

This newsletter is being sent to current and former The Nippon Foundation fellows, and persons who have asked to be added to the mailing list or have been introduced by The Nippon Foundation staff.



## **[The Nippon Foundation News] August Greetings**

Greetings from The Nippon Foundation. The rainy season has ended in Tokyo and the hot, humid weather of summer has arrived, with daytime temperatures of around 35 degrees Celsius and higher. An interesting news story that has developed over the past weeks is the blooming of a “century plant” (*Agave americana*) in Hibiya Park, a large park adjacent to the grounds of the Imperial Palace. The plant gets its colloquial name because in the past it was thought to bloom only once every 100 years, but in fact, in their native habitat of Mexico and the bordering area of the United States, the plants bloom in 10-30 years. The plants only bloom once and then soon die, leaving shoots in the surrounding ground that will grow to continue the cycle. In Hibiya Park, a staff member noticed that the stem had begun growing in mid-May, and as of mid-July the plant was 7.7 meters tall.

Based on photographs from around 1960, this particular plant is thought to be more than 60 years old, which makes it roughly the same age as The Nippon Foundation (originally established as the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation in 1962). Unlike the century plant, the Foundation has grown steadily over that time and will continue to grow into the future, but our activities can be seen as similar to the shoots the plant leaves behind. After being set on a path for growth with assistance from the Foundation, our hope is that the projects we support will continue to grow on their own and reach new heights for generations to come.



*The blooming agave 'century plant' in central Tokyo's Hibiya Park*

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## Completion of World's First 'Fleet Operation Center' for Remote Navigation Support for Multiple Fully Autonomous Ships

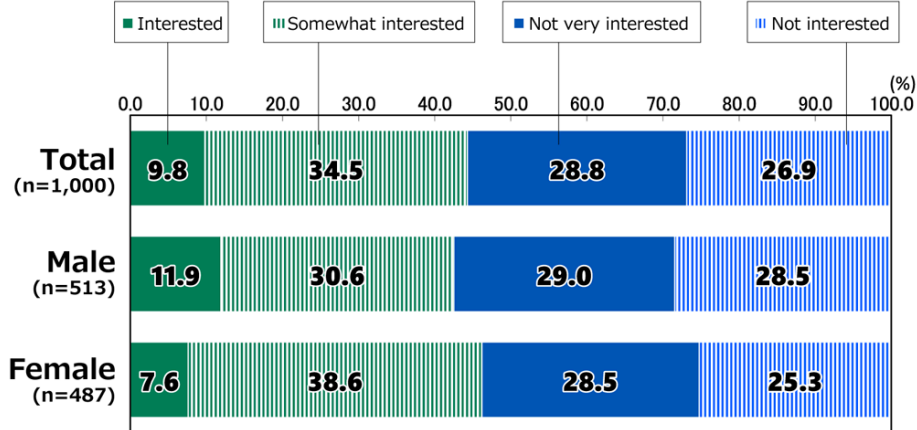
*The Nippon Foundation MEGURI2040 Fully Autonomous Ship Program makes steady progress toward social implementation in 2025*



The Nippon Foundation has been spearheading the MEGURI2040 Fully Autonomous Ship Program since February 2020. The Fleet Operation Center, which has been under development to provide remote navigation support for multiple ships from land, was completed on July 18 in Hyogo Prefecture. The center will provide remote navigation support for four autonomous ships simultaneously in a series of demonstration tests to be conducted in July 2025.

## Awareness Survey of 18-Year-Olds – Imperial Family, Job Hunting

More than 40% of respondents 'Interested' in imperial family, while more than 70% are concerned about job prospects



Against the backdrop of discussions on how to maintain stability in the imperial line of succession, 44% of respondents expressed either "Interest" or "Some interest" in the imperial family, and 47% replied that they "Feel affinity" toward the imperial family.

On the subject of job hunting, more than 70% of respondents replied that they were "Concerned" about accepting a job without knowing where they will be assigned geographically or within the company, but close to 70% replied that they would "Work hard in any case."

## Promotional Event Held for 'Spring UMIGOMI Zero Week 2024'

Attendees include Deputy Mayor of Fukuoka, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of the Environment, cartoon character Sazae-san



To promote “Spring UMIGOMI Zero Week 2024,” being carried out from May 30 to June 9 as part of a nationwide cleanup program organized by The Nippon Foundation and Japan’s Ministry of the Environment to address the increasingly serious issue of ocean debris, the World Cosplay Cultural Development Association held a Cosplay de UMIGOMI Zero Challenge 2024 event on June 1 in the city of Fukuoka. The event featured an opening ceremony followed by a trash cleanup in the surrounding area.

[Full Article](#)

## Yohei Sasakawa Blog

Chairman of The Nippon Foundation



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[Less Than Half of Japanese Youths Interested in and Feel Affinity with the Imperial Family: Poll](#) [2024/07/19]

[World’s First Liquid Hydrogen-Fueled Oil Tanker Design Awarded Approval in Principle \(AiP\) Under The Nippon Foundation Project](#) [2024/07/16]

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