

FOCUS

Asia-Pacific



Newsletter of the Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center (HURIGHTS OSAKA)

September 2009 Vol. 57

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Editorial

Never to Forget

Museums that exhibit the faces and forms of injustice have the heavy responsibility of facilitating not merely remembrance but also empowerment.

The preservation of Tuol Sleng as the "crime scene" of the Khmer Rouge is meant to prove that torture and execution existed and to implant the idea that violators should be held accountable.

The presentation of materials from the perspective of "oppressed people" by LIBERTY OSAKA aims to remind us that human rights violations, as well as realization, occur in the most ordinary situations in our lives.

The honor being given by *Bantayog ng mga Bayani* to people who made great sacrifices in their struggle for human rights celebrates the fact that their efforts helped make us see the dawn of freedom.

Human rights museums are repositories of memories that tell us to "never again" suffer the injustices of the past. But these museums need not be frozen in time.

Since the faces and forms of injustice change, these museums may adapt to the present contexts, to the new interests of the young, to the new technologies of communication, to societal changes.

Human rights museums are reminders of the injustices that we have to confront now and in the future.

LIBERTY OSAKA: Promoting Human Rights to All

Nobutoyo Kojima

A group of concerned people in Osaka City met in August 1982 to discuss the establishment of an "Osaka Human Rights Historical Museum." They wanted a unique museum that would present a "viewpoint on human rights through the perspective of the history of oppressed people."¹

The museum was eventually established as the Osaka Human Rights Museum and popularly known as LIBERTY OSAKA, the first museum on human rights in Japan. It was established in 1985 in Osaka City with the financial support of the governments of the Osaka Prefecture and City, labor unions, civil society organizations, and private corporations. The largest contributor was the Buraku Liberation League (BLL), the national leveler's movement established before World War II that played a leading role in the post-War movement against the discrimination of Japanese known as *burakumin* (*buraku* people).²

Museum Location

The original building and location of LIBERTY OSAKA are significant in the history of the anti-discrimination movement in Osaka. LIBERTY OSAKA is partly housed in one of the buildings of Sakae Primary School, the second oldest school to have been established

in Osaka prefecture in late 19th century. The museum started in a school building built in 1928 with the financial support of the *buraku* people in the area.³

The school is located in an area, created as Watanabe village (*Watanabe mura*) in 1706 during the Edo period (1603-1868), where *buraku* people worked on the traditional major industries of leather tanning and drum manufacturing. The area produced drums that were used in Shitennoji, the major temple in Osaka, as well as in Osaka Castle during the 18th century. According to documents dating from around 1881, most of the 73,000 drums produced in Osaka in a year were made in Watanabe village. This area was also called Kawata village (*kawa* means leather, or skin) during the Edo period, and later renamed Naniwa ward (*Naniwa-ku*). Drum-making remains an industry in Naniwa ward at present with four manufacturers using the old drum-making techniques. The area had long been the residence of *buraku* people, who suffered social discrimination from the time the Watanabe village was established till the present. BLL has been very active in this area. LIBERTY OSAKA's location therefore is very historic in relation to the struggle against discrimination.

Basic Philosophy of the Museum

LIBERTY OSAKA was established to conduct studies and research on human rights including *buraku* issues, to collect and preserve related materials and cultural goods, and to publicly exhibit them, in order to contribute to the promotion of human rights and the development of a "humanity-rich" culture.

It adheres to four basic principles:

- (1) Comprehensive museum focused on human rights

Out of the more than five thousand museums in Japan, few comprehensively cover human rights issues rooted in the history and culture of the Japanese society (such as the *buraku* history), and aimed at contributing to the promotion of human rights as well as the development of a "humanity-rich" culture. LIBERTY OSAKA, therefore, can be seen as a comprehensive museum on human rights. While based in Osaka, LIBERTY OSAKA sends out the message of respect for human rights across the country and the world.

- (2) Museum that responds to the new human rights movement

LIBERTY OSAKA responds to the need to eliminate discrimination by heightening

human rights awareness through its unique functions as a museum. Its activities (including exhibitions, meetings and other events, as well as educational programs) provide possible methods and directions for new human rights movements, such as those on human rights learning and awareness-raising.

- (3) Museum that promotes the importance of human rights history and culture

In light of the advancement and diversification of the cultural needs of people, LIBERTY OSAKA has taken the new challenge of introducing intangible cultural assets such as performing arts and music that museums have not done before. This approach likewise reflects the use of songs and dances by people suffering from discrimination in expressing anger against, and yearning for liberation from, it. Exhibiting and publicizing these songs and dances are important for the promotion of human rights.

- (4) Creative and participatory museum that promotes voluntary activities

LIBERTY OSAKA adopts participatory management as well as creates new ideas, awareness and values that help realize human rights and develop culture using the creativity coming from the grassroots activities of the people. LIBERTY OSAKA aims to gain greater capacity for further development through the combined strengths of the efforts of many private

organizations, the cooperation of the local governments, and its status as a foundation.

Exhibits and Projects

Initially, the exhibits of LIBERTY OSAKA were structured around the *buraku* issue. During the 1995-2005 period, however, LIBERTY OSAKA undertook a substantial renewal of its exhibits by including various forms of discrimination and human rights issues arising from the current complex social conditions in Japan.

The current general exhibition section is based on the theme "How we face discrimination and human rights in Japan," and focuses on the discrimination and human rights issues from the start of the modern period (1868 onward) in Japan, when the structure of discrimination of the feudal ages was reorganized, until today. This section clarifies, from a human rights perspective, the social structure in Japan that created discrimination, the efforts of the discriminated people themselves against discrimination, and the discrimination and human rights situation today. Apart from the general exhibition, two special exhibitions as well as other exhibition projects are organized each year.

The general exhibition section consists of four units. Below is a brief introduction of each of these units.

Unit 1: Human Rights Today

Human rights are rights that all human beings are born with. Yet there are human rights that are violated, and

people have to struggle to enjoy them. What roles do the various human rights have in our lives? Using multiple screens, this Unit shows visual materials on human rights in Japan and the world, as well as materials on the right to work (focusing on *karoshi* [death from overwork]), and the right to education (focusing on the phenomenon of children refusing to go to school).

Unit 2: Our Values and Discrimination

Each person has a different sense of values. These values provide an important basis in people's lives. But there are times when these values may provide a basis for discrimination. This Unit presents an opportunity for visitors to examine how values give people the strength to live, as well as how they relate to discrimination.

This Unit examines issues related to economic, social and physical statuses by looking at ten values, such as "the desire for good academic achievement" and "desire for good job."

Unit 3: The Activism of People who are Discriminated-against

People who suffer discrimination have diverse opinions and claims. This Unit shows their economic industries, the cultures they developed, their diverse views, and their movements against discrimination. The visitors can learn the meaning of these views and activities.

This Unit examines the structure of discrimination in contemporary Japan focusing on twelve issues, including issues regarding Korean residents, Ainu people and *buraku* people.

Unit 4: Discrimination, Human Rights and You

People suffering from discrimination are not the only ones affected by discrimination and human rights. Each person is involved in discrimination or human rights issues relating to education, work and daily life. Through narrations of different persons, this Unit shows how people can face discrimination and human rights issues. In this Unit, visitors can watch videos of victims of discrimination, or those who are involved in anti-discrimination and human rights activities, narrating their experiences.



Involvement in School Education

The activities of LIBERTY OSAKA place particular importance on working with educational institutions. LIBERTY OSAKA's specialist curators provide information, explain the exhibitions, as well as give advice and guidance on the preparation of visitation

programs for students (from all school levels and universities) who visit as part of human rights education. LIBERTY OSAKA staffs also visit schools for human rights education using the learning processes derived from program implementation experiences and on topics relating to objects and materials from the museum. More and more students show interest in LIBERTY OSAKA through these educational activities. There are also volunteer guides who provide explanations to the general visitors, another educational activity that leads to a deeper understanding of the exhibition materials.

Impact

LIBERTY OSAKA's regular museum activities and its work in schools are mutually stimulating and deepen the understanding of how human rights education can be done systematically.

It has collected a significant amount of historical materials, as well as materials on *buraku* arts, crafts and movements.

In the twenty-four-year operation of LIBERTY OSAKA, it has received 1.22 million visitors. Many students learned about the *buraku* discrimination for the first time through LIBERTY OSAKA. Some even began to aspire to become teachers after the experience of viewing original objects and materials on display in LIBERTY OSAKA. They realized that they would not have come across this experience in conventional school education.

Future Direction

LIBERTY OSAKA looks forward to welcoming more visitors from other parts of Asia. To achieve this, it is launching in 2010 a continuing renewal program of the general exhibition. It plans to use multiple languages in its exhibit and activity explanations, along with the use of digital information network.

It also plans to introduce exhibitions and workshops using experiential methods that enable children to effectively learn human rights.

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Endnote

- ¹ "Lest We Forget: Osaka Human Rights Museum Planned for 1984," *Buraku Liberation News*, number 11, October 1982, page 3.
- ² See "What is Buraku Problem," *Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Research Institute*, for the background on *buraku* discrimination, http://blhrii.org/blhrii_e/What_is_Buraku.htm
- ³ "Lest We Forget: Osaka Human Rights Museum Planned for 1984," op. cit.

Philippine Museum Honors Resistance to Martial Law

Bantayog ng mga Bayani Museum

"Bantayog ng mga Bayani" in the Filipino language means "Monument to the Heroes." It is a landscaped memorial center honoring those individuals who lived and died in defiance of the repressive regime that ruled over the Philippines from 1972 to 1986.

A 14-meter Inang Bayan (Mother Philippines) Monument designed by sculptor Eduardo Castrillo stands on the grounds of the memorial center, depicting the self-sacrifice of a fallen figure of a man, held in one hand by the rising figure of a woman who symbolizes the Motherland, while her other hand reaches for the glorious sun of freedom. In the distance stands a Wall of Remembrance, where the names of martyrs are inscribed. The Monument and the Wall of Remembrance were unveiled on 30 November 1992.¹

In August 2009, the Bantayog ng mga Bayani Museum (Bantayog Museum) completed the first two years of operation since it opened to the public. Still very much a work in progress, it has managed nevertheless to merit positive comments from the public and the media.

The Inspiration for the Bantayog Museum

After visiting the Philippines immediately after the 1986 People Power Revolution to rejoice over the downfall of an authoritarian regime, Dr. Ruben Mallari, a Filipino-American medical doctor, suggested the establishment of a memorial to honor those martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the cause

of freedom and justice but failed to witness the dawn of freedom.

A group of Filipinos responded to this suggestion and organized the Bantayog ng mga Bayani Memorial Foundation. Dr. Ledivina V. Cariño, former Dean of the University of the Philippines' College of Public Administration, helped draft the concept paper based on the suggestion of Dr. Mallari. The final concept paper stated the rationale for Bantayog Museum:

Freedom has dawned magnificently upon us brought about by our own will, with the help of Divine Providence. We stood together with linked arms as we proclaimed our unity, our dedication to liberty and democracy, and our commitment to our country. With boundless faith, we broke the chains which enslaved us in a regime of terror, intimidation and fraud. But as we enjoy our liberation, let us not forget those who fell during the night. Let us honor the Filipino patriots who struggled valiantly against the unjust and repressive rule of Ferdinand Marcos. Let us build a memorial to those men and women who offered their lives so that we may all see the dawn.

For as we remember those victims of authoritarian rule, we shall become more vigilant about preserving our freedom, defending our rights, and opposing any attempt by anyone to foist another dictatorship upon us.

In honoring our martyrs, we proclaim our determination to be free forever.

The Bantayog Museum aims to reach out mainly to

schoolchildren and college students, hoping to help them understand and learn from the people's struggle against repression. "Never Again!" is a recurring theme of the activities held at the memorial center.

Preserving the Memory

Based on a set of criteria for selecting persons to be honored, families of victims, members of civic organizations, and the general public are invited to send the names and personal circumstances of persons who should be honored. A Research and Documentation Committee verifies the factual bases of each nomination and conducts independent researches and investigations, so that the names of obscure, unknown martyrs in remote places may be brought to light. The Executive Committee of the Foundation reviews the recommendations of the Committee, and the Board of Trustees gives the final approval.²

The names of the first sixty-five martyrs, some of them well-known such as Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. and many others not as well-known, were enshrined in 1992. The following year, after long reflection, the Foundation decided to include as heroes those who gave their all for the sake of freedom, justice, and democracy during the Marcos years but died after the EDSA Revolution.

Since then, hundreds of heroes and martyrs of the martial law dictatorship have been honored by their names being inscribed on the black granite Wall of Remembrance.

Right behind the Wall of Remembrance is the Jovito R. Salonga Building, which is named after a distinguished political leader who fought against the authoritarian regime. Salonga continues to add his powerful voice to the democratic people's movement clamoring for human rights, justice and the rule of law.

The Bantayog Museum occupies more than a hundred square meters of space on the second floor of the Jovito R. Salonga Building. On the same floor is the Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco Auditorium where film showings are presented, and programs are held. It is named after the Foundation's Chairperson, a prominent businessman and philanthropist who has served as the country's ambassador to China and Japan.

A library is now open on the ground floor of the same building. It contains archives and reference materials relating to the same period, and has begun to serve students and scholars wishing to do research.

Awakening a Sense of History

By displaying authentic material objects associated with the heroes and martyrs, as well as with the period of dictatorship, the Bantayog Museum hopes to awaken in its visitors a powerful sense of history as it was actually made by real-life men and women.

While concentrating principally on the period itself of Marcos rule (1972 to 1986), the collection and displays also include the periods immediately before (from 1965) and after (1986-87) in order to place the dictatorship and the corresponding people's resistance in their historical context.

Thus, the pre-martial law section deals with the economic, political and social problems of

the 1960s (mass poverty, abusive government officials, violation of civil liberties) that gave rise to popular discontent especially of the youth.

Methods of torture are documented, and the model of a prison cell draws much attention from visitors.



Photo courtesy of Traveler on Foot (<http://traveleronfoot.wordpress.com>)

There is a growing collection of memorabilia from the period of resistance, including underground publications, the "mosquito press," reports from the various civil-society groups emerging at the time, and expressions of international solidarity. The families and friends of the heroes and martyrs donate much of the Bantayog Museum's material collections.

Through the years of repression, opposition to the Marcos regime kept growing and broadening until the shocking assassination of the political leader Benigno Aquino, Jr. upon his return to the Philippines from exile in the United States. The ensuing nationwide protests have been well documented, culminating in the world-famous "People Power Revolution" that finally drove the dictator out in February 1986. This event is brought to life in the Bantayog Museum with the scale model of a military tank, stopped in its tracks and covered with flower petals showered by the people gathered to press for the ouster of Marcos.

Meanwhile, a Hall of Remembrance beside the Bantayog Museum is dedicated to the heroes and martyrs, through the capsule biographies and individual photos of each one. This section is meant to inspire love and respect for their sacrifice for the common good, especially in the minds and hearts of young people.

Other activities

Conscious that many other aspects of the martial law period are not yet included in the permanent display, the Bantayog Museum has been mounting special exhibits from time to time. One of these was a special tribute to the late President Corazon Aquino, who assumed the presidency right after the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship, and whose recent demise prompted a massive outpouring of emotions and fresh insights into her legacy of public service. Another special exhibit showed the works of Philippine artists done in the Social Realist style, some of which were painted during the martial law period and others depicting how today's realities mirror those of yesterday.

Concerts and story-telling are among the other activities conducted by the Bantayog Museum. It may be noted that since the Bantayog Memorial Center hosts numerous programs, seminars, etc. by various civil-society groups, the latter are also drawn to visit the Bantayog Museum. It is hoped that with more support from the private sector and the general public, more resources will be generated that will allow the implementation of so many ideas that cry out to be done.

Volunteers are the backbone of the staff, a unique aspect of the Bantayog Museum and Library. Many of them were part of the people's movement against

martial law, and are thus able to impart an unforgettable personal touch as they guide visitors around the exhibits. Others are student volunteers with a particular appreciation of the history of the period. Conscious of the need to equip themselves with the requisite professional and technical skills, they have been taking part in a museology training program consisting of visits, seminars and workshops offered by the country's foremost institutions along this line, led by the National Museum.

Admission to the Bantayog Museum is free, although donations are welcome. Its operations are supported and guided by a Board of Trustees headed by the top businessman Alfonso T. Yuchengco (Chairperson) and the human-rights lawyer Jovito R. Salonga (Chairperson Emeritus), with Quintin S. Doromal as Executive Director.

Making an Impact

Of the more than seven thousand visitors who have come to the Bantayog Memorial Center so far, a good number is composed of ex-activists who are now parents and grandparents themselves. Often, they come in groups to relive the time when they put their own lives at stake for the sake of "truth, freedom, justice and democracy" – the watchwords of Bantayog Museum even today.

However, students at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) make up the majority of visitors. Because Philippine history is part of the academic curriculum, schools organize annual educational tours of which the Bantayog Museum is increasingly a part. It is not an uncommon sight to see tour buses lined up at the entrance to the Bantayog Memorial Center, loaded with hundreds of students and their teachers all waiting for their turn.

It is mainly because of favorable media coverage over the past two years that these schools (and the tour operators) have come to know about the Bantayog Memorial Center. Bloggers have been a good source of information and promotion, as well.

The Philippine press sees the Bantayog Museum as a timely reminder of the dangers of forgetting the past. "At last a museum for rare courage," read one headline.³ One columnist said, "...(S)pend a nice Sunday afternoon there, while the breezes blow and the sun shines, looking at the names carved on the Wall of Remembrance, which belong to those who did something heroic for us in more recent times, which claimed many of their lives, and which is why the breezes blow, and the sun shines for us today."⁴ Not a few have commented, though, that this is still a small museum with fewer items than the bigger ones; others have noted the "little shop of horrors" aspect which are perhaps an unpleasant reminder of the martial law period's atrocities.

Future direction

Building up the Bantayog Museum's collections, as well as properly organizing them with a digitized information system, is the focus of work in the short to medium term. At the same time, the work of educating the public about the Bantayog Museum and its chief concerns should be addressed through more special exhibits, lecture series, conferences and such. A very important complementary task is to dig deeper into the sources of information about martial law; an oral history project must be started while participants during the period are still around to remember and to recount.

By the year 2011, when the Bantayog ng mga Bayani

Foundation observes its 25th anniversary, the Bantayog Museum (and library) envisions itself to be "a leading organization on the martial law years, or the leading organization."

The words of Senator Salonga sum up what Bantayog Museum will continue to aim at:⁵

we shall proclaim our firm resolve to keep faith with our martyrs and heroes and our deepest conviction that this land of the morning, the repository of our hopes and dreams, is worth living for and dying for.

For further information please contact: Bantayog ng mga Bayani Museum, 2nd floor of J.R. Salonga Bldg., Bantayog Memorial Center, Quezon Avenue corner EDSA, Quezon city, Metro Manila, Philippines, ph/fax (632) 434-8343; e-mail: bantayogmuseum@gmail.com; http://bantayog.wordpress.com.

Endnotes

- ¹ Based on *The story of Bantayog Foundation: Remembering the martial law martyrs and heroes*, available in <http://bantayog.wordpress.com/about/>.
- ² *Ibid.*
- ³ Ma. Ceres P. Doyo, "At last, a museum for rare courage," *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*, available in http://services.inquirer.net/print/print.php?article_id=20070226-51611.
- ⁴ Conrado de Quiros, "Museum," *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*, available in <http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/columns/view/20070829-85263/Museum>.
- ⁵ *Statement of Senator Jovito Salonga during the 1992 unveiling of the Inang Bayan Monument and Wall of Remembrance*, available in <http://bantayog.wordpress.com/keeping-faith/>.

Tuol Sleng

John Lowrie

Tuol Sleng Museum in Phnom Penh is an unlikely museum. It is where as many as 17,000 or more people were incarcerated, tortured, and then systematically killed during the Khmer Rouge rule from April 1975 to January 1979. The museum's outward appearance was then, and remains today, that of a typical Cambodian school, but it is ominously different as soon as you enter, in its silence, in its foreboding. It was a typical secondary school once, but not any more and never again, not even in a country desperately short of school buildings. Never again will it see crowds of blue and white uniformed school-boys and girls. Nor will it buzz with the familiar chatter of children and their rote-learning chants that once emanated from its eerie classrooms. Instead you are ushered in with the same signs and their stark warning that greeted its many victims such as:

Do nothing! Sit still and wait for my orders. If there are no orders, keep quiet! When I ask you to do something, you must do it right away without protesting.

The Start of a Museum

The travesty of what went on in Tuol Sleng was undoubtedly the product of an extreme Cambodian leadership but its discovery and preservation is due to the Vietnamese whose army, with dissident Cambodian forces, overthrew the Khmer Rouge in 1979. Two of their photo-journalists first entered Tuol Sleng. They saw and recorded

exactly how it had been abandoned by its erstwhile custodians, including leaving the corpses of its final victims to rot. Vietnamese authorities soon realized the significance of their find and appointed an expert, Mai Lam, to take charge of it and to document its archives.

Tuol Sleng is therefore much more than a museum testifying to a macabre chapter of history. It is to this day a largely intact crime scene with evidence of mass atrocities and much more. It has been the repository of vital evidence carefully conserved first by Mai Lam, and to this day by the Documentation Center of Cambodia and supporting organizations. That evidence is now playing a vital role in the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, the United Nations-backed special court now sitting to judge those most responsible for the tragedies of Khmer Rouge rule. Tuol Sleng images, the museum's exhibits, are not just historical artifacts, but in mid-2009, they are brought to life again in vivid and startling witness testimony. The evidence comes from no less a figure than the man in charge at the time, with his extraordinary admissions, and by those of the very few survivors of his stewardship. Kaing Guek Eav's (alias Duch) is the first Khmer Rouge leader to face trial. Tuol Sleng, he confesses, with its linked facility ten kilometers away, known as Choeung Ek Killing Fields, was indeed a center of extermination; the top one of hundreds for the Khmer Rouge, not seen since the Nazi death camps of the Holocaust.

Tuol Sleng is now the responsibility of the Government of Cambodia through a Secretary of State at the Council of Ministers responsible for national archives and of its Department of Museums. UNESCO provides important technical support. Although it is clear that Tuol Sleng will be preserved for the foreseeable future, its long-term future is inextricably bound up with the outcome of the Khmer Rouge trial and Cambodia's internal debate about how to deal with this dark chapter of its history. So far Tuol Sleng is largely untouched, remaining in its original simplest form. Even plans to improve some facilities for visitors have brought much resistance, but the Government recognizes that it is in need of some essential repair, which must be done in ways that do not destroy its authenticity. Really a new facility will be needed to be able to conserve artefacts and displays for posterity, but even then, it is unlikely that Tuol Sleng will emulate other museums to attract and entertain visitors. Such peripheral facilities, for visitors to engage "interactively", will not be welcomed in the near future, not until that debate is concluded which may take several more generations. Anything that detracts from the simple chilling images and recollections would be seen as insensitive while people who survived the period live on with their painful memories, nightmares and traumas. One entrepreneur learned this the hard way in 2008. He tried to recreate not far away a Khmer Rouge style canteen, complete with the typical meal of meager grael,

eating implements and attire of the period, as if by now there would be some kind of nostalgia for it. His idea aroused universal revulsion; if the authorities had not ordered it closed, it would have been a commercial failure.

Tuol Sleng does stand on its own as a memorial, the unique symbolic edifice of the Khmer Rouge rule where any detractor likely to pose a threat was purged most mercilessly. A salient feature of Tuol Sleng is that apart from the stories coming from its only six survivors, with the paintings of one, Van Nath, appearing there depicting the horrors, visitors are left to draw their own impressions based on what they see and feel. There are few of the usual narrative descriptions seen in most museums. There are literally no stories at all of the victims; how or why they ended up there, and unlike for example Holocaust sites, there are no personal possessions, no material evidence of lives once lived and finally lost there. Apart from a few clothes, no mementoes were left. Visitors do not need a guide to internalize the experiences, although if one does accompany them, he or she will not only act as an escort but also be able to add his or her personal dimension. Hardly any family in Cambodia escaped unscathed in that time.

The Exhibits

Tuol Sleng, also known as S21 after the district in which it is found, is just a kilometer from central Phnom Penh, near the usual shopping centers, markets, hotels and tourist sites. It is inevitably a "must-see" on the dark tourist trail, with up to five hundred domestic and foreign visitors daily, although their reasons for going are quite different. Foreigners usually feel compelled to exercise a natural morbid fascination. They pay modest admission charges. It is

free for Cambodians, for whom it is a solemn pilgrimage visit; often personal and intimate, sometimes a search for an unknown aspect of their identity. Whether foreigner or Cambodian, all visitors are emotionally moved once there. After the somber warning signs are heeded, there are four buildings to visit. Buildings A, B, and C are similar with several storeys, and barbed wire on upper floors put there apparently to prevent inmates from suicide attempts. There are numerous cells, made of brick or wood dividing up the former classrooms. They were used not just for incarceration but also torture. Pictures can be seen of bodies once on the metal beds still standing there. Blood stains on the floor, boxes in the corner for human waste, are still there. In some rooms there are boards displaying photographs of victims, with pictures depicting atrocities such as electrocution, shackles, scorpion stings, and even babies removed from their mother's womb only to be crushed against the walls. Reminders say that many of the "guards" were just teenage children brainwashed and desensitized to the brutality. Building D was the main interrogation center, next to the guard's quarters.¹

For Cambodians who find the last trace of their lost relatives in Tuol Sleng, it is the saddest of shrines, knowing that the flesh and blood of their own kith and kin was spilled in very the rooms where they are standing. For that reason, it does make Tuol Sleng one more place in the world where the human race must be reminded of its tragic past. It will never be managed in the same way as for example the Silver Pagoda museum in Phnom Penh that sets out Cambodia's long and at times glorious history, including the famous Angkor Wat era.

Impact of the Museum

Tuol Sleng Museum will stay devoted to the history of one short tragic period, and what happened in one place, but its role in this sense as a place of learning should not be underestimated.² It cannot, it does not, and will never answer the question that is most often asked; the same question it is hoped that the Khmer Rouge Trials will answer, which is simply – "Why?" Cambodians want an answer. They need to come to terms with this the darkest of periods in their history. They are beginning to do this.³

However, some Cambodians (who are not considered members of the Khmer Rouge) raise the idea that Tuol Sleng was "invented out of whole cloth by the Vietnamese, so as to blacken the reputation of the Cambodian people and to indict them *en masse* for genocidal crimes."

To this, David Chandler, a historian on Cambodia, has this response:⁴

I always replied to them that I believe that their suggestions were mistaken. The effort to invent S-21, I think, would have been far too costly for the Vietnamese, and far too complicated. The Vietnamese did not have the resources, for example, to compose the documents discovered in the S-21 archives (and thousands of others related to S-21, discovered elsewhere in Phnom Penh after the Vietnamese withdrew), to invent the names and backgrounds of workers at the prison, to fake the photographic evidence, and to invent biographies for the survivors and former workers at the facility. Moreover, had they mounted such an operation, it seems likely that someone who participated in it would have talked about it, especially after the Vietnamese withdrew their forces in 1989.

Thun Saray, prominent human rights leader in Cambodia and who personally lived through the horrors, says of Tuol Sleng:

For Cambodians, and international visitors as well, this place should be a memorial place. The experience of visiting this place where so many people suffered and died; where photographs of torture, prisons cells, and more should remind people of the horrible times and that things like this will not be forgotten and will not happen again. Tuol Sleng is part of the legacy and gives access to Cambodians to gain knowledge about the real events that happened under the KR.

This year, for the first time, the Khmer Rouge period is to feature in official teaching of history in schools. The Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam)⁵ has led a "Genocide Education Project" initiative with forty-eight Cambodian and international experts and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS). They have trained the first twenty-four senior officials who will go on to train teachers for all children to be taught the subject after 2010. The MoEYS has approved Dy Kham Boly's *A History of Democratic Kampuchea* as the official history textbook. Youk Chhang, director of DC-Cam says: "Understanding the past, however horrendous, is the first step towards restoring humanity and identity of a nation". The initiative includes active reading, group discussions, guest lectures, theatre arts and field trips. Tuol Sleng will feature in visits for schools from all over the country not just Phnom Penh. Such creative methodology should help teachers overcome the difficulties inherent in conveying lessons to children whose parents and older living relatives not only lived through the horrors, but who are still traumatized by it. Reputable psychosocial research, for

example by Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO) shows that not only has trauma stayed with survivors, but also its pervasiveness is manifested in later generations. That cycle must be broken.

Future Direction

If lessons of history are learned and acted upon, then the cause of universal human rights will be advanced. Tuol Sleng shows graphically how Khmer Rouge leaders ruled by fear; fear over the entire population, real fear of knowing what would befall all those whose absolute loyalty could not be assured. Individuality was destroyed. So was trust in the natural inherent goodness that human beings should harbor and show towards each other. Fear dictated that survival, at any cost, became the main determinant of human behavior. No country in the world will ever attain acceptable standards across the full gambit of civic, political, social, economic, and cultural rights until the day comes when leaders cease to use fear and oppression to maintain their control. If Tuol Sleng helps to bring that day to Cambodia, it would at least bestow one most noble final honor on its victims.

John Lowrie, who has worked in Cambodia since 1998 as a senior human rights and development worker with international and local civil society organizations in developing countries, has been working on the promotion of good governance, rights of disabled people and others living with vulnerability including ethnic minorities, and the sustainability of local civil society organizations in developing countries.

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931 301; e-mail: nhs@camintel.com, johnlowrie@wirelessip.com.kh; www.newhorizonsunlimited.org; and see his recent article: www.scribd.com/doc/11621086/The-Name-of-the-Game-is-Sustainability-but-Does-the-Last-Player-Count-by-John-Lowrie

Endnotes

- ¹ For a more detailed room by room guide, please visit: <<http://www.tokyoreporter.com/2008/10/04/museum-tour-the-tuol-sleng-genocide-museum/>>. For an excellent pictorial guide with comment, read "Hanging in the Past" by Timothy Dylan Wood and Rita Leistner, available in <http://www.ideasmag.artsci.utoronto.ca/issue4_1/ideas_leistner_wood_low.pdf>.
- ² For a very useful commentary on Tuol Sleng and how it relates as a museum compared with others such as those of the Holocaust written before the Khmer Rouge trials read Paul Williams, "Witnessing Genocide: Vigilance and Remembrance at Tuol Sleng and Choeung Ek," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*; Fall 2004; 18, 2; available in homepages.nyu.edu/~pw32/Cambodian_genocide.pdf
- ³ For the Cambodian Government Perspective on Tuol Sleng see "Memory of the World Register: Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum Archive Ref N° 2008-04, available at: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/files/27488/12200140123TuolSleng_web.rtf/TuolSleng%2Bweb.rtf
- ⁴ David Chandler, "Tuol Sleng and S-21," *Searching for the Truth*, June 2001.
- ⁵ The Documentation Center of Cambodia has an excellent website <http://www.dccam.org/> and also posts regular updates of relevant articles including the Khmer Rouge Trials," <http://www.cambodiatribunal.org/>

WPHRE and Human Rights Education Law in Japan: Implications for the Japanese Local Governments¹

Kenzo Tomonaga

Human rights education and human rights awareness-raising play a vital role in promoting human rights and in eliminating all forms of discrimination including *Buraku* discrimination.

Eight years have passed since the Law on the Promotion of Human Rights Education and Human Rights Awareness-Raising (LPHREA) was enacted in Japan,² while almost five years have passed since the United Nations started both the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) and the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) in January 2005.

The Japanese government has been issuing since 2002 its annual White Paper on Human Rights Education and Awareness-Raising that describes various human rights education activities and initiatives undertaken in each year. However, the Japanese local governments have not issued such reports yet. In this context, the Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Research Institute (BLHRRRI) surveyed the local governments regarding the implementation of their commitments under LPHREA, WPHRE and UNDESD. This paper provides a synopsis of the survey findings and a number of proposals for the future.³

Survey Findings

BLHRRRI sent a survey questionnaire to each of the

1,870 local governments in Japan in September 2007. 1,450 local governments (77.5% of the total) sent valid responses.

The survey questionnaire covered training programs, and specific plans. For LPHREA, the questionnaire also covered local government supporting structure and reporting of activities undertaken; and for WPHRE and UNDESD, specific plans for Dowa education and awareness-raising.

The responses of the local governments are summarized into the following:

A. Activities and initiatives made by local governments regarding LPHREA

(i) Training and publicity activities based on LPHREA

Almost half (715 or 49.3%) of the responding local governments said that they offered training programs for local government employees, while another half (734 or 50.6%) said 'No'. One local government did not respond to this question.

Less than half (672 or 46.3%) of the local governments said that they offered training programs for teachers, while a slightly more than half (756 or 52.1%) said 'No'. Four local governments did not respond to this question.

Slightly more than half (768 or 53.0%) of the local governments said they held public information activities

on LPHREA for local residents, and less than half (678 or 46.7%) said 'No'. Four local governments did not respond to this question.

(ii) Plans based on LPHREA

This is the most important item among the questions in the survey. Among all local governments that responded, 234 (16.2%) said "Yes, we have a plan based on LPHREA," 192 (13.2%) said "We have a plan which is considered to be based on LPHREA," and 1,021 (70.4%) said "No, we do not have such a plan yet." Five local governments did not respond to this question.

From among the 426 local governments that responded that they have either a plan based on LPHREA or considered to be based on it, two prefectures (Hyogo Prefecture and Oita Prefecture) said that they have both. From these confused responses of two prefectures, we may conclude that only 424 out of 1,870 local governments (22.7%) have specific plans based on LPHREA.

(iii) View of local governments without any plans yet

Among the local governments that do not have such a plan yet, 107 (10.5%) said that they would be formulating a plan based on LPHREA, 298 (29.2%) said that they were currently

considering making such a plan, and 608 (59.5%) said that they do not have such an intention. Eight local governments have no response on this point.

(iv) Government structure to promote the LPHREA-based plan

The second important aspect in promoting human rights education and awareness-raising by local governments is that they have an official structure or a task force to promote the LPHREA-based plan. Among the local governments that have LPHREA-based plans, 299 (70.4%) have such a task force, while 120 (28.4%) do not have such plan. Five local governments did not respond to this question.

(v) Promotion structure including academic experts and representatives of local residents for the implementation of LPHREA-based plans

Among the local governments that have LPHREA-based plans, 257 (60.5%) have promotion structures that include academics and local residents, while 161 (38.1%) do not include them. Six local governments did not respond to this question.

(vi) Reports on the implementation of plans based on LPHREA

Among the local governments that have LPHREA-based plans, 72 (16.9%) have published reports on the implementation of such plans, while 341 (80.5%) have not done so. Eleven local governments did not respond to this question.

B. Efforts made by local governments regarding WPHRE

(i) Training and publicity on WPHRE

To the question on whether or not they have offered training programs on the WPHRE for local government employees, 82 local governments (5.7%) said 'Yes,' and 1,322 (91.1%) said 'No.' Forty-six local governments did not respond to this question.

134 local governments (9.2%) said that they have training program on WPHRE for teachers, while 1,276 (88.0%) said that they have no such training program. Forty local governments did not respond to this question.

Also, 81 local governments (5.6%) said that they have conducted public information activities on WPHRE for local residents, while 1,349 (93.0%) said that they have not done so. Twenty local governments did not respond to this question.

(ii) Plans based on WPHRE

Among the local governments that have responded, 10 (0.7%) said, "we have a plan directly based on WPHRE," 45 (3.1%) said "we have a plan which is considered to be based on WPHRE," and 1,384 (95.4%) said, "we do not have any such plans yet" (eleven local governments did not respond to this question). Thus, only 55 local governments have plans either directly based on or considered to be based on WPHRE.

(iii) View of local governments without any plans yet

Among the local governments that said that they do not have such a plan yet, 22 (10.5%) said that they are going to formulate a plan based on WPHRE, 232 (24.0%) said that they were considering adopting such a plan, and

1,023 (73.9%) say that they do not have such an intention. Seven local governments did not respond to this question.

C. Efforts made by local governments regarding UNDESD

(i) Training and publicity on UNDESD

To the question on whether or not they have offered training programs on the UNDESD for local government employees, 46 local governments (3.2%) said 'Yes,' while 1,373 (94.7%) said 'No,' and 31 gave no response. 68 local governments (4.7%) said that they have had training programs on UNDESD for teachers, while 1,339 (92.3%) said that they do not have such a program. Forty-three local governments did not give a response.

Also, 51 local governments (3.5%) said that they have conducted public information activities on UNDESD for local residents, while 1,372 (94.6%) said that they have not done so. Twenty-seven local governments did not give a response.

(ii) Plans based on UNDESD

Among the local governments that have responded, 4 (0.7%) said "we have a plan directly based on UNDESD," 28 (3.1%) said "we have a plan which is considered to be based on UNDESD," 1,393 (95.4%) said "we do not have any such plans yet," with 25 local governments not giving a response to this question. Among those local governments that have no such plans yet, 7 (0.5%) said, "we are going to formulate a plan based on UNDESD," 292 (20.9%) said "we are currently considering about such a plan," and 1,082 (77.6%) said

that they do not have such an intention. Seven local governments did not give a response to this point.

D. Guidelines and basic plans for Dowa education

As the recommendation from the Area Improvement Measures Council rightly pointed out in May 1996, it is necessary to create and expand human rights education based on the many years of Dowa education experiences. It must be noted also that 1) Buraku discrimination still exists; 2) it is important to study deeply about the Buraku discrimination issue; and 3) Dowa education should be situated as a vital pillar of human rights education in view of the leading role it historically plays for the advancement of human rights education.

From such a viewpoint, we asked whether local governments have basic plans and/or policies for Dowa education. 296 (20.4%) responded 'Yes,' while 1,137 (78.4%) said 'No' and 17 did not respond. Among local governments that have no such plans/policies, 24 (2.1%) are going to formulate such a plan/policy, 230 (20.2%) are currently considering adopting such a plan, 875 (77.0%) do not have such an intention, and 8 gave no response.

Future Issues

The following issues have to be considered in the call for more commitment and action in the years to come:

(1) Local governments should offer training programs for their employees and teachers, and conduct public information activities for local residents on such initiatives as LPHREA, WPHRE and UNDESSED so

that their significance would be more widely recognized.

- (2) All local governments should formulate plans based on these initiatives.
- (3) Local governments that already have plans should publicly report on the status of their implementation on a regular basis.
- (4) All local governments should establish a task force for the promotion of these plans and actions consisting of the governor/mayor and all section representatives, and which should hold meetings on a regular basis.
- (5) All local governments should set up an advisory body consisting of academic experts and representatives of local residents (including those representing the discriminated-against). The advisory body should hold meetings regularly to come up with proposals for the formulation and improvement of the plan.
- (6) The local government plan should include concrete programs for the solution of various human rights issues including the *Buraku* discrimination issue.
- (7) The local government plan should include programs for human rights education and awareness-raising in all places including the school, community, home, and the workplace.
- (8) The local government plan should include human rights training programs for public officials and professionals such as government employees, teachers, police officers, medical and welfare practitioners who are deeply engaged in human rights issues.

(9) Local governments should formulate plans and programs for concrete human rights issues such as basic plans/programs for Dowa education and awareness-raising along with human rights education and awareness-raising plans/programs.

(10) Grassroots movements should be built up to promote LPHREA, WPHRE and UNDESC with the participation of wide-ranging organizations, groups and individuals.

Mr. Kenzo Tomonaga, the former Director of the Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Research Institute, is now a member of the Board of Directors of the institute.

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Endnotes

- ¹ Professor Yasumasa Hirasawa of Osaka University translated this article from Japanese language into English language.
- ² The English translation of LPHREA is available at http://blhrri.org/blhrri_e/news/new117/new11701.html
- ³ The full report on the survey findings is available in Japanese language at http://blhrri.org/kenkyu/data/survey_on_HRE/index.htm

Human Rights Events in the Asia-Pacific

The 14th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) on Human Rights¹ discussed a number of issues including human rights and corruption, human rights and religion, and human rights defenders. On the issue of human rights and corruption, the APF members "committed to undertake practical measures to combat corruption using a human rights based approach and to promote awareness of the close linkages between corruption and human rights and the harmful effects of corruption on the enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights." On the issue of human rights, religion and belief, the APF members considered the "need for inter and intra faith dialogue [at national, regional and international levels] to promote mutual understanding and the protection and promotion of human rights and the value of using a human rights approach to balance potentially competing rights."² The Jordan National Centre for Human Rights hosted the meeting with the co-sponsorship by the APF and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.³

NGO Parallel Conference

A parallel "Arab and Asia-Pacific NGO Workshop on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights" was held on 2 August 2009 in Amman. The workshop discussed the basic roles and functions of national human rights institutions based on the Paris Principles, the challenges facing human rights defenders in the Arab & Asia-Pacific, and the establishment of NHRIs in the Arab & Asian regions. The NGO representatives also discussed the human rights

situation in Iran, and Taiwan, and advocacy at the International Coordinating Committee (ICC) of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. The workshop had forty-four participants from various countries. The Amman Center for Human Rights Studies in cooperation with Forum Asia, the International Women's Rights Watch-Asia Pacific, the International Services for Human Rights and The Foundation For the Future organized the workshop.⁴

Photo contest on CEDAW

The Asia Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, co-chaired by UNESCAP and UNIFEM, is holding a photo contest to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The photos should depict any of the following:

- Women participating in decision-making processes, such as women exercising their right to vote and the right to be elected, taking part in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction processes, holding leadership positions in the government, civil society, community, private sector
- Women participating in post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction initiatives
- Women and girls enjoying the same opportunities for education as men and boys
- Women enjoying the same employment opportunities and labor rights as men, and working in sectors that are

traditionally dominated by men

- Women having equal access to health care services
- Women and men participating equally in household duties, such as taking care of children or the elderly
- Rural women, indigenous women, HIV positive women, migrant women, refugee women and other often excluded groups of women enjoying these rights.

Seven photos will be chosen as winners and exhibited on 25 November 2009 at the opening of the exhibition "Women CAN: Women's Rights are Human Rights" to be held in Bangkok, and featured on the websites of the UN agencies involved in organizing the contest. Entries should be submitted on 15 October 2009 at the latest. For more information please visit: www.cedawphotocontest.org.

Endnotes

- 1 The APF has the national human rights institutions (NHRIs) of Jordan, Afghanistan, Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Palestine, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste as members.
- 2 14th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum, *Concluding Statement*.
- 3 Asia Pacific Forum website, <http://www.asiapacificforum.net/about/annual-meetings/14th-jordan-2009/?searchterm=Amman%20meeting>
- 4 Based on report in the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) website: www.achrs.org/english/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=165&Itemid=59

2009 Study Tour to Jeju, South Korea

Nobuki Fujimoto

HURIGHTS OSAKA organized, in cooperation with the Kobe Student Youth Center, a study tour to Jeju island in South Korea from 25 to 29 August 2009 to learn about its history of "migration."¹ Jeju island is southwest off the Korean peninsula.

Jeju island has close historical ties with Osaka where the biggest community of Korean residents in Japan is found. Koreans had been migrating to Osaka since the start of the Japanese colonial period in the early 20th century. Majority of them came from Jeju island partly because of the availability of regular shipping service between Jeju island and Osaka at that time. There are historical records that show that one-fourth of the Jeju population migrated to Japan, particularly to Osaka, to work in factories and other jobs during the colonial period.

The thirty-member study group consisted of NGO activists, academics, students, concerned citizens, and Korean residents in Osaka whose grandparents came to Japan during the Japanese colonial rule.

The group visited a women divers museum, the Jeju April 3 Peace Park,² the Jeju Peace Museum, the former Japanese military facilities (including the underground strongholds and airport), and the Jeju Immigrant Center, a non-governmental organization (NGO) affiliated with the Jeju Migrant Peace Community.

The Haenyeo Museum has many exhibits on the lives of Jeju women divers. *Haenyeo* is the Korean word for the women who gather marine products by diving

more than ten meters deep into the sea. The hard life of these women divers symbolized Jeju island. They migrated to other parts of Korea and to foreign countries (especially to Japan) diving for marine products and their income supported the island's economy. There are also records showing their involvement in the anti-Japanese movement in the 1930s.

At the Jeju Immigrant Center, the group met and talked with the Director, Mr. Kim Jeong Woo, and staff members of various nationalities. The Center provides migrants (both migrants married to Koreans and migrant workers) from China, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia, etc. with consultation service, Korean language and culture classes, and emergency shelter.

The group learned that the Jeju Immigrant Center fulfils its aim of making the foreign migrants live together with the Koreans by protecting and promoting their rights through exchange of information and views on the issue.

The Jeju island study tour was the third and final stage of the Korean study tour project of HURIGHTS OSAKA.³

Nobuki Fujimoto is a staff of HURIGHTS OSAKA.

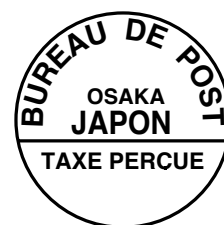
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Endnotes

- 1 Migration in the context of Jeju island refers to both voluntary and "forced" migrations. Voluntary migration covers both the colonial-era movement of people from Jeju Island to Japan to find work at their own initiative, and the more recent movement of people from other countries (particularly Southeast Asian countries and China) to work in Jeju island. Forced migration on the other hand refers to the compulsory deployment of Korean workers by the Japanese colonial government during the latter part of the second world war. This latter type of migration, however, remains a debatable point among Japanese historians.
- 2 A summary of the final report of the Korean National Committee for Investigation of the Truth about the Jeju April 3 Incident (available in www.jeju43.go.kr/english/sub05.html) states that the "Jeju April 3 Incident was a series of events in which thousands of islanders were killed as a result of clashes between armed civilian groups and government forces. It took place over the period from March 1, 1947, when the National Police opened fire on protesters, and April 3, 1948, when members of the Jeju branch of the South Korean Labor Party began an uprising to protest against oppression by the National Police and the Northwest Youth and against the South Korean government, until September 21, 1954 when closed areas of the Halla mountain were opened to the public." Then President Roh Tae-woo apologized to the Jeju people for the unfortunate incident.
- 3 For information on the previous study tours see "2008 Study Tour to South Korea" (www.hurights.or.jp/asia-pacific/053/04.html) and "Korea-Japan Symposiums on "International Marriage" and "Female Migrant Workers"" (www.hurights.or.jp/asia-pacific/050/08.html) in this publication.

HURIGHTS OSAKA Calendar

HURIGHTS OSAKA has published in early 2009 in New Delhi the *South Asian Teachers and Human Rights Education - A Training Resource Material*. This is a handy and user-friendly resource material that situates the understanding of human rights and human rights education in the context of South Asia, and utilizes the existing materials in this subregion to illustrate the practice of human rights education in the school system. Copies can be bought through the website of the Indian Social Institute-Delhi (www.isidelhi.org.in).



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HURIGHTS OSAKA, inspired by the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, formally opened in December 1994. It has the following goals: 1) to promote human rights in the Asia-Pacific region; 2) to convey Asia-Pacific perspectives on human rights to the international community; 3) to ensure inclusion of human rights principles in Japanese international cooperative activities; and 4) to raise human rights awareness among the people in Japan in meeting its growing internationalization. In order to achieve these goals, HURIGHTS OSAKA has activities such as Information Handling, Research and Study, Education and Training, Publications, and Consultancy Services.

FOCUS Asia-Pacific is designed to highlight significant issues and activities relating to human rights in the Asia-Pacific. Relevant information and articles can be sent to HURIGHTS OSAKA for inclusion in the next editions of the newsletter.

FOCUS Asia-Pacific is edited by Osamu Shiraishi, Director of HURIGHTS OSAKA.

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