The Symbols of Hyogo

Prefectural Flower: Nojigiku
The Chinese character “Hyogo” means one or white wave against a certain background, representing Hyogo Prefecture facing the equator in north and south mode.

Prefectural Flag: Niigiku
The Wild Chrysanthemum, or Niigiku in Japanese, which produces white flowers in November, was chosen as the Symbol of Hyogo Prefecture when NHK Japan Broadcasting Corporation held an event to name a symbolic flower for each prefecture.

Prefectural Tree: Kusu-no-ki
With a form full of vigor and vitality, the Camphor Tree, or Kusu-no-ki in Japanese, is a fitting representation of the image of Hyogo Prefecture. Some trees that are particularly big in size and have beautiful shapes are made natural monuments of Hyogo.

Prefectural Bird: Kounotori
The Oriental White Bird, or Kounotori in Japanese, was designated by the Japanese Government as a specially preserved animal in 1936. Captors hunting of this bird by releasing them back in the wild is currently being conducted in the Prefectural Forests and the Oriental White Bird in Okayama City.
Hyogo Prefecture, situated in the geographical center of Japan, is easily accessible to the world by sea and air. Within Japan, Hyogo Prefecture offers smooth and uninterrupted passage to various cities by extensive expressway, railway, and airline networks.

The Japanese archipelago, shaped like a bow, is located at the eastern end of the Eurasian Continent. Japan consists of four major islands and many smaller ones. Its land extends considerably both to the west and to the south, resulting in a diversity of climatic conditions around the country. The Kansai region, in which Hyogo Prefecture is located, has its own economic and cultural features that are distinct from those of the Tokyo metropolitan area.

Blessed with a central location, Hyogo Prefecture has developed quick and easy access to various places throughout Japan and around the world. Moreover, since the opening of the Port of Kobe in 1888, Hyogo has served as a gateway to Japan for the outside world. As access to the Prefecture developed, so did the exchange of cultures. Many aspects of Western culture, such as movies and golf, entered Japan through Hyogo and later spread throughout the country. At the same time, karaoke, anime, and other aspects of Japanese culture have spread from Hyogo to the world.

**Airport Access**
Kansai International Airport, or KIX, is Japan’s only 24-hour airport. Kobe, Hyogo’s capital, is one of the closest cities to the Airport. The Airport can be reached in approximately one hour from Kobe by express bus.

Kobe Airport, or UKB, is a domestic airport which has excellent access. It is just 16 minutes from downtown Kobe by Portliner train service and is connected with KIX via a bay shuttle ferry service.

**The Port of Kobe**
The Port of Kobe is a major international trade port. Efforts are being made to develop this port into the central hub of Asian sea traffic.

**Road Network**
Major expressways that traverse Japan from east to west and from north to south pass through Hyogo Prefecture. Excellent access is available from Hyogo to cities outside of the Prefecture. Construction of the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, the world’s longest suspension bridge, was completed in April of 1998, linking Hyogo Prefecture to the island of Shikoku.

**Railway Access**
One of the world’s fastest trains, the Shinkansen, or bullet train, runs from Kobe to destinations east and west, making the travel time from Kobe to Tokyo only about two and a half hours. In combination with those of Osaka and Kyoto, Hyogo’s extensive transportation system, including various railways such as JR, Haikyu, Hanshin, Sanjo, Kobe Deminsu, and the Kobe Municipal Subway, make up an integrated commuter system in the larger Kansai metropolitan area.

**Major networks in Japan**

**Air routes and time between KIX and the world**

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*Hyogo Prefecture - Gateway to the Asia-Pacific Region*

*Hyogo Prefecture, situated in the geographical center of Japan, is easily accessible to the world by sea and air. Within Japan, Hyogo Prefecture offers smooth and uninterrupted passage to various cities by extensive expressway, railway, and airline networks.*

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*Major networks in Japan*

*Air routes and time between KIX and the world*
Hyogo, Kansai, and the World

Hyogo Prefecture has developed into a highly internationalized region centered around the Port of Kobe, and now it serves as home to many international institutions. Hyogo forms the Kansai economic region together with Osaka and Kyoto.

A World Metropolis, Kansai

The area centered around Hyogo, Osaka, and Kyoto is called the Kansai region, and it was the center of Japan for over 1,000 years until the capital was moved to Tokyo in 1868. As a result, Kansai is rich with shrines, temples, and historic sites. About half of Japan’s designated national treasures and important cultural properties are located in the Kansai region. The area is also known for its diversified natural beauty, including forests, lakes, and the sea.

Unlike the Tokyo metropolitan area, Kansai is a decentralized region consisting of the three major cities of Osaka, Kobe, and Kyoto. The three cities respectively display features of a commercial city, an international city, and a historic city, forming a great economic sphere. Other large cities as well as smaller cities and towns all contribute to the area’s attractiveness and prosperity. With the global access of Kansai International Airport, the Kansai region is expected to become an international exchange base, mainly for the Asia-Pacific region.

Hyogo Within Kansai

According to ancient Japanese mythology, the Japanese archipelago came into existence with the formation of Awaji Island, which now belongs to Hyogo Prefecture. This legend shows Hyogo’s considerable contribution to the development of Japanese culture in ancient times. Hyogo has been left with a diversity of historical sites, including Himeji Castle, which was designated by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage site.

Historically, Hyogo has played a key role in developing transportation routes on land and by sea, and prospered from domestic and international exchange. Since the opening of the Port of Kobe in 1879, Hyogo has been a gateway to the world, serving as a center of international trade and a hub for international exchange.

In terms of modern day attributes, Hyogo Prefecture serves as an international base for research projects that cover a wide range of areas. Research facilities that have been established in Hyogo include the world’s largest synchrotron radiation facility (SPring-8), the International BMXCS Center for environmental management of enclosed coastal sea, and the WHO Kobe Center, which conducts human health studies. Based on the lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, research activities for disaster management and prevention are under way at the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution as well as the Asian Disaster Reduction Center. In addition, various other international research organisations are coming together in Hyogo Prefecture.
Hyogo Prefecture—A Japan in Miniature

Hyogo Prefecture extends from the Japan Sea in the north to the Seto Inland Sea in the south, and further down to the Pacific Ocean through Awaji Island. Hyogo has an overall area of 8,395 square kilometers, with a population of about 5.6 million as of January 2010.

Hyogo Prefecture contains a rich variety of communities ranging from large cities to rural villages as well as isolated islands, and also has several diversified climatic and natural features. Various leisure activities can be enjoyed here, including swimming, skiing, and bathing in numerous hot springs. As a result, Hyogo Prefecture has become known as a Japan in Miniature. The Prefecture consists of five highly distinctive districts: Settsu (Kobe and Hanshin), Harima, Tajima, Tamba, and Awaji, each of which has its own unique history, climate, and industries.

Climate
Due to the region’s vast land size, climates in Hyogo vary by region, and can be categorized into three different geographic zones - the southern area along the Seto Inland Sea, the northern area along the Japan Sea, and the mountainous area in the middle.

The climate in the south is moderate with little sun, while the cloudy and rainy north receives seasonal winds from Siberia in the winter and has a lot of snowfall.

Industries
Most of the Prefecture’s population - over 90% - reside in the urban areas of Kobe, Hanshin, and Harima. Industries such as steel, shipbuilding, and machinery are concentrated in these large urban areas. In contrast, agricultural, forestry, and fishing industries are active in the districts of Tajima, Tamba, and Awaji, against the backdrop of beautiful rivers, mountains, and sea.

Leisure Activities
As a result of Hyogo’s diversified climate and abundant natural features, swimming and other marine sports can be enjoyed in the summer in various places facing the Japan Sea and the Seto Inland Sea, while in the winter skiing can be enjoyed in the mountains of Tajima. Also, Arima hot springs, one of the oldest in Japan, as well as Kinosaki and Yamuna hot springs, are all popular tourist attractions in Hyogo Prefecture.

Festivals and Events
In various parts of the Prefecture, traditional culture has been passed down through the generations. Visitors can enjoy the traditional Awaji Nagoya Joruri puppet theater and the all-female Takarazuka Review. There are also a variety of exciting events, such as the Nada Fighting Festival and Toka Ebi as well as the Shintetsu Festival (Chinese New Year festival) in Tamba (Tamba).

Hyogo Prefecture extends from the Japan Sea in the north to the Seto Inland Sea in the south, and further down to the Pacific Ocean through Awaji Island. Hyogo has an overall area of 8,395 square kilometers, with a population of about 5.6 million as of January 2010.
Progress Toward Reconstruction From the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake occurred in January 1995. Since the occurrence of this tragic disaster, various efforts have been made towards “Creative Reconstruction” with the aim of achieving more than merely returning the region to the pre-earthquake state.

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, registering a seismic magnitude of 7.3, struck the southern part of Hyogo Prefecture at 5:46 on January 17, 1995. The vertical thrust earthquake was responsible for the loss of more than 6,000 lives, and severely damaged utility lines such as electricity, gas, and water supply, in addition to homes and urban infrastructure, including expressways, railroads, and harbors. The total damage amount was valued at approximately 10 trillion yen.

Damage Caused by the Earthquake in Hyogo Prefecture (as of December 22, 2005)

Dead: 6,402
Missing: 3
Injured: 40,092

Note: Total number of deaths due to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake: 6,402

Dead: 6,402
Missing: 3
Injured: 40,092

Amount and Breakdown of Damage (Estimated as of April 5, 1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Damage (in ¥ billions)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Railways</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expressways</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public works facilities (excluding expressways &amp; buildings)</td>
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<td>Harbor</td>
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<td>Reconstructed land</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilities for education</td>
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<td>Facilities for drinking water</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,926.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outline

Hyogo Prefecture is home to internationally renowned companies such as Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. and Kobe Steel, Ltd. Many major Japanese companies, including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd., Toshiba Corporation, Fujitsu Ltd., and Mitsubishi Electric Corporation, locate their research and manufacturing facilities in Hyogo. At the same time, Hyogo is home to global niche businesses for the 21st century. Sanyo Corporation commands about 30% of the world market for home appliances, a device designed to extract blood cells. Chempakoka Kashi Ltd. has a 50% share of UV absorbers. Japan Electronic Materials Corporation creates probe cards to test ICs and LCD devices, and holds a 20% share in the global market. Tenkioku Electric MFG Co., Ltd. has a 40% global share in the canned motor pumps market. Fujitsu Electric Co. Ltd. sells commercial fish finders and holds the top share in the world market. World Co., Ltd., an apparel maker, is leading Japan’s fashion industry.

Industries

Many foreign-affiliated companies as well as research and manufacturing facilities belonging to a number of major Japanese companies are located in Hyogo Prefecture. Recently, Hyogo is creating a name for itself as a venue of technological innovation and development in fields related to nanotechnology.
The Best Location For Foreign-Affiliated Companies in Japan

(1) Foreign-Affiliated Companies Located in Hyogo Prefecture

Aside from the Tokyo Metropolitan Area, Hyogo has been popular for foreign affiliated companies and currently more than eighty have established their Japanese headquarters here. The existence of a historically developed global personal network, an ideal living environment for foreigners, superior access to transportation and commodities distribution, and enhanced locational support services offered by the prefectural government are exceptional charms that make Hyogo an attractive business base.

Western global companies such as The Procter & Gamble Company, Nestle, and Eli Lilly and Company have established their Japanese bases in Hyogo. In addition, companies from China, which is leading the world economy with its outstanding growth, and other companies from Asian countries have begun to increase in number here.

Some of the main examples currently are insurance companies with large call center facilities including AIG, Inc. and Aetna Japan; large-scale commercial facilities such as IKEA Japan K.K. and Chelsea Japan Co., Ltd.; and the construction of plants and distribution facilities for one of the world’s largest industrial gas suppliers, Air Liquide.

Hyogo offers opinion exchange meetings and seminars based on its network with foreign affiliated companies within the prefecture.

These measures are designed to reinforce the prefectural policy for the promotion of international economic exchange and to maintain and improve business location environment.

(2) The Best Locational Support Services by Hyogo Prefecture

Locational Consultation at One-Stop Service Window

Hyogo Prefecture established the Hyogo-Kobe Investment Support Center (HKICS) with the cooperation of the City of Kobe and local economic organizations to offer comprehensive consultation service for companies investing in the prefecture. The HKICS provides very meticulous consultation services in response to each company’s needs, the main services include advice concerning administrative procedures for corporate registration and acquiring work visas, introduction of potential offices and industry infrastructure, presentation of local governments’ incentive measures for domestic and foreign companies that are considering investment in Hyogo. Furthermore, for companies that want specialized consultation regarding judicial affairs or tax services, the HKICS provides the opportunity for free consultation service by English speaking lawyers, CPA’s and judicial advisors.

The HKICS also has a business office in Tokyo and provides information about the investment environment in Hyogo to companies that are considering branching out into from the Tokyo metropolitan area.

HKICS Homepage: http://www.hyogo-kobe.jp/

(3) Growing Business Benefited from Advanced R&D Facilities in Hyogo

The country of Japan now bases its new growth strategy on green innovation and life innovation. Among various scientific technology, especially nanotechnology, is of utmost priority in the 21st century for supporting innovations in a wide array of industries, such as environment and energy, materials, IT and biotechnology. SPring-8, the world’s largest scale synchrotron radiation facility, is an appropriate facility for conducting nanotechnology research and is located in Harima Science Garden City in Hyogo.

SPring-8 is open to the public, and to both domestic researchers and their overseas counterparts. Researchers unencumbered across the globe are carrying out cutting-edge research activities. On top of three beamlines available for industry use, the establishment of beamlines for drug discovery and soft matter industries, as well as for innovative storage battery development, is underway.

The prefecture possesses two beamlines and encourages industries to utilize the facility, offering use to comprehensive industrial fields, such as environment and energy as described above. Hyogo Prefecture established the Synchrotron Radiation Nanotech Research Laboratory to provide extensive counseling, from giving advice on synchrotron radiation use and supporting their experiments, to offering training programs for corporate researchers and conducting joint research.

One of the promising areas for nanotechnology application is life science. The City of Kobe is promoting the Kobe Medical Industry Development Project in Port Island to advance health, wellness, and medical industries by establishing an operation base for high-level research and development centers, such as the Institute of Biomedical Research and Innovation (IBRI). The Project aims to attract related companies from within and outside Japan through the collaboration among industry, academia, and government. This same also has a translational research function to apply medical research to clinical practice, while supporting business and human resource development.

This Project has attracted many pharmaceutical companies and universities around Japan, such as Kyoto University, Osaka University, and Kobe University, and cutting-edge R&D activities are unfolding in many fields, including regenerative medicine.

Hyogo Prefecture welcomes foreign affiliated companies to the region with the best support for investing business and a great living environment for work.
Products

Ranging from natural bounties such as agricultural products cultivated in the region’s vast land area and seafood from the surrounding bodies of waters, to traditional crafts and delicious sake and confectionery, Hyogo’s local products make memorable souvenirs and are enjoyed by many visitors.

■ Agricultural Products

Various parts of the region have devised unique ways of cultivating agricultural products according to their local climates. The Tamba District produces black soybeans called kurotsuyu, which are widely used for meals and confectioneries. Uzumachi Soba noodles in the Tajima District, often called Saka Soba because they are served on locally made white porcelain china (Sunau” in Japanese), are popular among visitors, who often enjoy eating them together over the number of times they can eat. Cattle bred in the Tajima District are known as the origin of several top beef brands, such as the world-famous Kobe Beef, Sanda Beef, and Awaj Beef. The rich taste of this beef can be enjoyed in several different dishes such as steak, abura-ahara, and asa-yaki.

■ Fishery Products

Kobe is one of the very few prefectures in Japan that face two bodies of water: the Japan Sea and the Seto Inland Sea. Because of this excellent location, Kobe is blessed with abundant marine resources. The Matsuura Crab from the Japan Sea is called the king of winter delicacies. Its sweet and delicious taste, enjoyed raw, boiled, or boiled, always gives a sense of satisfaction. Octopus from the Seto Inland Sea is well known for its taste and chewy texture. Meanwhile, Akashi yaki, locally known as Teramachi yaki, is a ball-shaped bread made of flour, soup, and egg that contains chopped octopus, and is enjoyed by people throughout Japan. Akashi (longer shell) from the Seto Inland Sea is known for its soft meat and melting texture, while fresh and tough ai (sea bream) that comes from the strong current of the Akashi Straits and Naruto Straits is a delight for the eyes as well as the taste buds.

■ Traditional Crafts

The colorful climates of Hyogo have been the backdrop for a variety of traditional crafts that are unique to each locality. The Kamimizu District is home to various uchiwa crafts such as sasahan (Japanese abacus) made in Otsu City using high-quality timbers and bamboo, woodcut tools in Miki City often used as carpenter tools, and bunbun, folk music that resembles flute. The Tamba District is famous for the production of Tamba Hennie, one of Japan’s six oldest pottery, while the Tajima District produces the beautiful white-Izumiyama Hennie and Toyoka woven willow products. The traditional skills and professionalism of the craftsmen have been passed down for generations, and still remain in various parts of Hyogo.

■ Sake

There are many places famous for sake (Japanese rice wine) production in Hyogo. In particular, Nada Gogo (literally the “five quarters of Nada area”), located in the coastal area east of Kobe, is one of the biggest sake brewing communities in Japan. As many as forty breweries are located in an area extending 12 km from west to east. The perfect combination of abundant natural water flowing through Mt. Rokko, the brewery’s rice called Yamada-nishiki, harvested in the Himeji District, and the strong wind called Rokko Oroshi blowing from Mt. Rokko, and the seasoned techniques of sake brewers and the Tamba and Tajima Districts, help Nada Gogo establish their renowned brands. Moreover, the area’s excellent location facing the Seto Inland Sea has also contributed to the development of Nada Gogo by making the shipping of products easier. With Nada Gogo, in addition to many other sake breweries producing unique brands, Hyogo Prefecture is often called the “sake brewery of Japan.” These sake brands allow visitors to enjoy their stay drinking, talking, and laughing.

■ Confectioneries

Since the opening of the Port of Kobe in the mid-19th century, Hyogo has functioned as the gateway to Japan to the world. People from Western countries introduced their style of sweets through this port, and Western-style confectioneries have been growing to represent Hyogo’s confection business. There are many major confectionery factories as well as many cakes and sweets shops in and around Kobe City. On the other hand, traditional Japanese sweets made from local ingredients, conveying old-fashioned flavors, are still common in various parts of the region.

Kobe Beef
Tamba Black Soy Beans
Izumichi Soba Noodles
Sliced Sea Bream
Akashiyaki Dumpling
Grilled Conger Eel
Matsubara Crab
Sake Earthenware
Miki Wrought Tools
Abacus of Ono
Japanese Sake
Cakes and Sweets
Japanese Sweets
Abacause of Ono
Japanese Sake
Cakes and Sweets
Japanese Sweets
Tourism

Hyogo has a variety of tourist locations, including scenic sites created by abundant nature, hot springs loved by famous writers and artists, and historic and cultural heritage sites such as Himeji Castle.

- **Nature**
  - Hyogo Prefecture enjoys a multi-climatic environment, with its vast land area and sea setting. The Yatsushiro Sea, which extends from the Pacific Ocean, is the largest sea in Japan.
  - The Hachijo Highlands, located in the northern Tottori Prefecture, is the most popular ski resort in Japan, known for its abundant nature and superb skiing conditions.
  - The Yatsushiro Sea is a popular destination for divers and snorkelers, with a variety of marine life to explore.

- **Hot Springs**
  - There are many famous hot springs in Hyogo. Arcadia Hot Spring is one of the oldest hot springs in Japan, renowned for its natural hot water and beautiful natural surroundings.
  - The Onsen Yumura, located in the northern Hyogo Prefecture, is a popular destination for hot spring enthusiasts, known for its natural hot springs and beautiful scenery.

- **History / Culture**
  - In Hyogo Prefecture, there are many old and cultural sites that often played a role in Japanese history. Such tangible and intangible cultural properties and traditional celebrations are important attractions for tourists.
  - Himeji Castle, also known as the White Heron Castle, is a symbol of the Edo period and is one of the most famous castles in Japan. It is now preserved as a national treasure.

- **Metropolis / City / Town**
  - Metropolitan, city, and town areas of Hyogo pride themselves on their colorful characteristics that are unique to each locality.
  - In Kobe City, the northern area, visitors can experience the historical and cultural heritage sites, such as the Shinto shrine and the castle. The southern area, known for its commercial and industrial activities, offers a modern and dynamic atmosphere.

- **Shinkoro Drum Tower in Izushi**
  - This drum tower, located in the city of Izushi, is a traditional drum tower, which is a symbol of the Izushi Festival. It is a popular destination for drum enthusiasts and tourists.

- **Iris Garden of Yotakuji Temple**
  - The Yotakuji Temple, located in the city of Nishinomiya, is famous for its beautiful iris gardens. The garden is open during the iris blooming season, which is typically from May to June.

- **Arima Hot Springs**
  - Arima Hot Springs, located in the city of Arima, is one of the oldest and most famous hot spring areas in Japan. It is known for its natural hot springs and beautiful scenery.

- **Akihisa Shakujo in Yumura Hot Springs**
  - Akihisa Shakujo is a famous poet and novelist, known for his works on the nature and culture of Hyogo Prefecture. His works are widely read and appreciated by tourists and locals alike.

- **Koshien Stadium**
  - Koshien Stadium, located in the city of Nishinomiya, is a famous baseball stadium, known as the home of the Kansai University baseball team. It is a popular destination for baseball fans and tourists.
Projects Leading the Way in the 21st Century

With projects such as the Kobe New Eastern City Center, home to several international organizations, Hyogo Prefecture is currently engaged in several diverse international projects that will lead the way in the 21st Century.

Kobe New Eastern City Center (HAT Kobe)
A model city-based on the idea of a "rebuilding area" for the 21st century equipped with housing, commercial facilities, and disaster management functions. It is being constructed in the Kobe New Eastern City Center. Established in the City are the WHO Kobe Centre, which conducts research for health promotion; the inter national EMERGs Center, which deals with the environmental management of coastal seas and coastal regions of the world; and the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution, which engages in disaster management based on the experiences and lessons learned from the Earthquake. The International Recovery Platform and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center were also established to provide support for reconstruction from natural disasters. Through these and other international organizations such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the City serves as a global hub for international institutions.

In addition, the City is also home to the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, which serves as a symbol of cultural restoration, and the Hyogo Emergency Medical Center, which acts as a core emergency service center in the event of a disaster.

Harima Science Garden City
Located in a rich natural environment, Harima Science Garden City is a futuristic city designed to promote harmonious coexistence between people, nature, and science. The city is laid out in such a way that residential and recreational areas are surrounded by a combination of research facilities and advanced technology industries. In addition to various facilities such as SPRing 8, which is the world's largest third-generation synchrotron radiation facility, the Hyogo Prefectural Center for Advanced Science and Technology, the University of Hyogo, and institutions such as the Hyogo Ion Beam Medical Center, which conducts RDD of cutting-edge cancer treatment methods, are established here. The SPRing 8 facility is capable of producing extremely bright light by accelerating electrons to light speed. The system has proven particularly effective in analyzing substances and living organisms at molecular and molecular levels. Many expectations are placed on its application in a wide range of fields, including the development of new materials and medicine. Since its opening in 1997, the facility has made a number of noteworthy achievements.

Hyogo Media Garden City
This area is ideally located in a lush natural environment that is close to convenient transportation networks and a large city. By acting as a central base for the creation of new industries, Hyogo Media Garden City promotes the creation of jobs and the structural reform of current industries. Through these roles, the City serves as a leading model of preferential policies towards industry and information, based on the concept of "creation of an attractive media garden city where people, things, and information can interact.

Kobe Airport
Kobe Airport, which opened in February 2006, has a total area of 272 ha and a runway 2,500 m long. The airport was created on reclaimed land about 8 km off the shore of Port Island. As a regional airport for domestic flights, the airport is expected to provide additional convenience to the citizens of Kobe and the surrounding areas.

Awaaji Yumebutai
Awaaji Yumebutai is one of the ongoing projects aimed at the creation of a garden island open to the world, serving as a base for international exchange in the Osaka Bay Area. It is the core of Awaaji Island international Garden City, which is intended to be a city of communication, where people from all over the world can interact under the general theme of "communication between people, nature, and the world."

Awaaji Yumebutai was built on the site of a former gravel quarry where greenery was restored, and utilizes the surrounding dynamic slope environment to host several types of international exchange facilities such as a hotel, an international conference center, a greenhouse, an open air theater, and a park.

Next-Generation Supercomputer Facility
Riken is now developing the RIKEN next-generation supercomputer as part of the Key Technology of National Importance, with the aim of further raising the level of simulation science in technology, which is now solidifying its footing as a method of modern scientific technology in line with theory and experimentation.

When the facility is completed in 2012, the system can perform at the speed of ten petaflops per second (ten to the power of the sixteenth). It will be the world's most cutting-edge and highest performance facility. When its operational services begin, it is expected to lead development of the nation's scientific technology and industries by being available to comprehensive fields like life science, nanotechnology, earth environment, nuclear power, etc.
International Exchange and Cooperation

Hyogo Prefecture has internationalized and modernized itself with the opening of the Port of Kobe. The Prefecture is making efforts to create cities where people from across the globe can live in comfort, and is addressing various challenges that are common to all of humanity in collaboration with various countries around the world.

Centered around the Port of Kobe, which was opened to the rest of the world in 1868, Hyogo Prefecture has developed into a cosmopolitan region leading the modernization and internationalization of Japan. Since the opening of the port, the Prefecture has become a more and more comfortable place to live for non-Japanese residents, offering such conveniences as many training programs designed to international standards, international schools that provide first-class education, hospitals and consulting institutions that offer multilingual services, and a number of churches. At present, more than 100,000 overseas residents from about 141 countries reside in Hyogo.

The 21st century is a time of great exchange. And as this new century was dawning, the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake robbed us of many precious lives. During the reconstruction process from the disaster, great support was received from all over Japan and abroad, making us realize how important it is for us to live together with other people in the world and help each other.

Some of the problems local governments face today require collective efforts by many regions regardless of the boundaries of districts and nations. Therefore, Hyogo Prefecture is promoting multilateral cooperative frameworks in addition to the traditional bilateral exchange among our overseas sister states and affiliated regions.

Meanwhile, the newly developed Kobe New Eastern City Center has become home to a collection of international institutions that address a wide range of global issues, such as disaster management, environment, health and welfare, and human resource affairs. In addition to the accumulation of international research institutions and collaboration with local governments abroad, the Prefecture encourages the participation and cooperation of non-governmental organizations and companies that engage in activities for international exchange and cooperation. Through such measures, Hyogo Prefecture hopes to contribute to the peace and stability of the world in the 21st century by advancing efforts to solve common issues for all humanity.
Hyogo Prefecture is making a variety of efforts to create a “Beautiful Hyogo” where people can live their lives in caring communities that are rich in natural and cultural beauty.

The Constitution of Japan sets forth a system of local autonomous governance based on the concept that in a democracy it is important for local residents to have a strong voice in the management of local administration. This system of self-governance is founded on a dual structure of local authorities, which consists of municipalities and prefectural governments. Both of these public bodies maintain respective executive branches and assemblies and have the authority to establish regulations, manage property, and execute regional administrative work. The members of the assemblies and the heads of the executive branches are selected through direct election by residents in the regions where the local public bodies are located, and their term of office is four years each.

Municipal public bodies, of which there are approximately 1,700 in the entire nation, provide administrative services closely related to the daily living of residents. The 47 prefectural public bodies in Japan contain numerous municipalities and serve wide areas. These bodies are responsible for formulating regional projects in each prefecture, improving the health and welfare of prefectural citizens including hygiene, executing administrative work entrusted by the national government, and coordinating the work done by the municipalities. Hyogo Prefecture employs approximately 60,000 civil servants, including police officers and teachers, who are engaged in public work. The organization for handling the administration of the Prefecture consists of a prefectural assembly (a legislative body), the Governor and his secretary (executive body), and administrative commissions, such as the Prefectural Board of Education.

Urban Planning for Comfortable Living
Under the concept of creating a living environment complete with strong community ties and rich natural surroundings, the Prefecture offers guidance on regional planning, coordinates planning that involves multiple municipalities, and makes decisions for large-scale urban planning. The Prefecture is also responsible for the establishment and management of prefecture-run housing. In order to respond to the increasing importance placed on sports and leisure activities, the Prefecture is involved in the management, maintenance, and establishment of prefectural parks.

Infrastructure for Transportation and Daily Living
Hyogo Prefecture is constantly working to maintain and improve its wide-ranging transportation network, including roadways that connect many municipalities, airports, and seaports in the Prefecture. In order to prevent disasters and protect the lives and property of its citizens, the Prefecture is advancing projects to create thoroughly disaster-resistant cities, including river conservation works and dam construction.

Promotion of Welfare
By establishing the “Oriental White Storks: Tajima Airport” in 1992, the first of its kind among local governments in Japan, Hyogo Prefecture is promoting a welfare-oriented society in which companion animals can live in harmony with the people. Construction of barrier-free public facilities and cooperative housing quarters is an example embodying the concept behind the ordinance. In order to realize an affluent and lively senior society and develop communities in which the elderly, people with disabilities, and other citizens can live in comfort and security, the Prefecture is advancing projects such as the construction of nursing homes for the elderly and the establishment of a system of home visits by nursing services.

Health and Medical Services
In order to provide high-quality health and medical services, the Prefecture subsidizes the modernization of hospitals and promotes the construction of prefectural medical institutions throughout its jurisdiction to ensure regional bases of medical services. In addition, Hyogo operates the “Wide-Area Disaster and Emergency Medical Information System,” providing a medical hotline throughout the Prefecture to reinforce emergency medical care on holidays and at night. The Prefecture also holds various health classes to raise health awareness among the public.

Environmental Protection
The Prefecture review industrial activities and life styles of the citizens in order to promote the creation of an environment-friendly society in which people live in harmony with nature. Its activities for raising environmental consciousness among citizens include support for recycling campaigns, efforts to stop unnecessary driving of automobiles, and promotion of low-emission cars. In order to conserve the environment on a global scale, the Prefecture has established the International EMICS Center, an international organization for advancing the environmental management of enclosed coastal seas and coastal regions of the world, and has supported its activities. Another project for the environment put forward by the Prefecture is the protection and breeding of oriental white storks, an endangered and specially protected species, in an effort to return them to life in the wild.

Promotion of Arts and Culture
In order to expand the base of artistic and cultural activities available to its citizens, Hyogo Prefecture promotes arts and culture by granting subsidies for organizations related with arts and culture, and actively supporting performances by the Piccolo Theater Company. The Hyogo Performing Arts Center serves as a base to showcase world-class artistic performances, promote international exchange between performing arts groups, and foster cultural activities of prefectural residents.
History

Hyogo Prefecture was established in 1868 when the Port of Kobe was opened to the world. At that time, the Hyogo area consisted of four prefectures: Hyogo, Shikama, Toyooka, and Myodo, which were brought together into the single prefecture of Hyogo in 1876. Since then, Hyogo has contributed to the modernization of Japan as an important contact point with overseas countries.

1868

Hyogo Prefecture was established.

The Port of Kobe was opened to the rest of the world.

1874

Railway service started between Osaka and Kobe.

Shikama, Toyooka, and Myodo Prefectures joined Hyogo Prefecture.

1878

The first Hyogo Prefectural Assembly was opened.

1882

The Hyogo Prefectural Assembly Hall was completed.

1889

The municipal system was introduced.

(Hyogo Prefecture contained 2 cities, 26 towns, and 402 villages; there are presently 22 cities and 66 towns.)

1902

The Hyogo Prefectural office building, the current Hyogo House, was completed.

1947

The first gubernatorial election was carried out.

1966

The new prefectural office building was completed.

1970

The new Prefectural Assembly Hall and the second prefectural office building were completed.

1972

The Sanyo Shinkansen line was opened between Shin- Osaka and Okayama.

1975

The prefectural population exceeded 5 million.

1981

The Hyogo section of the Chugoku Expressway was opened.

1984

The Kobe Port Island Exhibition “Portopia ’81” was held.

1985

Ohnaruto Bridge was completed.

Kumumi (the Creation Myth) Festival was held.

1986

The Maizuru Expressway was opened.

The Hokusetsu-Tamba Festival “Holopina ’88” was held.

1989

The Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled (FESPIC Games) were held in Kobe.

1990

The third prefectural office building was completed.

1994

The Tajima Airport was opened.

The Tajima Festival was held.

1996

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake occurred.

1997

SPping-8, a large-scale synchrotron radiation facility, began operations.

2000

The entire portion of the Sanyo Expressway was opened.

2003

The Akashi Kaikyo Bridge was opened.

2006

The 61st National Sports Festival (Nijoju Games) was held.

2007

Opening of the Hyogo Museum of Archeology.

2008

The 25th National Confectionary Exposition in Hyogo (Himeji Confectionary Expo 2008)

2009

Conducted the nationwide tourism campaign entitled “Hyogo: Make it Your Destination.”

- Promotion of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries
- Promotion of Education
- Promotion of Industries

Promotion of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

In order to help develop farmers who will shoulder the future of the agricultural industry in the region, Hyogo Prefecture offers subsidies and loans for the installation of modern farming facilities and the introduction of new farming machinery. The Prefecture also promotes camp school programs for students to learn through nature and outdoor activities. In addition to the founding and operation of the prefectural university and high schools, the Prefecture stations school personnel at public elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. The Prefecture also supports and grants approval to private schools, including international schools and vocational schools.

Promotion of Education

Hyogo Prefecture establishes and manages educational facilities, including schools, libraries, and museums. The Prefecture also promotes camp school programs for students to learn through nature and outdoor activities. In addition to the founding and operation of the prefectural university and high schools, the Prefecture stations school personnel at public elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. The Prefecture also supports and grants approval to private schools, including international schools and vocational schools.

Promotion of Industries

The Prefecture grants a variety of low-interest loans to small and medium-sized businesses for financing and modernizing their facilities. To promote regional industries, support is also offered for the group transfer of facilities to industrial zones, development of new products, and holding of trade fairs. Regional businesses are also given assistance, through support for the maintenance and construction of shopping arcades and store buildings. Moreover, the Prefecture subsidizes and invests in venture businesses and fosters new entrepreneurs to encourage the creation and development of next-generation industries. In addition to enhancing trade and business attraction, the Prefecture has also been promoting tourist attractions, and tourism campaigns are underway to attract more domestic and foreign visitors.