

APEC Junior Forum

Prior to the APEC Energy Ministers' Meeting, "APEC Junior Forum" was organized by Fukui Prefecture for middle-school students, as a part of its unique education program on international relations and energy. The fora were held in 10 middle schools throughout the prefecture, where students studied about APEC as well as general information and energy issues of the countries/regions they were assigned to host. These students also had opportunities to communicate with students from APEC member economies, who are currently studying in Fukui.

On March 18th, approximately 420 students from the participating schools assembled in Tsuruga City, where each school presented their accomplishments from the preliminary study sessions and simultaneously exchanged opinions.

Today, representative students will present their proposals that were summarized in Tsuruga to the Energy Ministers' Meeting.



▲ Representatives from each school announcing their proposals

Kagami-biraki

The "Kagami-biraki," a sake-barrel-opening ceremony, is a popular custom that has taken place in Japan for centuries. This ceremony is performed at the New Year to celebrate the commencement of the new business year. The "Kagami" (= a mirror) denotes "harmony" and "biraki" (=to open) carries the connotation of "unlimited expansion," thus the phrase carries a deeper meaning of "unlimited expansion of harmonious relations."

Traditionally, at sake breweries the cover of the sake barrel was called a "mirror." From days of old, Japanese sake has been offered as wine to the gods in various Shinto religious ceremonies. After praying, it was a tradition for participants to drink sake together, wishing for their prayers to be fulfilled.

Tonight, "Kagami-biraki" will be conducted to wish for the success of the APEC Japan 2010 Energy Ministers' Meeting.

The "Kagami" will be open to the shouts of, "yoi-sho, yoi-sho, yoi-sho!" Please join in the chorus as we crack open the sake barrels.



▲ Scene from the Welcome Reception at the APEC Japan Senior Officials' Meeting held in Hiroshima City on February 21, 2010

Katsuyama "Sagicho" Bayashi

"Sagicho" is a fire festival with a history of more than 400 years that takes place on the Lunar New Year in Katsuyama City, Fukui. This is a buoyant and poignant traditional performing art, through which the culture of their ancestors has been properly preserved. To ensure that the dance's traditional movements are revered, ostentatious or immodest performances are prohibited.

Adults wearing red traditional long inner robes, together with children, dance to music with a rhythmical beat performed by Shamisen (3 stringed instrument), Japanese flute and a unique Japanese gong called Sho. Please enjoy this fascinating performance, one you could never see in other parts of the country.



APEC Japan 2010 Energy Ministers' Meeting in Fukui

Welcome Reception "FUKUI NIGHT"

Friday, June 18, 2010

Convention Hall, B1 Floor of Fukui Chamber of
Commerce and Industry Building, Fukui

Hosted by

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

&

APEC Japan 2010 Energy Ministers' Meeting
Fukui Organizing Committee