

# 旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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## Hokkaido News Top 5



April 2020  
Compiled by AIC

### Experts Deem State of Emergency Declaration as Successful in Hindering Outbreak 3/19

A panel of experts advising the government on the coronavirus outbreak has put forth their analysis of the current situation, and concluded that the state of emergency declaration had a successful impact on preventing an explosive spread of coronavirus infections. However, the panel also stated that the spread of the virus will not be resolved soon, and that it will continue to persist as a serious concern into the near future.

### Olympic Athletes to be Cheered On by Summer Cherry Blossoms 3/22

Branches were gathered from cherry blossoms at the Hokkaido Shrine in order to cheer on Olympic athletes competing in the marathon and race walking events held in Sapporo this summer. The branches will be stored in a freezer to delay the blooming date of the blossoms until the arrival of the Summer Olympics, where they will be waved back and forth to cheer on athletes.

### Migratory Birds Flock to Lake Utonai 3/22

As the warm weather comes in, migratory birds, including the greater white-fronted goose, rest their wings on Lake Utonai in Tomakomai as they make their way towards Siberia. Migratory birds began appearing this year in mid-February, with large flocks of 75,000 greater white-fronted geese having been spotted. Even recently, several thousand birds can still be seen as they leave early to look for food in nearby rice patties and pastures.

### Local Restaurant Treats High School Graduates in Kutchan Town 3/24

A traditional Japanese style restaurant in Kutchan Town made extraordinary efforts to help brighten the lives of local high school students. Graduation ceremonies took a toll due to the coronavirus: all students were required to wear masks, school anthems remain unsung, and guardians were prohibited from attending. To help create a fond memory for the students, a restaurant invited students from Kutchan Town and the Niseko school district to enjoy a full course Japanese traditional style meal (worth ¥10,000 each) for no cost. The funds to provide these celebratory meals were raised through crowdfunding.

### Increased Average Temperatures Expected for Upcoming Months 3/25

Northern Japan will be experiencing warm temperatures this spring according to the Japanese Meteorological Agency. From April to June, average temperatures for Hokkaido all the way down to the Tokai region are predicted to increase compared to those of previous years. The amount of rainfall is predicted to be similar to the yearly average.



### Inside This Issue...

#### For further information

#### or to register for events contact:

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※ Due to the recent outbreak of COVID-19, events and movies will not be listed in this month's issue.

# Information on COVID-19

## Asahikawa Local News — Local Doctor Contracts COVID-19

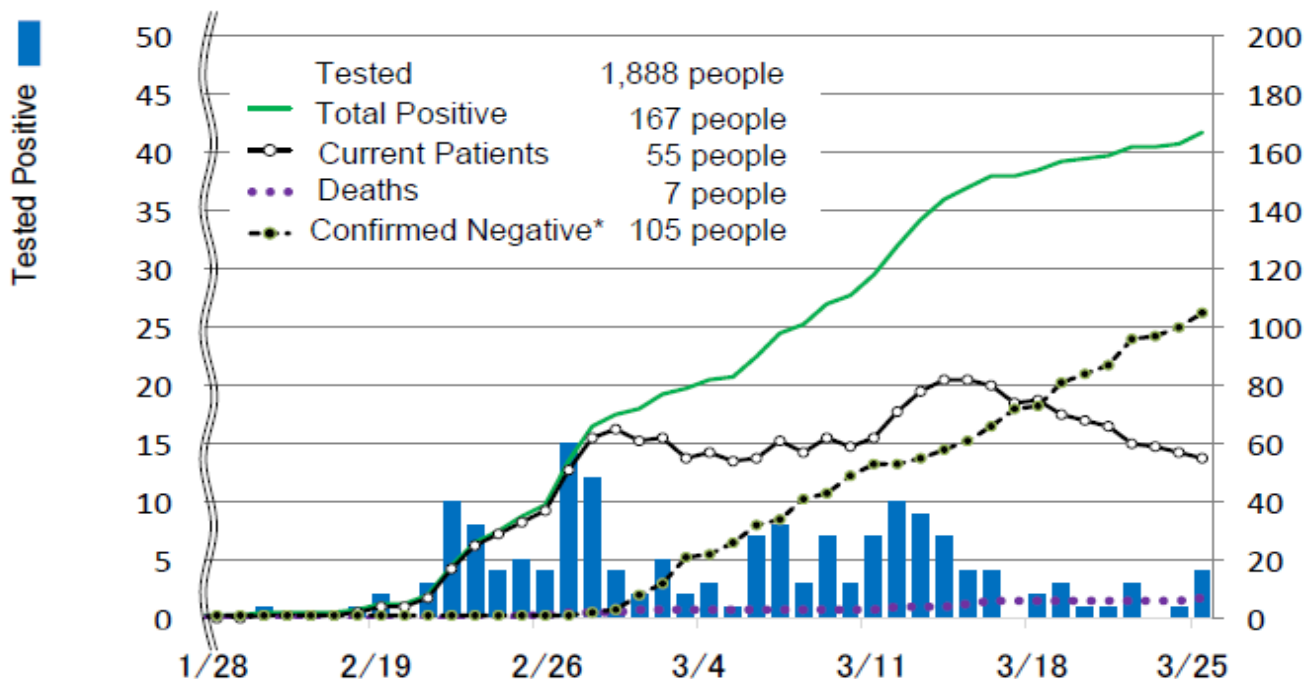
On the 18th of March, a doctor in his 50's employed at the Karasawa Hospital in Asahikawa (4-jo 9-chome) tested positive for COVID-19. On the 26th of February, he had displayed symptoms including fatigue and a sore throat. On March 4th, he saw a doctor at the Karasawa Hospital, where he thereafter stayed home from work to recuperate. However, his symptoms did not improve, so he had himself examined at a local healthcare center where it was determined that he had contracted the novel coronavirus. He is currently hospitalized in a city hospital, and is expected to recover.

The city is now conducting an inquiry to determine whether or not patients the doctor had treated are experiencing signs or symptoms of poor physical health, as the doctor had continued to work for six days after displaying symptoms.

## Resources to Keep Yourself Updated on the Latest COVID-19 Developments

- **Hokkaido Prefecture:** [pref.hokkaido.lg.jp](http://pref.hokkaido.lg.jp) (A banner on the homepage will direct you to information in Japanese, with English translations provided by the Hokkaido Foreign Resident Support Center)
- **Hokkaido Foreign Resident Support Center:** [www2.hiecc.or.jp/soudan/en](http://www2.hiecc.or.jp/soudan/en) (Shortcut to emergency information regarding COVID-19)
- **Asahikawa City:** [city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp](http://city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp) (Japanese only. You can find detailed information on the number of people who contracted COVID-19 and how it has spread between those people and others, along with information on measures to prevent spread)
- **Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare:** [www.mhlw.go.jp/english/](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/) (National statistics, government measures, and information on measures to prevent spread)

## Current Information on COVID-19 Related Patients in Hokkaido (As of March 25, 2020)



\*\*Confirmed negative\* refers to formerly positive-testing patients who, after recovering their health, have received negative PCR test results twice, and been discharged from the hospital. The first PCR test is administered 48 hours after the patient has shown recovered health, and if the results are negative, then a second PCR test is administered 12 hours after the first.



# Hello Asahikawa!

**Name: Lan Park**  
**Home Country: South Korea**  
**Interviewed: 3/6/2020**

If you live in Asahikawa or are just passing through and would like to be interviewed for "Hello Asahikawa," email us at [cir\\_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp](mailto:cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp)!

**AIC:** Hello Lan! Where are you from?  
**Lan:** I'm from the city of Suwon in South Korea.

**AIC:** What brings you to Japan?  
**Lan:** Suwon and Asahikawa are sister cities, and they have a work exchange program where they each send an employee to each other's cities to work for a year. I'm a participant in this program.

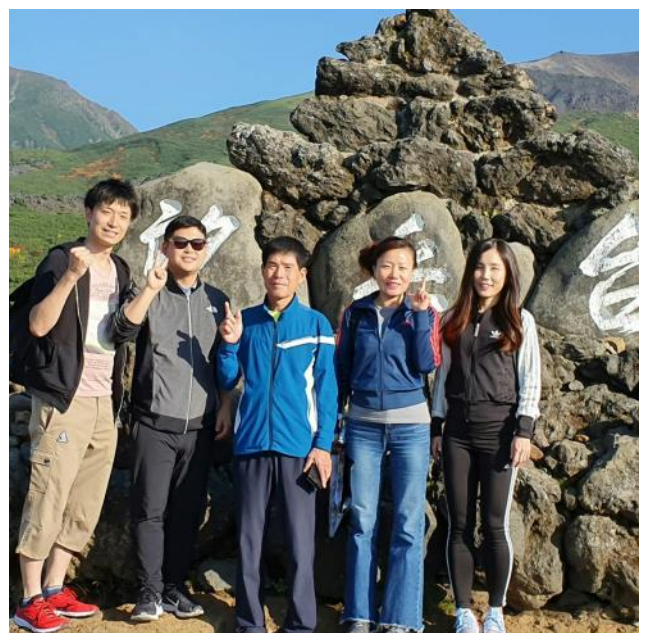
**AIC:** How does living in Japan compare to your life back in Korea?  
**Lan:** Living in a foreign country all by yourself can be difficult, but for me it has been a good chance to learn about Japanese culture and the many aspects of Japanese society. I want to try my hardest to learn Japanese while I'm here.

**AIC:** Are there any big differences between Asahikawa and Suwon?  
**Lan:** The biggest difference between Asahikawa and Suwon is that in Suwon, wherever you go there are always crowds of people. Asahikawa is large in terms of area, but small in terms of people. The fact that you are surrounded by nature despite being in the city is one of the wonderful things about Asahikawa.

**AIC:** What do you like about Japan?  
**Lan:** The natural surroundings of Hokkaido are incredible, and I am a little jealous. I am also impressed by the kindness of the Japanese people.

**AIC:** Do you like Japanese food?  
**Lan:** I like almost all Japanese food, but I have never really liked fish. I like anything except food with fish in it. I also love tempura.

**AIC:** Me too! What are your hobbies?  
**Lan:** In Korea I do physical activities like hiking up mountains and playing table tennis, but I don't have much of a chance to do that here. I also enjoy watching films, so I go to the movie theater here often.





**AIC:** What languages do you speak?  
How is your Japanese?  
**Lan:** I speak Korean. My progress with Japanese has been difficult. It was pretty easy to learn when I first started, but the more you study it the harder and more complicated it gets.

**AIC:** Do you miss anything about Korea?  
**Lan:** I miss my family the most. Living apart from them is one of the most difficult things about living in a foreign country.

**AIC:** Last but not least, do you like Karaoke?  
**Lan:** I love karaoke. In Korea, I usually sing for three to four hours at a time.

**AIC:** That's all I have for this interview. Thank you so much for participating!  
**Lan:** You're welcome!



## FUN FRIDAYS

Interesting activities, such as quizzes, discussions, songs, games, handcrafts and many more, all in English! Come meet new people, relax, and relate on Fun Fridays!

**Dates:** Cancelled until further notice

**Times:** 1:00pm-2:00pm ~Afternoon~ 2nd and 4th Friday of the month  
6:30pm-8:30pm ~Night~ 2nd Friday of the month

**Location:** Asahikawa International Center, Common Meeting Room (1)  
(Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome)

**Charge:** ¥1,500 for 3 months (Free for volunteer leaders)

The AIC offers many services to make your life in Asahikawa more enjoyable. Here are just a few:

**Volunteer Guide:** Volunteers are registered to help translate and interpret.

**Event Volunteer:** The AIC plans many exciting events throughout the year, such as Friendship Parties.  
Why not become a volunteer and help plan these events?

**Homestay:** Families are registered to welcome you into their homes for an overnight stay or just for an afternoon visit.

**For further information or to register, please contact AIC.**



The Asahikawa International Center (Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome) has free wifi available for public use free of charge. Registration for a user card is needed, if you are residing in Asahikawa. Please feel free to come by anytime, as well as check out some of the other services and activities available at the Asahikawa International Center .

## Spread the Word...

Contribute to the AIC newsletter and share any interesting information you may have with other readers. You may write on any topic including, items to buy or sell, offers for culture/language exchanges, or write an essay about your life in Asahikawa or your hometown. The article should not be profit related! Please send your submissions to us at the AIC.



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**\*\*The opinions expressed in the essays are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Asahikawa International Committee or the City of Asahikawa.\*\***