

Editorial of the Chugoku News Paper, which is the leading news paper corporation in Hiroshima with a circulation of approximately 7200,000 morning papers and 76,000 evening papers, on 4 August 2005

(*tentative translation by Yasuo HASHIMOTO)

Title:

Relationship with Asian countries –responsibility to improve relationship is getting more

Outline of the editorial:

It has passed ten years since when Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama publicized the comment which expressed regret and apology that Japan did great damage and pains to the Asian countries. Has the reliability on Japan by the Asian countries increased during this period? It seems the opposite way. Hiroshima has two faces of the ex-military base city and the atom-bombed city. It means that Hiroshima has the responsibility to ring an alarm bell to the Japan's national government to stress the importance of the real reconciliation between Asian countries and Hiroshima. It's also important to promote mutual reliance through daily activities with Asian people.

(Text partly omitted)

The mutual understanding with China and Korea is important, however the one with Singapore is also important. Many Japanese companies have invested in and many tourists have been visiting in Singapore. Singapore is also the place where Japan occupied and massacred many Chinese people. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong criticized the Prime Minister Koizumi's comment on Yasukuni and request it's suspension. This was reported as a rare gesture.

Mr. Yasuo Hashimoto was the first Director of the Hiroshima Representative Office in Singapore for three years just before the Prime Minister Murayama's comment. After he returned to Japan, he has played the role of connection by supporting Singapore students to experience Japan with the Hiroshima Singapore Association (HSA). The amount of number of students who have visited Hiroshima is more than six hundred for last 14 years. He mentioned the fact that Singapore students bear their traveling expense by themselves is important.

Mr. Hashimoto sometimes recalls the comments by some of intimate Singaporean friends, which are "Japanese don't know the history and are forgettable", "Japanese companies follow the Singapore salary standard, however refuse to follow the paid holiday scheme in Singapore" and so on.

Mr. Hashimoto felt that they mentioned immaturity and selfishness of Japanese. Of course he knows that many Singaporeans like Japan. However he knows that anxiety to the rationality of the Japan's decision making system has not been vanished.

Hiroshima, which was suffered by disaster, feels we have to unify the people's feeling over the countries. We have to deepen conversation through promoting exchange opportunities with Asian people not only when the day of 6 Aug. Atomic-bombed day.