

Popoki



Newsletter

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http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/index_e.html

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August! The hot summer in Kobe where Popoki lives is almost over. To maintain his strength and immunity, Popoki tries to eat well and keep hydrated. For that, you can't beat watermelon! Please help yourself! It's nice and cold!



Popoki's Hot News!



Coming up!

"Thinking about Peace and Health with Popoki"

Online Workshop 10/24 14:00~

Piece of Peace

One of Popoki's friends, **Eunice-nyan**, with help from her father, sent the following piece of peace. *"Peace is enjoying every sense of humor with people smiling all around her, full of hope and aspiration."*



What sort of 'peace' did you encounter today?

Please let us know by sending a message to Popoki's e-mail:

[ronniandpopoki \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:ronniandpopoki@gmail.com) !



10th Conversation about Nuclear Issues

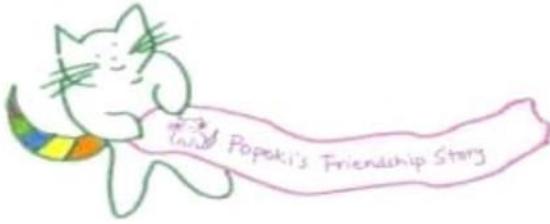
Ronyan

On the morning of 6 August (Japan time), we held our 10th annual “Conversation about nuclear issues”. This year, too, we had participants from the US, Guåhan/Guam and Kobe. The thirty participants were composed of members of Remembering Hiroshima, Imagining Peace (Pittsburgh, PA), Tiara Na’Puti (University of Colorado) and Monaeka Flores (Prutehi Litekyan/Save Ritidian) from Guåhan/Guam, Popoki’s friends and Kobe University graduate students (from Austria, China, Guinea, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Taiwan, US). In the past, the members of RHIP watched a film related to nuclear issues and then stayed in the theater for the conversation, but this year everyone joined on Zoom, which made it much easier to talk with one another. This year the film, “The beginning of the end of nuclear weapons”, was about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and most of us watched it beforehand. We began our conversation by introducing ourselves and giving our country’s position on the Treaty. Thanks to that, we all felt closer not only to the question of nuclear weapons, but also to the rest of the world. When I asked if people were afraid of a nuclear war occurring, almost everyone said they were worried and thought it might happen within five years. After that, we discussed nuclear issues such as possibilities for security that does not depend on nuclear weapons, the nuclear threat, the situation in Guam, (a US colony) and called the “tip of US the spear”. Of course, we talked about the pandemic and security, too. As we were discussing what we can do, we realized that our time was already up. Being able to learn about situations we do not generally hear about from people who are from those places was very interesting and stimulating. Thank you all so much!

Looking forward to seeing everyone again next year!

(Photo: Rakunyan)





Popoki's Interview

* We have started a new series of interviews with Popoki's friends in different places. We are asking about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. This time we have a report from Emmanuel Haruna nyan.

An Interview with Mr. Kobby Azu on COVID-19 Experience in Japan



Tell me about yourself, please?

My name is Kobby Azu and I'm from Ghana. I am working with the Central Bank of Ghana. I came to Japan under the Japan Development Scholarship (JDS) to study Master's in Development Policy at Kobe University.

How long have you been in Japan?

I've been in Japan since August 2018. So next month, I'm going to complete two years in Japan.

Tell me briefly about your COVID-19 experience in Japan?

Since my arrival in Japan, my experience has been interesting. At the beginning of February this year, I left Japan to attend an international conference in the United States. Luckily for me, I returned to Japan in March, before the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic. A couple of weeks after I returned from the U.S, I felt sick, and I was scared I had contacted the virus. So, I went to the hospital for a test, but the doctor told me that there was nothing in my x-ray to show that I had the novel coronavirus. So, the doctor gave me some Chinese oriental medicine, and I got fine again. I knew well that I didn't have the COVID-19 virus, but I had the experience of being tired, which made me afraid.

What are the prevention measures taken by the Government of Japan?

Interestingly, I think the Government of Japan has been trying to manage the pandemic quite well although the international community was skeptical since there has been no severe lockdown like in other countries. One of the challenges is that it is hard to know who has the symptoms, as some people are asymptomatic. As an international student, it was difficult for me to know whether the government had a designated healthcare center for COVID-19. There is information that encourages people to wear a face mask, to wash their hands or to use a hand sanitizer frequently. If a person has any of the symptoms, you should call the hospital or arrange to see your doctor. However, some foreigners in Japan complained that they were unable to get a test despite showing some symptoms of COVID-19. There was therefore a challenge for the visitor to the hospital to have a test. Secondly, during the 'rush hour', the trains are so crowded with people, and that is another area of concern. This defied the rule of social distance or physical distances. To reduce contact with the virus, the Government of Japan is deploying 3Cs; closed spaces, crowded places, and close-contact settings. To the best of my knowledge, the Japanese people have complied with the government's instructions.

What advice do you give to international students living in Japan?

For international students studying in Japan, please take good care of yourself and do not expose yourself to situations where you may contact with the virus. Always wear a face mask, wash your hands regularly, and keep a distance from people. If there is a sign of a fever or tiredness, pick up your health insurance card to either call the hospital or visit your doctor for a test.

What is your final word?

Stay safe and keep yourself healthy while you're doing your normal business.



**Note from Popoki: Some hospitals will not let you in with COVID-19 – like symptoms so it is best to contact them before you go

POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 148 This month's theme is moving big and small!



1. First, as always, sit up straight and look beautiful.
2. Now, stand, stretching your arms up and standing on your tiptoes! Hold while you count to ten and release. Repeat 3 ~ 5 times.
3. Next, extend your arms and stretch way up, and then swing your upper body down. Repeat 5 times.
4. Now, stand and cross your legs. Slowly roll down until your hands touch the floor. Can't reach it? No problem, go as far down as you can. Repeat 3 times and then cross your legs the other way.
5. Did it? Even if you didn't succeed, you tried! It is time for the 'success pose.' Congratulations! Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.

Please join us!



Next Po-kai: 2020.9.14 @ zoom! 18:30~*

* It is always the same link but please contact Popoki if you need it.

9.16~ Popoki's Mask Gallery @ International Conference of Museums for Peace,
<https://sites.google.com/view/inmp-museums-for-peace/conferences/2020-conference>

10.24 "Thinking about Peace and Health with Popoki" Online workshop. 14:00~. Facilitated by Satonyan (Hyogo University of Health Sciences). Contact us for the link.

Book Suggestion from Popoki's Friends

Otsuchi-cho (July, 2019). *"Ikiru Akashi - Iwateken Otsuchi-cho Higashi nihon daishinsai kirokushi"* (Testimony of Living: A Record of the Great East Japan Earthquake in Otsuchi-cho, Iwate Prefecture). Editorial Supervision: Otsuchi-cho Board of Education, others.

Popoki in Print

* Back issues of Popoki News: http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html

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- “If we all participate, something will change! Reflecting on Palestine” *THE YMCA* No.607 June 2010, p.1 (YMCA Japan Monthly Newspaper)
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- FM COCOLO 76.5 ‘Heart Lines’ 2010.1.9 Japanese Interview: Ronni on Popoki in Palestine
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- ‘Nada’ notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event, 2009.12, p.2
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- ‘New Books: Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki’s Peace Book 2’ (Rebecca Jennison) “Cutting-Edge,” Vol.35 2009.6, p.3
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- ‘Tomodachi ni Natte Kuremasenkai,’ *RST/ALN*, 2009.2.22
- Popoki on the radio. <http://www.kizzna.fm/> Click on 6CH to hear the program and reading of Popoki in Japanese (No longer available)
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- Popoki in Pittsburgh. Check out the Remembering Hiroshima/Imagining Peace URL: <http://www.rememberinghiroshima.org/>





What Popoki Means to Me

Bashir-nyan

For me, Popoki is a peace activist. He engages in issues that are related to peace and human development such as issues regarding health, disaster, safety, migration, refugees, and many other issues that require peaceful solutions. I have known Popoki for more than 12 years and had the opportunity to participate in his journey of peace activism.

I visited the southern border area of Bangladesh last year, a place well-known for refugee camps where the most persecuted human beings of recent times have taken refuge: the Rohingyas. Rohingya refugees fled from Myanmar in order to escape from mass execution, rape, gender-based violence, genocide, and several other forms of inhumane torture. The Bangladesh government has hosted nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees and assisted to build shelters alongside with continued food supply, medicine, and other logistical support. The international community has also offered its helping hand to deal with Rohingya issues; however, it has remained one of the most unresolved refugee crises of the 21st century. As the Rohingya population that moved to Bangladesh is huge, there is most likely a shortage of shelters, especially many makeshift huts have been built, and sometimes 5 to 10 people have to live in a single hut. The lack of sanitation, water supply and electricity make it hard for the daily lives of the Rohingyas. During the time of infectious disease or pandemic, it becomes hard to maintain social distancing due to the overcrowded population.



Makeshift huts at BaluKhali Rohingya camp, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

© Bashir Uddin 2019

While the world has been fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic, it has also devastated the socio-economic life in Bangladesh, and now has reached Rohingya camps. This has escalated tensions among the local communities and camp residents. On top of the pandemic, now the monsoon floods have also affected the area, threatening the lives of thousands of Rohingyas as well as the local people. The Bangladesh government has limited resources and has been carrying the burden of Rohingyas for a long time, but has been doing its best to deal with this tough situation. International communities, NGOs, and various aid organizations have come forward to help, but it will take time to improve the situation as the country itself most probably will go through a deep economic recession due to COVID-19.

Having mentioned the above situation, I think it is time to think about solidarity and peace that local, regional, and international actors involved in Rohingya issues need to consider beyond their political and economic interests. This is what I have learned from Popoki. When the world is shattered by a pandemic like COVID-19, civil conflicts, border tensions, refugee crises and various complicated issues, Popoki gives us some light of hope to see them through a lens of peace where everyone is equal...no identity politics, no genocide, no exploitation, no domination and so on. I think these are some important messages that Popoki gives us to think about the value of human lives.



PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE POPOKI PEACE PROJECT!

The Popoki Peace Project is a voluntary project which uses Popoki's peace book and DVD to promote peace through various activities such as peace camps, peace workshops, seminars and other activities. Since the March 2011 earthquake, we have also worked in the disaster area and in 2012 published a book about that work: *Popoki's Friendship Story - Our Peace Journey Born Out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake. Popoki, What Color is Peace?* has been translated into Thai, Chinese, Korean, Khmer, Indonesian, Tetun and Bengali, Vietnamese, Arabic and Hebrew. Spanish, Farsi, Lao, Swahili, translations are underway. If you would like to translate Popoki, or have a way to have the book sold at your local bookstore, please let us know.

How to purchase Popoki's books: *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1, Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2, Popoki, What Color is Genki? Popoki's Peace Book 3 and Popoki's Friendship Story*

From outside of Japan

1. Go to your local Japanese bookstore: Kinokuniya, Maruzen, etc. (or their website)
2. Write to us at ronniandpopoki@gmail.com and we'll figure it out!

From Inside Japan

From the publisher, Epic: TEL: 078-241-7561 · FAX: 078-241-1918

From Amazon.co.jp or your local bookseller

From the Popoki Peace Project ronniandpopoki@gmail.com



Contributions are always welcome!

Popoki Peace Project popokipeace-at-gmail.com

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THANK YOU FROM POPOKI!