

## Quarterly Schedule: April to June 2004

Course	Term	Unit	Ceremony of Completion
Business Course	9 <sup>th</sup> Business Course (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	10 May 2004	29 June 2004
Japanese Language Course	Third (April Term)	21 April 2004	17 July 2004
<b>Computer Course</b> <i>Ministry of Education</i>  <i>Staff members of NUOL</i>  <i>Students of NUOL</i>  <i>Ministry of Education and Staff members of NUOL</i>  <i>Ministry of Information and Culture</i>	The 4 <sup>th</sup> course for staff members of the Ministry of Education	01 March 2004	09 April 2004
	The 8 <sup>th</sup> course for the staff members of the National University of Laos	01 March 2004	09 April 2004
	The 4 <sup>th</sup> course for the students of the National University of Laos	08 May 2004	10 July 2004
	The 1 <sup>st</sup> course for Power Point and Internet Using Program	05 May 2004	31 May 2004
	The 1 <sup>st</sup> course for the staff members of the Ministry of Information and Culture.	05 May 2004	11 June 2004
<b>Cultural Exchange Program</b>	“TANGO NO SEKKU” Japanese Seasonal Childrens’ Festival	08 May 2004	

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 Lao-Japan Human Resource Cooperation Center  
 National University of Laos

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## Successful Speech Contest draws a large audience

The Japanese Speech Contest was held on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March at the Lanexang Hotel with an audience of nearly 400. The Contest was organized under the joint sponsorship of the Ministry of Education, Embassy of Japan, JICA Office and the Committee of Japanese Speech Contest which consisted of the private Japanese language schools, the association of ex-students who studied in Japan, the Japanese language Division of the Faculty of letters of the National University of Laos and the Lao Japan Center.



Prof. Dr. Bosengkham Vongdara, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education, Mr. Itsuo Hashimoto, Ambassador of Japan, and Mr. Hidetaka Nishiwaki, Resident Representative of JICA Laos Office attended the Contest representing the joint sponsors.

There were 15 speakers including 8 from the National University of Laos, 6 from private Japanese language schools and 2 from the public. The speakers were given 5 minutes to talk on a theme of their choice. Although the level of Japanese was fairly basic, the contents of each speech was rich, demonstrating, to an impressed audience, that the speakers had practiced hard.

The winner of the Contest was Ms. Anodisaka Phachinisitthi who is studying the Japanese language at the Lao Japan Center. Ms. Anodisaka received a letter of commendation from the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education. She spoke on the importance of preservation of environment by focusing on recycling. The second winner of the contest was Mr. Saosavanh, who has studied at Sihom Wytayaa school, he received a commendation from the Ambassador of Japan. The third winner was Ms. Inthipone Xayavong who has studied at Chanpa Japanese language school and the Lao Japan Center, she received a certificate from the Resident Representative of JICA Laos Office.

In addition to the speech by the contestants, song and dance were performed by the groups of Japanese language schools followed by model speeches by ex-Lao students to Japan.

## The Festival of Dolls (Hinamatsuri) was enjoyed by many guests



The Festival of dolls, or Hinamatsuri, was celebrated in the Lobby of the Lao Japan Center on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March. This festival is held to pray for the growth and happiness of girls. Many families in Japan with young girls display doll-stands featuring dolls dressed in ancient court costumes, together with peach blossoms. They offer rice crackers and other food to the dolls. The doll-stands had been displayed at the lobby of the center for two weeks around 3<sup>rd</sup> of March which is the festival of dolls day in Japan.

The participants to the festival tried to make dolls by folding papers, and the best works were selected by the vote of participants. 5 top works were commended by the Director of the Center. The participants also enjoyed Amazake (a special drink made by rice), rice crackers and Chirashi-jushi (vinegared rice with many ingredients) which had been prepared by the Japanese residents in Vientiane.

## LJ Center hosts BON-DORI dance festival



In the evening of the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, the Lao Japan Center held a BON-ODORI dance festival at the front yard of the center entrance. Originally, “ODORI” means “dance” and “Bon” or “Obon” means the festival of Souls. In this festival a variety of foods are offered to the spirits of ancestors, and their repose prayed for. In towns and villages across the country people in YUKATA (light cotton kimono) gather for outdoor dances known as bon-odori. For many Japanese, summer wouldn't be summer without a bonodori.

On 28<sup>th</sup> of March Yagura, or a stage, was assembled in front of the entrance of the center with many light up lanterns hanging overhead. There were also several booths where traditional games were played or Japanese sweets, usually sold at Bon-odori festivals, could be bought such as Watagashi (cotton candy) and Kakigoori (crushed ice with syrup).

This was the second BON-ODORI festival that the LJ Center has organized. More than 300 people joined the festival. The young Lao dancers group known as “Young Artists for Peace” also performed the Lao traditional dance of “Lamvong Lao”. The Lao and Japanese people enjoyed both Lao and Japanese dance until after 9 p.m.



## Mochi-tsuki and the Japanese traditional games in New Year

“Mochi-tsuki” is Japanese traditional cooking which involves pounding steamed rice into rice cakes, and is regarded as the ceremony for welcoming the new year. Using a heavy mallet made of wood, they pound rice in a big wooden jar.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January, the Lao-Japan Center held Mochi-tsuki and demonstrated the Japanese traditional games which are usually played on new years day. Over 100 Japanese language students and others participated in the event. Steamed sticky rice is the staple food for Lao people and the participants showed much interest in the Japanese style of cooking sticky rice.

After pounding steamed rice into cake it was covered and sprinkled with kinako (soybean flour) and anko (bean-paste ball) and wrapped with nori (seaweed) in the same way that it is done in Japan. All participants enjoyed the taste which was a new experience for them.

The participants also enjoyed some Japanese traditional games of the new year season such as kendama (cup and ball play), karuta (card game), komamawashi (spinning a top) and yo-yo (spinning up and down on its string). Many Japanese residents in Vientiane joined in the performance which they had once played.



## Study tour group from Japan visited the Center



On the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, the study tour group from Fukushima prefecture, which is located in the northern part of Japan, visited the Lao Japan Center on an exchange program with Japanese language students of the Center. The study tour was organized by the Fukushima Overseas Cooperation Association and supported by the Fukushima prefectural government.

The members of the group who joined the meeting was consisted of four high school students; one technical college student; five university students with two instructors and about 40 Japanese language students. Following the introduction of both parties, the study tour group explained to the Fukushima prefecture with well prepared visual aids. After the presentation by Lao students all members were divided into small groups and had a discussion on many topics. Finally they enjoyed song and dance together. The exchange meeting was really fruitful for both Lao and Japanese participants.

Besides the study tour group from Fukushima prefecture, there were two more visitors to the Center. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, 6 university students from Ritsumeikan University, Toyo University and Nanzan University visited the Center and had meetings with Japanese language students, while on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March, 15 students of Hosei University of Japan visited the Lao Japan Center.

## The second Joint Coordinating Committee Meeting was held at NUOL for better management

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March, the second Joint Coordinating Committee for the Faculty of Economics and Management and Lao Japan Human Resource Cooperation Center (Lao Japan Center) project, was held at the National University of Laos. The Joint Coordination Committee consists of the President of the National University of Laos, as the chair person, related personals of the University and representative of the Ministries.

Representative of JICA Laos Office, officials of the Embassy are Japanese constituent members besides project related JICA experts. The committee supervise the work plan, review the overall progress and evaluate the achievement of the project. The committee meeting was attended by Mr. Tuyen Dongvan, Vice president of the University and Mr. Hidetaka Nishiwaki, resident representative of JICA Laos office and officials of the Embassy, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Management and other staff members together with the acting director of the Lao Japan Center and JICA experts. At the meeting the marked progress in the past year were reported and further efforts were confirmed among the members.

### Operations

#### Lao-Japan Center

- ◆ Office Hours :
  - ➔ 08 : 00 to 16 : 00
  - ( Monday to Friday )
- ◆ Media Room :
  - ➔ 08 : 30 to 19 : 30
  - ( Monday to Friday )
  - ➔ 08 : 30 to 17 : 00
  - ( Saturday )

Interview with the Japanese language Speech Contest winner



Ms. Anodisaka Phachnisitthi (Kha)

(Q) What did you think when you became champion?  
 (Kha) I was really surprised to receive the championship at the contest, because I thought I did not make my speech well. Besides, I was a little bit nervous with so many in the audience.

(Q) What is your work and why did you want to study the Japanese language?

(Kha) I am working at the Setthatilat Hospital. I started to learn the Japanese language in 1999. I was interested in a Japanese cartoon and I thought if I could read it in its original language I could enjoy it more.

(Q) Your theme of the speech is the importance of preserving the environment. Why did you choose this topic?

(Kha) The theme came out from a talk with my mother. My mother is the principal of a primary school, where teachers are very eagerly working in recycling goods. The teachers of the school carry out the project "rubbish bank" recommended by the Lao government. Pupils bring empty cans and bottles to the school, and change them into money. Pupils of the school even held a fashion show using recycled clothes.

(Q) Do you want to continue your study at the Lao Japan Center?  
 (Kha) yes, definitely. Studying at the Lao Japan Center, after finishing my work at hospital, is sometimes hard for me. But I got firm confidence to continue my study with this lucky experience.

University and Ministries staff receive computer training



The Lao Japan center introduced a 50 hours basic computer training program on MS-Word and MS-Excel for the staff members of the Ministry of Education and the National University of Laos. The training was held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for 5 weeks. The 7<sup>th</sup> computer training course, for staff members of the National University of Laos, started on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January and was completed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February with 36 participants.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> computer training course, for the staff members of the Ministry of Education, started with 18 participants and was completed on the same day as the course for the university staff members.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of February the closing ceremony was held at the Lao Japan Center for both participants from the University and the Ministry of Education. The Vice President of the University, Mr. Tuyen Dongvan and Mr. Shinichi Suzuki, Chief advisor of the project, handed over the completion certificates to the participants. The total number of the participants on the course reached 250 for the University and 60 for the Ministry of Education.

The 8<sup>th</sup> computer training course started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March with 12 staff from the Ministry of Education and 6 staff from the Ministry of Information and Culture.

The 8<sup>th</sup> computer training course for the university staff also started on the same day. Both courses are scheduled for completion on the same day of the 9<sup>th</sup> of April.

University Students receive computer training at LJ Center

Besides the two computer courses mentioned above, a basic computer training course for the university students was organized for every Saturday and Sunday morning.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> computer training program for the University students started on 31<sup>st</sup> of January and was completed on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March with 18 students.

7<sup>th</sup> Business Course Program Concludes while 8<sup>th</sup> Course Commences

The 7<sup>th</sup> Business Course which started on 15<sup>th</sup> of September, was terminated on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of January the Lao Japan Center held the Closing Ceremony at which 45 participants from the fundamental course, 67 participants from the advanced course and 25 participants from Distant Learning Education Course (JICA-Net) received certificates.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Business Course had started on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January with 144 participants. Among 144 participants, 78 person, 54% of the total participants, are company employees and 43 person, 30 % of the total participants are civil servants.

The four months course is scheduled to terminate on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2004.

The Business Course Text Book are Revised

The Business Course of the Lao Japan center provides lectures on 8 subjects in the Fundamental Course and 8 subjects in the Advanced Course. The course started in September of 2001 and some of the text books have been required to be revised. The revision of the text books was completed by the end of the year 2003 and all new text books have been used for the lectures of the 8<sup>th</sup> Business Course.

The following are the titles of the revised text books which are currently lectured at the Business Course program

Fundamental Course	Advanced Course
1. Principles of Marketing	1. Marketing
2. International Trade	2. A Sian and Lao Economies
3. Production Management	3. Project Management
4. Business Communication Skills	4. Information Management
5. General Accounting	5. Managerial Accounting
6. Introduction to Business Management	6. Management Strategy
7. General Finance	7. Corporate Finance
8. Organizational Behavior	8. Human Resource Management

On 16<sup>th</sup> of January the Lao Japan Center donated 160 text books, 10 copies of the 16 subjects above to the Central Library of the National University of Laos for the University students' use.



5 Japanese Professors lecture at Business Course



During January and March the Lao Japan Center had a total of five Japanese professors lecturing on the Business Course.

Professor Akira Matsunaga, of the University of Nagasaki, gave lectures on " strength and weakness of the medium and small companies" on 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of February.

Professor Mitoshi Yamaguchi, of the Kobe University, gave lectures on "population growth and agricultural economy" three times on 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of March.

Professor Yoshiro Ueda, of the University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences, gave lectures on " Corporate Management in the Global Market " on 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of March.

Professor Yoshinobu Sato, of the same University as Professor Ueda gave lectures on " Marketing " focusing the importance of distinction and positioning of the market, four times on 19<sup>th</sup> ,24<sup>th</sup> ,26<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of March.

Professor Yoshiaki Takahashi, of the Chuo University, gave lectures on "Corporate Governance" three times on 23,26 and 30 of March.

### Three Business Course participants interviewed after return from awarded trip to Japan

Mr. Khamsen Sisavong, Managing Director, Sengsavanh College



(Q) How was the trip to Japan?

(S) : It was a very good experience for me. All lectures were very interesting, especially lectures on human resource development. Dr. Ohgi explained about Japanese economic recovery after the World War II. He said that the Japanese government placed the years 1950 – 1960 as the learning stage to develop human resources first before developing the economy, and paid full attention to enrich the education. Also, we heard at Matsushita Electric Industry Co.,Ltd. The recorded voice of the late founder, saying “put people before products”, and “good thinking makes good products”, “customer first before company’s profit”.

(Q) What was interesting to you in Japan ?

(S): The Shoe factory in Kobe and the Daikin Co.,Ltd were very interesting. Their efforts to produce high quality products at a low price with best services are good examples for Lao business.

(Q) Were there any experiences that you can apply for your business?

(S) Yes, it is cooperation and discipline among Japanese people. The Japanese people, not only work hard but also they are punctual and always concentrate on their job and cooperate with each other. So, I am talking to my teachers to have disciplines in their duties to help develop human resources in this country.

Mr. Chanthaadara Inthavong, Director, Inter-Export Co.,Ltd.



(Q) What was the most impressive thing about your trip?

(I) It was the Daikin Co.,Ltd. They produce air-conditioning equipment in automation, many different types of products on different production lines. What was very impressive to me was that there are quality controllers at two or three places in each of the production line before the final products are examined at the end, so that they can save time and cost without processing the inferior quality to the last process of the production. This is definitely a way to increase productivity, so I am thinking to apply the same system at my sewing factory.

(Q) What else impressed you?

(I) It was people’s attitude toward the guests. The Daikin Co., Ltd. Greeted us with a warm and polite attitude and showed us all the works in the factory. The same was in Shin-Kansen, the bullet

train the conductor took a deep bow and asked for the ticket. This is something that we should learn from Japan especially when we greet our customers.

Ms. Amphaynguen Sounthala, Office Manager of Lao-German program Rural Development in mountain area.



(Q) How was your trip to Japan?

(S) : It was the first trip to Japan for me. People were very kind and nice wherever we went. Even in the bus, people smiled to us in a way that you cannot find in other countries. All the public transportation departs exactly on schedule and people in Japan work very hard.

(Q) Which companies were impressive to you?

(S) : The most impressive was the Daikin Co., Ltd. in terms of quality control, time management and marketing strategy. The factory was very clean and I was amazed to see people working very hard. The second was Suntory. We observed the beer factory. It was a very big and clean factory that I have never seen in Laos. The factory was fully automated and there was no smell at all when we walked through the factory. **(CONTINUED PAGE 5)**

### The second term of Japanese language course terminated

The second term of Japanese language course started on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January for three months until the 30<sup>th</sup> of March. The course is divided into 11 classes with 2 weekday afternoon classes for the University staff and students, 6 weekday evening classes for the public and 3 Saturday morning classes for public. The number of student who had completed the second term was 240.

### Japanese Text Books in Lao language issued by the LJ-Center



The text book used in the Japanese language course at the Lao Japan Center is “min-nano nihongo (Japanese for everyone) and the vocabulary and grammar reference book of min-nano nihongo has been translated into 10 foreign languages with no Lao version yet published. For this reason the teachers of the Japanese language course planned to translate and issue the vocabulary and grammar reference book in the Lao language. In February the vol.1 of two books (190 pages) was finally compiled and published.

In translating the Japanese to Lao language and in editing the text books many Lao people and Japanese residents living in Laos kindly gave their support. The Lao Japan Center extend appreciation to the Japan Foundation for giving subsidy in publishing the text books.

The text books are available at the Lao Japan Center and cost 22,000 kip.

### Japanese Dictionaries were donated by visiting professor



Prof. Yoshiro Ueda, of the University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences visited the Lao Japan Center in March to give lectures at the Business Course of the Center.

Prof. Ueda kindly brought 64 copies of dictionaries of Japanese language and donated them to the Japanese language Course of the Center.

Prof. Ueda requested the post office of his hometown, Kobe, to place a collection box and called the citizens to donate their used dictionaries. Among the Japanese dictionaries, the most popular among Lao students the one that is edited for primary school students written in plain words. All these dictionaries have been kept on bookshelves for many years after users went to higher schools.

Some of these dictionaries are kept at the Japanese language course for teachers’ use while most of the donated dictionaries are sold to the Japanese language students at a minimum price.

**(FROM PAGE 4)** Ms. Amphaynguen Sounthala, returned from awarded trip to Japan.

(N) What did you learn in this trip?

(S) : It is to organize the work. Not only the companies we visited, but also people in JICA were very organized. They gave me clear responses to any kind of questions, and if they had question that they could not answer, especially Ms. Omote of JICA contacted the right sources, and came back to us with the proper information in less than one hour. I consider myself pretty organized but not at her level, so I think I have a lot to do to improve myself.