



## ~ Think Together about the Capital Functions Relocation of Japan ~

### Trends in the Diet

The 151st ordinary session of the Diet convened on January 31, 2001 and was closed on June 29, 2001. During the session, the Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Representatives and House of Councilors conducted the following activities:

#### House of Representatives

The Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Representatives (Chaired by Mr. Eiji Nagai) established their Homepage on April 14, 2001. The Homepage provides information about the Committee's activities to further deepen the nations' understanding of the capital functions relocation. Opinions of citizens about the capital functions relocation are invited as contributions towards the judgment of the Committee. The Homepage address is at <http://www.shu-kokkaiiten.go.jp>.

The meeting of the Committee was held on June 13, and the members listened to explanations of the social and economic conditions by a governmental witness and a Diet official, and then discussed these freely. For example, the necessity of the relocation of capital functions such as the alleviation of the excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo, the strengthening disaster preparedness capabilities, and the overall reform of the national government such as the decentralization, were discussed.

On June 21, the Committee conducted field survey in the Tokyo Metropolis, inspecting the Japan Railroad (JR) Shinjuku Station and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Disaster Prevention Center, and then exchanged opinions with Tokyo Metropolitan officials, including Vice Governor Hamauzu.

#### House of Councilors

The Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Councilors (Chaired by Mr. Giichi Tsunoda) held the meeting on April 2 inviting three witnesses, President Nobuo Ishihara of Research Institute for Local Government, Professor Tatsuo Hatta of the University of Tokyo, and Director Kazuo Hiramoto of the Mitsubishi Research Institute, to gather their opinions and to have question and answer sessions.

For details of the opinions, questions and answers, please refer to the Internet Homepage "Proceedings of the Diet Retrieval System" ([http:// kokkai.ndl.go.jp/](http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/)).

### MLIT Participating Internet Fair

The Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division, National and Regional Planning Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport (MLIT) is exhibiting the Capital Functions Relocation Pavilion at the Internet Fair. Please take a look at it (Internet Fair address: <http://www.inpaku.go.jp/>).

## Capital Functions Relocation Symposium Held

MLIT held the "Capital Functions Relocation Symposium -- The Capital Functions Relocation and Japan In the Twenty-First Century" on June 14 under the sponsorship of the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren) and the Japan Junior Chamber, Inc. The symposium was held in Shibuya-ku, Tokyo and was attended by close to four hundred participants, and the capital functions relocation was actively discussed.

In the first session of the symposium, keynote speeches were given by Mr. Jitsuro Terasihma (President of Mitsui Global Strategic Studies Institute) and Mr. Yoshio Tsukio (Professor of the New Region Creative Science Research Course of the Graduate School, University of Tokyo).

In the second session, a panel discussion was held by seven participants, Ms. Motoko Ishii (Lighting designer), Mr. Kent Gilbert (Attorney of law in California State), Ms. Masumi Shiraishi (Senior Researcher of the Basic Research Institute of Nippon Life Insurance Co.), Mr. Hiroshi Suda (Chairman and Representative Director of Central JR), Mr. Yoshio Tsukio, Mr. Jituro Terashima, and Mr. Haruo Funabashi (Director-General for Policy Planning, The MLIT), with Mr. Hiroyasu Saito (Chief Editor in Charge of Commentary of the Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK)) as the coordinator.

The discussions were developed mainly on the following three points of dispute:



Firstly, different opinions were expressed on the excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo, such as "It should be alleviated by breaking up the concentration mechanism" and "It need not be alleviated because the merit of concentration prevails." Among opinions brought up in the discussion, opinions that Tokyo was very problematic were the most frequent, and a wide range of opinions were expressed on the future prospects and methodology of improving this situation.



Next, a consensus was reached that development of an information-networked society and the capital functions relocation impacts national land structure, but different opinions were expressed as to whether it works for centralization or decentralization and whether the load for Tokyo increases or not.

For formulating national consensus, agreement was reached on the importance of encouraging public opinion, with various ideas expressed on the methodology, such as "Strong will and leadership of the leaders are necessary" and "A referendum should be held."

Besides the above, opinions that the relocation should be discussed together with Japan's position in the future as a long-range plan for the nation" and "Viewpoints of environment and information technology should be regarded as important when formulating a plan for the capital in the twenty-first century" were brought up. Opinions were exchanged on the pros and cons of coordinating administrative reform or decentralization with the capital functions relocation.



## Capital Functions Relocation is Being Studied at Various Places

The Ninth-Grade Students of the Funabiki Town Utsuri Junior High School in Tamura-gun, Fukushima Prefecture

On April 12, four ninth-grade students of the Funabiki Town Utsuri Junior High School in Tamura-gun, Fukushima Prefecture visited MLIT to deepen their understanding of the capital functions relocation. They deepened their understanding about their prepared questions, such as "What is the capital functions relocation?" and an outline of the capital functions relocation.

The Economic Information Department of the Law and Literature Faculty, Kagoshima University

On April 25, the Director of the MLIT Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division was given an opportunity to participate in a class of the Economic Information Department of the Law and Literature Faculty, Kagoshima University, and gave a lecture on the capital functions relocation. Later, lively discussions took place between the Director, professors and assistant professors, and students, including students from foreign countries studying abroad. Many opinions recognizing the significance of the capital functions relocation in the area of environment and disaster prevention were also expressed.

Ninth-Grade Students of the Morioka City Kuriyagawa Junior High School in Iwate Prefecture

On April 25, three ninth-grade students of the Morioka City Kuriyagawa Junior High School visited MLIT to deepen their understanding of the capital functions relocation as part of their studies. They made preparations in advance, and questions and answers were carried out in a lively manner. They intended to write reports on the results of their study later.

Ninth-Grade Students of the Akita City Jonan Junior High School in Akita Prefecture

On May 16, three ninth-grade students of the Akita City Jonan Junior High School in Akita Prefecture visited MLIT to deepen their understanding of the new city, destination of the capital functions relocation. Questions and answers on the details and objectives of the capital functions relocation were exchanged and the students intended to write reports after completing their study on several cities.

Faculty of Law of Niigata University

On May 18, the Director of the MLIT Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division participated in a class of the Faculty of Law at Niigata University and was given the opportunity to give a lecture on the capital functions relocation. In the class, opinions that the capital functions relocation should be carried out to create inspiration for the twenty-first century were expressed.

Ninth-Grade Students of the Tajimi City Tohto Junior High School in Gifu Prefecture

On May 23, eighteen ninth-grade students of the Tajimi City Tohto Junior High School in Gifu Prefecture visited MLIT to deepen their understanding of the capital functions relocation. We let them view the Diet and central ministries and agencies and also deepen their understanding of the geography of the candidate site in their local region.

Hokkaido Urban and Regional Construction Hall of the Hokkaido Branch of the Japan Society of Urban Planners

On June 7, discussions were conducted on the theme of the capital functions relocation after a lecture given by the Director of the MLIT Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division at the Hokkaido Urban and Regional Construction Hall of the Hokkaido Branch of the Japan Society of Urban Planners. Initially, there was an impression that the significance of the capital functions relocation was not clear, however, after the Director's lecture the discussions became lively as people began to realize the significance of this relocation.





## The Preparation of Pamphlets

MLIT studied the capital functions relocation from the viewpoints of "Information Technology," "Environment," and "How the New City Should Be" in FY 2000, and concluded proposals and reports in March 2001. Details of the proposals and reports were already published in the last issue of this newsletter, but pamphlets have also been prepared to show the details in a simplified form.

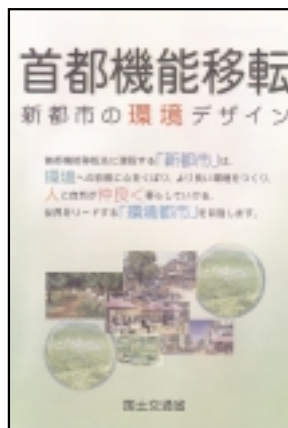
The pamphlet "A Story of the Capital Functions Relocation" has also been prepared for school children and junior high school students learning about the capital functions relocation.

If you wish to obtain these pamphlets, please contact the address shown at the bottom of this page.

## "On-Line Lecture Meetings" Being Held

On the MLIT Capital Functions Relocation Homepage, lecture meetings have been held with thirty knowledgeable persons in various disciplines such as academic and economic sectors. Please visit this web site

(<http://www.mlit.go.jp/kokudokeikaku/daishu/online/online-f.html>).



<March> Mr. Kazuo Hiramoto (Director of the Mitsubishi Research Institute)

Theme: "The effects of the Capital Functions Relocation are Dependent on Its Strategy"

Mr. Kisho Kurokawa (Architect; Member of the Japan Academy of Art; Chairman of the Japan Scenery Association; President Emeritus of Institute For Social Engineering)

Theme: "Capital Functions Relocation Should be Considered from the Viewpoint of the National Target in the Twenty-First Century"

Mr. Reijiro Hashiyama (Professor of Teikyo Heisei University)

Theme: "Blind Spot in Discussing the Capital Functions Relocation -- Why the National Interest is So Low"

## Major Recent Activities Related to the Capital Functions Relocation in Each Region

April 27, 2001 The Gifu and Aichi New Capital Promotion Council announced an interim report of the "Concept of New Japan's Capital" with capital functions laid out in the Aichi-Gifu Region.

July 19, 2001 The Fukushima Prefecture Capital Functions Relocation Promotion Prefectural Citizen Council and the Tochigi Prefecture Capital Functions Relocation Prefectural Citizen Council held the "Capital Functions Relocation Big Talk Show" participated by Governors of Tochigi, Gifu, Mie, and Fukushima Prefecture.

## Accessing Various Information

Various information concerning the capital functions relocation has been provided on the MLIT Homepage on the Internet. Please visit this web-site.

Also if you are interested in items in this leaflet and others, please let us know. We will pleasingly send related documents to you. We are awaiting your contact.

## We are Waiting for Your Contact

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