



GIFU UNIVERSITY NEWS *Letter*

Japan



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For International Exchange
Gifu University

October 2026

GU President Yoshida Attends Japan-India Joint Economic Forum in New Delhi

July 2



President YOSHIDA Kazuhiro attended the Japan-India Joint Economic Forum held in New Delhi, accompanied by KOYAMA Hiroyuki, Executive Director of GU-GLOCAL, and Prof. NISHIZU Takahisa, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Biological Sciences at GU. The forum, which serves as a platform for strengthening economic cooperation between Japan and India, was attended by Japanese Prime Minister TAKAICHI Sanae and the Prime Minister of India, H.E. Shri Narendra Modi. The two leaders exchanged views on the future direction of bilateral relations and other matters. GU was the only university invited to the forum.

Pres. Yoshida joined Session 4, which focused on the development of industrial value chains in India's North Eastern Region (NER). He emphasized the 15+ years of collaboration between GU and the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG). The two have jointly developed international education programs in food engineering, mechanical engineering, and AI. In 2019, they launched the first and only Japan-India Joint Degree Program (JDP), which has since evolved to include micro-credential programs to support lifelong learning and professional reskilling. Pres. Yoshida also reported on an international symposium in Guwahati in March to promote academia, industry, and government collaboration. It led to the establishment of a consortium of 20 universities in NER. He further presented a vision in which GU and IITG serve as a bridge between Japan and NER, working with the 20 universities, industry partners, and state governments to build a co-creation ecosystem. This is to foster collaboration in key sectors including semiconductors, aerospace, renewable energy, agro-processing, and life sciences. GU has named this the "Gifu University-IIT Guwahati Model," a new framework for internationally collaborative, university-led, regional transformation, and plans to expand it.

During the Q&A session, Pres. Yoshida remarked, "Deep Japan-India engagement originating from university partnerships will serve as a catalyst for even greater growth," underscoring the importance of robust academic and face-to-face exchanges.



Photo courtesy of the Cabinet Public Affairs Office



Photo courtesy of JETRO

GU-GLOCAL Symposium 2026

—Flourishing in the AI Age: Agency, Learning, and Connection

July 27

The GU-GLOCAL Symposium 2026 was held in the university auditorium. The attendance was 374 (in person: 280, online: 94).

It began with a special lecture by Prof. Ulrike Schaeede of the University of California, San Diego, entitled "The Hidden Strengths of Japan - Toward a New Balance and Resilience." She presented the Harvard Growth Lab's Global Product Complexity Rankings, noting that Japan possesses highly advanced manufacturing technologies and remains indispensable to global manufacturing. She pointed out that Japan itself does not fully recognize the extent of these strengths. She emphasized the need for Japanese people to reexamine their own strengths and spoke about the concept of "gentle capitalism," a model suited to Japanese society that values not only economic growth but also social stability and well-being.

A discussion session followed, featuring Prof. Schaeede, Visiting Prof. MOGI Kenichiro, a neuroscientist and author, and Vice Pres. LIM Lee Wah (Global Outreach, Diversity, Gender, and Library) representing GU. Topics ranged from what first sparked Prof. Schaeede's interest in Japan to the importance of pursuing one's passions. They emphasized that experiencing different cultures and meeting new people can help one discover one's own strengths. One particular remark — "What is important in the AI era is 'deAI' (encounters with people)" — drew enthusiastic reactions from the audience.





GU-GLOCAL offers a short-term overseas Spring School Program open to students across the university, in collaboration with IITG. The fifth Spring School Program was held at IITG from March 2 to 14. Of a total of 30 applicants, 10 were selected to participate in the program.

An opening ceremony marked the official start. Throughout the program, students were provided with opportunities to learn about India's rich and diverse culture through visits to national parks and local folk museums in Assam State. Students also toured factories producing confectionery items popular in India.

On the IITG campus, daily activities included a clay modeling workshop conducted by the Department of Design, as well as laboratory tours mainly focused on departments related to the JDP. In addition, on March 9 and 10, students attended the Guwahati JDP Symposium 2026, jointly organized by GU and IITG.

Despite the shortness of the program, it provided an intensive and comprehensive learning experience covering the social and cultural aspects of IITG and NER, and students were able to form friendships with local students.



Studying Abroad

Study Abroad Fair Spring 2026 | April 15

The aim of the Study Abroad Fair Spring 2026 (by GU-GLOCAL) was to promote student participation in overseas study programs, to introduce the programs available at GU, and to inform students of the language proficiency required.

First, staff from the Inbound and Outbound Student Affairs Office gave an overview of the university's study abroad programs and scholarship support systems. This was followed by presentations from ETS Japan and the Eiken Foundation of Japan, who explained the outlines of English proficiency tests. After a short break, students who had studied abroad gave presentations based on their experiences. These included short-term study abroad programs (two weeks to one month), as well as long-term programs (six months to one year). These students shared how they had grown by developing a willingness to communicate without fear of making mistakes, learning the importance of taking initiative, and gaining greater awareness of diverse cultures and values. The attendees listened carefully and eagerly. The fair concluded with them asking questions, demonstrating a high level of interest.



2026 Overseas Travel Risk Management Orientation | June 24

GU-GLOCAL hosted the 2026 Overseas Travel Risk Management Orientation. This was for students, faculty members, and staff planning to study abroad or travel overseas. Its purpose was to raise awareness of personal safety, help participants avoid unsafe incidents or accidents, and foster a broad understanding of risk management, focusing on health and safety issues abroad.

First, Dr. YAMAMOTO Mayumi, Director/Professor of the Health Administration Center at GU, delivered a presentation on pre-travel vaccinations and health management while overseas. This was followed by a lecture by Mr. HATTORI Makoto, former board member of the Japanese Council for the Safety of Overseas Students (JCSOS), who spoke about the importance of risk awareness and safety measures. Next, Mr. MATSUMOTO Takuya of Tokio Marine International Assistance Co., Ltd. introduced the JCSOS Total Assistance Service (J-TAS) for student support. Finally, Mr. MATSUNO Toshiyuki of Tokio Marine TNP Tokai Hokuriku Branch provided information about the Study Abroad Insurance, "Futai Kaigaku."



Studying Abroad



MARUYAMA Hinako
Nursing Course, School of Medicine

University of Alberta
EFN Program



Broadening My Perspective on Healthcare in Canada

I participated in the EFN (English for Nursing) Program at the University of Alberta in Canada for five weeks.

During my stay, I toured the University of Alberta Hospital and the Faculty of Nursing laboratories while studying medical English every day. I also gained a deeper understanding of the differences between Japan and Canada in terms of nursing roles, healthcare systems, and culture.

In the afternoons, I took part in various activities such as interacting with local students, trying curling, and visiting a nursing home, which exposed me to diverse values and cultures. On weekends, I enjoyed watching hockey games and sightseeing. These five weeks were an enriching experience that not only improved my practical English skills but also taught me the importance of understanding and appreciating different cultures.



Summer School 2026

June 17 – July 15

GU hosted the Summer School 2026, welcoming a total of eight students from three of its partner universities overseas: Northern Kentucky University (USA), the University of South Florida (USA), and Srinakharinwirot University (Thailand). The school combines Japanese language study with hands-on opportunities to experience Japanese culture. Participants visited Inuyama (Aichi Pref.), where they toured Inuyama Castle and explored its historic neighborhood; Seki (Gifu Pref.), where they visited the Seki Hamono Museum and a traditional Japanese swordsmith, and experienced knife sharpening at the Cutlery Museum; and Mino (Gifu), where they tried traditional Mino washi papermaking and strolled through the old Udatsu district. They also enjoyed a three-night stay in Gujo (Gifu), organized with the cooperation of the Gujo Hachiman International Friendship Association. They also experienced homestays and school visits. Living with host families in particular provided valuable experience of everyday Japanese life and culture, leaving a lasting impression on them, and many were visibly reluctant to say goodbye on the final day.

On campus, our visitors joined GU students in cultural activities such as attending traditional *nohgaku* (*noh* and *kyōgen*) theater and the Tanabata Star Festival. Student supporters accompanied the participants on an exploration of Gifu City and provided assistance throughout the preparation of their final presentations, from selecting topics to completing materials. They also offered advice on presentation design and Japanese-language expressions, supporting the participants' independent learning while fostering deeper interaction and friendship.



Initiatives of the Center for Japanese Language and Culture (CJLC)

Gujo Dance Workshop 2026

May 13

The CJLC held a workshop on Gujo Odori, a traditional dance designated as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage and also as an Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Japan. About 30 international students from 14 countries and regions participated and experienced this age-old tradition. The students were dressed in *yukata* by a kimono dressing group from Mino. Two instructors from Gujo, were invited to teach two Gujo Odori dances, "Kawasaki" and "Harukoma." The students learned the steps and hand-movements and carefully paid attention to all the fine cultural points. At the end, they were presented with souvenirs and traditional hand towels of Gujo. They shared impressions such as, "I'd like to go to Gujo and dance," and "Gujo dance is difficult but fun." It was a valuable experience of something quintessential to Gifu and Japan.



Nohgaku Workshop 2026

July 8

The *Nohgaku* Workshop 2026, by CJLC, was attended by about 30 participants, including students here for the Summer School 2026. This workshop, held annually since 2005, brings in professional *nohgaku* performers to present one of Japan's most distinctive traditional performing arts. This year, four distinguished instructors were invited: Mr. MIKATA Madoka and Mr. TAMOI Hiromichi who perform *noh* drama as main actors (*shite*) for the Kanze School of *noh*, and two *kyōgen* performers, Mr. SHIGEYAMA Chuzaburo and Mr. YAMAGUCHI Koudo, both from the Okura School of *kyōgen*. They provided valuable insights into the appeal and artistry of *nohgaku*.

The workshop featured a live performance of the *shimai* (dance excerpt) "Iwafune," lectures on *nohgaku* history and its musical instruments, practice of the chant "Takasago," explanations (both in Japanese and English) of the differences between the masks used in *noh* and *kyōgen*, and the expression of laughter in *kyōgen*. Participants also watched performances of the *kyōgen* play "Neongyoku" and the *noh* play "Adachigahara," and learned about *noh* costumes, experiencing the profound world of *nohgaku*.



Studying at GU



GAUM LUIS JULIAN
Center for Japanese Language
and Culture



My Life as an Exchange Student in Gifu

Living in the Japanese countryside as an exchange student has been an unforgettable experience. I enjoy being surrounded by beautiful nature, and I often spend my free time hiking or cycling through the mountains and countryside. Although student life in Japan is very different from that in Germany, I have learned to appreciate it.

In Germany, university life often revolves around parties and nights out, whereas students in Japan usually socialize in other ways. I have made many great friends here, and we often spend time together singing karaoke or exploring new places. These experiences have made my exchange year truly special.



Participation in a New Framework for Collaboration with North Eastern Region of India | March 9



President YOSHIDA, Vice President LIM Lee Wah, and GU-GLOCAL Executive Director KOYAMA Hiroyuki visited IITG and were visiting speakers in the Guwahati JDP Symposium in March. It brought together approximately 190 participants, including university representatives, government officials, and industry stakeholders from Japan and India. Lively discussions were held on the potential of international collaborative education and academia-industry partnerships focusing on NER. First, Pres. Yoshida emphasized the importance of academic collaboration between the two countries. He was followed by Vice Pres. Lim Lee Wah, who introduced GU's international initiatives, JDP, and the expanding scope of educational and research collaboration with India.

A roundtable session included a signing ceremony for a Letter of Intent (LoI) toward the establishment of the NER-Japan International Academic and Research Consortium, involving a total of 21 universities including GU, IITG, and other institutions located in NER. GU is the coordinating institution on the Japanese side and, in cooperation with IITG, will play a key role in promoting collaboration among universities, government agencies, and industry in NER and Japan.

GU is still the only university in Japan to operate a JDP with IITG, placing NER at the center of its activities and building pioneering partnerships in education and research. The LoI is another milestone over a decade of Japan-India collaboration, signaling an advance beyond inter-university exchange to regional development and industry collaboration.

In an academic session, Pres. Yoshida delivered a lecture on his own research achievements and the prospects for international collaborative research in the medical and life sciences fields at GU. This attracted wide interest from participants from both countries. That evening, the Government of Assam hosted a banquet attended by representatives from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, the Japan Science and Technology Agency, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Japan External Trade Organization, and a contingent of Japanese companies. The importance of GU's role in connecting Japan and NER was reaffirmed.



Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste to Japan Visits Gifu University | May 19



In late spring, a delegation from the Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste in Japan—including Ambassador Maria Terezinha da Silva Viegas, Financial Administrative Technician Faviola Henriques da Cruz, and Assistant Ana Catarina Moreira da Costa Fragoso—visited GU. From GU, Vice Pres. LIM Lee Wah, along with Prof. KUME Tetsuji, Prof. OHTANI Tomoyuki, Assoc. Prof. TAMURA Satoshi, and Assoc. Prof. FUKAI Hidekazu from the Faculty of Engineering—which hosts many international students from Timor-Leste—attended the meeting. They exchanged views on the current state of collaboration between GU and Timor-Leste, as well as on further promoting and expanding international education and research activities. The following day, an exchange event with students was held at GU.

Through such visits, GU is deepening its exchanges and cooperation with Timor-Leste and pursuing continued development in education and research.



Welcome & Connect Event | June 10



In early June, GU-GLOCAL hosted a networking event, Welcome & Connect, at the Tokai Open Innovation Complex, Gifu Site, on campus. In FY2025, GU was selected by MEXT for the Inter-University Exchange Project. Building on this achievement and drawing on its strong track record of educational collaboration with IITG, GU has established two distinctive support networks: the Gifu-India Student Community (GI-SC) and the Gifu-India Scientist & Engineer Community (GI-SEC). These networks aim to support Indian students and researchers in their daily lives in Japan and to promote their long-term settlement in the Gifu region. This event marked the first gathering designed to foster interaction among members of these networks.

First, there was a self-introduction session involving all participants. A total of 36 participants attended, 14 of whom were Indian students and researchers. They engaged in lively exchanges across nationalities, academic disciplines, and professional fields. This was followed by speeches, with two GU alumni invited as guest speakers: Mr. Hritaban Acharya of Menicon Co., Ltd., and Specially Appointed Asst. Prof. Raj Kishan Agrahari of the Inst. for Advanced Study at GU. They shared their experiences as GU students and spoke about their career paths leading to their current positions. Attendees later commented, "Listening to their firsthand experiences of working in Japan as foreign professionals motivated me to seek employment in Japan," and "Their talks broadened my perspective on building fulfilling careers and fostering enduring ties between India and Japan." Many participants expressed their eagerness to attend future events.

It is hoped that this initiative will serve as an important step in building a sustainable community to support Indian students and researchers, and its continued growth is eagerly anticipated.



Message from an Alumnus



From Student Life to Academic Career in Japan

My name is Raj Kishan Agrahari, and I am from Assam in Northeast India. Nearly nine years ago, I came to Japan to pursue education and research. My journey has taken me from a MEXT Scholarship student, earning a Ph.D. at Gifu University, to a JST-CREST and JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow at The University of Tokyo. In April 2026, I joined Gifu University as an Asst. Prof. and T-GEx fellow. My research combines plant molecular biology and bioinformatics to understand nutrient uptake and stress tolerance in plants. I am grateful for the opportunities Japan has provided for academic growth and collaboration.



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