

Summary of Press Conference

(December 20th, 2023)

On Broadcasting of “Yuku-toshi Kuru-toshi”

(Comments by NAKAJIMA Taichi, Senior Director)

I would like to explain about “Yuku-toshi Kuru-toshi” program, which brings in scenes from the New Year’s Eve to the New Year from locations around the country.

The year’s theme is “Cherishing Hopes, Steps toward Tomorrow.”

Towns and cities were getting busy this year after the end of long-lasting coronavirus regulations. With many people going out and traveling and the economy gradually recovering, 2023 was the year that brought “hope” to people.

At the same time, this year has seen a series of price hikes of various products around us, such as surging prices of raw materials, making it difficult to predict whether people’s livelihood would improve.

When we turn our eyes to the world, the international situation has become even more unstable, and there are growing concerns about disasters in various parts in the world.

This year’s program will be broadcast live from 11 locations across the country, from Hokkaido to Kyushu, to deliver the message of cherishing hope and moving forward toward tomorrow despite problems surrounding us.

The main location will be Kanda Myojin in Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo. Founded about 1,300 years ago, the shrine, which is affectionately called “Myojin-sama,” has long been loved by local residents. The shrine is said to be a place where the deity of marriage and relation-building and the deity of success in businesses joined hands to create a world where people can live in peace. Prayers will be delivered from this place to all across Japan so that the economy will further recover and people’s livelihood will improve as much as possible in the New Year.

There will be other relay broadcasting locations across the country, including following ones:

Utanobori Hachiman Jinja, a shrine in the town of Esashi, Hokkaido, is among them. This town, where dairy farming is thriving, has been hit hard in recent years by soaring feed prices. The program will show local residents vigorously carrying a “grass roll,” just as people would do with a portable shrine, with the wish that 2024 will be a fortunate and prosperous year.

The program will also be delivered from the Keihin Truck Terminal in Ota Ward, Tokyo. While the logistics industry already has such problems as a labor shortage and long working hours, it is about to face the so-called 2024 problem, which is expected to result from the shortage of truck drivers after

their overtime hours are capped in 2024. Reports will be made from the terminal where people continue efforts to build an efficient system even during the year-end and New Year's holiday period.

Next is Ishiyamadera in the city of Otsu, Shiga Prefecture. The temple is known as a place where Murasaki Shikibu, Japanese writer and lady-in-waiting during the Heian period from the late 8th century to the late 12th century, won inspirations for "The Tale of Genji." The character is featured as the protagonist in the new TAIGA historical drama, "Dear Radiance." About 1,300 years after the temple's founding, a woman assumed the post of temple head for the first time in 2023. We hope the report from the temple will deliver the hope that the world will become a place where everyone can live as they are, regardless of gender, nationality, or religion.

In Kyushu, the program will be broadcast from Aso Shrine in the city of Aso, Kumamoto Prefecture. The 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake, which registered the maximum intensity of 7 on the Japanese seismic scale, caused severe damage to the shrine, including the collapse of its tower gate. The tower gate was finally rebuilt in December thanks to the expertise of traditional Japanese temple and shrine carpenters and the latest earthquake-resistant technology. With the arrival of the New Year, a report from the temple will bring the joy of local residents, who have been waiting for the reconstruction of their local symbol.

The program will deliver scenes from various parts around the country as people are moving forward in the New Year with hopes in their mind.

Following last year, the program will be presented by "Ohayo Nippon (Good Morning, Japan)" anchors SHUDO Nachiko and SANJO Masayuki.

On NHK Special "Major Leaguer Ohtani Shohei"

(Comments by YAMANA Hiroo, Executive Director of General Media Administration)

The NHK Special on December 24th will feature Major League Baseball two-way superstar OHTANI Shohei. To be titled "Major Leaguer Ohtani Shohei: 2023 Densetsu to Daisho Soshite Aratana Sho-e," the program will last 15 minutes longer than usual.

The documentary program will explore the secrets of the superstar, who made baseball history this year. Ohtani played for Japan in the World Baseball Classic to contribute to the country's victory. He also became the first player from Asia to win a home run title in the MLB and earned the MVP award for the second time. Ohtani will speak about his baseball career in his own words. The program's crew has covered Ohtani since he joined MLB five years ago. The total length of interviews has reached 10 hours. The crew also managed to make an additional interview with Ohtani after the end of this year's season.

How did he feel when he was suffering from injuries? What are his thoughts on his departure from the Los Angeles Angels to the Los Angeles Dodgers? In addition to the footage from the latest interview, the program will also feature interviews with players, managers and others who know Ohtani well, delving into what's in his heart.