

Summary of Press Conference

(March 13th, 2024)

New Programs starting from April

(YAMANA Hiroo, Executive Director of General Media Administration)

I would like to introduce three new programs that will begin in April.

First, let me talk about “Shin Project X Chosenshatachi (Project X: The Challengers-New Beginnings.”

Its theme song, which will liven up the program, has been decided. As in its previous series, singer NAKAJIMA Miyuki will sing the song. It is titled “Shin Chijo no Hoshi — Earthly Stars (Unsung Heroes) - New Version - ,” which was newly recorded for the program.

While the program’s old series mainly shed light on Japan’s postwar reconstruction and its rapid economic growth period, the new series will primarily focus on the projects over the years since 1989. The period, which spans for more than 30 years, is often referred to as the “lost decades,” but that is not the case by any means. Focusing our attention to the period, we came to realize that there have been many unknown challenges and accomplishments by people who remain unnoticed by the public. In this program, we will carefully cover such people and feature them in the program. The first episode, to be broadcast on April 6, will feature TOKYO SKYTREE, the tallest tower in the world. A total of 580,000 elite craftsmen selected from all over Japan, including an elite group of steeplejacks, assembled the steel frame with overwhelming precision, with only a two-centimeter deviation at the height of 600 meters, at a site that was much smaller than that of TOKYO TOWER, while braving lightning, wind gusts and solar heat. We will deliver the story of engineers who came together with the determination to “build the world’s tallest tower with their own hands,” extending the broadcasting time to 83 minutes.

Prior to its broadcast, a special program will be aired on March 28, featuring such guests as astronaut NOGUCHI Soichi, who says is a big fan of “Project X,” TV personality KAZLASER, and comedian HICCOROHEE.

Next, let me explain about another new program titled “Toki o Kakeru Terebi: Imakoso Mitai! Kono Ippon,” which will start on April 5, at 10:30 p.m., on General TV.

The program will be navigated by journalist IKEGAMI Akira.

It will feature selections from NHK’s vast archives, covering a wide range of genres from society, culture, politics, economy, sports to entertainment.

To be featured in the first installment will be an NHK Special program titled “Sekai no Kagakusha wa Yokensuru: Kakusenso-go no Chikyu,” which was aired in 1984.

Ikegami, who has abundant experience of news reporting and extensive

knowledge, will provide easy-to-understand explanations on the social situation at the time of the broadcast, development up to the present and timeless messages, with guests suitable for the theme of each program.

This is a program that we would definitely like the younger generation to watch. We hope you will look forward to it.

The last new program I'll talk about is "AFTERNOON LIVE NEWSOON," which will start on April 1.

In a major change for the new fiscal year, we will convert the time slot from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays into a live broadcast zone. "AFTERNOON LIVE NEWSOON" will be aired from 3:10 p.m. to 6 p.m. within this slot.

Utilizing NHK's reporting capabilities and network, this program will deliver the latest news and useful information for daily life in an easy-to-understand manner, with some relay broadcasts. We aim at "providing transparent and trustworthy journalism," with reporters and directors sharing with viewers behind-the-scenes stories of news coverage and program production.

(From the project manager)

On the 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. time slots, "AFTERNOON LIVE NEWSOON" will present "a new way of delivering news and relay broadcasts" and "a new meeting place with NHK's contents."

The program will provide viewers with an opportunity to "pause and take a fresh look at the news that are constantly delivered day by day." In addition to a corner of news commentary, which is designed to deepen understanding of news by asking simple questions to reporters, the program will deliver "information that could not be mentioned in a short news report" and "the latest topics of interest" through relay broadcasts from relevant press clubs and other locations that are in focus on that day.

In the relay broadcasting corner, we will explore a variety of new styles, such as "a presenter who has no information about the relay location and content will make a live report while trying to sound out the information."

We will also have a corner in which best parts of our various programs are introduced in short, giving viewers a chance to get familiar with new programs, which they may find interesting although they didn't know about them before. The 5 p.m. slot will deliver "news and a variety of information closer to viewers."

We will pick up one important item from the latest news and spend a lot of time to deliver the topic, including commentary by reporters in the studio. Presenters and reporters will talk about questions that arise on the spot and have serious discussions as they rack their brains and research on the spot. We will also have a special corner focusing on one theme during the whole month, delving into the topic from various angles and approaches. The theme for April will be "money."

We will also deliver information on OHTANI Shohei, who are drawing much public attention, mainly focusing on the latest game results while making full use of data and other information to help you enjoy his performances even more.

On MLB in 2024: Broadcasting Schedule and Opening Series

(Comments by NAKAJIMA Taichi, Senior Director)

Let me explain about an opening series of the US Major League Baseball's 2024 season and our annual broadcasting schedule.

With the slogan of "Watch NHK for MLB!," NHK will continue to broadcast live MLB games this season and provide quality programs. The number of games to be broadcast is yet to be determined, but NHK plans to broadcast about 200 games, including an opening series in South Korea, with a focus on the Los Angeles Dodgers, to which Ohtani and pitcher YAMAMOTO Yoshinobu belong.

Viewers are sure to look forward to seeing Ohtani, who is attracting a lot of attention, and other Japanese players perform well in the season. In addition, various records are expected to be achieved this season.

Ohtani, who became the first Japanese player to win a home run title, is just four away from tying MATSUI Hideki's record for the most home runs by a Japanese player in the MLB.

DARVISH Yu of the San Diego Padres is only four wins away from reaching 200 wins in Japan and the United States together, following NOMO Hideo and KURODA Hiroki.

All eyes will be on these players to see when they will achieve the records.

In addition to Ohtani, the Los Angeles Dodgers have some of the MLB's best hitters, including MVP winners Mookie BETTS and Freddie FREEMAN, whose powerful plays are sure to draw great attentions. The National League, to which the Dodgers belong, has many Japanese players, drawing attention to their head-to-head matches.

NHK's baseball commentators will also liven up the broadcast. Such gorgeous faces as two-time World Series champion IGUCHI Tadahito and KOBAYAKAWA Takehiko are among our commentators' team.

Next, I would like to talk about the upcoming opening series in Seoul between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the San Diego Padres in one week. The Padres' starting pitcher will be Darvish, who will go head-to-head with the Dodgers' Ohtani for the first time.

As already announced, NHK will broadcast the first game on terrestrial General TV and the second game on NHK BS, both on live. The first game on March 20th will begin to be aired from 6:05 p.m. The live broadcast will begin before the game's opening and feature how players look like ahead of the season's first game. NHK Plus will also streamline the event live with catch-up.

The broadcasting of the second game, on March 21st, will begin at 6 p.m. on NHK BS in collaboration with the program "Waasupo x MLB Special." The live broadcast will start after airing highlights of the game on the previous day and delivering points worthy of note in the second game.

In this season, "Waasupo x MLB Special," a program that conveys the MLB's charms, is planned to be broadcast from March 25th until the end of the World Series. The program will showcase not only the performances of

Japanese players but also the best of the MLB on a daily basis. NHK will continue delivering the MLB's appeals this season through these live broadcasts and other programs.

On Special Programs on Satellite Broadcasting in March

(Comments by YAMANA Hiroo)

On our satellite broadcasting, Saturdays are regarded as a zone for delivering realistic and immersive content. We have presented special content with a sense of scale, such as a relay broadcast from the World Heritage Site in Venice, Italy, a live broadcast of the Omagari Hanabi fireworks festival in Akita Prefecture, music programs, such as "Densetsu no Concert Misora Hibari" and special dramas, such as "Inugami-ke no Ichizoku (The Inugami Clan)".

On March 30th, NHK BS and BS Premium 4K will broadcast a large-scale special relay program from 7 p.m., featuring cherry blossoms in the ancient capital of Kyoto, Otsu and Nara. This two-hour program will be worth watching for its realistic and immersive feel that only satellite broadcasting can provide.

The current Taiga historical Drama "Hikaru Kimi e" (Dear Radiance) has triggered a growing interest in the history and culture of the Heian period from the late 8th century to the late 12th century.

Kyoto, Otsu and Nara have many shrines and temples associated with Murasaki Shikibu and other characters in "Hikaru Kimi e" (Dear Radiance), as well as "The Tale of Genji," a work written by Murasaki Shikibu. The cities are also well known as viewing spots for cherry blossoms.

The program will introduce how people enjoyed cherry blossoms in the Heian period with the cast of "Hikaru Kimi e" (Dear Radiance), with relay broadcasts linking Miidera Temple in Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture, and Hasedera Temple in Nara with Daikakuji Temple in Kyoto, which will be the key station.

Guests at Daikakuji Temple in Kyoto will be YOSHITAKA Yuriko, who plays the role of Murasaki Shikibu, and MACHIDA Keita, who plays the role of Fujiwara no Kinto. FIRST SUMMER UIKA, who plays Sei Shonagon, will be the guest at Miidera Temple in Otsu, while INOUE Sakura, who plays the role of Fujiwara no Yoshiko, will be at the Hasedera Temple.

Daikakuji Temple, to be used as the program's key station, was founded in the early Heian period by Emperor Saga, who is said to have held the first official cherry blossom viewing event. In "The Tale of Genji," it is written that Hikaru Genji, the protagonist, entered the monkhood at a place nearby. Fujiwara no Kinto, played by Machida, composed a waka classical Japanese poem, which was selected for "Hyakunin Isshu," or a classical Japanese anthology of 100 Japanese waka by 100 poets, at this temple.

In this program, a boat will be floated on Osawa Pond, which has been in the temple precincts since the Heian period. With guests and others appreciating the cherry blossoms on the boat, the program will recreate kemari, or a type of football played by courtiers in ancient Japan, which was also enjoyed by Hikaru Genji, seasonal dishes for the aristocracy's cherry blossom viewing

and sweets from the time. We aim to close in on the origin of the Japanese people's love for cherry blossoms, which is still found today.

Miidera Temple, which will be the program's substation, is another place associated with characters in "Hikaru Kimi e" (Dear Radiance). The temple is where Murasaki Shikibu's father, Fujiwara no Tametoki, entered the monkhood and Fujiwara no Michinaga paid a visit. From the location, the program will introduce the popular Kangetsu Butai stage, where you can take fantastic photos of cherry blossoms reflected on the floor, and the 12-layered ceremonial kimono worn by court ladies, which is a complete reproduction using dyes from the Heian period, to touch upon the Japanese people's color sense and view of nature as they enjoy turns of the four seasons.

Hasedera Temple is said to be the "Flower Temple" that appears in "The Tale of Genji" and "The Pillow Book," which was written by Sei Shonagon. The temple is adorned with cherry blossoms around that time of the year. The program will convey the world of prayer that continues to this day, featuring the sound of the trumpet shell that has been blown since the Heian period, which is said to have surprised Sei Shonagon, and the temple's main deity, the Eleven-Headed Kanzeon Bosatsu.

Cherry blossoms are expected to bloom in late March in the region. Therefore, we hope you will be able to enjoy the various expressions of cherry blossoms from three different venues at different blooming times when the program is aired on March 30.

We hope that you will enjoy the realistic nighttime cherry blossoms with the ultrahigh-definition 4K image of the special program, which we expect make viewers feel closer to the world of "Hikaru Kimi e" (Dear Radiance)."

On the same day at 9 p.m., NHK BS will broadcast "FIFA World Cup Densetsu no Shiai No Cut Anata ga Mitai Gekito Soccer Dai-Tohyo," a special program designed to help viewers enjoy a new NHK BS program that will start in April. The FIFA World Cup and FIFA Women's World Cup have seen many legends over the centuries. In April, NHK BS will start a program that introduces legendary matches selected from all the tournaments and games while introducing historical backgrounds of those days.

Ahead of the program's start, we ask viewers which great games and super plays they wish to see again. We count down the votes with former Japanese women's national soccer team member, MARUYAMA Karina, and other guests in a live broadcast.

The first installment of the new program, which will begin in April, will feature the 1974 FIFA World Cup final in West Germany, in which the West German team, led by Franz Beckenbauer, nicknamed "der Kaiser (the Emperor)," stopped Johan Cruyff, who was called the "Flying Dutchman," to win the tournament. I hope you will look forward to watching this program.

So far, I explained about the details of two special programs to be aired on satellite broadcasting.