

# **Report of the Seventh Toyonaka Foreign Citizens' Council (Digest Version)**

Toyonaka City initiated the Foreign Citizens' Council in July 2005 with the aim of reflecting the voices of foreign citizens in municipal policy. This was the seventh council. Nine foreign citizens exchanged opinions as council members at five meetings during their term of about two years since July 2017.

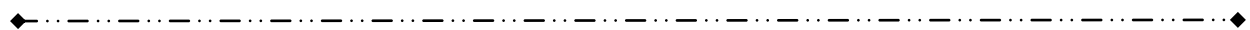
The theme for the seventh council was "Disaster preparedness: How to help foreign citizens with evacuation and how to provide them with information." To enable the council members to discuss with practical ideas, we showed them videos on the theme of disaster prevention/mitigation. The members had a lively exchange of views based on their own experiences in the 2018 Northern Osaka Earthquake and the Typhoons of Jebi and Trami.

Here we report the wide range of opinions the council members offered at the meetings.

April 2019

Toyonaka Foreign Citizens' Council Secretariat

(Human Rights Policy Division)



## **The Theme for the 7<sup>th</sup> Council “Disaster Preparedness; How to Help Foreign Citizens with Evacuation and How to Provide Them with Information.”**

# Major opinions expressed at the meetings (Summary)

## Transmission and Enhancement of Information

### « Daily Information »

- Many foreigners can understand pamphlets with the help of illustrations and furigana, even if they are written in Japanese.
- Information is easier to understand in images such as videos than in books and written words.
- It's hard to understand Katakana English or Japanese English which Japanese people often use.
- Toyonaka International Center needs to be recognized more widely.
- It would be nice to have an opportunity to receive the information such as Toyonaka International Center, hospitals and schools from not only Japanese residents but also foreign residents who have lived in Japan for a long time.

### « Disaster Information »

- I don't know what to do, where to evacuate and where to buy things in case of a disaster.
- Information may differ depending on the search tool. It is important to send correct information.
- I hope there are things like multilingual disaster prevention guide maps or brochures that carry the locations of evacuation centers and important points.
- How about using campaign cars to send out disaster information such as blackouts and waste disposal methods?
- It will be good to create a disaster prevention app that shows your closest evacuation center at the time of a disaster.

## Connection with local community

- Because nowadays information can be received via the internet and mobile phones, we need not interact with others. As a result, foreigners tend to be isolated.
- It will be good to develop key-persons who can send correct information at the time of a disaster. If the information is provided by people from the same country or speaking

the same language, we can feel safe and share feelings with each other.

- It will be good to have SNS social groups of foreign residents. It can be used on a daily basis for information sharing about our daily life and special events, and in an emergency, information can be posted and exchanged there.

## **What we learned from the experience of disasters**

The members of the council had a workshop discussing what they noticed and learned from their own experiences in the 2018 Northern Osaka Earthquake on June 18th and the Typhoons of Jebi and Trami in September.

### **« Things and information that are necessary to get prepared for disasters »**

- The City should distribute a disaster prevention map understandable for foreigners who cannot read Japanese well. (There are people who do not know the existence of the “Bosai Map (disaster prevention map)”.)
- We should prepare emergency food, drinking water, lantern, blanket, and other emergency supplies (clothing, etc.)
- We should know the evacuation routes and the evacuation places.
- We should know how to use the communication tools to ask for help such as Disaster Emergency Message Board Service or Safety Status Confirmation Service.
- We should check how and where we can get the information in our mother language.
- We have to be aware of the possibility of the outage of lifeline services such as electricity or water, and know how to cope with the situation.
- We should be prepared regularly, because no one knows when a disaster occurs.

### **« What caused us trouble after a disaster »**

- It was difficult to know where and how to evacuate when the earthquake happened.
- At the time of the earthquake, telephone connection didn't come back even after electricity was restored.
- I did not claim for reimbursement, because I did not know if the damage would be covered by insurance.
- I was worried that a bigger earthquake would occur, since we had many aftershocks.
- Even though the typhoon had gone, I could not feel safe, because there was no announcement.
- It was very inconvenient that the stores closed early when the typhoon was coming.

- I had to take 3 days off from my work because of the power outage caused by the typhoon.

### « Things, and information that will be necessary in case of a disaster »

- I hope they will let us know when to evacuate and when to pick up our children in our mother tongue.
- We should know how to deal with water/electric outage.
- Cell phones and battery chargers are indispensable.
- I hope to get information in our own mother language via email or loudspeaker.
- I want to know how to protect ourselves and our homes from objects carried by wind.
- We should be aware of the danger of broken glass windows.
- We should secure flower pots and laundry poles on our balcony.
- Typhoon information provided on TV and internet is renewed only once an hour. I hope to get more real-time information.

### « What I am going to practice for disaster preparedness »

- I will discuss evacuation routes with family members and determine a meeting place.
- I want to learn how to survive natural disasters.
- I will stabilize furniture and other objects at home.
- I will exchange information with friends via SNS and other media.
- When a typhoon comes, I will keep the curtains pulled.

### « Requests to Toyonaka City, the International Center, and the local community »

- Give us instructions immediately after a disaster via email and radio communication.
- I think a counseling service for mental health care after a disaster will be helpful.
- I hope they will hold workshops to teach us how to get prepared for a disaster.
- I hope, in the event of an emergency, they will open public facilities to citizens as evacuation shelters.
- I hope they will repair water pipes damaged by the typhoon more promptly.
- In case of emergency, I hope they will provide food.
- If there is a key person with accurate knowledge, information will spread more effectively among the citizens from the same country.
- I hope they will provide more information in our mother language.
- A workbook about disaster preparedness would be helpful.