



Special Message from the International Student Concierge

Part1

Activities for international exchange at Tohoku University!

What is TUFSA?

TUFSA stands for Tohoku University Foreign Students Association, a student-run organization at Tohoku University. Its aim is to support international students during their stay in Sendai as well as enhance intercultural exchange between international and Japanese students and the local community of Tohoku.

TUFSA History

It is the main student organization, representing the international student body of Tohoku University. Established in November 3, 1965, TUFSA has been active for over 50 years.

TUFSA organizes fun activities every month of the year. In order to provide constant updates on TUFSA activities, volunteer work, and other international events, TUFSA maintain an active mailing list which goes out to foreign students.



TUFSA Friends

TUFSA is always working to collaborate with other organization to bring events that will interest and benefit the foreign students and their families. Some of the organizations that TUFSA has worked with include MIA, SenTIA, @home, IPlanet, Hello World, Furisuku, TUMCA, SIJAK, etc.

TUFSA Festival

Every year in the spring, TUFSA hosts the Tohoku University International Festival (TUIF). With over 5,000 visitors every year, TUIF is one of the biggest cultural exchange events in the entire Tohoku region. For this year's 34th festival, the theme was "Harmony through Diversity."

Some of the main attractions of the festival include: stage performances, fashion show of traditional clothing, interactive corners, and food stalls from different countries.



As reported by Kiya Okhlopkova

Part 2

Students at Tohoku University are promoting studying abroad

Last year on March 14th, the Instagram account @tohoku.ryugaku1 announced the launching of the website '[Tohoku Ryugaku](#).' Aimed at telling stories from study abroad programs and helping aspiring exchange students, Tohoku Ryugaku has been established by Tohoku University students who have been studying abroad in order to provide support to those who want to study abroad. "We are also planning to help aspiring students with reviewing of application documents," the website wrote in its introduction section.

Japan has long battled the low and decreasing numbers of Japanese university students studying abroad. About 70% of Japanese companies with overseas operations have complained about difficulties in finding and nurturing globally minded talent. With the introduction of the 'Japan Revitalization Strategy' by the cabinet in 2013, the government aims to double the number of students study-

ing abroad by 2020. In such situations, support systems, like the experience of other students, play a key role in leading the change.

With 718 partners as of March 2018, Tohoku University's global network provides a plethora of opportunities for students to engage in study abroad programs. Yuto Katsuyama, a student of chemistry at Tohoku University, studied at the University of California – Berkley (UCB) for one year. He also joined UCLA last year as a visiting researcher. As one of the first students to write for 'Tohoku Ryugaku,' he explains the procedures to enter UCB along with his experience in California. "There are some many professors who have more than 6,000 citations! It is also easy to access them and have one-to-one conversations."

For Katsuyama there were several experiences that were new to him. "It is a bit scary when barricades are put up and you can see police officers with rifles whenever there are protests on campus but the classes on these days are cancelled too," he writes. Overall, the experience is something he cherishes as he gets ready to step into the working world. Another exchange student at the University of California – Irvine has written how his baseball friends got to practice with Shohei Otani, the professional Japanese baseball pitcher and designated hitter for the Los Angeles Angels.

The statistics from MEXT^{*1}, JASSO^{*2}, and JAOS^{*3} have shown an increase of 15% of outbound students between 2015 and 2016*. As more and more students apply for exchange programs, support websites like 'Tohoku Ryugaku' will surely act as a pillar of strength and motivation.

*http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/ryugaku/1412692.htm

*1 文部科学省 Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

*2 日本学生支援機構 Japan Student Services Organization

*3 海外留学協議会 Japan Association of Overseas Studies

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東北大学留学.com
<https://tohoku-ryugaku.net/>

As reported by **Trishit Banerjee**

My hometown: Tehran

In this column, we introduce the hometowns of our members, giving you a glimpse into the culture and the best things to do!

Hello everyone! In this issue, it's my turn to talk about the city I lived in before coming to Japan. I come from the capital city of Iran, Tehran. Tehran is the largest city of Iran and is also the most populous city in the Middle East. My hometown is located on the hillsides of the Alborz mountain range. The highest peak of Iran, Mount Damavand (5671m high) is visible from almost every point of the city. Tehran is the center of all the political, economic and cultural activities, making it a rather busy and colorful city, full of contrasts.

Damavand Mountain

<https://www.beautifulworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Damavand-mountain.jpg>

Visiting famous palaces in the north and downtown parts of Tehran provide an opportunity to learn more about Iran's history and enjoy the rich architectural heritage. My favorite palace downtown is called Golestan palace, it is from the Qajar dynasty and has been turned into a museum. Check out the beautiful artwork in the tiles and be amazed by all of the elegant details.

Golestan Palace

<http://irandoostan.com/dostcont/uploads/2017/04/golestan-palace-iran-Travel-to-Iran1.jpg>

After your visit in Golestan palace, you can stroll around Tehran's grand bazaar, which is close to the museum, and enjoy the old style Safavid architecture. The hustle and bustle of the crowded bazaar and delicious Persian cuisine will definitely refresh you. This area is also full of galleries and museums for those who want to explore Iran's art and history.

Bazaar in Iran

https://www.double-age.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/img_2151.jpg

For a relaxing evening, you can choose to visit one of the many parks of Tehran. I recommend Abo-Atash Park, more specifically the Tabiat Bridge (literally meaning nature). It connects this park to Taleghani Park and is the largest pedestrian overpass in Tehran.

Tabiat Bridge

https://www.irantravelingcenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/tabiat_bridge.jpg

At the end, it's also nice to take a peek at one of Tehran's symbolic towers, the Milad tower. Milad is a multipurpose tower with a height of 435m, making it the 6th tallest tower in the world. Once inside, you can have a nice view of Tehran from the observation decks. Personally, I prefer the night view of Milad tower from a distance!

Milad Tower

https://live.stat-icflickr.com/1918/45783702241_446bb71dc8_b.jpg

Let me know if you plan to visit Tehran someday. I'm here at the concierge desk to help you as much as possible. Lastly, here is a goodbye photo from me and my friends, posing at the Tochal ski resort in Tehran. See you!



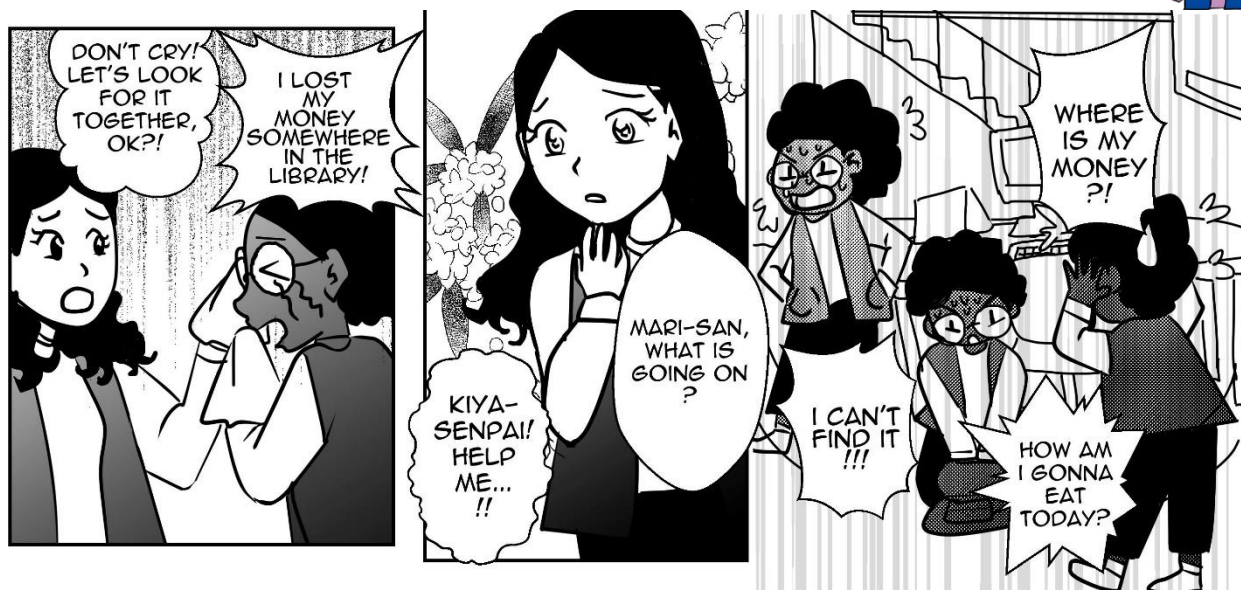
Tochal Ski Resort

As reported by **Sara Ebrahimi Azar**

MANGA Corner

This corner is about things that happen in the library, especially when you are a new student in Tohoku University.

Hello! I am Marina from Brazil! I like drawing for fun, so I hope you have fun reading too!



University Libraries across the World

(1) Yangon University, Myanmar

In this column, we will introduce universities and their libraries from different countries.

Yangon University, located in Kamayut, Yangon, is famous for being the oldest university in Myanmar's modern education system and the best known university in Myanmar. It was founded in 1920 and it will be celebrating its 100th anniversary next year. Besides being the oldest university in Myanmar, Yangon University is a prestigious university that leads the advancement of higher education.

On its journey to the successful educational achievement of the whole nation, Yangon University Library is one of the main integral sources of providing educational resource for learners, researchers and its faculty members.



Convocation Hall of Yangon University (YU)



Students in Convocation Ceremony

About the Yangon University Library

Seven years after the foundation of Yangon University, the university library was established (1927). The library is shaped like the letter "L" and is of British architectural design. In the base of the "L" is the main stack room which is used for book storage. The other two floors contain processing room, reference room, librarian's room, offices, discussion rooms and reading rooms. The library is famous for its valuable collections of Myanmar Manuscripts and South East Asian texts. During World War II, the library was used as a military hospital. As a result, the building incurred a lot of damages. In later years, it was renovated and reorganized. Currently, the library stands as an academic establishment whose mission is (1) to enable and support the acquisition of information for research (2) to promote academic growth in the university faculties (3) to serve as intermediaries between users and information sources (4) to provide quality information services that meet the needs of the user.

About the Universities' Central Library

The University of Yangon Library (formerly Rangoon) is the main research library. The library is one of the best at the university and is prestigious for holding valuable cultural and historical texts. In 1964, Yangon University Library became the Universities' Central Library under the newly established Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education. Upon the completion of the building in 1987, the Universities' Central Library was separated from the Yangon University Library. The Yangon University Library was re-established in the original building. In 1992 a three-story building was added to the Universities' Central Library. The Universities' Central Library has the largest collection of books, palm-leaf and parabike paper (hand-made paper) manuscripts in Myanmar. The library has several sections with different specialization subjects. There are sections which focus on the preservation and conservation of materials, the writing of dissertations and much more. Below are an example of the most notorious sections in the library.

The Myanmar Books Section holds unique resources of Myanmar traditional and national heritage. In this section you can find collections of palm-leaf and parabike paper manuscripts and rare printed books on Buddhism, history, literature, astronomy, astrology, indigenous medicine, jurisprudence,

customary law, language, Myanmar dictionaries, poetry, novels, plays, and much more.

The English Books Section holds mostly early 19th century publication, as well as, rare books on Myanmar. The section also includes books on ASEAN countries and neighboring countries like India, Bangladesh and China.

The Myanmar Manuscripts Section holds a rich collection of 15,000 Myanmar manuscripts on palm-leaf and about 4,000 parabikes.

Additionally, there is also Reprographic Section which has documents on Myanmar's history, which were given by the Office Library in India. There are also microfilms of Myanmar novels and Pyazats (drama) that were given by the British Library. The preservation of such microfilms was carried out with the Cornell University Library.



Yangon University Library



Universities' Central Library

Information retrieved from

<http://www.uclmyanmar.org/about-us/#1>

As reported by **Thiri Soe**

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