

HELLO, FRIENDS !!



Shimane Hello Friends



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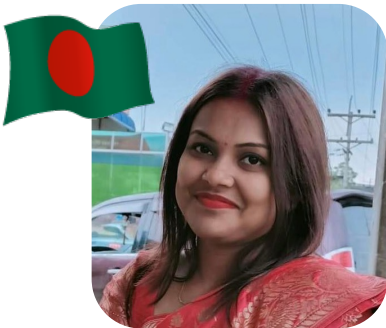
Hello, everyone. Welcome to the world of HELLO, FRIENDS!!

I was worried whether the autumn will really come this year in time because the days' highest temperatures reached almost 30 °C every day until recently. In the wake of typhoon No.14, however, it suddenly got much cooler and the right weather has finally come.



Now, it's time to sow the seeds, give fertilizer to the seedlings, move the grown saplings to larger areas, and ... sorry, again!! When it comes to gardening, I cannot stop talking. I hope you can enjoy the very best season of the year in your own way. If you find delicious food, beautiful foliage, or an art exhibition worth a visit, please let me know.

1 . LET'S MEET TODAY'S GUEST !!



Today's guest is PUJA DEY san from Bangladesh. She is in her 4th year in the Ph.D. program and belongs to the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Her beaming smile makes me happy and relaxed every time I see her and I wanted to know more about her. Through this interview, I learned that she is the type of person who spares no effort for her research, and ultimately for realizing her ideal self.

1. First, may I ask why you became interested in Shimane University to study as a Ph.D. student?

I wanted to advance to higher education after completing my Master's in Bangladesh. I searched for institutions on the internet and found some seemingly nice ones including in the UK and Finland. I even took an interview online with the one in Finland. It turned out that they were recruiting students for the fields of finance and social science while I wanted to pursue my field of medicine. Back to square one, I started searching again and finally reached Shimane University. There were lots of departments in the faculty of medicine. Actually I didn't have any particular expertise at that time but I thought I should go into the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology because I had wanted to help women in my country suffering from infertility since a young age.





I happened to realize there were some graduate students in the department from Bangladesh. I could communicate with one of them by email and learned how to contact the department and other things to get admitted as their Ph.D. student. The person was really nice and acted as a bridge between Kyo sensei, the professor of the department, and me.

After several correspondences with Kyo sensei, I was finally accepted as his student. Having passed the entrance exam in February, 2019, I officially became a student of Shimane University and started my campus life, rather lab life.

- I'm glad the Finnish university didn't look for students in the medical field. If it had, I wouldn't have been able to see you.

2. What was your first impression when coming to Izumo?

I cannot forget my first impression when I arrived at Izumo-shi station. It was in the early morning. The serenity around me was something I hadn't experienced before. There's no smell, no litter, no noise and everything is clean and neat. It was quite different from Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh and one of the world's most densely populated cities, where there is always hustle and bustle with the heavy traffic jams. I almost trembled with a kind of joy, thinking a new page of my life is about to begin in such a peaceful atmosphere.

3. What has been your biggest culture shock since coming to Japan?

Maybe it's chopsticks. My first encounter with chopsticks was when I bought a cup noodle soup. At the cashier, the shop clerk gave me a pair. In Bangladesh, people use only hands to have a meal. Returning home, I was puzzled not knowing how to use them but tried anyway. Just imagine how difficult it would be. The first attempt with ramen noodles!! They easily slipped through the two chopsticks. After several failed attempts, I burst into tears. But I didn't give up. I realized that I had to learn. I had to learn everything I needed to get accustomed to the life in Japan. I have struggled and made efforts to this end, which made me a confident person. I can use chopsticks now.



I can understand easy Japanese conversation. I can go anywhere using public transportation. I always ask whenever there is something I cannot understand. By doing so, I'm getting closer to becoming an independent person in this country far from my homeland. My dormitory is not near the campus. It takes about 20 min. on foot to go there or come back. Since I don't own a car and want to save money, I walk here almost every day.

This makes for good exercise. I can stay in shape with no extra time and money. This is my way of thinking. I don't lament the inconvenience. Rather, I take advantage of it.

- What positive thinking! Good exercise makes you stronger physically and mentally.

4. What's your favorite Japanese food or Japanese word?

My favorite Japanese word is “Arigatou”. I use it quite often because I’m really grateful for everything that people, especially Kyo sensei and Nakayama sensei, have done for me. Without their support I wouldn’t be what I am. “Arigatou” reminds me that I owe a lot to those around me. I should never take it for granted.

My favorite Japanese food is soba buckwheat noodles. One day, my Japanese friend took me to an Izumo soba restaurant. The black color of the noodles shocked me when I saw it for the first time. I couldn’t imagine the taste but it turned out to be really yummy. It was before the COVID-19 pandemic. I miss those days when we freely enjoyed eating out.

5. What's your favorite sightseeing spot in Japan?



Since I don’t have a car and public transportation costs, I rarely go far on my own. When my senior fellow Ph.D. students (a couple) from Bangladesh were still in school, they often took me to various sightseeing spots with them by car. My favorite one among those spots is Kirara Taki beach. The beauty of the sunset was beyond description. The sky was colored yellow and orange and it was reflected on the ocean surface. The sky and sea were melting into each other. The image is deeply etched in my mind.

6. What do you picture in your mind as a career path after graduation?

I want to continue my research after graduation. I don’t care about the location as long as I can do that. Maybe a post doc status would be suitable as the initial goal.

After building my career for several years and getting a higher status such as assistant professor, I want to broaden my working field and do something to realize my original dreams to help women in Bangladesh suffering from infertility.



Thank you, Puja san. In the interview she told me that her supervisor and other doctors treat her as if she were a newborn baby. That’s a nice metaphor. Maybe that’s because she asks them many questions every day and absorbs the new knowledge like a sponge. Looking back at myself, do I still keep curiosity and flexibility alive like her? Yes, I did, about half a century ago (ha, ha, ha).



This corner, “Let’s meet today’s guest!!” ends with this issue. Future interviews with the international students will be shifted to “Students’ Voices”, another English website https://www.med.shimane-u.ac.jp/english/Students_Voices/ organized and maintained by “The English Project Team”. If you are interested in being an interviewee, please contact me, Yuko Okada, at <gakumh04@jn.shimane-u.ac.jp> or come to my office if you can take time for the interview. If we have no volunteers, we will ask someone to be the next interviewee.

2 . LET'S TRY THIS JAPANESE RECIPE !!

★ Tofu Steak ★



Tofu, which is said to be originated in China, is popular worldwide. It is low in calories and high in protein. So grilling tofu instead of having it as it is, which is called “Hiyayakko”, may not be new to you anymore. Even so, the recipe here still holds some Japanese essence thanks to soy sauce and bonito flakes (katsuo-bushi). On top of that, the combination of butter and soy-sauce is something you will be hooked on. If you are on a quest to enjoy tofu to the fullest, this recipe is worth a try!!

★ INGREDIENTS

(For two persons)

- Firm tofu (もめんとうふ/木綿豆腐 momen tofu) 1 cho (cho (丁) is a unit of tofu)
- Soft flour (はくりきこ/薄力粉 hakurikiko) 4 tbsps.
- Butter10 g
- Soy sauce 1 tbsp
- Salad oil 1 tbsp
- Bonito flakesas you like
- Green spring onion (chopped)...as you like
- Ginger (grated)as you like

A

★ HOW TO MAKE

- ① Drain water from the tofu by wrapping it with paper towel and putting some weight on it or heating it in a microwave for 2~3 min. with 600 W.
- ② Cut the thickness of ① in half and dredge with the flour evenly.
- ③ Put the salad oil and the butter in a pan over medium heat and bake ② until it turns into golden brown all over.

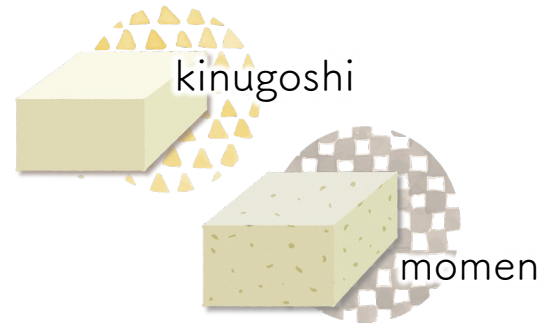


- ④ Put the soy sauce in the pan and roast the whole of the tofu lightly.
- ⑤ Turn off the heat. Place the pieces of tofu onto plates and put A on the top of each piece. Enjoy while they are still hot.

3. LET'S LEARN ABOUT TWO TYPES OF TOFU

Do you know there are two types of tofu? One is “kinugoshi(絹ごし)” and the other is “momen(木綿)”. The difference comes from how they are processed. Kinugoshi is made by adding coagulant to soy milk to harden it like pudding.

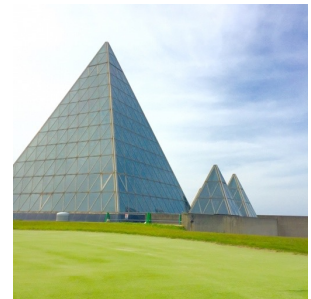
Meanwhile, momen is made by breaking the coagulant-added-soy milk and putting pressure on it to squeeze water and then hardening it once again. So, momen is harder than kinugoshi. Kinugoshi is suitable for eating tofu as it is because the texture is smoother and easier to swallow and momen is suitable for cooking tofu because it has less water.



Nutritional values are also different between them. 20%-30% more protein, calcium, and iron is said to be contained in momen while kinugoshi is said to be rich in vitamin C group and potassium. I myself like momen better. Why? It's easier to hold with chopsticks. For those who are clumsy, it's a big point.

4. SIGHTSEEING INFORMATION

∴ Nima Sand Museum ∴



You might imagine the one in Tottori prefecture from the word “Sand Museum”. It might be more famous but these two museums are quite different. If you are interested in sand clocks, this one in Shimane is definitely your destination. They boast of the world's biggest sand clock, which moves down 1t of sand from the upper part to the lower one in a year (Wow!). The exhibitions are accompanied by written explanations in both Japanese and English. They also offer 50% discounts on the admission fees for foreigners. What an internationally friendly facility it is!!

- ★ **ADDRESS** 〒699-2305 島根県大田市仁摩町天河内975
975 Tengouchi, Nima-cho, Oda City, Shimane Prefecture
- ★ **TEL** 0854-88-3776
- ★ **CLOSED** Wednesday (If it falls on a holiday, the next week day is closed.)
New Year's holidays (Dec.29-31, Jan.1, 6, 7) ※Subject to change
- ★ **TIME** 9:00 - 17:00 (10:00 - 16:00 on Jan.2~5)
※Reception closes 30 min. before.

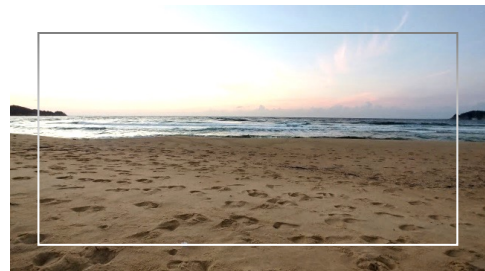
★ **ADMISSION FEE** 360 yen/high schooler or above
180 yen/elementary or junior high student
※These are the discount ones for foreigners. Don't forget your ID.

★ **ACCESS** 10 min. walk from “Nima (仁万)” station on JR Sanin line

★ **MAP** <https://www.google.com/maps/place/%E4%BB%81%E6%91%A9%E3%82%B5%E3%83%B3%E3%83%89%E3%83%9F%E3%83%A5%E3%83%BC%E3%82%B8%E3%82%A2%E3%83%A0/@35.146414,132.404663,15z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x4366855d47135364!8m2!3d35.1464144!4d132.4046628?hl=ja>

★ **OFFICIAL WEBSITE**
<https://www.sandmuseum.jp/guide/> (Pls check the latest information.)

∴ Koto-ga-hama beach ∴
(琴ヶ浜)



After learning about the singing sand (Naki-suna 鳴き砂) and experiencing the squeaky sound at the sand museum, how about visiting the beach covered by the sand? It's close to the museum, about 5 min. by car.

It's an arched beach about 1.4km long and is known for its rhythmic sound coming from the friction of the beautiful surfaces of the sand. It once served as a setting of a Japanese comic book. It was also chosen as one of the 100 best soundscapes and one of the 100 most beautiful beaches in Japan in 1996.

★ **ADDRESS** 〒699-2304 島根県大田市仁摩町馬路
Maji, Nima-cho, Oda City, Shimane Prefecture

★ **ACCESS** 3 min. walk from “Maji (馬路)” station on JR Sanin line

★ **MAP** <https://www.google.com/maps/place/35%C2%B007'51.6%22N+132%C2%B023'21.4%22E/@35.131,132.389266,17z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x0xdfd17b8b53b2198!8m2!3d35.1310002!4d132.3892665?hl=ja>



“HELLO,FRIENDS!!” is created by *The English Project Team*.
If you have any comments or questions, please contact us:
gakumh04@jn.shimane-u.ac.jp (addressed to Yuko Okada)
The English used on “HELLO,FRIENDS!!” is supervised
by our English teacher, *Ms. Murphy, Lynne*.

