The JAPAN Times

The only English-language Japanese newspaper archive of its kind that delivers over 100 years of Japanese perspectives on news, history and world affairs.
Ever since 1897 *The Japan Times* has reported daily in English on the people, places and goings-on in and beyond Japanese society.

*The Japan Times* was launched on March 22, 1897 during the Meiji era. This was a time when Japanese society experienced political, social, and industrial revolution, from being an isolated feudal society to emerging as a great power on the world stage. Fundamental changes took place, to social structures, internal politics, economy, military, and foreign relations.

It was during this era that the founder of *The Japan Times*, Motosada Zumoto (1863-1943), established the newspaper in order to give the Japanese people an opportunity to read and discuss news and current events in English. He also felt that because Japanese is a language not known among Westerners, Japan’s effort to become a leading world power was handicapped. The newspaper was needed to promote Japanese perspectives and opinions to the West. His efforts undoubtedly contributed to Japan’s ability to participate more fully in the international community.

“In gauging the degree of progress in civilization attained by a people, there is, I believe, no guide so sure and reliable as its public press.” - Motosada Zumoto during a meeting of the Japan Society in London in 1902.

According to the advertisers of *The Japan Times* at that time, the readership was composed of foreign residents as well as Japanese students and business people who needed to learn and speak English.

The newspaper was financed by Prince Ito Hirobumi (1841-1909), a four-time Prime Minister of Japan, so the newspaper was not entirely free from the influence of the Japanese government, but the aim of the newspaper was to be independent. Mr. Zumoto had claimed in speeches around the world that Japan’s press enjoyed almost as much political freedom as does the press of Britain or America.

From 1931 onward the Japanese government mounted more pressure on the paper’s editors to submit to its policies. In 1933, a former Japanese Foreign Ministry official was appointed as chief editor.

During World War II, the newspaper served as an outlet for Imperial Japanese government propaganda and editorial opinion.

Since 1996, the newspaper has been fully private and is not associated with any other mainline Japanese-language publications.
The Japan Times has offered a unique point-of-view, different from other Japanese language newspapers, since its first issue. This is a rare resource of media during Meiji and Taishō era, available in English.

Having pioneered overseas-focused journalism, The Japan Times focused on how to report Japanese issues to a non-Japanese audience. This perspective where the focus is on intercultural understanding offers valuable for research in both history and culture.

With the mottos, “All the News without Fear or Favor” and “The World’s Window on Japan”, The Japan Times newspaper is an independent publication, not associated with the mainline Japanese-language publications. As the only English-language Japanese newspaper archive of this depth, The Japan Times Digital Archive delivers over a century of news and history on world affairs from a Japanese perspective.

Content Includes:

- News, Opinions (Editorials, Op-eds, Letters to the Editor)
- Features - Life and Style, community, media, technology, food and drink, travel, environment, education, cartoons
- Entertainment - Film, art, music, stage, books, event previews, festival listing
- Sports - Domestic and overseas, including coverage of baseball, soccer, basketball, sumo and figure skating
- Advertisements from the very first issue in 1897

Articles found in The Japan Times often included information that was not published in the Japanese-language press. Some articles influenced not only the Japanese government, but also foreign entities:

- In 1914, The Japan Times first reported on the Siemens Scandal. The collusion of the Imperial Japanese Navy led to the fall of the cabinet of Yamamoto.
- In 1924, there were special features on the U.S.-Japan friendship. A special volume called "Message from Japan to America" was published. "A Message from Americans in Japan" was also published later that year.
- In 1934, when the Society Page carried an interview with a German journalist named Richard Sorge. This was a full seven years before he made headlines having been exposed as a Soviet spy.
- In 1945, the editorial revealed Japanese citizens’ mixed feelings toward the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers occupation. The Japan Times featured an editorial called “What shall we think of the Americans?”
- In 1955, a young woman’s victory in a small tennis tournament was reported, which was about four years before she became the new Crown Princess (now Empress) Michiko.

IMPORTANT RESEARCH FROM THE JAPAN TIMES
RESEARCHING THE JAPAN TIMES DIGITAL ARCHIVE

The Japan Times Digital Archive features the most innovative and user-friendly interface for discovering deep archive of any Japanese newspaper (English or Japanese).

Researchers now have online access to nearly 500,000 pages of a searchable English-language trove of over a century of Japanese history. Users can now search and view all the valuable resources The Japan Times has been delivering to the world, including thousands of detailed articles about Japan and East Asia, since its inception.

Key Features
- Every issue, published from March 1897 is searchable
- View graphic images photos and illustrations
- Text within advertisements is searchable
- Download or print articles in high resolution
- Includes special supplements of particular and unique interest to researchers, going back to the 1890's, including “EU Special”, “Global 30 Universities”, “Davos Special” and more.

As the only English-language Japanese newspaper archive of this depth, no prior knowledge of Japanese is necessary to use the database.

The online search tools allow users to enter keywords to find articles or advertisements on specific topics, with the option to limit searches to publication dates, title, specific days of the week, type of publication (Main, Extra or Supplement) or by Imperial Period:
- Meiji ([1868-1913] 1897-1912)
- Taishō (1912-1926)
- Shōwa (1926-1989)