

Press Release

Embassy of Japan

P.O. BOX 300, Republic of the Marshall Islands 96960
PHONE: 652-3311

Japanese Coach conducts “Yakyu” Training for School Children

Date: July 14, 2026
Majuro, Marshall Islands

On Tuesday, July 14, 2026, the opening ceremony was held for the Japanese baseball promotion event organized by the Embassy of Japan and Public School System (PSS) in the presence of H.E. SOMA Hirohisa, Ambassador of Japan, Honorable Gerald Zackios, Minister of Education, Sports and Training, and Honorable Kalani Kaneko, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, representing the Marshall Islands Baseball and Softball Federation (MIBSF).

This 5-day event includes 6 half-day training sessions for school children from 4 to 8 grades and 2 demo-game sessions on the last day. At the end of each field session, the coach will provide a brief overview of the history and development of baseball in Japanese culture. In addition, special training sessions for local coaches and umpires are also scheduled. The event is more than just a sports event; it is a cultural experience that fosters “respect, discipline, responsibility, and teamwork” as essential life skills through training and practice in “yakyu” or Japanese-style baseball.

Mr. YOMODA Ryusei represents the Baseball Federation of Japan (BFJ) and provides guidance to over 150 school children, local coaches and umpires throughout the event. He has dedicated his life to “yakyu” starting baseball at the age of 5 and played through university. He obtained the physical education degree and gained his coaching experiences in Japan. He also coached in Tanzania as a JICA volunteer and deepen his insights in coaching children with diverse cultural backgrounds.

The event was also an all-Japan collaborative effort supported by various private-sector organizations under the BFJ, such as JR East Baseball Team (railway company), Meiji Yasuda Baseball Team (insurance company), Japan Rubber Baseball Association (sports association), Isono Undouguten CO., LTD (sports equipment distributor). The equipment provided by those organizations was cordially handed over from the BFJ to the PSS during the opening ceremony.

At the opening ceremony, Ambassador SOMA said, “I hope that through this experience, every child will discover both the joy and the challenges of ‘yakyu’ and the event will inspire them to keep playing, growing and striving toward their own goals.” He also expressed his hope that this event would forge new and lasting bonds between Japan and the Marshall Islands, based on shared passion, mutual respect, and the universal language of sports.

On behalf of the government of the Marshall Islands, and especially on behalf of children, Minister Zakios conveyed his gratitude to Coach YOMODA and the BFJ for providing this opportunity and equipment. He noted that “yakyu” is about discipline and building the whole person and added that it builds teams, partnerships, and discipline, and also contributes to good health and so many other things.

For more information, please contact:

Embassy of Japan (Tel: 625-3311)

Mr. KOYAMA Misaki (Email: misaki.koyama@mofa.go.jp)

Mr. Greg Obeketang (Email: obeketang.greg@mj.mofa.go.jp)

【Photos】



Speech by Ambassador SOMA



Speech by Minister Zackios



Speech by Coach YOMODA



Speech by Minister Kaneko



Equipment handover



Group photo