

E-Mail Newsletter from Mayor of Okayama City “Challenge of Legendary Okayama” (17)
May 27th Issue

【Exchange with Luoyang~57th descendant of Bai Lotien who drinks like a fish~】

Hello, I'm Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

I visited Luoyang City, China that has a sister city relationship with Okayama City from May 18th to 20th.

In Luoyang City, I exchanged opinions for the further relationship of both cities through talks with Mayor of Luoyang and the chief of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in Luoyang City. With this visit, I expect our relationship will be more advanced.

At the same time, I was able to feel the importance and magnificence of the city's history when I visited a town that was called “the ancient capital of the 9 dynasties”, the Longmen stone cave which has been registered as the world heritage, and the Yellow River which is the second longest river in China. It was a very meaningful visit. I would like to introduce two points that I was especially impressed.

First, a welcome activity that Luoyang Foreign Language school held for us. About 200 students who belong to Japanese class gathered and held events. From modern dance to traditional dance, I was amused by their various events. I was especially impressed by a dance by the female students who wore Yukata along with “song of the four seasons” and also danced and sang acting as a popular Japanese idol group AKB48. I was near tears when I saw it.

Secondly, I was impressed by the hospitality of meal and sake day and night. At a feast in China, I knew that there is a custom to drink up a high percentage of alcohol after making a toast. And I was ready for that but was overwhelmed by it.

Especially, a feast held by the National People's Congress was very intense. They repeatedly made a toast and drank up an alcohol with 53 degrees called “Tokoshu” with every participant with a small glass (a small version of a wine glass). Among the participants, there was Mr. Bai Zhigang, the vice chief of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and also he is the 57th descendant of Bai Lotien.

Bai Lotien was famous for loving alcohol and appears in many poems and songs. The descendant inherited his DNA so he was able to drink so much. I was just taken a back by him toasting three times with every person of the delegation and he came back to me for the third toast for the second round. I need to train my liver by the next visit.

However, I believe Mr. Bai canceled his job in the afternoon.