

「Email Newsletter from Mayor of Okayama (57) October 15th Issue

【attending “Setouchi four prefectural capital Mayors conference”】

Hello. This is Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

On October 2nd, the first Setouchi four prefectural capital mayors conference was taken place to deal with common issues in cooperation with Hiroshima city, Takamatsu city, Matsuyama city, and Okayama City which are central cities of Setouchi and aim to show our synergistic effect by utilizing each other’ s strength.

Let me briefly explain how this conference happened.

I always believed that fulfilling polices which not only city itself carries out but also a wide area including surrounding regions do together was essential to make Okayama city even better.

And two things were always in my head; one is efforts made by Okayama city, surrounding cities, and towns together, and another one is “Setouchi brand” . I had this feeling that if four ordinance-designated cities such as Okayama city, Hiroshima city, Takamatsu city and Matsuyama city from Shikoku region cooperate with each other, we’ d be able to make effective efforts that lead to regional development. I told my idea to Mayor of Hiroshima who sat next to me at Ordinance-Designated City Mayors Conference where I participated this May and he agreed. Then I talked to Mayor of Takamatsu and Mayor of Hiroshima talked to Mayor of Matsuyama and realized this “Setouchi four prefectural capital mayors conference” .

I went to Matsuyama city where the meeting was held when I still have jetlag because it was a day after the day I came back from Mexico. Dogo Onsen main building was the venue and we wore not suits we usually wear but happi coat which advertises each local area and it had a slightly informal atmosphere. Thus the meeting livened up beyond my expectation in topics such as tourism promotion, special products and their market expansion.

We all have agreed to have administrative officers determine details to make concrete efforts in domestic and foreign (especially Asia regions) countries together after next year.

Mayor of Hiroshima even suggested making an emblem of the conference by next meeting.

Moreover, just four of us had a social gathering after the conference, which really came alive. I can't tell you details though...

There each Mayor constantly came up with specific ideas about what to do next year. I believe we have built stronger relationship of trust and had a meaningful conference that each mayor felt a good response.

At present, total population of four cities is approximately three million people and each city leads their own sphere. I hope to make a good use of "Setouchi four prefectural capital Mayors conference" to seek synergy and develop into "win-win" relationship.

I'd like to connect this activity to further development of entire Setouchi regions.