

Email Newsletter from Mayor of Okayama (122) October 21, 2019 Issue

【G20 Health Ministers' Meeting has finished.】

Hello, I'm Masao Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

G20 Okayama Health Ministers' Meeting was held in Okayama City on 19th & 20th October. 34 official representatives from the G20 membership and the invitee countries have discussed the issues around ageing and infectious diseases that are the part of global important medical & health issues.

On 18th November, one day before the Meeting, City of Okayama arranged the welcome reception party for the participants. We celebrated the Meeting with locally-produced foods, local traditional god-entertainment performance [*Bicchū Kagura*], and piano performance by a local pianist.

On behalf of the host city, I made a presentation on the future vision of wellbeing in Okayama, 'Positive Health Okayama'. Promotion Supportive Association of G20 Health Ministers' Meeting summarised this concept with municipal offices, prefectural offices, and other local autonomous actors. We will realise it by 2030.

Besides, eight representative students from Joto, Sozan, and Gakugeikan high schools made statements on women's health and medical issues. In the rehearsal, they looked a bit nervous and I was somehow worried about them. On the day, however, they did a great job. Their performances and the contents were wonderful and they got an extraordinary applause from the audiences.

On the same day, the reception evening party arranged for the ministers was held at Kakumeikan in Okayama Korakuen Garden, which is known for its Japanese-style warriors' resident. Traditional Japanese theatre performance [*Kyogen*] was introduced, and food produced in Okayama was politely served for them.

Suddenly, while we were having friendly talks, Swedish representative began to sing an impromptu song. Then, Spanish representative danced Flamenco in pairs. Lithuanian representative started to beat the table as a drum in the end. You see how we've got an excited reception.

On 20th, I brought the representatives to a glossary store and a walking gym at Branch Okayama Kitanagase. The facility stands for wellbeing promotion by pooling finance and knowhow from the private sectors.

During the observation tour in the glossary store, I explained about healthy food. French representative said, “It is good that Japanese people are flexible. French people stick to cheese and wine, and they do not intend to change the eating habitat. They are stubborn.”

Besides, at the walking gym, the observant group highly approved the attitude towards the holistic promotion of wellbeing in Okayama City. Some representatives made a joke by saying “Let’s make a walking summit in the next Meeting in Saudi Arabia.”

The representative from the United States kindly came to the executive office and directly gave an honourable comment. “This is the most thoughtful reception that I’ve ever seen although I’ve participated in various meetings.” Besides, the representative from Italy also said “That was the best reception.”

I do appreciate the outputs from the representatives from each country and region during the Meeting over the three days, and I am satisfied that they got a good impression of Okayama.

From now, we would like to prevail the idea of wellbeing to the Okayama citizens by promoting ‘Positive Health Okayama’ which was made as the legacy of the Meeting. Moreover, the practical experiences of administrating an international meeting will be useful when we will organise other international forums and meetings in the future.