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Article : Tokushima's Colorful Summer Dance Festival is Back!

Directions: Read the following article aloud.

The Shikoku town of Tokushima is creating a new committee to plan and fund the iconic Awa Odori, bringing back its festivities after two years of COVID-19 uncertainties.

Summer festivals and Awa Odori are often thought of in tandem, especially in the Shikoku town of Tokushima, which boasts one of the most famous festivals featuring the traditional Japanese dancing. The warm nights of the season invite the colorful footwork and graceful hands of trained experts and townspeople, alike. Yet, the talents that go into production have been threatened by the impact of COVID-19, which shut down many festivals over the past two years.

One town is fighting back. Tokushima, located on the eastern corner of Shikoku Island, created an executive committee specifically “for the future of Awa Odori.”

The new organization, set up by Tokushima City and the local business community, is solely focused on supporting the festival. The first meeting, held April 8, discussed the scale of the town’s 2022 festivities, the likely costs and sources for its income, and the COVID-19 situation.

The city announced in February that it will hold the 2022 Awa Odori Dance Festival outdoors from August 12 to 15, during the Buddhist *obon* festival for honoring the dead. Barring any large-scale explosion in the number of infections, the city confirmed that it would set up two areas for viewing the event, one paid and the other free.

The seating capacity would be held to about 60% of capacity. Tickets sales for seats, part of the fundraising, will open from late June.

The city tourism association had run the festival activities including Tokushima’s Awa Odori festival, for years. However, the association went bankrupt after its large cumulative deficit became public, and a private consortium has been in charge of its operation since 2019.

Moreover, the consortium and the business group involved in the festival had clashed over who should shoulder the financial burden caused by the cancellation of the festival for two years due to the pandemic. This prompted Mayor Sawako Naito to dissolve the group and set up a new one.

Since 2020 the city has been the sole sponsor of the 3-day shortened version of the event.

Source: Tokushima's Colorful Summer Dance Festival is Back!

<https://japan-forward.com/corona-ni-makeruna-tokushimas-colorful-summer-dance-festival-is-back/>

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2 Key phrases and vocabulary

Directions: First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. graceful 優雅な、優美な、上品な、品のある

- Penguins look clumsy on land, but they are **graceful** swimmers underwater.

2. threatened 絶滅の恐れがある状態である、存続が危ぶまれている、危険が迫っている、脅かされている

- Toki is listed as **threatened** species.

3. fundraising 寄付金集めの、資金集めの

- They are organizing many **fundraising** events to help disaster victims.

4. shoulder a / the burden 重荷を背負う、負担を担う

- After her father died, his daughter had to **shoulder the burden** of running the business.

3 Questions

Directions: Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Why were many festivals cancelled over the past two years?
2. When will Awa Odori Dance Festival take place in 2022?
3. Have you participated any dance festivals?
4. Which festival would you recommend to go?

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日本語関連記事： めごたごた、続きの阿波おどり、新実行委発足 夏4日間開催へ

徳島市と地元経済界などでつくる阿波おどりの新たな主催団体「阿波おどり未来へつなぐ実行委員会」が8日、発足した。市内で初会合を開き、新型コロナウイルスの感染状況に応じた今夏の開催規模や収支計画などを議論した。

市は今年の阿波おどりを、コロナ禍前と同様の8月12～15日に屋外で開催する方針を2月に示している。初会合では、大規模な感染拡大が生じていない場合に、有料と無料の観覧場所を2カ所ずつ設けて座席の収容率を約60%に抑えるなどの対策を講じることを確認した。観覧席のチケット販売は6月以降になる見通し。

徳島市の阿波おどりは、長く市観光協会が運営していたが、多額の累積赤字が発覚し破産。令和元年から民間の共同事業体が運営を担った。コロナ禍の影響で中止となった令和2年分の資金負担をめぐり、内藤佐和子市長が委員長を務めた実行委（解散）と事業体が対立。3日間に短縮して開かれた昨年は、暫定的に市が主催した。

出典： めごたごた、続きの阿波おどり、新実行委発足 夏4日間開催へ
<https://japan-forward.com/japanese/99101/>