

if Asia-Pacific nations resolved and agreed to create a free and open business environment in the Asia-Pacific, which would be the world's largest such trade area. All countries recognize the importance of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which aims to promote free trade, but the negotiations are making little headway, and not much progress has been made in the talks. If the FTAAP becomes a reality, other regions will realize that they might be left behind unless they liberalize as well. This would mean much greater chances that talks at the WTO would make prog-

ress. And if the FTAAP were linked with the European Union, nearly all world trade would be liberalized, with the exception of Africa and parts of Latin America. Whichever scenario comes to pass, the FTAAP will help lead to freer world trade and investment.

**Japan is to consider taking part in TPP negotiations. What significance would that have?**

If Japan took part, it would no doubt be a plus

## Cool Japan Schedule, 2011 (selected events)

**150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of  
Japan-Germany relations**

**50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of  
Japan-Kuwait relations**

**20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment  
of new diplomatic relations between  
Japan and Estonia/Latvia/Lithuania**

### January 27

#### Japan Night in Davos

**Venue: Central Sporthotel, Davos, Switzerland**

The World Economic Forum holds its Annual Meeting in Davos, January 26–30, inviting world business and political leaders, intellectuals and journalists to discuss a range of global social and economic issues. On January 27, JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) will hold a Japan Night at the venue, on the initiative of the Japanese Government, providing participants the opportunity to find out more about Japan, its traditional foods, culinary culture and other tourist attractions.

### February 2–13

#### Japan Media Arts Festival

**Venue: The National Art Center, Tokyo, Japan**

The Agency for Cultural Affairs annually organizes the Japan Media Arts Festival to commend outstanding media art works in the genres of entertainment, animation and manga. The 14<sup>th</sup> Japan Media Arts Festival will exhibit 171 works selected from 2,645 entries from 49 countries.

### April

#### Al Janadriyah National Festival for Heritage and Culture

**Venue: Janadriyah, near Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

The annual Janadriyah National Festival for Heritage and Culture is held in the Janadriyah region of Saudi Arabia to celebrate traditional Saudi culture. It attracts more than one million people every year. Since 2008, one country has been invited as a guest country, and in 2011 the invited guest is Japan. Japan intends to showcase both its cutting-edge technologies in fields such as water, environment and energy, and its cultural strengths in both traditional and contemporary fields.

not only for Japan but also for Asia, the Asia-Pacific and the world. TPP participation would mean market liberalization. For Japan, it would break the paralysis rooted in such factors as the low birthrate and the aging of the population. It would be a big shot in the arm.

On the other hand, the opening of markets would mean problems for agriculture since greater imports of agricultural and marine products would possibly dent Japan's agricultural production, lowering farmer incomes.

Nonetheless, Japan went through the same

sort of experience in coping with similar changes in the context of trade friction with the United States during the 1980s. Products such as domestic oranges and beef were dealt a blow, but dint of effort made Japanese *wagyu* beef popular abroad, while items such as high-quality *mikan* orange juice were born as new products capable of competing with orange juice. Japanese rice, moreover, has good potential as an export item since it is popular abroad for its safety and good taste. I think we could expect Japanese participation in the TPP to have a big impact.

### March 18–25

#### 12<sup>th</sup> Japan Fashion Week in Tokyo

**Venue:** Tokyo Midtown, Japan

Tokyo Fashion Week is an annual festival of fashion featuring the work of young designers from all over the world. The highlight is Tokyo Collection Week, which showcases the 2011–12 Autumn/Winter Collection.

### June 30–July 3

#### 12<sup>th</sup> Japan Expo

**Venue:** Parc des Expositions de Paris-Nord Villepinte, France



REUTERS/AELO

Japan Expo is an eagerly anticipated event in France held annually since 2000. The Expo showcases both traditional and contemporary aspects of Japanese culture, including the martial arts, literature, manga, animation, music, movies and fashion. In 2010, Japan Expo attracted about 173,000 visitors over its four-day run.

### August 6–November 6

#### Yokohama Triennale 2011

**Venue:** Yokohama Museum of Art, NYK Waterfront Warehouse, Kanagawa, Japan

The fourth Yokohama Triennale is an international contemporary art exhibition at which some of the world's leading contemporary artists are invited to show and produce art works and hold workshops. The third Yokohama Triennale, held in 2008, attracted some 550,000 visitors.

### September–November

#### Japan International Contents Festival (CoFesta)

**Venue:** Tokyo and Other Cities, Japan

Japan International Contents Festival is the umbrella term for a wide range of events which take place in Tokyo and other cities in Japan mainly from September to November. Through CoFesta, visitors can experience the full force of "Cool Japan" trends in "contents" genres including film, animation, broadcast media, games, music and manga.



WATARU MUKAI