

From “the Pearl of Africa” Uganda,

October 2026 Issue (Reiwa 8)

I have a lot to share with you this month as well.

1. Anime Night Held at the Ambassador’s Residence

Japanese anime is widely loved by people all over the world, regardless of nationality, cultural background, or generation. I learned that in Kampala, Uganda, anime enthusiasts hold monthly meetups at a Japanese restaurant in the city.

This month, we hosted our first-ever Anime Night at the Ambassador’s Residence, which also served as an opportunity to interact with the local Japanese community. The core members are part of a group called “What About Anime.” The participants come from diverse backgrounds, including students and working professionals. They have been deepening their bonds by holding monthly events featuring Japanese anime quizzes and presentations on each other’s favorite anime series.

On October 1, approximately 80 members gathered at the Ambassador’s Residence. The Embassy organized activities to introduce Japanese culture, such as origami, kendama, and kimono-wearing experiences. We also introduced JICA’s activities to raise broader awareness of Japan’s initiatives in Uganda.





[Photos from Anime Night]

While interacting with fellow anime fans, I learned that Kampala is home to animation studios capable of competing on the global stage. CREATURES ANIMATION STUDIO was founded primarily by the Malinga brothers, who majored in visual arts abroad. Another studio is KATOTO STUDIO. This studio is also led by a team of talented animation creators, spearheaded by Richard and Lewis, who studied animation production in France. They produce original works featuring cute characters, among other projects. These studios are currently fulfilling commissions from the Ugandan government and international organizations as part of their business operations.

I hope that, building on their animation expertise, they will be able to forge relationships with the Japanese animation industry.

2. “ASHES GIVE BIRTH TO FIRE,” a Documentary Set in Uganda

“ASHES GIVE BIRTH TO FIRE,” one of seven films nominated for the 4th Tokyo Independent Film Festival, is a documentary directed by Aki Fujiwara and set in rural Uganda.

Director Fujiwara currently resides in Guinea but was based in Kampala, Uganda, until last year. This film, created through her encounters with various people in Uganda, received high praise at the Tokyo film festival. As a result of the selection process, “ASHES GIVE BIRTH TO FIRE” was chosen as the runner-up for the Grand Prix.

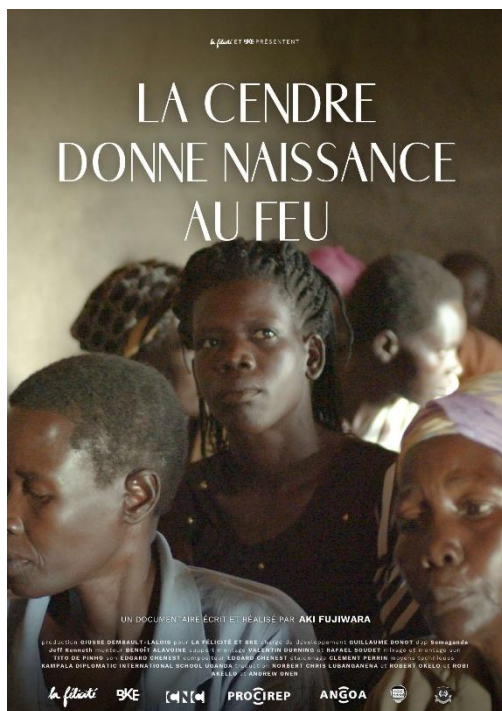
The reality is that there are still many areas in rural Uganda that lack electricity. The film depicts the people of Uganda living in such environments—including their limited access to water—and the new developments brought about by the arrival of electricity, all captured through meticulous camerawork. It is also an outstanding documentary from the perspective of offering a glimpse into daily life in Uganda. If you have the opportunity, I highly recommend that all readers of this column go see it.

On October 31, a screening of the seven award-winning films will be held at the Wataresu Common Hall in Kanda, Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo.

You can reserve a spot for the screening via the link below (admission is free).

<https://www.jimbochocollective.com/timf>

Congratulations to Director Fujiwara on his award!



[Posters and Photos of “ASHES GIVE BIRTH TO FIRE”]

3. Kampala: A Construction Boom

In Kampala, new office buildings, apartment complexes, and commercial facilities are being built one after another, creating the distinct atmosphere of a construction boom.

Recently, the Marriott Hotel opened its doors. Two adjacent buildings, a hotel tower and a residential tower—were constructed. In addition, large Asian-owned supermarkets are opening one after another. Infrastructure such as electricity and water supply is essential for such large-scale facilities.

As this construction boom continues, the city's infrastructure is likely to improve as well. In fact, sewer line construction is proceeding at a rapid pace along major routes. I believe Kampala's living environment will improve at a rapid pace.



[Newly Opened Hotel]



[Asian Supermarket]



[Construction Work on the Infrastructure]

(End)