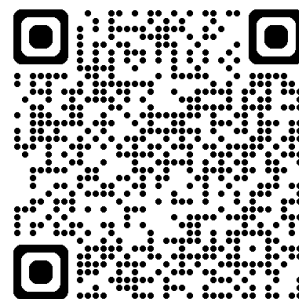


Extreme heat continues to wallop Hokkaido and Japan at large



<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20250724151630727/>

Those hoping for a break from Japan's punishing heat wave will have to wait a little longer. Weather officials say Thursday will still be a scorcher, especially in the country's northernmost prefecture of Hokkaido. The daytime high in Hokkaido's Obihiro city reached 38 degrees Celsius in the afternoon. Officials are calling it an unprecedented heat that could even be life-threatening. Some places were even hotter. The mercury hit 39 degrees in the nearby city of Kitami, a record high. Similar temperatures were seen across Japan including in Fukushima, Gunma, Kyoto, and Hyogo prefectures. Heat-stroke alerts span most of the country from Hokkaido in the north all the way to Okinawa in the south. Officials say it could lead to unstable atmospheric conditions. Eastern Japan in particular could be hit by sudden localized downpours. They are asking people to stay on alert. Officials say flooding, landslides, swollen rivers, lightning strikes, gusts and hail could also occur. Joining us now from Hokkaido is NHK World's Aoki Midori. She's in Obihiro for us. So Midori, you're in one of the hottest places in the country right now. How are you feeling?

I have lived here for 3 years, and I have never felt the heat like this. We are in Tokachi region which has been under a heatstroke alert for 3 straight days but today is definitely the worst so far. The sun is especially strong, so it was hot even early in the morning. I don't know if you can tell on camera, but I can't stop sweating and it feels like my skin is just burning. I can't overstate how crazy it is to have heat like this here in Hokkaido of all places.

As I understand, the region is just not used to coping with this. Right?

Exactly, because Hokkaido usually has cooler summers, many buildings don't have air conditioning. So even if you are inside, you are at risk of heatstroke. Hospitals and schools are trying to keep things cool by installing fans for example, but some schools even went a step further and shortened classes or canceled them entirely. Officials are also going door to door to make sure people are safe. They are visiting elderly residents at home to see if they are staying hydrated. Cooling shelters have also been set up in some public facilities. But the heat is not just putting people's health at risk, there's fears about what it could do to

people's livelihoods. This region is one of Japan's dairy powerhouses. Many veterinarians say heatstroke is also hitting the area's cattle population. Even agricultural farms are struggling. If the heat drags on, their crops may die. If things don't cool down soon, people across Japan will start to see the impact at the dinner table.

We'll have to keep an eye on that. Thank you Midori.

Source: (NHK World News)

Now discuss the questions with a partner.

1. Have you noticed any unusual weather patterns this year? What's been the most concerning to you?
2. What strategies do you have to beat the heat?
3. Would you be open to changing your lifestyle to adapt to hotter summers (waking up earlier, adjusting work hours)?
4. How does hot weather affect your mood, energy, or sleep?
5. How might these changes in weather affect travel, tourism, or daily life in Japan?