



森鐵物語
~ The stories of Forest Rail ~

Route settings & Cultural background

Route settings



The Matsuhara Line was constructed in the late 1890s, connecting Matsuhara with Asashikawa forest. It has a branch line from Numahara to Ōyamaguchi. It used to be operated by a local forestry company for timber transportation.

In the first few years, this line operated freight trains only. But with the development of the forestry industry, more people moved into this area, leading to a scheduled passenger train service being introduced in 1912. In the late 1930s, four KiHa 750 (based on JNR KiHa 07) DMUs were put into service to handle the fast growing passenger flow.

After WWII, most logging camps were closed to protect forest resources, which caused traffic on this line to drop sharply. Passenger train services ceased operation in the 1960s; some parts of the line were also closed.

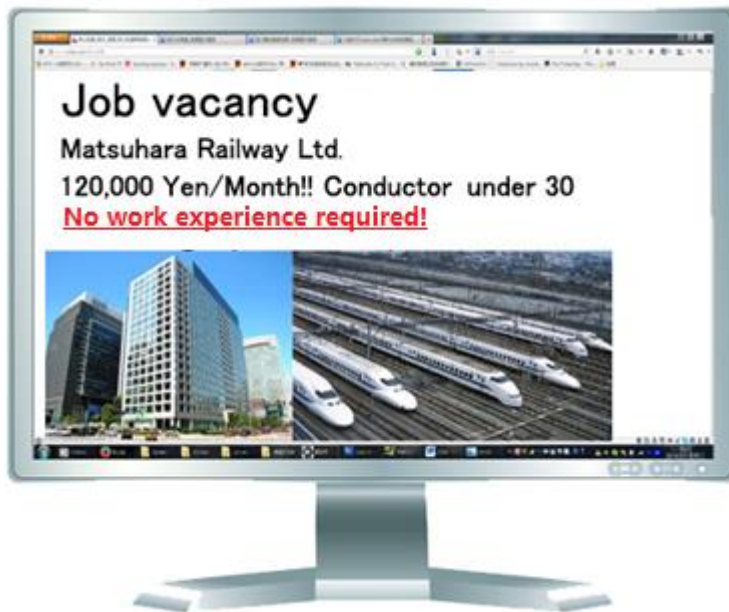
In late 1990s, as the tourism industry rose, people started moving back to this area. A local businessman bought this line and restarted passenger services with two rail buses modified from the B20 Coaster, which was imported from Hong Kong. The company announced that KiHa 750s will return to service once repaired and they would introduce a new air-conditioned train to deal with the growing passenger volume. Rumour had it that they would buy the CR75 DMU (KiHa 130) and install vending machines in the cabin. However, there were only a few train services a day in the warm, rainy area. Some parts of the line are covered by grass and wild flower.

Story Settings

With the deepening of the economic crisis, unemployment shot up. As a matter of fact, it's more difficult for university graduates to find a good job.....



But it's lucky for Izumi Chisa, she found quite a nice job on the internet. Well, at least it looked good on the website.



Quite a nice job, isn't it?

But.....

The reality may be different 🤔 😁

Dialogue between Izumi Chisa and Aoyama Yakumo

1. About the company



: Why does your company look totally different from your advertisement?!



: Photos are only for reference, the actual thing may be different.



: \$@#(!*&#^!#*

2. About the train Kiha 720



: OMG what's this? A piece of junk?



: They bought it from a junkyard, actually.



: At least we did some modification and it's working perfectly.



: There are flames in the engine and the brakes

malfunction...you call this WORKING PERFECTLY?!

3. About new trains and future improvement



: Besides Kiha 750, will there be any future improvements?



: I've ordered two CR75 DMUs with vending machines, they are now under maintenance.



: New or used.....



: Our boss usually does not buy **NEW** things, so...



: Ma-da-ku, I'm good at financing



: So if electrified, he will introduce something like the JNR 103 Series EMU or an even older model?



: You got my point.

Railbus Kiha 720



: This train used to be the backbone of our fleet.

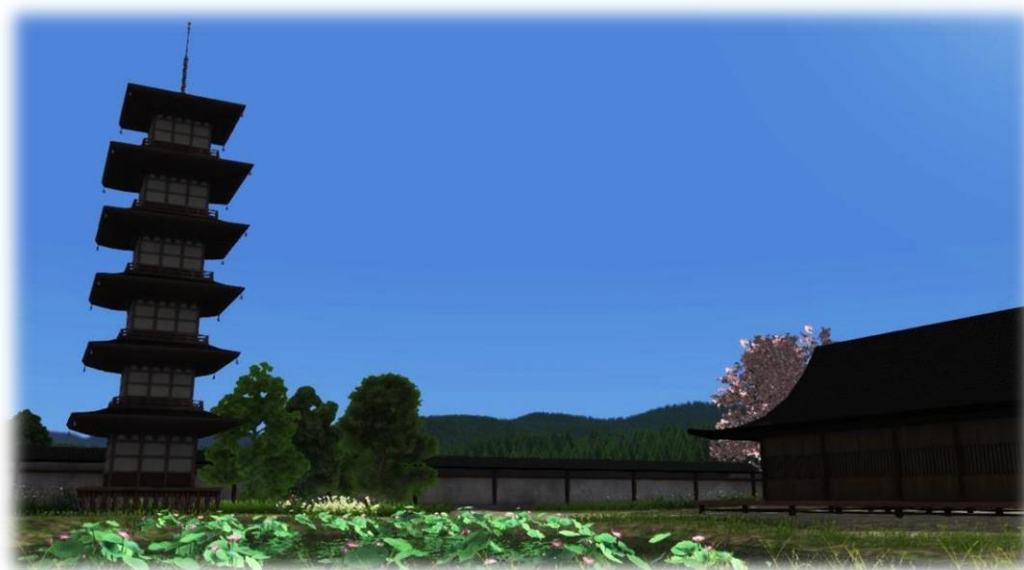


: OMG...you didn't even change its original direction board! Tuen Mun to KaiTak Airport. KaiTak airport closed in 1998, so this little bus is at least 16 years old!!



: 24 years old to be exact.

Cultural background



Buddhism in Japan

Buddhism has a long history in Japan. It was first introduced to Japan around 552 AD (or so). Buddhism has had a major influence on the culture and development of Japan over the centuries.

A typical Buddhist temple consists of: Main gate, Main Hall, Jizō Hall, Buddha Hall, Lecture Hall, Yakushi Hall, Kannon Hall, etc. Some smaller temples may only have one or two of these halls.

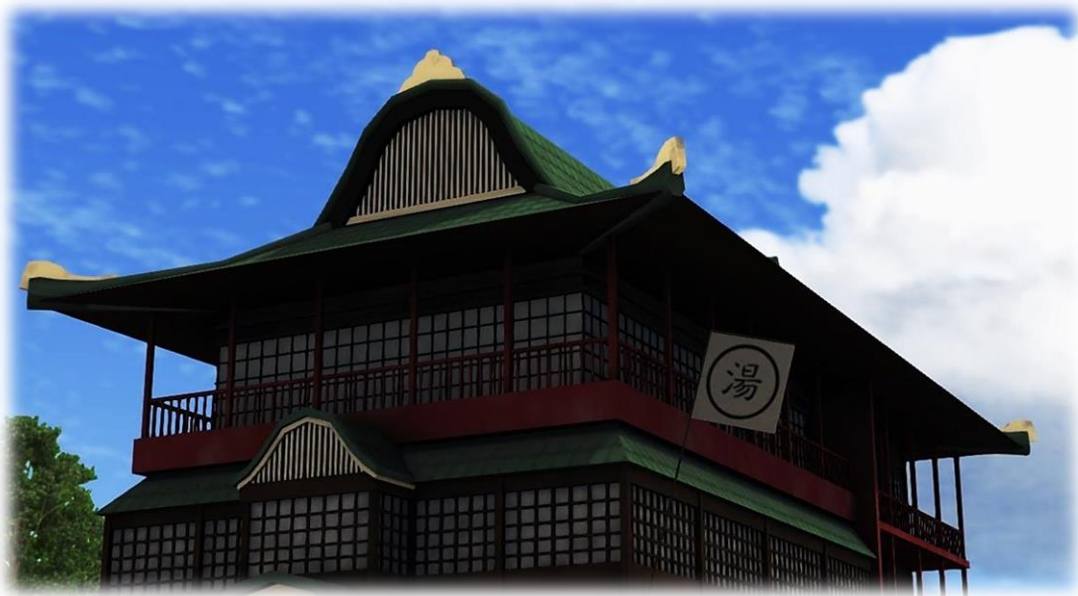
Some famous temples in Japan

Name	Location
Chūson-ji	Hiraizumi, Iwate
Tō-ji	Kyoto
Jōruri-ji	Kizugawa, Kyoto
Daigo-ji	Kyoto
Byōdō-in	Kyoto
Kanshin-ji	Kawachinagano, Osaka
Kōfuku-ji	Nara, Nara
Gangō-ji	Nara, Nara
Hōryū-ji	Ikaruga, Nara
Sōfuku-ji	Nagasaki
Myōdō-in	Fukuyama, Hiroshima

For more information, you can visit

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism_in_Japan#Cultural_influence

Hot Springs in Japan



Japan is a volcanically active country. As a result, there are thousands of onsen across the country. Onsen were used as public bathing places traditionally, today they play an important role in attracting tourists.

Onsen come in many different types and shapes, including roten-buro or noten-buro (outdoor) and indoor baths. The presence of an onsen is often indicated on signs or maps by the symbol ♨ or the kanji, 湯.

In ancient times, men and women bathed together at onsen, but gender separation has been enforced since the Meiji Restoration in the late 19th century.

Onsen water is believed to have healing properties because it contains mineral substances. A particular onsen may feature several different baths, each with water with a different mineral composition.

If you're interested in taking a bath in one of the Japanese onsen, you can visit this website for more information including how to take a bath in the Japanese onsen and list of onsen in Japan.

<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2292.html>

Floating Paper Lanterns



In China and Japan, the custom of floating water lanterns is an important activity in many festivals.

In China, floating water lanterns (放河灯) can be seen during many festivals like Magpie Festival (known as Chinese Valentine's Day), Ghost Festival (or Mid-July Days), etc. People will write their wishes on the lantern and float it in a river or lake. In some southern areas, people float paper lanterns to send away disease and misfortune. So, in China floating lanterns have a variety of different meanings and can be used in many different circumstances.

In Japan, these activities are called Tōrō Nagashi (灯籠流し). Tōrō is traditionally another word for lantern, while Nagashi means "cruise, flow". This is primarily done on the last evening of the Bon Festival based on the belief that this guides the spirits of the departed back to the other world. Traditional Japanese beliefs state that humans come from water, so the lanterns represent their bodies returning to water (traditionally the sea in this case).