

Current Coronavirus Situation**(this section has been quoted from President Komaba's message.)**

On April 11th, Japan recorded its largest daily coronavirus infection rate of 720 people and instituted a state of emergency, but figures began to drop after that, enabling the state of emergency to be rescinded on May 25th, and the infection rate as of May 29th is approximately thirty people per day, making a total so far of 17,500 infected people.

Restrictions will be relaxed in three steps from now on, and the government has announced that the entire country can return to normal from August 1st if we continue to pay attention to preventing additional infections. Although the government was slow off the mark to establish prevention measures, with the exception of a few cases, it is thought that all of the nation's citizens working together to maintain a high level of awareness of the risks and social order enabled us to achieve this result.

With regard to KSK, we have separated the work carried out by indirect departments into two offices from the perspective of BCP since the middle of April, cancelled all internal events, prohibited commutation by train and movement between offices, and are continuing with measures for reducing losses by introducing irregular double shifts and a four-day working week, etc.

We are also carrying out maintenance, repairs and improvements to production equipment, something that can only be done on this scale during times like this, and are systematically moving ahead with preparations for an immediate start on restoring demand in the latter half of the year.

We believe that we will have to work under new social and economic systems centered on the way in which the people of the world communicate with each other once the coronavirus pandemic finally comes to an end.

We pray that the pandemic will die down as soon as possible throughout the world so that we can once again return to normal.

Automotive Area**(Toyota's FCV strategy includes a counteroffensive to halve costs)**

Fuel cell vehicles (FCV) are set to become the new "normal". The greatest mission imposed upon Toyota Motors is to produce the next season's MIRAI FCV scheduled to be introduced onto the market by the end of 2020. In order to realize this prophesy, they must first overcome the cost barrier.

Yoshikazu Tanaka, Toyota's person in charge of the development for next season's MIRAI due to be released at the end of 2020, has raised a target of halving the cost of FC systems from the first generation of MIRAI. He stated that the reason why FCV costs are so high is because "very few units are being shipped". It is because of this that Toyota has solidified its strategy for the shared use of FC systems across a wide range of platforms (Fig.1). The FC stacks (batteries), which constitute the core component of FCVs, will be supplied for other vehicles in addition to the Toyota brand MIRAI FCV passenger vehicle.

In further detail, numbers will be secured in three main sectors. The first of these is the passenger vehicle sector, with Germany's BMW employing the Toyota FC stack on FCVs that will commence mass-production in 2022. The small-quantity mass-production of FCVs based on the X5 SUV model has been scheduled (by BMW). The second sector is fixed FCs that will be used as a source of energy for cities. Toyota is due to commence the construction of a smart city named Woven City in the city of Susono, Shizuoka Prefecture, at the beginning of 2021. Woven City will include a plan in which all buildings have solar panels installed on their roofs, and the energy generated by these will be used to produce hydrogen. The hydrogen produced with zero emissions will then be used to generate electricity with the FCs, thereby targeting energy self-sufficiency. And, the third sector will involve the commercial vehicles that Toyota has set its sights on.

It will be difficult to secure figures at the required scale only by supplying BMW and using FCs in the smart city experiment, but expectations are high for using them in FCVs now that a tailwind has begun to support the use of fuel cells in trucks and buses, etc. Market research company Fuji Keizai Co., Ltd. has estimated that the global FCV market for commercial vehicles will reach 1,539,200,000,000 yen by fiscal 2030, a 38.4-fold increase over fiscal 2018. Toyota has formed a tag team with Hino Motors to promote the use of FCs in commercial vehicles. The companies will move ahead with the joint development of FC trucks based on Hino's large PROFIA truck.

Next season's MIRAI scheduled to be sold by Toyota from end of 2020 (the images show the model in its final stage of development)



Fig.1. Fuel cell stack used on other platforms

The fuel cell stacks used for next season's MIRAI will also be used on other platforms



FCV power train that BMW is scheduled to mass-produce in 2022



Large FC truck jointly developed



FCs will be used as the energy source for the Woven City verification experiment for which Toyota is due to commence construction

Source: Automotive

Keihin Seimitsu Kogyo (Kaizen Presentation Videos)

Although we have regrettably been forced to cancel this year's KSK Kaizen Convention, we will be producing videos of the presentations by all teams (nine teams) scheduled to take part.

The actual filming of the videos will be carried out after we have completed the primary rehearsals and secondary rehearsals, with all processes scheduled to be completed by the end of September.

When the videos become available, we will send them out to everyone who has attended past Conventions, together with English subtitles.

Post-editorial Notes: (A special moment)

May 23rd marked the 33rd wedding anniversary of the author and his wife.

My wife has an extremely excitable personality, but I put her to many hardships by living together with my parents in the early days of our marriage, and made life very difficult for her by dragging her off to the unfamiliar country of America, where she had to grope in the dark on a daily basis and give birth to our children in a foreign nation. I was also mostly absent from the home while she raised our children and was forced to face the problem of bullying at school, despite which she managed to ensure that both of our kids grew up straight and strong.

We usually gather to celebrate at a tasteful restaurant on the day of our anniversary, but this year I arranged a caterer and we celebrated at home. After I had thanked my wife for thirty-three years of marriage, my younger daughter (who acts as the bond between us) said, "thank you for enduring the past thirty-three years for us," and I felt my chest tighten as I recognized that this phrase best summed up our situation.

And, to change the subject, I have been staying overnight occasionally at the company dormitory since the second half of April to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Although life in the dormitory entails certain tiresome chores, such as cleaning, laundering and going out to buy breakfast and dinner (although not under the watchful eye of the God of Thunder), I find it quite relaxing and am enjoying myself.

The other day, I went for a run around the neighborhood after finishing work and then returned to the dormitory to drink alone, and while enjoying some songs on YouTube, I came across the We Are The World 2020 song written for the people suffering from the effects of the coronavirus in America, the various songs written to cheer on the people in the medical profession who are battling against the virus and all of the other songs that are full of compassion, and I had trouble controlling my tears as I realized just how wonderful people are in times of trouble.

I found it hard to endure the compassionate way in which people try to understand each other when they are suffering or otherwise experiencing hardships, and I wondered what sort of fool I was as I sat there alone in the dormitory feeling deeply moved by their actions.

It was once again brought home to me that I am what I am and will never change as I spent that heartwarming spring night all alone.