

## 2021.2 北九州市立大学外国語学部/練習問題 No2 (要約)

The lockdown is affecting the world in more ways than initially expected. It's true we all expected pollution situations across the world to get worse, and there has already been much proof of that, including this Indian town from which one can now see the [Himalayan ranges](#) 100 miles away. This particular story is set in Japan. According to a [press release](#), it's not just humans that are missing each other but eels from a Japanese aquarium have missed seeing human eyes watching them roam about in their enclosure.

Typically, eels carry on with their activity even when people came to visit them. However, Japan has been on lockdown from March 1 this year, so it's been a good two months since the eels have had visitors and they've practically forgotten what we look like.

Maintenance workers at The Sumida Aquarium in the Tokyo Skytree tower noticed that the tiny spotted eels acting in a peculiar way is unlike themselves—burrowing into the sand whenever a worker passed by their enclosure. It is being said that the 65+ days break since the start of the lockdown has severely affected their memory of what humans look like. According to research, garden eels are very careful and sensitive by nature and are known to submerge themselves in the sand when triggered; however, the aquarium revealed that the eels had learned to accept the human presence as the facility was always filled with visitors. Now, as the eels are used to a human-less environment, their newfound shyness is making it difficult for the staff to conduct regular health check-ups on them.

To combat this situation and possibly reacclimate the eels with humans, the aquarium has come up with a novel solution—a three-day "emergency event" starting on May 3 called the "face-showing festival" with the aim of "not forgetting the existence of humans." Through the event, the aquarium is set to allow people from all over the world to "talk" to the eels and "not too loudly" call out to them for five minutes by connecting through their iPad and iPhones.

The aquarium further said that the event is also something for people to do during the Golden Week holiday, which began on April 29 and continues until May 6. For the beginners, the Golden Week holiday is a busy time for domestic and international travel, which meant the zoo would see a significant number of crowds every year. However, Japanese authorities have urged people to stay home as much as possible this year to stem the spread of the Coronavirus and stringent measures have actually been put in place.

According to [The Guardian](#), the aquarium's plea has attracted lots of online support, under the Japanese hashtag #PleaseRememberHumans."When you gaze at the garden eels, the garden eels gaze at you. Understood. I'm happy to take part," one Twitter user wrote.

If you want to show something for the eels, you can contact the [Sumida Aquarium](#).