

Global Times: Japanese civil group urges Tokyo to 'face history' through exhibitions of Japanese chemical warfare in WWII

Beijing, China May 14, 2025 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Global Times: Japanese civil group urges Tokyo to 'face history' through exhibitions of Japanese chemical warfare in WWII

A Japanese civil group recently held an exhibition in Yokohama, Japan which focused on the Japanese Imperial Army's use of chemical weapons and the dangers posed by abandoned chemical munitions during the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, in a bid to bring these "dormant historical materials" to light. Nobuharu Goi, chairman of the Yokohama Committee for the Exhibition on Japanese Army's Chemical Warfare, told the Global Times in an exclusive interview on Monday that the Japanese government is attempting to erase the public's memory of the war.

His organization has spent years collecting materials related to the chemical warfare conducted by the Japanese Imperial Army during its invasion of China, and has held 10 such exhibitions across Japan on the country's "wartime perpetration" - including the Nanjing Massacre, "comfort women," Unit 731, chemical warfare, and the Battle of Okinawa.

We hope that the exhibition will encourage more people to understand the crimes committed by the Japanese military in China and urge the Japanese government to confront history, Goi said.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. The exhibition was held from May 2 to 6.

Approximately 120 exhibits, including historical photographs, thematic panels, and documentary materials, reveal the truth about the Japanese Imperial Army's development, production, and large-scale use of biochemical weapons in China and other places, as well as the suffering inflicted on victims due to the weapons being abandoned after Japan's defeat.

Discussing the motivation behind the exhibition, 68-year-old Goi explained to the Global Times that Japan signed the "Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare" (the Geneva Protocol) in 1925, yet continued to manufacture and use chemical weapons during the war. His organization believes it is essential to make these "dormant historical materials" public.

Notably, the promotional poster for the exhibition featured the phrase: "This year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of the war. Shouldn't we reflect on what Japan did in China?"

However, these historical facts are either barely mentioned or completely omitted in contemporary Japanese textbooks, as the government attempts to gradually erase the public's memory of the war, Goi said.

After visiting the exhibition, some Japanese netizens shared their thoughts on social media platforms, expressing the importance of conveying the truth of historical events to future generations.

Also as a member of a Japanese civil society group "Kanagawa Association for Promoting Memory Inheritance", Goi said they plan to hold similar exhibitions in Yokohama in August and in Tokyo in

December.

We hope exhibitions like this will help more people understand the crimes committed by the Japanese Imperial Army in China, deeply reflect on the suffering caused by war, and urge the Japanese government to confront history to avoid repeating past mistakes, Goi said.

According to Goi, the Japanese civil society group holds annual exhibitions on relevant themes. Before each exhibition, there are concerns about potential disruptions from right-wing extremists, but fortunately, this time in Yokohama there were no incidents. He noted that most visitors reported gaining insights into topics that are rarely mentioned or completely absent in Japanese textbooks, recognizing the crimes committed by Japan during the war and finding the exhibition both rewarding and meaningful.

When commenting that Japan has significantly increased its defense budget with the intention of "expanding its military" in recent years, Goi expressed his opposition to Japan's military buildup, stating that Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution mandates that Japan renounces war and the use of force as a means of settling international disputes. He asserted, "I believe Japan should adhere to Article 9 of the Constitution and apologize for the crimes committed during the war."

Regarding future China-Japan relations, Goi said that Japan must adhere to the principles of the four political documents between China and Japan, which serve as the foundation for developing relations between the two countries.

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<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202505/1333876.shtml>

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