

# News from Iwate's Reconstruction

**Ganbaro, Iwate!**  
Let's stick together, Iwate!

Volume 132  
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## The news from Iwate as it moves toward reconstruction

We are deeply grateful for the heartwarming encouragement and support received from both within and outside of Japan in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, which struck on March 11, 2011. The precious bonds created during this time will always be cherished.

We will now bring you the news from Iwate's reconstruction.

## Iwate Sanriku Reconstruction Forum Held in Tokyo

Tokyo

On December 9 (Sat), Iwate Prefecture held the Iwate Sanriku Reconstruction Forum at the Tokyo Garden Palace Hotel in Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo.

This was the 6th time the forum had been held. The theme was "The Power of Sport! Working Towards the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics!" Around 400 people attended.

After the opening address, Governor Tasso had a live discussion with Tokyo's Governor Koike. They talked about the contributions that athletes are making towards the

reconstruction, as well as exchanged opinions about preparations for the 2019 Rugby World Cup and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, using last year's Land of Hope Iwate National Sports Festival as an example.

Next, film director Keishi Otomo gave a special speech. He said he'd like everyone in the country to support the athletes coming from all over the globe, to be inspired by them, and to communicate that inspiration back out into the world.

At a panel discussion with the theme, "Reconstruction Through Sport; Things I Can

Do", panelists included Iwate-born climber Futaba Ito and rugby player Eriko Hirano. They spoke about their experience of the disaster, reconstruction activities, and goals for contributing to the reconstruction through sport.

At lunch, attendees enjoyed a rice ball set, featuring a taste comparison of different Iwate rice brands. There was an exhibition relating to the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, as well as PR for the 2019 Rugby World Cup, and a stall selling Iwate-made products.



The discussion between Governor Tasso and Tokyo's Governor Koike



The closing ceremony



People viewing the tsunami exhibition

## Otsuchi Salmon Festival Held For the First Time In Two Years

Otsuchi

On December 3 (Sun), a large crowd gathered at the Otsuchi Fish Market (in the Ando district) for the Otsuchi Salmon Festival.

In 2016, the festival was cancelled due to a poor catch of salmon, but it went ahead this year with a change of venue; it took place at the fish market, rather than the riverside. The occasion marked the 400th anniversary of the death of Masasada Magohachiro, an Otsuchi local considered to be the creator of aramaki salmon, a local salt-cured salmon dish. The festival

looked back at the history and culture of the food, which has become a symbol of the town.

Salmon catching is always a popular part of the festival. The participants tried their best to grab hold of the bouncing, thrashing fish, then smiled widely when they caught their target.

There was a stall selling local aramaki salmon, a fish auction, and a BBQ corner with freshly grilled salmon. There was a sense that this is truly the town of salmon.



The popular salmon catching event

The stall selling aramaki salmon



The fish auction (Photos: Otsuchi Town)

## We are recruiting members for the Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team!

Know, Buy, Eat, Go – and Help Support Us!



We are now recruiting both individual and group (corporate or other) members in the Greater Tokyo Area for the "Iwate Reconstruction Supporters". Members are e-mailed information regarding reconstruction and tourism in Iwate, and upcoming events in the Tokyo area.  
**(Information only available in Japanese.)**

For more information, please see the website of the Tokyo Branch Office of the Iwate Prefectural Government:

Iwate Ooendan

Search

**Free to Register!**

## Prime Minister Abe Visits Iwate

Yamada • Otsuchi • Kamaishi

On December 20 (Wed), Prime Minister Abe, along with the Minister for Reconstruction, Mr. Yoshino, and the Minister in charge of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, Mr. Suzuki, visited Yamada, Otsuchi and Kamaishi, in order to observe the area affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

A large group of residents gathered to welcome the group to Yamada, where they visited the Whale and Sea Science Museum. They heard the staff and volunteers speak about their efforts to revive the facility, which reopened in July this year. Then they viewed the Museum's world-class sperm whale and minke whale skeletons.

At Otsuchi High School, the Prime Minister and his colleagues attended reconstruction workshops held by student volunteers, and learned more about the tragic experiences people were put through, as well as their efforts to pass information about the disaster and reconstruction on to the next generation.

Lastly, the group visited the Kamaishi Forestry Association to view products made from local wood and iron. The Prime Minister said, "I want to promote the forestry industry, which is part of the livelihood of the region. The national government fully supports the reconstruction."



A commemorative photo taken with Otsuchi High School students  
From left: Mayor of Otsuchi, Mr. Hirano / Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Reconstruction, Mr. Nagasaka / Minister for Reconstruction, Mr. Yoshino / Prime Minister Abe / Minister in charge of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, Mr. Suzuki / Headmaster of Otsuchi High School, Mr. Itsukaichi / Iwate's Governor, Mr. Tasso

## "Toni #3 Tunnel" (name TBD) Completed

Kamaishi

A ceremony was held on December 5 (Tue) to commemorate the completion of the "Toni #3 Tunnel" (name TBD) on the Yoshihama-Kamaishi Road, a section of the Sanriku Coastal Road.

The Yoshihama-Kamaishi Road will be a 14km stretch of highway connecting Yoshihama, in Sanriku, Ofunato, to the Kasshi area of Kamaishi. The 3,023m tunnel is between the Kamaishi South IC exit (name TBD) and Kamaishi Junction (name TBD).

The road used now, National Highway #45, connects Kamaishi to Ofunato, but features frequent sharp curves and steep inclines. There's often traffic, and certain parts were flooded during the tsunami. However, when the new Yoshihama-Kamaishi Road is completed (planned for 2018), it will help alleviate chronic traffic, and will drastically reduce transport times to Ofunato Hospital. The hospital's Emergency Medical Center is the only emergency medical facility in the southern coastal region. The finished tunnel marks a major step towards the Yoshihama-Kamaishi Road's completion.

By providing a more convenient method of transport, the roads of the reconstruction are expected to give a boost to both tourism and local business.



The completion ceremony (Photo: Kajima Corporation)

## A Record of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in Iwate Prefecture

2011.3.11

Yamada

What happened that day? In this section, we will be looking back at the disaster in each coastal town.



The approaching tsunami (Photo: Yamada Town)



The central region, destroyed by tsunami and fires (Photo: Yamada Town)

- Tsunami Height  
Yamada Bay 10.9m  
Funakoshi Bay 19.0m
- Deaths  
604 (direct)  
83 (related)
- Missing people 148
- Destroyed buildings 3,167

(As of November 30)



### ■The damage in Yamada's bay & center

Yamada Bay is circular and enclosed, with a narrow entrance. This amplified the tsunami waves, causing them to feed off each other and increase the damage.

In Yamada's central region, an 8m wave destroyed the fishing industry's infrastructure, took out the town's sea defenses, and flooded 50% of its districts.

### ■Widespread fire damage

Besides the tsunami, fires broke out on a huge scale in the Yamada, Osawa and Tanohama districts, and on a smaller scale in the Orikasa district. A wide area around the central JR Rikuchu-Yamada Station was destroyed. Altogether, over 16ha of land was ravaged by fire. Fire engines were unable to traverse the roads due to the rubble, and the water supply was disrupted, preventing effective firefighting from taking place.



A recently-opened shopping area in central Yamada

## A New Kamaishi Community Hall - TETTO

Kamaishi

On December 8th (Fri), an opening ceremony of a new community hall, TETTO, was held in Omachi, Kamaishi City. The new building replaces the original community hall damaged in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

The hall consists of four floors with an additional basement floor. Specially engineered wood materials were used for the ceilings and walls of Hall A with a maximum capacity of 838 people and Hall B, which faces north of the lobby area and can change into an open air style hall, has a maximum capacity of 218 people. A large roof made of glass, considered a unique part of the structure, connects the lobby area of the building to the nearby Kamaishi Information and Community Center.

The hall's name was submitted by an elementary school student living in the same city and chosen out of 775 other potential names. The name "TETTO" playfully connects Kamaishi's history as a capital of iron production and the Italian word for roof – both called "tetto" in their respective languages.

At the ceremony, Kamaishi Mayor Noda commented, "As a city, we will strive to make this hall a beloved place for citizens to gather and have fun. This hall will be the heart of Kamaishi's cultural arts and shall spark new, lively activities for the city."



The new Kamaishi Community Hall - TETTO



Inside Hall A

## Noda's Araumi Scallops to be registered under the GI Act

Noda

On November 10th (Friday), an announcement was made by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to register Noda's special Araumi Scallops as a nationally recognized regional brand product under the GI Act - Geographical Indication Protection System.

The Geographical Indication (GI) Protection System was established to recognize many high quality regional brand products, which use traditional production methods unique to their region, and protect them as the national government's intellectual property. Products chosen and registered under the GI Act are branded with a special GI logo upon distribution.

The Araumi scallops are produced in Noda Bay, where the scallops can freely drift in the rough waters, rich with planktons they can feed on. The meat of the scallops is thick and savory, and its strong muscle fibers gives a unique chewy texture. They are also highly regarded for their smooth, beautiful appearance due to the careful removal of all growth or deposits on their shells.

This is the second regional brand product to be registered in the GI Act for the prefecture (the first being the Maesawa beef in Oshu). With this new addition, there are hopes for the product to increase recognition of the region and expand broader market options.



The registered Iwate Noda Town's Araumi Scallops (Photo: Noda Fishery Cooperative Association)



### Sanriku Event Information



1/7

Sun

#### 30th Ryusendo Mizumatsuri Festival

Iwaizumi

Venue: Ryusendo/Ureira-dori/Iwaizumi Community Hall Site

Miko dance, Mizuki and Ryumai (dragon dance) parades, and more. Moreover, you can see men splashing icy water from the cave on their heads! The Tazawako Ryujin Drum group will also be attending this 30th anniversary

Inquiries

Iwaizumi Tourism Association and Executive Committee  
☎ 0194-22-4755

1/15

Mon

#### Suneka

Ofunato

Venue: Sanriku-cho Yoshihama District

Strange beings called Suneka with demon-like masks visit each house to punish slackers and pray for healthy children and a rich harvest. This event happens every January 15th, to celebrate the First Full Moon Festival. It was designated as an Important Folk Cultural Property in 2004.

Inquiries

Ofunato Yoshihama Reconstruction Branch Office ☎ 0192-45-2001

1/20

Sat

#### Taste of Winter Festival

Kamaishi

Venue: Sea Plaza Yuu

Taste Kamaishi's winter food, and produce from its sister cities, all in the same place. There will be a preliminary contest for February's "National Wanko Soba Competition" in Hanamaki, and a Kamaishi Ramen Eating Contest.

Inquiries

Kamaishi Tourism Product Association ☎ 0193-27-8172

1/28

Sun

#### North Sanriku Kuji Winter Market

Kuji

Venue: Yamase Dofukan, central Kuji

Held once a month between November - February. In addition to savoring the fresh sea and mountain food of Kuji, there will be loads of fun activities, and opportunities to participate in traditional folk performances.

Inquiries

Kuji Winter Market Executive Committee ☎ 0194-52-2123

1/28

Sun

#### Fresh Winter Produce & Pacific Cod Festival

Miyako

Venue: Miyako Fish Market

A newly established event to enjoy fruit and vegetables fresh from the farm, and Miyako's acclaimed, delicious Pacific Cod. There will be about 40 booths to check out at the fish market, where the festival will be held.

Inquiries

Fresh Winter Produce & Pacific Cod Festival Executive Committee ☎ 0193-64-2214

#### Sanriku Railway South Rias Line Lunch and Sweets Retro Train Tour

Venue: Sanriku Railway South Rias Line

**Tour Dates: 1/6 (Sat), 1/7 (Sun), 1/8 (Mon-Hol), 1/13 (Sat), 1/14 (Sun)**

A limited tour to celebrate the new year. You can order a Lunch/Sweets Box to eat during the tour.

\*Reservations can only be accepted via telephone, and will close three days before each tour date.

Inquiries

Sanriku Railway - Kamaishi Station ☎ 0193-22-1616 (9am - 5pm)

