

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

The news from Iwate as it moves toward reconstruction

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

三陸復興

Volume 71
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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. Autumn has come: fishing for *sanma* has commenced on the coast, and we await the harvest of the golden fields of rice in the countryside. We will now bring you the news from Iwate's reconstruction.

9/5 (Fri) First Trip to Iwate for Reconstruction Minister Takeshita Since Being Appointed

On Friday, September 5th, Reconstruction Minister Wataru Takeshita (Shimane, 2nd electoral district) visited Iwate for the first time since being elected.

Minister Takeshita visited the prefectural office with Parliamentary Secretary Shinjiro Koizumi. They sat down with Governor Tasso and exchanged opinions on the future of the restoration, from funds to support for survivors.

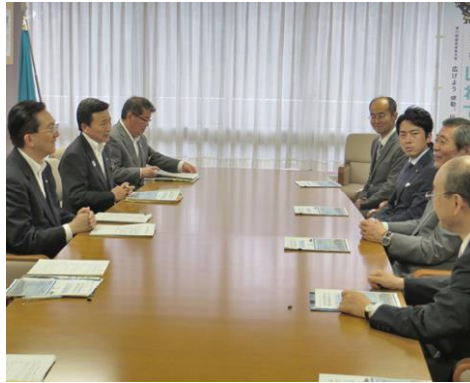
Minister Takeshita was appointed to his current position during the 2nd Abe Cabinet Reshuffle that occurred on Wednesday, September 3rd, while Koizumi has been in

in office (supervising Iwate's reconstruction) since the last cycle. The country's full-fledged reconstruction phase will last until fiscal year 2015, and funds for reconstruction will end in 2016. Because of this, the four prefectures involved in the disaster (Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima) requested a time extension on this period on July 10, 2014.

In regards to reconstruction funds, Minister Takeshita said, "I will ensure that the essential amount of funds will be available," during the talk.



Governor Tasso greeting Reconstruction Minister Takeshita



Exchanging opinions



Reconstruction Minister Takeshita (right) and Parliamentary Secretary Koizumi (left)

Sanriku Railway in the Black for the First Time Since the Disaster – Reservations for Autumn Event Train Reservations Well Underway

After taking damage from the disaster, all of the lines of the Sanriku Railway were restored on April 6th, 2014, and the quarterly current account balance (April-June) made a profit of ¥37,660,000. It's the first time the railway has made a profit since the disaster, and it's a huge comeback - the same period last year saw a deficit of ¥35,810,000.

According to Sanriku Railway, tourism increased during the long holiday in May, and 69% increase of passengers (29,749) from April to June compared to the same time the year before. Fare income grew by ¥125 million, an increase of 137%.

The popularity of the NHK television drama "Ama-chan" as well as the restoration of all lines did their part in increasing usage of the railway.

On the North-Rias line, they have uniquely designed trains such as the "North-Sanriku", where attendants dressed as *ama* (female sea divers) ride on cars outfitted with classic Japanese decor (until Oct 13 on weekends and holidays). There's also the retro-themed "Sanriku-Shiosai", which is designed to showcase the early Showa period with a glamorous interior design (until Nov 30 on weekends and holidays).

As a symbol of the reconstruction, the Sanriku Railway is not just a local means of transport, but also hope for local revitalization on the tourist front.



The bustling Sanriku-Kuji station



North-Sanriku *ama* attendants



Picturesque scenery from the train



Inside a retro train

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.

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

Iwate Ooendan

Search

Free to Register!

First Sanma Fish Haul in Honshu Restoring the fishing industry

Ofunato

On August 29 (Fri), the first sanma haul of the year in Honshu (the main island of Japan) was at a fish market in Ofunato. The local 18th Mikasamaru ship (199 tons) caught 20 tons of sanma off the coast of Nemuro, Hokkaido. The sanma, also known as pacific saury, were valued at 1,200 to 1,300 yen per kilogram.

The first fish haul of the season happened a day later than last year, but the fishermen ended up catching twice the amount of fish. Much of the haul included large, fatty fish over 160 grams. The fish market was completed in April this year after suffering extensive damage from the disaster, and the mood was lively with the arrival of the tasty autumn haul.

Ofunato harbor had the top fish haul last year in Honshu with 14,585 tons.

The first sanma fish haul at the new fish market marks another step toward reconstruction for the fishing industry, and everyone involved is looking towards the future.



Sanma haul at the new fish market
(photo credit: Ofunato City)

Grade 8 Otsuchi Students Promote and Sell Regional Products

Morioka

On September 2 (Tue), 89 middle school students from Otsuchi Middle School, a school hard hit by the disaster, sold local goods in three different spots in Morioka City (Kawatoku, Cross Terrace Morioka, Sakanacho Arcade), and talk up the charms of Otsuchi.

The sales event included training and lodging for students who expressed a desire to participate in the reconstruction efforts for their hometown.

At Sakanacho Arcade, students wearing matching *happi* robes passed out homemade *chirashi* and sold around 20 kinds of local marine products, snacks, and vegetables.

Manami Fujiwara, who was handled sales, said with a smile, "At first I was a bit nervous, but when I went it was actually really fun. I want to help advertise our local goods and spread the word about Otsuchi."



Otsuchi middle school students serving customers with a smile

Many young people are diligently helping the affected area of Sanriku move toward a full reconstruction. The new section "People for Sanriku's Future" introduces one of these young people and their powerful feelings every issue.

Part 25 introduces Mr. Kosuke Kimura's efforts.

PROFILE

Originally from Makinohara City, Shizuoka Prefecture. In the summer of his senior year in college in 2012, he participated in a project with the Yamada Town Council of Social Welfare and Community. During winter break in December that year, he planned a volunteer bus tour and held a Christmas event using temporary housing and community centers.

After that, he applied for the Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team, and in August 2013, he was assigned to the Yamada Town Social Council for Reconstruction Support Center where he currently remains.

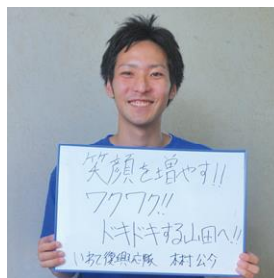
I want people to keep meeting each other

Using his experiences as a volunteer, he matches the needs of the locals and supports the townspeople in discovering their motivation in life.

Without relying on volunteers, he set up exchange events for the townspeople like a cooking class with cooperation from the town's restaurants, or inviting a teacher from a local ceramics class for a handicrafts class. He even



Yamada Town Council of Social
Welfare and Community
Kosuke Kimura



"Let's see some more smiles!!
For an exciting Yamada!!"

planned an exploration tour where people can rediscover the charming points of Yamada.

Kimura wants these bonds to stay strong even when the volunteers return back home. If volunteers are encouraged to form friendships with the townspeople, they'll want to return to visit these people again. These sorts of bonds will make meeting each other more fun.

A chance for everyone to discuss our town's development

It's been a year and a half since Kimura was assigned to work in Yamada, and the debris and leftover foundations of houses are now gone; street levels are being raised. "The residents are definitely aware of the reconstruction – the town continues evolving away from those hard times. It's just that they feel it is going too slowly. But I think rather than forcing the pace, it's better to increase opportunities where we fill them in on things like plans or policies for the town's development. However, people are going to be impatient too, and I think it's also important to take care of the mental side of things," said Kimura, as he talked about the gradually changing town.

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of August 31'2014

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,132
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 25,716

To make a donation to aid in Iwate's reconstruction:
www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/011100.htm

Thank you for all your support!

As of August 31'2014

- ▶ **Donations for survivors:** Around ¥18.15958 billion (89,806 donations)
- ▶ **Donations for reconstruction projects:** Around ¥19.57121 billion (6,922 donations)
- ▶ **Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations:** Around ¥6.95166 billion (13,960 donations)

※ This fund is to assist in the study and daily life of affected children by encouraging sport and study activities.

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For the News from Iwate's Reconstruction archives: <http://www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/>

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