

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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

三陸復興

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Iwate Prefecture

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.

The fresh, cool winds have blown in and ushered in a mild, pleasant autumn. The affected areas continue to move toward reconstruction. We will now bring you the news from Iwate's reconstruction.

“Thank you TOMODACHI – Tsunami Disaster Reconstruction Report”

Held in New York City, U.S.A.



Governor Tasso gives his speech in English

On Monday, August 26 (JST: August 27), Iwate held “Thank you TOMODACHI – Tsunami Disaster Reconstruction Report” at the Japan Society in New York City, U.S.A.

In addition to expressing our deep gratitude to our friends in the United States who worked tirelessly to aid our reconstruction, the event was intended to communicate how Iwate has been recovering since the disaster.

At the entrance, high school students from Iwate held up cards reading “Thank you TOMODACHI” as they greeted people. About 200 invitees, both on the American side and Japanese residents, were in attendance.

The first part was a speech given by Governor Tasso in English, in which he expressed thanks for America's reconstruction aid such as “Operation TOMODACHI”, and discussed Iwate's ongoing reconstruction efforts.

After further speeches by Drew Schufletowski, an international affairs specialist at the U.S. State Department, and Gary Moriwaki of the U.S.-Japan Council, Governor Tasso presented both men with certificates of appreciation, and a mini-concert was performed by Ms. Junko Yagami, a Japanese singer residing in the United States.

At the reception which followed, Iwate's locally-produced Iwate Wagyu beef, rice, and local *saké* were on offer, and along with a photo exhibit showing the reconstruction, there was a performance by the Iwate Prefecture Folk Song Association, and a lively demonstration of Morioka Sansa Odori. Those present were able to feel the strength of Iwate as it moves towards reconstruction.

On Tuesday, August 27 (JST: August 28), the Governor met with State Department Deputy Assistant Secretary James Zumwalt in Washington D.C., and expressed his gratitude for U.S. aid works such as Operation TOMODACHI.

Mr. Zumwalt expressed his warm feelings toward Iwate Prefecture when he said he was very glad to send a rescue team to Ofunato. He also said that this aid showed the deep bonds of the alliance between the United States and Japan.



High school students from Iwate Prefecture greet visitors



A visit to the Department of State

Examining the data in Vol. 7 of the Iwate Reconstruction Index Report

The Iwate Reconstruction Index Report is published periodically and serves to make it easier to understand the current states of affairs and recent trends in Iwate's reconstruction efforts, particularly in the 12 affected coastal municipalities. Below are outlined the main points from volume 7 of the report (as of the end of July 2013).

Progress on disposal of debris (as of the end of July 2013)

▶Rate: 62.3% (43.2% at the end of April)

The disposal rate has increased compared to the last index, indicating that we are succeeding in accelerating the reconstruction.

Fish haul in fish-producing areas (total for April~June 2013)

▶18,110 metric tons

Shows an increase of 24.3% on the figure for the same period last year. Indicates a jump back to 86.1% of the pre-disaster average catch.

Visitors to main tourism areas (total for April~June 2013)

▶1,767,900 visitors

Shows a drop of 1.1% from the same period last year, but a relative increase of 6.7% increase on pre-disaster (2010) numbers for the same period.

We are recruiting members for the Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team!



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:

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Iwate Ooendan

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Kamaishi Yoisa revived after 3 years

On Saturday, September 9, Kamaishi City's summer festival "Kamaishi Yoisa" was held. The festival was cancelled in both 2011 and 2012 following the disaster. Around 800 people in beautiful yukatas danced through the streets of Kamaishi while chanting *Saasa, yoi yassa* in unison.

Kamaishi Yoisa became famous through the summer nature poetry of Kamaishi, but after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami it was cancelled. Since then, countless voices have cried out that the festival is needed to revive the lively atmosphere of the town, and so this year the festival was revived after a 3-year hiatus.

On the stage traditional local performing arts such as Obu Daiko drumming and the Tadakoshi Tiger Dance were performed. Misaki Usuzawa, a singer from neighboring Otsuchi Town, also performed. These acts lent extra color to the festival.



The "Kamaishi Yoisa" festival

Sanriku Ofunato Saury Festival

On Sunday, September 8, Ofunato held its "Sanriku Ofunato Saury Festival". Ofunato prides itself as one of the few places in Japan where saury can be caught.

The weather was bad for the whole day, but the Sea Pearl Ofunato Temporary Outdoor Facility was brought to life by the smell of some 2,500 saury that had been caught the previous day and were being grilled and offered free-of-charge to visitors. The local flavor was ambient.

"We've pretty well returned to pre-3/11 levels in terms of our catch, so I hope lots of people will come and enjoy Ofunato's delicious saury," says Eiichi Sasaki, chairman of the festival's organizing committee.



A child enjoys delicious saury



A feast of char-grilled saury

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

Part 5 introduces Ms. Yurie Endo's efforts.

Profile:

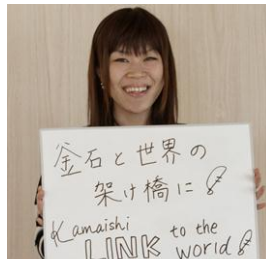
Originally from Kamaishi City, for a time she worked in Tokyo, but wishing to go back to her hometown she made a U-turn and joined the Kamaishi Otsuchi Industrial Research Development and Training Center. In October 2010 she travelled to New Zealand, but the following autumn made the decision to return to Japan in the hopes of working to contribute to Kamaishi's reconstruction. In May 2012, she founded the NPO "Kamaishi LINK" with the goal of aiding the reconstruction as well as international exchange, and she currently works as its representative.

I hope to contribute using what I'm good at

Endo, who has experience living abroad, organized exchanges for Japanese and American high school students, and worked to connect Kamaishi with people from abroad who wished to study the disaster and to learn about Japanese culture. Through these and other projects she has

People for SANRIKU'S Future

Yurie Endo
Kamaishi Link (NPO)



"I want to be a bridge between Kamaishi and the world! Kamaishi LINK to the world!"

been pouring her efforts community-building.

"I hope we can contribute to the reconstruction using the things we're good at," says Endo. "By encouraging people from abroad to interact with the local region, we can grant the local children a chance to learn about and become interested in foreign culture."

I plan to open a café to encourage international communication

In early October, Endo plans to open a café in the Unosumai area of Kamaishi City, in order to further her goal of regional development through international exchange.

"There is a movement to bring the Rugby World Cup to Kamaishi," Endo points out, pondering the future of the city. "Rugby is like Kamaishi's identity. If it becomes a reality then of course lots of foreigners will come. Through rugby we can brighten up the local people's lives and add momentum to the move toward reconstruction."

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of Aug. 31, 2013

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,145
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 25,023

For more information on damage in Iwate, or to make a donation, go to the Iwate Disaster Information Portal:

Thank you for all your support!

As of Aug. 31, 2013

Donations for survivors: Around ¥17.83587 billion (86,495 donations)

Donations for reconstruction projects: Around ¥16.58889 billion (6,261 donations)

Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations: Around ¥5.9748 billion (10,945 donations)

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

We've got a brand new website! Why not check it out at: <http://iwate-fukkoudayori.com>

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