

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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

三陸復興

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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.

An increasingly cold wind has been blowing the leaves from the trees. Winter seeps into the mountains, and moves ever closer.

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

The Reconstruction Minister and Ministerial Aid Visit Iwate

Morioka

On October 10th, 2015 (Sat), shortly after the Prime Minister Abe reshuffled his cabinet for the third time, the new Reconstruction Minister, Tsuyoshi Takagi, and his ministerial aid, Hirohisa Takagi, visited Iwate for the first time since assuming their roles. They met with a delegation led by Governor Tasso, and exchanged opinions about the problems facing the disaster areas.

Governor Tasso requested their assistance regarding continuing financial and physical support for the reconstruction, the International Linear Collider (ILC) bid, and the construction of a stadium in Kamaishi ahead of the 2019 Rugby World Cup.

Minister Takagi said, "The most important thing is to maintain close ties with the disaster-hit areas. My job is to keep up-to-date on progress with Iwate's governor and mayors, and to get on with the reconstruction." With regard to the upcoming 5th anniversary of the earthquake and tsunami on March 11th next year, he added, "I want

people to say that we've made progress, even in the remaining five months. I want to take measures to protect people's lives and livelihoods."



The governor and ministers exchanging opinions

Rugby Ambassadors: "The 2019 Rugby World Cup is in Our Hands"

Miyako

Kamaishi is one of the host cities for the 2019 Rugby World Cup. The Kamaishi East Rotary Club (club president Yoshiro Ogasawara), sent six local middle school students to this year's tournament in England.

Applications were accepted from first and second-year students at 5 different local middle schools. Of the 25 candidates, 6 were randomly selected to become participants: Sogo Nitta (2nd year, Kasshi Middle School), Mizuki Sasaki (1st year, Odaira Middle School), Ryohei Suzuki (1st year, Kamaishi Middle School), Rimiko Sawada (2nd year, Kamaishi Middle School), Miki Sasaki (2nd year, Toni Middle School) and Rui Horaguchi (2nd year, East Kamaishi Middle School). These "Rugby Ambassadors" spent a week in England from September 21st, 2015 (Mon).

Besides watching the Japan vs. Scotland match, which was held in the city of Gloucester in south-east England, the students were able

to see how the teams of volunteers helped run the tournament.

On October 9th, 2015 (Fri), at a hotel back in Kamaishi, 5 of the students made a presentation about their trip to the Kamaishi East Rotary Club. They told the audience of roughly 50 people how exciting it was to see Japan's unprecedented success. The report had three topics: "Things we loved," "Things we learned" and "Hopes for the tournament in Kamaishi."

One of the Rugby Ambassadors, Sogo Nitta, was particularly enthusiastic. "It was brilliant to see an actual host site. I want to work at the World Cup in Kamaishi, and contribute to its success." The ambassadors all shared a renewed determination. "We want to take the 2019 World Cup into our own hands," they said.

The students make their report (photographs courtesy of the Kamaishi East Rotary Club)



"e! Iwate" is a mobile app that sends you news and information about Iwate's Reconstruction (in Japanese). You can then re-post this information on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter.

You can use the app with the following smart phone models:

• Android OS4.0 and newer, iOS6.0 and newer

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Playing in Harmony: East Japan Aid Concert 2015

Miyako

On October 12th, 2015 (Mon), the "Playing in Harmony" East Japan Aid Concert 2015 (organized by the Miyako Public Hall and the Iwate Art Support Center), was held at the Miyako Public Hall in Sokeioki, Miyako.

The event aims to raise support for areas hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Since 2013 it has taken place in Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima and Tokyo. This was Miyako's second time hosting the concert.

The performers, including the singer, Machiko Watanabe, and the jazz pianist and conductor, Norio Maeda, were all musicians with a connection to Miyako. There were also performances from local groups, such as a Miyako elementary school's choir and wind orchestra, as well as a joint performance from four different high school wind orchestras. For the finale, all 250 performers appeared on stage together to sing Machiko Watanabe's "The Day That the Seagulls Flew".



The musicians on stage for the finale
(photograph courtesy of the Miyako Public Hall)

The Ofunato Reconstruction Tohoku Sandai Festival

Ofunato

On October 17th (Sat) and 18th (Sun), the Ofunato Reconstruction Tohoku Sandai Festival (organized by the Sanriku International Association) was held in Sakaricho, Ofunato.

This was the festival's fifth year. Up until now it's been run by a committee of local volunteers, but as of this year, responsibility has shifted to the International Association. They want to "use the festival's power to get Ofunato's energy back." It's intended to contribute to the reconstruction, to encourage previous residents to return, and to help build a sustainable region. To that end, organizers aimed to add an international flavor to the event's traditional culture and performing art.

Many of the performances during the main event on the 17th were symbolic of Tohoku. There was the Kanto bamboo lantern parade (Akita City, Akita), the Sansa Dance (Morioka City, Iwate), the Hanagasa Dance (Yamagata City, Yamagata) and the Sparrow Dance (Sendai City, Miyagi), as well as performances of the disaster-hit Sanriku region's traditional Tiger and Deer Dances. But there was also a show by the Toburon *Pungmul* Group, who play Korean *pungmul* folk music. Around 400 people paraded through downtown Ofunato, whipping up a lively atmosphere.



Lively folk performances on the festival stage

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 47 introduces Mr. Kenta Shimizu's efforts.

PROFILE

Originally from Tokyo.

Shortly after graduating, he visited Rikuzentakata with a friend in April 2013. This was the catalyst for a permanent move in February 2014.

On March 11th, 2015, he launched the internet TV show "Rikuzentakata Bababa TV." He broadcasts Rikuzentakata's charms via the show, while also working for the registered charity, Sakura Line 311.



Rikuzentakata Bababa TV
Director
Kenta Shimizu



"Giving something back
to Rikuzentakata."

restaurants in and around Rikuzentakata.

Mr. Shimizu spoke of the need to promote Rikuzentakata online. "I get the impression that the proprietors of the city's restaurants are mostly older people who can't use the net. But since the younger generation look online before they go somewhere, I thought it would be useful to make a food show. I also wanted to introduce other topics, like the reconstruction's progress and Rikuzentakata's traditional festivals."

Brought up by the town

"To be honest, I was quite a negative person when I was in Tokyo. But over the past year and a half, I feel like the people in Rikuzentakata have helped me to grow," Mr. Shimizu reflected.

"Some locals call this a town with nothing. But speaking as an outsider, I think it's got bucket loads of charm. By promoting that, I can give a little something back," he said, expressing his love for the city.

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of Sep. 30, 2015

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,126
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 26,165

To make a donation to aid in Iwate's reconstruction:

www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/011100.html

Thank you for all your support!

As of Sep. 30, 2015

Donations for survivors: Around ¥18.4415 billion (92,059 donations)

Donations for reconstruction projects: Around ¥19.7879 billion (7,466 donations)

Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations: Around ¥7.73874 billion (16,273 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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