

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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

Volume 125, May 2017 Edition

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.

Long-Awaited "Abasse Takata" Shopping Center Is Now Open

Rikuzentakata

On April 27 (Thu), "Abasse Takata", a multi-purpose facility with shops and a library, opened in the city center of Rikuzentakata, which suffered catastrophic damage in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

"Abasse Takata" is a large retail facility built on elevated ground in the city center. Its shops include specialist stores, clothing retailers, a supermarket and a drug store. Integrated within the facility is a public library, which is due to open in July.

The facility's name, "Abasse", means

"let's go together" in the local dialect. It was chosen via an open selection process.

The Mayor Toba of Rikuzentakata, gave a greeting at the opening ceremony. "I think that 'Let's go together to Abasse' will become a familiar phrase. This city center facility is a starting point for robust town development, leading us towards a true reconstruction," he said. After an opening speech by Hiroaki Murakami, an actor and Rikuzentakata native, the large crowd of eager citizens finally went inside, and began shopping.

Next to the facility, a new playground called "Machinaka Square" was also partially opened to the public. It quickly filled up with parents and children.

Six years on from the disaster, Abasse Takata is sure to become a busy new hub for the city.



The newly-opened "Abasse Takata"



The opening day



The ribbon-cutting ceremony



"Machinaka Square", a playground next door

3 New Shopping Facilities Open Near JR Ofunato Station

Ofunato

On April 29 (Sat), several new shopping facilities opened in the JR Ofunato Station area. The occasion was marked with a "2nd Town Opening" ceremony.

The new facilities include 18 shops on the Ofunato Yume Shopping Street (installed by the Ofunato Yume Shopping Street Cooperative), 16 shops in the Kyassen Mall & Patio (installed by Kyassen Ofunato Urban Development) and 12 shops in the Kyassen Food Village. This comes to 46 new shops in total.

At the ceremony, Mayor Toda of Ofunato said, "This is an important milestone on the path towards the revival of private industry, but the crucial stage is yet to come. We want to put

various measures in place to encourage customers to shop here." Ofunato Reconstruction Support Ambassadors, Daisuke and Hanako Miyagawa, acted as representatives of the new facilities, and gave a "town opening joint declaration" to all in attendance. After the traditional cask-breaking and mochi-throwing ceremonies, the shops were officially opened.

The development of the shopping area in the square next to the station began in March last year, with the "1st Town Opening". Work is currently progressing on other projects, such as a local confectioner's factory shop due to be completed by the end of the financial year.



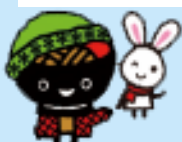
Kyassen Mall & Patio



The town opening ceremony

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 Fukkou Ooendan

Search

Free to Register!

Miyako Fish Market Expansion Complete Miyako

On April 23 (Sun), a completion ceremony was held to mark the construction of an additional building at Miyako Fish Market (located on the coast in Miyako City). Around 100 people attended.

The market was destroyed in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, but reopened in April 2011. Construction on the new building began in August 2015.

The new premises includes a steel-framed, 2-story sales area, doubling the amount of floor space. Also inside is an administrative wing containing break rooms, a cafeteria, and meeting rooms for laborers and clients. There is also space for 36 forklift trucks.

Other new facilities include cold seawater tanks that keep fish fresh with UV sterilization. An electronic bidding system with tablet computers has been introduced in order to improve efficiency.

The market provides around 90% of the prefecture's pacific cod, and is praised for the freshness of its products. It is hoped that the market's catch of salmon, Pacific saury, squid, and other fish will increase in the future.



The completed expansion to Miyako Fish Market

Construction Underway On Kamaishi's Unosumai Reconstruction Stadium (Name TBD) Kamaishi

On April 27 (Thu), construction began on the "Kamaishi Unosumai Reconstruction Stadium" (name TBD) in Unosumai, Kamaishi, which will host games in the Rugby World Cup 2019™. A ceremony was held to pray for its safe completion.

Around 100 people attended the ceremony. Mayor Noda of Kamaishi said, "After 6 years of working towards reconstruction, this day has finally come. The concepts for the stadium are 'spreading one's wings' and 'setting sail'. We hope that the next generation of children will spread their wings in the future, and set sail out into the wide world."

Next, players from the local rugby team, the Kamaishi Seawaves RFC, gave a demonstration on the planned site of the stadium.

The stadium will be built on 9 hectares of elevated land. It will have 16,000 seats, of which 10,000 will be temporary. Construction is due to be completed in July 2018.



The ground-breaking ceremony



A model of the completed stadium

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

2011.3.11

Hirono

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



The huge tsunami hitting Hirono (Photo: Hirono Town)

- Tsunami height
12.0m
Hirono, Kuji North Bay
- Number of deaths
0
- Number of missing people
0
- Number of injuries
0
- Number of destroyed buildings
26

1. The only place on the coast with zero human casualties

Hirono, situated at the northern end of Iwate's coast, avoided human suffering during the disaster. There were no deaths, no people missing, and no injuries. The suggested reason for this is that Hirono didn't just take "hard" measures like building sea walls and other structures. It also put "soft" measures (events, teaching programs, etc) in place to raise awareness about tsunami safety.

2. Preparing for a tsunami

There have been independent disaster mitigation groups all across Hirono since before the disaster. These groups conduct various activities, including the weeding and maintenance of evacuation routes, and the installation of signs displaying elevation above sea level. There is a day-to-day awareness in Hirono that people must evacuate if a tsunami hits, and it's thanks to this awareness that there were no casualties in the disaster.



The damaged Iwate Aquaculture Cooperative Taneichi Offices (Photo: Hirono Town)



The reconstructed Iwate Aquaculture Cooperative Taneichi Offices (Photo: Iwate Aquaculture Cooperative Taneichi Offices)



The newly-built Hirono Seafood Hall (Photo: Hirono Seafood Hall)

Reopening of Michi-no-Eki Rest Stop "Iwaizumi"

Iwaizumi

On April 20 (Thu), the Michi-no-Eki Rest Stop "Iwaizumi" in Otomo, Iwaizumi Town, officially reopened. The rest stop was heavily damaged during Typhoon No. 10 last August, but has been temporarily open for business since November.

Mayor Date of Iwaizumi spoke at the commemorative ceremony, saying, "Iwaizumi must do its best and look towards the future. I want this day to mark the start of that."

The reopened restaurant offers local specialty goods such as hamburg steak made with shorthorn beef and offal hotpot in an open atmosphere. There is also a cafe space for visitors to relax in.

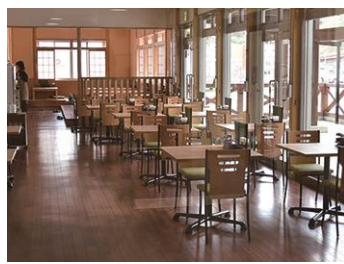
During Golden Week, the rest stop sold mountain vegetables in season, salted and grilled char, and baked tofu coated in miso, bringing many excited customers into the shop.

The facility hopes to re-release its popular product "Iwaizumi Yogurt" on to shelves in September thanks to the reconstruction of its damaged factory.

【Business Hours】Shop ■ 8:30 - 18:00 Restaurant ■ 11:00 - 17:00
Café Space ■ 9:00 - 17:00
Address: Shimohei-gun, Iwaizumi-cho, Otomo 90-1
☎0194-32-3070



The officially re-opened Michi no Eki Rest Stop



The restaurant's open atmosphere

SL Ginga on the JR Kamaishi Line: 4th year of operation

Hanamaki - Kamaishi

On April 29 (Sat), the Steam Locomotive (SL) Ginga started running on the JR Kamaishi Line between Hanamaki Station and Kamaishi Station.

On this day, events were held along the railway, where railway fans, residents living around the tracks, and tourists celebrated the train's first day of operation of the year.

SL Ginga began running in April 2014 to support the reconstruction from the earthquake and tsunami through tourism. This is its fourth year of operation, and it is scheduled to run mostly on weekends until the end of September, for a total of 51 full cycles. Operation after October will be announced at a later date after details have been decided.

The car being pulled by the C58 steam locomotive is designed after Kenji Miyazawa's famous novel "Night on the Galactic Railroad". Changes to the planetarium screening shown inside the car are currently being made.

SL Ginga will play a big part in bringing visitors to the coastal areas for the season.

SL Ginga Hours of Operation

Depart Hanamaki 10:37 - Arrive Kamaishi 15:07
Depart Kamaishi 10:55 - Arrive Hanamaki 15:20



SL Ginga on the tracks



Come to Sanriku!

Sanriku Event Information



6/4

Sun

Kamaishi Daikannon Kamaishi
Fire Festival

Venue▶ Kamaishi Daikannon

The Kamaishi Daikannon is a 48.5 meter tall white statue of the Buddhist deity Gyoran Kannon that stands on Kamasaki Peninsula. At the fire festival, there will be traditional performances and a prayer stick burning event to pray for dreams coming true. Admission is free of charge on the day.

Inquiries

Kamaishi Daikannon
☎ 0193-24-2125

6/11

Sun

Hiraniwa Bull Sumo Kuji
Competition – Azalea Match

Venue▶ Hiraniwa Highlands Bullring

The only bull sumo competition in the Tohoku region. Watch these powerful animals wrestle each other to push each other out of the ring. After the matches, you have the chance of winning a luxurious prize at the raffle!

Iwate Hiraniwa Highlands Bullfighting
Competition (within the Kuji Municipal Industry
and Construction Division)
☎ 0194-72-2111

Inquiries

6/18

Sun

The 29th Hei River Miyako
Fishing Competition

Venue▶ Hei River in the Kawai Area

When one hears "mountain stream fishing", Heigawa is the place to go. Fishing fans from all over come to this river to enjoy the sport. There are two divisions: char and landlocked salmon. Participants show off their skills and compete to see who can get the biggest catch.

Inquiries

Miyako Chamber of Commerce and
Industry Kawai Branch
☎ 0193-76-2120

Tanohata Diving Service – Now Open!

Tanohata Diving Service officially opened its doors on April 29 (Sat).

The facility has a rest area, showers, a changing room, and a place to hang wet belongings to dry.

As there are no diving guides, courses, or trial diving sessions available at the facility, the facility has established a buddy system.

Please call in if you are a beginner or you are unable to find a buddy.

Address: Shimohei-gun, Tanohata-mura Tsukue 142-3 Ocean Experience Center

Inquiries: Tanohata Diving Service ☎ 0194-33-2881



Diving at Tanohata (Photo: Tanohata Village)

HP: <http://tanohata-ds.com/>



The Michi-no-Eki Rest Stop called Noda is connected to the Rikuchu-Noda Station on Sanriku Railway's Kita-Rias Line. It has the specialty products shop "Purple", a fresh produce area, and a restaurant all in one. Here are some recommended products you can get at Purple.

Noda Salt Made in a Wood-Fired Kiln

Noda has been making salt since the Edo Period. Salt was produced by directly boiling ocean water, but the method was abolished by the government in 1905.

It was brought back in the Heisei Period (1989~), reviving salt manufacturing in the area, but the salt factory was washed away during the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. A new salt factory was built on higher ground in February 2012, once again bringing back this traditional method of making salt.

Noda salt is made by boiling sea salt down for 4 days on a wood-fire kiln. It's known for being rich in minerals and for its balanced, mild flavor.



Noda salt flies off the shelves

Wild Grape Wine "Shizuku Marine Rouge"

Iwate Prefecture has the largest cultivation area of wild grapes in the country, and within Iwate, 40% of that is located in the northern coastal area.

The wild grapes from Noda Village are known for being extremely sweet, with a sugar content of 16-20 Brix. Wine made with these grapes is preserved and fermented in a former mining tunnel next to the winery to make an incredibly delicious product.



Wild Grape Wine "Shizuku"

Specialty Products Shop "Purple"
Business Hours: 9:00 – 18:00
(Closes at 17:45 from November - March)
Holidays: 9/30, 1/1
Inquiries: Specialty Products Shop "Purple"
☎ 0194-78-4171
Website <http://nodaeki.com/>

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 70 introduces Ms. Ayumi Fukasawa's efforts.



Sosaku Noka Cosmos Staff

Ayumi Fukasawa



You can only eat Kasshi persimmon here! Come to Kamaishi to eat some, and interact with its nature and warm-hearted people!!

On April 28, rare cheesecake and jam made using the persimmons were newly released. "Food plays a very important role in a child's growth, so I was interested in foods that are good for your body. Rather than wanting to sell a lot of products, I want to have people see Kasshi persimmon and know more about the Kasshi area of Kamaishi, to support Kamaishi, and to want to go to Kamaishi," said Ms. Fukasawa as she expresses her thoughts on Kasshi persimmon being one of the tools to revitalize the local area.

Building a community that focuses on the next generation

"Kamaishi is rich in nature, with the ocean, mountains, and rivers. I think it's a lovely place with lots of cheerful and positive people," said Ms. Fukasawa on her impression of Kamaishi. "Right now there are sea walls set up that prevent a view of the ocean, but I think it's fine as long as we make it a place where nature and mankind co-exist. It feels like children have less and less opportunities to experience nature, so I want to be involved in more activities working with children as well." She is pouring great effort into building a town that focuses on the next generation.

Regional revitalization using local special products as a tool

Kamaishi's Sosaku Noka Cosmos runs a restaurant that puts a great deal of care into their menu by growing their own ingredients. Ms. Fukasawa is working to develop, produce, and sell new Kasshi persimmon products. Kasshi persimmon, a special local product of Kamaishi, is a type of persimmon that is made by oxidizing the fruit at a low temperature for a week.

Casualties & Damage in Iwate

As of April 30, 2017

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: (direct) 4,672 Missing: 1,122 (related) 463
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 26,077

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 April 30, 2017

Donations for survivors: Around ¥18.55634 billion (94,630 donations)

Donations for reconstruction projects: Around ¥19.83536 billion (8,174 donations)

Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations: Around ¥8.94132 billion (20,074 donations)

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



For the News from Iwate's Reconstruction archives:

<http://www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/>



News from Iwate's Reconstruction Web

Watch videos about recent news and People for Sanriku's Future!

Check out our website for more!



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