

# News from Iwate's Reconstruction

## 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.

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

Volume 140  
August 2018 Edition

## The first "Iwate Reconstruction for Tomorrow" seminar of 2018

MORIOKA

July 17<sup>th</sup> (Tue) – The first "Iwate Reconstruction for Tomorrow" seminar of 2018 was held in Morioka City. Hosted by "Iwate Tomorrow Design", a collaborative industrial-governmental-academic group, this year marks the event's fourth consecutive year. This event was open to the public as part of the program for the Iwate Meeting on International Disaster Risk Reduction and Crisis Management research, which took place between the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup>.

The first half of the event saw Governor Tasso and Kamaishi Mayor Noda give keynote speeches under the theme of "Restoration and Reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami". Detailing how the situation has been dealt with over the last 7 years, the Governor and Mayor shared their experiences from Kamaishi City and from the Prefecture's points of view.

To follow, Arnold Howitt (Senior advisor at Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Center for

Democratic Governance and Innovation) spoke about the importance of having strategies prepared for times of emergency in order to help rebuild as quickly as possible.

During the second half, under the theme of "crisis control and prevention, lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake", Shuzo Koshino (Iwate University Regional Disaster Prevention Research Center, visiting professor), Masahiko Mochizuki (Former CEO of Sanriku Railway), and Mio Kamitani (Chief of Secretariat at Oraga Otsuchi Yumehiroba) gave accounts of their experiences during the disaster.



Governor Tasso gives a keynote speech

After these accounts, Arjen Boin (Professor of Public Institutions & Governance at the Institute of Political Science at Leiden University) gave a presentation on ways to assist decision-making in times of disaster, as well as ideas for a cooperative framework.

This day served to remind us that in recovering from the disasters of the past, and in preparing for the disasters of the future, it is imperative that we build a network of cooperation and support with as many people as possible, both inside and outside Japan.



Commemorative photo with attendees

## Roads open from Rikuzentakata Osabe IC to Rikuzentakata IC, and Yoshihama IC to Kamaishi South IC!

RIKUZENTAKATA • OFUNATO • KAMAISHI

A 6.5km road extension was officially opened on July 28<sup>th</sup> (Sat) between Rikuzentakata Osabe IC and Rikuzentakata IC along the Karakuwa-Takata highway stretch of the Sanriku coastal highway.

August 11<sup>th</sup> (Sat) saw the opening of a 5km extension along the Yoshihama-Kamaishi highway between Yoshihama IC (from Ofunato city) to Kamaishi South IC (to Kamaishi city). After their opening ceremonies, these roads were available for use.



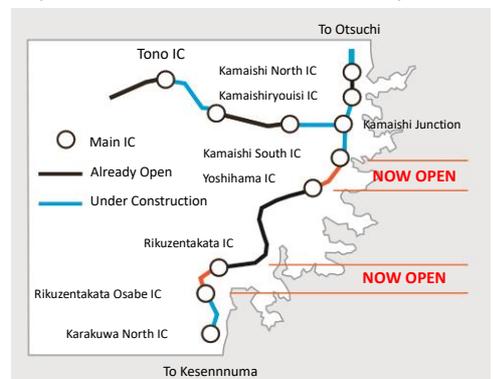
Karakuwa-Takata highway opening ceremony

The opening of these two lengths of track brings the connected area between Rikuzentakata and Kamaishi to 40.2km, which will lead to more efficient transport of marine products from the Sanriku area. These improvements are also expected to promote the fishing industry, make tourism more widely accessible, and further increase tourism in general.



The first run of cars along the newly opened

A further 3.5km extension along the Karakuwa-Takata highway (between Karakuwa North IC and Rikuzentakata Osabe IC) and a 9km extension along the Yoshihama-Kamaishi highway (between Kamaishi South IC and Kamaishi Junction) are planned to be opened within the current fiscal year.



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

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

Free to register!



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



## Tokyo University Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute International Coastal Research Center rebuilt

OTSUCHI

The Tokyo University Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute's International Coastal Research Center (Otsuchi-cho, Akahama) suffered devastating damage in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. However, on the 20th of July (Fri), a commemorative ceremony was held to celebrate the reconstruction of the facility at a location nearby, on higher ground.

Originally built in 1973 along the Otsuchi bay, the research facility didn't stand a chance against the tsunami as it reached its top floor (3F), washing away research equipment, valuable stored data, as well as three of their oceanographic ships. The third floor was repaired after the disaster and research resumed.

The newly constructed facility is three floors of reinforced concrete. The research and experiments building has been provided with facilities and equipment to support ocean research, in addition to accommodation for researchers, among other things. As a joint-use center facilitating collaborative research projects, the center will accept researchers from both inside and outside the country to study the effects of earthquakes and tsunami, marine ecosystems, and more.

Current plans are to convert the former research center into an experimental breeding facility, though it will also have an "ocean study room" that will be open to the public. The plan is for it to not only be something that attracts national and international researchers, but to make it a place where people can come together.



The reconstructed International Research Center



The previous, disaster-struck facility.

## Three village road routes open, connecting coastal and inland areas

TANOHATA

July 8<sup>th</sup> (Sun) – A ceremony was held at the Okanyo-Kitayama Line's Ichi-no-watari crossing to celebrate the opening of three road extensions along the Tanohata Okanyo village road (5,714m) Kitayama Line, the already completed Akedo village road (1,859m) Kitayama Line, and the Kitayamazaki Line village road (455m).

The road extensions have been carried out as an effort to eliminate isolation in coastal areas during times of disaster and to secure civilian evacuation routes among the aforementioned villages. The national highway 45 (Ichi-no-watari area) and the Iwaizumi-Tanohata Fudai Line prefectural road (Kitayama area) have also been connected by an approximately 11.5km long dual carriageway.

Around 100 people attended the opening ceremony, including both local residents and those who were involved in the development of these roads. At the ceremony, Mayor Ishihara of Tanohata in his speech said "The routes have been completed – these roads that we have hoped for will bring an end to the isolation of settlements in times of disaster." The Kacchi Deer Dance Preservation Society performed, praying for safety on these roads. While ensuring access between coastal and inland areas, it is expected that these newly opened roads will also become new tourism routes from inland to scenic coastal areas such as Kitayamazaki.



Cutting the tape at the opening ceremony (Photo Source: Tanohata Village)



Map outlining the newly opened routes

## Messages for the Future

Yamada

Shinsei Yamada  
Shopping Center  
Cooperative Association  
Office Director

Ms. Momoyo  
Shiyya



### Be brave enough to run away

When an earthquake has occurred, or disaster of any kind is expected, it is important to be brave enough to run away. It may be the first thing you would think to do, but depending on how fast you move, even the smallest difference of time can cost you your life.

Speaking from experience, it is very easy to think "it's probably safe here", and I believe there are people out there who don't want to bother with evacuating. However, we must call out to each other and make the decision to run.

The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami caused severe damage to the Iwate coast. As the reconstruction proceeds, lessons learned from the disaster are being passed along in the coastal communities. There will be a big earthquake again in the future, and natural disasters can strike at any time. In order to prepare for these incidents, we will introduce some of these lessons.

### Do not determine the safety of the situation by yourself

At the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, it took approximately 30 minutes for the tsunami to reach our shores. For that reason, people who already evacuated thought "I might still make it (if I go back)", and returned to their homes for their possessions, ultimately sacrificing themselves.

Even after evacuating, do not make your own judgement regarding the safety of the situation. It is of utmost importance that you wait for the rescinding of the alarms before anything.



The tsunami-struck Yamada Bay, overlooking Ogurayama

### Recovering Town & Food Samples Walking Tour Information

An earthquake storyteller guide from the shopping center will walk with you around the Rikuchu-Yamada Station area that was once a bustling town center, and now still recovering.

We will prepare three food activities unique to Yamada to enjoy along the way. After the activity, please enjoy some food samples.

<Examples of food activities & samples>

\*The content will change depending on the season and day.

- Yamada specialty "Yamada Sembei" frying activity
- Oyster and scallop shelling
- Morning harvest shabu-shabu
- Flattening squid

Operating period: Year-round

Minimum number of participants: 4 people

Necessary time: About 1 hour and a half

Fee: ¥1,300 per person

#### ■Inquiries/Applications■

Shinsei Yamada Shopping Center Cooperative  
Association Office

Tel: 019-377-3732

## Summer 2018 – Fun Activities at Nebama Beach

KAMAISHI

From July 28 (Sat) to 29 (Sun), an event called the "Summer 2018 – Fun Activities at Nebama Beach (hosted by Nebama MIND Co.)" was held at the Nebama Beach and in the nearby park area of the Unosumai District of Kamaishi City.

The beach lost most of its sand from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, therefore while it is not open to the public as a beach yet, event organizers were able to obtain swimming permission for this special day. After declaring the importance of beach safety, children thoroughly enjoyed swimming and the many activities held at the event.

Participants were able to try out stand-up paddleboarding, hop on a rescue boat, or enjoy snorkeling at the beach. Also, workshops such as picture-frame making out of various beach objects and paint-your-own daruma were available by the beach. It's been eight years since the beach was last open to the public, so participants were delighted to spend time at the Nebama beach. In 2017, the Prefectural Government contemplated whether it was technically possible to restore the lost sand of the beach. After observing that constructing a fixed, artificial sand was possible, construction of a new artificial beach began in 2018.



Participants enjoy stand-up paddle boarding  
(Photo: Nebama MIND Co.)



Children make their own original picture frame  
(Photo: Nebama MIND Co.)



Railcars from both companies pass by each other at the Taro station (run by Sanriku Railways)



A Sanriku railcar crosses the bridge on the JR Yamada Line

## The Sanriku North Rias Direct Rail Now in Operation

JR Yamada Line / Sanriku Railway North Rias Line

From August 3 (Fri) to August 6 (Mon) and August 10 (Fri) to August 13 (Mon), a direct rail line (with no transfers) that connected the JR Yamada Line (from Morioka to Miyako Station) and the Sanriku Railway North Rias Line (from Miyako to Kuji Station) began its operation for a limited time.

The rail line was a joint collaborative work between JR East Japan Morioka branch and Sanriku Railways to boost further recovery efforts of the coastal regions from the 2011 disaster. The line, which railcars from both companies take turns during the service, was first established in 2014. But it was on a brief hiatus due to the landslide that affected the JR Yamada Line in 2015. It's taken three years to reopen the line, even for a limited time.

During its limited operation, the train leaves once a day from Morioka Station and Kuji Station. Many railway fans gathered to take unique pictures of the train (and the view from the train) running on a different company's rail line. The rail car, "Kenji (model Kiha-58)", that JR has been using is due to end its service in September so this will be the last time for it to run on the Sanriku Railway line.

## ~Hope~ An archive of the earthquake and tsunami in Iwate



(<http://iwate-archive.pref.iwate.jp>)

- Over 240,000 written materials and pictures related to the disaster
- A record of steps taken during disaster by each organization in chronological order
- Archive of local newspaper articles moments after the disaster

Resources are organized in six categories:

- ① Preparation
- ② The power of connection
- ③ Disaster aid that turned to friendship (*kizuna*)
- ④ For those who need special care
- ⑤ Response to an unprecedented event
- ⑥ Hometown (*Furusato*) Iwate- Sanriku

