News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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

三陸復興

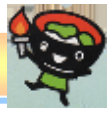
Volume 104
May 1, 2016

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.

153 Days until the **National Sports Festival** 174 Days until the **National Sports Festival for the People with Disabilities**



"Moguranpia" Aquarium Reopens In Kuji

Kuji

On April 23rd, 2016 (Sat), Kuji's underground aquarium and science museum, "Moguranpia", (Samuraihama, Kuji), reopened in its original location, 5 years after being completely destroyed in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

The facility uses the inside of a tunnel in an oil storage base, and is the only underground aquarium in Japan. It has around 40 tanks of varying sizes, which display roughly 3,000 animals of 200 different species. The aquarium has about the same number of creatures as before the disaster.

At the opening ceremony, the city mayor, Mr. Joji Endo, said, "We're here today because of the assistance of people from all over the country. I want Moguranpia to become a symbol of the recovery, and a focal point for visitors to Kuji and the North Sanriku region."

A visiting associate professor at the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, named Sakana-kun, has been collaborating with the aquarium since before the disaster and gave his support towards the reopening. As the head of the Moguranpia support group, he was delighted at the news. "The fish are back after 5 years away. If you watch them glitter as they swim, or look at their cute little faces, I'm sure you'll feel full of energy!" he said.

From the aquarium's underwater tunnel, you can see creatures like Kamekichi, the green sea turtle that miraculously survived the tsunami. Moguranpia is also planning "Nanbu Moguri" and "Hokugen no Ama" diving performances, once per day on weekends and holidays.

Sakana-kun with Moguranpia's mascots

The reopened "Moguranpia"

The popular underwater tunnel, home to "Kamekichi"

(right: Moguranpia's new character, "Kamekichi")

"Namiita Coast Village", A New Tourism Hub, Is Now Open

Otsuchi

Otsuchi, which lost sandy beaches to land subsidence by the disaster, hosted the grand opening of the "Namiita Coast Village" in Kirikiri on April 17th, 2016 (Sun). Around 200 local residents participated in the event, which was titled the "Namiita Coast Carnival".

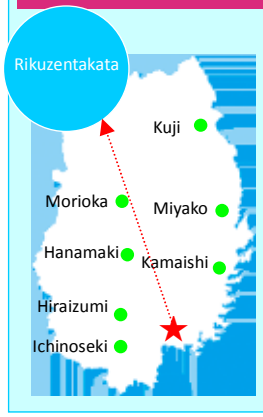
The facility hosts three shops, a surfing store (KSURF), a cafe bar (JONMA) and an internet-connected co-working cafe (KAI CAFE). It also has a social space for visitors.

The grand opening event had t-shirt printing and an exhibition of local photography. Every visitor received a free scallop from the Sanriku coast.

Namiita Coast Village (Photo: Otsuchi Town)

Spreading the joy. Giving thanks.

The Land of Hope National Sports Festival and National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities



Event ▸ Beach Volleyball Dates ▸ August 28th (Sun)
Venue ▸ A Specially-Constructed Venue in Takata, Rikuzentakata
Inquiries ☎ 0192-54-2111 (Rikuzentakata City)

Rikuzentakata INFORMATION

Rikuzentakata, where the Pacific Ocean spreads out before your eyes. It serves as the southern gateway to the sprawling rias coastline of the Sanriku Fukko National Park. The Miraculous Pine, a single tree that survived the tsunami, stands as a symbol of the city's journey towards recovery, which it is currently undertaking thanks to the public's generous aid and encouragement. The annual Ugoku and Kenka Tanabata Festivals on August 7th attract large, bustling crowds, and is a great way to feel the verve of the southern coastal region of Kesen.

The Miraculous Pine

The Taro Kanko Hotel Memorial Opens To The Public

Miyako

Conservation work has been completed on the Taro Kanko Hotel (in Taro, Miyako), and the structure opened to the public on April 1st, 2016 (Fri) as a memorial of the disaster.

This is the first disaster memorial to open to the public that has used disaster reconstruction funds.

The tsunami reached the 4th floor of the 6 floor hotel, and only the structural framework remains of the bottom two floors. The hotel lies within Miyako City, which secured the land and structure so that they could preserve it for others to know the danger of tsunami and lessons learned.

You can reserve educational disaster prevention tours (called "Manabu Bosai") where you can tour the inside of the hotel and see a video of the tsunami taken from the 6th floor.

■Reservations required
■Inquiries: Manabu Bosai
☎ 0193-77-3305
080-5739-6423
9:00am - 6:00pm

The Taro Kanko Hotel.

Website ▸ http://www.kankou385.jp/pickup/625.html

Introducing: The "Wrapping Truck"

Morioka

In order to support the reconstruction and National Sports Festival, Aichi Rikuun Co. (of Komaki, Aichi), a delivery company in the Toyota Group, have created the "Wrapping Truck," a truck wrapped with Iwate-themed posters.

On April 11th, 2016 (Mon), at the unveiling ceremony in front of the Iwate Prefectural Government, Governor Tasso presented a letter of thanks to Takashi Kobayashi, Aichi Rikuun's president.

The truck's container, which is roughly 12 meters long and 25 tons in weight, has been covered in vivid photographs from Iwate Prefecture, including the Miraculous Pine, the Sanriku Railway, shopkeepers from the Sanriku-Saiko Shopping Association, Hiraizumi and the Hashino Iron Mining Site (both are World Heritage Sites), and the National Sports Festival.

The truck will make a round trip daily between Aichi Prefecture and the Toyota factory in Kanegasaki, promoting Iwate to everyone along the way.

The unveiling of the "Wrapping Truck"

People for SANRIKU'S Future

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 54 introduces Ms. Yasuko Furuno's efforts.

Head of Child Support Pact (Non-Profit Organization)
Yasuko Furuno

"Cheerful children make a bright future!"

<<< PROFILE >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Originally from Kagoshima Prefecture.

She studied abroad during high school and university. After graduating she found work in Tokyo, at a non-government organization (NGO) focused on international cooperation.

In August 2011, the NGO sent her to Kesennuma and Rikuzentakata. From October of that year she worked at Michikusa Room, a relaxing, social place for children who had nowhere else to go after the tsunami. Since April 2013 she has been working in Rikuzentakata for Pact.

Reconstructing the environment around our children

Pact has three main activities: supporting children via the Michikusa Room, matching volunteers with local needs and running a boarding house sited in a refurbished schoolroom.

Ms. Furuno, as the Head of Child Support, works to improve the environment surrounding local children. "The reconstruction work on the town is gradually progressing, but there are still temporary housing units on school grounds, and no plans to build new parks," she said. However, Ms. Furuno has high hopes for Rikuzentakata's future rebuilding work. "These children will eventually grow up to support the town, so I want them to be glad they were born here."

Continued support

Ms. Furuno also called for the support of more volunteers. "Five years have passed since the disaster and, although some people continue to help, the numbers are falling. Volunteers provide Rikuzentakata with huge encouragement because we know people are still thinking of us. The natural surroundings are beautiful, so please consider coming to help out."

Pact's website : http://pact-rt311.org

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of March 31, 2016

▸Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,123
▸Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 26,168

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 March 31, 2016

Donations for survivors: Around ¥18.45494 billion (93,134 donations)
Donations for reconstruction projects: Around ¥19.76697 billion (7,691 donations)
Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations: Around ¥7.96499 billion (17,318 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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