

# 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.

Even the coastal regions held their coming-of-age ceremonies this year, and we were able to see young people become adults filled with fresh determination toward reconstruction.

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

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



Volume 79  
January 15, 2015

## Iwate-Sanriku Reconstruction Forum in Kobe

Kobe

~Toward the Creation of a New Homeland~

On January 8 (Thursday), the Iwate-Sanriku Reconstruction Forum (organizer: Iwate Prefecture) was held in the main hall of the Kobe International Conference Center. Roughly 350 people attended the event.

The theme of the event was "Toward the Creation of a New Homeland." In his opening speech, Governor Takuya Tasso expressed his gratitude for the support received from Kobe City in Hyogo Prefecture as well as from others within and outside of Japan. As a response to this support, he also talked about improving the pace of reconstruction.

Governor Tasso, Hyogo Prefecture Governor Toshizou Ido, and Professor Keiko Kiyohara from Kobe Gakuin University discussed lessons for future generations learned from the Great Hanshin Earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

They talked about the responses to both disasters, as well as what should be done in case of future disasters. They also deliberated on how to pass on the lessons that came from the earthquakes to future generations.

After that, a panel discussion was held with Iwateans in the tourism/fishing industry, and other people who were driven to volunteer during the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami because of their experiences during the Hanshin Earthquake.

The panel's theme was "Thank you Kobe! Let's walk together toward the future!" They talked about how they could use their experiences and activities to work toward reconstruction in both Iwate and Kobe.

Participants were very absorbed in these discussions.

In the lobby, there were displays and an exhibition of *Omoi wo Tsunagu, Inochi wo Tsunagu Ki* (The Tree That Unites Us and Our Feelings) which had messages from picture book author Moe Nagata and Hyogo Prefecture residents to the disaster areas in Tohoku. There was also a Reconstruction Bazaar selling Iwate's local specialty products. It was an event that deepened the friendship between Iwate and Hyogo.



The panel discussion



Governor Tasso and Governor Ido with *Inochi wo Tsunagu Ki*

JR Yamada Line (Miyako-Kamaishi section) to be Operated by Sanriku Railway

Miyako - Kamaishi

The Miyako to Kamaishi section of the JR Yamada Line (55.4km) was damaged during the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and is still closed. On December 26 (Friday), Governor Tasso, Mayor of Miyako Masanori Yamamoto, and Sanriku Railway President Masahiko Mochizuki held a discussion with JR East President Tetsuro Tomita and other JR executives about officially accepting JR's offer to give control over the Miyako-Kamaishi section to Sanriku Railway.

It was proposed that, with the transfer, JR East would take on the 14 billion yen cost for restoring the line, as well as a total of 3 billion yen for covering projected deficits and differences in freight rates, etc. They would also assist by handing over railcars free of charge, improving the rail tracks, and so on.

With this, the railways along Iwate's coast would become one continuous line from Kuji Station in the north to Sakari Station (Ofunato) in the south. It is expected that this will make travel more convenient and will contribute to the Sanriku coast's reconstruction and tourism.



Winter Special: Sanriku Railway Kotatsu Train!

Kuji - Miyako

The North Rias Line connects Kuji and Miyako and is running a winter special: "kotatsu" trains have been operating from December of last year to March 29 (Sunday). (\*Kotatsu are cozy low tables with blankets and a heater underneath)

Kotatsu trains were down in 2011 because of the earthquake and tsunami, but they resumed in December 2012 from Kuji to Tanohata. After all the Sanriku lines reopened in April of last year, kotatsu trains have finally started running again between Kuji and Miyako.

Inside the railcars, there are attendants dressed up as *ama* (shell divers) and appearances of ogre-like *namomi* which come from traditional events in the northern coastal region. The 1' 40" trip includes a beautiful view of Sanriku's gorgeous rias coastline.

<For more information>  
Sanriku Railway Co. Traveler Service Department  
TEL: 0193-62-8900



The kotatsu trains



Inside the kotatsu train

## Calendars Showcasing the Coastal Region

Calendars for 2015 were made to promote and support tourism in the coastal areas.

The Miyako Tourism Cultural Exchange Association printed 2,000 poster-sized copies of the Miyako Omotenashi Calendar. These calendars are made every year to promote Miyako's local charm and create a friendly image for the city. Pictures of gorgeous Jodogahama beach were chosen for this year's calendar, which was distributed for free in places like the Tourism Information Center in front of JR Miyako Station.

On the other hand, the JR East Morioka branch office has started selling SL Ginga calendars. SL Ginga is a steam train that the JR East put back in service for the first time in 42 years to support reconstruction in Kamaishi from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. The calendar shows the SL train on the tracks throughout the seasons along with other pictures. The calendar is sold in Morioka Station, Hanamaki, Tono, and Kamaishi Station on the Kamaishi Line, as well as the Tohoku Shinkansen's Shin-Hanamaki Station.

The Ministry of the Environment created a calendar of Japan's national parks as well to promote their beauty throughout Japan and the rest of the world. The famous Anatooshiiso rocks of Ofunato's Goishi Coast appear for March amongst the calendar's breathtaking landscapes of Japan. You can download this from the Ministry of the Environment's website.

Download > <http://www.env.go.jp/park/doc/calendar/>



Miyako Omotenashi Calendar (Left) SL Ginga Calendar (Right)



National Park Calendar

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 33 introduces Mr. Suguru Shimizu's efforts.

### Profile:

Originally from Rikuzentakata. In April 2002, Shimizu joined the social welfare corporation Taiyokai. He received technical guidance from Ishikawa Oil Refinery (Representative: Shuuichi Ishikawa), which was damaged during the disaster and forced to shut down. At Seishoukan Seseragi in 2012, he got involved in the Kesen region's specialty - camellia oil - and remains in the area to this day.

### *Not giving into suffering, inheriting the region's craft*

The camellia is Rikuzentakata's city flower, and many wild camellias grow along its coast.

The Ishikawa Oil Refinery had over 50 years of history in Rikuzentakata, where they extracted oil from the camellia flowers to sell in various products. But the factory/residence was damaged during the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. The heir to the company was also killed in the tsunami, and hopes of rebuilding were abandoned, but the social welfare organization Taiyokai stepped into inherit

People for  
SANRIKU'S  
Future

Social Welfare Corporation  
Taiyokai  
Camellia Oil Supervisor for  
Seishoukan Seseragi  
Suguru Shimizu



"Local Product of the North. Please try our gold-colored Kesen camellia oil!"

the trade of extracting camellia oil. Since April 2012, in the hopes of helping rebuild their region, they have been producing camellia oil along with Ishikawa Oil Refinery.

"Camellia oil is known for being used in cosmetics, but it can also be used in cooking. The extracted oil is a beautiful golden color, and its rich taste is great for cooking, so I hope you try it out," says Mr. Shimizu.

There are high hopes that the company can pass down the craft and make the oil one of Rikuzentakata's famous regional goods.

*With gratitude: using the goodness of the community for the future*

"It's impressive how the conveyor belt near Takata Matsubara works late into the night every day. They are elevating the ground level, and I think that the landscape is changing a lot really quickly. We're still receiving a lot of support from other prefectures, and as a local of the area I'm really grateful. The memory of Rikuzentakata before the disaster - the goodness of it - can be used not just in our camellia oil products, but for the future of the region," says Mr. Shimizu on his thoughts about the reconstruction.

### Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of Dec. 31, 2014

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,130
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 25,716

To make a donation to aid in Iwate's reconstruction:  
[www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/011100.html](http://www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/011100.html)

### Thank you for all your support!

As of Dec. 31, 2014

- Donations for survivors:** Around ¥18.2874 billion (90,624 donations)
- Donations for reconstruction projects:** Around ¥19.62505 billion (7,185 donations)
- Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations:** Around ¥7.07976 billion (14,522 donations)

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

News from Iwate's Reconstruction, Volume 79. January 15, 2015.

Published by the General Affairs Division, Bureau of Reconstruction, Iwate Prefecture. TEL: 019-629-6925

For the News from Iwate's Reconstruction archives: <http://www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/>

Editing & Printing: SYNAPSE