

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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

三陸復興

Volume 61
(April 2014)
Iwate Prefecture

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.

The snow on the ground has melted, and after a long, cold winter we are finally moving into spring.

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

Sanriku Railway Restored To Glory

Sanriku Railway, which serves dual roles as a transportation system for the residents of Iwate's coastal region and a key part of the region's tourism sector, suffered significant damage in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

After the disaster, the portions of the railway that had suffered only minor damage were quickly able to resume operations, but it was not until April 6 of this year, a full three years after the disaster, that the whole line was rebuilt and trains could once again run on the full 107.6-km stretch of rail.

We hope that Sanriku Railway will serve as a symbol of Iwate's reconstruction.

Operation of South Rias Line Resumes

On April 5, the 15-km stretch between Kamaishi and Yoshihama stations reopened. This meant that the full 36.6-km stretch between the South Rias Line's Sakari and Kamaishi stations were once again operational.

Ceremonies were held commemorating the event at Sakari and Kamaishi stations, drawing large crowds to celebrate the reopening of the South Rias Line.



Departure ceremony at Sakari Station



Cutting the ribbon at Kamaishi Station



Sugimoto and Arakawa "split the ball" (kusudama-wari) at the Kuji ceremony

Operation of North Rias Line Resumes

The following day (April 6) saw the resumption of operations of the North Rias Line's 10.5-km stretch between Omoto and Tanohata stations. This marked the full reopening of the 71-km North Rias Line between Miyako and Kuji stations.

The actors Yoshiyoshi Arakawa and Tetta Sugimoto visited Kuji Station and took part in a lively ceremony on the platform. The two had previously played railway staff at the fictional "North Sanriku Railway" in the popular NHK morning drama *Ama-chan*, which was partly shot at Kuji Station.



First train enters Miyako Station



People celebrating at Kuji Station

Publication of Results of the First "Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey" for 2014

Iwate Prefecture periodically conducts the "Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey" in order to measure Iwate's reconstruction progress following the 2011 Earthquake and Tsunami.

The survey targets people living or working in the disaster-affected municipalities, and is conducted once every three months.

We will now explain some key points extracted from the results of the first survey of the year (conducted in February 2014).

How have the lives of the survivors recovered?
"Fully recovered" or "Mostly recovered": 55.9% (last time: 48%)

- There was an increase of 7.9 points over the previous results.
- While participants gave positive points like "More people have moved into new houses and public housing projects", some were distressed by the inconvenience and mental strain of still having to live in temporary housing.

How do you feel about the recovery of the local economy?
"Fully recovered" or "Mostly recovered": 46.9% (last time: 48.8%)

- There was a decrease of 1.9 points under the previous results.
- While participants appreciate the revival of the fisheries industry and look forward to an increase in employment and consumption from the introduction of large shopping malls, concerns were raised over the effect the latter would have on the temporary shopping facilities' business conditions.

How do you feel about the disaster mitigation measures?
"Satisfactory" or "Mostly satisfactory": 19.6% (last time: 13.7%)

- There was an increase of 5.9 points over the previous results.
- Participants were happy with the improvements in the seawalls and so on, but some expressed concern over the possibility of traffic issues in the event of another tsunami, asking for better and safer roads.

We are recruiting members for the Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team!



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.

For more information, please see the website of the Tokyo Branch Office of the Iwate Prefectural Government:

Iwate Ooendan

Search

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

Free to Register!

First in Tohoku!

Funakoshi Elementary's Successful Move to Higher Ground

Yamada

On April 5 (Saturday) Yamada Municipal Funakoshi Elementary School (137 students, principal: Shigeto Sasaki) held a ceremony to mark the completion of its new school building. The old building was destroyed in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, and construction work to move the school to higher ground was concluded recently.

This marks the first completed move of a damaged school to higher ground anywhere in the three tsunami-affected prefectures.

The new building was built by cutting down some of the forested area behind the old building. The reinforced concrete structure has

been raised 11 meters, and is now 24 meters above sea level. On the first floor is a disaster-preparedness room, with blankets, sleeping bags, and 2-3 days of emergency food supplies for all the students.

The completion ceremony was attended by current students as well as people affiliated with Yamada Town. Student union president Daiki Minato (6th grade) said happily "I want to thank everyone by taking good care of the new school building."

The students, who until now had to attend classes in the Rikuchu Kaigan Youth House, will once again be able to take classes in a proper school building.



The completed school building



The ceremony



Students singing the school song

"The Last Pine Tree, a Symbol of Hope" Donated to Rikuzentakata

~Best Wishes for the Reconstruction from 14 Car Manufacturers~

Rikuzentakata

On March 27, 2014, "The Last Pine Tree, a Symbol of Hope", a steel-plate replica of the Miracle Lone Pine Tree, was presented by the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association (JAMA) to Rikuzentakata Municipal Daiichi Junior High School. The replica had been built by JAMA members and displayed at events such as the Tokyo Motor Show.

The replica was produced by the combined efforts of 14 JAMA member firms and made completely from steel plate using sheet metal technology. It is 2.7 meters tall (1/10 scale) and was modelled down to the smallest detail on the Miracle Lone Pine Tree. It used steel plates from Rikuzentakata cars that were damaged in the tsunami in its construction, and it was exhibited at the Tokyo Motor Show and other venues last year.

The presentation ceremony took place on March 27, and JAMA's chairman Akio Toyota (president of Toyota) gave an address in which he expressed his desire to help the reconstruction in any way he could. "Our members all visited Rikuzentakata and heard from many different people, ultimately deciding to produce this monument. It is our hope as the makers of the monument that those who look upon it will get a sense of the meaning of the Lone Pine Tree and know



"The Last Pine Tree, a Symbol of Hope" presentation ceremony commemorative photograph with Daiichi JHS students, Rikuzentakata's mayor, and JAMA's chairman

how much the reconstruction means to us."

The replica will be displayed in the first floor of the Iwate Hanamaki Airport Terminal until the end of March 2015. It will then be moved to the Community Hall that is being constructed in Rikuzentakata.

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of March 31, 2014

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,132
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 25,706

For more information on damage in Iwate, or to make a donation, go to the Iwate Disaster Information Portal:

Iwate Pref Bousai

Search

Thank you for all your support!

As of Feb. 28, 2014

Donations for survivors: Around ¥17.95467 billion (88,247 donations)

Donations for reconstruction projects: Around ¥18.69077 billion (6,612 donations)

Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations: Around ¥6.39807 billion (12,256 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 61. April 2014.

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