

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 new fiscal year has begun. Going into the third year after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, Iwate has officially dubbed fiscal 2013 as "the Year of Accelerating the Reconstruction". We continue toward a reconstruction that meets the needs of the affected areas and the survivors. We will now bring you the news from Iwate's reconstruction.

(Right: The Lone Pine Tree of Rikuzentakata, in the process of being preserved; photo taken April 2013)



Reopening Part of the Sanriku Railway South Rias Line



On Wednesday, April 3, the section of the Sanriku Railway South Rias Line that lies between Sakari Station and Yoshihama Station was reopened after being inactive for two years. A commemorative ceremony was held at Yoshihama Station in Ofunato City, and in addition to local residents, His Excellency Ambassador Al-Otaibi of Kuwait (which provided aid for the reopening) and various other big names were in attendance. It truly was a lively affair. Sanriku Railway, which has



Governor Tasso and Ambassador Al-Otaibi exchange a handshake

been a major transportation line for the local people, hopes to have its entire rail system back up and running as soon as possible. As such, it is working to achieve the goal of having the Yoshihama-Kamaishi section of the South Rias Line and the Omoto-Tanohata section of the North Rias Line fully restored by April 2014.

Red Cross Publicity Envoy visits Prefectural Office

Actress Norika Fujiwara, special publicity envoy for the Japanese Red Cross Society, visited the Iwate Prefectural Office on Tuesday, April 2 to tell Governor Tasso about the group's reconstruction aid activities.

Ms. Fujiwara also stopped by the Reconstruction Bureau, and encouraged the workers with the story of her experiences during the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995.



Reconstruction Promotion Plan Approved by National Government

On Friday, April 12, the Prime Minister officially approved Iwate's "Confirmed Contributory Pensions Special District Reconstruction Promotion Plan". With this, those who meet certain requirements and were entered into the confirmed contributory pension scheme (either through their company or individually) at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake will be able to withdraw before they reach the age of 60. A one-time lump sum at time of withdrawal can be used to help rebuild their lives. Further details are available from the [Iwate Reconstruction Net website](#).



Receiving the certificate of approval

Casualties & Damage in Iwate (as of March 31, 2013)

Human casualties/deaths: 4,672

Missing: 1,151

Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 24,928

⇒ For more information on the damage, please see the [Iwate Disaster Information Portal](#) website.



☆☆ We are recruiting members for the Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team ☆☆

We are now recruiting both individual and group (corporate or other) members of the "Iwate Reconstruction Supporters" in the Greater Tokyo Area. Members are e-mailed information regarding reconstruction and tourism in Iwate and upcoming events in the Tokyo area. Registration is free!

⇒ For more information, please see the [Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team homepage](#) (Iwate Prefecture, Tokyo Branch Office)

Thank you for all your support!

Donations for survivors (as of March 31, 2013):

Around ¥17.74605 billion (84,963 donations)

Donations for reconstruction projects (as of March 31, 2013):

Around ¥16.50305 billion (5,992 donations)

Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations (as of March 31, 2013):

Around ¥5.37932 billion (9,411 donations)

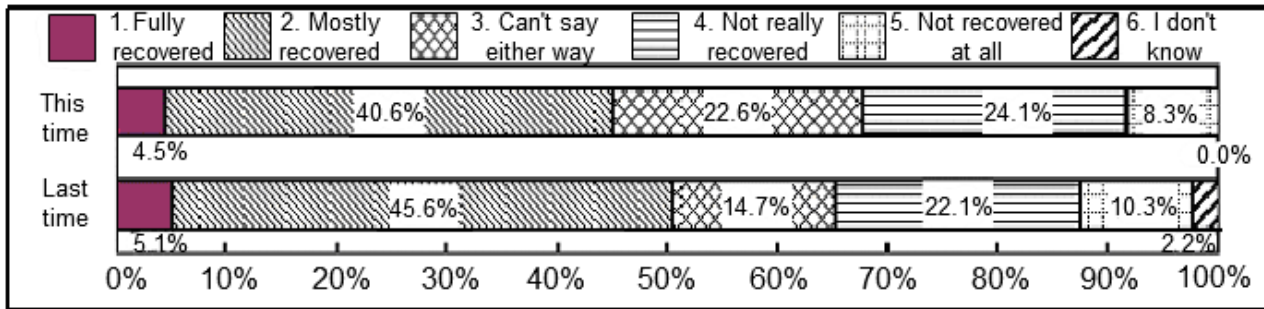
To assist in the study and daily life of affected children by encouraging sport and study activities

⇒ For donations, please see the ["Iwate Disaster Information Portal"](#) website.

Publication of the “Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey” and “Reconstruction of Damaged Businesses Survey”

Iwate has published the results of its “Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey” and “Reconstruction of Damaged Businesses Survey”, which are distributed to local residents/workers and businesses (mostly in commerce and industry) respectively. These surveys are performed periodically to measure our reconstruction progress following the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. This is the first survey for 2013.

According to the Watchers Survey results, the proportion of survivors who feel that their lives have either “fully recovered” or “mostly recovered” is 45.1%, a drop of 5.6 points from last time the survey was performed.



Results from the 2013, 1st edition “Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey”, concerning residents’ lifestyles

According to the Damaged Businesses Survey results, the percentage of businesses that feel they have “re-opened” or “partly re-opened” is at 78.9%, up one point from last time’s 77.9%. We will continue to perform these surveys, in order to ensure that our reconstruction efforts accurately reflect the opinions of the people in the affected areas.

Both surveys are available from the “Iwate Reconstruction Net” website ([“About the Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey”](#) and [“About the Reconstruction of Damaged Businesses Survey”](#)).



The Ceremony

Encouragement Ceremony for Aid Staff

On Monday, April 1, the Iwate Prefectural Hall played host to the encouragement ceremony for support staffers dispatched to Iwate from local governments around

the country. Fiscal 2013 saw 160 workers sent to Iwate from prefectures and designated cities all over the country, from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa in the south. For the next year, they will lend their efforts to Iwate’s reconstruction.

During the ceremony, Governor Tasso issued words of encouragement, and a representative of the support staff made an expression of resolve on their behalf. The workers’ enthusiasm was evident.



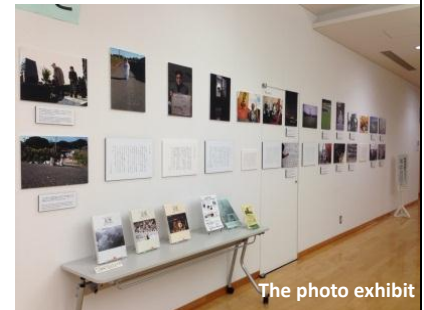
The support staffers’ official gesture of determination

More manpower will be of greater importance going forward, now that we are in the “Year of Accelerating the Reconstruction”. We hope that people all around the country will continue to support us so we can realize our reconstruction as soon as possible.

Information regarding upcoming events at the Iwate Prefectural Library

The Iwate Prefectural Library is holding events from Monday, April 1 to Thursday, May 30 to mark the first anniversary of their “Documents of the Disaster” corner.

Among the events is a documentary photo exhibition based around the theme of “Memory: We must never forget”, and displays around



The photo exhibit

100 photos taken by Nikkei reporters of the disaster area in the immediate aftermath. A display of relevant newspaper articles is also being organized.



The newspaper exhibit

For details, please check [the library’s website](#), or contact them on 019-606-1730.

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☆We welcome any comments or questions you may have regarding the *News from Iwate’s Reconstruction*:

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◆News from Iwate’s Reconstruction Archives→<http://www.pref.iwate.jp/view.rbz?cd=34866&ik=0&pnp=14>

