

We are deeply grateful for the heard-warming encouragement and support received from both within and outside of Japan in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, which struck on 11th March 2011. The precious bonds created during this time will be always cherished. More than a year has passed since the disaster, and most of the rubble and debris have been removed to a temporary site, as recovery efforts continue to move forward as planned. Although, the road to recovery is not easy, Iwate's people remain firmly united in their efforts to rebuild and reconstruct Sanriku Area and Iwate.



Kamaishi City (photo taken on April 25)

Now, here is some latest news of Iwate

【Spring Season's Athletic/Sports Meets Galore】

Spring is the season of athletic meets, and many of such athletic meets are being held at elementary and junior high schools in various disaster-hit areas of Iwate.

Some schools had their athletic meets after a 1 year gap, as many of the schools could not organise their athletic meets due to the disaster last year. It was indeed a pleasant sight to see the children playing under open blue skies as their vigorous shouts echoed through the ground.

Funakoshi Elementary School in Yamada-machi was destroyed completely by tsunami, and since then the school has been conducting its classes by renting a part of a prefectural youth facility known as "Rikuchu Kaigan Seishonen-no-ie". The school held its athletic meet on the grounds of the youth facility on the 20th. As the children enjoyed their activities, the school expressed its gratitude for the sports equipment it received from all over Japan.

The new building of Funakoshi Elementary School will be built by reclaiming the hill behind the school site, and the school hopes to start its classes at the new school by 2014.

The school premises of **Akasaki Elementary School in Ofunato City** were also destroyed completely by tsunami, similar to the Funakoshi Elementary School; as a result of this, the school was forced to rent a part of the space of Tako-no-Ura Elementary School. Since Tako-no-Ura school grounds has been hosting 'temporary housing', both the schools held their joint athletic meet at the 'Multipurpose Grounds of Sanriku B&G Marine Sports Centers" on the 19th.

The vigorousness of children's activities have also brought fresh energy to the people affected by the disaster.

★Athletic Meets at Elementary and JH Schools (Main Examples)

Local Govt. Body	School Name	Month/Date	Special Features
Fudai Village	Fudai Elementary	5/19	Fishermen's banners and national flags of various countries hoisted.
Iwaizumi Town	Omoto Elementary	5/20	Held jointly at Ooushi Branch School which houses temporary school building.
Miyako City	Taro Daisan Elementary	5/26	Students gave a performance of local performing art which was not performed after the disaster
Yamada Town	Funakoshi Elementary	5/20	Organised at Rikuchu Coast Youth Centre, which has been housing the school temporarily.
Ootsuchi Town	Ootsuchi Elementary & others※	5/26	4 schools conducting classes at a temporary location held a joint Meet.
Ofunato City	Akasaki Elementary	5/19	A joint Meet with Tako-no-Ura (temporary location for the Akasaki school)
Rikuzen Takada City	Kesen JHS	5/19	Flags, batons received from organizations supporting the event

※Ootsuchi Elementary, Ando Elementary, Akahama Elementary, Ootsuchi-Kita Elementary

【Bus Tour to Support Rebuilding Efforts: Let's Meet & Share】

"Iwate Destination Campaign" was started in April; as many tourists from all over Japan are expected to visit Iwate, a Bus Tour to aid the recovery efforts has been introduced, in order to give visitors an opportunity to see the conditions in the disaster affected areas.

The purpose of this Bus Tour is not only to see the affected areas but also hear from the local people affected by the disaster. There will be 3 tour courses: Rikuzen Takada & Ofunato, Tono & Kamaishi, Ryusendo & Northern Rikuchu Coast. On all the courses, a bus guide will relate the experience of the disaster to the visitors.



Tsuyoshi Sawaguchi from Miyako Tourism Association who works as a guide, says: 'my house was also swept away by the tsunami; as a person who experienced this tsunami and survived, I feel that the memory should not be allowed to fade away.'

>>For Details (Back Issues) ... <http://goo.gl/ZHKcX>

Iwate Pref. TV Programme "Iwate: A Step Towards Hope"

Episode 5: ~Meet and Share~

(Broadcasting Dates: May 7, 8, 9, 10, 13)



Thank you for your support!!

★Donations for Survivors (As of April 30th)

Approx. ¥17.27928 Billion (78, 964 Donations)

~These donations will be distributed to the disaster affected people through local administrations~

★ Donations for Reconstruction Projects (As of April 30th)

Approx. ¥ 15.61040 Billion (5,164 Contributions)

~These contributions will be used for reconstruction and redevelopment projects planned by the Prefecture~

>>>For Donations/Contributions

<http://www.pref.iwate.jp/~bousai/jyouhou/volunteer.html>

Casualties & Damage in Iwate (As of May 30th)

oHuman Casualties/Deaths : 4,671; Missing: 1,220

oBuildings Destroyed: (Residences only; Total/Partial): 24,877

Thank you for your support!!

★Iwate Fun to Support Children's Education (As of May 17th)

Approx. 4.39900 Billion (6,592 Donations)

~ The money from these donations will be used to support disaster-hit children's 'life' and 'studies', so that they can enjoy their studies and sports.

【“Tohoku Rokkon Festival・2012 Morioka” is celebrated in great style!】

Last year Tohoku Rokkon Festival was held in Sendai, in the hope that it will lift people’s spirits and help them to overcome the tragedy of last year’s disaster.

In addition to the festive floats from 6 major Tohoku festivals (Morioka’s Sansa Dance Parade, Aomori’s Nebuta, Akita’s Kanto, Yamagata’s Hanagasa, Sendai’s Tanabata and Fukushima’s Waraji Festivals), the festive float from local Morioka Autumn Festival also took part in the festival.

Blessed by a fine weather, approximately 243,000 people visited during the two days of the festival; we hope that the success of such events will contribute to the rebuilding energy.



Morioka: Sansa Dance



Akita: Kanto Festival



Aomori: Nebuta Festival



Sendai: Tanabata Festival (Sparrow Dance)



Yamagata: Hanagasa Festival



Fukushima: Waraji Festival

< Festival Schedule/Outline >

- Time: 2012, May 26 (Sat) & May 27 (Sun)
- Organised By: Tohoku Rokkan Festival Executive Committee
- Venue: Chuo-dori, Morioka City Morioka Castle Site Park

>>> Please see here for the details about Tohoku Rokkon Festival ...

Tohoku Rokkon Festival (Official HP) <http://www.rokkan.jp>

Latest from Rokkon Festival (Morioka City) <http://www.city.morioka.iwate.jp/koho/kohomorioka/015357.html>

Photos: Courtesy of Morioka City



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