

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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

Volume 128
August 2017 Edition

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 latest news from Iwate's reconstruction!

National Governors Meeting held in Iwate Adopting the Iwate Proclamation

Morioka

A two day National Governors Meeting was held in Morioka City on July 27 (Thu) to 28 (Fri). This is the first time for the meeting to be held in one of the three disaster-affected prefectures (Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima) since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

In his opening statement, Governor Tasso said, "The driving force of Iwate's reconstruction is the power of our relationships with the rest of Japan and the world, and also the fundamental strength of the local people. We would like to express our appreciation by showing you how our reconstruction has progressed."

The meeting's discussion covered eight themes / 22 topics with the title "From Isolation to Coexistence ~ Changing Japan's Society from the Regions outside Tokyo" as its main proposition. Topics such as a swift recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic games, and the development of the regions outside Tokyo were compiled to propose to the national government.

On the 27th, an "Iwate Proclamation" was adopted in which the national and the local government will cooperate together to work on its goals of continuing humanitarian aid,

ensuring long term funding for the reconstruction, enriching disaster education for future generations, and building a disaster-resistant country.

The meeting ended in the morning of the 28th, and the governors were divided into three groups to visit the coastal disaster-affected areas.

At the press conference in the end, Governor Tasso said, "With the Iwate Proclamation adopted, a strong message regarding the nation's recovery and disaster has spread out across the country. I think this is a big step to change Japan from within the local regions."

Full text of the Iwate Proclamation (JPN only): <http://www.pref.iwate.jp/seisaku/chijikaigi/057585.html>



Governor Tasso reading out the Iwate Proclamation



The National Governors Meeting



Prefectural governors visiting the coastal disaster-affected areas

In Hopes of A Full Reconstruction Ring Entrance Ceremony by Kisenosato & Harumafuji

Kamaishi

On August 14 (Mon), *Yokozuna*-rank sumo wrestlers, Kisenosato (from the Tagonoura stable) and Harumafuji (from the Isegahama stable), performed their ring entrance ceremony (*dohyo-iri*) in hopes of a full reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami at the shared gymnasium of Unosumai Elementary School and Kamaishi Higashi Middle School in Kamaishi City.

This ceremony performed by the *yokozuna* sumo wrestlers is one of many support activities to assist the disaster-affected areas, and has continued for seven years straight since 2011.

After a moment of silence by all attendees, both *yokozunas* together with

program chief assistant Tamanoi offered memorial flowers to the victims, then performed drum demonstrations and a sumo-themed song (*sumo jinku*).

With Iwate native *Makuuchi*-rank sumo wrestler, Nishikigi, as his forerunner, and similarly, Kagayaki, as his sword bearer, Kisenosato demonstrated a powerful *Unryu*-style ring entrance. Afterwards, Harumafuji demonstrated a *Shiranui*-style entrance. Both performances were enjoyed by the audiences (about 1,000) that came to see them.

Kisenosato said, "Even if it's only for a little while, I want to support the survivors by making them happy. I want to return home with my mind and body toughened up (through this experience), and display a good example of sumo wrestling."



Dohyo-iri performed by Yokozuna Kisenosato



Sumo wrestlers and all involved members posing for a photo

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 emailed information regarding reconstruction and tourism in Iwate, and upcoming events in the Tokyo area. **(Information only available in Japanese)**

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

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

Iwate Oendan

Searchh

Free to Register!

Reconstruction of the Miyako Athletic Park

Miyako

On July 12 (Wed), an inauguration ceremony was held to commemorate the completion of the reconstructed Miyako Athletic Park, which was completely destroyed in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

The total area of the park is 16.1 hectares including a baseball field, track-and-field area, a multipurpose square, and a free space area. The baseball field was rebuilt the way it was before the disaster, with 1,268 seats for the back stand and 648 seats for the infield area totaling 1,916 seats.

Also, in addition to the 8-lane 400m weatherproof tracks of the track-and-field area, a 4-lane 50m indoor practice area has been built. This makes it the coastal regions' first to be a Class 3 Certified field to hold a prefectural level competition.

On July 29 (Sat), to commemorate the renewal of the park, the baseball field was used to host the Tohoku Rakuten Eagles vs Yokohama DeNA match of the Eastern League Professional Baseball Competition. Additionally, on the 30th (Sun), track-and-field classes were held by the runners of the Mizuno Track Club (a prestigious athletic club). With the park's completion, there are high hopes of revitalizing the local area through sports.



Baseball field in the newly reconstructed Miyako Athletic Park (Photo: Miyako City)

The Long-Awaited Public Library Opens!

Rikuzentakata

On July 20 (Thu), the public library of Rikuzentakata City, which was completely destroyed by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, was opened after being rebuilt on raised land in the central city area.

The new library is adjoined to Abasse Takata, a large shopping center, and is a wooden structure with a floor space of 900m². Different types of wood were used to give a warm and spacious feel, such as the locally obtained Japanese Larch for its pillars, a generous amount of Kesen Cedar used on its floors, and an outdoor wooden terrace deck for reading.

The facility holds 65,000 books, 4,500 DVD & CDs, and 100 types of magazines. In order for it to be welcoming to as many people as possible, a kids corner (complete with a nursing room and a family bathroom) and a study space for middle / high school students has been constructed.

The opening of the library, along with Abasse Takata, is expected to be a major leisure spot for the public and revive the liveliness of the city.



A spacious facility



A terrace space for reading to also enjoy the outdoors

A Record of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in Iwate

2011.3.11

Kamaishi

What happened that day? Let us look back at the disaster in each affected coastal area.



The tsunami devastates the city center (Photo: Kamaishi City)



The tsunami hits Kamaishi harbor (Photo: Kamaishi City)

- Height of Tsunami
 - 15.1m Otsuchi Bay
 - 22.6m Ryoishi Bay
 - 10.1m Kamaishi Bay
 - 21.0m Touni Bay
- Deaths 888
- Missing 152
- Injured Unknown
- Destroyed Buildings 3,655



1. The Unosumai area suffered the most damage

In Unosumai, the worst-hit area of the city, the tsunami obliterated about 500m of tidal walls and flowed into the city center. The area by itself suffered more than one-third of the flooding recorded for the entire city, with 266 hectares of flooded areas.

2. Damages to the city center and east area of Kamaishi

The tsunami hit the city center (east of Kamaishi Station) and the waves ran up the Kasshi River that flows through the city for about 3.5km. The city hall and the fire station, which served as bases of operations during the disaster, suffered flooding, and fishing equipment and facilities along the harbor received extensive damage as well.



Kamaishi Higashi Middle School and Unosumai Elementary School rebuilt on higher ground.



Restored Kamaishi Fish Market

Seven Years On: Two beaches are reopened on the Sanriku Coast

Ofunato,
Yamada

On July 22 (Sat), the Uranohama Beach in Yamada Town and Okirai Namiita Beach in Ofunato City reopened seven years after the deep scars left by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

■Uranohama Beach (Yamada Town)

Two-thirds of the sandy beach had been lost by the tsunami. With reconstruction grants from the national government, 27,000 tons of sand were brought from out of the prefecture to rebuild the beach as the prefecture's first artificial sand beach. The beach office, also swept away by the tsunami, has been rebuilt with 8 shower rooms (male/female) added.

■Okirai Namiita Beach (Ofunato City)

Ofunato City has been aiming to open three of its beaches since the disaster, and the Okirai Namiita Beach is the first to reopen upon completion of reconstruction efforts.

There may have not been good weather this season, but there are hopes for it to be a popular summer leisure destination for the Sanriku in the future.



Uranohama Beach



Okirai Namiita Beach (Photo: Ofunato City)

Seven years since the last Yoichi summer festival

Otsuchi

On August 12 (Sat), the Yoichi summer festival, hosted by the Otsuchi Suehirocho Shopping District Co-op Association, was held in the Machikata district in Otsuchi Town. It was the first since the disaster after the town was heavily damaged by the tsunami.

As work toward reconstruction progressed, shop owners who had reopened their shops (and those planning to) gathered to revive the Yoichi, Otsuchi's summer highlight, to reenergize the city. At the opening ceremony, Representative Director Kikuchi of the aforementioned association said, "As a step toward the rebirth of the town's central area, we would like you to enjoy a moment of summer here."

At Yoichi, there were about 30 shops on the Suehirocho-dori (street) where the shopping district once was. Support workers were dispatched, and booths were up selling local specialty items and promoting tourist destinations. Events such as *mochimaki* (scattering rice cakes), traditional folk arts, and traditional Japanese songs were performed at the main stage. Although it rained the whole day, the townspeople and those returning for *obon* season enjoyed the long-missed Yoichi festival.



The lively Yoichi festival even in the rain



It's Autumn! Festival time!
Come to Sanriku!

Sanriku Event Information



9/10 Kujihiradake Autumn Festival Hirono
Sun

Location▶Kujihiradake Mountain Peak

This is an event to enjoy the autumn at the town's symbol, Kujihiradake. There will be *mochimaki*, performance art demo, and local specialty items to buy and enjoy.

Inquiries

Hirono Regional Promotion
Division (Ono Hall)
☎ 0194-77-2111

9/15 Kuji Autumn Festival Kuji
Fri

Location▶Aramachi – Osanai

9/17 This has been the biggest festival of northern Iwate since 1360. You will get to see an extravagant float and *mikoshi* parade, and also a parade of traditional folk art performances. On the eve, 9/14 (Thu), there will be a showing of a glittery float.

Inquiries

Kuji Autumn Festival Committee
(Kuji City Tourism Product Division)
☎ 0194-66-9200

9/15 Otsuchi Festival Otsuchi
Fri

Location▶within Otsuchi town

A joint event between Otsuchi Inari Shrine and Kozuchi Shrine. There will be performances such as *Kagura*, *Shishi-odori*, *Toramai*, and also *Shichifukujin*. This is a traditional event with dances as well.

Inquiries

Otsuchi Festival Committee
(Otsuchi Commerce & Tourism
Division)
☎ 0193-42-8725

9/16 Miyako Autumn Festival Miyako
Sat

Location▶Central area,
Miyako station front, etc

9/17 A festival made for the local people to take part in that began in 1985. There will be a contest of specially decorated floats on the streets, dances by the townspeople, etc.

Inquiries

Rikuchu Miyako Junior Chamber
☎ 0193-62-8458

9/16 Yamada Autumn Festival Yamada
Sat

Location▶ Specially prepared
festival square

9/18 In celebration of both the Yamada Hachimangu Shinko festival (9/17) and Osugi Shrine Shinko festival (9/18), there will be *mikoshi* events, traditional performance art at the stage, and also various food booths to enjoy.

Inquiries

"Promoting the charm of Yamada" Committee
(Yamada Commerce & Industry Division)
☎ 0193-82-2515

9/17 Sanriku Ofunato Pacific Saury festival Ofunato
Sun

Location▶Ofunato City Fish Market

Ofunato harbor boasts the highest catch of pacific saury in Japan, and the festival will be using lots of them! Enjoy various meals such as the "charcoal-grilled" corner and many other fun things!

Inquiries

Sanriku Ofunato Pacific Saury Festival
Committee
(Ofunato City Tourism Product Division)
☎ 0192-21-1922

