

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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

Volume 131
November 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 news from Iwate's reconstruction.

Town Opening in Kuwagasaki & Koganji

Miyako

On October 28 (Sat), a town opening ceremony was held in the Kuwagasaki & Koganji district of Miyako, which suffered catastrophic damage in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

The ceremony represents a milestone for the ongoing reconstruction, which has so far included the maintenance and rebuilding of the city center, and public facilities like roads.

The district, which faces out onto Miyako Bay, suffered the loss of over 1,000 buildings in the disaster. For this reason, the city has

been conducting a land readjustment project, covering a 23.8 ha area since 2013.

As of late September, 79% of land (by surface area) has been put back into use. The city is aiming to complete the remaining 21% by the end of the financial year.

At the ceremony, Mayor Yamamoto said, "Without the reconstruction of the Kuwagasaki & Koganji district, there couldn't be a reconstruction of Miyako. We're going to proceed with the work as swiftly as possible, while bearing the future of the

region in mind." Afterwards, there were readings by local middle school children, and a report on the reconstruction's progress.

Additionally, at Kuwagasaki Elementary School, there was an event where you could view the reconstruction's progress from the sky, by hot air balloon. At a special event space, a large group of residents gathered to watch a powerful performance from the Yamaguchi Taiko drum group, and enjoy minced Pacific saury soup.



The town opening ceremony (Photo: Miyako City)



The town opening event (Photo: Miyako City)



Hot air balloon rides (Photo: Miyako City)

Honmaru House and Rikuzentakata Machinaka Terrace Now Open

Rikuzentakata

On October 1 (Sun), the "Rikuzentakata Machinaka Terrace" shopping center and the "Honmaru House" citizens center opened in the central Takata district of Rikuzentakata.

Rikuzentakata Machinaka Terrace is a permanent home for 5 shops that had been doing business in temporary premises. Four of these shops opened on the 1st: a local sake shop and haberdashery, a soba restaurant, a salon, and a ramen restaurant.

Meanwhile, Honmaru House was designed by the architect Ito Toyo, and relocated from Utsunomiya, Tochigi, as a donation by Tokyo Gas.

The facility is a multipurpose space with kitchen facilities and large tables, for hosting cooking lessons and other workshops. Unless it's reserved for an event, people can freely use the facilities to rest, read, and eat. It's expected to become a hub for people from all generations.



Rikuzentakata Machinaka Terrace



Inside Honmaru House

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.
(Information only available in Japanese.)

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

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

Free to Register!

Iwate Oendan

Search

On October 19 (Thu), Iwate Prefecture, Ofunato City and Taiheiyo Cement (who have a factory in Akasaki, Ofunato) confirmed an agreement that promotes recycling throughout the entire region.

This reciprocal agreement utilizes the resources of all three parties. It aims to build a disaster debris disposal system within the prefecture, promote recycling throughout the entire region, protect the environment, and revitalize the region.

At a special ceremony, the agreement was signed by Governor Tasso, Ofunato's Mayor Toda, and Taiheiyo Cement's Director, Shuji Fukuda.

The agreement comes after Taiheiyo Cement's Ofunato factory accepted 970,000 tons of debris from 3 cities and 2 towns on Iwate's coast, and reused it in their cement. In total, the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami produced 6.18 million tons of debris in Iwate.

The agreement contains 4 measures: reducing environmental damage, processing disaster debris, promoting environmental education, and protecting the environment while revitalizing the region.



The signees. Left: Director Fukuda, Taiheiyo Cement. Centre: Governor Tasso, Iwate. Right: Mayor Toda, Ofunato.

On November 2 (Thu), a ceremony to decide the match schedule for the 2019 Rugby World Cup was held in Tokyo. The dates and locations of 48 matches across 12 stadiums were confirmed.

The two matches at the Kamaishi Unosumai Recovery Stadium (name TBC) will be Fiji vs. the 2nd placed team in the Americas, on Wednesday, September 25, 2019, and the 1st placed team in Africa vs. the Repechage winner, on Sunday, October 13.

Iwate already has a connection with Fiji: they gave their support after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. The match will be a good chance to express our gratitude, and to deepen international relations.

Kamaishi's Mayor Noda commented on the schedule. "It's a chance for us to give thanks to people around the world. Together with the prefectural government, we'll endeavor to meet this heavy responsibility. I'd like this to be a collaborative effort, between the disaster-hit towns, the 3 disaster-hit prefectures and all 6 prefectures in Tohoku," he said.



A mock-up of the Kamaishi Unosumai Recovery Stadium (name TBC) (Photo: Kamaishi City)

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

2011.3.11

Fudai

What happened that day? In this section, we will be looking back at the disaster in each coastal town.



The tsunami in the Fudai Harbour. (Photo: Fudai Village)

- Tsunami height 18.4m Fudai Bay
 - Deaths 1
 - Injured people 4
- As of October 31 2017

■ The Fudai Flood Gate and the Otanabe Seawall

Fudai has suffered severe damage from tsunami throughout history, including the Meiji Sanriku Tsunami (1896) and the Showa Sanriku Tsunami (1933).

For this reason, Fudai Village and the prefectural government took protective measures by building the Fudai Flood Gate off the Fudai coast, and the Otanabe Seawall in the Otanabe harbor.

At the time, the standard height for seawalls was around 10m, but due to the insistence of the village mayor, the flood gate and seawall were both built to a height of 15.5m.

The central area of Fudai follows the Fudai river. The Fudai Flood Gate, which was built 300m upriver from the river mouth, protected this area from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, minimizing the damage.

The Otanabe Seawall also provided successful protection. The 14m-high tsunami was completely blocked, so there was no damage at all to homes on its inland side.



The flood gate, which minimized damage (Photo: Fudai Village)



A recently-built coastal park (Photo: Fudai Village)

Rikuchu-Yamada Station's New Windmill-themed Building

Yamada

On October 26 (Thu), Yamada Town revealed the new building design for Rikuchu-Yamada Station, which was destroyed in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

The design is based on the windmill situated on the nearby Holland Island. This island, along with Yamada Bay, is a major tourist attraction in Yamada. Construction is due to begin in April 2018, and finish in September.

The new station building will be a wooden, single-story structure. It will include ticket machines, tourist information, and restrooms. Besides the main entrance, there will be a second access point, leading to "Hapine", the public community center next door. This will make it easy and efficient to use both facilities.

Construction is underway on the suspended JR Yamada train line between Miyako and Kamaishi. When the work has been completed, operation of the line will be given to Sanriku Railway.

It is estimated that the full Sanriku Railway line, from Kuji to Sakari (Ofunato), will commence operation by the end of the 2018 financial year, providing a huge boost to passenger numbers and the revitalization of the area.



A mock-up of the new station building



Hapine, the community center next door

Yamada-Miyako Road Opens on Sanriku Coast

Miyako / Yamada

On November 19 (Sun), the Yamada-Miyako Road, a 14km stretch between the Yamada IC exit and Miyako South IC exit, opened to the public. The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism was in charge of construction.

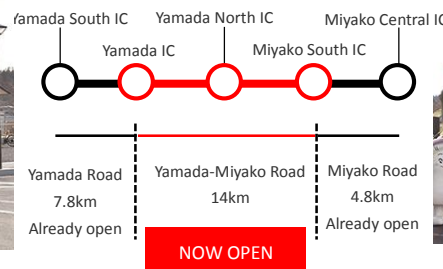
Two sections of the Sanriku coastal road were already open, in Yamada (7.8km between Yamada South IC and Yamada IC), and Miyako (4.8km between Miyako South IC and Miyako Central IC). The new road connects these sections, forming a single 27km expressway. This makes it much easier to travel to and from the region.

On the 19th, an opening ceremony was held at Miyako South IC (Tsugaruishi, Miyako). The attendees celebrated the boost to the reconstruction of the expressway network.

Iwate's first expressway numbering markers

Expressway numbering markers add a number to the existing road names, making it easier for drivers, particularly those visiting Japan from overseas, to navigate through the road network.

Expressway numbering markers were introduced in Iwate for the first time, to coincide with the opening of the new road. Signs displaying "E45" appeared at 3 points on Japan National Route 45, and close by to Yamada North IC.



The opening ceremony



Sanriku Event Information



12/3 Sun **Noda Scallop Festival** **Noda**
 Venue: Noda Fishing Harbor
 On this day only, you can buy live Araumi Scallops - Noda's special product – directly from fishermen. There will also be grilled scallops, and many other foods.
Inquiries Noda Fishery Cooperative Association ☎ 0194-78-2171

12/3 Sun **Otsuchi Salmon Festival** **Otsuchi**
 Venue: Otsuchi Fish Market
 Held to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of Masasada Hachiro, the man who came up with local specialty aramaki salmon. There will be salmon catching (charge applies), a barbecue, aramaki salmon workshops (charge applies), water dropwort tastings, a limited amount of free fried tofu from Niigata, and more.
Inquiries Commerce, Industry and Tourism Division ☎ 0193-42-8725

12/9 Sat **Iwate Salmon & Seafood Festival** **Morioka**
 Venue: History and Culture Museum
12/10 Sun Iwate's Seafood vendors will gather to sell their products. You can buy the best Iwate has to offer, including raw salmon, aramaki salmon, salmon roe, abalone, salted sea urchin and Sanriku wakame seaweed.
Inquiries Iwate Salmon Festival Executive Committee ☎ 019-626-8080

12/17 Sun **Miyako Salmon Festival** **Miyako**
 Venue: Tsugaruishi River Flood Plain
 Try catching salmon by actually getting into the river! There will also be plenty of other ways to enjoy the in-season fish, like salmon soup (free, while stocks last), and a salmon ramen speed eating competition (charge applies).
Inquiries Miyako Salmon Festival Executive Committee ☎ 0193-62-3534

12/23 Sat/Hol **North Sanriku Winter City Kuji** **Kuji**
 Venue: Special Festival Square
 Held monthly between November and February. A fun event where anyone and everyone can enjoy the city's fresh food and traditional folk entertainment.
Inquiries North Sanriku Winter City Kuji Executive Committee (Tourism Department, Kuji City) ☎ 0194-52-2123

Kitayamazaki Cliffs - New Year Cruise **Tanohata**
 Venue: **Shimanokoshi** Fishing Harbour
Dates: Jan 1, 6:30 / 10:00
 Jan 2 & 3, 10:00
 Enjoy Kitayamazaki's unique scenery on these special cruises. The 50-minute round trip goes past **Benten Saki, Yagoshizaki** and Kitayamazaki.
Inquiries Ragaso Hotel ☎ 0194-33-2611



Sit at the cozy heated tables on Sanriku Railway's Kotatsu Train to experience the epitome of winter, and a perfect example of the hospitality that only a local line can provide. The train will operate on the North Rias Line (Kuji – Miyako) from December

Winter in Sanriku: The Kotatsu Train

Witness the kind of the hospitality that only a local line can provide: "Namomi" demons from local legends appear on the train to delight passengers, and the car comes to a stop next to the best views.

Passengers boarding at Kuji can reserve a seafood lunchbox, including Sanriku abalone, sea urchin and scallops, or a deluxe "Sea Shanty Lunchbox", loaded with the region's best seafood. Passengers boarding at Miyako can reserve seasonal desserts to enjoy on their journey.

Dates: Weekends and holidays from 12/16 to 3/31. Daily from 12/30 to 1/8. Times: Kuji 12:15 → Miyako 13:54 Miyako 14:40 → Kuji 16:32 * The timetable will change slightly in March. Prices: Vary by travel distance (e.g. Kuji-Miyako, ¥1,850 one way) + Seating fee, ¥310 Lunch / Dessert reservations: Accepted up to 1pm, two days before your travel date. Reservations required.

Inquiries: Customer Service Department, Sanriku Railways TEL: 0193-62-8900 (Operating hours: 9am – 6pm)



(Photos: Sanriku Railways)

"Namomi" demons of northern Iwate

The deluxe "Sea Shanty" lunchbox

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 76 introduces Mr. Yūto Sasaki's efforts.



Takata Kurashisha

Yuto Sasaki



Realizing everyone's individual "ideal lives", right here in Rikuzentakata.

He is currently in charge of "vacant house ventures" at a community development charity called "Takata Kurashisha".

Mr. Sasaki spoke enthusiastically about his current work. "In Tokyo, any unused space is considered a waste, but in rural areas even vacant houses have such history and sentimental value that people are reluctant to relinquish them. We talk to these owners, and match them with people who want to live in Rikuzentakata," he said.

Information about vacant houses and jobs

"Rikuzentakata has amazing views in every season. You can feel like yourself here, in a way that's impossible in Tokyo," Mr. Sasaki said. "We're planning to open a website with information about vacant houses and jobs. If we solve those two problems, it will become much easier to live here. I want to help new residents achieve the life they hoped for when they moved here".

Revitalisation by increasing migration

The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami occurred when Mr. Sasaki was a 3rd year middle school student. Even in Tokyo, it prevented some people from getting home, and his graduation ceremony was cancelled.

Even after he entered high school, Mr. Sasaki wanted to visit Tohoku, to see the situation with his own eyes, and contribute if possible. After graduating, he ended up visiting Rikuzentakata via charity activities.

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of October 31, 2017

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: (direct) 4,672 Missing: 1,121 (related) 464
▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 26,078
To make a donation to aid in Iwate's reconstruction: www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/011100.html

Thank you for all your support! As of October 31, 2017

- Donations for survivors: Around ¥18.57664 billion (95,175 donations)
Donations for reconstruction projects: Around ¥19.88783 billion (8,348 donations)
Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations: Around ¥9.12942 billion (20,703 donations)
※ This fund is to assist in the study and daily life of affected children by encouraging sport and study activities.



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



News from Iwate's Reconstruction Web Watch videos on the news and People for Sanriku's Future! Check out our website for more!

