

5-year memorial of Great East Japan Earthquake

Friday, March 11, 2016

Symposium examines disaster risk reduction

Minoru Matsutani
STAFF WRITER

March 11 marks five years since the devastating Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami, and one year since the Third U.N. World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Sendai, the center of the disaster-hit Tohoku region.

To commemorate these events, Sendai will hold the 2016 Sendai Symposium for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Future on Saturday.

"It's been a year since the U.N. conference and five years since the earthquake. It's a milestone day and we should gather people from various sectors who are working on revitalization and disaster risk reduction to share their achievements and discuss future agendas," said Emi Oba of the Sendai Disaster Resilient and Environmentally Progressive City Promotion Office.

The one-day symposium has been jointly organized by the U.N. Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) in Japan and supported by the Cabinet Office, the Reconstruction Agency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures and the International Recovery Platform. The symposium plans to host 1,000

people, including members of the public, municipal government officials and researchers, engaged in various activities to revitalize the Tohoku region and reduce disaster risks.

No pre-registration is necessary to attend the symposium, though some sessions may reach capacity.

"The purpose of this symposium is to think and share ideas about what we can do to accelerate disaster risk reduction in the future in Sendai and the Tohoku region. We hope to accomplish this through presentations on a variety of topics, discussing and sharing the direction and challenges of their future activities in accordance with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," according to the symposium website.

The Sendai Framework is the international guideline for disaster risk reduction that was adopted at last year's U.N. conference.

The framework is a 15-year, voluntary, nonbinding agreement that recognizes that the state has the primary role to reduce disaster risk, but that the responsibility should be shared with various stakeholders, including local governments, the private sector and others. The framework contains several specific goals

to promote the importance of disaster preparedness, concrete measures to reduce damage and international cooperation to make the world more disaster ready.

At the main venue of the symposium, the Sendai International Center, the keynote speech will be delivered and several seminars will take place.

After opening remarks by Sendai Mayor Emiko Okuyama at 10 a.m., Robert Glasser, special representative of the U.N. Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, will deliver the keynote address titled "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and Expectations to Local Actors."

Following Glasser's address, there will be 11 seminars. In one of them, the General Incorporated Association Miyagi Cooperative Reconstruction Center will introduce its project, "People-centered Roadmap for Reconstruction."

Additionally, the Sendai Miyagi NPO Center will make a presentation, titled "Machinowa: Citizen-centered Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction." The nonprofit organization will discuss citizen volunteers and the structure of volunteer groups that will maximize the efficiency of support the groups offer to di-

saster-hit areas.

The city of Sendai will discuss "The Current Status of Reconstruction and the Future Challenges of the Great East Japan Earthquake" from the viewpoint of a municipal government.

Sendai and the Gender Equal Opportunity Foundation will jointly deliver a presentation, titled "TalkxTalk Women in Leadership 2016," to discuss women's roles in disaster risk reduction and the revitalization of Tohoku. They will also discuss the importance of female leadership during non-emergency times.

Also, the Japan International Cooperation Agency will discuss international cooperation to deal with the aftermath of disasters. In a session organized by the Fukkou University Alliance, students will report on their volunteer activities.

Tohoku University's Research Organization of Electrical Communication will discuss measures to maintain electricity and communication networks in case of disasters. The Cabinet Office will introduce recent efforts by local governments to come up with disaster risk reduction plans, with a view toward encouraging more municipalities to do so.

In the closing session, scheduled for 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., participants from different stakeholders will present challenges and their ideas on concrete actions to take, allowing them to explore a common direction toward 2030 and a chance to brainstorm about what to do to contribute to global efforts on disaster risk reduction.

Also at the same venue, exhibitions and small presentations will take place at the Sendai International Center.

In the exhibition space, 52 groups, including non-profit organizations (NPO), companies and government organizations, will display posters and other materials to introduce their activities related to disaster risk reduction and revitalization.

Nine organizations, including Kokugakuin University, Kubota Corp., Tokio Marine Holdings and some volunteer groups, will hold small presentations.

Additionally, related events



Clockwise from top: Firefighters conduct a disaster drill; A child sprays water during a fire drill; Audience members listen to a presentation at the Third U.N. World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai last March. CITY OF SENDAI



The recommended amount of food and water to be kept in case of emergency to last a family of four a week. CITY OF SENDAI

will be held at other venues in Sendai to commemorate the disaster and the U.N. conference. For example, NPO 20th Century Archive Sendai will hold several discussions on the disaster at Sendai Mediatheque.

The city of Sendai, the largest city in the Tohoku region, aims to lead the movement to raise global disaster risk reduction awareness by introducing various activities in line with the Sendai Framework, which was endorsed by the U.N. General Assembly following last year's Third U.N. World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

The framework has seven global targets: 1) Substantially reduce global disaster mortality by 2030, aiming to lower average global mortality rate per 100,000 in the decade ending in 2030 compared to the period ending in 2015. 2) Substantially reduce the number

of affected people globally by 2030, aiming to lower average global figure per 100,000 in the same time period. 3) Reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product by 2030. 4) Substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, including through developing their resilience by 2030. 5) Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020. 6) Substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for implementation of this framework by 2030. 7) Substantially increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster

risk information and assessments to the people by 2030. To achieve the goals, there are four priorities to be shared with the world.

First, the world needs to better understand disaster risk. Disaster risk management should be based on an understanding of disaster risk in all aspects of vulnerability, capacity, exposure of people and assets, hazard characteristics and the environment. Such knowledge can be used for risk assessment, prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response.

Second, governance to manage disaster risk must be strengthened. Disaster risk governance at the national, regional and global levels is critical for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation. It also fosters collaboration and partnership.

Third, public and private in-

vestment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non-structural measures are essential to enhance the economic, social, health and cultural resilience of persons, communities, countries and their assets, as well as the environment.

Lastly, disaster preparedness for effective response and to "build back better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction must be enhanced. The growth of disaster risk means there is a need to strengthen disaster preparedness for response, take action in anticipation of events and ensure capacities are in place for effective response and recovery at all levels. The recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phase is a critical opportunity to build back better, including through integrating disaster risk reduction into development measures.

Be prepared for severe natural disasters

Taro Kono
MINISTER OF STATE FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT

March 11 this year will mark five years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami. I would like to extend anew my heartfelt sympathy for the victims and the affected people of the disasters. Over the five years since the disaster, reconstruction has been steadily moving forward in the areas devastated by the earthquake and tsunami, as seen in the shift of housing to higher elevations and the expanded construction of public housing. I would like to express my gratitude for the warm and encouraging support we have received — and continue to receive — from people overseas.

Due to natural conditions and location, Japan is a country that is prone to various natural disasters; not only earthquakes and tsunami, but also volcanoes, typhoons, floods and mudslides. Therefore, the government is diligently working to build a nation that is more prepared for disasters, by resolutely reviewing disaster risk reduc-



tion measures and constantly incorporating the latest scientific knowledge on disasters, never forgetting the invaluable lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami.

Especially with the recent climate change caused by global warming, natural disasters are worsening as can be seen in extremely concentrated downpours. Against such disasters of extreme severity, administrative "public help" is not enough. "Self-help" and the "mutual help"

of residents and companies in such areas as evacuation and rescue activities based on mutual cooperation in the region are indispensable.

Japan's disaster countermeasures have evolved in response to those major disasters such as the 1959 Isewan Typhoon, the 1995 Great Hanshin earthquake and the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami. I, however, believe we have to take new countermeasures, which go much beyond earlier ones, to be better prepared for intensifying disasters in the future. Therefore, I established a forum for discussion titled "Disaster Countermeasures 4.0 — Future Design Project" involving experts from various areas. We are currently examining how individuals should look at disaster risk and how society as a whole should prepare for disasters. We are planning to make proposals in the middle of May and would like to make our preparations for future disasters more reliable.

Furthermore, Japan, which throughout its history has experienced many natural disasters, has accumulated

advanced technology and know-how in dealing with them. Against such a backdrop, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction," which includes training 40,000 people and disaster risk reduction cooperation totaling \$4 billion over four years, at the Third U.N. World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai last March. We would like to contribute further to global disaster risk reduction by providing and sharing Japan's knowledge and technology as an advanced nation in the field of disaster risk reduction.

In 2020, Tokyo is set to host Olympic and Paralympic Games. Although there is a danger posed should the Tokyo Inland Earthquake or the Nankai Trough earthquake occur, we will more forward in building a nation that is as prepared as possible for natural disasters. We will achieve this by working with a solid union of government, corporations and residents, ensuring that people interested in visiting Japan will feel safe in doing so.



The Sendai International Center is the venue of the 2016 Sendai Symposium for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Future on March 12. The Third U.N. World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held at the center last March. CITY OF SENDAI

5-year memorial of Great East Japan Earthquake

Securing post-disaster communication network

Many people had trouble connecting on mobile phones in the immediate aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011. Destruction of communication infrastructure silenced some mobile phones, while massive numbers of calls and texts checking the safety of loved ones overwhelmed intact infrastructure, slowing and, in some cases, stopping cellular traffic.

There is a possibility that there may have been lives that could be saved if mobile phone services had properly operated. Such a situation can be improved with "Relay-by-Smartphone," an off-the-grid smartphone communication technology that can boost

connectivity, possibly saving lives.

Relay-by-Smartphone is a new method that enables data relay using multiple smartphones, even in situations in which mobile networks and public Wi-Fi are unavailable. With the method, packet data is sent via "Wi-Fi direct links" as smartphones pass each other, with the data eventually relayed to the designated recipients.

Jointly developed by Tohoku University, NTT Docomo Inc. and Kozo Keikaku Engineering Inc., the technology is to be released to the market as an SDK (Software Development Kit) in April.

Tohoku University, which led the development, conducted an experimental disaster drill on its campuses in Sendai in October, in which it had students carry smartphones without SIM and Relay-by-Smartphone installed.

The students took photos and sent texts to the university disaster headquarters as they would in the event of a disaster.

In the drill, the university used NTT's ICT-Car, which functions as a temporary mobile base station in case of a disaster. Relay-by-Smartphone helped send pictures and messages to the disaster headquarters from mobile phones located outside the coverage area of the base stations. The drill was successful, yielding results that could contribute to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and damage control in the future. More than 650 texts reached disaster headquarters. Those texts and pictures greatly helped the administrators understand the situation and take initial action.

"Last year's drill convinced us that information delivery from individuals to relevant authorities is effective. It's true this direction of communication is very important in the time immediately after a disaster. Later however, information delivery in the opposite direction is also important. For example, it is essential for a headquarters to send information, such as which evacuation venues have excessive amount of

foods and water, to individuals. Relay-by-Smartphone is useful in creating information flow both ways," said Hiroki Nishiyama, an associate professor in the Tohoku University Graduate School of Information Sciences.

Using a drone simultaneously with smartphones with Relay-by-Smartphone installed makes it even more efficient, for instance, when it may take several days until damaged communication infrastructure is repaired. The drone may pick up an SOS message from someone buried in debris and relay it to disaster headquarters within the first 72 hours following a disaster (the likely threshold of survival after a disaster).

Unless Relay-by-Smartphone is used by many people, it will not be very helpful.

To maximize the effectiveness of the application, it also needs to be useful during non-emergencies. Yoshiyuki Senoo, executive officer at Kozo Keikaku Engineering, is aware of this necessity.

"Mobile phone carriers have excellent networks that enable high-quality communication; high-bandwidth and low-latency communication.



From left, Masato Nishiura of Spatial Communication Design Section, Business Development Dept. at Kozo Keikaku Engineering Inc., Yoshiyuki Senoo, executive officer, Social System Design and Marketing Dept. at Kozo Keikaku Engineering and Hiroki Nishiyama, associate professor, Graduate School of Information Sciences at Tohoku University. 左から、構造計画研究所事業開発部空間通信デザイン室の西浦升人氏、同じく構造計画研究所 専門役員 社会デザイン・マーケティング部担当 妹尾義之氏、東北大学大学院情報科学研究科准教授の西山大樹氏 YOSHIYUKI MIURA

But there are cases in which such communication quality is not required. In such cases,

Relay-by-Smartphone can be a new communication service that supplements mobile

phone networks, by building a simple infrastructure without any cost," he said.

災害直後からいち早く機能する情報伝達網を

2011年3月11日の東日本大震災とそれに伴う津波の発生直後、多くの人が携帯電話による通信が困難な状況に陥った。携帯電話が使用できなくなったのは主に通信インフラの損壊が原因だが、その通信インフラがまだ辛うじて生きているエリアでさえも安否確認のための通話やメール送信のやりとりが瞬時大量に発生したため、通信速度が著しく低下し、最終的に通信ができないう状態になった。

震災時、仮に携帯電話の通信が可能であれば、もっと数多くの命を救えたのではないかとこの教訓から、東北大学を筆頭に、NTTドコモ、構造計画研究所の3者は、大惨事にも通信機能の維持が可能な「スマホdeリレー」を共同開発した。

「スマホdeリレー」は、スマートフォンがモバイルネットワークや公衆Wi-Fiにつながっていない状況でも、別のスマホが近くをすれ違ったときにスマホのWi-Fiモジュール同士が直接データをリレーし、最終的に宛先

の人に届けることのできる画期的な通信方式だ。この仕組みは災害時におけるスマートフォンの可用性を向上し、多くの被災者の命を救える可能性を秘めている。4月には「スマホdeリレー」を使ったアプリを開発できる「スマホdeリレー SDK」の発売も予定されている。

共同開発者の東北大学は、2015年10月に宮城県仙台市のキャンパスで防災訓練の一環として実証実験も行った。複数の学生が「スマホdeリレー」をインストールしたSIMカード抜きスマホを持ち、テキストメッセージやスマホ搭載カメラで撮った写真を大学の防災本部へ送信する試みを行った。

実証実験では、災害時の応急回線を構築するためにNTTのICTカーなどの可搬型中継局も活用。スマホdeリレーはこれらの中継局のエリア外にいる端末からのメッセージや写真も本部へつないだ。実験は見事成功を取り、今後の減災・ダメージコントロール対策に役立つ成果を得ることができたようだ。本部に

は訓練開始直後から続々とメッセージが到達し、最終的には650通を超えた。これらのメッセージや写真は、防災本部における初期の状況把握と対応に大きく貢献した。

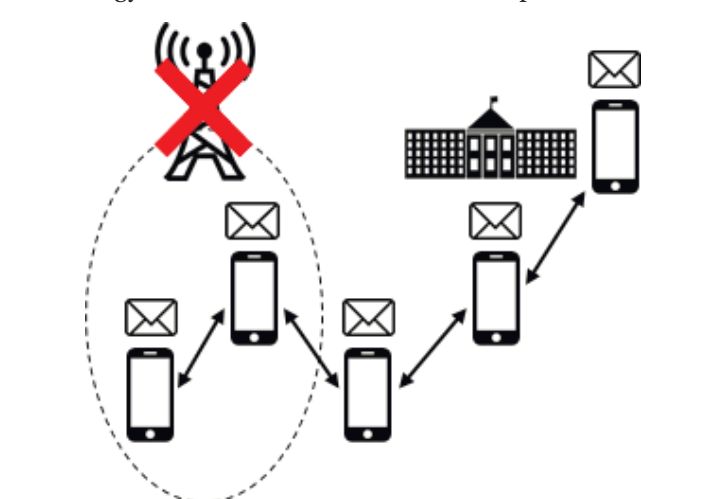
スマホdeリレーについて、東北大学大学院情報科学研究科の西山大樹准教授は次のように語る。「昨年の防災訓練では、個人から災害対策本部へ向けた情報提供の有用性が確認できました。確かに災害発生当初はこの方向の情報の流れを作ることが極めて重要となりますが、実はその後、逆方向の情報の流れが必要となってきます。例えば、本部からどの避難所に食物と水が余っているかといった情報を皆に提供するような放送型の情報配信が求められます。スマホdeリレーは、これらどちらの方向の情報の流れを作る際にも役に立ちます。

通常の携帯通信基地局は被災すると修復まで日数を要し、先が読めない。「スマホdeリレー」をドローンと併用すると、災害本部に

72時間以内(災害発生から72時間を境に生存率が下がると言われている)にSOSを伝達できる可能性も見えてくる。例えば瓦礫の下敷きになった人からのSOSメッセージをドローンが受信して、災害本部に伝達する流れだ。

構造計画研究所の専門役員の妹尾義之氏は、アプリが実際に災害時に活用されるにはまず日常生活の中でデータ通信の一つの手段としての利用を普及させていく必要がある、と感じている。

さらに「携帯電話会社が提供するモバイルネットワークは大容量のデータを遅延なく届けることができる素晴らしいシステムですが、そこまでの通信品質が求められるようなケースには、コストゼロで簡易的なインフラが構築できる「スマホdeリレー」のほうがリーズナブルです。スマホdeリレーはモバイルネットワークが苦手とするシーンを補完する新たな通信サービスだと言えます。」と妹尾役員は自信を込めた。



Relay-by-Smartphone: Off-the-grid smartphone communication
スマホdeリレー:インフラ設備不要の端末間通信
KOZO KEIKAKU ENGINEERING

Municipalities bundle IT services to ensure security

Hiroshi Suzuki
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

The Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami destroyed nearly every piece of social infrastructure and lifeline in the Tohoku region on March 11, 2011. Power, water and gas supplies were all interrupted in Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima prefectures, while communication lines in and out of the prefectures were cut.

Computers were of course no exception. The strength of the magnitude-9.0 earthquake, the largest in recorded Japanese history, knocked out many computers and servers and any that survived the quake were subsequently destroyed by the massive tsunami.

It was only days after the disaster that governments in the disaster-hit areas turned their attention to cloud computing outsourcing services as tools to meet the pressing demands of resuming municipal services as soon as possible. In the five years since the disaster, cloud computing services evolved to meet a wider variety of administrative demands, and have now entered into a new phase, industry officials said.

"In Miyagi Prefecture, the tsunami hit coastal areas particularly hard, and governments there lost all the



PCs donated to Sendai by Fujitsu Ltd. CITY OF SENDAI

necessary equipment to carry out their municipal work," a Sendai official told The Japan Times. "They had no choice but to rely on cloud outsourcing services."

Soon after the quake, the governments of those areas faced urgent needs to reopen their websites to disseminate support information to residents, as well as requests for volunteers, food, water, medical supplies and other necessities.

One of the benefits of using cloud outsourcing is that companies and other entities don't require servers to set

up a computerized environment. According to data collected by the Information-technology Promotion Agency, Japan, companies such as NEC Corp., Fujitsu Ltd. and IBM Japan offered free cloud outsourcing services for a limited period soon after the disaster.

The Sendai City Office, less damaged as it is located further inland, served as a distribution hub, collecting donated goods and reallocating them to hard-hit cities and towns. The distributed items included laptop computers for Rikuzentakata,

Iwate Prefecture, one of the hardest-hit cities in the region.

With only those computers and restored communication lines, they managed to reopen their homepages and mirror web sites only days after the disaster, the Sendai official said.

Government project

The quake hit the country at a time when the government was encouraging municipal governments to use cloud outsourcing services.

About two years before the quake, the government began test projects of the services that allow several cities and towns to share information systems in remote data centers, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. The value of this idea was highlighted following the quake, according to the official.

"For example, after the quake, many municipal governments needed to provide financial subsidies to residents, a task which differed little from city to city. So, if there is a common information system for the task that can be saved in a package in one location, the system can be shared whenever needed. This allows for savings in both time and cost," the Sendai official said.

As of January, 347 cities,

towns and villages nationwide in 56 different regional groups use cloud outsourcing services to share information systems, covering more than 9.9 million people in Japan, according to the communications ministry. However, this still only represents 7.8 percent of the total population.

Advanced stage

The idea of sharing information systems by local governments has now entered an advanced stage. The communications ministry said in November that the central government is now requesting that municipalities integrate their access routes to the Internet into one, which will be under the management and protection of the prefecture. In exchange for simplifying the access routes, the prefecture is required to apply tighter security to the single route, shutting out hackers attempting to access the community network and protecting municipal networks under their management.

"This is based on the project under the initiative of the communications ministry, amid the increasing number of cyberattacks targeting companies and government-related organizations," said an official of Fuji Electric Co. The company announced last month a tie-up with IBM



A server room severely damage in the earthquake and tsunami in Rikuzentakata, Iwate Prefecture. RIKUZENTAKATA CITY

Japan to offer prefectural governments higher-level security services for the integrated Internet access routes.

In May last year, a security flaw at the Japan Pension Service allowed information leakage after a series of cy-

berattacks on the network, eventually resulting in the theft of more than 1 million citizens' personal information, including names, addresses and birth dates.

"The idea of a prefectural network with a single Inter-

net access aims to provide prefectural municipalities with safer cybersecurity," the Fuji Electric official said. "It is just like a network umbrella of a prefecture with a bigger budget to spend for better security."



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5-year memorial of Great East Japan Earthquake

Volunteers working to rebuild lives

Giving back to society is very important to Philip Morris Japan (PMJ). Besides its ongoing initiatives against domestic violence and child abuse, PMJ was quick to respond to the immediate needs of the affected areas following the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. Although five years have since passed, PMJ continues to contribute to the region through programs that address the changing needs of the affected areas.

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, PMJ responded with a ¥100 million donation for emergency aid and mid to long-term relief. Working together with non-profit organizations, the company launched projects aimed at supporting the restoration of the Tohoku region. The company also matched donations from staff, and encouraged em-

ployee volunteer activities in the affected areas.

The motivated and determined employees are an integral component of PMJ's corporate contributions. The company staff approach their contributions to local communities with the same vigor that they bring to their job, with the company fostering an environment where all members can actively contribute their time and energy. The company believes deeply that by working together with its employees, a positive difference can be made.

The volunteer work started in the immediate aftermath in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, and later expanded to other parts of Tohoku. To date, more than 1,000 PMJ employees have joined volunteer efforts in the region. In the initial phases, staff worked to clear rubble and

debris from houses, factories and streets. As time passed and the needs in the affected areas shifted to improving the mental well-being of victims and rebuilding towns and communities, PMJ adapted its activities to meet changing priorities.

One example is the volunteer work at Yotsuba Farm in Higashi-Matsushima, Miyagi Prefecture, supporting a young farmer seeking to rebuild his hometown. This project aims to restore a 120-year-old historic residence and surrounding farmland, which was badly damaged in the tsunami, and rebuild the community through agriculture. According to Yotsuba Farm's Kotaro Atsumi, "PMJ offered us both mental and spiritual sustenance after the disaster and we never felt alone." The hard work by PMJ volunteers restoring the farm has led to crops that are sold to area restaurants and residents. Employees who have participated in this program also benefited from the experience. "I feel we need to give continued support to the disaster area," one of the volunteers said.

Another commented: "It was a good opportunity for me to think again about this devastating disaster. Even after returning to my hometown, I'd like to do something for Tohoku."

Another example would be the construction of a playground at "Aoi-area," a new residential area in Higashi-Matsushima that is currently under construction. With the support of Higashi-Matsushima and a non-profit

organization, PMJ built a playground and had a barbecue with residents. In recognition of PMJ's efforts, the vice mayor of Higashi-Matsushima visited volunteers during the construction, and the company also received a certificate of appreciation from the Higashi-Matsushima School Board director. "We thank PMJ for their support and hard work. I'm happy to see children happily playing in this new park," said a representative of the Community Renovation Committee of Aoi-area.

The volunteer spirit is ingrained in many PMJ employees. When torrential rain triggered large-scale mudslides in the city of Hiroshima, PMJ

employees in the area volunteered in disaster relief activities there. They removed mud from homes and engaged in general cleanup efforts. Employee volunteers in Iwate Prefecture also gather once a year in Kamaishi city to support that community's restoration. They have undertaken such projects as rebuilding a baseball field, cutting grass and removing debris from farmland.

PMJ is fully supportive of the efforts of its employees in these volunteer activities, and facilitates these activities in various ways. As a responsible corporate citizen in Japan, PMJ will continue to give back and contribute to the society in which its employees live and work.



Rebuilding a storehouse at Yotsuba Farm, Higashi-Matsushima 東松島、よつばファームでの倉庫の修理
PHILIP MORRIS JAPAN

ボランティア活動で復興に貢献



Building a playground at Aoi Area, Higashi-Matsushima 東松島、あおい地区での遊具設置
PHILIP MORRIS JAPAN

フリップモリスジャパン(以下、PMJ)は、責任ある企業市民として、地域社会へ貢献していくことはとても重要だと考えている。2011年に東日本大震災が発生した際には、PMJの社会貢献の柱であるDV被害者への支援や児童虐待防止活動と連動した支援プログラムのみならず、被災地への緊急支援も早急に実施してきた。同社では現在も、被災地のニーズに応じた活動を継続的に行っている。

東日本大震災直後、PMJでは総額1億円を緊急・中長期的支援へ提出。NPOと協働し、復興支援の新しいプログラムを立ち上げ、その他にも、マッチング寄付や従業員によるボランティア活動など、積極的に復興支援に取り組んでいる。

PMJの社会貢献活動を支えているのは、意識が高く、意志の強い従業員一人ひとりと。同社は、地域社会へ貢献す

ることが、仕事において高い能力を発揮することと同じと考え、従業員がそれぞれの地域で時間とエネルギーを割いて、存分に活動できる社会貢献の機会を積極的に設けている。その理由は、会社が従業員とともに取り組んでこそ、PMJにしかできない社会貢献を実現することができるという強い信念があるからだ。

東日本大震災発生直後から実施している被災地でのボランティア参加数は延べ1,000人を越え、今もなお従業員が現地に入り活動している。石巻から始まり、東北地方のさまざまな場所で、家や工場、側溝などから瓦礫や泥を掻き出す作業を行ってきた。時間の経過とともに被災地からのニーズは緊急の支援からコミュニティ再建や心のケアへと変化しており、PMJは常に被災地のニーズに応える活動の実施に努めている。

活動先のひとつである宮城県東松島市牛網地区で、築120年の古民家を再生し、「農」をテーマにコミュニティの復興を目指している農業生産法人株式会社よつばファームの熱海光太郎氏は、「震災後の復旧、再発進において、私たちがよつばファームの従業員はなくてはならない存在でした。いつでもどこでも私たちの心を支えて下さっていたのだと思います」と感謝の言葉を述べている。ボランティアによる継続的サポートが大きな力となって、震災の影響で農作物の栽培が難しくなっていた土地で農作物を収穫できるようになった。そして、収穫された作物は県内のレストラン等に出荷され、地元住民へも販売できるようになっている。活動に参加した従業員は、「まだまだ復興作業が必要。今後も未長く続けたい」、「震災を再度見つめ直すことができた。自分の住む町でも何か活動しようと思う」等の感想を語っている。

松島市に新しく建設されている集合移転地区の「あおい地区」。ここでは、入居する子ども達向けの公園作りに携わった。東松島市やNPOの協力のもと遊具を組み立て設置し、地元の方々を招待しBBQを実施。東松島市副市長も激励に訪れ、東松島市教育委員会教育長より感謝状が贈呈された。「皆さんに作って頂いた公園で楽しんで遊ぶ子ども達。本当にありがとうございます」とあおい地区まちづくり整備協議会代表の方から感謝の言葉が贈られた。

PMJ従業員には確かなボランティア精神が根付いている。広島県北部において、大雨の影響により大規模土砂災害が発生し甚大な被害がもたらされた際にも、従業員自ら立ち上がり有志で土砂災害支援ボランティア活動に参加し、浸水した民家の家財運び出しや泥のかき出し作業に取り組みした。また、岩手県とその近隣に在住の従業員たちは、年

に1度釜石市に集合し、津波の被害を受けた野球場の整備や、瓦礫の撤去、草刈りなどの実施により、地域の復興を継続的に支援している。

PMJは従業員のボランティア活動を全面的にバックアップするとともに、さまざまな機会を積極的に設けている。責任ある企業市民として、これまでも、そしてこれからも、従業員が住み、働く日本の地域社会に貢献すべく、活動を継続している。

Working at Yotsuba Farm, Higashi-Matsushima 東松島、よつばファームでの作業の様子
PHILIP MORRIS JAPAN



Working at Yotsuba Farm, Higashi-Matsushima 東松島、よつばファームでの作業の様子
PHILIP MORRIS JAPAN

Maintaining remnants of disaster for future

Hiroshi Suzuki
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

Sept. 1, known as Disaster Prevention Day, was designated as such by the government in 1960. On this day every year, cities and towns nationwide, as well as schools, companies and even small community groups, run evacuation drills to prepare for natural disasters such as typhoons, landslides and earthquakes.

More and more, the younger generation doesn't know why Sept. 1 is designated as Disaster Prevention Day. The government chose it because it was on that date that the massive Great Kanto Earthquake nearly Tokyo and the surrounding areas in 1923. The magnitude-7.9 quake resulted in more than 100,000 dead or missing.

Today, as reconstruction and rehabilitation projects are progressing in Miyagi, Fukushima, and Yamagata prefectures, damage caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011, is being repaired, even as some areas experience delays. Today, the governments of those disaster-hit areas are fighting against something intangible; being forgotten.

"We have junior high school students visiting our city from other prefectures on school trips, and less and less of them know about the earthquake," Yoshitaka Yamazaki, an official in the Commercial Tourism Division of Miyako, Iwate Prefecture, said.

That is why the city will open the Tsunami Remains Taro Kanko Hotel on April 1, an educational facility for disaster prevention. The facility is the renovated former Taro Kanko Hotel that which was hit by tsunami five years ago. The tsunami reached the fourth floor of the six-story building, leaving nothing but the bare steel frame on the first and second floors when the waters receded. The city purchased the hotel in March 2014 and decided to maintain the building as it is and create a commemorative site.

"To enter the building, visitors have to climb the stairs outside the building up to the fifth floor and they can look down and understand how high tsunami can reach," Yamazaki said in an interview. "We have to pass down the terror of tsunami as a lesson and we expect this spot to help improve disaster risk reduction awareness."

Governments and residents of the quake-hit areas, includ-



The Tsunami Remains Taro Kanko Hotel in Miyako, Iwate Prefecture, is now an educational facility for disaster risk reduction. MIYAKO CITY

ing survivors of the earthquake and tsunami, recognize the significance of passing down their experiences and stories of what happened that day to future generations, creating a succession of memories and records.

But, not every razed seawall, turned-over house, or tsunami-ravaged building is suitable to keep. It is difficult to make decisions especially on sites where people died. In some areas, residents are split over the issue because some bear-beared family members can't bear seeing the sites.

Conflicting views

Hiroshi Kameyama, the mayor of Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, will make a decision by the end of March on whether the city will leave the ruined building of the former Okawa Elementary School. There, 74 students, about 70 percent of the total, and another 10 teachers died in the tsunami that day as they failed evacuate.

Last month, the city held the first, and probably the last, public hearing on the issue, after conducting a research for two years and issuing a thorough report in December last year with help of civil experts. In the report, the city proposed scenarios of demolishing the whole building, keeping part of the building and keeping the entire facility, presenting costs, as well as pros and cons for each scenario.

In a survey conducted for the December report, 60.4 percent of city respondents said they want the city to keep either a part of, or the whole

building. But, of the residents in districts near the school, 54.4 percent want the city to demolish the whole building, while 45 percent said they support a plan to keep either a part of the building or the entire building.

If kept, the school will become a memorial for mourning, and a place to demonstrate the importance of evacuation, the city notes in the report.

"Keeping the building is just one way to tell our future generations what happened here. But no matter which scenario we choose, it will be a difficult decision to make," said an official of the city's Rehabilitation Policy Planning and Evaluation Division.

20 years to decide fate

On Dec. 22, Jin Sato, the mayor of Minamisanriku, Miyagi Prefecture, was photographed in front of the town's former disaster prevention center. It was the first time for him to visit in five years. Sato, who was among those who were working in the center on the day of the earthquake, is one of a few survivors of the tsunami.

After the tsunami hit, the three-story building was completely submerged, and Sato barely managed to save his life, by holding onto an antenna and standing on the roof for hours. Of those who were at the building that day, 43, mainly the town officials, were killed or went missing. Sato's grief for those victims held him back from visiting the building.

The former disaster prevention center is now nothing but

a bare steel frame. On Dec. 22, the town had a ceremony in front of the building, handing it over to Miyagi Prefecture. The town had decided to demolish the structure, but the prefecture offered to obtain and manage the site until 2031, 20 years after the quake, to give local residents more time to consider the fate of the memorial icon.

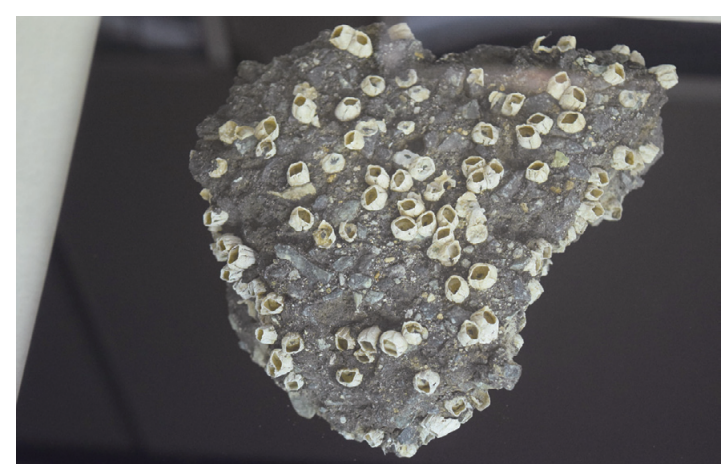
"We hear some saying 20 years is too long to make the decision. But, I want them to know that, even five years after the quake, people here are reluctant to bring up the issue and are hesitant to talk about it even among family," Mayumi Shiratori, an official at Provincial Reconstruction Division of Miyagi Prefecture Government, told The Japan Times.

Back in 1966 in Hiroshima, it was 21 years after the U.S. atomic bomb attack when the City of Hiroshima decided to keep the half-destroyed building of the then Hiroshima products museum, now registered as a UNESCO World Heritage site as the Atomic Bomb Dome.

Delayed recovery

Fukushima Prefecture is lagging behind the other quake-hit prefectures in discussing the issue, partly because, according to the prefecture, almost 100,000 are still living in temporary housing, both within and outside the prefecture, making it almost impossible for them to have opportunities to discuss issue.

That is why the prefecture-run Fukushima Museum took the initiative to start construct-



Clockwise from top left: a chunk of concrete with acorn barnacles; a post box that was washed away by tsunami; various disaster-related items; and a wall showing the level of tsunami are on display at the Fukushima Museum FUKUSHIMA MUSEUM



ing a digital archive of the damage and aftermath, before they are cleared away. It is using a technology known as Mixed Reality, which shows users three-dimensional images through a head-mounted display, allowing them to virtually experience the scenes. The museum is offering visitors a chance to experience the digital archive between Feb. 11 and March 21.

When considering whether

or not to retain the quake legacies, it is indispensable for governments to make decisions when they have a consensus from residents.

"But, with this digital archive, those legacies can be re-

tained in images without municipal government decisions," said an official of the museum. "People of Fukushima Prefecture still have their hands full just taking care of themselves on a daily basis."



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5-year memorial of Great East Japan Earthquake

Seismic isolation systems help mitigate earthquake damage

Seismic isolation is an excellent technology to help make structures more resistant to earthquakes by installing equipment to isolate a building from the ground and keep tremors from reaching the building. Seismic isolation systems reduce shaking by placing rubber, lead or other substances between structures and the ground, using them as a cushion to absorb tremors.

Buildings equipped with seismic isolation systems suffered minimal damage, even in the Tohoku region, during the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011.

One such building belongs to Starts Construction and Asset Management Co. (Starts CAM) in Sendai.

Starts CAM, a division of the Starts Group real estate and consulting conglomerate, completed construction of the eight-story residential building in March 2001. Its quake resistance was proven in the March 2011 quake.

The building sustained no damage and residents reported that not even a wine glass was broken.

"The landlord was an architect, so he was well aware of the benefit of seismic isolation systems," said Shingo Chisaka, an executive officer in charge of structure design at Starts CAM. "Back then, Miyagi experienced a large earthquake about every 30 years."

Since March 2011, building owners are increasingly aware of the necessity of quake resistance and the number of buildings with seismic isolation systems has steadily increased.

Starts CAM has received orders to construct 351 structures featuring seismic isolation systems in the 16 years through February that it has been building such structures. The company has received between 20 and 40 new orders every year since fiscal 2005, except for 2011 when it saw 49 new orders.



From left, Shingo Chisaka, an executive officer in charge of structure design at Starts CAM, and Tsutomu Nakanishi, who also oversees structure design at Starts CAM. Starts CAM建設統括本部設計部の千坂真吾取締役とスタートSCAM設計統括の中西力氏
NATSUKO HIROKANE



Anesis Lian condominium, codeveloped by Starts CAM and Iwatani Corp. アネシリアンはスタートSCAMと岩谷産業が共同開発した STARTS CAM

One drawback of seismic isolation systems is the high cost associated with them. Because of this, public buildings that are used by many people, such as schools, hospitals and government offices are typically fitted with the latest in seismic isolation technology.

However, Starts CAM is trying to lower the cost to make the technology affordable for ordinary residential buildings. For example, *takayuka* (high floor) seismic isolation methods are cheaper because they are installed at a higher level than regular seismic isolation systems, simplifying construction by reducing digging and foundation-laying work. The *takayuka* methods also enhance safety.

The company has also been able to gather detailed data after the March 2011 quake, thanks to its business portfolio covering everything from design, construction and operation of buildings.

For example, Starts CAM has seismometers in two buildings that are only 350 meters apart in Tokyo's Edogawa Ward. One is a five-story building fitted with a seismic isolation system, while the nearby eight-story

building has no such system.

The degree of shaking recorded at the building with seismic isolation system on March 11, 2011, was lower than that at the building without the system, according to Starts CAM's data (see diagram at bottom left).

"These are very valuable data. We can check that the results are in line with the tremor-reducing effect we planned for when we designed the building," said Tsutomu Nakanishi, who also oversees seismic isolation structure design at Starts CAM.

The company also installs seismic isolation systems in existing structures without requiring them to suspend operations. For example, it retrofit Honmyoin Temple in Tokyo's Ota Ward with a seismic isolation system. This resulted in the temple seeing very little damage in the March 2011 quake.

Quake experience vehicle

Starts CAM is trying to raise awareness of the importance of seismic isolation and, to that end, it has been allowing people to experience a quake, both with and without seismic isolation, in a specially designed vehicle since 2006.

"We want as many people as possible to get on a quake experience vehicle and have first-hand experience of the severity of earthquakes and the safety of seismic isolation systems," Chisaka said.

With the vehicle, people can experience eight different levels of shaking, including the levels of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake, the 2004 Niigata-Chuetsu Earthquake, the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake.

People can also experience the difference in shaking with and without a seismic isolation

system.

The vehicles are sent out about 20 times a month to various events such as university architecture classes, corporate disaster drills and conferences on disaster risk reduction. About 12,000 to 13,000 people experience quakes in Starts CAM's vehicles each year.

Starts CAM tries to raise awareness of seismic isolation systems among not only residents of buildings with the systems, but also with the construction industry, people in charge of disaster risk reduc-



A quake experience vehicle was displayed at Expo 2010 Shanghai. 2010年の上海万博で地震車が展示された STARTS CAM

tion at companies and governmental organizations and others.

Further measures

Even if seismic isolation systems keeps buildings intact, suspension of lifelines such as water, gas and electricity will make it difficult to live day to day. Condominiums jointly developed by Starts CAM and energy supplier Iwatani Corp. focus on life continuity after disasters.

The condominiums are

equipped with seismic isolation systems, as well as emergency wells in the event of municipal water supply disruptions. They also have propane gas tanks to use for kitchen, meaning gas supplies will not be suspended in the event of a disaster. Also, the gas can be used for power generation via a "counter-disaster energy system." The condominiums are equipped to allow for the required minimum standard of living in the event of disasters.

"Starts CAM has a strong

commitment to contribute to society through designing seismic isolation buildings and activities to promote such buildings, as well as to create buildings and communities with new disaster-risk-reduction technologies, including seismic isolation, by making full use of its technology, network and ideas," Nakanishi said.

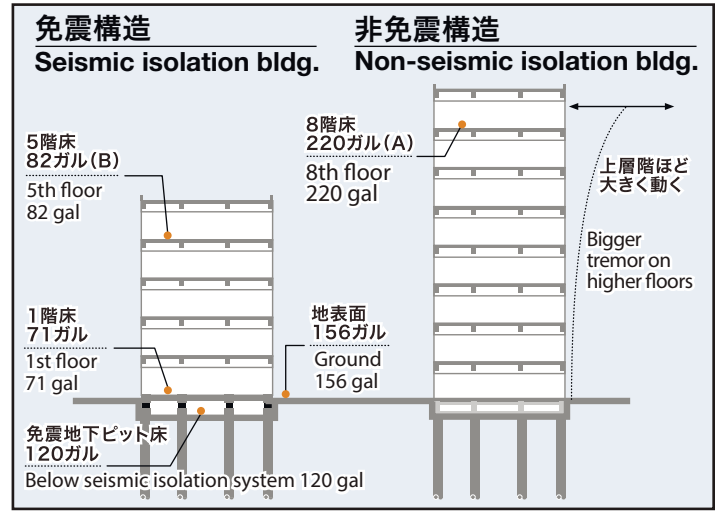
Overseas network

Starts CAM is part of the Starts Group conglomerate,

which engages in everything from real estate, hotel operation and nursing services to financial services. It has 34 branches and subsidiaries in 22 countries. Its overseas operations are mainly real estate services for Japanese companies that are expanding offshore. It also operates hotels and golf resorts outside Japan.

It also plans to open a rental factory in the Philippines and build and operate hotels and serviced apartments in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

免震構造で地震による被害を軽減する



Seismic isolation equipment 免震装置 STARTS CAM

免震構造は免震装置を建物の一部に組み込んで建物と地盤を絶縁し、地震の揺れが直接建物に伝わらないようにする工法であり、建物を地震の揺れに強くするに役立つ画期的な技術だ。ゴム、鉛などの部材を地震の振動を吸収する緩衝材として建物と地面の間に設置し、揺れを減らすことができる。

2011年3月に発生した東日本大震災の際、仙台にあるスタートSCAMの8階建て免震マンションは地震による被害を最小限に留めることができた。

住人によると、食器棚にあるワイングラス一つでさえも壊れなかったそうだ。同社の免震システムを施した建物は地震が起きた後もほとんど被害を受けず持ちこたえられるというところが、この震災で証明されたのだ。

「このマンションのオーナーは一級建築士で、免震構造のメリットをしっかりと熟知していたので、災害に備えて導入したそうです。昔から宮城県では30年に一度は大きな地震が起きているんです」と同社建設統括本部設計部統括部長である千坂真吾取締役は語る。

「使命感、信念を持った免震建物の設計・普及活動を通じて社会に貢献するとともに、技術力とネットワークとアイデアを駆使し、新しい免震技術や防災技術を利用した建物及び街を生み出していきたい」と中西氏は語った。

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起震車

スタートSCAMは免震の重要性を広く世に発信していくために、2006年以降起震車を設計して、免震の場合とそうでない場合のときに感じる地震の揺れの違いを人々に体験してもらっている。

千坂取締役は「私たちはできるだけ多くの人々に起震車に乗ってもらい、地震の揺れと免震の安全性を知ってもらいたい」と強調する。

この起震車によって2011年の東日本大震災、1995年の阪神淡路大震災、2004年の新潟県中越地震、1923年の関東大震災、そして2008年の四川大地震のそれぞれの震度に加え、8階階の揺れと、免震装置がある場合とない場合の違いも体験できる。

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We want to make better communities and create residences that people feel safe in.

This desire inspired us to build condominiums with seismic isolation systems, sculptures and emergency wells.

People can safely go about their daily lives, knowing their condominiums are quake-resistant with seismic isolation systems. Having wells in their backyards secures water during emergencies, while sculptures offer comfort on the street.

Community creation through seismic isolation leads to a better future and we build homes under this belief.



街をもっと良くしたい。安心・安全な住宅をつくりたい。

そんな思いからアートや井戸のある免震住宅が生まれました。

地震に強い免震と誰もが使える井戸が地域に安心を

パブリック・アートが街なみに潤いを与えます。

免震を通じた街づくりがより良い未来につながっている。

そう信じて、私たちはものづくりをしています。

5-year memorial of Great East Japan Earthquake

Taking power of sport to Tohoku

Koji Murofushi
ATHENS 2004 OLYMPIC GAMES GOLD MEDALIST AND SPORTS DIRECTOR OF THE TOKYO 2020 ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Like most people in Japan, I remember vividly where I was on March 11, 2011. I was training in Phoenix, Arizona, for the 2011 World Athletics Championships. I watched in disbelief as the tragedy unfolded in the Tohoku region on TV, feeling utterly helpless. I was frustrated that there was nothing I could do to help except keep trying to reach my family and friends on the phone.

I remember feeling that this was the first time since I had become an athlete that I felt so powerless. As an athlete, if you lose a competition, you train harder. If you are not among the best, you stay motivated and try harder until you achieve your goals.

That is why, on that sad day in 2011 when sport had taken me away from Japan, I made a decision to bring sport and its power back to the affected areas.

I am not the only one. Many Japanese athletes realized there was something they could do to help give courage to, and inspire, people. We realized that sport has so much more to offer, and together we set off to Fukushima, Iwate and Miyagi prefectures to visit shelters, participate in discussions and enjoy sports with children, trying to put smiles on their faces.

All of us experienced firsthand the innate power of sport to act as a force for good. Sport has the power to create new dreams and bring people together — even in the most difficult of times.

The first time I went to Tohoku after the earthquake and tsunami struck was in June 2011. A local athletics federation invited me to visit a high school in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture. I remember seeing all the students gathering outside and the atmosphere was heavy. Then, we started a relay together, with the teams cheering each other on. The sport



Koji Murofushi, the sports director of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, and children polish the 1964 Olympic cauldron at the Ishinomaki General Sports Park, Miyagi Prefecture, on March 6. TOKYO 2020 - SHUGO TAKEMI

seemed to break the tension. The day after, I saw the teenager I passed my baton to on TV saying it was a great experience. From someone who had suffered so much, that meant everything to me.

I was back in that same city last week, to clean and polish the 1964 Olympic Cauldron with children from the area. The cauldron is currently being housed in a public park there. We then ceremonially lit the cauldron before enjoying some sports together.

In all, I have visited Tohoku more than twenty times since 2011. Not only did I meet with children, trying to inspire them and give them hope for the future, I also invited many of them to some national sports competitions, and introduced them to some of their favorite athletes. I felt that this kind of thing was the least I could do after all they had been through.

I have known some of these children for almost five years now. I have watched them growing up and I can certainly testify that their mindsets and outlooks have become much more positive over that time. Some of them have graduated, or are already working, embarking on a new chapter in their lives.

Recovery and reconstruction efforts have been going on in the Tohoku region for the past

Japan's recovery from a national tragedy. We have a great sense of responsibility to inspire and unite the entire population behind a common vision for the future of Japan.

We are formulating an action and legacy plan to maximize the positive impact of the 2020 Tokyo Games. It is based on five pillars, one of which is "Recovery from the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, nationwide benefits and global communication." The organizing committee has already created the "2020 Young Athletes' Project" with the aim of encouraging the next generation of athletes to contribute more to society.

Under this project, we organized four different events in 2015. Olympians and paralympians took part in sports festivals in Fukushima with hundreds of children. We also invited some 80 students to Tokyo, a visit that included stopping by the offices of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee. At Tokyo 2020, connecting with the younger generation, increasing engagement between athletes and local communities and demonstrating the power of sport to act as a force for positive change are among our most important roles.

We will have plenty more opportunities to do this very soon. In a few months, as the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games draw to a close, the focus of the world's attention will shift squarely to Tokyo.

We will continue engaging with the local communities in the Tohoku region and the best has yet to come. The cultural program, the volunteer program, the live sites, and the torch relay are just some of the milestone events we will stage to ensure the people of the Tohoku region are just as involved in the games as everyone else in Japan. In 2020, the world will witness a vivid demonstration of the power and values of sport — not only in Tokyo, but across the entire country where the games are inspiring new hopes, dreams and aspirations.



Artist rendering of the Fukushima Prefectural Center for Environmental Creation FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

Reconstruction moving forward

Masao Uchibori
FUKUSHIMA GOVERNOR

Five years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami. On behalf of the people of Fukushima, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those people at home and abroad for their overwhelming support during this period.

Fukushima Prefecture is still in the process of reconstruction as we face numerous issues, including many residents still living as evacuees, decommissioning the nuclear power plant, contaminated water, rebuilding the daily lives of disaster-affected people and working on reputational damage, as well as preventing disaster memories from fading and being forgotten.

On the other hand, I can feel that smiles are starting to come back to people's faces throughout Fukushima with a bright light steadily spreading, as we can see from the Futaba Mirai Gakuen High School opening in the disaster-affected area, progress in development of facilities that support reconstruction such as the Environmental Creation Center, in addition to bustling tourist sites in the prefecture and young people's success in culture and sports.

While embarking on these efforts, Fukushima's image



and unfavorable reputation among other countries regarding safety remains a major obstacle. Sending out accurate information is extremely important to dispel these negative impressions. We have had people from overseas visit Fukushima, including when international meetings take place such as the U.N. World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction that was held in Sendai last March, or on observation visits. We also send out information using the Internet and mass media, as well as utilizing Fukushima's foreign resident network. In January, I attended the World Economic Forum

annual meeting (the Davos Conference) in Switzerland and delivered a message to the world on what Fukushima faces today in its continuing challenge in reconstruction and revitalization. I will make use of the bonds and networks built through these opportunities and reach out to develop understanding and gain support from people around the world.

In addition, we are steadily carrying out international cooperation in the medical device and renewable energy industries, business interaction with overseas companies, as well as cooperation and collaboration with international organizations in the area of radiation.

Furthermore, as Fukushima receives global attention, the children of Fukushima have more opportunities to interact with people from all over the world. They are becoming more aware of Japan's position from an international perspective and Fukushima's position from a global perspective. Through these valu-

able experiences, some children have been inspired to want to give back to the world. Fukushima Prefecture would like to take measures to increase such opportunities, allowing them to interact in various fields such as culture, academics and sports.

"Challenge" is the key word to move forward with Fukushima's reconstruction. I am determined to aggressively "challenge" a variety of issues and establish "a newborn Fukushima," which is full of dreams, hope and smiles." I ask for your continuous support and cooperation.



Image of the exhibition hall at the Environmental Creation Center FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

ANGOLA
Embassy of the Republic of Angola in Japan

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the Republic of Angola**

H.E. Mr. João Miguel Vahekeni
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



**Embassy of
Bosnia and Herzegovina**

H.E. Ms. Anesa KUNDUROVIC
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**Embassy of the
Federated States of Micronesia**

H.E. Mr. John Fritz
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



French Embassy, Tokyo

H.E. Thierry Dana
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



Five years after the March 11th tragedy, our thoughts are with our Japanese friends. Their courage in the face of adversity has been an inspiration for all of France.



Royal Thai Embassy, Tokyo

H.E. Mr. Bansarn Bunnag
Ambassador - designate



Thailand admires the Japanese people's resilience. Through hard times, we shared and supported each other. We shall work closely together for the benefit of our people, peace and prosperity.



**Embassy of
the State of Qatar**

H.E. Yousef M. Bilal
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



The State of Qatar will continue to support the affected areas to bring back hope and smiles to the local people towards their future ahead.



**Embassy of
the Bolivarian
Republic of Venezuela**

H.E. Mr. Seiko Ishikawa
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



5-year memorial of Great East Japan Earthquake



Top row from left: Young volunteers sort scallops in Kesenuma, Miyagi Prefecture, on Feb. 28; A man checks stock at a fish farm in Tamura, Fukushima Prefecture, on Feb. 16. Middle row from left: Community paper editors work on a monthly paper in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, on Feb. 16; Children unveil monuments at the elementary school they attended before the earthquake and tsunami in Higashi-Matsushima, Miyagi Prefecture, on Feb. 27. Bottom row from left: A residential area in Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture on March 13, 2011, and Feb. 18; Namie, Fukushima Prefecture, an area designated as a no-go zone due to the nuclear disaster on March 12, 2011 and Feb. 15; Above, from top: A fishing port in Shinchi, Fukushima Prefecture, in March 2010, on April 7, 2011, and Feb. 17. KYODO