

Gyro

United We Stand Fukushima

Fukushima International Association

Issue No.7

※For the Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Tagalog and French version of this newsletter, please visit the FIA's website.

On this occasion we would like to express our heartfelt condolences to the people affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and would like to pray for the speediest of recoveries. By this newsletter, we hope to provide you with up-to-date information on the present condition of Fukushima Prefecture.



Fukushima Now in Pictures



Yui Yui Festival

(Photo taken in Fukushima City 9.24.2011)



Iizaka Fighting Festival

(Photo taken in Fukushima City 10.1.2011)



Harvest Season

(Photo taken in Date City 10.6. 2011)



Voices from Fukushima

Ono Osamu (Male, Aizu Wakamatsu City)

I was very fortunate because during the earthquake only a few things fell off the shelf. The electricity, water and gas services worked normally. When I saw the images of tsunami on TV, I thought this was going to be serious. Currently here in the Aizu area, we have many evacuees from the coast and I am one of the volunteers who assist them. Through volunteering, I realized how people are closely connected and how people can help each other during a disaster like this. The life in Aizu has gone back to the way it was before the quake. However, as radiation is an enemy that cannot be seen by our eyes, to resolve the problems such as radiation decontamination and groundless rumours, it is still a long road down the stretch.

Tabo Yosuke (Male, Miharu Town)

The earthquake that struck on 3.11 was unprecedented. I was fortunate that the electricity, gas and water services in my home were working fine. When I turned on the TV, I saw images of the Sendai airport being swallowed by the tsunami and immediately called my cousin whose house was near that area. Yet as phone lines were down, I could not reach my cousin and the last thing I heard was that the whole family had been washed away. I felt a deep sense of sorrow as there were also many others who lost their precious lives due to this disaster. As there was not much information given by the government, the only resource for updates on the power plant was from the news. Also, citizens were not given the correct information on radiation. As a result, more citizens became anxious regarding radiation leakage. We often hear the word “kizuna” after this disaster; the way I see it is whatever you own, share the other half with another person and the person will do the same, and it will be a chain reaction. Once this is accomplished, the circle of “kizuna” will only get stronger.

Choi Yuna (From Korea, Female, Fukushima City)

I am an international student from Korea currently studying in Fukushima. On the day of the earthquake, I stayed at a shelter with my friend. The next day my parents called me and told me what had happened to the power plant and urged me to leave, so I took the bus with my friend to Fukushima airport. We were lucky as we were able to fly back to Seoul on the 14th of March. Afterwards, as the new semester was about to begin and as I wanted to see with my own eyes the current situation in Fukushima, I returned in May. To my surprise, everything looked normal as if nothing had happened. I had my passport on me at all times in case I need to evacuate and wore a mask everywhere I go because I was worried about radiation. However, I do not do this anymore. I am determined in graduating from Fukushima University so I am working hard toward this goal.

Euripa Aparecida Ojima (From Brazil, Female, Fukushima City)

I was working in Motomiya City when the earthquake struck so I was not able to return home until 11pm. As we became more worried about the explosion of the power plant so on the 15th of March my husband and I evacuated to Tokyo via a bus that was sent by the Embassy of Brazil and we eventually left the country. In Brazil, I would call my friend who was still in Fukushima once a week for updates. In June, we returned to Fukushima as I thought it was safe to do so. Although I am concerned with the radiation problem, nothing can be done to ease my anxiety. Also, as earthquakes happen so often, I have stocked up a few instant noodles in a bag by the front door in case another big one strikes. However, I believe with a strong will and the hope for life that Japanese people perceive, Japan can overcome the hardships and get back on track in no time.

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