

The Great East Japan Earthquake – two years on

Two years after the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, Japan is determined to accelerate the “revitalization process” by focusing on three pillars, namely:

- (i) Economic Revival - More than US \$106 billion to be set aside for stimulating the economy through job creation, enhancing innovation, reconstruction efforts, strengthening domestic demand, etc.
- (ii) Reconstruction - Budget of approx. US \$266 billion secured for FY2011-2015, to accelerate the reconstruction work of disaster-affected areas in Tohoku region
- (iii) Crisis Management - Investment of US\$23.4 billion for strengthening social infrastructures to ensure readiness for any future crises or disasters

BEFORE



Drowned runways of Sendai Airport

AFTER



Restored runways of Sendai Airport
(April 2011)

BEFORE



Collapsed roofs of Sendai station

AFTER



Restored Sendai station
(April 25, 2011)



Subsided Joban Expressway



Restored Joban Expressway
(March 17, 2011)



Displaced family

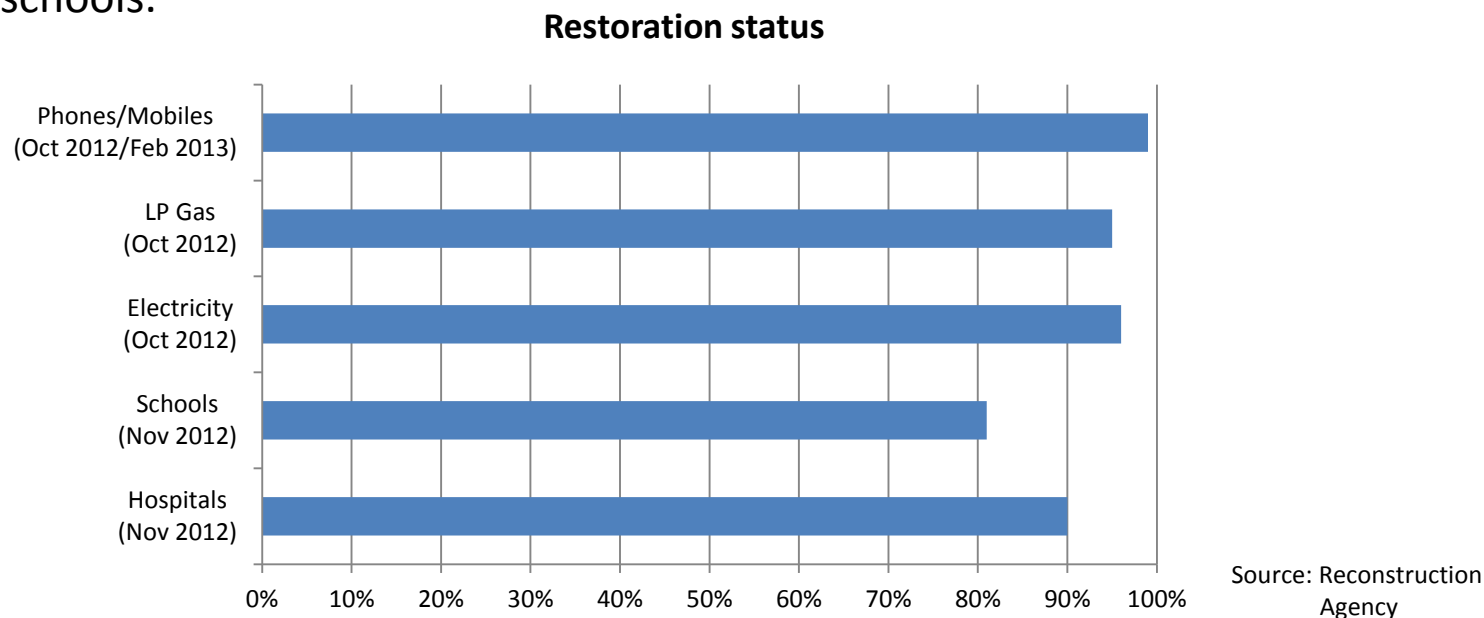


Family moves to a temporary house

1. Progress made towards Reconstruction

Steady progress is being made in the post-earthquake reconstruction process. Immediately following the earthquake & tsunami, some 470,000 people were evacuated, and public or temporary housing has been made available to all of the 320,000 people displaced.

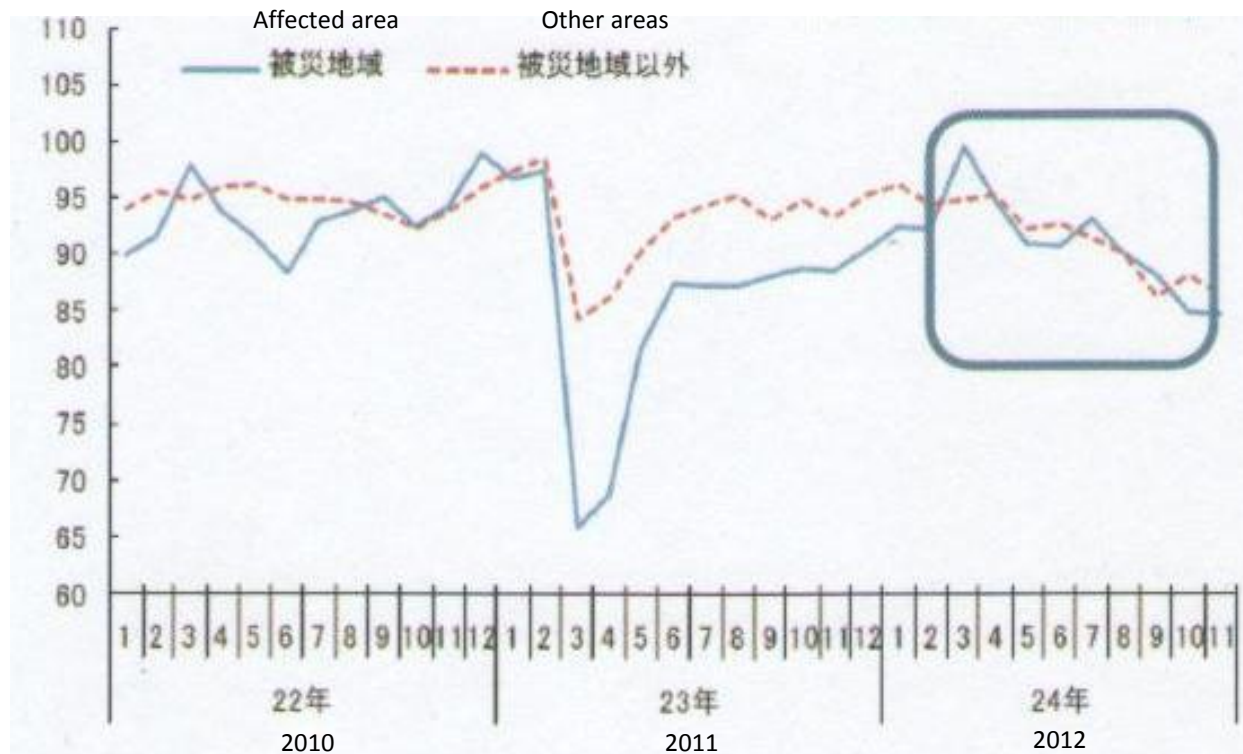
Vital infrastructure such as major roads and rail networks was quickly restored, while essential public services were quickly re-established, including 90% of affected hospitals and 81% of schools.



Japan is committed to incorporating advanced technologies and new methods into reconstruction initiatives to ensure sustainability and energy-efficiency.

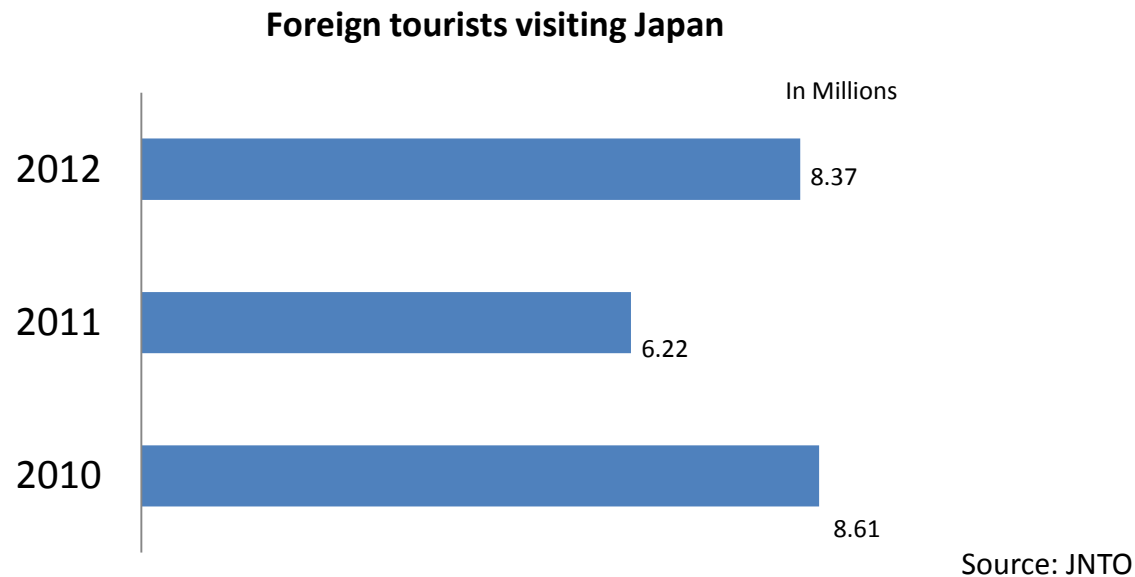
Businesses that were damaged in the earthquake, including automobile companies, are now back on their feet and set to return to globally competitive status. According to the overall indices of mining and manufacturing of Japan, there is only a slight difference between the affected areas in comparison with the non-affected areas.

Indices of mining and manufacturing between the affected area and non-affected areas



Source: Reconstruction Agency

Tourist numbers have also bounced back. In 2012, there were around 8.37 million foreign visitors to Japan, representing a significant recovery (up from 6.22 million foreign visitors in 2011) and a return to pre-earthquake levels of inbound tourism. Japan welcomes foreign visitors from around the world.



Many countries have now lifted or eased restrictions on the importation of foods from Japan, which had been imposed in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. As of March 2013, ten countries (Canada, New Zealand, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Columbia, Guinea, Myanmar, Malaysia and Serbia) have completely lifted radionuclide-related restrictions on food products from Japan.

2. Assistance from the Royal Government of Bhutan & its people

Japan wishes to reaffirm its deep appreciation for the heartfelt sympathy and support of the Bhutanese people, including the relief donations amounting to US\$ 1 million towards those who suffered as a result of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Various memorial services and prayer ceremonies were held by the Bhutanese government across the country, such as, on 12 March 2011, which was attended by His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck; on 13 March 2011, and three-day prayer ceremonies from 18 to 20 March 2011.

The King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and Her Majesty Queen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck stayed in Japan as State Guests from 15 November 2011, visiting Tokyo, Fukushima and Kyoto, before departing on 20 November 2011.



Their Majesties visiting the tsunami affected areas in Fukushima



Their Majesties praying for the victims at Fukushima

On 17 November 2011, His Majesty made an address to the Japanese Diet, offering his deep sympathy and condolences for the pain, suffering and great losses incurred in the Great East Japan Earthquake as well as encouragement for the reconstruction efforts. His Majesty's thoughtful tribute to Japan and its people gave encouragement to many people in Japan, especially his words, "No nation or people should ever have to experience such suffering. And yet if there is one nation that can rise stronger and greater from such adversity, it is Japan and her People. Of this I am confident."

On 18 November 2011, Their Majesties paid a visit to the Sakuragaoka Elementary School at Souma City in Fukushima Prefecture, where His Majesty encouraged the school children.



His Majesty addressing the Japanese Diet



His Majesty offering deep sympathy and condolences



Their Majesties visiting Sakuragaoka Elementary School

3. Japan's commitment towards global disaster management

Japan is committed to sharing knowledge and lessons learned from the earthquake and subsequent recovery process with the international community. To this end, Japan organized conferences on Disaster Reduction and Nuclear Safety in 2012. Japan will also host the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in early 2015.



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

Japan faces a number of challenges and is proactively addressing immediate issues such as post-earthquake reconstruction, economic revitalization and disaster prevention, as well as long-term challenges such as demographic change and the transition to a 'green' economy.

Based on the instructions of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Japan will conduct a review from scratch the Strategy for Energy and the Environment adopted by the previous DPJ administration, and set out responsible energy policies that take into account a range of perspectives, including stable energy supply and energy cost reduction. The previous administration's policy, which aimed to "enable zero operation of nuclear power plants in 2030s" will be reviewed.