

Briefing session on Foreign Sufferer support at the time of Kumamoto Earthquakes

We held a briefing session on foreign sufferer support in half a year after the Kumamoto Earthquakes.

Date: October 10 (Mon.) 13:00 ~ 16:00 Place: At Conference room 3, 4th, floor, Kumamoto city International Center 80 participants (free of charge)

Supported by Council of Local authorities for International Relations (CLAIR), Liaison council of Kyushu International Exchange Association, Kumamoto Prefecture and Kumamoto City, NPO National Conference of Multicultural Managers, Kumamoto International Association, and Citizens Council of Kumamoto City Human Rights Awareness.

After the greetings by Mr. Junichi Sawada, the director of Multicultural Division of CLAIR, the session proceeded as follows

[Report by foreign sufferers]

- Mrs. Dinusha Rambukpitiya (Sri Lanka)
- Mr. Mohammad Sameer (Pakistan)



Report by foreign sufferer
Mrs. Dinusha Rambukpitiya
speaking

Brief Summary:

Mrs. Dinusha Rambukpitiya had just moved to Kumamoto City in April with her husband and two children from Fukuoka. When the earthquake occurred, she did not have any acquaintances around her. Filled with a sense of isolation, she evacuated to her children's primary school. When her children's classmates found her and talked to her, she felt a deep sense of relief, she says.

Mr. Mohammad Sameer has a Japanese wife and two children. He heaved a sigh of relief when Islamic halal lunch was delivered to his family. It was the time when they had a short supply of food, and he said that he had been saved (by goods from Richmond Hotel: refer to page 8). He distributed supplies sent from Muslims across the nation to disaster Sufferers in distress relief. We understood how important a connection between people was.

[Symposium]

①Emergency response --- Supporting evacuation sites

Speaker: Mr. Shinichiro Nakashima (Kumustaka~Association for Living Together with Migrants)

Facilitator: Mr. Tomonobu Haga (Executive Manager of Nagaoka International Affairs Center and KIF's Advisor for multicultural Project)

②Translation of information --- Activities of Disaster Multilingual Support Center during disasters

Speakers: Mr. Yoshihiko Doi (Representative Director of NPO Resource Center for Multicultural community Tokai and Multicultural manager)

Ms. Ikuko Yamaura (chief promotor of international exchange of Arakawa ward and Multicultural coexistence manager)

Facilitator: Prof. Toshiya Tsukamoto (Doctoral Program for Multicultural Innovation, Osaka University)

③Psychological care (towards the future)

Mr. Bijay Gyawali (IsraAID Support)



Symposium Multilingualization
of Information speaker Mr. Doi

Brief Summary:

In terms of the initial response, mainly two things were reported: firstly, not many foreign citizens evacuated to evacuation centers-evacuees were mostly Japanese and the information only in Japanese gave foreign citizens cause for anxiety; secondly, it was necessary to cope with false information on the Internet. Kumamoto City International Center (KCIC) was not a designated evacuation center in the initial stage, so anxiety over distribution of goods and delay of the decision of around-the-clock operation of KCIC made foreign evacuees worry. These were pointed out as problems that should be solved in the future.

As for multilingualization of information, the management situation of the multilingual disaster support center was reported. What was pointed out as important for the smooth operation was that the facilities provided should be strong enough to resist earthquakes and the infrastructure should be well maintained. In the Kumamoto ⑩ KCIC was safely used as the multilingual disaster and an evacuation center.

In terms of the evacuation center cruising activity, a smile from a foreign evacuee who was spoken to in his/her mother tongue was a good result of our activity. At the same time, the challenge we have to address in the future will be to promote on a routine basis the multi-cultural society so that foreign citizens may not alienate themselves.

As for mental healthcare, it was reported that giving evacuees ample opportunities to express themselves was important. It is necessary to alleviate evacuees' anxiety through mutual feeling of trust and understanding.

[Discussion] Learning how multicultural society should be in the future from Kumamoto earthquakes

Coordinator: Mr. Taro Tamura (Representative of board of directors of NPO National Conference of Multicultural Managers)

Panelist: Mr. Tomonobu Haga (Director of Nagaoka City International Association and an advisor for multicultural section of KIF)

Prof. Toshiya Tsukamoto (Doctoral Program for Multicultural Innovation, Osaka University)

