

Dear Friends,

Thank you for thinking of us and Japan. The earthquake and tsunami hit the northern part of Japan and no Atsumi-scholar now lives in this area and all the chapters of CISV Japan are in Tokyo or further south. But we did have a promotional chapter in Northern Japan and the Kanto Chapter, who used to be a buddy, is now trying to confirm the safety of all the CISVers there.

It was unusually big earthquake (you certainly missed it!) I am in my foundation office, which is in a VERY solid building, but it shook for a long time. But we are all fine. One ceramic object was broken, that is it. Phones are busy and all the trains in Tokyo stopped so my staff could not go home. Thank god internet was working.

Damages in Tokyo was not so serious compared with what has been happening (still happening) in the northern part of Japan. All my family including my dog Laka are fine, but the trouble in Tokyo was no train/subway, no phone, no SMS, and heavy traffic jam. Because my evening meeting was cancelled, I went to pick up my daughter who works in the central part of Tokyo. It usually takes about 30 minutes, but it took 2 hours to go and 4 hours to come back. It was really scary if you cannot contact to anybody by phone when you need to reach them. Some trains started to work around 11pm and phone situation improved a little. Strangely it was easier for someone abroad to call me, as it was always busy when I tried to call or send SMS to my family in Tokyo. My other daughter came back home at 2:30 am. We were all glad that everybody in Tokyo could come back home. But then we started to learn the catastrophe in the northern part of Japan on TV.

One day passed. Sunny and warm day, early cherry flowers have started to bloom. Trains/subways started but not in full schedule, mobile phones still difficult to connect, hose phones are better, many events have cancelled, Tokyo Disney Land is closed. I cancelled to go to the meeting in Nagoya, and my daughters are at home because their plans were canceled. We are all busy answering to the emails and facebook messages. But horrible news still kept coming from TV. As for the nuclear power plant accident, I think that generally people trust the government and there seems to be no panic.

It is a bit difficult to explain, but natural disaster such as earthquake or typhoon is something that we have to accept in Japan, because we have had them once in a while throughout 2000 years of history. Some anthropologists might have linked it to the characteristics of Japanese people. So we should be OK and at least in Tokyo things will be back in normal very soon.

Thank you again for your kind consideration,

Junko Imanishi
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