



Looking into Fukushima's Revitalization

Ever since I attended the ALT orientation at Fukushima City, I have always wanted to try the Fukushima's Revitalization Education Tour.

Last November 2024, I finally visited Namie and Futaba to see the places which had been affected by the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster in 2011. **I went to the Futaba Art District and the Great East Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Disaster Memorial Museum which serve as reminders of the tragedy. The highlight though is the Ukedo Elementary School Ruins in Namie which is dubbed a "miracle school," as everyone, including teachers, was able to evacuate safely before the tsunami hit.**

As a foreigner, the museum opened my eyes to the stories before and after the disaster. The Ukedo Elementary School Ruins showed me how powerful the disaster was and

how it must have been difficult for everyone to recover. Appropriately, The Futaba Art District aspires to bring joy back to the community and revive it.



One of the murals showing an image of a giant daruma.

If there is one thing Japan can do, that is to rise above the ashes like the legendary phoenix. **Almost 14 years after the disaster, the Hamadori area, together with the whole Fukushima prefecture, are rebuilding themselves from the terrible**

memory of the past. Slowly, people have been returning to these affected towns to bring back what was once a thriving community.

There are more places that Hamadori can offer but I personally chose to visit these areas to show everyone that it is now safe here. Everything is now back in business even before I came here. All these towns need is for the whole world to know how great it is to be here!

Only light can dispel the dark; and I hope this shed some light about these places as the Hamadori area cannot live forever in darkness. I wish everyone can give it a fighting chance to bring itself back to how it was. To other foreigners like me, you can visit these places to see them for yourselves. They are just a few hours away from Tokyo via *shinkansen*.