

Japanese show thanks for relief aid with event

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The six prefectures in Japan's Tohoku region jointly organized a four-day event in Taipei that starts today to thank Taiwan for its relief assistance in the wake of a magnitude 9 earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan in March 2011.

The "Tohoku Japan Thank You" event will feature a variety of performances, including Japanese sansa folk dance, taiko drumming and shamisen music, said the Interchange Association Japan's Taipei office, which represents Japan's interests in Taiwan.

Visitors will also be able to sample Japanese food, try on Japanese festival and TV drama costumes, and participate in a raffle for free round-trip air tickets to Japan, the office said.

In addition, the Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles, a Japanese baseball team based in Miyagi Prefecture, have donated 100 of their jerseys to give to participants at the event.

In its invitation to the public, the Interchange Association said the residents of the Tohoku region were deeply moved by Taiwan's disaster aid three years ago and hope to repay that kindness.

The March 11, 2011, earthquake and subsequent tsunami in Japan killed almost 16,000 people and left close to 2,600 missing, mainly in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures in the northeast of the country.

In the wake of the disaster, Taiwan donated about ¥20 billion (US\$193 million) in aid, more than any other single country.

The thank you event was organized by a committee comprising the Tohoku District Transport Bureau, Japanese tourism industry groups and governments of the six Tohoku prefectures — Akita, Aomori, Fukushima, Iwate, Miyagi and Yamagata.

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It is to be held at Taipei Expo Park until Monday and admission is free.

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