Domestic violence higher in tsunami zone

TOKYO — Domestic violence in Japan’s tsunami and nuclear disaster zone has risen dramatically, a report released on Friday—International Women’s Day—said.

Increased stress caused by coping with the aftermath of the tsunami of March 2011, or the fear of radiation from the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant, could be to blame, said the report from news agency Jiji Press.

In Fukushima, where the towering tsunami sparked reactor meltdowns and radiation leaks, 840 cases of domestic violence were reported to police in 2012, 64% higher than a year earlier, Jiji Press reported.

In Miyagi Prefecture, which was badly hit when waves devoured coastal communities, 1,856 cases were reported, up a third on the previous year, the agency said.

No definition of domestic violence was given in the report, which cited local social workers saying that “men tend to stay home after the disaster because many of them have lost jobs”, thereby increasing tensions in the family.

The tsunami killed almost 19,000 when it struck two years ago on Monday.

In the Fukushima region alone, tens of thousands of people are still displaced from their homes because of high radiation levels and the devastation wrought by the disaster.

It remains uncertain whether they will ever be able to return, with experts saying it could be decades before the area is deemed safe.

Many families from Fukushima have been split apart, with men forced to stay behind because they are unable to find work near to the temporary homes to which their wives and children have fled.

A local support group cited by Jiji said this could lead to frustrations that may also increase violence in the home.

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kimuzukashi Mar. 09, 2013 - 08:19AM JST

The stress must be horrendous, especially for those couples and families living in 1K "temporary accommodation" with no privacy. I hope these men get the help they need before people end up getting killed...

Disillusioned Mar. 09, 2013 - 08:24AM JST

So, what is the government doing about it? Bugger all!!! It's two years since the tsunami and meltdown and very few people have been returned to their homes or been compensated. This report should also include the increased suicide rate in these areas. It is shameful how little has been done to help these people.

Lowly Mar. 09, 2013 - 10:12AM JST

I would imagine so.
This is to be expected.
At least it is being measured and reported.
Next-treated? Support?
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