Emperor hopes everyone will support Tohoku disaster victims

TOKYO — Emperor Akihito on Tuesday urged the nation not to forget the victims of the March 11, 2011 disaster.

In his New Year’s message released by the Imperial Household Agency, the 79-year-old emperor said: “At the dawn of the new year, my heart goes out to the afflicted people, those who cannot return to the places they used to live because of radioactive contamination and those who have to spend the cold harsh winter in temporary housing. I sincerely hope that, in the future, the experience of the damage caused by the earthquake and tsunami will be fully utilized in disaster prevention education and town planning so that the country moves toward assuring safety and security in the lives of the people.

“Our country is now going through difficult times because of the earthquake and other factors, but it is my wish that the people’s hearts will always be with the afflicted, and that everyone will support one another to overcome the various challenges. It is my hope that the new year will be better, even a little, for the people of Japan and the people of the world.”

The emperor and other members of the imperial family will make five appearances before the public at the imperial palace on Wednesday. The times are 10:10 a.m., 11 a.m., 11:50 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 2:20 p.m.

Japan Today

16 Comments

smithinjapan JAN. 01, 2013 - 03:59PM JST

Let’s hope we can. Let’s also hope our efforts and money aren’t put into government projects like whaling when the money should be used to build more housing. What was the percentage that they’ve accomplished so far? 0.2%?

Fix the priorities and help the people and hopefully the Emperor’s message will be realized.

Aristoman JAN. 01, 2013 - 04:40PM JST

Agree SmithinJapan. I also think that Emperor’s hope and words without action are not enough for tsunami and nuclear victims. Many politicians are sucking on the taxpayers’ tax trying to rebuild economy by building more reactors and making stronger army. If Emperor is so nice and human why they don’t invite at least a family from disaster area pro week to warm up in their palace? Open your eyes people. Ohhh but here in Japan we don’t question authorities. Sumimasen.

Ewan Huzarmy JAN. 01, 2013 - 04:55PM JST

Cough up some of YOUR dosh then, and make sure that Abe and his cronies don’t get their hands on it.
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Tell it to the national government.

Aristoman: "Many politicians are sucking on the taxpayers tax trying to rebuild economy by building more reactors and making a stronger army." It's enough to make you ill, isn't it? Instead of helping the victim's the government is more or less pledging to build new reactors. Instead of helping rebuild Ishinomaki they are using the money to send out whaling ships in their name (I wonder how much money of it they see in the end?). And all this while the government acknowledges cleaning up Fukushima will be something the world has never attempted, etc etc. I agree it would be nice if the Emperor and his family invited someone to stay with them as a gesture of kindness and the humanity he puts forth, but it also brings up a lot of problems. The worst ones, of course, being politicians would not allow it. The next being security would not allow it. Then you get into the more personal questions of whom do you choose? Why does Mr. A who lives besides Mr. B not get chosen when the latter does? It would be nice, simply, if the Emperor could do a little more to exert pressure on the government. Despite not having any control, the man and his family have a lot of sway -- especially if you compare it to the #7 PM in less than seven years, and he could help apply pressure on the government to reign in wayward spending... or at least put forth some of the money they promised for restructure towards actual restructure instead of contact lens factories in Nagoya, expressways in Okinawa, and the aforementioned in an area far, far from home.

Very nice of him and the royal, imperial family to greet us one in a while.

A much needed message and I don't know how anyone could be more clear than that.

He can start by getting on the J Gov. arse to get the emergency housing going .................

At the dawn of the new year, my heart goes out to the afflicted people, those who cannot return to the places they used to live because of radioactive contamination and those who have to spend the cold harsh winter in temporary housing. -Our country is now going through difficult times because of the earthquake and other factors, but it is my wish that the people's hearts will always be with the afflicted, and that everyone will support one another to overcome the various challenges.

A much needed message and I don't know how anyone could be more clear than that. The direction has been set for 2013. Hopefully the politicians (and people) will listen.

I think everyone has been supporting them. Everyone except the Japanese government, of course. There has been billions of yen donated, people have opened their homes for billeting, tonnes of food, clothing and blankets have been donated and there are hundreds of people volunteering their time to the victims of the triple disaster. The only ones not supporting them are the Japanese government with their procrastinating about getting these people into houses and TEPCO who still have not shelled out compensation payments to most of the victims. The emperor should not sending wishes to the people of Japan. He should be tearing strips of the dithering cronies in the J-Gov and TEPCO.

"Our country is now going through difficult times because of the earthquake and other factors, including government and corporate malfeasance/greed, arrogance, laziness, and, in some cases, down right stupidity. And I'm afraid the country is going to need more than "the people's hearts" to get back to prosperity. Good luck Japan in 2013.
Emperor hopes everyone will support Tohoku disaster victims - Japan Today: Japan News and Discus...

warnerbro JAN. 01, 2013 - 11:29PM JST

His statement is actually amazingly forthright and about as politically explicit as he could be. It must have been hard to bull through his handlers even to mention radiation. He's legally expected to remain apolitical. The hope he was able to express, which is that business will not continue as usual, is almost worthy to be called amazing. Remember that he has no personal wealth or property. What he has is what the new revanchist cabinet and the minions in the Imperial Household Agency (who are far to the right of him and his children politically) choose to give him.

Tamanegi JAN. 01, 2013 - 11:39PM JST

The Emperor may as well just come out and say "gambatte ne"

Foxie JAN. 02, 2013 - 12:02AM JST

With all that money that got donated from all over the world and by me too, why do these people still have to live in temporary housing? What happened to all that money that was for those people????

Michael Craig JAN. 02, 2013 - 12:47AM JST

Where's Princess Mako? She's not in this one!

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