

Programs on the Great East Japan Earthquake

復興津波 原奈

Stories to Share
3.11 and Beyond



On March 11, 2011, a major earthquake with a magnitude of 9.0 and a giant tsunami occurred, followed by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster. NHK immediately sent several hundred crews to the disaster-stricken areas, and since then it has been producing many documentaries based on invaluable materials as a historical record.

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津波——TSUNAMI

Series The Giant Tsunami

Surviving the Tsunami



1 × 58 min.
Clean, M/E + English, English script

The 3.11 earthquake generated a tsunami of an unprecedented size, reaching close to 39 meters (128 feet) in height in some areas and traveling up to five kilometers (3.1 miles) inland. What caused such a giant tsunami and how did people escape its deadly onslaught? Utilizing exclusive footage captured by NHK and amateur videos, the program takes a comprehensive look at the tsunami's destructive power and tells the remarkable tales of survivors.

The Unforeseeable Ferocity



1 × 58 min.
Clean, M/E + English, English script

How did embankments come to be destroyed? What sort of danger did the disaster-stricken areas face from tsunami fires? This program provides an overall picture of the giant tsunami using real-time images, witness reports and expert analysis. By focusing on what those involved were thinking and did during the disaster, the program investigates what is needed for us to protect our lives from future tsunami.

The Line Between Life and Death



1 × 49 min.
Clean, M/E + English, English script

A survey was carried out on what happened that day to the 4,500 residents of Yuriage town, where the tsunami claimed 800 lives. What emerged from the results was the 'psychological factor', which had not previously been verified or included in disaster prevention measures. The program examines the 'mental trap' in which people may be caught during disasters and proposes new disaster prevention measures incorporating both soft and hard infrastructures.

MEGAQUAKE II



In production

A sequel to MEGAQUAKE (2010), the science documentary will follow the latest efforts in seismological research that has accelerated immensely since the 3.11 earthquake in Japan.

Radiation – Fighting the Invisible Enemy



1 × 52 min. Clean, M/E + English, English script

The residents of Iitate Village in Fukushima Prefecture were living a quiet agricultural life surrounded by mountains until the nuclear power plant accident 40 kilometers away utterly changed everything. With their village located inside the government-designated planned evacuation area, the residents had to make the decision to abandon their normal livelihood. But opinions between the young and the elderly were divided on whether to stay or leave. This is a record of the struggles of the Iitate villagers faced with the possible disappearance of their village.

Battle toward Energy Shift



1 × 49 min. Clean, M/E + English, English script

The 3.11 earthquake destroyed public trust in nuclear power plants and a stable supply of electricity. The focus of attention has suddenly shifted to alternative sources of energy, such as solar power generation, and behind-the-scenes corporate developments have intensified. Domestic and overseas companies are jostling in competition to develop a system to create an energy-saving 'Smart City'. This program presents a realistic frontline report on the surging tide of the energy revolution and investigates the path that technology-oriented Japan should take.

Fukushima Nuclear Crisis – Braving Danger to Map Radiation



1 × 52 min. Clean, M/E + English, English script

The nuclear disaster has led to radioactive contamination of surrounding areas. A team of scientists formed to measure its levels independently of the government and the IAEA depicted them on an original map. This two-month coverage, started just after the disaster, captures the scientists venturing into 'radiation hot spots'.

One Day in a Radioactive Town



1 × 55 min. Clean, M/E + English, English script

This program documents one day spent by an NHK crew within the restricted zone in Namie, which was devastated by the double blows of tsunami destruction and radioactive contamination. One month after the disaster, what was once a lively town had been transformed into huge piles of rubble, with livestock left abandoned and many people still unaccounted for.

Meltdowns



In production

Using interviews with Fukushima reactor operators, unreleased materials, and detailed CGs, the program unfolds what really happened at the nuclear plant.

Frontline of Nuclear Engineers



In production

The program focuses on the brave team of on-site engineers who are working despite various troubles to achieve the 'cold shutdown' of the reactors planned for January 2012.

Colossal Tsunami: Doctors' Endless Struggle



1 × 50 min. Clean, M/E + English, English script

The Japanese Red Cross Hospital was the only hospital in Ishinomaki to survive the earthquake. Ever since then, it has battled to save the lives of the city's 200,000 residents. As a result of the tsunami damage, its initial life-saving activities failed to function as the doctors wished, and they were at a loss faced with the unusual symptoms of survivors. In addition to showing images from the hospital during the 200 hours following the disaster, the program vividly portrays the reality of the deterioration in medical services. This is a historical record of 'disaster medicine'.

Tohoku Festival Prayers



1 × 48 min. Clean, M/E + English, English script

Japanese summer festivals serve as a time to hold memorial services for the souls of the departed. Although some of the many places devastated by the disaster were unable to hold their colorful and passionate centuries-old festivals, the people of Rikuzen-Takada, Soma, Minami-Soma and some other cities decided to go ahead as usual. The program shows festival committee members busily repairing damaged floats and drums and encouraging the participation of dispersed former residents. What are the thoughts of the people holding these summer festivals? And what do they hope to express in them?

Banding Together – An Isolated Village's Fight for Survival



1 × 49 min. Clean, M/E + English, English script

Isolated by the disaster, the residents of Baba-Nakayama in Miyagi Prefecture decided they could wait no longer for government reconstruction measures, and embarked on the reconstruction of their village themselves. Now they are proceeding with the plan to move the community to higher ground and restore the local fishing industry with the help of outside volunteers. By focusing on villagers who are determined to recover and move forward, the program demonstrates the resilience of people prepared to rise to their feet to face any difficulty.

Series Starting Over

Radiation and My Missing Family



1 × 48 min.
Clean, M/E + English, English script

Norio Kimura was living in Okuma town, 'ground zero' of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, where

Reactors 1 to 4 are located. He is one of the few disaster victims suffering from 'triple distress'. The program reports on the reality imposed on people by the earthquake, the tsunami and the nuclear accident.

A Street Called Dream



1 × 48 min.
Clean, M/E + English, English script

Minamimachi's vibrant main shopping district was reduced to sand and gravel after the earthquake, but efforts

are now being made to revive it by constructing temporary buildings for tenants. The camera captures their spirited energy as they aim for restoration.