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Friday, Dec. 28, 2012

Sony Corp. lends unused buildings in Miyagi to disaster-hit companies

Jiji

SENDAI — Sony Corp. recently began lending its unused buildings in Miyagi Prefecture to companies hit by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami to help their recovery.

Local companies devastated by the disaster are working to rebuild their businesses at Sony's Sendai Technology Center in Tagajo, Miyagi Prefecture, dubbed Miyagi Reconstruction Park.

The electronics giant has lent seven buildings with a total floor space of some 40,000 sq. meters to disaster-hit firms with key offices in the prefecture for 10 years without charge. The space, once used as production lines, had been unused due to Sony's restructuring.

The companies now using the buildings include a printing firm whose factories were swept away by tsunami, a parts manufacturer and a developer of hydroponic culture equipment.

In the space, Tohoku University and Toyota Motor East Japan Inc., a Toyota Motor Corp. unit based in the village of Ohira in the prefecture, have started developing electric vehicles that can drive themselves in times of disaster as well as a new technology for avoiding traffic jams.

"I hope the park will be a platform for reconstruction with technological innovation," said Sony Vice Chairman Ryoji Chubachi, a native of Miyagi Prefecture who has worked at the Sendai Technology Center for more than 10 years.

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