

The Committee for the Protection of Buried Cultural Properties

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Fiscal 2017 activities on protection of buried cultural properties are reported herein.

The fiscal 2017 national meeting of the Committee for the Protection of Buried Cultural Properties (the Committee) was held on May 26 at Taisho University, attended by 32 members. In the meeting, it was decided to conduct a new questionnaire by the Committee which is a continuation of questionnaires that have been conducted in the last ten years.

An information exchange session of the Committee was held on Oct. 22 at Miyazaki Municipal University, attended by 17 members. Reports were made and opinions were exchanged on damage to cultural properties and reconstruction from the heavy rainfall in northern Kyushu, present states and problems on protection of buried cultural properties in Miyazaki Prefecture, preservation problems in various parts of the country, and so on.

The board of directors meeting was held nine times in fiscal 2017. The board of directors mainly discussed new issues on protection of buried cultural properties, information and problems brought up from regional subcommittees and the Committee members. Especially revision of the Law for Protection of Cultural Properties was repeatedly discussed as a major topic in fiscal 2017.

Request for preservation of archaeological sites by the Committee was submitted for two sites in fiscal 2017, and there were six answers for these requests. Also, there was one answer for a preservation request submitted in fiscal 2016.

The following archaeological sites were discussed by the Committee in fiscal 2017: 1. Shinmei site in Bando City, Ibaraki Prefecture; 2. Takaosan mounded tomb in Numazu City, Shizuoka Prefecture; 3. Nishiiwano site in Kashiwazaki City, Niigata Prefecture; 4. Noborioji tile kiln sites in Nara City, Nara Prefecture; 5. Wareishijizo buddha sculpture in Mihara City, Hiroshima Prefecture; 6. Jono site in Kitakyushu City, Fukuoka Prefecture; 7. Maehata site in Chikushino City, Fukuoka Prefecture; and 8. Koshima clinic site in Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture.

As for the partial revision of the Law for Protection of Cultural Properties, deliberation by the government's advisory body has been conducted since June 2017. While it proposes

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comprehensive preservation and utilization of regional cultural properties, it promotes utilization of cultural properties as tourist attractions. While it includes important issues regarding direction of future administration for protection of cultural properties, it holds a risk of overusing cultural properties, and therefore the Japanese Archaeological Association submitted a public comment on Sept. 28, 2017 and has expressed its opinion on March 8, 2018.

As for the poster session at the general meeting and the convention, the Committee presented “Excavation Research on Buried Cultural Properties due to Reconstruction Projects of the Great East Japan Earthquake (5th Report)” with examples from different prefectures.

A talk with the Agency of Cultural Affairs was held on March 20, 2018. Preservation problems on Noborioji tile kiln sites and Takaosan mounded tomb, revision of the Law for Protection of Cultural Properties and measures for damages to cultural properties caused by the Kumamoto Earthquake were discussed.