The rules of sushi

by John Asano
Opinions Sep. 13, 2012 · 06:18AM JST (37)

Like most things in Japanese life there are precise codes and formalities involved with eating the national dish of sushi. Its preparation, presentation and consumption are subject to a surprising number of rules.

Here are some of the most important sushi etiquette.

Wasabi

To mix or not to mix? The correct technique is to place a small amount of wasabi on each piece of sushi with your chopstick before eating. These days it is quite common for people outside of Japan to mix their wasabi in soy sauce as a dipping sauce for the sushi. I tend to do this myself and although not technically correct, it is acceptable.

Dipping

What is the correct way to dip sushi into soy sauce? The rice part of the sushi should not touch the soy sauce as it has already been flavored and will tend to fall apart easily in the sauce. Only the fish, seafood or other part of the sushi should touch the sauce.

How many bites?

Sushi is meant to be eaten in one bite. It is considered rude to bite it in two. If the sushi is too big, ask the chef to cut it in half. They will not be offended and are happy to oblige.

Fingers or Chopsticks?

Sushi was traditionally eaten only by hand. These days most people eat sushi with chopsticks. How can I tell which to use? If you visit a restaurant where you are given a specific hand towel to wipe your fingers then the restaurant is recommending that you eat using your hands.

Where to Start?

Yes, believe it or not there is a correct order in which to eat sushi. Start first with the most delicately flavored fish and gradually proceed to stronger flavors or fattier fish such as tuna or eel, and finish with the sweet egg sushi.

Why is there ginger?

The beautiful pink ginger is meant to be eaten between mouthfuls of sushi to refresh the palate, so it’s ready for a new flavor and to aid in digestion.

The 3 Golden Rules

Don’t forget these 3 keys rules: don’t stick your chopsticks upright in the rice; don’t cut a piece of sushi in half with your chopsticks; and don’t mix wasabi in your soy sauce.

These are formal rules of etiquette and while correct as long as you enjoy your sushi, that is fine with me.
Tooth patch could mean end of decay

Health Sep. 18, 2012 - 07:18AM JST ( 2 )

The tooth-patch, an ultra thin biocompatible film made from hydroxyapatite AFP

TOKYO —

Scientists in Japan have created a microscopically thin film that can coat individual teeth to prevent decay or to make them appear whiter, the chief researcher said.

The “tooth patch” is a hard-wearing and ultra-flexible material made from hydroxyapatite, the main mineral in tooth enamel, that could also mean an end to sensitive teeth.

“This is the world’s first flexible apatite sheet, which we hope to use to protect teeth or repair damaged enamel,” said Shigeki Hontsu, professor at Kinki University’s Faculty of Biology-Oriented Science and Technology in western Japan.

“Dentists used to think an all-apatite sheet was just a dream, but we are aiming to create artificial enamel,” the outermost layer of a tooth, he said earlier this month.

Researchers can create film just 0.004 of a millimeter thick by firing lasers at compressed blocks of hydroxyapatite in a vacuum to make individual particles pop out.

These particles fall onto a block of salt which is heated to crystallise them, before the salt stand is dissolved in water.

The film is scooped up onto filter paper and dried, after which it is robust enough to be picked up by a pair of tweezers.

“The moment you put it on a tooth surface, it becomes invisible. You can barely see it if you examine it under a light,” Hontsu told AFP by telephone.

The sheet has a number of minute holes that allow liquid and air to escape from underneath to prevent their forming bubbles when it is applied onto a tooth.

One problem is that it takes almost one day for the film to adhere firmly to the tooth’s surface, said Hontsu.

The film is currently transparent but it is possible to make it white for use in cosmetic dentistry.

Researchers are experimenting on disused human teeth at the moment but the team will soon move to tests with animals, Hontsu said, adding he was also trying it on his own teeth.

Five years or more would be needed before the film could be used in practical dental treatment such as covering exposed dentin—the sensitive layer underneath enamel—but it could be used cosmetically within three years, Hontsu said.
The technology, which has been jointly developed with Kazushi Yoshikawa, associate professor at Osaka Dental University, is patented in Japan and South Korea and applications are under way in the United States, Europe and China.
A Japanese woman’s guide for getting a date

By Karen Masuda

Lifestyle Aug. 29, 2012 - 06:53AM JST (124)

What kind of person are you attracted to? Good looking and intelligent may be at the top of many people’s list of attractive attributes, but not all of us are blessed with an abundance of physical beauty and/or high intelligence.

Self-sufficiency and outspokenness would normally be good characteristics to have but are also widely overlooked by the male species when searching for a female to spend time with. “Ah she doesn’t need me,” would be a likely initial reaction. This could be one of the great universal truths: cultural boundaries disappear in the need for us to be needed.

Alright, so something has to be done and since it takes time for someone to find your “inner beauty,” you may want to try these sure-fire tactics, courtesy of our female Japanese editorial staff, for getting someone you’re interested in to be interested in you.

Ladies, arm yourselves!

1. Play Tech-Dumbv

Take an antiquated cell phone with you the next time you go drinking with friends. Approach the man you have your eye on and strike up a conversation during which you intentionally take out the antiquated cell phone and start fiddling with it. The moment for your Academy Award performance is at hand:

“Ohhhhh this cell phone!” Moan lightly. Ooze with helpless and gentle frustration.

When he says, “What’s the matter?” you’ve got him hooked.

Continue with your performance. “I don’t know much about cell phones. Had this one for ages! It’s really difficult to use.” Simper a bit over this.

Most likely your guy has the most recent edition of his favorite smartphone and is itching to show off his knowledge of it. He’ll say, “Why don’t you get a new one?” (If this guy isn’t perceptive enough to say anything, then it is OK to ignore him and move on).

Act like the thought of dealing with a new cell phone is truly baffling and just the thought of it leaves you speechless. “Well I … I, I …” Brighten up with, “The latest iPhone 5 is really popular, isn’t it? How is it? I really want a new phone but…” go back to being baffled.
“It’s a 4s, the iPhone 5 isn’t out yet. What kind of phone do you want?”

He is all yours. You need him to help you find a good cell phone. On your next day off, you can plan a date in search of the perfect cell phone. You may even be able to get him to buy it for you.

2. Bubble Over With Enthusiasm

Be theatrical; he’ll love it. At any gathering of mixed company, guys like to brag, giving orations on their latest endeavors. Perk up your ears for the guy you like, inserting your “wows” and “Oh really?” in a timely fashion. An "I didn't know that!" will also make him feel good enough to elaborate. “You’re kidding! What’s that supposed to mean?” Let him know you want to know more, adding in a sing-songy tone: “I’d love to hear about it!” The excitement in your voice is evident and he will gain much satisfaction from all your enthusiasm. You will be a pro in no time with enough practice.

3. Bump Up the Cute Level

Here we run into the cultural aspects of what is attractive in a woman. Repeating what your guy said, like you are saving it for posterity, then putting your finger to your head and moving it in a circular fashion might be a good idea. When asked “what are you doing?” reply: “Saving it on my hard drive.” Your guy might think that was the cutest thing. It will make you look daft, which is a good thing. Your guy can feel superior without any guilt because you are just so darned cute.

4. The Omuraisu Trick

When you’re at a restaurant together make sure he knows you cannot eat omuraisu. Omuraisu is a Japanese dish of rice topped with an omelette and can be found on the menu in any family restaurant and many coffee shops throughout Japan. For those of you outside of Japan, any egg-based dish like a normal omelette should work fine.

When seated, make sure you are seated next to your guy so that you can share a menu. Find the picture of omuraisu, gaze at it with consternation and exclaim sadly: “I absolutely can’t eat omuraisu.”

There is almost 100% chance that your guy will respond with, ”Why not? You don’t like omuraisu?”

Be silent for a few seconds for dramatic effect and continue. “I... well (take a deep breath). Every time an egg is cracked open, those cute little chickies die...they’re killed! Those cute little baby chicks. I can’t bear to think about it. They’ll never get a chance to be born, to hop around and chirp those cute little chirps.” It is good to shiver at this point.

Your guy will gaze at you in amazement. What a kind, sensitive angelic person you are. Next he will be feeling the need to spend the time to really get to know you. He’s yours. Plans for a date are in the bag.

When you start going out with him, no doubt you will find yourselves at a similar restaurant where you can order omuraisu.
You’ve got to know each other well enough, but of course he is going to ask “Didn’t you say you couldn’t eat omuraisu?”

It is safe enough to blow it off with a “I’m OK with it now,” or “Oh, I got used to it,” or even a “Did I say that?”

Original Author: Lady Ebiosu

RocketNews24

External Link:
It’s expensive being a woman

Kuchikomi Sep. 04, 2012 - 06:04AM JST

美しくなるためのお値段事情
3万～94万円
お見合いパーティー
500円～15,000円
不妊症対策
1,000円～300万円
子供のタレントスクール代
月31,000円。

TOKYO —

It’s expensive being a woman. You can do it on the cheap, of course, but think what you miss out on. Not for you the “enchanting beauty boom,” for instance. What’s an enchanting beauty boom? As Shukan Josei (Sept 4) explains it, it involves everything “from upgrading your makeup and fashion sense to plastic surgery.” Of course, there is an economy class, in this as in most things, but be forewarned: there are no upper limits, and once you start, there’s simply no end to it.

The first thing an enchanting beauty will want is a personal coordinator and/or a personal stylist, who will take you shopping and make a fashion plate of you. The fee: somewhere around 20,000 yen for two hours. Some personal coordinators make house calls, charging 25,000 yen to 30,000 yen for two hours.

If you hair’s not thick enough, you’ll want to do something about that, and you can. Scalp treatments run at around 54,000 yen for six months, or 92,000 yen for a year. Dental beautification? No problem – 800,000 yen and your teeth will be like new, no one seeing you smile would ever guess you were over 40.

There’s much more than this to the enchanting beauty boom – breast enlargement, face lifts, skin treatments, anti-aging injections and so on, for all of which Shukan Josei provides price options (a face lift, for example, can range from more or less quick-fix procedures costing in the neighborhood of 30,000 yen, to surgery setting you back 945,000 yen).

But since women’s needs go beyond enchanting beauty, so does Shukan Josei’s research. Marriage. More and more people are staying single for life, but marriage has its attractions too, and professionally organized “omiai” parties, where prospective marriage partners can meet, are flourishing. How much are they? That depends. A basic no-frills party can cost a woman as little as 500 yen. If she’s particular about who she’s likely to meet, she might want to spend a little more – 4,000 yen or so for an “omiai” where all the men are government employees; 15,000 yen for those open only to doctors and lawyers.

Infertility is a major theme these days, as is its corollary, fertility treatment. Here, too, there is a broad range of choices, from professional advice on coordinating sex with the ovulation cycle (1,000 yen to 2,000 yen per session) to artificial insemination.
(20,000 yen to 30,000 yen per try, with a 60-80% success rate) and far, far beyond – in-vitro fertilization, for example, at 350,000 yen to 500,000 yen, and, if this doesn't work, surrogate motherhood at 2-3 million yen.

Once you've had the child, why not make a star of him or her? Many mothers want to, inspired by celebrities like Fuku Suzuki and Kanon Tani, both 8. Success like that has to be worked at, and paid for. It can cost 150,000 yen just to get a child into a talent school, plus lesson fees of up to 31,000 yen a month.

No woman need succumb entirely to the stresses and strains of responsible wifehood and motherhood. There are releases. Host clubs? Know what you want and plan accordingly. At some, 3,000 yen will buy you all you can drink for two hours. At others, it's 10,000 yen and no time limit.
Panetta urges calm, but says U.S. takes no sides in Japan-China dispute

By Dan De Luce

Politics Sep. 17, 2012 - 04:50PM JST ( 8 )

TOKYO —

U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta on Monday called for diplomatic efforts to resolve a worsening territorial spat between Japan and China, after earlier warning disputes could draw East Asia into war.

Speaking after meetings in Tokyo with Japanese leader, Panetta urged “calm and restraint on all sides” in a row over disputed islands that has rapidly escalated in the last week into sometimes violent protests in China.

“Obviously we’re concerned by the demonstrations and the conflict over the Senkaku islands,” Panetta said, referring to the Japanese-administered archipelago that China claims and calls Diaoyu.

“It is extremely important that diplomatic means on both sides be used to try to constructively resolve these issues,” he said, adding a resolution of the dispute has to be based on “clear principles” and international law.

“It’s in everybody’s interest for Japan and China to maintain good relations and to find a way to avoid further escalation,” said Panetta, pounding the podium for emphasis.

Panetta arrived in Tokyo on Sunday evening after days of anti-Japanese protests had rocked cities across China, with diplomatic missions being targeted in some instances.

Panetta said intemperate actions over the disputed East China Sea islands could have serious consequences.

“It raises the possibility that a misjudgement on one side or the other could result in violence, and could result in conflict,” he said. “And that conflict would then have the potential of expanding.”

Japan and China, Asia’s two largest economies, have long been at loggerheads over the island chain, but tensions have spiked recently.

Last week, Japan announced it had nationalised three of the islands, triggering an angry reaction in China. Tokyo already owns another and leases the fifth.

The uninhabited islands lie along important shipping lanes and the seabed nearby is thought to harbour valuable mineral resources.

The Senkaku dispute is just one of a number of island sovereignty rows in the area, many of which involve an increasingly assertive China.
“We could have a blow-up on any one of these issues,” Panetta later told around 350 of the approximately 47,000 U.S. military personnel stationed in Japan, during a visit to Yokota Air Base.

Panetta told reporters the U.S. commitment to Japan, in the form of a mutual defense treaty, was unwavering. “Obviously we stand by our treaty obligations. They are longstanding, and that does not change.”

But he said the United States as a matter of policy does not take a position on the territorial dispute.

Panetta’s week-long Asian tour includes visits to Beijing and Auckland but his schedule originally did not include a stop in Tokyo. The row over the islands likely prompted the change in his itinerary, analysts said.

Japanese Foreign Minister Koichiro Gemba, who met with the former CIA chief earlier in the day, called on Beijing to dial down the temperature on the dispute.

“Anti-Japan demonstrations are spreading on a scale never seen before. Some of them have turned into riots. It is truly regrettable that Japanese businesses have suffered significant damage,” he said.

Reports Monday suggested Japanese firms were curtailing their operations in China after factories there were targeted.

“I will again ask the Chinese government to take appropriate measures. I hope law and order will be respected,” the foreign minister said.

Gemba said he told Panetta that Japan was seeking to keep a lid on the row.

“We have agreed that Japan and the United States will cooperate to ensure that Japan-China relations will not be seriously harmed,” he added.

© 2012 AFP
Chinese mob ravages Japanese restaurant during protest; later finds out it is Chinese-owned

By Steven Simonitch

National Aug. 21, 2012 - 10:26PM JST (94)

TOKYO — Anti-Japanese demonstrations have been sweeping across China since Sunday in response to Japanese activists unfurling Japanese flags on a disputed island in the South China Sea, four days after Chinese activists landed on the same island.

Undoubtedly the most high-profile of the protests was in Shenzen, where some Chinese protesters burned Japanese flags and even turned violent, vandalizing Japanese cars and breaking into a local Japanese restaurant.

What the angry Chinese mob didn’t realize was that, like most Japanese eateries outside of Japan, the restaurant they ravaged was owned and operated by Chinese.

According to Chinese news source Zaobao, the restaurant, called Tokugawa, is run by a Chinese manager and chef who have absolutely no connections with Japan.

The owner opened the restaurant five years ago after investing 5,000,000 yuan ($786,250) of capital. He says he had just heard of the demonstration and was thinking of closing down the store when the mob broke in and destroyed over 100,000 yuan ($15,725) worth of property.

“I also love my country, but there is a better way to express one’s patriotism. This is just rioting,” he spoke, though he claims he holds no grudge towards his fellow countrymen for their actions and intends to reopen the restaurant.

Anyone living outside of Japan is probably aware that many Japanese restaurants are actually owned by Chinese or Koreans, though they usually use Japanese names like “Fuji,” “Tokyo,” or “Samurai.”

Needless to say, the Japanese internet community has gotten a kick out of the incident, pointing out that the cars they toppled were also likely owned by Chinese.

So remember kids, the next time you form an angry patriotic mob, be sure to politely ask the owner his nationality before you ransack his restaurant.

Source: Yahoo! Japan, Zaobao (Chinese)

RocketNews24
Asian territory disputes could trigger war: Panetta

National Sep. 17, 2012 - 06:30AM JST (44)

Panetta arrives at the US airbase in Yokota, Japan AFP

TOKYO —

China and other Asian countries could end up at war over territorial disputes if governments keep up their “provocative behavior,” U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Sunday.

Speaking to reporters before arriving in Tokyo on a trip to Asia, Panetta appealed for restraint amid mounting tensions over territorial rights in the East China Sea and the South China Sea.

“I am concerned that when these countries engage in provocations of one kind or another over these various islands, that it raises the possibility that a misjudgment on one side or the other could result in violence, and could result in conflict,” Panetta said, when asked about a clash between Japan and China.

“And that conflict would then have the potential of expanding.”

The Pentagon chief’s trip coincides with an escalating row between Asia’s two largest economies over an archipelago in the East China Sea administered by Tokyo under the name Senkaku and claimed by China under the name Diaoyu.

Tensions have steadily mounted since pro-Beijing activists were arrested and deported after landing on one of the islands in August. Japanese nationalists then followed, raising their flag on the same island days later.

On Tuesday, Japan announced it had nationalised three of the islands in the chain, triggering protests in China. Tokyo already owns another and leases the fifth.

The uninhabited islands are in important sea lanes and the seabed nearby is thought to harbour valuable mineral resources.

Sometimes violent demonstrations have been held in China near diplomatic missions in the days since Tokyo’s announcement, although there have been no reports of deaths or serious injuries.

Hong Kong broadcaster Cable TV showed footage of clashes Sunday in Shenzhen between riot police and demonstrators, with some holding a banner calling for a “bloodbath” in Tokyo.

Panetta said he and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton “both strongly urge that
these countries—rather than engaging in that provocative behaviour—engage in an effort to find ways to peacefully resolve these kind of issues”.

Panetta is due to hold talks on Monday with his Japanese counterpart where the dispute is expected to top the agenda before heading to China and then on to New Zealand.

He predicted economic rivalry would lead to more feuds in the future over potentially resource-rich areas in the Asia-Pacific region.

“We’re going to face more of this. Countries are searching for resources,” he said, adding: “There’s got to be a peaceful way to resolve these issues.”

“What we don’t want is to have any kind of provocative behaviour on the part of China or anybody else result in conflict.”

Territorial disputes in the South China Sea also have Washington worried, as China has refused to withdraw claims to virtually all of the strategic waterway and has been accused of bullying smaller states in the area.

The Philippines and Vietnam have alleged Beijing has used intimidation to push its claims in the South China Sea, through which around half of the world’s cargo passes.

The United States has backed an effort by the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to seek a code to govern access to the sea, which would establish rules and a formal dialogue to prevent incidents from escalating into full-blown conflict.

Panetta’s trip is part of a bid by President Barack Obama to shift Washington’s diplomatic and military focus to Asia, amid concern over China’s growing power and assertive stance.

But skeptics question if the Pentagon has the resources to exert sufficient influence in Asia, especially when it must contend with repeated crises in the Middle East.

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苦手意識を捨てよ！外国人と友達付き合いをする時の5ポイント - nanapi（2012年9月17日12時05分）
http://news.infoseek.co.jp/article/nanapi_00003480

外国人の友達と仲良くしている人を見るとうらやましいですね。言葉の壁だけではなく、文化や習慣の違いがあると、日本人同士のようにうまく付き合わないのではと思ってしまう人もいるかも知れません。外国人というだけで自分の方が身構えてしまうのでしょうか。そこで今回は知り合った外国人と楽に友達付き合いができるように、ポイントを幾つか紹介しましょう。

■ポイントその1:言葉の壁を破れ！
どうしても日本人は外国語に対して苦手意識があります。英語教育を受けているけれど会話はダメ、そのほかの言語なんてもっと無理って思ってるせんか？外国の人達は全くそんなことを気にしないのです。何か伝えたいと心を開くだけで意志疎通はできるもの。どんどん話しかけましょう。こっちが必死に伝えようとすれば、相手も必死に耳を傾けて理解しようとしてくれます。

■ポイントその2:社交辞令は言わない！
日本人なら言いまわしや表情などで言葉の裏を読んでくれたり、全部言わなくても言いたいことを理解してくれるでしょう。でも外国人は本音で話をするので、自分も本音で付き合うこと。相手が気を悪くするからと、やんわりした言い方をするとトラブルのもとになります。

■ポイントその3:NOをハッキリ言う！
外国人と付き合うと意志表示がはっきりしていることがよくわかります。友達だから本意でなくても合わせよう、考えが違うけれど場の空気が悪くなるから一応合わ合わせておこうというのは日本人的な優しさでもあるけれど、優柔不断なところです。

外国人は嫌な時はNOを言いますし、それは違うと反論します。それによって付き合いが変わることはないのです。もし相手にNOと言われても気を悪くしてはいけないし、自分も無理して合わせようとして言わないところはNOと言いましょう。

■ポイントその4:友達の友達はみんな友達！
外国人特に欧米の人達はパーティー好きです。特別なことがなくても気軽にパーティーを開きますし、誰が主催者か知ってなくても誘われれば喜んで参加します。そして君も行かない？と声をかけてくれます。

日本人なら知らない人のパーティーというとちょっと抵抗があるのですが、そのあたりの感覚は違いますね。気軽に出かけてそこでまた新しい友達ができて、とどんどん友達を増やしていきます。よろしくないパーティーは別としてそういう機会があるなら参加してみてはいかがでしょうか。途中で帰ったりしても誰も文句は言いませんよ。フレンドリーな付き合いを心がけましょう！

筆者の体験談ですが、「近くに来たら家にも寄って下さいね」と話の流れで言ったつもりが実際に訪ねて来られ、泊まる気でいたのには驚きました。相手は言葉どおり本当に喜んで来てくれたのに、泊めてあげられなかったことを反省しました。
ポイントその5:日本を勉強しよう！

外国の人と話すをいつも感じるのは日本人が日本のことを尋ねられて答えられないことが多いということです。外国の人達は自分の国についてとてもよく勉強しているし、また日本人には日本の文化や習慣についてよく質問します。自分の国のことなのに何にも知らないと言うのは、国際的な交流を深めるのにはマイナス材料と言えます。もっと自分の国の文化や伝統に興味を持って、外国人との話題を広げるようにしたいですね。外国人と仲良くするには日本をもっと知るべし！

おわりに

いかがでしたか。外国人と友達付き合いを続けられるにはやはり国際人にならなければいけませんね。日本的なきめ細やかな気配りというのは外国人に大変好感を持たれます。そしてその上で自分の意志をしっかり伝えることや、相手の意志を尊重することが大事だと言えます。お互いに刺激し合える友達になれるといいですね。

著: nanapi ユーザー・plum29 編集: nanapi 編集部 写真: Train 5 on the K152 by Renato Ganoza)
The government “will formally decide at an energy and environment meeting this weekend” to stop the use of nuclear, the paper said.

Tokyo has worked to hammer out a new energy policy in the wake of last year’s crisis, when reactors at Fukushima were swamped by the tsunami, sparking meltdowns that spread radiation over a large area.

In the months that followed, Japan’s entire stable of reactors were shut down for routine safety checks, with only two of them ever having been restarted, and those in spite of often vocal public protest.

Last week, Noda’s ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) issued a policy recommendation saying Japan should “put every political resource to realise a situation where the number of nuclear plants operated be zero in the 2030s.”

The DPJ listed three principles to achieve this: not constructing new nuclear plants, stopping old nuclear plants after 40 years of operation, and only approving the restart of nuclear plants that had passed safety checks by a nuclear regulator.

The policy paper recommended Japan make greater use of renewable energy, and take further energy saving measures, including the use of smart metering.

It also said Japan should develop resources in nearby waters and look to cheaper...
procurement of liquefied natural gas and other fossil fuels, including shale gas.

Japan, with precious few resources of its own, is presently heavily dependent on oil from the Middle East and has been forced to ramp up its imports to make up the energy shortfall over the last 18 months.

Nuclear had provided around a third of the country’s electricity before the disaster at Fukushima.

Noda said Monday he will incorporate the DPJ’s recommendations into his new energy policy, which is expected to be finalized later this week.

Ahead of a general election expected this autumn, nuclear energy has become a hot button issue in Japan with regular protests that sometimes attract tens of thousands of people calling for it to be ditched.

At the same time the country’s powerful business lobbies have worked hard to push for a restart of shuttered reactors, fearing power shortages.

Germany last year said it would shut down its 17 nuclear reactors by 2022, while in Italy, a referendum rejected any resumption of nuclear energy generation, which was halted after the 1986 disaster at Chernobyl.

Switzerland has approved plans to close its five reactors by 2034. However a number of Asian countries are pushing ahead with expanding their nuclear programs.
When cooking dinner is a matter of life and death

Lifestyle Aug. 30, 2012 - 07:00AM JST (3)

The US State Department and the UN, is working towards a goal of supplying 100 million clean cookstoves by 2020 AFP

WASHINGTON —

For millions of women around the world, cooking the family meal is a daily, dangerous chore. Sweating over smoky open stoves, they put their lives and their children at risk every day.

More than three billion people, or 40% of the planet’s population, still rely on open fires to cook, balancing a pot on top of some stones, under which burns a fire fueled by wood and coal, dung or left-over crops.

"Before we had just a dirt floor in one of the corners of the kitchen, where we would build a small fire, and we’d put a metal stand over it for the pots. There was so much smoke in the house all the time," Maria Itzep Chiguil said.

“The children had a lot of problems with their eyes, and with their throats and congestion,” the 35-year-old mother of four told AFP, speaking by phone with the help of a translator, from her home in the Guatemalan highlands.

The World Health Organization estimates that reliance on solid fuels is one of the 10 most important threats to public health.

Some two million people die each year from the effects of smoke inhalation, mainly children under the age of five who fall prey to respiratory illness such as pneumonia.

Burns and injuries from falling pots and from clothes catching on fire are also a serious problem.

Collecting tonnes of firewood is also a laborious, time-consuming and hazardous process. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for instance, one woman is estimated to be raped every hour, many while out foraging for fuel.

Environmental damage is huge as forests are depleted and black carbon from inefficient fires counts for upwards of 25% of the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere, while homes become coated in black grease.

Now a global alliance, set up under the auspices of the U.S. State Department and the United Nations, is working toward a goal of supplying 100 million clean cookstoves by 2020.

Chiguil says her life and that of some 15 neighbors in her Guatemalan village of Patachaj was transformed a year ago when they received their new cinder-block fuel-efficient stoves.
With its four pot holders, she can now cook several things at once. “I used to spend all day cooking as I could only cook one thing at once,” she said. “Now I have more time for other things.”

“Half of the world is cooking this way and it’s kind of hard to believe we never thought this through before,” said Kris Balderston, whose office at the U.S. State Department helped set up the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has become the most public face of the public-private partnership, and has so far cajoled some 36 countries to join either to implement clean cookstoves at home or become donors.

“This is one of the solvable problems that we face in the world today,” she has said.

The alliance brings together many partners: researchers to draw up standards on stoves, manufacturers to make them, governments to promote awareness, NGOs to help distribute them and financiers to help people afford them.

But executive director Radha Muthiah said one of the biggest hurdles was “the lack of a consistent set of agreed upon global standards—health standards, safety standards, emissions standards and efficiency standards.”

Launched in September 2010, the alliance has developed a strategy for how to tackle the problem called “Igniting Change” and has spent most of 2012 deciding which nations to target initially.

The final choice will be unveiled in September, but is likely to include Tanzania and Kenya, and possibly Bangladesh and maybe Vietnam.

They were chosen according to a set of criteria. “One is the need. What’s the percentage of the population which is still burning biomass in a very inefficient, ineffective way today?” Muthiah said.

“The other is the impact we can have—on health, on the environment, on women’s empowerment indicators. What kind of difference we can make.”

China and India hold a special status in the alliance. Both have already run successful clean cookstove programs, and can bring their experience to bear as well as working towards upgrading existing stoves.

“What the alliance won’t be doing is making stoves and selling stoves. That’s not our goal. Our goal is to create a thriving market that can do that sustainably,” said Jacob Moss, director of the U.S. cookstoves initiative.

The aim is to expand the use of stoves which use as little fuel as possible but give off high energy in return, while also reducing emissions.

One wood-burning model under development includes a little fan and produces enough
thermal electrics to charge a small cell phone.

There are also liquefied petroleum gas stoves, and stoves which run off charcoal, a fuel of choice in many urban African environments.

A variety of different models are in production or development to fit local traditions and cooking customs.

Cost remains an issue though with the cheapest stoves still possibly retailing for around $15 which can be a fortune to the world’s poorest, and the cinder-block ones at the high end of the price range at about $120.

But the alliance is hopeful that micro-finance institutions and innovative schemes—such as one in Rwanda in which firewood would be exchanged for fuel pellets with the stove thrown in free—will bridge the gap.

“Is it more expensive to have someone who has very little resources spend five bucks, which is still a lot, on something which doesn’t really solve anything for them? Or to find a solution that can really start to transform their lives?” asked Moss.

“We’ve got to figure out how to get them something that’s going to improve their lives and maybe even save their lives.”

© 2012 AFP
The government on Wednesday unveiled a worst case disaster scenario warning that a magnitude 9 earthquake in the Nankai Trough off Japan’s Pacific Coast could kill over 320,000 people, dwarfing last year’s quake-tsunami disaster.

According to the projections released by the Cabinet Office, up to 320,000 people could be killed in 30 prefectures by tsunami generated by a massive earthquake in the trough which stretches for 750 kilometers from Kanto to Kyushu.

The projections were based on a scenario in which a quake strikes at nighttime during the winter with strong winds helping to unleash tsunami up to 34 meters high, sweeping many victims away as they slept.

Many of the estimated 323,000 victims would be drowned by the tsunami, crushed under falling objects or in fires sparked by the disaster, it said.

The highest number of casualties are expected to be in Shizuoka (109,000 projected deaths), followed by Wakayama (35,000), Miyazaki (34,000) and Kochi (25,000).

However, the report said the number of deaths could be reduced by 80% if evacuations begin within 10 minutes of a tsunami alert. It also called for more evacuation centers on high ground and taller buildings, as well as regular evacuation drills.

At the town of Kuroshio in southwestern Kochi Prefecture, the tsunami could reach 34.4 meters—the highest level projected under the scenario, the Cabinet Office said.

In its previous projection in 2003, the panel gave a worst case scenario in which no areas would be hit by a tsunami of more than 20 meters.

But the panel has upgraded its predictions in the wake of the 9.0-magnitude earthquake on March 11 last year that sent a tsunami barreling into the northeast, killing some 19,000 people and devastating the coastline.

“As long as we live in Japan, we cannot deny the possibility of a huge earthquake.
and tsunami,” Masaharu Nakagawa, state minister for disaster management, told reporters Wednesday.

The report was designed to paint a worst-case scenario and help officials boost their disaster preparedness.

Japan Today/AFP
Young people easily get sucked into Aum Shinrikyo spinoff Aleph

Kuchikomi Aug. 28, 2012 - 06:42AM JST ( 25 )

洗脳

若者はなぜアレフに惹かれるのか
勧誘の手順—東日本大震災陰謀説—博学の元物理学教授—増え続ける会員

TOKYO —

“Last fall I was in a bookstore in Nakano (Tokyo), leafing through a book on yoga, when a woman comes up to me and says, ‘I run a yoga school…’”

The speaker is “a perfectly ordinary man” identified as Mr S by Weekly Playboy (Sept 3), which interviewed him for his insights into a puzzling question: Why is Aleph, the successor of the religious cult Aum Shinrikyo, so attractive to “ordinary” young people? The 1995 sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway system, which killed 12 and sickened thousands, is Aum’s most notorious atrocity – there were numerous others in a similar vein. You’d think an Aum spinoff would be anathema to anyone “ordinary,” and yet as of November 2011, police estimated their membership at 1,200-1,300, with 200 or so joining every year. Sixty-five percent of them are under 35. Mr S, an “ordinary” company employee whose age is not given but seems to be in his early 30s, describes his own recruitment.

He and the woman, Ms T, struck up an acquaintance. Their conversations were wide-ranging. She had provocative ideas – on conspiracy, for instance. The Sept 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. were an American conspiracy. The March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami and the subsequent nuclear disaster were likewise a conspiracy. To Mr S, this was dubious but interesting – who knew, after all? “The mass media is nothing but lies,” said Ms T. She took him to a sparsely furnished apartment where Mr S’s yoga training began – 3,000 yen per session, two sessions a week. The sessions included watching videos which reinforced the conspiracy theme. To do yoga properly, Ms T explained, you must purge your mind of lies and misinformation, which includes just about everything you think you know about the world.

Not a word, so far, about Aleph.

Ms T’s efforts were seconded by a Mr Y, who struck Mr S as strikingly knowledgeable. He knew politics, economics, science. Ms T introduced him as a former physics professor who had given up his academic career to devote himself exclusively to yoga. Mr S’s doubts dissolved. If Mr Y was in on this, there must be something to it.

After three months came the bombshell: “We’re Aleph.”
But it was no bombshell. Mr S was in junior high school when the sarin affair exploded on the national consciousness. He recalls being more interested than appalled, and anyway, all that was a long time ago. If anything, the connection to so dramatic an episode made his present experience all the more titillating. Moreover, he says, by then he’d spent some 40,000 yen on the training, and he was unwilling to admit that it was money down the drain.

And so he graduated into hard-core Aleph training, heavy on recorded sermons by Aum guru Shoko Asahara, currently on death rowxxvii.

His awakening, when at last it came, was a strange one. It was in response to an Aleph teaching to the effect that a man who has sexual relations cannot attain enlightenment. Strange, thought Mr S – Asahara has children. “Yes,” he was told, “but the Master is no ordinary man.”

Having believed everything else, why did he doubt that? Somehow, he did.

The good news is, Mr S severed his relations with the cult. The bad news: new members keep coming. In search of what?
Tokyo man takes top prize at Chelsea Flower Show

By Julian Ryall for BCCJ ACUMEN

Lifestyle Aug. 27, 2012 - 06:35AM JST ( 4 )

Kazuyuki Ishihara has won seven awards at the Chelsea Flower Show, including four golds.

「里山の暮し」

石原和幸氏 チェルシー・フラワーショーで金賞

これまで7個の受賞メダルのうち4個は金賞

庭の写真と受賞時のムービーはこちら
http://www.e-amuser.com/kazu-isihara-cafe-home.html

TOKYO —

Kazuyuki Ishihara won the gold medal in the Artisan Garden category at the Royal Horticultural Society's annual Chelsea Flower Show in late May, bringing home his seventh award from the world's most famous gardening event. And of that medal total, no fewer than four have now been gold.

Ishihara’s design, titled “Satoyama Life”, was planned as a peaceful space that underlines the importance of coexisting with nature in modern-day life. Satoyama is the Japanese term given to the patches of traditional landscape that dot the space between mountains and lowland, and can be found to this day.

“The countryside of my childhood — 40 years ago — was alive with the richness of nature”, he told BCCJ ACUMEN. “Life might not have been so convenient back then, but the people had a certain richness of mind, and seemed to be more at peace with each other.

“I recalled that and wanted to represent those memories and ideas in a garden that took satoyama as its inspiration”, he said.

Sponsored by his own garden design firm — Ishihara Kazuyuki Design Laboratory Co Ltd — and five other firms, Ishihara used a thinning out technique to highlight the natural beauty of the garden that contrasts with techniques used in Europe that are more commonly associated with ikebana flower arrangement.

The key plants that were incorporated into the design were acers and other deciduous trees that bud simultaneously, as well as liriope muscari, a species of low, herbaceous flowering plant that is native to East Asia and is known in the West as lilyturf, and quercus suber, an evergreen more commonly known as the cork oak.
The judges and critics agreed with Ishihara’s vision, with the rounded shapes of the mosses — imported specially from Norway for the occasion — covering the building and mirroring the shapes of the stones in the wall.

The Artisan Garden category was returning to the show for a second year, and the designers’ brief was to create a garden that utilised natural, sustainably sourced materials and traditional craftsmanship to complete their projects.

Given the vagaries of the British climate, however, building the garden was not completely without incident for Ishihara.

“In comparison with previous years, it was cold in May in England and that made things more difficult,” he explained. “In particular, matching the conditions in Japan and England, and trying to get the best quality plants to work into the design was challenging.”

While Ishihara was sketching and planning the design in the warmth and relative humidity of a Japanese spring, for example, Britain was experiencing one of its wettest and coolest springs on record — complicated by brief bouts of unseasonably hot weather.

He spent about one month physically assembling the garden in London and spent an estimated £200,000 to complete the project. Ishihara first took part in the Chelsea Flower Show in 2004, when he won the Silver Gilt Medal for his Chic Garden, and says the secret to winning the most coveted titles on the competitive gardening calendar is to have original thoughts that can be expressed in the design, rather than attempting to make a “cool garden.”

“It is important that the originality of the person who is designing the garden comes through,” he said.

Ishihara said he feels relieved at having won the gold, after only having taken the silver award in the last two years.

“For two years, I could not quite manage to take the gold, but I did it this year, with the support of my sponsors in Japan,” he said. “I can now take the gold medal back to my family and I’m really happy about that.”

And even though it is a long way off yet, Ishihara is already making plans to defend his title next year.

“As long as I have the support and the physical strength, I want to continue challenging the top awards,” he said.

External Link: http://bccjacumen.com/features/design/2012/08/garden-made-for-gold/
A citizens' group in Shizuoka Prefecture said Tuesday that it has collected enough signatures to call for a referendum on the restart of the idle Hamaoka nuclear power plant, operated by Chubu Electric Power Co.

The group, calling itself Genpatsu Kenmin Tokyo Shizuoka (A vote on nuclear power by Shizuoka people), said it presented a petition containing 165,127 signatures to the local government on Monday, Fuji TV reported. They only required 62,000 signatures to request a referendum.

Shizuoka Gov Heita Kawakatsu said, “This seems like a good opportunity to educate the public about nuclear power. We’ll use this public interest to advance discussions on the issue.”

Kawakatsu hit headlines in May of last year when he refused requests from the Ministry of Health and Welfare for Shizuoka to test its tea leaf crop for radiation before shipping it.

Similar groups seeking to hold referendums on nuclear power plants on the ballot in Tokyo and Osaka were rejected by the Tokyo metropolitan assembly and the Osaka city assembly, even though enough signatures from voters were collected.

The future of the Hamaoka plant is still up in the air, even though Chubu Electric is constructing a 1.6-kilometer-long, 21-meter-high seawall around the plant which is scheduled to be completed in December 2013.

The Hamaoka plant lies just 100 meters away from the Pacific Ocean and sits in the Tokai region, southwest of Tokyo, where seismologists have long warned that a major quake is overdue because two major continental plates meet here.
Chubu Electric said it is also working on other measures to prevent flooding inside the plant, and programs to safeguard cooling systems that bring reactors to safe shutdown in case of severe accidents.
Robot cat Doraemon receives residency in Kawasaki

National Aug. 25, 2012 - 04:36PM JST ( 8 )

The Doraemon character first appeared in manga strips in 1969 AFP

TOKYO —

Doraemon, Japan’s robot cat from the future, will celebrate turning minus 100 years old by being given official residence of the city where he will be born, a city official told AFP on Friday.

The electronic blue feline, whose cartoon exploits have captivated children across Asia, is to be given a residency certificate for Kawasaki on Sept 3, exactly a century ahead of his supposed birth.

The city, in which the character’s creator lived, is also home to a popular museum of all things Doraemon and plans to issue copies of the time-traveling robot cat’s residency certificate to fans and visitors.

“Doraemon was created and born in Kawasaki. In that sense, he has always been a city resident,” Mayor Takao Abe told reporters, according to the online edition of the local Kanagawa Shimbun newspaper.

“I hope (the residency certificate) will bring the museum closer to many people,” he said.

The certificate will give Doraemon’s birthday as Sept 3, 2112, as well as listing his likes—pastries—and his dislikes—mice.

Doraemon was sent back in time from the 22nd century by a young boy who wanted to alter his family’s historical misfortune.

His magic pocket provides an endless supply of fantastical gadgets that help his young friend Nobita Nobi navigate the trials of everyday life.

The character first appeared in manga strips in 1969, making the transition to small and big screen over the following decades.

Doraemon remains enormously popular in Japan, serving as an instantly recognizable cultural reference across generations.

The cartoon series also has a large following in the rest of Asia, including in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea.
New Hatsune Miku music video leaves world in tears

By Steven Simonitch

Entertainment Aug. 25, 2012 · 06:00AM JST

TOKYO —

There are literally tens of thousands of songs out there that use the Hatsune Miku Vocaloid software for vocals, but few can inspire and touch people's hearts like the work of Japanese 11-member music group Supercell.

On Aug 14, Supercell released the music video for their new single “ODDS&ENDS,” their first song to feature Hatsune Miku in over a year and the opening theme for the upcoming Playstation Vita game “Hatsune Miku Project DIVA-f.”

Check out the video and be sure to grab a box of tissues because Supercell has once again managed to pour more emotion into this virtual singer than can be found in most pop songs today.

The song has been flooded with praise and Japanese and international viewers alike have commented that the video left them in tears.

One Japanese viewer offers his interpretation of the final scene:

“At 4:58, Miku forms from the ‘odds & ends’ laying around the room. I think that each piece of junk represents the people, such as producers and illustrators, involved in making Vocaloid music. If even one piece of junk goes missing, Miku falls apart. They may never be able to compare to professionals, but when a group of amateurs come together they can create something big like this. It’s the same with her concerts. While an ordinary person would see that and think it’s nothing more than a digital image, it is us who make that ‘digital image’ into something real by calling out and cheering her on together. What I’m trying to say is, Miku is the embodiment of our love, sweat and tears-she’s our angel!”

Indeed, the lyrics themselves seem to be a shout out to all of the people who have found a voice for themselves in Miku. It’s easy to see why Miku is so loved by the Japanese and international net communities and we look forward to seeing what the combined efforts of her fans can create next.

Source: YouTube
RocketNews24

Summer in Japan is unlike summer in any other places in the world. It’s hot, it’s humid, it’s stifling, it’s suffocating, and it’s... hot.

Summer in Japan can be difficult, but it also brings beautiful images: fireworks, matsuri (festivals), yukatas (summer kimonos), cold tea and noodles, stylish handkerchiefs and green tea ice cream.

The word “natsubate” is used to describe the fatigue and lethargy that comes along during the unbearable summer months. I tend to feel so sleepy and tired during the summer, not very hungry at all and not too motivated to go outdoors. Last year I wrote a Summer in Japan Survival Guide, and after experiencing my second Japanese summer, I think I’m slowly becoming an expert in surviving in extreme temperatures.

Here are my most useful tips:

Hydrate

Whether it’s green tea, water, vitamin water or any fruit flavored water, you have no excuse to not stay hydrated. Japan is convenient in every way possible, from convenience stores to vending machines on every street corner. I carry around an insulated tea bottle which I fill up in the morning, and it keeps my tea chilled all day long. I highly recommend splurging on a quality tea bottle. I drink green tea for breakfast, then I switch to “mugicha” (roasted barley tea), which contains no caffeine. The kids drink that kind of tea throughout the day as well.

Dress accordingly

Japanese people tend to cover up in hot weather - arm covers and sun visors and all that jazz. In my case, I tend to take off clothing, and thankfully Osaka is a lot more forgiving about bare shoulders than rural Japan ever was. Light cotton sundresses and ballerina flats are my summer staples, and linen pants are perfect to work in this kind of heat.

Deodorize

Deodorant does not exist in Japan. Well, it does, but what you will find in drugstores is simply perfume. If you want deodorant or anti-sudorific, you need to have someone send it from home. In Japan, only The Body Shop carries something decent.

*Reader Ashley from the super informative blog Surviving in Japan enlightened me with some great options in Japan, please read
here if you’re in Japan and confused about what’s available!

Handkerchiefs

In the summer months, all designers come out with lovely handkerchiefs used to wipe your hands or dab your forehead and neck—they’re so beautiful and practical, I recommend always carrying them around.

Exercise

Heat is not a reason to stop being active, and I like to keep up with my running habits, even in the most unbearable heat. I think it’s good to keep an exercise routine, but small changes must be made: I only go running once the sun has set; it makes a bit of a difference.

Summer dishes

My appetite is nearly gone in this kind of heat, but Japanese cuisine offers a variety of light meals and snacks that are enjoyable for your taste buds and stomach. Somen, udon and soba noodles are served cold with a chilled broth and vegetables. Salted and boiled edamame make for a nice appetizer. Hiyayakko is a simple dish of cold tofu with toppings: radish, ginger, plum, yuzu fruit. Another favorite of mine is cold shabu shabu, which is traditionally a hot pot, but served cold. Chilled jasmine tea is delicious in the summertime.

Air con

I don’t think it’s possible to survive without air conditioning in the Japanese summer, but a breeze makes things more pleasant. Invest in a fan, spray yourself with water and just relax.

Minimize and waterproof

If you’re a girl, put your hair up and minimize your makeup— if you must, waterproof everything, and Japanese makeup has a great selection of eyeliner and mascara that will require intense scrubbing to take it off.
Bullying – the problem that won’t go away
Kuchikomi Aug. 03, 2012 - 06:45AM JST
( 20 )

TOKYO —

Bullying—is it insoluble, human nature being what it is? Or are school authorities simply too busy, too pressured, too spineless, too concerned with their schools’ image, to face it squarely?

The suicide last October in Otsu, Shiga Prefecture, of a 13-year-old second-year junior high school boy who had been relentlessly bullied by classmates while teachers looked the other way reminds us how little progress has been made over the past 30 years. “Schools,” says Chiba University education scholar Daisuke Fujikawa, “are not learning the lessons of the past.”

The education ministry officially recognizes some 77,000 “ijime” (bullying) cases a year – “the tip of the iceberg,” says Josei Seven (Aug 9). Should bullying be made a crime? In raising the question, the magazine reviews some of the tortures that apparently drove the boy to jump to his death from his family’s 14-story apartment building last October. They include routine beatings, the forced eating of dead bees, forced shoplifting, and, most notoriously, “suicide practice.” It certainly sounds criminal on the face of it, and Josei Seven detects a groundswell of feeling that the full force of the law is the only language kids who go in for that sort of thing would understand.

A counterargument is raised by Kinokuni Children’s Village Free School principal Shinichiro Hori. A “free school” is an alternative facility for kids who, whether because of bullying or for other reasons, are unable to cope with regular school. “Kids who bully others do it because their hearts are disturbed,” Hori writes. “With society foisting its ideals on them—good marks, for example—they can’t breathe. Their hearts don’t get enough oxygen. So you can punish them, or threaten them, and it might have some effect, but it doesn’t go to the root of the problem.”


“More important than anything is that children should be happy, absorbed, interested. For that to happen, teachers have to be passionate about what they do. But as it is, they’re too burdened with administrative responsibilities. Teachers need to be free to use their imaginations. Without a radical change in the top-down approach to education, I don’t see how the problem can be solved.”

Three boys in particular are considered ringleaders in the torments endured by the victim. Two have moved; the third remains in Otsu but has stopped going to school. From acquaintances, Josei Seven hears the three show no sign of repentance or reflection, no sense of having done wrong.

School kids tormenting each other must be as old as school, but “ijime” as a social problem
– ordinary rough-housing getting seriously out of hand and drawing national attention – dates to the February 1986 suicide of a 13-year-old Tokyo boy who hanged himself in a shopping center washroom.lviii He left a suicide note which mentioned, among other tortures he endured, “mock funerals” – complete with flowers and incense – with himself as mock corpse. The similarity to the “suicide practice” in Otsu 26 years later is unmistakable – a reflection of how little has changed.

中学校いじめ問題—教師の対処法。
Japan’s pro-nuclear weapon voices grow louder amid debate

By Yuri Kageyama

National Aug. 05, 2012 - 06:50AM JST

Former Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba AP

TOKYO —

A contentious debate over nuclear power in Japan is also bringing another question out of the shadows: Should Japan keep open the possibility of making nuclear weapons—even if only as an option?

It may seem surprising in the only country ever devastated by atomic bombs, particularly as it marks the 67th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima on Aug 6 and Nagasaki three days later. The Japanese government officially renounces nuclear weapons, and the vast majority of citizens oppose them.

But as Japan weighs whether to phase out nuclear power, some conservatives, including some influential politicians and thinkers, are becoming more vocal about their belief that Japan should have at least the ability to make nuclear weapons.

The two issues are intertwined because nuclear plants can develop the technology and produce the fuel needed for weaponry, as highlighted by concerns that nuclear power programs in Iran and North Korea are masking bomb development.

“Having nuclear plants shows to other nations that Japan can make nuclear weapons,” former Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba, now an opposition lawmaker, told The Associated Press.

Ishiba stressed that Japan isn’t about to make nuclear weapons. But, he said, with nearby North Korea suspected of working on them, Japan needs to assert itself and say it can also make them—but is choosing not to.

Such views make opponents of nuclear weapons nervous.

“A group is starting to take a stand to assert the significance of nuclear plants as military technology, a view that had been submerged below the surface until now,” says “Fukushima Project,” a book by several experts with anti-nuclear leanings.

Adding to their jitters, parliament amended the 1955 Atomic Energy Basic Law in June, adding “national security” to people’s health and wealth as reasons for Japan’s use of the technology.

“The recognition that both nuclear issues must be addressed is heightening in Japan,” said Hitoshi Yoshioka, professor of social and cultural studies at Kyushu University. The link between the two is “becoming increasingly clear.”

Yoshioka sits on a government panel investigating the nuclear disaster spawned
by the March 11 tsunami last year. The subsequent meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi plant have called into question the future of nuclear power in Japan, in turn raising concern among some bomb advocates.

Most proponents don't say, at least not publicly, that Japan should have nuclear weapons. Rather, they argue that just the ability to make them acts as a deterrent and gives Japan more diplomatic clout.

The issue dates back to the 1960s. Historical documents released in the past two years show that the idea of a nuclear-armed Japan was long talked about behind-the-scenes, despite repeated denials by the government.

The papers were obtained by Japanese public broadcaster NHK in 2010 and more recently by The Associated Press under a public records request.

In a once-classified 1966 document, the government outlined how the threat of China going nuclear made it necessary for Japan to consider it too, though it concluded that the U.S. nuclear umbrella made doing so unnecessary at the time.

In meeting minutes from 1964, 1966 and 1967, Japanese officials weigh the pros and cons of signing the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which would mean foregoing the nuclear option. Japan signed the treaty in 1970.

The government denials continued, even after former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone wrote in his 2004 memoirs that, as defense chief, he had ordered a secret study of Japan's nuclear arms capability in 1970. The study concluded it would take five years to develop nuclear weapons, but Nakasone said he decided they weren't needed, again because of U.S. protection.

In 2010, the Democratic Party of Japan, after breaking the Liberal Democratic Party's half-century grip on power, reversed past denials and acknowledged the discussions had taken place.

Given the secretive past, former diplomat Tetsuya Endo and others are suspicious about the June amendment adding “national security” to the atomic energy law.

Backers of the amendment say it refers to protecting nuclear plants from terrorists. Opponents ask why the words aren't then “nuclear security,” instead of “national security.”

Japan has 45 tons of separated plutonium, enough for several Nagasaki-type bombs. Its overall plutonium stockpile of more than 150 tons is one of the world's largest, although much smaller than those of the U.S., Russia or Great Britain.

Tokyo Gov Shintaro Ishihara, an outspoken conservative, has repeatedly said Japan should flaunt the bomb option to gain diplomatic clout. Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has expressed similar sentiments, although in more subdued terms.

The Yomiuri, the nation's largest newspaper, made a rare mention of the link between
nuclear energy and the bomb in an editorial defending nuclear power last year, saying that Japan's plutonium stockpile "works diplomatically as a nuclear deterrent."

That kind of talk worries Tatsujiro Suzuki, vice chairman at the Japan Atomic Energy Commission, a government panel that shapes nuclear policy. Himself an opponent of proliferation, he said that having the bomb is a decades-old ambition for some politicians and bureaucrats.

"If people keep saying (nuclear energy) is for having nuclear weapons capability, that is not good," Suzuki said. "It's not wise. Technically it may be true, but it sends a very bad message to the international community."

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Fruit flies offer DNA clue to why women live longer

Traffic is a common source of carbon monoxide

The way that even low levels of carbon monoxide can be fatal, by disrupting the heart's rhythm, has been unravelled by researchers in Leeds.

They found that levels common in heavy traffic could affect the way the heart resets itself after every beat.

Their study in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine showed a common anginal drug may reverse the effect.

The British Heart Foundation said the research was a promising start.

Carbon monoxide is produced by faulty boilers, cigarettes and car exhausts.

It is deadly at high levels as it "shoulder-barges" oxygen out of the blood, meaning less is transported around the body. Carbon monoxide poisoning kills more than 50 people in the UK each year and many more around the world.

However, studies have suggested that even low levels, such as that found in built-up cities with lots of traffic, may also damage the heart.

Continue reading the main story
Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning

Headaches
Breathlessness
Nausea
Dizziness
Collapse
Loss of consciousness
Tiredness
Vomiting

Source: Health and Safety Executive
The University of Leeds research team found that the gas kept sodium channels, which are important for controlling the heartbeat, open for longer.

Disrupting the sodium channels can disrupt the heart's rhythm, leading to cardiac arrhythmia, which can be fatal.

Solution

In collaboration with researchers in France they tested an angina drug - which also affects the sodium channels - on rats.

Prof Chris Peers, from the University of Leeds, told the BBC: "It was very exciting for us. When we monitored rats exposed to levels of carbon monoxide similar to heavy pollution, they had the same heart problems and we could reverse them.

"At the moment no one knows how to treat this. We're saying look there's a drug on the shelf that might be able to help.

"Of course it needs clinical trials, but we believe it is a great start."

Dr Helene Wilson, a research advisor at the British Heart Foundation, said: "This study is a good example of research being used to better understand the underlying causes of an abnormal heart rhythm and in this case it has uncovered the ability of an old drug to perform a new trick.

"Carbon monoxide poisoning is tragically common but hopefully these promising results can be replicated in people so that it saves lives in the future."
I'm pretty sure that most of you know what a dried fish is, right? But what on earth is a “dried fish woman?” Japanese society can be tough. Japanese also seem to like categorizing people who are different and give them funny names. One of them is “himono onna” or “dried fish woman.” Himono onna (干物女) is a young woman, usually in her late 20s or older who has given up on relationships, love and sex. According to the Japanese Wikipedia entry, a “himono onna” can be characterized as follows:

— Her replies to mails are often late and quite short (as she can’t be bothered).
— If it’s fast food, then she might eat it while standing in her kitchen.
— If she forgot something at home, she might just enter her apartment with her shoes on, moving on her knees because she’s too lazy to take off her shoes (in Japan you have to take your shoes off before entering even your own home).
— On her day off, she won’t put on make-up.
— She probably goes to a beautician only once every 6 months.
— During the winter months, she doesn’t shave/wax her body hair properly or might have stopped completely.
— She has no problem entering an izakaya (Japanese pub) all by herself.

— She hasn’t felt that anyone was a heart-throb recently.

The female main protagonist of a popular manga “Hotaru no Hikari,” that has also been made into a drama, is actually a himono onna! According to that series, a “dried fish woman” is someone who puts on a sincere face when outside of her apartment. However, as soon as she gets home, she changes into comfortable clothes, ties her hair up to a samurai-style topknot and enjoys a can of beer loudly. She might even scratch her ass or burp.

As a himono onna doesn’t intend to have children in the future, she’s just using her hard-earned money all for herself. Usually dried fish women do not join any social events, especially those that are aimed at meeting a significant other (合コン, gokon: group date). They rather enjoy going straight home after work instead of going out with co-workers or friends to drink.

Though society is changing, it’s still uncommon in Japan for a woman over 30 to be unmarried. People keep talking about you, staring at you. There’s a lot of pressure. I think that’s one reason for the phenomenon of the “dried fish woman.”

On the other hand, women like that are rather common in most Western countries. There, it’s not a big deal if somebody over 30 is still single and has no children – or has no intention of creating a family. Nobody cares. It has become normal. They don’t have to defend their lifestyle in front of others – at least not as much.

Surprisingly, the himono onna have actually started to embrace that name and are proud of being the way they are, though these women are still quite rare. As their lifestyle
is opposed to what is considered “normal,” a funky name was made up for it to label it as “unnormal” or “strange.” I don’t think that it’s necessarily true that himono onna have given up on love, but when you’re over 30 and unmarried, you’re considered to have failed. My guess is that at least some of the “himono onna” haven’t given up on love, but pretend that’s the case, because the alternative would be that love has given up on them.

Recently there are more and more women who are focused on building a career for themselves. The marriage age is going up, too. In a few years, it might be the norm to marry rather late or even to remain single. How about you? Are you a himono onna? Do you know any? I’m sure there’s at least a little bit of the dried fish in all of us.
Japanese snack attack

Many people say that when you travel, don’t just look for the coolest places to go to – you have to try the local food, be it weird or fancy – besides, walking and looking for tourist spots can really make you hungry.

Forget McDonald’s, Starbucks or Burger King. Fast food joints are everywhere, popping like daisies in a meadow. But when you’re in a foreign country, you have to be a little adventurous when it comes to food. Of course, you also have to be careful about which food stand to visit, especially if you want to try street foods.

In Japan, trucks, carts and tables with tents are all over the place, offering great cheap food after a night out drinking with friends, or any time at all. Though the Japanese still see it as rude to eat on the go, it’s actually starting to change. Here are some of the snacks you might see on streets and on the common places in Japan, food that not only would catch your attention but tickle your taste buds.

Yaki Imo (Oven-roasted Sweet Potatoes)
According to locals, “yaki imo” is the classic street food in Japan, especially during autumn and winter because it helps keep people warm and feeling full in more ways than one. It’s simply sweet potatoes roasted on an open fire. Some vendors have their ovens built on wheels so they can move around and sell their stuff. “Yaki imo” is very high in dietary fiber and jam-packed with other vitamins and minerals.

Yakisoba (Fried Noodles)
Seriously, you’re in Japan, might as well try authentic noodles! It’s very cheap yet it fills your stomach and satisfies your hunger. It has vegetables with salty and juicy goodness that you can eat any time of the day. It’s also one of the favorites during festivals and sporting events.

Ramen
Ramen stands are all over the city. If you’re having a ramen episode, pick a different stand everyday and compare which ramen tastes better.

Okonomiyaki Pancakes
Osaka has a strong street food culture, and the batter-based okonomiyaki pancakes are city specialities. Kansai- or Osaka-style okonomiyaki is found throughout Japan. The batter is made of flour, grated nagaimo (a type of yam), water or dashi, eggs and shredded cabbage, and usually contains other ingredients such as green onion, meat (generally pork or bacon), octopus, squid, shrimp, vegetables, kimchi, mochi or cheese. Okonomiyaki is also referred to as “Japanese pancake” or “Osaka soul food.”

Kakiage
Kakiage is a type of tempura made with mixed vegetable strips, such as onion, carrot, and burdock, and sometimes including shrimp, which are deep fried as small round fritters.

Takoyaki
Takoyaki or fried or grilled octopus is a popular dumpling made of batter and cooked in a special takoyaki pan. The ball is filled with diced octopus, tempura scraps or tenkasu, pickled ginger and green onion.
Nikuman (Pork buns)

Another flour-made snack, nikumn is similar to the Chinese baozi or pork buns. From August or September through the winter months in Japan, these are sold even at convenience stores, where they are kept hot and steamy.

Yakitori (grilled chicken)

Yakitori is made from several bite-sized pieces of chicken meat, or chicken offal, skewered on a bamboo skewer and grilled, usually over charcoal. It is cooked with salt or tare sauce, made up of mirin, sake, soy sauce and sugar. The sauce is applied to the skewered meat and is grilled until delicately cooked.

Korokke (deep-fried fish)

This snack is made by mixing cooked chopped meat, seafood, or vegetables with mashed potato or white sauce, rolling it in wheat flour, eggs, and bread crumbs, then deep frying this until brown on the outside. Sounds like the French dish croquette, korokke are sold wrapped in paper at stalls and sometimes served as sandwich.

Onigiri (Rice Balls)

Rice balls are common in Asia. In Japan, a simple rice ball may both be filled with salmon, plum, tuna and mayonnaise and wrapped in seaweed. Perfect for lunch or at any time of day.

As years go by the Western culture continues to influence Japan’s cuisine, seen on simple snacks or even street foods. Bagels, ice cream, coffee, even Mexican food can be seen on the streets of Japan. But still, nothing beats the colors, the art and years of tradition packed in a single ball of rice sold in stores, carts and corners in the cities of Japan. Truly, everything here is a must-try.

Japan Today

Rainy season means hydrangea season: Top 5 picks for where to see them

By Vicki L Beyer  Jun. 16, 2012

TOKYO — June is prime hydrangea season — nature’s way of cheering us up during the rainy season.

Hydrangeas (“ajisai” in Japanese) are hardy and prolific. There are two main types of blossoms: the round pom-pom type known as “mopheads” and the flat heads with small blooms or buds in the center and larger flowers around the perimeter known as “lacecaps.” In either case, the blossom is not a single flower but a cluster of small flowers. Some have smooth, round petals and others have petals with fringed edges.

One interesting feature of hydrangeas is that the flowers can change colors over time, often shifting from pink to purple or fading in intensity in the course of 4 to 6 weeks of blooming. The flower color intensifies when aluminum is introduced to the soil, and fades as aluminum levels in the soil drops, so that even rain can cause the colors to change. Young plants often feature blossoms of several colors on a single bush. With so much
variety, it’s no wonder that these flowers are so beloved.

Hydrangeas seem to be in bloom everywhere in this season, but there are some places where the big bushes with dark green leaves and big round balls of flowers are concentrated and particularly fine.

Ranked from 5 to 1, here are my top 5 places to see hydrangeas within striking distance of (very close to) Tokyo. (There are so many great places that it was hard to stop at 5!)

#5 – Gongoro Jinja (Kamakura)

The hydrangea is the city flower of Kamakura, and there are few tourist destinations in the city where you don’t encounter them. Still, there are a number of places where the blooms are especially noteworthy and one of them is Gongoro Jinja (also known as Goryo Jinja) in Kamakura’s Hase district, just a 5-minute walk from Enoden Hase Station (and a 2-minute walk to the parking lot of Hase-dera, ranked #3 on this list).

The main entrance to the shrine crosses the Enoden train tracks just before the tracks enter a tunnel. The tracks are lined with hydrangeas and many photographers set up tripods here to capture shots of the Enoden train emerging from the tunnel with hydrangeas in the foreground.

But, addition to those views, nestled at the foot of the rockface behind this unadorned little shrine, is a small but intense garden of hydrangeas in a fantastic range of blossom styles and colors, many of them the more modern hybrid varieties.

#4 – Hondo-ji (Matsudo)

In the 10-minute walk from Kita-Kogane Station on the JR Joban Line to Hondo-ji, the appearance of the word “ajisai” in the names of establishments ranging from coffee shops to chiropractic clinics is a dead give-away that the hydrangeas here are noteworthy. Indeed, the expansive grounds of Hondo-ji contain more than 10,000 hydrangea plants. The volume of flowers, combined with the number of paths one can meander to enjoy the blooms, would be overwhelming in a more compact setting but here it’s “merely” impressive. The temple grounds feature a number of buildings, including a tall red and white pagoda, that make good background for hydrangea photos. An added bonus toward the “back” of the temple ground is a large iris garden that is usually also in full bloom in June.

#3 – Hase-dera (Kamakura)

The main temple of Hase-dera (5-minute walk from Enoden Hase Station) sits halfway up a hill with ponds and waterfalls at its feet. The temple grounds are always attractive and filled with flowers of the season, but during June and early July, it is the hydrangeas that people come to see. On the hillside above the main temple are 2,500 hydrangea plants of 40 different varieties and people are willing to wait for up to two hours to get to walk “Prospect Road”, as the trail among them is called. The views and variety of flowers makes it worth the wait, but it’s also possible to simply enter the temple grounds and look up at the blooms from the temple’s main courtyard — perhaps not as up-close-and-personal, but still stunning. Often, particularly unusual varieties are displayed in pots on the lowest level of the temple grounds.

#2 – Meigetsu-in (Kamakura)

This temple, a 10-15-minute walk from JR Kita-Kamakura Station, is nicknamed the hydrangea temple, indicating that the hydrangeas
here are something special. The entire hillside leading to the temple is covered with about 2,500 hydrangea plants, mostly of the traditional “mophead” style with the big round balls of flowers in color shades ranging from blue to purple to mauve to pink. The sloping topography of the temple grounds, nestled in a little valley, give the hydrangea bushes a particularly dense appearance. In addition to the main stairs leading from the temple gate up to the temple, there are other pathways, allowing flower lovers to wander among the blossoms. Like Hondo-ji, there is also an iris garden behind the temple, to add even more luster to your visit.

The popularity of this temple means that people queue for up to 300 meters waiting to get into the temple grounds. But don’t be discouraged - the line moves quickly and the embankment next to the road is also planted with hydrangeas, so you can enjoy hydrangeas while waiting to see hydrangeas.

#1 – Hakone Tozan Railway (Hakone)

On the trip from Hakone Yumoto station up the mountain to Gora on the Hakone Tozan Railway (a part of the Odakyu Group), the embankments lining the zigzag rail line are planted with approximately 10,000 hydrangea plants that makes the ride very spectacular in this season. Because of the embankment, the blooms are at eye level for passengers on the train, affording great viewing. In fact, the blooms are so popular that area is floodlit at night during the hydrangea season. This year, the season is a little late, so the floodlighting will start from June 25 and run through July 13. The trains run on a special schedule during this season and are supposedly timed to make it possible for daytrippers to see the floodlit flowers and still get back to Tokyo by bedtime. But I always try to stay over somewhere in the area if I can.

Wherever happens to be your favorite place to view hydrangeas, enjoy!

Where is Japan’s culture and is it disappearing?

by Justin Velgus

Opinions Aug. 04, 2012 - 06:33AM JST (13)

I was not sure what to expect when I entered the office of anime, models, dolls, tanks, and starships that belonged to Professor Darren Ashmore of Akita International University. But as I was to find out: never a judge a book by its cover. With his nearly two decades of Japan studies throughout all of Japan, with his specialties in anthropology, pop culture, and folk art revival, I knew could finally get to some questions on everyone’s minds.

We all have our own reasons for coming or staying in Japan. Whether that be anime or manga as seems to be the stereotype, or a more traditional perspective on temple, shrine, or history appreciation, there is no one “correct” way to experience Japan. In fact, through Professor Ashmore’s infamous “Manga Mania” class, students end up learning not just about popular manga or its history, but how that manga is a reflection of history, politics, religion, and culture.

What is culture?
Professor Ashmore has a knack for getting his students and others think beyond the obvious. I wasn’t falling for his tricks of saying that culture is everything, what we make it to be, or what society believes. This was an interview and I wanted answers.

Culture is a mix of traditions and customs, he explained. After a quick glance up the skirt of one of his anime maid figurines, I asked him to elaborate. Customs have a practical use and a fairly evident purpose. Traditions on the other hand once had a practical use and purpose, but today that no longer applies — yet the ritual continues.

Often these customs and rituals blend, allowing for multiple interpretations of meaning. I could recall a mix of custom and tradition in many of my own daily life rituals in Japan. Perhaps the most well-known cultural characteristic of Japan is removing your shoes before entering a house (shrine, temple, tea room, tatami room, etc). Traditional thought dictates that the outside is unclean and inside is pure; this is an almost spiritual way of thinking. The more practical way of thinking and practice, however, is to keep mud and dirt outside where it belongs.

How about an example?

Giving credit to his current stomping grounds of Akita in northern Tohoku, Professor Ashmore said there is no better example than culture, both as a tradition and as a custom, than is illustrated by the Namahage. Every Dec 31, the gods dressed as demons of Oga Peninsula and other less advertised locales of Japan descend from the mountains to terrorize families and their children. Banging on the doors and windows, they burst through the front door yelling for the children to be judged. The Namahage, with their large knives and buckets, have been rumored to skin children that are lazy or don’t listen to their parents. Thankfully, some kind words and offerings of food and sake to the Namahage from parents is enough to convince them to leave. Of course, this is on the assumption the children promise to behave themselves.

For anyone who has been to Tohoku, you will know the winters are extremely harsh with snow well into March and April each year. And let’s not forget the wildlife, particularly bears that roam the forests. A major purpose of the Namahage ritual is to have children behave. Wandering off in the winter and getting lost in a snowstorm or attacked by an animal could mean death. Yet today, urbanization, snow plows, warmer clothes, heaters, and hand warmers, make going outside far less dangerous. Still, the tradition is held onto for tourism and bringing the community together, and for the few firm believers that think we should hold on to tradition for tradition’s sake.

Is Japan’s culture disappearing?

With hints of what was to come, I asked my final question: Is Japan’s culture disappearing? “Yes, to put it bluntly,” was my response. And the reasons can be the introduction of technology, the reducing population, the lack of interest or perceived
importance, or the lack of practicality tradition has today.

Continuing with his Namahage example, Professor Ashmore expanded on the idea of the Yamahage, a small town's variant on the Namahage tradition. With the youth leaving for the bigger cities, there was a lack of people willing to become the demons of the night since several years ago. A witty grandmother came up with the idea of using local international university students to fill the role because demons have conventionally been viewed as outsiders. The village elders agreed to set up the culture exchange and today, year after year, we see non-Japanese maintaining Japanese culture through scaring Japanese children. For the record, we don't mask to do that.

We can easily see pop culture clashing with traditional culture, but the modern man or woman needs to really understand both views to see Japan as it is today. Japan is connected with the past in many ways, even if those ways are becoming fewer. Sometimes a tradition becomes a custom, or vice versa. Other times the only way to preserve culture is to modify it with the changing situation and times. The alternative is to let a tradition disappear. When we try to hold onto a tradition that has no relevance today without lenience to change, there can only be failure. And we lose part of culture with every lost tradition. But you can't force tradition—it must be accepted by society to live on. To wrap up the interview, the ever genki Professor Ashmore left me with one thing to ponder, a customized “Star Wars” quote no less: “The more you tighten your grip, the more traditions will slip through your fingers.”
Japan’s pro-nuclear weapon voices grow louder amid debate

By Yuri Kageyama

National Aug. 05, 2012 - 03:10PM JST ( 53 )

Former Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba AP

TOKYO —

A contentious debate over nuclear power in Japan is also bringing another question out of the shadows: Should Japan keep open the possibility of making nuclear weapons—even if only as an option?

It may seem surprising in the only country ever devastated by atomic bombs, particularly as it marks the 67th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima on Aug 6 and Nagasaki three days later. The Japanese government officially renounces nuclear weapons, and the vast majority of citizens oppose them.

But as Japan weighs whether to phase out nuclear power, some conservatives, including some influential politicians and thinkers, are becoming more vocal about their belief that Japan should have at least the ability to make nuclear weapons.

The two issues are intertwined because nuclear plants can develop the technology and produce the fuel needed for weaponry, as highlighted by concerns that nuclear power programs in Iran and North Korea are masking bomb development.

“Having nuclear plants shows to other nations that Japan can make nuclear weapons,” former Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba, now an opposition lawmaker, told The Associated Press.

Ishiba stressed that Japan isn’t about to make nuclear weapons. But, he said, with nearby North Korea suspected of working on them, Japan needs to assert itself and say it can also make them—but is choosing not to.

Such views make opponents of nuclear weapons nervous.

“A group is starting to take a stand to assert the significance of nuclear plants as military technology, a view that had been submerged below the surface until now,” says “Fukushima Project,” a book by several experts with anti-nuclear leanings.

Adding to their jitters, parliament amended the 1955 Atomic Energy Basic Law in June, adding “national security” to people’s health and wealth as reasons for Japan’s use of the technology.

“The recognition that both nuclear issues must be addressed is heightening in Japan,” said Hitoshi Yoshioka, professor of social and cultural studies at Kyushu University. The link between the two is “becoming increasingly clear.”
Yoshioka sits on a government panel investigating the nuclear disaster spawned by the March 11 tsunami last year. The subsequent meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi plant have called into question the future of nuclear power in Japan, in turn raising concern among some bomb advocates.

Most proponents don’t say, at least not publicly, that Japan should have nuclear weapons. Rather, they argue that just the ability to make them acts as a deterrent and gives Japan more diplomatic clout.

The issue dates back to the 1960s. Historical documents released in the past two years show that the idea of a nuclear-armed Japan was long talked about behind-the-scenes, despite repeated denials by the government.

The papers were obtained by Japanese public broadcaster NHK in 2010 and more recently by The Associated Press under a public records request.

In a once-classified 1966 document, the government outlined how the threat of China going nuclear made it necessary for Japan to consider it too, though it concluded that the U.S. nuclear umbrella made doing so unnecessary at the time.

In meeting minutes from 1964, 1966 and 1967, Japanese officials weigh the pros and cons of signing the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which would mean foregoing the nuclear option. Japan signed the treaty in 1970.

The government denials continued, even after former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone wrote in his 2004 memoirs that, as defense chief, he had ordered a secret study of Japan’s nuclear arms capability in 1970. The study concluded it would take five years to develop nuclear weapons, but Nakasone said he decided they weren’t needed, again because of U.S. protection.

In 2010, the Democratic Party of Japan, after breaking the Liberal Democratic Party’s half-century grip on power, reversed past denials and acknowledged the discussions had taken place.

Given the secretive past, former diplomat Tetsuya Endo and others are suspicious about the June amendment adding “national security” to the atomic energy law.

Backers of the amendment say it refers to protecting nuclear plants from terrorists. Opponents ask why the words aren’t then “nuclear security,” instead of “national security.”

Japan has 45 tons of separated plutonium, enough for several Nagasaki-type bombs. Its overall plutonium stockpile of more than 150 tons is one of the world’s largest, although much smaller than those of the U.S., Russia or Great Britain.

Tokyo Gov Shintaro Ishihara, an outspoken conservative, has repeatedly said Japan should flaunt the bomb option to gain diplomatic clout. Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has expressed similar sentiments, although in more subdued terms.
The Yomiuri, the nation’s largest newspaper, made a rare mention of the link between nuclear energy and the bomb in an editorial defending nuclear power last year, saying that Japan’s plutonium stockpile “works diplomatically as a nuclear deterrent.”

That kind of talk worries Tatsujiro Suzuki, vice chairman at the Japan Atomic Energy Commission, a government panel that shapes nuclear policy. Himself an opponent of proliferation, he said that having the bomb is a decades-old ambition for some politicians and bureaucrats.

“If people keep saying (nuclear energy) is for having nuclear weapons capability, that is not good,” Suzuki said. “It’s not wise. Technically it may be true, but it sends a very bad message to the international community.”

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It was my very first week in Japan, and already I knew something funny was going on. I guess I’m a little astute like that. I had this epiphany on the second floor of a small cafe in Azabu-juban, which is a rather upscale part of Tokyo, as I was having tea with an attractive young lady of my acquaintance. When she excused herself to use the facilities (we’d had about a pot of tea, after all), the waitress came hustling over.

“Hello,” she said in English. I looked up and thought, Jeez, you’ve got a lot of earrings.

“Hey, how’s it going?” I said.

“Where are you from?” She seemed pretty excited. I looked to see if my friend was coming back any time soon.

“How do you know I’m not from Japan?” I replied.

“Because you’re not Japanese.

“That’s kind of circular reasoning, isn’t it?

“I’m sorry, what?

“Never mind,” I said. “Are you from Japan?

“Of course!” she said. “Can’t you tell?

“I’m American, so no, actually.

“Can you drink green tea?” she asked.

“Like a boss. How ’bout you?

“Of course! I’m Japanese.

“Oh, I forgot.

“Isn’t it too bitter for you?” she asked. “Don’t you want to put sugar in it?

“Well, maybe some people do mix in sugar, or even milk.

“Heeeey,” she said, and her eyes lit up.

“But have you tried it with salt and pepper?” I asked. “It’s really good like that.

“Iyaaa, muri!” she said. Well, I thought, at least I got her to speak some Japanese.

At the time, I naively believed this to be a random bit of conversation. I can be so wrong. As the same pattern began to repeat itself hundreds and then thousands of times, I gradually realized I’d stumbled onto something far more . . . what’s the word? Insidious? Mmn, nah, that’s not it. Anyway, far more something.

If you look “foreign” (whatever that means; but apparently, like porn, one knows it when one sees it), then you’ll hear the exact same phrases, often in the same order, from every single Japanese person. You’re guaranteed to
hear the following seven phrases like clockwork, usually in Japanese, except for No. 1.

1. “Hello!”

Actually, this sounds a bit more like “herro,” but we’ll let that slide for the moment. Just remember that when you go to France, you’re expected to speak French; in Italy, Italian; and in Japan, English. Abide by that and everybody’s happy. Never mind that half the foreign-looking people here don’t even have English as their native language; Japanese folks can’t wait to bust out this word when they see your big, round eyes, just in case you’ve forgotten how much you don’t blend in. The irony is that native English speakers rarely actually say “hello.” Well, maybe they do in the movies, I don’t know.

2. “Where are you from?”

I usually get asked this question in Japanese, and have found it to be a great phrase for making people feel at home. Please don’t hesitate to try this on your friends of other races. There’s nothing impolite about it, because really, nobody who looks like you could possibly be from here.

The world’s changing, of course, and Japan’s no exception. These days an increasing number of Japanese people happen to be white, black or something else altogether. You gotta envy their lives, getting to field this question on a daily basis. Just think of it . . . a white Japanese person? That’s crazy. That’s like a black Englishman. Whoa, impossible. What’s next, Americans from Europe?

3. “Your Japanese is great.”

Subtle power-trip or innocuous compliment? You decide. No really, every day, you decide. And there’s pretty much no decent response to this one. Just last week, I walked into a boutique to look at some manly handbags and the moment I said konnichiwa, the salesman was like, Oooh, your Japanese is great. I was like, Really? From one word? Well, actually, my konnichiwa is pretty stunning, now that you mention it. And just wait till you get a hold of my sayonara.

4. “Have you been in Japan long?”

This comes either before or after No. 3, and they form a nice set. If you say you’ve been here a short time, then the proper response is: “Wow, and already your Japanese is so great.” Alternately, if you say a long time, then: “Oh, so then you’re married to a Japanese?” In either case, you should anticipate follow-up Question 4.5, “When are you going back home?”

5. “What’s your name?”

Ah, an old favorite. So, the reality is that when you’re not around, Japanese people use last names. But the moment you enter the picture, they start calling you and each other by first names. The last-name thing is like a secret handshake, a sort of Japanese closed society, straight up Illuminati stuff. But when they meet you, because you look so “foreign,” they just take your family name, ball it up, and roll it under the nearest train.
You get called by your first name, and that’s the way it is, Ken.

6. “You use chopsticks really well.”

So the other day I was in a soba shop next to this wrinkly old couple who would not stop staring at me eating a bowl of noodles. Their table was only a foot away, and they were like 300 years old and the old lady was freaking fixated on me. I was all like, Okay, just don’t look at the old people and maybe they’ll go away. But then this skeleton claw reached out and grabbed my arm and started shaking me, and an old witch voice said, Heeey, you can use chopsticks really well! I was like, Jeez old lady, lemme go! All that agedness is probably contagious. Plus, that’s my chopstickin’ arm. I need that. But to be fair, my chopstick skills are, in fact, pretty amazing. And you should see me with a spoon.

7. “Can you eat natto?”

Of all the foods in Japan, somehow natto has won the award for the strangest thing “foreigners” could ever stuff into their mouths. Not sea snails, raw horse, squid innards, or whatever monjayaki is, but gooey beans. There’s about a million things on a Japanese menu more terrifying than natto, but Japan has unanimously concluded that fermented beans equals gaijin kryptonite. Even buying natto in the supermarket is embarrassing. I try to wait until there’s nobody in line, and then it’s like, Yeah, I’ll, uh, take this candy bar, and that comb, and a cigarette lighter, and a 12-pack of condoms, and a copy of Penthouse . . . and, oh yeah, that, umm, natto over there. No, not that one, the one on the left. Yeah, just go ahead and put that in a bag, would you? Jeez, I’ve got a ton of combs and Penthouses.

Rule, Law, or Force of Nature?

Japanese people live for rules. And when they meet “foreigners,” the only rule seems to be they’ve got to cover all seven points as soon as possible. For years, scholars have speculated that this may even be an obscure law or ancient Imperial edict. Recent research has also raised debate over the actual number of required questions and statements, with some putting the number as high as twenty. However, seven remains the agreed upon figure for working calculations. One could argue higher, or lower, but let’s not get all crazy splitting hairs and going into imaginary numbers and stuff. Suffice to say these seven are etched deeply into the DNA of every Japanese person.

Win Beer with the Japanese Rule of 7!

The Japanese Rule of 7, by the way, happens to be the world’s safest bar bet. Here’s how to win a beer. A delicious beer. Just wait until you hear someone say “herro,” and then immediately turn to the person next to you and say, I bet I can tell you six more things this fool’s gonna say. They’ll be like, No way. Boom, instant beer. You can even use it with the speaker him/herself, since it’s physically impossible for Japanese people not to run through the remaining six points, no matter how hard they try. It’s like putting a sack of cats in a roomful of mice.
And to help keep you well lubricated, here’s a convenient and stylish wallet-sized card, listing all seven points, suitable for laminating. It even includes English translations to assist you in making friends outside of Japan with “foreigners” and others who don’t physically resemble you. And if you live in Japan, then the next time you find yourself in a smoky izakaya and a drunk salaryman strikes up a conversation (which is like every day if you’re me), don’t hesitate to whip it out and show him you know what’s up. Guaranteed to keep the conversation flowing.
Int'l marriages test ability to balance love with tolerance 4. 19, 2012 - 05:40AM JST(66)

When you’re the partner in a “kokusai kekkon” (international marriage), proclaims Shukan Gendai (Apr 21), every day you’re in for a surprise. And the stats show increasing numbers of such partners are in on the gag.

According to Toru Orimoto, a legal professional knowledgeable about international marriages, the number of Japanese males tying the knot with a female of another nationality rose from under 4,000 in 1980 to 23,000 in 2012. Add to that the number of Japanese females marrying foreign males, and you’ve got more than 30,000 new international couples tying the knot every year.

“The recent trend has been for middle-aged Japanese males in their 40s and 50s to wed foreign women,” says Shinji Katsuyama, operator of the Toranomon branch of the Win Bridal Japan matchmaking service. “In many cases, when these men, who have assets, decide they want to wed and have children, they desire a young bride. But Japanese women aren’t interested in middle-aged men—the accepted norm for a partner’s age differential is around 10 years—so it’s easier for them to pair up with foreigners. For foreign women, the main factor attracting them to live in Japan is economic, which is something that a man between age 40 to 60 is able to offer.”

Shukan Gendai proceeds to list numerous gaffes (そのつもりがないのに相手を不快にさせる社交上の) by foreign brides, such as the Chinese female who felt it was okay to scoop up and keep coins that had been flung at the altar of a Shinto shrine during the Setsubun festival; an Italian woman who tried to emulate Japanese at funerals, but erroneously thought they were snorting (snort cocaine) powdered incense at the altar; a Romanian bride who freaked out at the sight of her husband swilling raw eggs for his breakfast; and a man who found it odd that his Libyan bride would escort their children to a nearby park at night to engage in outdoor karaoke gatherings with her compatriots.【C】同国人，同胞

While assigned to Indonesia, Takashi Hosokawa met his wife Cecilia (both names are pseudonyms), who had worked as an interpreter. The two have enjoyed 15 years of connubial bliss. “We were married in November and I brought her to Japan in December,” Hosokawa recalls. “I was shocked by my electric bill for that first month, which was over 50,000 yen.” It seems Cecilia cranked up the air conditioner setting to 35 degrees, equivalent to the daytime peak. “I walked in and our little 2K flat was like a sauna,” he relates. “I’ll freeze to death here,” she whined. And there she was padding around barefoot and in a halter and miniskirt, perspiring. It never occurred to her to put on more clothes. “And then she became upset when I asked her to put on a long-sleeved garment,” Hosokawa smiles in recollection. 衣服.

Following her marriage to an American, Kanako
Mori, 34, soon discovered her hubby was a passionate aficionado of porno movies from his native land. 《口語》夫、主人、ハズ。So what’s the secret to giving an international marriage staying power? “The most important thing is to go with the flow, and keep your sense of humor,” advises manga artist Junichi Inoue, age 42, who three years ago tied the knot with a Chinese bride about 20 years his junior. “If you try to force your spouse to give up ingrained customs and practices, you’ll never resolve anything. Just enjoy the ride.”

The article concludes that Japanese need to understand that if love is to transcend national boundaries, tolerance is indispensable.

Tokyo mega-quake would kill over 9,600, simulation shows

NationalApr. 19, 2012 - 12:40PM JST(53)
Japan suffers frequent seismic activity and schoolchildren are regularly taught how to respond to earthquakesAFP

TOKYO —

More than 9,600 people would die with nearly 150,000 injured if a mega-quake struck Tokyo, a disaster that would also level large parts of the Japanese capital, a government projection said Wednesday. The frightening simulation was released by the Tokyo metropolitan government as Japan slowly rebuilds its northeast coast, which was devastated by a magnitude 9.0 quake in March last year that unleashed a deadly tsunami.

The disaster killed some 19,000 people and triggered the worst nuclear accident in a generation.

Tokyo was largely spared from the damage, but if a smaller 7.3-magnitude quake struck the sprawling metropolis, it would leave about 9,600 dead and 147,000 people with injuries, including 21,900 seriously, the projection said.

About 5.2 million people would be unable to go home owing to electricity and transportation damage while the temblor would flatten or seriously damage some 378,000 buildings with about 188,000 structures burning to the ground.

A huge tsunami would strike isolated Pacific Ocean islands several hundred kilometers outside Tokyo, which are considered part of the municipality, but was not likely to cause damage or fatalities in the metropolis itself.

The biggest city in earthquake-prone Japan lies at the intersection of four tectonic plates and there is a 50 percent chance it will be struck by a magnitude 7.0 or higher quake in the next four years, according to the University of Tokyo’s Earthquake Research Institute.

The government projection does not include fatalities and damage in outlying prefectures that make up Greater Tokyo, home to about 35 million people.

In 1923, Tokyo and surrounding areas were struck by a 7.9 magnitude quake that left more than 140,000 people dead and destroyed much of the city.

© 2012 AFP
If you want a child, do it before you're 30, says leading obstetrician Kuchikomi

Apr. 16, 2012 - 06:15AM JST (118) TOKYO —

When entertainers speak, the world listens, and one message they're delivering lately is profoundly disturbing to at least one leading obstetrician – namely, that giving birth relatively late in life is okay. It's not, Kyoto Medical University professor and infertility expert Nobuhiko Suganuma writes in Shukan Bunshun (April 12). Suganuma has a message of his own: “If you want children, have your first before you turn 30.”

The influence of celebrities on matters remote from their talents is a remarkable fact of life. When Mariko Shinoda of the girl band AKB48 mused in January about getting married around 40 or 50, Suganuma took notice – he could easily imagine young women listening starry-eyed and thinking, “Me too.”

Suganuma has been treating women for infertility since the dawn of the artificial insemination era more than 30 years ago. His own patients over the years number some 5,000. He has seen the numbers soar nationwide during those decades – and no wonder, he says.

Ovaries, wombs and hormones, in his view, are in prime condition before 30. A first childbirth then can prolong the reproductive peak, but starting after 30 “entails risks” – of Down’s Syndrome or other diseases in the child, at worst, of miscarriage, or simply of infertility.

“There are no firm statistics,” he writes, “but the rising number of women marrying late and then being unable to conceive is an undeniable fact.” Moreover, “the success rate of infertility treatment starts dropping at age 30 and plunges past 35.”

Entertainers whose own highly public lives have popularized late marriage and childbirth include the model Rika, who had her first child at 38; Shoko Aida, formerly of the pop duo Wink (41); actress Koyuki (35); and comedian-actress Naomi Matsushima (40).

For a woman of a certain age who is aware of the risks and decides to proceed with pregnancy anyway, “that’s a matter of individual freedom,” writes Suganuma. The problem, he claims, is that many are not aware of the risks.

Liberal-Democratic Party Lower House lawmaker Seiko Noda was 50 when she gave birth a year ago through artificial insemination. Her son Masaki has been hospitalized ever since with serious medical problems. Suganuma in his Shukan Bunshun article quotes Noda as saying, “No one ever told me that having a child after 40 could be difficult.”

Every year, says Suganuma, the number of women giving birth past age 35 is rising. In 1985, late births (not necessarily first-time births) comprised approximately 7% of the total. By 2010 they accounted for 23.8%.

“Japanese sex education,” he writes, “is all about birth control. Of course, it’s important for teenagers to know how to prevent unwanted pregnancies. But it seems to me it also needs to be taught that under 30 is the most suitable time of life for women to begin giving birth.”
Contract workers at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant get off a bus in Iwaki-Yumoto, Fukushima Prefecture. AP

TOKYO —

A growing number of Japanese workers who are risking their health to shut down the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant are suffering from depression, anxiety about the future and a loss of motivation, say two doctors who visit them regularly.

many TEPCO families in the area now hide their link to the company for fear of criticism, local doctors and psychiatrists say.

Shigemura likens the workers’ experience to that of U.S. Vietnam veterans returning home to hostility in the 1960s and early ‘70s.

“They both worked for (the good of) their countries, but they got a backlash,” he said.

About a dozen nuclear workers approached by the AP declined to be interviewed for this report. Except in rare cases, TEPCO has repeatedly declined requests to interview workers, and the workers themselves have shunned virtually all media attention, so these doctors’ accounts provide an unusual glimpse into their lives.

One former TEPCO employee who lived in the town of Tomioka, inside the 20-kilometer exclusion zone around the plant, told journalists during a rare visit to the Fukushima plant in February that she was frequently harassed by evacuees among the 100,000 displaced by the disaster.

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Saori Kanesaki, a former visitor guide at the Fukushima plant.

More than a half-century ago, many Japanese survivors of the U.S. bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were stigmatized due to fears about their exposure to radiation. But the Fukushima disaster has thrown up a completely new kind of discrimination because of the workers’ links to TEPCO, a company widely despised throughout Japan for its mishandling of the disaster.

Some 3,000 TEPCO employees and other contractors continue to labor daily at the plant in one of the world’s riskiest jobs—keeping three melted-down reactor cores as well as spent fuel pools cool through a makeshift system of water pipes.

They face a long haul: Removing the fuel and completely shutting down the plant could take 40 years.

Worries about radiation exposure aren’t overwhelmingly prevalent among the TEPCO workers, both doctors say, although some workers are concerned, especially those with higher exposure counts. During the crisis, authorities raised the maximum radiation exposure limit to 250 millisieverts from 100 millisieverts. Six TEPCO workers surpassed that level, and were removed from work at the plant. That exposure level was lowered again in December to 50 millisieverts, with an exception allowing up to 100 millisieverts in emergencies.

In addition to the discrimination, the TEPCO nuclear workers, who are specially trained, are anxious that they will be transferred to a completely different kind of job, such as clerical work, if they should surpass the exposure limit, the doctors say.

“More than health risk, they are worried about social risk and employment risk,” said Takeshi Tanigawa, an epidemiologist with Ehime University’s medical school who visited the plant after the disaster and was the one of the first to report its harsh working conditions, which have since improved. He has been back 15 times since, and Shigemura later volunteered to join him.

The two doctors report that they are not aware of any case of radiation sickness or radiation burns among the workers, who undergo regular checks for radiation levels in their bodies.

A brief report on their experience visiting the Fukushima plant soon after the disaster that highlights the discrimination workers faced was published in Wednesday’s issue of The American Journal of Psychiatry.

The Japanese public and press, meanwhile, has offered the workers little praise, unlike the Western media, which during the height of the crisis portrayed the remaining band of workers at the plant as the heroic “Fukushima 50.” The domestic press instead emphasized how the dangers faced by the workers reflected the risks of nuclear power.

Culture helps explain some of these dynamics, including the strong Japanese sense of duty and group responsibility.
“People believe the workers share in the responsibility” for the disaster even though they didn’t cause it, Tanigawa said.

Disaster psychiatry is not well-developed in Japan. The 1995 Kobe earthquake brought growing awareness of the psychological trauma of disasters, but specialists in the field remain rare.

Research from the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster suggests that mental health problems will persist for years.

Eighteen years after that crisis, Chernobyl clean-up workers experienced higher rates of depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, headaches and suicidal thoughts than the general population, according to a 2008 study in the journal Psychological Medicine.

Many TEPCO workers now live in a temporary barracks at a soccer stadium called J-Village, several kilometers south of the Fukushima Daiichi plant. Workers at J-Village approached by a journalist refused to talk, and other contractors said they would get in trouble with the utility if they did.

Environment Minister Goshi Hosono, who is also in charge of nuclear crisis management, has made a point of thanking the workers during visits to the Fukushima plant, and children from around Japan have sent drawings and words of encouragement. But the workers have told the doctors that in restricted areas around the plant, former neighbors have shouted, thrown bottles and shoved them during their brief visits home to retrieve belongings.

Such discrimination weighs heavily on the workers, said Shigemura.

“Showing appreciation to the workers is an urgent need. It’s totally lacking,” Shigemura said, adding that he believes stigmatization is a key factor in influencing the workers’ psychological distress.

A growing number of the workers tell the visiting psychiatrists of sagging motivation and hopelessness, and Shigemura warned that such attitudes could lead to “misconduct or human error or sabotage.” He also said the workers are drinking more alcohol and smoking more.

His team started to receive some research funding from the Health Ministry in April.

Shigemura predicts that the rate of post-traumatic stress disorder among Fukushima workers 2-3 years after the disaster will surpass the rate among 9/11 rescue and recovery workers, which a 2007 study in The American Journal of Psychiatry said was 12.4%.

TEPCO says it is considering hiring a full-time psychiatrist to help meet the mental health needs of workers at the plant, but that there are a shortage of such experts, particularly in the Fukushima region.

“The public’s trust in TEPCO has declined, so we will work to improve that,” said Yuji Ohya, an official with the company’s health
and safety department. “Hopefully as that improves, it will boost the workers’ spirits.”

Associated Press writer Mari Yamaguchi contributed to this report.

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Some Japanese customs that may confuse foreigners

Lifestyle Feb. 25, 2012 - 09:07PM JST ( 147 )

The vee sign doesn't mean "peace" in Japan.
Sanko Gakuen

TOKYO —

There are many customs and behaviors that are natural for Japanese people, either because they are historically accepted, imposed by society or because they are part of the Japanese psyche. To foreign visitors, some of these customs can be a bit confusing.

MADAME RiRi offers a few examples.

1. Making the peace sign (vee)

Many young Japanese people instinctively form a vee with their fingers when they pose for photos. In many other countries, this is the sign of peace. But there is no such meaning in Japan. Fortunately, Japanese make the vee sign with the palm of their hand facing the photographer and not the back of the hand, which might get them in trouble overseas. In any case, it’s a good way to spot who the Japanese tourists are in a crowd.

2. Sitting on the floor

Many foreign people wonder why Japanese people sit on the floor. It is very rare to see people sit on the floor in Western countries where tatami mats are not common. Many foreign visitors to Japan find it hard (and painful) to sit on the floor, opting instead for the familiarity of the couch or chair.

3. Drinking barley tea

If you open the fridge in most Japanese homes or look at any vending machine, you’ll likely see barley tea. It’s a refreshing drink that goes well with meals and is particularly good in hot weather. And it doesn’t have a lot of caffeine.

4. Slurping ramen, sniffling

Japanese people usually slurp when they eat noodles such as ramen, soba and udon. Although slurping noodles is considered rude in Western countries, in Japan, it is an expression of one’s appreciation for the meal. So slurp away as loud as you like. Sniffling, clearing one’s throat and swallowing phlegm are also habits that visitors may find unsettling.

5. Nodding response (Aizuchi)

When you communicate with Japanese people, you often see them nodding their response with words like “He,” “Un,” “Soso,” “So nanda” and so on. This type of nodding response is called “Aizuchi” in Japanese and dates back to the Edo period. “Aizuchi” is also a good way of looking like you are taking part in a conversation, but foreign people seldom use these words, perhaps because they feel it will look like they are not listening seriously.
6. Double-eyelid surgery

Perhaps this one applies to many women in Asia, not just Japan. Double eyelid surgery is common because young women want to have bigger eyes. Have a look at the girls who adorn the covers of fashion magazines, or pop diva Ayumi Hamasaki. Foreigners may wonder why Japanese women get cosmetic surgery for their eyes but don’t do anything about their teeth. In the West, a woman is more likely to get a nip and tuck, but rarely have her eyes altered.

7. Walking pigeon-toed in high heels

Some Japanese girls cannot walk gracefully in high heels and end up walking pigeon-toed.

8. Bowing

Bowing is an integral part of Japanese society, whether you are saying hello, goodbye, apologizing, expressing condolences or just responding instinctively. Some Japanese people even bow while talking on the phone. In Western countries, the handshake and hug are more common.

Source: MADAME RiRi
第59回安倍川花火大会の市民花火を募集します

安倍川花火大会に、あなたの花火を打ち上げてみませんか。

☆金婚式を迎えた記念に
☆娘の結婚を祝って
☆子どもの誕生日を祝って
☆孫の小学校入学を祝って
など、それぞれの思いが込められた花火を打ち上げてみませんか。プログラムにコメントをお載せします。

【価格は次のとおりです】

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応募方法：平成24年5月31日（木）までに、電話かFAXで安倍川花火大会本部へどうぞ

（電話054-221-7199・FAX054-221-8199）
i biocompatibility の意味や和訳。【名詞】【不可算名詞】生物的適合性。【名詞】《拒絶反応を起こさないこと》。

ii ハイドロキシアパタイト(hydroxyapatite)

塩基性リン酸カルシウム。鉱物としても存在するが、通常は硝酸カルシウムとリン酸ソーダから作られる。水に不溶、白色粉末。

ハイドロキシアパタイトはタンパク質や核酸を吸着する性質があるので、細粒状にしたものがカラムクロマトグラフィー担体としてタンパク質・核酸の精製に利用されている。

iii 焼灰石(りんかいせき、apatite、アパタイト)は、リン酸塩鉱物のグループ名。化学組成の違いによっていくつかの種類があり、単に焼灰石といった場合はフッ素焼灰石をさすことが多い。

アパタイトという名前から「歯」や「歯磨き粉」を連想される方は多いと思います。

実はアパタイトは歯の成分の一つであり、科学的な分野、工業的分野においても「物の構造を強化」したり、「吸着力」を強める為に使用される事が多い鉱物です。

躯近なところではファンデーションの吸着性を高める成分としても使われています。

アパタイト

人体の約4%を構成する無機質の、大部分を占める。

アパタイトはリン酸カルシウムの一種で、歯や骨の主成分として知られるアパタイトを「ハイドロキシアパタイト」(Hydroxyapatite)と言う。

ivピンセット
v ハイテクバカ
vi 古くなった、古風な、時代遅れの、老朽の。
vii [ものを] いじくる：もてあそぶ〈about, around〉[with]

viii アカデミー賞【C】【映画】 オスカー 《アカデミー賞（Academy Award）受賞者に与えられる小型黄金像》。
ix (間の抜けた)作り笑いをする、にやにや[にたにた]笑う。
x 大げさに喜ぶ
xi 安上がりに
xii 【C】その場しのぎの解決法

xiii a (ある題名から)自然[当然]に引き出せる結論；(必然的)結果 [of]。
xiv 【U】排卵
xv 試験管[ガラス器]内の[で]、生体外の[で]

xvi ソクソクする喜びを感じている。
xvii Result in war
xviii …の跡を追って；…にならって；…に引き続いて

xix [原子物理] 原子炉
xx Billion は10億。国連の2011年版「世界人口白書」によると、2011年10月31日に世界人口が70億人に到達したと推計されている。
xxi（波と波の間の）くぼみ，谷
xxii 中川正春 内閣府特命担当大臣（防災、「新しい公共」、男女共同参画）
xxiii個人またはグループで、既成の組織を飛び出し独立組織をつくること。
xxiv新兵[新会員、新入社員、新メンバー]募集；(人員の)補充。
xxv 偶然知り合いになる。
xxvi …を支持する，後援する，裏付けする
xxvii 一並びの死刑囚監房
xxviii職人，職工，技工。
xxix [名]植物カエデ
xxx 落葉性の
xxxiヤプラン(藪蘭)
xxxii (…を)反映する，忠実に写し出す

xxxiii【C】【通例複数形で】 とっびな行ない[考える]，醉狂，気まぐれ

xxxiv出来事；（特に，重大事件に発展する危険性をもつ）付随事件，小事件，紛争，事変

xxxv〈仕事・テストなど〉能力[努力]を必要とするような，難解だが興味をそそる，深く考えさせる，や
りがいのあるある

xxxvi 請願 [嘆願、陳情] 書、訴状

xxxvii 国民投票、一般投票

xxxviii (1) 新聞に大きく取り上げられる。(2) 有名になる、知れ渡る。

xxxix 国民投票、一般投票

(x) 新聞に大きく取り上げられる。(2) 有名になる、知れ渡る。

xl 《口語》 〈計画など〉 未定の、未解決で、漠然とした。

xli 未払期限の過ぎた、未払いの

xlii 支払期限の過ぎた、未払いの

xliii 〈…に〉 派手に金を使う、散財する 〈on〉

xliv 〈魚・カエルなどが〉 〈卵を〉 産む。2. 〈…を〉 大量に生じる；〈…を〉 大量に引き起こす。

xlv 〈偽物・無価値のもの・望まれない人などを〉 〈人〉 に押しつける、つかませる 〈on, upon〉

xlvi "What would you do?"（もしあなたならどうする？）

xlviii 〈名詞〉 〈可算名詞〉 (暴動などの) 警備者、張本人、不整脈

xlix 〈軍事情報・文書など〉 機密扱いの

lx 〈魚・カエルなどが〉 〈卵を〉 産む。2. 〈…を〉 大量に生じる；〈…を〉 大量に引き起こす。

lxii 支持者

lxiii 戦争を抑止するもの；(特に) 核兵器

lxiv Influence

lxv 〈軍事情報・文書など〉 機密扱いの

lxvi 〈偽物・無価値のもの・望まれない人などを〉 〈人〉 に押しつける、つかませる 〈on, upon〉

lxvii "What would you do?"（もしあなたならどうする？）

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lxix 〈軍事情報・文書など〉 機密扱いの

lx 創成する。An arrhythmia is any disorder of your heart rate or rhythm. It means that your heart beats too quickly, too slowly or with an irregular pattern.

lxvi 〈医学〉 呼吸・脈拍など生理的徴候を観察・記録する装置

lxvii a special skill or ability that you have naturally or can learn

lxviii 〈名詞〉 〈可算名詞〉 (暴動などの) 警備者、張本人、不整脈

lxix 〈軍事情報・文書など〉 機密扱いの

lxx 〈医学〉 呼吸・脈拍など生理的徴候を観察・記録する装置

lxxi Down syndrome (ダウン症候群, 英: Down syndrome) は、体細胞の 21 番染色体が 1 本余分に存在し、計 3 本 (トリソミー症) 持つことによっ
て発症する、先天性の疾患群。ダウン症とも呼ばれる。
多くは第 1 渾数分裂時の不分離によって生じるが、ま
れに第 2 渾数分裂時における場合がある。転座型を除
いてどんなカップルの間にも生まれ得る。現在のとこ
ろ根本的（医学的）な治療法・治療薬はないが、早期
からの『療育』により社会生活への適応性を向上させ
得ると考える者もいる。かつては蒙古症とも呼ばれ
ていた。
lxxxii to speak loudly and angrily in a way that
criticizes sb/sth or tries to persuade people to do sth
He walked to the front of the stage and began to
harangue the audience.

lxxxiii
to try to make sb angry or upset by saying unkind
things about them, laughing at their failures, etc
The other kids continually taunted him about
his size.

lxxxiv 入らせない。
lxxxv Tokyo Electric Power Company
lxxxvi 【C】 悪事を行なう人；加害者，犯人 〔of〕．