

# THE NEWS QUIZ

## HEADLINES

Top court to rule on wartime 'Yokohama Incident' soon

American 'enka' singer has big debut

JR Tokai generates friction with costly maglev train

New energy-saving scale ends 'star inflation' for flat-panel TVs

Lehman Bros joins emissions trade

## HEADLINES *extra*

“Tokyo eyes five exemptions for Australia FTA”

Q: What are the five exemptions?

## PICTURE



インド



ブラジル



アメリカ



インドネシア



ハンガリー



香港



広東

What's the story?

## NEWSMAKER



Why is this gentleman in the news again?

## MISSING WORDS

Adults snapping up \_\_\_\_\_, collectibles

\_\_\_\_\_ reaches record ¥838 trillion

Man hospitalized after swallowing \_\_\_\_\_ in convenience store burger

SAIPAN — A Saipan court denied bail Monday to businessman Kazuyoshi Miura following his arrest Friday over the 1981 fatal shooting of his wife in Los Angeles. Miura, 60, told the court the murder "took place several decades ago, and it is unlikely that I will destroy evidence or run away." The focus now is when Miura will be transferred to California as sought by the Los Angeles Police Department. In Tokyo, Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said Japan will consider cooperating with the investigation into the case by U.S. authorities but noted it has not yet received such a request. "We will think about it once we receive a request," Machimura said at a news conference. "We will deal with it based on domestic laws and Japan-U.S. treaties. Just because a not-guilty verdict was handed down in Japan does not mean we cannot cooperate with (U.S.) investigations." Japan's Consular Office in Saipan has been in contact with the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo on how to deal with the case, officials said. Consul in Saipan Kenji Yazawa said Sunday that Miura was unhappy that he had been arrested despite being acquitted by the Supreme Court in Japan in 2003 of the death of his wife, Kazumi, 28. She was shot in the head on a street in L.A. and flown back to Japan in a coma, dying months later in 1982. Miura sustained a slight gunshot wound to the leg. Miura has been in frequent phone contact with his lawyers in Japan to discuss further responses. In Tokyo, Miura's lawyers urged the government not to cooperate with the U.S. investigators given that Miura was acquitted of the murder charge. Miura was taken into custody Friday at Saipan airport when he showed his passport at immigration prior to returning home from a brief vacation. Sources said Monday that Miura's arrest was based on a warrant issued May 5, 1988, that lists allegations that he plotted together with others to kill his wife for insurance money and eventually had her shot in 1981. Miura discussed with a former actress about how to kill his wife and got her to assault the victim in a Los Angeles hotel room, according to the warrant. It also says he traveled with his wife to Los Angeles and got an unidentified person to shoot her in November 1981 to gain an insurance payout. As Miura's accomplice, the warrant cites the former actress, who was convicted of the assault by a court in Japan, and other unidentified people without specifying new accomplices or fresh evidence. Miura, who also stood trial in Japan, was found guilty of attempted murder of his wife and spent time in prison but was acquitted of her murder. Speaking to reporters in Tokyo, Miura's lawyers argued that the 2003 Supreme Court acquittal should stand for their client and said it would be an "injustice" if the U.S. authorities should indict him on a charge for which he has been cleared. "Although it is legally possible, it is very rare that a man acquitted by a top court in one country is charged for the same crime in another state," lawyer Junichiro Hironaka said. "That is because prohibition of double jeopardy is a common rule for any state which values human rights." Hironaka said the lawyers received six phone calls from Miura since he was taken into custody in Saipan. Miura "has claimed over the phone that the case is already closed, and that the arrest is unfair," he said. Hironaka said he would provide legal assistance to help Miura return to Japan. He said he believes an indictment is unlikely because reports that the Los Angeles police obtained new evidence in the case are highly dubious. "I doubt that there is any new evidence. If there is, it will likely be some firsthand testimony — but I am not aware of such information," Hironaka said. Another lawyer, Yoichi Kitamura, also present at the news conference, suggested it would not be easy for the U.S. authorities to find Miura guilty of the murder. "I doubt that they will even be able to indict him for murder," Kimura said.

The Supreme Court will give a decision March 14 on an appeal by relatives seeking to clear the names of five deceased men convicted of promoting communism during the war in what is seen as the worst case of suppression of free speech in Japan, court sources said. The top court is expected to uphold a 2007 Tokyo High Court decision that turned down an appeal against a 2006 Yokohama District Court decision that dismissed criminal charges against the five and did not rule on their guilt. The prospect emerged because the top court has opened no sessions on the appeal to listen to arguments from the prosecution and defense in a retrial. Customarily, the top court holds a session before overruling a high court decision. Justice Isao Imai of the top court's No. 2 Petty Bench is the presiding judge in the case, popularly known as the "Yokohama Incident." In the retrial, both the district and high courts dismissed charges against the five to terminate the criminal procedure but did not judge whether the five men were guilty. Their relatives had sought not-guilty verdicts. The incident involved the arrest of more than 60 journalists and magazine editors from 1942 to just before the end of the war in 1945 on suspicion of violating the old peace preservation law for allegedly promoting communism. Of them, about 30 were tried under the old Code of Criminal Procedure and found guilty of violating the anticommunist law. Four people died during the investigation, apparently from torture. The five men involved in the ongoing trial at the Supreme Court are Toru Kimura, Eizaburo Kobayashi, Hiroshi Yoshida, Kenjiro Takagi and Toshio Hiradate, who their families say were wrongfully charged after investigators tortured them to gain confessions. Kimura was an editor of the monthly magazine Chuo Koron. The five were each sentenced to two years in prison, suspended for three years, in August and September 1945, for publishing procommunist articles in the magazine Kaizo (Reform) during the war. Their trial resumed after the Yokohama District Court decided in April 2003 to reopen the case and the Tokyo High Court upheld the district court's decision in March 2005.

Japan has proposed to Australia that rice, wheat, beef, dairy products and sugar be taken off the table in negotiating a bilateral free-trade agreement, a senior agricultural official said Monday. "We intend to protect sectors that need to be protected," vice farm minister Toshiro Shirasu told a news conference. If the five farm items are freely imported into Japan at low prices, they are expected to deal a serious blow to domestic producers. Australia, a major farm product exporter, is expected to oppose the exemptions. Shirasu's remark came as the fourth round of bilateral FTA talks got under way Monday in Tokyo. The talks, which last until Friday, are the first negotiations since Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd took office in December.

Debt reaches record ¥838 trillion

The balance of Japan's debt climbed to a record ¥838.005 trillion at the end of 2007, up ¥4.307 trillion from the level Sept. 30, the Finance Ministry said Monday. The balance of per capita debt came to ¥6.56 million, up about ¥50,000 from the year before, according to the ministry. Of the total, government bonds stood at ¥678.642 trillion, up ¥3.964 trillion from three months earlier.

Adults snapping up full series of comic books, collectibles

Instead of like kids — buying items one by one until they have painstakingly put together a complete collection — adults are increasingly using their greater purchasing power to snap up series of comics and pocket books all at once. Last August, secondhand book retailer Bookoff Corp. opened a page on its Web site targeting adults who want to purchase the entire series of popular comic books such as "Slam Dunk" and "Golgo 13," the latter of which runs to more than 100 installments. Many customers come into the shops looking to buy entire series, but as the stores deal only in secondhand books some installments are not available. In mail-order sales, new copies fill in for the missing numbers, enabling customers to buy complete sets. "Because the business is so successful, we want to increase the number of titles we offer," said an official in charge of PR at the company. Major publisher Shinchosha Publishing Co., which has promoted a series of 100 recommended pocket books each summer since 1976, started complete-set sales on its home page last year. "Fathers who want their sons and daughters to read masterpieces seem to be buying them," a company official said. A full set was priced at around ¥50,000 last year, and the official said, "We expect increases in sales." The bulk buying boom by adults began with children's products that offered collectible extras. Ezaki Glico Co. for example sold the Time Slip Glico series of caramels in 2001 through 2005 with such extras as little figurines of heroes Tetsujin 28 and Ultraman, and models of Osaka monuments like the Tower of the Sun and the pavilions at the 1970 World Expo. Many adults bought the caramels by the case — each containing 80 boxes originally intended for retailers. Early this year, Seven-Eleven Japan Co. and Coca-Cola (Japan) Co. sold bottles of the soda for ¥798 that came with four types of small radio-controlled vehicles modeled after delivery vehicles. "Not only children but also adults yearning for remote-controlled vehicles were the target," one official said. Bulk-buying accounted for almost all the sales of the popular limited sets. "Bulk buying by adults is an effective way for people to feel energetic and reward themselves," said Hiroshi Hasegawa, head of the shopping research institute of Hakuhodo Inc., a major ad agency.

HYOGO — Police on Tuesday said that a 19-year-old man was taken to hospital on Sunday night after he swallowed a 1-cm fish hook inside a hamburger that his mother bought for him at a FamilyMart convenience store in Himeji City, Hyogo Prefecture. According to police, the man's mother bought the "tartar burger" around 4 p.m. and heated it up for her son that night. He complained of a severe stomach ache around 8 p.m. and was taken to hospital. An X-ray revealed the hook inside his stomach. Police said a second hook was found inside the burger's wrapping paper and believe they may have been deliberately placed in the burger. The company that makes the burgers said that 1,200 were made on Sunday morning and that they had all been passed through a metal detector. Although no other complaints have been received, FamilyMart stopped selling the product on Monday.

Jero, quite likely Japan's first black American "enka" (ballad) singer, is set to enter the singles chart at No. 4 based on sales figures compiled by Oricon Co. to be released Monday. Such a showing would mark the highest-ever chart entry among debut singles released by enka singers. Jero, whose real name is Jerome White, Jr., came to Japan in 2003 to become a singer after graduating from the University of Pittsburgh. He is drawing popularity by singing the ballads dressed in hip-hop clothes. Born in Pittsburgh, the 26-year-old made his debut earlier this year, releasing the single "Umiyuki" ("Marine Snow").

Concerns about huge estimated costs and future profitability are casting a shadow over Central Japan Railway Co.'s long-term project to build a magnetically levitating train system. The project to run the world's fastest train between Tokyo and Osaka would be a big step for the railway, known as JR Tokai, which is eager to expand current passenger capacity. It also aims to hedge any risk caused by natural disasters by shortening the nation's most crowded rail route, which is now 515 km. The planned maglev route is 290 km, on which the trains would run at 581 kph. "It's a project to give a dream to the public in the 21st century," JR Tokai Chairman Yoshiyuki Kasai said in a recent speech in Tokyo. But JR Tokai's Dec. 25 announcement that it will pay ¥5.1 trillion of the estimated cost for the first phase connecting Tokyo and Nagoya raised caution because the original plan called for the carrier to share the cost with the government, analysts said. The news hit JR Tokai's share price the next day. It tumbled by 20 percent within the four business days following the surprise announcement. As of Tuesday, it stood 9.73 percent lower at ¥1.02 million than the Dec. 25 closing price. "JR Tokai does not care about shareholders," said a transportation-sector analyst at a Tokyo branch of an overseas brokerage who asked not to be named. "I wonder if the project is really worth doing by a listed company." Such criticism follows JR Tokai's forecast of a lower profit in the future. Its pretax profit is expected to average about ¥140 billion for 10 years beginning in 2026, after posting a pretax profit of ¥70 billion in 2026, the railway said Dec. 25. The carrier logged a pretax profit of ¥236.65 billion in the business year that ended last March and has forecast ¥260 billion for this business year to March 31. "The company has the responsibility of explaining the lower profitability. But it has not yet fully explained this to shareholders," the analyst said. JR Tokai has not released clear estimates of its profits for 2036 and beyond.

"We don't release any specific figures regarding when the profit will come back to the current level," said Katsumi Miyazawa, director and general manager of public relations at JR Tokai. But he added that the railway expects profits to edge up above ¥140 billion beginning in 2036. The railway continues to pursue the maglev project aggressively. If the project is completed, it would take about 1 hour to reach Osaka from Tokyo, compared with more than 2 hours by bullet train. JR Tokai decided to pay the estimated cost for the Tokyo-Nagoya section on its own because the government's priority is to build a nationwide bullet train network, including more than 1,000 km of future construction. It was reported earlier the government wanted JR Tokai to wait until that network is completed. Frustrated by the government's lack of support, JR Tokai decided to go it alone. Analysts, however, are unsure of the ¥5.1 trillion cost. One uncertainty in the estimate is the cost to drill a tunnel through the southern Japan Alps, whose strata, under the pressure of two huge plates, are more prone to warp and crumble than those of other mountains.

Japan will tighten energy-saving standards for liquid crystal display and plasma televisions in April in an effort to cut global warming emissions in the household sector, officials said Tuesday. Under the current system, flat-panel TVs sold in the domestic market carry labels, ranging from one to five stars, indicating their level of power consumption. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry has decided to revise the conditions of the five-star rating system due to significant improvement in the energy efficiency of flat-panel TVs in recent months, the officials said. The labeling program, targeting appliances that use a lot of electricity such as air conditioners and refrigerators, was introduced in October 2006. When the system was introduced, only about 10 percent of flat-panel TVs were able to have the most energy efficient five-star label. But now about 60 percent can meet the five-star conditions, which has led to confusion among consumers, the officials said. After tightening the conditions, about 3 percent of TVs currently sold in Japan will be able to win the five stars, they said, adding that 33 percent will have four stars and 35 percent will have three stars. Flat-panel TVs are the only item affected this time, according to METI. The household sector's carbon dioxide emissions increased by 30.4 percent in fiscal 2006 from the level seen in 1990. To clear the country's reduction target of carbon dioxide emissions under the Kyoto Protocol, the government sees it as imperative to save energy at households. Under the protocol, Japan is required to cut greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 6 percent from the 1990 level between 2008 and 2012.

Lehman Brothers Inc. has announced it will start trading carbon credits in Japan, becoming the first global investment bank to link the Japanese and European carbon markets. Lehman Brothers has become the first foreign financial firm to open an account in Japan's national registry system for trading in Certified Emission Reductions, the company said. A CER is a carbon credit developed by carbon offset providers that is certified as being equivalent to one ton of carbon dioxide under the mechanism defined by the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to combat global warming. The carbon offset system allows emitters of greenhouse gases to pay another party to undertake to remove an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Lehman Brothers said its entry into Japan's carbon trading market follows a significant increase in its global reach in the international carbon markets, including China, India and Latin America.

### Chicken Ramen out to conquer world

Fifty years after its invention, the world's first instant noodle product is setting out to conquer the world. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the invention of its long-selling Chicken Ramen, Nissin Food Products Co. will release in March seven different versions specifically targeting customers in the United States, Brazil, Hungary, mainland China, Hong Kong, Indonesia and India. This is the first time Japan's arguably best-known noodle product will be marketed abroad other than in Hong Kong. The history of instant noodle products, of which 91.6 billion were sold worldwide in 2006, started when Nissin founder Momofuku Ando created Chicken Ramen in 1958. Catering to local tastes, each of the seven versions has a different flavor. The U.S.-targeted noodles are flavored with onion and taste better when cooked in a microwave. The chicken soup of the Brazilian noodles is especially thick and the Indian version is spiced with turmeric and chili.