

Safety and Health in Japan

A Newsletter from Japan Industrial Safety and Health Association (JISHA)



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30th Anniversary of the Zero-Accident Campaign



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This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Zero-Accident Total Participation Campaign (abbreviated as the “Zero-Accident Campaign” below). The campaign was launched at the National Industrial Safety and Health Convention held by the Japan Industrial Safety and Health Association (JISHA) in Nagoya in 1973. The resolution of this convention stated, “The creation of safe and comfortable workplaces cannot be attained by employers only. It becomes possible after all working members participate positively in safety and health activities. For this purpose, it would be most effective to promote a Zero-Accident Total Participation Campaign in which each working member plays a specific role.”

The Zero-Accident Campaign is based on the fundamental concept of respect for human life and the belief that each and every person is irreplaceable. The ultimate goal of the campaign is to achieve zero accidents by encouraging every employee to put safety and health first. Promoting the Zero-Accident Campaign in workplaces requires a fervent commitment to achieving zero accidents on the part of top management, development of comprehensive safety and health management activities by managers and supervisors, and the vigorous implementation of voluntary workplace activities.

The Zero-Accident Campaign has already been introduced at many workplaces and has played a significant role in reducing occupational accidents. Hazard prediction training (otherwise known as “KYT”), which was developed as a practical means of prioritizing workplace safety, is practiced at numerous workplaces and has proven to be an extremely effective tool for preventing accidents caused by human error.

With increasing mobility in the labour market, the diversification of working patterns, and the severe economic environment of recent years, there is concern that changes in both the quality and quantity of workload will increase the level of mental and physical stress on workers.

In April 1999, the government issued the Guidelines for Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems (OSHMS). It is expected that workplace safety will be

improved by using OSHMS as a framework for implementing the Zero-Accident Campaign and promoting these two programs in an integrated manner.

To disseminate and improve the Zero-Accident Campaign over the years, JISHA has formulated six Action Plans for the Zero-Accident Total Participation Campaign since the campaign began in 1973. It has now formulated the 7th Action Plan for the Zero-Accident Total Participation Campaign, which covers the five-year period from 2003 to 2007.

Taking the social environment surrounding the Zero-Accident Campaign into consideration, the 7th Action Plan aims to further disseminate and improve the campaign by establishing the following four basic objectives:

- (1) Integrated Promotion of the Zero-Accident Campaign and OSHMS
By integrating promotion of the Zero-Accident Campaign and OSHMS, provide a more systematic and continuous means of implementing the Zero-Accident Campaign.
- (2) Recognition of the Important Roles of Managers and Supervisors in Reducing Accidents
Identify the role of line managers in the Zero-Accident Campaign and recognize the important roles of managers and supervisors.
- (3) Extension of the Zero-Accident Campaign to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Tertiary Industries
Strive to extend the Zero-Accident Campaign to small and medium-sized enterprises and tertiary industries, and promote the voluntary resolution of safety and health issues.
- (4) Full Development of Local Zero-Accident Campaign Activities
Encourage the creation and growth of local associations of workplaces that participate in the Zero-Accident Campaign, and encourage workplaces to share information on safety and health.

We at JISHA will do our utmost for the success of the 7th Action Plan, which we believe will further reduce accidents in the workplaces of Japan.

Activities of Industrial Safety and Health Organizations

National Safety Week 2003

The 76th National Safety Week was held by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) and JISHA with the support of five sector-specific industrial safety and health associations. Following the preparatory period (June 1–30), the National Safety Week was held at workplaces across the nation from July 1 to 7. Based on this year's theme, "Find Hidden Dangers and Improve Safety Management," active efforts were made at workplaces across Japan to establish systematic and continuous safety and health management practices in order to further improve safety.

During the week, workplace safety patrols were conducted in various workplaces, and the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare recognized the achievements of workplaces that have demonstrated excellence in their occupational safety and health management practices, and acknowledged



National Safety Week 2003 poster

individuals with commendable achievements in the field of safety and health. In the past, the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare's awards in the field of safety and health were divided, being awarded during National Safety Week in July and National Industrial Health Week in October. Starting this year, however, they are awarded during National Safety Week, as the safety and health awards. On July 1, 2003, the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare presented the Award for Excellence in Safety and Health to 18 workplaces, the Award for Outstanding Organizations in Safety and Health to 1 organization, and the Award for Commendable Achievement in Safety and

Health to 3 individuals, at the main award ceremony.

JISHA's OSHMS Certification Services Started

Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems (OSHMS) aim to promote the systematic and continuous voluntary implementation of safety and health management practices through a series of processes known as the "Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle." OSHMS are implemented with the cooperation of labour and management under the leadership of employers for the purpose of improving safety and health in workplaces. Since the Guidelines for Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems were issued in Japan in April 1999, they have been actively introduced at many workplaces.

JISHA provides training for OSHMS coordinators to support efforts of workplaces to introduce their own OSHMS. It has also provided a "JISHA Package," which contains a model OSHMS independently developed by JISHA to enable workplaces to efficiently establish their own systems as easily as possible.

Introducing an external evaluation and certification system for the efforts undertaken by employers will increase awareness of safety and health among employers themselves and will promote increased penetration and acceptance of OSHMS. In the recognition that these systems will contribute to improved



Safety Awards Ceremony



Certification Ceremony

“Endocrine Disruptive Chemicals: About Pregnancy and Birth,” and Dr. Haruhiko SAKURAI, Director, Occupational Health Research and Development Center, JISHA, on “How to Coexist with Chemical Substances.” More than 200 attendees listened with great interest to the presentations.

20th Kubota Award Winner

The Kubota Award was established in 1984 with a donation from the family of the late Dr. Jukou KUBOTA, the first director of JISHA’s Occupational Health Service Center. Dr. Kubota made significant contributions toward improving the level of occupational health in Japan. The award recognizes the meritorious service of individuals or organizations for their achievements in promoting occupational safety and health.

On April 11, 2003, the 20th Kubota Award was presented to Dr. Takayoshi KITAYAMA, President, Kitayama Occupational Health Consulting Office. As an industrial physician, Dr. Kitayama has made great strides in improving the levels of occupational health in Japan by tirelessly working for many years to improve corporate health management. He was an early pioneer in efforts to prevent health impairment due to Visual Display Terminal (VDT) work, and has made many proposals regarding health care diagnostic methods.

safety and health in workplaces, JISHA began offering OSHMS Certification Services on March 31. Nine companies were certified at the first certification ceremony, which was held on May 9, followed by three more at the second ceremony on June 26.

Special Lectures for the 20th Anniversary of the Japan Bioassay Research Center

The Japan Bioassay Research Center, which is managed by JISHA, was established by the former Ministry of Labour in 1982. The center is an experimental institution that performs toxicity tests on chemical substances and is equipped to perform

two-year inhalation carcinogenicity tests on animals. Special lectures commemorating the center’s 20th anniversary were held at the Hideyo Noguchi Memorial Hall in Tokyo on February 21.

JISHA President Kazuo HIROMI gave the opening remarks at the event, and Center Director Taijiro MATSUSHIMA offered an introductory speech entitled “The Japan Bioassay Research Center’s 20-Year Legacy and Recent Accomplishments.” This was followed by a presentation entitled “Can Cancer Be Prevented?” by Dr. Hiroyuki TSUDA, Chief, Experimental Pathology and Chemotherapy Division, National Cancer Center, as well as presentations by Dr. Fumiki HIRAHARA, Director, Gene Therapy Division, Yokohama City University Hospital, on

9th Ocean Seminar

The 9th “Safety and Health Ship” took 196 participants on an eight-day round-trip training voyage to Ishigaki Island from May 13 to 20, 2003. This voyage has been organized every other year since 1984. Its purpose is to train personnel involved in creating safe, healthy and

comfortable workplaces that are free of occupational accidents, and to breathe new life into workplace safety and health activities by providing workers with experiences that take advantage of the ship’s unique setting.

The training program is developed by a small team of people and follows an interactive curriculum that focuses on practical skills. It is divided into four courses: general safety and health, OSHMS, promoting zero-accident campaigns, and health promotion.

Activities of
Industrial Safety
and Health
Organizations



The “Safety and Health Ship”

Labour Administrative Activities

Main Points of the 10th Industrial Accident Prevention Program

On March 24, 2003, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) released its 10th Industrial Accident Prevention Program, which covers the five-year period from 2003 to 2007. The program was established by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare based on the Industrial Safety and Health Law and on opinions issued by the Labour Policy Commission. It contains important stipulations regarding the major policies for preventing occupational accidents and other matters pertaining to occupational accident prevention. This is the 10th program to be developed since the first five-year plan was created in 1958.

The subtitle for the program is "Aiming to Reduce Risk in the Workplace and Ensure the Safety and Health of All Workers." It contains guidelines in the following five basic areas: (1) elimination of fatal accidents; (2) securing safety and health at small and medium-sized enterprises; (3) promotion of occupational health strategies for the prevention of mental and physical stress at work; (4) development of safety and health management techniques to reduce risk; and (5) responding to the diversification in working patterns and greater employment mobility.

The program has four main goals: (1) to continue the declining trend in the number of fatalities due to occupational accidents and to significantly

reduce the annual number of fatalities to well below 1,500; (2) to reduce the total number of occupational accidents during the program period by 20% or more; (3) to reduce the number of cases of serious occupational illness, such as pneumoconiosis and work-related cancer, and eliminate anoxia and carbon monoxide poisoning, which often result in fatal accidents; and (4) to achieve a significant reduction in work-related illnesses such as health impairment due to overwork and work-related stress.

Regional Labour Administrative Policy for Fiscal 2003

The MHLW issued the Regional Labour Administrative Policy for fiscal 2003 on March 31, 2003, notifying prefectural labour offices nationwide. The policy identifies the following key measures for ensuring workers' safety and health:

- (1) Observation of and thorough compliance with industrial safety and health laws and related legislation.
- (2) Development of policies for ensuring workers' health:
 - a) Prevention of health impairment due to overwork
 - b) Improvement of mental health
 - c) Development of health maintenance policies
 - d) Occupational illness prevention measures

- e) Policies for preventing health impairments due to chemical substances.
- (3) Development of policies for significantly decreasing occupational accidents:
 - a) Promotion of occupational accident prevention measures in the construction industry
 - b) Improvement of the safety of machinery and equipment
 - c) Work-related traffic accident prevention policies
 - d) Explosion and fire accident prevention policies
 - e) Occupational accident prevention policies in tertiary industries.
- (4) Promotion of the creation of comfortable working environments.
- (5) Implementation of measures aimed at promoting the further improvement of safety and health in workplaces:
 - a) Promotion of the spread of Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems (OSHMS)
 - b) Promotion of voluntary safety and health management activities in small and medium-sized enterprises.
 - c) Promotion of voluntary chemical substance management at workplaces
 - d) Promotion of increased awareness among workers.
- (6) Enforcement of the amended Industrial Safety and Health Law.

New Guidelines for Measures on Smoking at Work

Following the enactment of the Health Promotion Law (Law No. 103, 2002) as of May 1, 2003, the MHLW, in order to further bolster its passive smoking measures to ensure workers' health and create comfortable working environments, revised its old guidelines and developed new Guidelines for Measures on Smoking at Work.

To significantly reduce passive smoking, the new guidelines recommend the establishment of smoking rooms that prevent smoke from escaping into non-smoking areas as much as possible. Also, whereas the old guidelines allowed for either exterior ventilation systems which exhaust tobacco smoke directly outside the building before it is dispersed or interior ventilation systems that filter tobacco smoke and disperse the filtered air into the room (using an air purifier), the new guidelines recommend smoking measures that include exterior ventilation systems because of the problem posed by the inability of air purifiers to remove the gases produced by burning tobacco.

Mental Care Guidelines for Accident Victims

The MHLW established guidelines on local mental health care treatment following an accident.

The guidelines focus on local governments, health centers, and mental health centers.

Society has developed a strong awareness of the need for so-called "mental care" following natural disasters such as the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake as well as crimes and other human-caused accidents. The MHLW therefore proposed an approach to integrating the various activities that could be implemented in the confusion immediately following a disaster. It addresses such specific issues as first response, the importance of natural recovery from trauma, diversified responses, and working with volunteers and the news media.

Partial Amendment of the Enforcement Ordinance of the Pneumoconiosis Law and the Ordinance on Industrial Safety and Health

On January 20, 2003, the MHLW issued the Ministerial Ordinance Partially Amending the Enforcement Ordinance of the Pneumoconiosis Law and the Ordinance on Industrial Safety and Health (Ordinance No. 2 by the MHLW, 2003). The partial amendment to the Enforcement Ordinance of the Pneumoconiosis Law went into effect on April 1, 2003 and the partial amendment to the Ordinance on Industrial

Safety and Health went into effect as of the date it was issued.

The amended Enforcement Ordinance of the Pneumoconiosis Law adds primary lung cancer to the list of complications of pneumoconiosis. It also makes it mandatory for employers to provide lung cancer testing to workers who have already been diagnosed with pneumoconiosis.

The amended Ordinance on Industrial Safety and Health extends issuance of the Personal Health Record to workers who have left hazardous jobs and been diagnosed with pneumoconiosis.

Formulation of Policy on Illegal Foreign Workers

On March 5, 2003, the National Police Agency, Ministry of Justice, and MHLW issued a report on the Policy on Illegal Foreign Workers. It is estimated that there are currently about 220,000 illegal immigrants in Japan, a number that continues to remain high. There are an increasing number of people from overseas who purposely plan to immigrate illegally by using various types of forged documents, illegally obtaining Japanese passports, or impersonating Japanese natives. There are also an increasing number who plan to immigrate secretly by ship.

To end this situation, the three bodies above have made plans to further strengthen their ties and promote

stronger efforts to control the maliciously unscrupulous tide of illegal foreign residents and workers. The policy emphasizes the following: (1) strengthening of administrative guidance and outreach activities among illegal foreign workers and suspicious brokers/employers; (2) strengthening of administrative guidance and outreach activities among employers and organizations; (3) strengthening of measures to prevent unauthorized activities by foreigners legally holding work visas; (4) strengthening of restrictions against illegal residency and illegal work crimes; and (5) active publicizing of efforts to prevent illegal workers both in Japan and abroad.

Report by the Asbestos Substitution Investigation Committee: Toward Prohibition

The MHLW Asbestos Substitution Investigation Committee issued a report on April 4, 2003 indicating that the use of asbestos is not necessary in most asbestos-containing products, and that other products can be substituted for those containing asbestos.

Construction materials that can be substituted for by non-asbestos products include extruded cement panels, decorated cement shingles for dwelling roofs, fiber-reinforced cement boards, ceramic siding boards, and asbestos cement pipes. The substitutable non-construction materials are adhesives

for insulation materials and friction materials (brakes and clutches).

The MHLW will make a public statement and issue a report to the World Trade Organization indicating that it will prohibit the import, manufacture, and use of asbestos-containing products for which substitutes are available. It plans to complete these procedures by this summer and then soon after to amend the Enforcement Order of the Industrial Safety and Health Law.

Research and Statistics

Report on Efforts to Prevent Workplace Violence in Europe and the United States

In recent years, Japan has reported incidents of workplace violence that have resulted in the injury or death of many workers. These include bank and jewelry store arson cases, as well as cases of robbery involving money transport vehicles and taxis. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), through JISHA, has thus conducted a study of workplace violence and the countermeasures against it in such places as Europe and the US, where it is already recognized as a growing social problem and some progress has been made in addressing it.

The report cites workplace violence statistics from the *US National Crime Victimization Survey Report* (NCVS). NCVS indicates that during the seven-year period from 1993 to 1999, there were an average of 1.7 million incidents of violence and about 900 cases of murder in the workplace per year.

The report also describes *Workplace Violence: A Report to the Nation* published by the University of Iowa Injury Prevention Research Center in the US, and categorizes workplace violence into four types: (1) criminal intent, (2) customers/clients, (3) worker-on-worker, and (4) personal relationships. It also discusses the state of laws and regulations in various advanced nations as well as guidelines for preventing workplace violence.

The examples in this study from Europe and the US have many lessons for how to move forward in examining policies for preventing workplace violence in Japan.

Number of Fatalities and Injuries in 2002

The MHLW has announced that the number of fatalities due to occupational accidents declined in 2002 to its lowest level since 1973 to 1,658. The number of fatalities has been below 2,000 for five consecutive years.

This year was down 132 (7.4%) from 2001, the year with the lowest number of fatalities up to that time (1,790).

The number of injuries from occupational accidents requiring four or more days' absence from work was also down to 125,918, a decrease of 7,680 persons (5.7%) from the previous year.

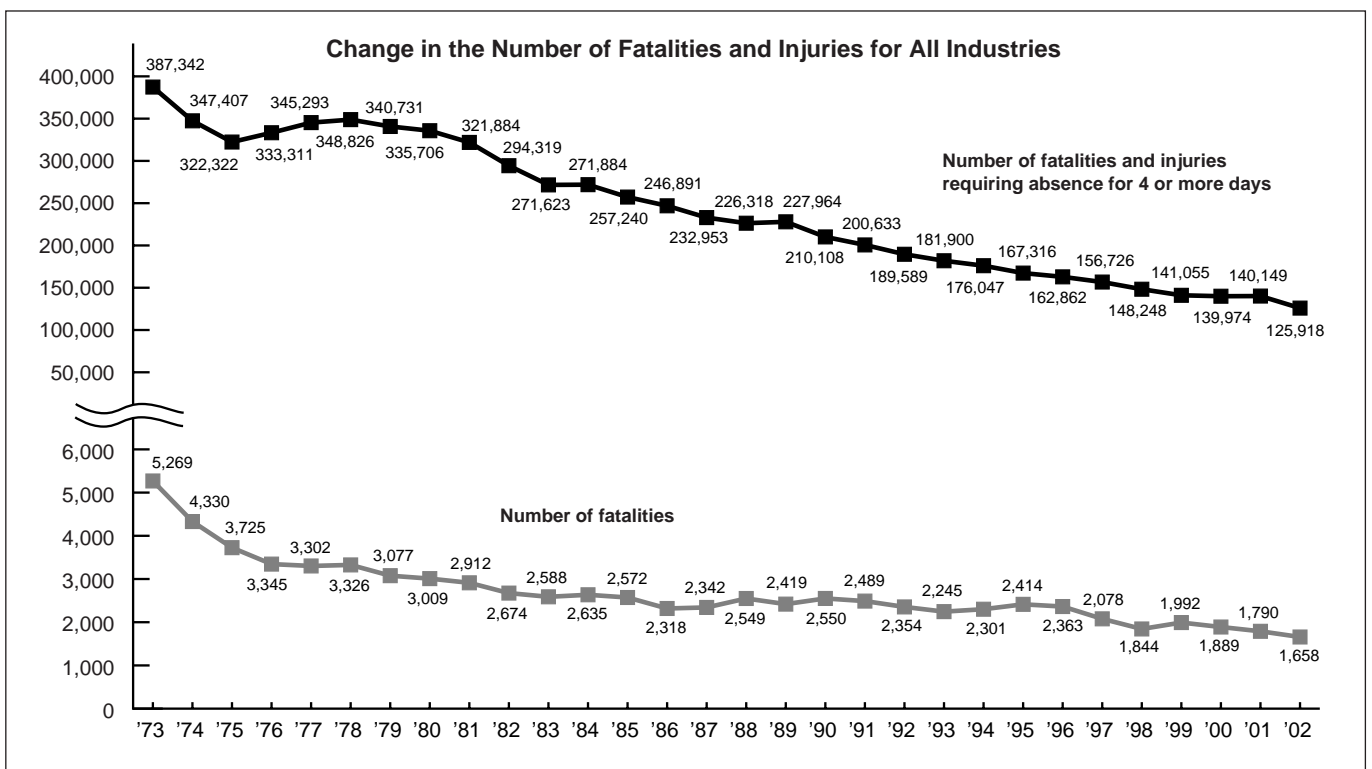
Number of Traffic Accidents and Injuries in 2002

The National Police Agency announced that in 2002 there were 936,721 traffic accidents, 8,326 traffic accident fatalities, and 1,167,855 injuries. The number of accidents and injuries was both down slightly from 2001 (the worst year for accidents), for the first decline in the past 12 years. The penalty for reckless driving resulting in injury or death was applied in 322 cases, 54 of which resulted in one or more fatalities. The number of fatal accidents attributed to drivers has sharply declined since the Revised Road Traffic Law came into effect in

Occurrence of Fatalities by Industry (1998-2002)

(Final)

Industry	2002		2001		2000		1999		1998	
	Fatalities	% of total	Fatalities	% of total	Fatalities	% of total	Fatalities	% of total	Fatalities	% of total
Total	1,658	100.0	1,790	100.0	1,889	100.0	1,992	100.0	1,844	100.0
Manufacturing	275	16.6	326	18.2	323	17.1	344	17.3	305	16.5
Mining	17	1.0	24	1.3	26	1.4	24	1.2	29	1.6
Construction	607	36.6	644	36.0	731	38.7	794	39.9	725	39.3
Passenger transportation	35	2.1	32	1.8	29	1.5	29	1.5	47	2.5
Overland freight transportation	234	14.1	241	13.5	271	14.3	270	13.6	225	12.2
Stevedoring	15	0.9	18	1.0	11	0.6	10	0.5	19	1.0
Forestry	49	3.0	54	3.0	53	2.8	71	3.6	69	3.7
Others	426	25.7	451	25.2	445	23.6	450	22.6	425	23.0



June 2002, stiffening penalties against those convicted of drunken driving and reckless driving.

258 Transportation Managers Forced Drivers to Carry Overweight Loads or Accept Overwork Driving Assignments

According to the National Police Agency, there were 258 Road Traffic Law violations in which the police arrested transportation managers for such offenses as forcing truck drivers to carry overweight loads or accept overwork driving assignments.

This number was 1.9 times higher than in 2001 (when there were 137 violations). Overweight loads accounted for most of these violations (136 or 53%), followed by such infractions as driving without a license, abandonment, and overwork driving.

Unemployment Rate Hits High of 5.4% in 2002

According to the Labour Force Survey released by the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, the unemployment rate (percentage of

unemployed people in the working-age population) in 2002 rose 0.4 points from 2001 to 5.4%, the worst rate since statistics began to be compiled in 1953. The average annual number of unemployed persons in 2002 was 3.59 million, up 190,000 from 2001. This is the 11th consecutive year of increase.

Domestic Topics



First Conference to Prevent Accidents from Sleep Apnea Syndrome

On February 26, 2003, the driver of a *Hikari* bullet train fell asleep at the controls on the JR Sanyo Line. The bullet train was traveling at 270 kilometers per hour while the driver slept for about eight minutes. An automatic operating system brought the train to a halt.

An investigation showed that the driver suffered from sleep apnea syndrome (SAS). SAS is a sleep disorder that causes an individual to stop breathing frequently while sleeping, preventing sound sleep. As a result, such a person suffers from excessive sleepiness during the day.

On March 5, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport instructed the railway companies in Japan to enact policies to address sleep disorders. It also initiated a liaison conference, which was held for the first time on March 7. The conference allowed attendees in various businesses to share information on the policies established to prevent drivers in transportation industries from having accidents or driving problems due to sleep disorders. They discussed policies pertaining to such issues as personnel management, roll call/spot inspections, training for drivers, and health management.

Manufacturers Encouraged to Bolster Safety Management Systems Following Explosion at Fireworks Factory

Ten workers died in an explosion at a fireworks factory in Kagoshima City on April 11, 2003. Following this incident, on April 14, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) advised all fireworks manufacturers, through the trade organization, to make doubly sure that their safety management systems include repetitive inspections of manufacturing facilities and methods as well as thorough safety training for employees involved in the manufacturing process. On the same day, METI called upon prefectures to give the same advice to the fireworks manufacturers within their jurisdictions.

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JISHA was established in 1964 under the Industrial Accident Prevention Organization Law. Its purpose is to eliminate industrial accidents by improving Japan's industrial safety and health levels through voluntary accident prevention activities among businesses throughout Japan.

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