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Japan Screen Topics

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FUNERAL FOR LATE PRIME MINISTER NEW CABINET INSTALLED

129 feet 3 min. 35 sec.

1. (BUDOKAN) A public funeral for the late Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira, sponsored by the Government and the ruling Liberal-Democratic Party, was held July 9 at the Nippon Budokan Hall. Ohira died of a heart attack June 12.
2. (CARTER CLOSE-UP) Dignitaries from nations all over the world -- including four heads of state, ten prime ministers and other envoys -- attended the memorial service together with Japanese political and business leaders, representatives from the arts and thousands of invited guests.
3. (CROWN PRINCE) Leading the prayers for the deceased prime minister were Japan's Crown Prince and Princess as representatives of the Imperial Family.

Mrs. Shigeko Ohira offered flowers to the memory of her late husband on behalf of the Ohira family.

4. (CARTER; HUA; MARCOS) Among the many dignitaries paying honor to the memory of the Japanese prime minister, and offering condolences to his family, were: U.S. President Jimmy Carter, China's Premier Hua Guofeng and Philippine First Lady Imelda Marcos.

White carnations, a flower particularly loved by Ohira, were offered individually by the 6,000 guests in attendance at the memorial service, and by the general public.

5. (DIET BUILDING) Several days after Ohira's funeral, the National Diet Building was the scene of voting to name a new prime minister for Japan. A special session of the Diet convened, and as provided by Japan's Constitution, each member of the Diet came forward to cast a ballot in favor of one of the candidates for the post.

When all the votes were in, an official count was taken and the announcement made that veteran parliamentarian Zenko Suzuki would serve as Japan's 70th prime minister.

6. (MEETINGS; CABINET) Prime Minister-elect Suzuki immediately began a canvass of the best-qualified political figures to serve in Cabinet posts. Leaders of the ruling Liberal-Democratic Party were consulted, and one-by-one names were selected to fill the vital positions of the government.

When the Cabinet positions were all finalized an official announcement of its membership was made, and a formal attestation ceremony was held at the Imperial Palace. Then, the new Suzuki Cabinet gathered for its first official meeting -- in which the ministers pledged to carry on with the policies which had been promoted by the late Prime Minister Ohira.

After the initial meeting the Cabinet ministers made their first public appearance, posing for the traditional photograph of the new leaders of Japan's government.

'BIRDMEN' CHALLENGE RECORD

88 feet 2 min. 26 sec.

1. (JUMPING FROM TOWER) The fourth Japan International Birdman Rally was held recently at Japan's largest lake, Biwako. Would-be 'birdmen' competed in sailing home-made gliders across the lake, launching themselves from a special tower.

There was a festive atmosphere to the competition, as large crowds of spectators and cheerers gathered to watch the gliding and root for their favorites among the competitors.

2. (CHECK-UPS; JUMPING) After last-minute checks of their equipment the 'birdmen' took their turns at challenging the world record for this event. Most of the 119 birdmen were serious

challengers, all-out for the record glide and the prize offered by the popular "Challenge World Records" television program which telecast the rally. Many of the ingenious, completely home-made gliders worked quite well and covered respectable distances.....others failed to 'glide' very far at all.

About twenty of the entries were in the special comic category, judged for the originality and humor of their costumes; and most of them failed to cover much distance. But the large crowd appreciated their spirit and imagination and gave them loud applause as each took a daredevil leap off the tower (and straight into the lake).

3. (LONG GLIDE) The most successful of this year's competitors did very well indeed, setting a new world record of 101.6 meters -- a very tough mark for the 'birdmen' of next year to surpass.

MASTER CONFECTIONER

142 feet 3 min. 57 sec.

1. (VARIOUS SWEETS) Traditional Japanese sweets come in a wide variety of shapes, flavors, consistencies and colors. There is an etiquette to these confections, which demands that specific types be eaten during certain seasons and according to the occasion:

wedding, tea ceremony, etc. Color, form and flavor all play a role in determining, for example, just what sweet should accompany an autumn tea ceremony, or a cherry blossom viewing party in April.

2. (MURAYAMA) Kōichi Murayama of Tokyo is a master producer of traditional sweets for one of the oldest firms in Japan. Leaving his wife and daughter each morning, Murayama rides the train to his 450-year-old company, where he has worked for 45 years and is the "master confectioner" of the firm's 462 employees.

3. (HAND WORK) All of these traditional sweets are completely hand-made, from only natural ingredients. According to the season, Murayama may be turning out confections in the form of chestnuts, cherry blossoms, plums, apricots and many other distinctive forms.

His primary working materials are bean paste, rice and sugar -- along with the various natural flavorings added to create specific tastes. Each confection is meticulously and slowly crafted by Murayama's expert hands; and each is required to be just as pleasing to the eye as it is to the palate.

Several ingredients may be combined in a single treat, with a number of layers of various flavors surrounded by a final coating chosen to blend and harmonize perfectly with the colors, tastes and consistencies of the center.

4. (SHOGI GAME) Now and then Murayama takes a break from his work to enjoy a game of Japanese 'Shogi' [a form of chess] with one of his fellow confectioners. But before long it's back to

the shop, and to creating more tasty treats. A favorite sweet for the autumn season is molded in the form of a maple leaf, and the coloring must be just right to enhance this effect.

5. (3-COLOR MIXTURE) As the master, he is often called upon to prepare unique, elegant confections for special occasions. To do so, the first step is often choosing one of the great many special wooden molds used for such large-scale confections.

Murayama then calls on his decades of expertise and exquisite sense of color, taste and form in order to create a truly fantastic display which blends all these to perfection and results in a delicate, delicious treat.

For Kōichi Murayama, master producer of traditional Japanese sweets, such superlative efforts are simply a matter of course.

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