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# ULTIMAS NOTICIAS DEL JAPON

(Semana del 23 al 27 de agosto, 1993)

(VIP 93)

(DISTRIBUCION EXCLUSIVA)

### MULTIPLE BIRTHS INCREASE DRAMATICALLY

The ratio of multiple births, including triplets and quadruplets, to the general population in Japan has jumped dramatically, according to the results of a survey by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Over the past decade the birthrate has approximately doubled for triplets and grown about fivefold for quadruplets. Initially the increase was attributed to the use of fertility drugs that stimulate the ovulation of more than one egg at a time. The ministry now notes that the increase in multiple births could also be attributed to the growing use of the in vitro fertilization procedure in which multiple fertilized eggs are implanted into the mother's womb.

According to the ministry, the ratio of twins to the general population remained steady at 6 pairs per 1,000 live births from 1951 through 1968, but hit a new record of 6.8 pairs per 1,000 in 1987. This record has been surpassed every year since, hitting 7.0 for the first time in 1990, and climbing to 7.2 in 1991.

In the case of triplets, there were between 50 and 60 sets per 1 million live births from 1951 through 1974, but with the introduction of fertility drugs in the mid-1970s the birthrate began to increase, and 96 sets were born in 1981 alone. The widespread use of in vitro fertilization in the latter half of the 1980s pushed the figure beyond 100 per year, jumping to 168 in 1990, and 176 in 1991.

In the past, a maximum of 2 sets of quadruplets were born per 1 million live births, but around 1980 this figure began to increase to between 3 and 6 sets. Over the past several years it has jumped dramatically, exceeding 10 sets for the first time in 1983, then climbing to 13 sets in 1990 and 16 sets in 1991. Only 4 sets of quintuplets were born between 1900 and 1974, but 28 sets were born between 1975 and 1991.

In vitro fertilization was first performed in Japan around 1983. Several ova are fertilized outside the womb, then reimplanted, leading to a greater chance of multiple-birth pregnancy than in the general population. Previously it had been common to implant 6 to 7 fertilized eggs, but now 3 to 4 are deemed sufficient.

The number of cases of in vitro fertilization stood at 160 through 1988, then rose sharply. In 1990, 1,178 women became pregnant through this procedure, resulting in 784 deliveries. Multiple births occurred in 219 cases, accounting for 28 percent of the total, and resulting in 1,048 actual births. In 1991, 2,015 women became pregnant and delivered 1,700 infants. Out of 1,349 deliveries, 290, or 21 percent, were multiple births. It is expected that the number of multiple births will continue to rise in the future as the use of fertility drugs and in vitro fertilization becomes more widespread.

(The material herein is based on domestic Japanese news sources and is offered for reference purposes. It does not necessarily represent the policy or views of the Japanese Government or of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.)

**SUDDEN DEATH STRIKES MOST FREQUENTLY  
IN BED, BATH, AND TOILET**

Most sudden deaths occur during sleep, in the bath, or on the toilet, according to the findings of a recent survey by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. The survey also revealed that one-third of people struck down by sudden death have a history of hypertension. The ministry is to investigate warning signs and situations in which sudden death may occur and examine mental stress and other possible causes. It hopes to shed more light on the way people are suddenly afflicted, find out how people can take care to avoid such an outcome, and look after effective preventative measures.

The survey questioned the families of 10,065 people who had died suddenly (defined as the occurrence of death within 24 hours of the onset of an attack) in metropolitan Tokyo since 1991 about the deceased's apparent state of health immediately before death and the situation in which the death occurred. Previous surveys have used the same approach but always have been limited to about 1,000 cases. This is the first survey carried out on such a large scale.

The results showed that among the nearly 82 percent of sudden death victims who were aware of their illnesses and had taken continuous treatment, 35 percent had suffered from high blood pressure, 23 percent from heart disease, and 14 percent from diabetes.

A total of 18 percent, however, had been completely unaware of their condition and had taken no treatment. Among victims in the 30 to 50 age group, those with no known ailments outnumbered those with a history of illness by two to one.

Looking at the circumstances in which the attacks that led to death occurred, the greatest share of 33 percent happened while asleep, followed by 9 percent in the bath and 5 percent on the toilet. When the figures are adjusted to take account of the average time spent on each activity, however, the much longer time spent in bed (an average of 6 to 8 hours) than in the bath (about 30 minutes) or on the toilet (about 10 minutes) changes the picture significantly. Calculated in this way, deaths in the bath or on the toilet became four to five times more frequent than deaths in bed. The reason is that blood circulation speeds up, blood pressure rises, and the heart and blood vessels are put under strain in the bath or on the toilet.

Males account for about 62 percent of all sudden death cases and for nearly 70 percent of cases in the apparently healthy group. Among the direct causes of death, more than 70 percent are accounted for by diseases of the circulatory organs, especially cardiac infarction and other diseases of the heart. One person in eight afflicted by sudden death was in the prime of life. Other sources indicate that stress and lack of sleep are common causes of sudden death.

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CONVENIO DE COOPERACION INTERNACIONAL

Entre la Agencia de Cooperación Internacional (JICA) y la Agencia Minera Metálica del Japón (MMAJ), junto con la Empresa Nacional de Minería (ENAMI) y la Agencia de Cooperación Internacional (AGCI) de Mideplan han firmado el convenio Alcance de Trabajo, a través del cual, se explorarán los recursos minerales en las áreas de Veraguas (II Región) y Progreso (III Región, al oriente de Copiapó). En el proyecto de Veraguas se analizará el prospecto del yacimiento Prophry Copper, y en el de Progreso se estudiará el prospecto del yacimiento del tipo manto.

En las dos áreas se han hecho investigaciones básicas, tales como las investigaciones geológicas, sondaje químico de la tierra, exploración física, por lo cual, a partir del mes de octubre próximo está programado hacer sondaje. Mientras tanto JICA extenderá las donaciones de equipos y envío de expertos.

Desde 1975 hasta 1991, JICA y la MMAJ han realizado 5 proyectos con SERNAGEOMIN, y han recopilado informaciones geológicas muy valiosas. El año pasado, ENAMI comenzó a desarrollar un proyecto tipo explotación, Proyecto Cerro Negro, con la cooperación de JICA y la MMAJ, con la cual se espera profundizar más aún el intercambio de personas y técnicos en el campo minero.

**C O M U N I C A D O   D E   P R E N S A**  
**Comité Siglo 21 de la Cuenca del Pacífico**

Durante la visita oficial al Japón, en noviembre de 1992, del Primer Mandatario chileno, S.E. don Patricio Aylwin, los Gobiernos de Chile y el Japón convencidos de la importancia de la Cuenca del Pacífico y del rol de puente que les cabe a ambos países en ella, acordaron el establecimiento del Comité Siglo 21 de la Cuenca del Pacífico.

Siguiendo este acuerdo se realizará en Santiago, del 13 al 15 de septiembre próximo, la primera reunión del Consejo Directivo del Comité Siglo 21 de la Cuenca del Pacífico, en el cual participarán destacadas personalidades - diplomáticas, académicas, empresariales y de prensa - de Chile y del Japón.

En esta reunión se determinará a qué deberán orientarse las actividades futuras del Comité Siglo 21, y también seleccionar los temas concretos que deberán estudiar, tales como la cooperación bilateral en el futuro, además del estudio de medidas para promover la mutua comprensión entre ambos países, basados en el intercambio cultural, académico y de personalidades, la colaboración económica e industrial con miras al Siglo 21 y el rol que podrían desempeñar los países participantes del Comité en el fortalecimiento de las relaciones entre Asia-Pacífico y Latinoamérica.



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