

# What's New?

Niihama City

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## Lost In Translation

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“I’m a man of my word” is a phrase often tossed around in the English language. It simply means I will do as I say, although easier said than done. It is difficult for any of us to keep all of our promises. Things come up that cause us to have to cancel last minute, or we just don’t feel like following through with that thing we said we would. Since living in Japan, I have grown unwillingly accustomed to people canceling last minute, or better known as dotakyan.

Dotakyan is a word that is, just as the Japanese like to do to every phrase, shortened. The actual phrase is “dotanba kyanseru,” literally translated to mean last minute canceling. I found it strange that they had a single word they used for these situations. Yet at the same time, I found it to be perfectly fitting in the Japanese culture.

Things always seemed to start and end in the same way upon meeting people in Japan. I meet the person (we’ll call him A-san), we converse, we make plans to hang out, and eventually we exchange numbers. As I follow up on the plans that A-san and I had made, it seemed that quite too often I would get a similar reply, “Thanks for the invite! Unfortunately, something has just come up and I will not be able to make it out. Please let me know the next time you want to hang out.”

I am not saying all Japanese people do this, because that is not true. However, through experience, this seemed to happen more often to me than it did in the States. I brought this issue up to a few of my Japanese friends one day; but did not get the reaction I had anticipated. Instead, I got a slight smirk from one and a couple of confused glances from the others. This is where my Beginners Japanese Etiquette 101 class had begun.

According to my friends, it is both polite and perfectly acceptable to say yes to the initial invite. “Most people do it,” they said. It is then up to that person to follow through or reject the invitation, no hard feelings attached. This may be where the cultural difference kicks in. Growing up in the US, I have been taught that people are expected to keep their word. In Japan, things work in a different way. That is because they are not necessarily giving their “word.” Instead, they are handing you a piece of spoken collateral that may be used in their advantage to snatch back at anytime. I would often perceive the situations as a commitment to a plan, yet to them, they had never committed themselves to any plan at all.

Dotakyans extremely annoyed me at first. But as time went on and I began to understand the Japanese way of thinking, it all began to make more sense. Sure, being a man of your words and doing as you say makes more sense to me. However, I finally realized that these people were not being rude when they cancelled. This was something that I would have to get used to.

Every country has a different way in which it goes about certain situations. For example, you would not catch a single person slurping up their noodles in an American restaurant, while it is seen as a sign of gratuity towards the meal in Japan. Living in a foreign country has been a rollercoaster ride; I have experienced both the ups and downs. No matter where people go they will experience things they are not used to. It is up to that person to either accept the differences or deny them. In my case, I had simply been lost in translation.

George Lea is a fourth year student at The Ohio State University currently taking a year off and participating in the Ichimiya Group/Ohio State Exchange Program. He enjoys studying Japanese, playing tennis and inline skating. He loves dogs!



**How about contributing an article for “What’s New?”?**  
Any topic is fine, such as your self-introduction, your comments or your essay. Please feel free to make contact with :[kasi4386@plum.ocn.ne.jp](mailto:kasi4386@plum.ocn.ne.jp)

# MOVIES

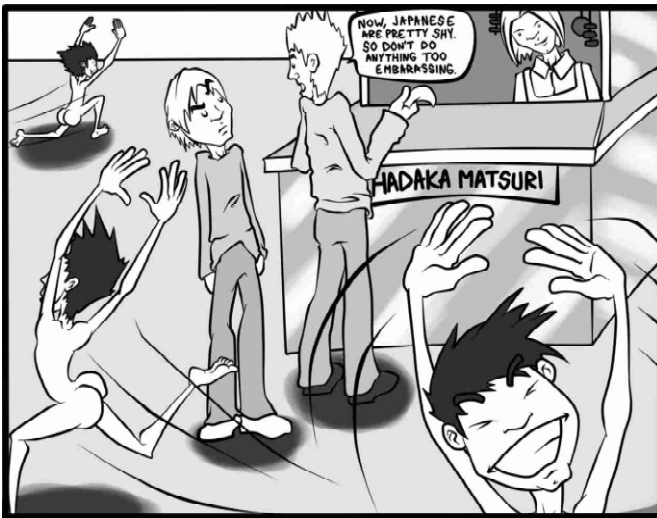
## TOHO PLEX (AEON Shopping Center)

March 13 ~	DRAGONBALL EVOLUTION	English/ Dubbed
March 14 ~	MADAGASCAR 2	Dubbed
March 20 ~	VALKYRIE	English
March 27 ~	MARLEY & ME	English
March 28 ~	WATCHMEN	English
April 10 ~	Red Cliff Part 2	Chinese/Dubbed
April 24 ~	BURN AFTER READING	English

### Information Service

Tape (24hours) : 0897-35-3322

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SGG would welcome any suggestions, questions or ideas for monthly articles.

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The editors for this month are K. KAIDA & T. KASHIMOTO

## Prospective Indonesian Care Workers

### Have Started Training



#### *From The Ehime Shimibun*

101 prospective Indonesian care workers started working at 54 facilities in 24 prefectures on January 29th as part of the EPA program (Economic Partner Association).

In Ehime Prefecture, one trainee each for Matsuyama and Niihama have started to work at special nursing care homes for elderly people.

They are expected to acquire nursing care experience at these facilities and aim to pass the national exam for Japanese care worker's licenses.

In the field of nursing care, worker shortages have become a more and more serious problem throughout the country. Workers from abroad are expected to fill the gap. However, whether foreign workers can successfully work depends on how familiar they become with the Japanese language.

In order to ensure smooth operation of the facilities, a good command of Japanese as well as a clear perception of the religious and cultural differences between Japan and Indonesia, where most people are Muslims, will be absolutely necessary.

Malta Halsanti has started training at Wakamizu-kan, Special Nursing Home in Wakamizu, Niihama.

These prospective workers came to Japan last August and since then have been learning Japanese. They have also been studying about the Japanese way of life for about six months at training centers around Yokohama. The Indonesian trainees will acquire three years of field experience in their respective nursing homes as required for their care worker's qualifications and will then have to take the national exam for the license.

However they will only have one chance to take the exam, if they fail they will have to return to their home country and will be given no opportunity to retake the exam.

In addition, 104 Indonesian nurse candidates have come to Japan. They are going to finish their Japanese training session on February 12 and will then be dispatched to 47 hospitals across the country to start nurse training on February 14.

Meanwhile, another Bilateral Economic Partner Agreement, this time with the Philippines came into effect late last year. A maximum of 450 trainees who aim to become licensed nursing care workers and nurses, are coming to Japan from the Philippines in April or May.

## Useful Information for shopping

Various Kinds of Milk Sold in Supermarkets



You can find a variety of cartoned milk on the shelf at the supermarket. Chinese characters (漢字) indicating the kind of milk are printed on the carton. We hope that the following information will help you to make your choice.

### Variety of milk Fat/ Calories in 200ml 漢字 (meaning)

Non-fat 無脂肪乳  $\doteq$  0.1%  $\doteq$  80cal 無(non) 脂肪(fat) 乳(milk)

Low-fat 低脂肪乳  $\doteq$  2.0%  $\doteq$  100cal 低(low)

Non-processed 牛乳  $>$  3.5%  $\doteq$  130cal 牛(cow) 乳(milk)

High quality 特濃  $>$  4.4%  $\doteq$  160cal 特(specially) 濃(processed)

You may find processed milk (加工乳) with extra nutrition (calcium, iron) added to it.

A carton of non-processed milk has a notch on the top.

## Cherry blossom viewing spots

### around Niihama

**Takinomiya Park** (Takinomiya, in the west)

**Hirose Park** (Uehara, near Zuiohji temple)

**Yamane Park** (Sumino-Shinden, near  
Minetopia)

**Minetopia Besshi** (Tatsukawa, in the south)

**Ikeda Pond Park** (Funaki, in the east)

### Along the Kokuryo River

**Kuroshima-kaihin Park** (Kuroshima,  
in the northeast)

**Inariyama Park** (Ohjohin, in the southwest)

# ONE POINT JAPANESE

## いろいろな「あまい」(1)

A: このケーキ、甘くて おいしいですね。

Kono keki, amakute oishidesu ne.

(This cake is sweet and delicious, isn't it?)

B: そんなに 食べて、大丈夫ですか。

Sonnani tabete, daijōbu desu ka.

(Is it all right for you to eat so much?)

A: 甘い 物には 目が なくて、つい 食べ過ぎて しまうんです。

Amai mono ni wa me ga nakute, tsui tabesugite shimaun desu.

(I'm fond of sweets and I soon eat too much.)

B: わたしも ダイエット 中 なんですが、甘い 誘惑に 負けて、いつも 後悔 しています。

Watashi mo daietto chū nandesu ga, amai yūwaku ni makete, itsumo kōkai shite imasu.

(I am also on a diet, but I always regret giving in to the temptation of sweets.)

C: みなさん 甘党 ですね。

Minasan amato nandesu ne.

(You two have a sweet tooth, don't you?)

わたしは 辛党 なので、お酒 の つまみ になるようなものしか 食べない ですよ。

Watashi wa karato nanode, osake no tsumami ni naruyōna monoshika tabenain desu yo.

(As I am a drinker, I only eat food that goes well with alcohol.)

A: うちの 両親 が、息子 に 甘くて、困 っています。

Uchi no ryōshin ga, musuko ni amakute, komatte imasu.

(I am having a problem because my parents indulge my son.)

B: だれ でも 孫 には 甘くなる ものですよ。

Dare demo mago niwa amakunaru mono desu yo.

(Anybody is apt to indulge their grandchildren.)

A: わたしが 子どもの頃 は とても 厳 しかったのに・・・。

Watashi ga kodomo no koro wa, totemo kibishikatta noni . . .

(But when I was a child, they were very strict...)

息子が わがまま になるんじゃないかと、心配 です。

Musuko ga wagamama ni narunja naika to, shinpai desu.

(I'm worried that my son will become spoiled.)

B: 大丈夫 ですよ。

Daijōbu desu yo. (Don't worry.)

★ ～に 目がない・・・be fond of sweets, have a sweet tooth

★ 甘党・・・have a sweet tooth

★ 辛党・・・be a drinker

★ ～に 甘い・・・indulge

< by Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

Feel free to contact us at ~

Tel : 050-3521-0055 (Fumie Imamura).