

# national

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## exploiting trainees p labor: lawyers

Abiko, the group's secretary general, said in Tokyo at The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan.

Pointing at the death of a Chinese trainee in Ibaraki Prefecture in 2008 that was recognized as "karoshi" (death from overwork) by a labor office in the prefecture early this month, Abiko said the case is only "the tip of the iceberg."

Twenty-seven foreign nationals, most of them in their 20s and 30s, who came to Japan under the training program died in fiscal 2009, marking the second-highest tally on record after the 35 deaths seen the year before. An earlier report on the 2009 fatalities said nine died of brain or heart disease, four died while working, three committed suicide, three died in bicycle accidents and the rest died of unknown causes.

The training and internship programs, established in 1993

by the government, allow foreigners to work as technical interns at companies for up to two years after they undergo a year of training.

"I lost all heart," said Li Quing Zhi, a 34-year-old Chinese, who also attended the news conference.

Zhi, who came to Japan under the program in 2007, said he worked from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day at a fixture-making company in Saitama Prefecture with only 21 days off a year. He was paid only part of his overtime wages for the first year, just ¥400 per hour. After he complained, Zhi's work was ended last March.

"If the Japanese industry needs labor from foreign countries, Japanese citizens have to discuss how to accept them as labor with a full guarantee of labor rights. In this system, they are not guaranteed labor rights," Abiko said.



Crossing borders: Olympic gold medalist Yasuhiro Yamashita gives Israeli and Palestinian children a judo lesson at a dojo in Jerusalem on Wednesday. KYODO

## Judo gold medalists break down barriers by teaching Israeli, Palestinian kids

Jerusalem  
KYODO

Japanese men's judo Olympic gold medalists Yasuhiro Yamashita and Kosei Inoue taught the martial art to some 50 Israeli and Palestinian children at a dojo in Jerusalem.

Speaking in front of about 30 Israeli and 20 Palestinian children, Yamashita, a gold medalist at the 1984 Los Angeles Games, said, "I think it is meaningful that Israeli and Palestinian children are grappling

together to do judo."

The event was held as part of activities by the Solidarity of International Judo Education. Yamashita heads the Japan-based nonprofit organization aimed at spreading judo internationally.

Yamashita told the children about the time that Egyptian judoka Mohamed Ali Rashwan did not target Yamashita's injured right leg in the final of the men's judo open weight class at the Los Angeles Olympics.

"Judo is a sport that develops an attitude of respect for other people," Yamashita said.

"I'd like you to make a point of respecting those around you even after returning home from the dojo."

Inoue, the gold medalist in the under-100 kg class at the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney and who is now studying in Britain, taught his classes in English.

A 13-year old Palestinian boy, who took part in the practice wearing a borrowed judo jacket and a pair of shorts, said: "(Mr. Inoue) was very strong. I want to participate in the Olympics as a Palestine representative in the future."

## Diet to convene July 30 to Aug.

KYODO

The ruling and main opposition parties agreed Tuesday to hold an extraordinary session from July 30 to following the July 11 Councilors election, ers said.

As the ruling coalition's Upper House makes the election, Prime Naoto Kan will likely face difficulty in passing legislation although his Democratic Party of Japan retains a narrow majority in the House of Representatives. The upcoming Diet session was finalized between DPJ and the Liberal Democratic Party, the main opposition force.

Key debates are set for on Aug. 2 and 3 in the House and Aug. 4 and 5 in the upper chamber.

Meanwhile, DPJ lawmakers said the party is considering postponing its presidential election for a week from the planned date of Sept. 12.

The ruling party is also holding the legislative election on Sept. 11, lawmakers said.

With the delay, the extraordinary Diet will also be postponed to late September from the originally planned Sept. 12.

## Lawsuits loom in inedible rice scam

Records were doctored to make it appear as if the rice had been turned into animal feed, the ministry said.

The Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry looked into the distribution of the imported rice, which totaled 82 tons, in October 2008, when the problem of substandard rice surfaced, but found nothing questionable at the time.

But a separate probe this

year into the use of rice in food processing led to the allegation of illegal use of substandard rice by the companies in question.

Although it is not clear if the rice has already been consumed, the ministry has confirmed that 19 tons were used as an ingredient in "shochu" spirits. There are thought to be no health concerns arising from its consumption.

## Abductees not executed: Kim

BY BEFORE Y

新発見 フォトリ

customer tries out local Mall Rera in Chitose Prefecture, has some 2

ny-pinchers

electric fans are selling this summer as consumers continue to curbing and opt for curbing to help them weather the wave, gaining the upper hand over more expensive alternatives.

Customers rushed to retail cheap electric fans during a three-day weekend Monday, when ex

British