



**SAUCY COMEBACK.** Michihiro Kono, president of Yagisawa Shoten Co., walks to his company's new headquarters in Rikuzentakata, Iwate prefecture, northeastern Japan. Four years after the March 11, 2011 tsunami, the company has been saved through Kono's conviction, crowd-funding, and the unexpected survival of its vital ingredient. (AP Photo/Eugene Hoshiko)

## Soy sauce makes 'miracle' comeback in tsunami-wrecked Japan

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other manufacturers. Kono turned an old inn in Rikuzentakata into his office and then built a new factory in a nearby town on land vacated by a school. It began soy production in early 2013.

But resurrecting Yagisawa's soy sauce flavor would not have been possible if the original cultures had not been found, mainly by sheer luck.

The cultures were in storage at a university medical research laboratory where Kono had donated them for possible cancer-fighting research. The lab was destroyed by the tsunami, but the containers with the cultures were found nearby by its researchers, intact.

The sauce, made from soy beans and wheat, must sit for two years before it can be sold. That's why the sauce, given the name "Miracle," went on sale for the first time only in November.

These days, the company is still losing money, but sales are back to about 70 percent of pre-disaster levels, and it has found new customers including a fancy restaurant in France. Before the tsunami, it had mostly supplied businesses. Now, it's selling more soy direct to consumers, many of them eager to help a company rebuild.

Still, the success of Yagisawa is an exception to the prevailing story of loss and death the tsunami has left.

The Rikuzentakata coastline that used to be filled with quaint storefronts like

Yagisawa's and residential homes is now a barren stretch of brown dirt, except for trucks and cranes.

A memorial replica of a solitary pine tree that survived the tsunami is perched on top of a hill, a symbol for the city. But there are hardly any visitors.

Rubble and debris have been cleaned up. Construction work is underway, razing nearby hills, moving the dirt with conveyor belts that stretch for nearly two miles, and stacking the dirt into mounds.

The goal is to raise the shoreline by 30 to 36 feet above sea level, and rebuild a community in the tsunami zone, on top of the elevated area, a project expected to take three more years.

Kono acknowledged he was skeptical about the effort, noting that neighboring towns had offered to take Rikuzentakata residents in.

But he plans to be right back with a store, maybe a restaurant, when the project is finished. He has already opened a small café in the construction area, selling soy cakes, Yagisawa t-shirts, and a variety of soups, pastes, and sauces, including "Miracle."

Mamoru Araki, 41, owner of one of a handful of restaurants left in the area, who grew up with Kono, said Yagisawa sauce is not too sweet, just right for his sashimi, or raw fish.

Big challenges remain for reconstruction in the region, but at least his friend's company was back.

"That taste has returned," he said.

his department viewed the matter seriously and was conducting an internal investigation, including whether the supervisor was on or off duty at the time in question.

"The work is on rotation. ... If he is on a working shift, this is serious. We will definitely take action if there is any misconduct," he told reporters.

Liow said the ministry didn't investigate the matter earlier as they were waiting for the report by the independent safety investigation team.

The ministry's probe will be "very fast," he added, without saying when it would be completed.

After the last contact, the plane deviated from its flight path, turning sharply west and then south, according to analyses of transmissions to a satellite. Despite an exhaustive search in the southern Indian Ocean where the plane was believed to have run out of fuel and crashed, no trace of wreckage has been found.

In late January, Malaysia's government formally declared the plane's disappearance an accident and said all those on board were presumed dead.

The report also showed that the battery of the underwater locator beacon for the

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## Inbee Park wins HSBC Women's Champions by two strokes over Ko

SINGAPORE (AP) — Inbee Park claimed her 13th career Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) title by winning the HSBC Women's Champions, shooting a 2-under 70 in the final round to win by two strokes.

Park, who started the day with the same two-stroke lead, had birdies on holes 7 and 11 at Sentosa Golf Club to finish the tournament at a 15-under 273, clear of 17-year-old Lydia Ko, who also shot a 70.

Park hasn't carded a bogey since the third round of the Honda LPGA Thailand, a streak of five consecutive bogey-free rounds.

"This week was just incredible," Park said. "I don't think I can even believe myself that I didn't make any bogeys for 72 holes. I mean, if I thought about bogeys, then am I going to make bogey; if I was afraid of the bogeys, I'd probably make bogeys. But I thought, whatever happens, it's just meant to be."

Stacy Lewis had a bogey on the final hole for a 72 that left her in third place, four strokes off the lead.

Azahara Munoz, who was runner-up last year, tied for fourth at 10-under with Shanshan Feng and So Yeon Ryu.



**13TH LPGA TITLE.** Inbee Park of South Korea kisses the trophy after winning the HSBC Women's Champions golf tournament on March 8, 2015 in Singapore. With the win, Park claimed her 13th career Ladies Professional Golf Association title. (AP Photo/Wong Maye-E)

Defending champion Paula Creamer had a 74 to tie for 55th place.

Park, Ko, and Lewis played in the final group, with Park holding the overnight lead at 13-under and Ko and Lewis tied in second place at 11 under.

Ko made consecutive birdies on the fourth and fifth holes to pull even. They remained tied for the lead at 14 under after both had a birdie on the seventh, while Lewis trailed by two strokes.

Ko stumbled with a bogey on the eighth, allowing Park to make the turn with a one-shot advantage.

But Ko's chances of a seventh career LPGA

victory and her third win in as many weeks were all but erased with bogeys on holes 12 and 13.

"On this course, it's not that hard to lose shots," Ko said. "There are some lip outs and there are so many close ones. But I finished well with a birdie on 18, and I had a great stretch of three weeks, and I would have never imagined to have one second place and two wins."

Lewis erased her bogey on the 10th with a birdie on the 13th, only to drop another shot behind with a bogey on the 18th.

The next LPGA tournament, the JTBC Founders Cup, takes place March 19 through 22.

### 2014 Exemplary Community Volunteer Award Recipient: IRCO Asian Family Center



The IRCO Asian Family Center (AFC) was established in 1994 by the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) to provide multilingual and multicultural community-based services. The nonprofit center serves more than 5,200 individuals and families each year in our area's diverse Asian communities — Bhutanese, Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Lao, Mien, Nepali, Pacific Islander, Thai, and Vietnamese — as well as the mainstream population. In 2013-2014, AFC worked on many projects impacting the Asian community, including the Diversity and Civic Leadership program's "Engage" civic engagement survey, which helped Asian and Pacific Islander (API) community leaders collect, analyze, and report data to city and government officials; the Asian Pacific Islander Community Leadership Institute, a program that builds leadership skills and addresses racial disparities facing API communities; and the Cover Oregon Outreach and Enrollment program, which assists APIs in accessing health insurance. In addition, AFC has several ongoing outreach programs, including afterschool programming that supports school-age students' academic achievement; programs that assist families in preparing children younger than five years old for school; anti-poverty programs that help families stay in their homes and keep their utilities on; and more. To learn more, visit <www.irco.org>.

#### The Asian Reporter Foundation is accepting nominations for its 2015 "Exemplary Community Volunteer" awards.

The recognition banquet will be held Thursday, April 23, 2015 at northeast Portland's TAO Event Center.

Nomination forms and award guidelines are available for download at <www.ARFoundation.net>.

The nomination deadline is Wednesday, March 18, 2015 at 5:00pm.

#### The Asian Reporter Foundation's 17th Annual Scholarship & Awards Banquet features:

Most Honored Elder Awards	Hawaiian dinner
Exemplary Community Volunteer Awards	Cultural entertainment
College Scholarship Awards	Silent auction