

# Bluefin tuna goes for \$632,000 in first Tsukiji auction of '17

By Elaine Kurtenbach  
AP Business Writer

**T**OKYO — A Japanese sushi chain boss bid a winning 74.2 million yen (\$632,000) for a 466-pound bluefin tuna in what may be Tsukiji market's last auction at its current site in downtown Tokyo.

The winning bid for the prized but imperilled species was the second highest ever after a record 155.4 million yen bid in 2013 at the annual New Year auction. This year's price was \$2,981 per kilogram, compared with about \$7,930 per kilogram for the 2013 record-setting auction price.

Kiyomura Corp. owner Kiyoshi Kimura posed, beaming, after the predawn New Year auction with the gleaming, man-sized fish, which was caught off the coast of northern Japan's Aomori prefecture. His company, which runs the Sushi Zanmai chain, often wins the annual auction.

Last year's New Year auction was supposed to be the last at Tsukiji's current location. The shift to a new facility on



Tokyo Bay was delayed due to soil contamination at the former gas plant site. Japanese are the biggest consumers of the torpedo-shaped bluefin tuna, and

surging consumption of sushi has boosted demand, as experts warn the species could go extinct.

A report by the International Scientific

**AUCTION ACTION.** A prospective buyer inspects the quality of frozen tuna before the first auction of the year at Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo, on January 5, 2017. A Japanese sushi chain boss bid a winning 74.2 million yen (\$632,000) for a 466-pound bluefin tuna in what may be Tsukiji market's last auction at its current site in downtown Tokyo. Last year's New Year auction was supposed to be the last at Tsukiji's current location, but the shift to a new facility on Tokyo Bay was delayed due to soil contamination at the former gas plant site. (AP Photo/Eugene Hoshiko)

Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean last year put the population of bluefin tuna at 2.6 percent of its "unfished" size, down from an earlier assessment of 4.2 percent.

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission tightened international limits in 2015 as the species remained under threat, halving the catch of bluefin tuna under 30 kilograms from the average caught between 2002 and 2004.

But overfishing has continued and in some areas bluefin are harvested at triple the levels considered sustainable.

## United Arab Emirates says five diplomats killed in Afghan blast

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) says five of its diplomats were killed in a bombing in Kandahar, Afghanistan. The UAE said it was flying the nation's flags at half-mast in their honor.

Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the UAE's prime minister and vice president, said on Twitter that "there is no human, moral, or religious justification for the bombing and killing of people trying to help" others.

Afghan officials previously said the blast killed five people and wounded 12. Among the wounded were Kandahar governor Homayun Azizia, as well as UAE ambassador Juma Mohammed Abdullah al-Kaabi.

The Taliban issued a statement saying they did not plant the bomb, instead blaming an "internal local rivalry" for the attack.

## Murakami's new book to be released February 24 in Japan

By Mari Yamaguchi  
The Associated Press

**T**OKYO — Haruki Murakami's new book has a title, though its content remains a mystery.

*Kishidancho Goroshi*, which means "Murder of a Knight Commander," will hit Japanese bookstores February 24, the book's publisher, Shinchosha Publishing Co., said. Overseas availability isn't yet known. Shinchosha said the book will have two parts, subtitled "Emerging Ideas" and "Moving

Metaphor."

The esoteric titles suggest a contrast from the past works by the acclaimed best-selling writer.

"The titles perhaps give you an impression that is different from Murakami's past works, don't they? What is its content like?" Shinchosha said in an e-mail. The publisher would only say more hints would come later. Murakami has described it as a very strange story.

Murakami, 67, usually shies away from the limelight, although he has spoken out on issues such as

world peace and nuclear energy. He began writing while running a jazz bar in Tokyo after finishing college. His 1987 romantic novel *Norwegian Wood* was his first best-seller, establishing him as a young literary star.

His most recent novel, *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage*, was released in Japan in 2013, and a collection of short stories, *Men Without Women*, was published in 2014. His million-seller *1Q84* in 2009 was one of his longest novels.

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