

Japanese woman honored by Guinness as oldest person at 116

By Yuri Kageyama
The Associated Press

TOKYO — A 116-year-old Japanese woman who loves playing the board game Othello has been honored as the world's oldest living person by Guinness World Records.

The global authority on records officially recognized Kane Tanaka in a ceremony at the nursing home where she lives in Fukuoka, in Japan's southwest. Her family and the mayor were present to celebrate.

Tanaka was born January 2, 1903, the seventh among eight children. She married Hideo Tanaka in 1922, and they had four children and adopted another child.

She is usually up by 6:00am and enjoys studying mathematics.

The previous oldest living person was another Japanese woman, Chiyo Miyako, who died in July at age 117. The oldest person prior to Miyako was also Japanese.

Japanese tend to exhibit longevity and dominate the oldest-person list. Although changing dietary habits mean obesity has been rising, it's still relatively rare in a nation whose culinary tradition focuses on fish, rice, vegetables, and other food low in fat. Age is also traditionally respected here, meaning people stay active and feel useful into their 80s and beyond.

But Tanaka has a ways to go before she is the oldest person ever, an achievement of a French woman, Jeanne Louise Calment, who lived to 122 years, according to Guinness World Records.

Guinness said the world's oldest man is still under



ELDEST AT 116. Kane Tanaka, a 116-year-old Japanese woman, gestures after receiving a Guinness World Records certificate, back, at the nursing home where she lives in Fukuoka, southwestern Japan. Tanaka, who loves playing the board game Othello, was honored as the world's oldest living person by Guinness World Records. (Takuto Kaneko/Kyodo News via AP)

investigation after the man who had the honors, Masazo Nonaka, living on Japan's northernmost island of Hokkaido, died in January at age 113.

Indonesia court allows dam in orangutan habitat to proceed

MEDAN, Indonesia (AP) — Environmentalists have lost a court challenge to a Chinese-backed dam in Indonesia that will rip through the habitat of the most critically endangered orangutan species.

The state administrative court in North Sumatra's capital, Medan, ruled that construction can continue despite critics of the 510-megawatt hydro dam providing evidence that its environmental impact assessment was deeply flawed.

Experts say the dam will flood and in other ways alter the habitat of an orangutan species numbering only about 800 primates and likely make it impossible to take a crucial step toward ensuring the species survives — reconnecting fragmented forests the primates are spread across.

Scientists announced the discovery of a third orangutan species, *Pongo tapanuliensis*, in November after DNA analysis and field study revealed unique characteristics.

The population, with frizzier hair and distinctively long calls for the males, was previously believed to be Sumatran orangutans, also critically endangered. Without special protection, it's in danger of rapid extinction, scientists say. The species is found only in the Batang Toru forest, where the dam will be built.

Announcing the decision of a three-judge panel, presiding judge Jimmy C. Pardede said the witnesses and facts presented by the



DAM PROBLEM. The director general of conservation of natural resources and ecosystems at the Indonesian Forestry Ministry, Wiratno, center, inspects a screen displaying the map of the Batang Toru Ecosystem in North Sumatra where a population of a species of orangutans was found, during a press conference in Jakarta, Indonesia, in this November 3, 2017 file photo. Scientists are calling for the cancellation of a Chinese-backed hydroelectric dam in Indonesia that threatens the habitat of the recently discovered Pongo tapanuliensis, which numbers only 800 animals. (AP Photo/Tatan Syuflana, File)

Indonesian Forum for the Environment, the country's largest environmental group, in its case against the North Sumatra provincial government were irrelevant.

The group, known by its Indonesian acronym Walhi, said it would appeal.

"We will take all available legal channels," said Dana Prima Tarigan, the group's executive director for North Sumatra.

The group said the judges considered the case from a narrow

administrative perspective and ignored its environmental and conservation dimensions.

China's state-owned Sinohydro is building the dam, which is reportedly financed by Chinese loans. Critics of the project say it's part of China's "Belt and Road" plans to carpet Asia with Chinese-financed infrastructure and extend its economic and political influence.

Anti-dam campaigners and groups in favor of the project held small protests in Batang Toru and outside the Chinese Consulate in Medan.

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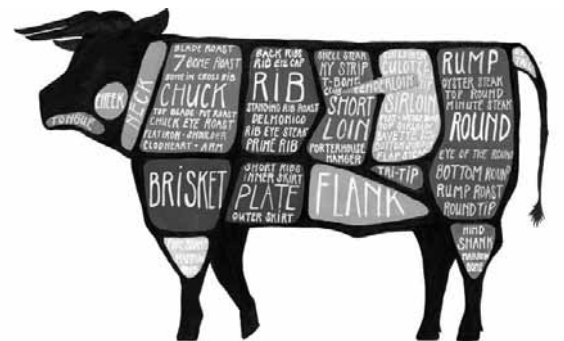


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