

## News Briefs

By The Associated Press

### 14 die in Japan monorail accident

TOKYO — A 40-ton steel girder rolled off an elevated monorail under construction in Hiroshima on yesterday, crushing vehicles at a traffic light below and killing 14 people, police said.

Nine people were injured by the 213-foot section of the monorail's horizontal frame, which demolished 11 vehicles, police official Kiyomitsu Umakoshi said.

He said the steel girder was being moved by construction workers when it slipped off a support column and fell.

"I clearly saw it come falling down on to my car," a weeping woman driver said in a nationally televised interview. "I saw about four or five cars ahead of me get crushed."

The cars were waiting at a traffic light on the road below, which parallels the elevated monorail route, Umakoshi said.

Some of the cars were flattened to less than half a yard in height. Police and construction workers spent more than two hours removing the girder from the crushed cars to get to the victims below, Umakoshi said.

Rescue workers then used power tools to remove the trapped victims, as horrified bystanders watched.

### Taj Mahal casino announces new chief

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — A former Nevada gaming executive was named the fifth president of Donald Trump's Taj Mahal Casino Resort in the property's troubled first year.

Trump announced Wednesday the appointment of Dennis Gomes, who was in charge of the Golden Nugget Casino Hotel in Las Vegas, Nev.

The Taj Mahal opened April 2 to great fanfare as the city's largest and most lavish casino. The property has led the city's casinos in gross gaming revenues but has failed to meet the average \$1.3 million a day that analysts said it needed to break even.

"The Taj Mahal is Atlantic City's most fabulous casino, and it deserves to have the No. 1 man in the business running it," Trump said in a statement.

Gomes formerly directed the Nevada Gaming Control Board's Audit Division and the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement's special investigations unit.

His experience in the Nevada gaming industry includes top management positions at Summa Corp. and Hilton Hotels Corp. casinos.

Gomes also was a senior executive at the Aladdin Hotel in Las Vegas and was president of the Dunes Hotel & Country Club before becoming president of the Golden Nugget.

### Fisherman catch live torpedo

SHINNECOCK, N.Y. — Four Long Island fishermen have a story to tell about the 3,500-pounder they netted.

And this fish story is no tale about the one that got away — just ask the Coast Guard.

The fishermen brought up their nets Wednesday morning 60 miles south of this coastal town and discovered they had snagged a 19-foot-long American torpedo that was fired during the 1940s, said Coast Guard Petty Officer Tom Young.

Navy explosives experts were called in from Newport, R.I., and the boat was evacuated when it was determined that the torpedo's 1,600-pound warhead was live.

The torpedo was an MK-15 with a 6-foot-long warhead and was probably fired from a submarine during the 1940s, Young said.

Police sealed off an unpopulated area two miles in from shore because the warhead had a 3½-mile fragmentation zone.

Officials were trying to determine what to do with the torpedo and the fishermen's boat, the Shinnecock 1, which was anchored in 57 feet of water 1½ miles off Tianna Beach with the torpedo on deck, Young said yesterday.

### 472 die during Malawi floods

BLANTYRE, Malawi — Flash floods that washed away entire villages in southern Malawi killed at least 472 people, including refugees from Mozambique's civil war, a regional official said yesterday.

Several hundred people are still missing and an estimated 150,000 people have been left homeless by the floods, which were caused by torrential downpours Sunday in the Mulanje district, the official Malawi News Agency said.

Regional administrator Stewart Winga said the bodies of 472 flood victims had been recovered by late Wednesday, many of them buried in mud slides in the mountainous terrain.

Winga, who heads rescue operations, said the dead included an unspecified number of Mozambican refugees. In recent years, more than 900,000 refugees have fled to Malawi to escape the bloody civil war in neighboring Mozambique.

Malawi's president for life, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, flew to the stricken area by helicopter yesterday, touring ruined buildings in the Chiringa and Phalombe villages, 44 miles southeast of Blantyre.

"This is how nature is. It can be kind or it can be cruel," MANA quoted Banda as telling survivors.

### Bring back those 'borrowed' hotel towels

PITTSBURGH — The Westin William Penn is granting amnesty to those who have taken towels, swiped silver or carried away crystal from the historic hotel in the past 75 years.

The William Penn wants to borrow the items for a display of memorabilia that will be set up June 17-22 in honor of the hotel's 75th anniversary.

"A lot of people have things they take as sort of souvenirs or tokens of their visit," said Marianne Lee, the hotel's sales manager. "We've lost linens, lamps, coffee pots, even a heavy French dresser that used to sit in the Grant Street lobby."

The first section of the hotel was built in 1916, and a second section was added in 1927.

Lee said over the years, the hotel also sold furnishings in public sales. Items the hotel would like to include in the display are a copy of the 1916 opening night menu and the original draperies embossed with the hotel crest.

One item that will be included in the display is a bubble-making machine that became a trademark for band leader Lawrence Welk.

### Pregnant woman, fetus die in crash

BERWICK — A pregnant woman was killed Wednesday afternoon in a violent head-on crash.

Paramedics were unable to save the fetus, which they believe was almost fully developed.

Lisa Sue Sitkowski, 35, of rural Shickshinny, died when her van was struck by a pickup truck that crossed the road into her lane, state police at Shickshinny said.

Police identified the driver of the truck as Mark T. Klein, 34, of rural Harveys Lake. Sitkowski was pronounced dead at the scene of massive traumatic injuries by Dr. R. Lynn Carlson, a member of Geisinger Medical Center's medical helicopter team.

Klein was flown by helicopter to GMC in Danville, where he was listed in critical condition, according to the Press Enterprise. Police said he suffered head injuries.

### Jailbirds barred from toy surprise

SHELTON, Wash. — Inmates at the Washington Corrections Center can enjoy their Cap'n Crunch cereal. But they have to give back the prize inside.

The "magic spinner" toy that comes in each box is considered contraband, said prison spokeswoman Barbara Lovelace. The small plastic spinning tops are not included on a list of personal property items inmates are allowed to have, she said.

"I'm positive tops aren't on it," Lovelace said of the list, which includes a number of different games, art materials and other items. The prison store began stocking Cap'n Crunch recently, at the request of inmates.

An inmate possessing a magic spinner would not be punished, but the toy would be confiscated and tossed in the garbage, Lovelace said yesterday.

The toy cannot be removed prior to purchase because it is sold in a food item.

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