

# Princess of Japan could give birth to first heir in 30 years

## ap news capsules

By the Associated Press INTERNATIONAL

**TOKYO** — Japan reacted with joy today as the palace announced that Crown Princess Masako appears to be pregnant. If she gives birth to a boy, he would be the first potential heir to the ancient Chrysanthemum Throne born in more than 30 years.

Palace officials made the announcement in a brief news conference. They offered little further information other than to say the 37-year-old princess is "showing signs" that she is pregnant.

Masako, a graduate of Harvard University and a former diplomat in Japan's Foreign Ministry, wed Crown Prince Naruhito in 1993. She suffered a miscarriage in December 1999, weeks after newspaper reports that she was pregnant touched off a media frenzy about the possibility of Japan finally having a new heir to the throne.

Palace officials were criticized then for announcing the pregnancy too early. Reflecting their extreme caution this time, officials said today that a more formal announcement would not be made until there was absolutely no doubt.

But according to reports, Masako

could give birth in November or early December. If she has a boy, he would be second in line to the throne after Naruhito, 41, the eldest son of Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko.

**AMSTERDAM**, The Netherlands — NATO-led peacekeeping forces arrested a top war crimes suspect in Bosnia and hustled him to The Hague today to stand trial on genocide charges linked to Europe's biggest massacre since World War II.

Dragan Obrenovic, former chief of staff of a Bosnian Serb unit, was arrested Sunday in Bosnia by U.N. investigators working with U.S. troops. Dutch radio and television said Obrenovic was brought to the Netherlands during the night and put into a detention cell at the U.N. war crimes tribunal.

He was expected to make an initial appearance before U.N. judges within a few days to enter a plea.

Obrenovic was under a secret indictment for allegedly participating in the July 1995 attack against Muslims in the eastern enclave of Srebrenica during Bosnia's 1992-1995 war. Srebrenica was a so-called safe zone protected by

the United Nations until Serb forces overran the town, killing up to 7,500 Muslims and Croats and expelling the rest of the Muslim population.

### NATIONAL

**CINCINNATI** — The sign in the Music Hall parking garage summed up a week of racial tension: Weekend events canceled.

Now, more than a week since the police shooting of an unarmed black man spawned protests that resulted in vandalism, looting and more than 700 arrests, city officials have to decide if it's time to lift a nighttime curfew that has been in effect since Thursday.

After three days of 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfews, city officials moved back the start of Sunday's curfew to 11 p.m. Today they had to decide whether to lift the curfew or tell the Cincinnati Reds to reschedule their game with the Milwaukee Brewers from Tuesday night to that afternoon.

City Council planned a special session on Tuesday to discuss demands by black leaders for a city ordinance allowing officials to bypass Cincinnati police officers and firefighters when hiring new chiefs for those divisions.

The city charter requires that chiefs be promoted from the ranks, but black leaders say that perpetuates alleged problems

within the divisions. Council's meeting will be its first since last Monday's meeting of the law committee was taken over by about 250 shouting demonstrators, paving the way for clashes in the streets.

**WILKES-BARRE**, Pa. — A prison inmate released on furlough for the holiday weekend was charged with killing his girlfriend on Sunday, police said.

Robert E. Protsman, 42, formerly of Shickshinny, was charged with criminal homicide for allegedly bludgeoning to death Rose Higgins, 44, in a Plymouth apartment early Sunday.

Protsman told investigators he'd visited several bars in Plymouth, about 100 miles northwest of Philadelphia, before he ran into Higgins and accused her of cheating on him.

He said the two were together for four years and were engaged to be married. He had been in prison for three months for not paying \$13,320 in child support for three children.

Protsman was remanded to the same correctional facility from which he had been released.

**BIRMINGHAM**, Ala. — Several civil rights-era cases have been revived in recent years, but few have touched

hearts like the 1963 murder of four black girls, killed when a bomb blast shattered the exterior wall of a church bathroom where they were tidying up for worship.

Today, the infamous case was to return to public scrutiny with the start of jury selection in the trial of former Ku Klux Klansman Thomas Blanton Jr., one of four men suspected of planting dynamite in the church. Blanton, 62, has pleaded innocent.

Judge James Garrett said jury selection will probably take all week and testimony is expected early next week.

Prosecutors contend Blanton was one of four Klansmen identified within weeks of the blast, but until now the only person who has stood trial is Robert "Dynamite Bob" Chambliss, convicted in 1977 on state murder charges. Chambliss died in prison and has always denied the bombing.

Last week, Garrett indefinitely delayed the trial of Bobby Frank Cherry, who was indicted last year but found to be mentally incompetent to stand trial. Herman Cash, the fourth Klan suspect, died in 1994. He was never charged.

**STUART**, Fla. — A motorist who allegedly used his car to drag a police officer was fatally shot, authorities said.

Stacy Lee Scales, 32, was pronounced dead early Sunday. Officer George McLain was treated at a hospital for minor foot and hand injuries and released, police said.

McLain stopped Scales for a traffic violation Saturday night, said police Sgt. Martin Jacobson. Scales then allegedly drove off, dragging the officer with him.

McLain shot Scales but police declined to give any more details.

Relatives of Scales, who was black, said the shooting by McClain, who was white, was racially motivated. But Jacobson said a videotape of the incident showed McLain acted properly.

The Martin County Sheriff's Office and the State Attorney's Office were looking into the incident at the request of the police chief, Jacobson said.

### WASHINGTON

**WASHINGTON** — An estimated 26 million filers are facing a midnight deadline for getting their income tax forms on the way to the Internal Revenue Service.

But residents of New England and upstate New York will have a day's grace thanks to the Patriot's Day holiday in Massachusetts, home to an IRS processing center that handles their returns.

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