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*Translated from the Japanese by Louise Heal Kawai*

**riverrun**

# KEY STAFF AT THE NORTH KANTO TIMES, AUGUST 1985

● **MANAMI TAKAGI**  
PA to Chairman

● **SHIRAKAWA**  
Chairman, NKT

● **IIKURA**  
Managing Director, NKT

## EDITORIAL

● **TODOROKI**  
Chief News Editor

● **KASUYA**  
Editor-in-chief

● **DIMURA**  
Managing Editor

## CIRCULATION

● **ITO**  
Chief of Circulation

## ADVERTISING

● **UKITA**  
Chief of Advertising

## PHOTOGRAPHY

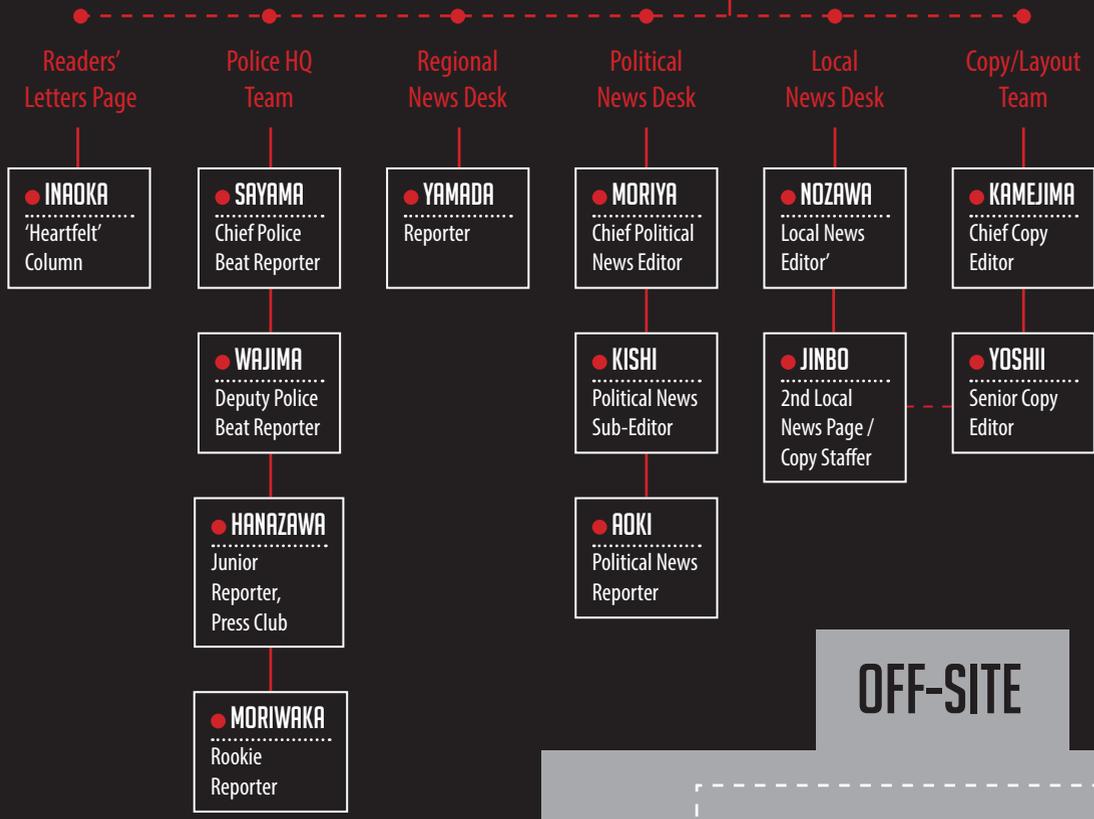
● **SUZUMOTO**  
Assistant Manager, Photography

## GENERAL AFFAIRS

● **GUNJI**  
Facilities Manager

## BOOK PUBLISHING DIVISION

● **MORO**  
Chief of Book Publishing



● **ANZAI**  
Circulation Representative

● **KURASAKA**  
General Manager, Advertising

● **TONO**  
Photographer

● **KAIZUKA**  
Deputy Chief, Book Publishing

● **MIYATA**  
Advertising Executive

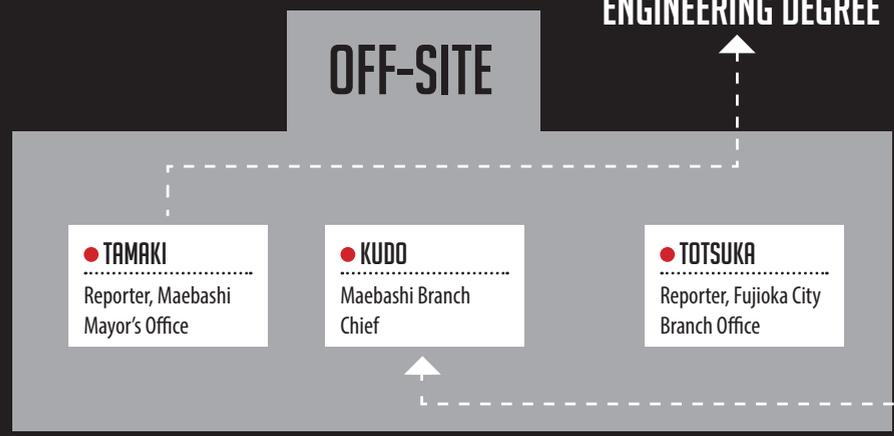
## JAL FLIGHT 123 CRASH DESK

● **YUUKI**  
JAL Crash Desk Chief

### EDITORIAL ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS

● **CHIZUKO YORITA**  
Editorial Administrator

**DRAFTED DUE TO CRASH-RELATED STAFF SHORTAGE**



## CHARACTER GLOSSARY

### **Kyoichiro Anzai**

Key member of the Circulation Department at the *North Kanto Times*, who has been in the job for just under ten years. In his mid-forties, three or four years older than Yuuki. An extremely enthusiastic character: fond of drink, laughter, talking, and shaking people heartily by the shoulder. A fanatical rock climber, who single-handedly started the *NKT*'s hiking club.

### **Rintaro Anzai**

Thirteen-year-old son of Kyoichiro and Sayuri Anzai. A shy boy by nature. (*Rintaro is thirty years old when he climbs Tsutate with Yuuki in 2003.*)

### **Sayuri Anzai**

Anzai's wife, and Rintaro's mother. A genuine and unassuming person.

### **Aoki**

Political Correspondent at the *North Kanto Times*. Is away on an assignment in Tokyo at the time of the JAL crash.

## **Mitsugu Endo**

Anzai's previous climbing partner, who lost his life climbing Tsutate in 1972.

## **Kanae Fujinami**

Head of the Ministry of Transportation's Aircraft Accident Investigation Committee, otherwise known as the JAL 'crash investigation team'.

## **Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda**

A former Japanese Prime Minister, who left office in December 1978.

## **Gunji**

Works in the *North Kanto Times's* General Affairs/Facilities Department. Has often recommended its reporters to upgrade to using word processors, but in vain. Joined the company at the same time as Yuuki. Loyal to Chairman Shirakawa, but also an advocate of neutrality in the workplace.

## **Hanazawa**

Junior police beat reporter at the *North Kanto Times*, and third in line at police headquarters behind Sayama and Wajima. A twenty-six-year-old with delicate features; has three years' experience as a reporter. Accompanies Sayama up Mount Osutaka to the crash site on the first day.

## **Harasawa**

One of the members of the Ministry of Transport's crash investigation team, who it transpires is a good friend of Tamaki's

University Engineering Professor. He implies that the cause of the JAL crash was likely the rear bulkhead.

## **Iikura**

Managing Director of the *North Kanto Times*, and the second most powerful figure at the company. Reportedly consolidating his support base in Circulation, ahead of making a play for the Chairman's position. His subtle politicking has earned him the nickname 'The Clever Yakuza'. He is former Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda's closest ally at the *NKT*.

## **Inaoka**

Veteran member of the *North Kanto Times's* Editorial Department, in charge of the readers' letters page, 'Heartfelt'. Worked for the paper's Arts and Culture page for many years. Is due to retire the following year.

## **Ito**

Head of the Circulation Department at the *North Kanto Times*. Has a distinctively oily voice, a hooked nose and a moustache. He is Anzai's boss, and is politically sided with Managing Director Iukura.

## **Jinbo**

Member of the Copy team at the *North Kanto Times*. Responsible for the second local news page. Up until the previous year he had been a reporter at the paper's branch office in Tatebayashi City. He is viewed by Senior Management as a failed reporter. Between twenty-five and twenty-six years old, he often has a flushed expression on his face.

## **Kaizuka**

Deputy Chief of the *NKT*'s Book Publishing Division. Prior to this post he worked in the paper's editorial department. Yuuki contacts him to sound out the idea of a potential JAL crash book.

## **Kamejima**

Chief Copy-Editor at the *North Kanto Times*. Has a round, moon face, and a habitually cheerful disposition. Nicknamed *Kaku-san* by his colleagues.

## **Kasuya**

Editor-in-Chief at the *North Kanto Times*. Has a very large physical frame. Is non-confrontational, and as such has the nickname 'The Conciliator'. Not politically aligned to either the Chairman or the Managing Director.

## **Kishi**

Sub-editor on the *NKT*'s Political News Desk. Joined the company the same time as Yuuki. Has a long, narrow face. Has two daughters, named Kaz and Fumi, who – despite having adored him as infants – now treat him, in his own words, like 'some kind of germ'.

## **Kudo**

The *North Kanto Times*'s Maebashi Branch Chief. He is about to turn fifty; has a professional reputation for panicking, and a personal one for gambling. Is often found at the *keirin* cycle track.

## **Kurasaka**

General Manager of the *North Kanto Times*'s Advertising Department. Is a couple of years older than Yuuki and was previously a

member of the editorial department. Described as having a square face, and falls out with Yuuki when his shopping mall advert is dropped without notice.

### **Mina Kuroda**

Previously Personal Assistant to Chairman Shirakawa, though left her position three weeks prior to the JAL crash under a cloud of controversy.

### **Miyata**

A staff member in the *North Kanto Times's* Advertising Department. Also member of the company's hiking club, and an enthusiastic rock climber. Is heavily tanned, and wears glasses.

### **Ayako Mochizuki**

The female cousin of Ryota Mochizuki. Twenty years old and a second-year Media Studies and History of Journalism student at Gunma Prefectural University.

### **Ryota Mochizuki**

Junior *NKT* reporter who died in August 1980, six days into his assignment with Yuuki. Death was classified as a traffic accident, though is widely believed to be a suicide, driven by shame.

### **Moriwaki**

A first-year reporter at the *North Kanto Times* who only started going on assignments in the few months before the JAL crash.

### **Moriya**

Chief Political News Editor at the *North Kanto Times*, and Kishi's and Aoki's senior.

## **Moro**

Chief of the *NKT*'s Book Publishing Division. Has longish hair that falls below his ears. A smug, know-it-all type.

## **Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone**

Japan's Prime Minister at the time of the JAL crash. When the story breaks, he is preparing to visit the controversial Yasukuni Shrine to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

## **Nozawa**

Copy-Editor in the *North Kanto Times*'s Local News Section. Started at the paper the same time as Yuuki, but doesn't talk to him, due to a grudge held about a joint murder case scoop in 1970, for which Yuuki alone received the Editor-in-Chief's Award.

## **Oimura**

Managing Editor at the *North Kanto Times*. Nicknamed 'The Firecracker', owing to his short fuse. Is loyal to Chairman Shirakawa, and was one of the main beneficiaries from the paper's golden 'Okubo/Red Army' era.

## **Sayama**

The chief police beat reporter at the *North Kanto Times*. Thirty-three years old, with ten years' reporting experience. Orphaned young: his own father committed suicide when he was a child, and his mother died in a traffic accident. Like a younger brother to Yuuki, and saved Yuuki's career by coming to his rescue over the Ryota Mochizuki incident in 1980.

## **Shimagawa**

Detective within the Prefectural Police Department, and currently Head of their Forensics Division. An elegant dresser, with the outward appearance of a salaryman. Two or three years older than Yuuki, he and Yuuki have not seen one another for roughly five years prior to the JAL crash.

## **Shirakawa**

Chairman of the *North Kanto Times*, and holder of the most powerful position in the company. Was previously Editor-in-Chief at the paper. Is wheelchair-bound, having damaged his spinal cord in a traffic accident six months prior to the JAL crash. Has a notorious temper, which has earned him the nickname ‘The H-Bomb’.

## **Suetsugu**

An old climbing acquaintance of Anzai’s. In his mid-forties, and around the same age as Anzai. Deeply suntanned; with a wide, friendly face. His small shoes show he has lost his toes to frostbite.

## **Suzumoto**

Assistant Manager of the Photography Department at the *North Kanto Times*. He points out his junior colleague Tono to Yuuki when Yuuki comes looking for him.

## **Manami Takagi**

Personal Assistant to Chairman Shirakawa. Described as stunningly beautiful. Started in the role three weeks before the JAL crash.

## **Tamaki**

A reporter in his third year at the *North Kanto Times*, currently covering the Maebashi City Mayor's Office. It transpires he is the only reporter at the company with a degree in engineering, and so is subsequently reassigned to follow the Ministry of Transportation's Aircraft Accident Investigation Committee. Has an earnest face, and wears his hair in a neat side-parting.

## **Todoroki**

Chief Local News Editor at the *North Kanto Times*. Wears gold-rimmed spectacles with dark lenses. Along with Managing Editor Oimura, he has profited most from the paper's Okubo/Red Army era – to the extent he still carries clippings from the period in his pocket diary.

## **Tono**

A young member of the *North Kanto Times*'s Photography Department, in his fourth year at the company. Sports a neat crew cut, and his wife is pregnant at the time of the JAL crash. Is the only *NKT* staff member to witness Hanazawa's punching Kurasaka on Mount Osutaka.

## **Totsuka**

A reporter based remotely at the *NKT*'s Fujioka City Branch Office. In his fifth year with the company.

## **Ukita**

Chief of the Advertising Department at the *North Kanto Times*. The superior of Kurasaka and Miyata, who cameos when calling Yuuki's bosses to register his indignation about the dropping of the mall opening advertisement.

## **Wajima**

Deputy police beat reporter at the *North Kanto Times*. Considered too timid to hold this role. Is first to reply to Yuuki once the JAL crash site is confirmed, but then fails to make it up Mount Osutaka.

## **Yamada**

Reporter working on the Regional News Desk at the *North Kanto Times*. His trademark is his tousled hair.

## **Chizuko Yorita**

Provides administrative support to the editorial department at the *North Kanto Times*. Treated like a tea lady by the reporters. Twenty-seven years old, she aspires to be the paper's first female reporter.

## **Yoshii**

A veteran copy-editor at the *North Kanto Times*. Although in his mid-thirties, his slight build and childlike face give him a much younger appearance. Almost always seen with a ruler in his hand.

## **Jun Yuuki**

Teenage Son of Kazumasa and Yumiko Yuuki. A gloomy thirteen-year-old, who largely ignores his father.

## **Kazumasa Yuuki**

The novel's main character, and a roving reporter at the *North Kanto Times*. Yuuki is forty years old, and the paper's longest-serving reporter. Only staff member to hold the unusual title of 'roving reporter', having shunned managerial career

development since issue with Ryota Mochizuki five years previously. Made JAL Crash Desk Chief when the crash is confirmed to be in Gunma prefecture. (*Yuuki is fifty-seven years old when he climbs Tsuitate with Rintaro Anzai in 2003.*)

## **Yuka Yuuki**

The daughter and youngest child of Kazumasa and Yumiko Yuuki. An energetic, sweet-natured girl.

## **Yumiko Yuuki**

Wife of Kazumasa Yuuki, and mother to Jun and Yuka. She knows well the frustrations of being a reporter's wife.