

Japan girl group AKB48 attacked with saw

29th May, 2014



Two members of one of Japan's most popular pop groups AKB48 were injured on Sunday. A fan attacked them with a saw while they were at a promotional event

signing autographs. The two singers, Rina Kawaei, 19, and Anna Iriyama, 18, were mingling with fans who had queued for hours to see them, when a man suddenly lunged forward and slashed them with a saw. The pair were fortunate not to have sustained serious injuries and were released from hospital a day after the attack. They both had cuts on their hands and head. A concert in Tokyo that had been scheduled for Monday night was cancelled. The assailant got past lax security and said he wanted to kill anyone. He had not targeted the women.

The band AKB48 have become a pop culture phenomenon in Japan and are hugely popular around Asia. They are ubiquitous in their home country, appearing daily on TV and radio, with their images being plastered on advertisements throughout Japan. They hold the Guinness record for being the world's largest pop group. The group was formed in 2005 in Tokyo's Akihabara district with 48 members. They have since expanded to 140 members. Annual competitions are held to replenish their number when older members retire. Members have to follow strict rules if they join the group, including a total ban on dating. A clause in their contract states that any band member falling in love is "forbidden".

Sources: BBC / The Japan Times

Writing

Being rich and not famous is better than being rich and famous. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

pop groups / injured / promotional event / autographs / fortunate / attack / security / pop culture / phenomenon / ubiquitous / advertisements / world record / retire / love

True / False

- A fan attacked three members of a Japanese girl band. T / F
- The girls were singing live on stage when the event happened. T / F
- The girls suffered minor cuts to the hands and head. T / F
- The attacker had not targeted any members of the pop group. T / F
- AKB48 are ubiquitous in Japan. T / F
- AKB48 are the second largest pop group in the world. T / F
- The pop group currently has around 48 members. T / F
- Members of the band are not allowed to date anyone. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| 1. popular | a. mixing |
| 2. event | b. top up |
| 3. mingling | c. careless |
| 4. sustained | d. function |
| 5. lax | e. occurrence |
| 6. phenomenon | f. ever-present |
| 7. ubiquitous | g. well-liked |
| 8. expanded | h. prohibited |
| 9. replenish | i. experienced |
| 10. forbidden | j. increased in size |

Discussion – Student A

- What is the pop culture in your country?
- What do you think of a pop band with 48 members in it?
- Would you like to be a pop star (why)?
- What do you think of boy bands and girl bands?
- Should members of a pop group have to follow strict rules?
- What do you think of the "love is forbidden" clause in the group's contract that means no dating?
- Why do you think the no dating clause exists?
- What questions would you like to ask members of AKB48?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. signing | a. phenomenon |
| 2. fans who had queued | b. number |
| 3. The pair were fortunate not to have | c. the women |
| 4. lax | d. on advertisements |
| 5. He had not targeted | e. sustained serious injuries |
| 6. a pop culture | f. autographs |
| 7. They are ubiquitous in | g. security |
| 8. plastered | h. their contract |
| 9. replenish their | i. for hours |
| 10. A clause in | j. their home country |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Is it too dangerous for pop stars to get close to fans?
- Which pop star would you really like to meet (and why)?
- Whose autograph would you most like to have (and why)?
- Should the band's security have been tighter?
- Who or what would you queue for hours to see?
- Why do you think random attacks on people are increasing?
- What should happen to the assailant?

Spelling

- a aolptinrmoo event
- signing thoaaupgsr
- a man suddenly uledgn forward
- tsdsaueni serious injuries
- cuhelsded for Monday
- The ansaatils got past lax security
- a pop culture ennenmopoh
- They are ibuqutoisu in their home country
- rpsedatle on advertisements
- erilenpsh their number
- A aclsue in their contract
- falling in love is "reofibdnd"

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. a	4. i	5. c
6. e	7. f	8. j	9. b	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Pop star

You think being a pop star would be the best way of being famous. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that wouldn't be so good about their roles. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): a business leader, U.N. General-Secretary or a philanthropist.

Role B – Business leader

You think being a business leader would be the best way of being famous. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that wouldn't be so good about their roles. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): a pop star, U.N. General-Secretary or a philanthropist.

Role C – U.N. General-Secretary

You think being the U.N. General-Secretary would be the best way of being famous. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that wouldn't be so good about their roles. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): a business leader, a pop star or a philanthropist.

Role D – Philanthropist

You think being a philanthropist would be the best way of being famous. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that wouldn't be so good about their roles. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): a business leader, U.N. General-Secretary or a pop star.

Speaking – Celebrity

Rank these with your partner. Put the one you most want to be famous for at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| • writer | • pop star |
| • philanthropist | • soccer star |
| • actor | • leader of your country |
| • business leader | • U.N. General-Secretary |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.