



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, September 20, 2016

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INTERNATIONAL

Clinton, Abe agree to strengthen bilateral alliance

All broadcasters reported that Democratic presidential candidate Clinton met with Prime Minister Abe in New York on Monday. Abe reportedly told Clinton that the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance is increasing amid the tough security environment in the Asia-Pacific region and expressed hope to further strengthen the alliance for the peace and stability of the world. Former Secretary of State Clinton was quoted as saying: "I think the relationship between the United States and Japan is absolutely critical to peace and prosperity not just in Asia but worldwide." The networks said they also exchanged views on North Korea and China. Concerning the TPP, TV Asahi said although Abe expressed his intention to seek a swift ratification of the agreement, Clinton reportedly reiterated her opposition to the deal. TBS also said if the TPP is not ratified under the Obama administration, it is likely to become a major issue between the two nations. Fuji TV said although it is rare for a Japanese prime minister to meet with a U.S. presidential candidate, PM Abe probably decided to meet with Clinton in view of her policy of attaching value to the bilateral alliance.

North Korea announces successful test of new rocket engine

NHK reported this morning that North Korea announced earlier in the day that it successfully carried out a ground test of a new rocket engine to be used for satellite launches at the Tonchang-ri missile site in the presence of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. NTV reported, however, that the South Korean military believes that the North actually tested a high-powered engine to be used for launching long-range ballistic missiles.

SECURITY

U.S. military official says Japan to resume Henoko work in March

Monday's Ryukyu Shimpo wrote from New York that an unnamed high-ranking U.S. military official on Friday told an unnamed influential member of the Senate Armed Services Committee in writing that the Japanese government is highly likely to resume FRF construction work off Camp Schwab next March at the latest following its victory in the trial over the landfill permit. The military official reportedly explained that the central government's position was fully upheld by the court and that the legal battle will be settled in 2017 even if the Okinawa government files an appeal with the Supreme Court.

Two more Ospreys to be deployed at Futenma

Okinawa Times front-paged a story from Washington claiming that U.S. Marine Corps plans to station two additional MV-22 Ospreys at MCAS Futenma, noting that they were sealifted to MCAS Iwakuni on Friday for maintenance and inspections prior to deployment in Okinawa. One CH-53E and three UH-1Y helicopters will also be deployed to Futenma.

Japan, Australia to discuss updating ACSA

Asahi reported online from New York that Foreign Minister Kishida and his Australian counterpart Bishop held talks on Monday afternoon and agreed to launch discussions on updating the existing bilateral acquisition and cross servicing agreement (ACSA) so that more goods and services can be exchanged between the two militaries while engaging in international peacekeeping and disaster relief operations. The revision is being considered in view of Japan's enactment of the comprehensive security laws a year ago.

- [Still wrinkles in security laws](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Hold realistic debate on security legislation](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Security laws vital foundations for dealing with various threats](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Dialogue the only way to resolve Henoko dispute between Okinawa and gov't](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Tokyo's hollow court victory will not end base issue in Okinawa](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)

SCIENCE

U.S., Japan, ROK agree to bolster cancer research

Nikkei reported online that the health ministers of the U.S., Japan, and South Korea held a meeting in New York on Monday to confirm comprehensive, mutual collaboration for curing cancer by establishing a joint medical center and sharing expertise on treatment. Vice President Biden, who

heads the White House Cancer Moonshot initiative, attended the session, during which he stressed the importance of trilateral cooperation to combat the disease by saying: “Although there is only one moon, there are many ways to cure cancer.”

- [AI primed to optimize disaster relief](#) (The Japan News)

AMBASSADOR

Ambassador Kennedy promises continued U.S. engagement with Tohoku

Sunday's Kahoku Shimpo published an interview with Ambassador Kennedy, during which she emphasized that the United States will continue to work with Japan to help the Tohoku region recover from the 3/11 triple disaster. On her sixth trip to the Tohoku region, the Ambassador said that although reconstruction remains a challenge, she has seen impressive progress on each visit and has been inspired by local residents' resilience and unshakable spirit. Speaking on the TOMODACHI Initiative designed to help Japanese youths acquire skills to deal with societal challenges, the Ambassador explained that more than half of the over 35,000 participants in the various bilateral exchange programs have come from the Tohoku region. She mentioned that some members of the U.S. military who participated in Operation Tomodachi are still involved with charitable organizations working in Tohoku.

Ambassador Kennedy plants cherry tree on island off Kesenuma

Sendai Television and Kahoku Shimpo reported on Sunday that Ambassador Kennedy participated in a cherry-tree-planting ceremony with local children on Oshima Island off Kesenuma, Miyagi Prefecture, on Saturday. As part of Operation Tomodachi, the U.S. military dispatched some 300 Marines to the island to help with reconstruction after it had become isolated when harbors there were completely washed away by the tsunami on March 11, 2011. Local citizens welcomed the Ambassador and expressed gratitude for the help extended by the U.S. Kahoku Shimpo quoted the Ambassador as expressing hope that close relations between the people of the U.S. and the island will continue in the future.

Ambassador Kennedy visits cybersecurity research center in Tagajo

NHK's Sendai station and Kahoku Shimpo reported on Friday and Saturday, respectively, that Ambassador Kennedy visited the Control System Security Center in Tagajo, Miyagi Prefecture, on Friday. The facility is a joint project between METI and private firms that was established in 2012 to conduct research and development of technology to protect computer control systems at power plants and other key facilities from natural disasters and cyberattacks. Kahoku Shimpo quoted the Ambassador as expressing hope that the U.S. and Japan will strengthen their cooperation on cybersecurity.

Ambassador Kennedy visits environmental NGO in Kesenuma

Sanriku Shimpo on Sunday reported on Ambassador Kennedy's visit to Kesenuma on Saturday, including her visit to Mori wa Umi no Koibito, an NPO working to preserve forest and river environments for protecting marine resources. The paper quoted the Ambassador as saying that the group's efforts reminded her of the importance of protecting forest and river ecosystems in order to preserve the marine environment.

OPINION POLLS

- [56% have high hopes for Renho, 73% call for caution over TPP, Kyodo poll](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Kyodo News opinion poll & results from Tokyo Shimbun](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Over 90% approve of abdication, 56% have high hopes for Renho, Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)
- [Cabinet support rate climbs to 56.6% in Sankei-FNN poll, rises in other surveys as well](#) (Sankei)
- [Opinion poll & results from Sankei Shimbun](#) (Sankei)

ECONOMY

- [Japan to further relax rules to welcome more tourists](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japanese easing policy almost ready for face-lift](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Haneda Terminal 2 to handle international flights / Preparing for foreign visitors for 2020 Games](#) (The Japan News Evening edition)
- [Pact eyed to curb emissions from international flights](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Japan should speed efforts to join fight against global warming](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Seminars helping more female managers navigate Japan's male-dominated business world](#) (The Japan Times)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on September 16](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on September 17](#) (Nikkei)

- [Prime minister's schedule on September 18](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on September 18 and 19](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Komeito should openly join talks on constitutional revision](#) (The Japan News)
- [Ogushi to head Democratic Party's Policy Research Committee](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Renho will succeed only if she recognizes the difficult challenges she faces](#) (The Japan News)

EDUCATION

- [Japan ranks second lowest in education spending among OECD countries](#) (Kyodo News)

SOCIETY

- [Record number of infants under age 1 die of abuse](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Preventing youth suicides](#) (The Japan Times)
- [In sexless Japan, almost half of single young men and women are virgins: survey](#) (The Japan Times)

TV PROGRAMS

Experts discuss measures to prepare for torrential rains

In response to the increasing frequency of torrential rains in Japan that have caused devastating floods in many areas, five experts in fields including river engineering, infrastructure development, disaster evacuation, and meteorology discussed measures to mitigate damage from such disasters.

Health disparity

NHK's "NHK Special" on Sept. 19 reported on the emerging "health disparity" in Japan, saying that economic disparity is creating differences in access to healthcare, health conditions, and life expectancy. The program asked viewers whether they think the problem of health disparity is a matter of individual responsibility or a social issue. In response, 57.6% said it is a social issue and 42.4% said it is a matter of individual responsibility. The program also reported on ways to resolve "health disparity," highlighting measures taken in the UK. According to the program, the UK's Food Standards Agency asked food producers to gradually reduce the amount of salt used in their products. As a result, the UK successfully reduced the rate of stroke and heart disease, leading to a

200 billion yen annual decrease in medical expenses. The program also claimed that people-to-people connections are the key to rectifying "health disparity."

Evolution of Tyrannosaurus

NHK's "NHK Special" on Sept. 18 reported on the tyrannosaurus, believed to be the most powerful species of dinosaur that ever lived. The latest research has found that the tyrannosaurus was largely covered with feathers and that its DNA is extremely close to that of modern birds. The program described how the tyrannosaurus evolved from a small dinosaur into a powerful, large, and clever dinosaur amid the changing global environment and struggle for survival.

Self-driving revolution

NHK's "NHK Special" on Sept. 17 reported that a "self-driving revolution" is about to change the structure of industry and society worldwide. After Google first unveiled its driverless car that has no steering wheel or pedals, automobile manufacturers around the world began developing self-driving vehicles. Mercedes-Benz leads the world in self-driving cars, while Japanese automakers such as Toyota, Nissan, and Honda are speeding up development. According to the program, Nissan is hoping to develop cars that can drive automatically not only on highways but also on surface streets by 2020. The program said Japanese auto part makers are facing a moment of truth as emerging global suppliers are dominating the market for self-driving cars. The race to develop self-driving vehicles is reportedly about to fundamentally change the Japanese auto industry.

