



Afternoon Alert - Monday, September 26, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks led with reports on the opening of the extraordinary Diet session today.

POLITICS

Extraordinary Diet session begins

All broadcasters reported on the official start of the extraordinary Diet session this morning, highlighting that new Democratic Party President Renho is preparing to put pressure on the Abe administration by blocking its key agenda items, including the TPP-related legislation. In a remark to DP Diet members, Renho said that her party plans to present counterproposals instead of leveling criticism against the Abe administration. She added, however, that some of the GOJ bills are "too inadequate even for counterproposals."

Support for largest opposition party rises slightly

TV-Asahi reported on the results of its latest public opinion poll showing that public support for the DP led by new President Renho stood at 15.4%, up 1.5 points from a month ago, while the corresponding figure for the ruling LDP was 44%. About 45% expressed hope that the No.1 opposition party under the leadership of Renho will become strong enough to unseat the ruling LDP in the future.

- [Prime minister's schedule on September 22 and 23](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on September 23 and 24](#) (Nikkei)

- [Prime minister's schedule on September 25](#) (Nikkei)
- [Ex-TPP Minister Amari to join "inner circle" of LDP tax commission](#) (Yomiuri)
- ["LDP constitutional revision draft will not be withdrawn," says Nikai](#) (Asahi)
- [Editorial: LDP leadership debate offers a chance to bring more stability](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Takahashi appointed as deputy chief cabinet secretary for crisis management](#) (Yomiuri)

SECURITY

[Gov't spokesman pledges efforts to increase patrols over East China Sea](#)

NHK reported on a morning press conference by Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga, in which he commented on yesterday's flight by a group of eight Chinese military aircraft over the waters between the main island of Okinawa and Miyako Island. The top government spokesman said: "The government will pay close attention to the PLA's increasingly active operations. From the standpoint of firmly defending the nation's land, waters, and airspace, we will carry out patrol and surveillance operations thoroughly.... The Chinese planes may have been conducting some kind of training, but I will refrain from commenting specifically on the purpose of the flight." NTV aired a similar story, quoting an unnamed senior MOD official as saying that China is keen to increase its presence in the East China Sea by expanding its military exercises.

- [Defense Ministry to file complaint against Okinawa helipad protesters attacking officials](#) (Sankei)
- [MOD plans to set up new military research funding program](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

INTERNATIONAL

- [Abe prioritizes North Korea, Russia in UN diplomacy spree](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Japan, U.S. failing to lead the TPP effectuation process](#) (Sankei)
- [Remittance to HK corporation from Tokyo likely helped DPRK nuke development](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Pyongyang undermines sanctions with coal exports to China](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

- [Editorial: PM Abe's proactive diplomacy has risks](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Survey of newspaper editorials on North Korea's nuclear test](#) (Sankei)
- [Japan, Russia appear to be making headway in island dispute](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Putin's close aide appointed as foreign intelligence chief](#) (Asahi)
- [Editorial: Japan, U.S. must join forces to slap tougher sanctions on North Korea](#) (The Japan News)
- [New tactic on northern territories](#) (The Japan News)
- [2 islands' return from Russia key to treaty](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Putin](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Gist of PM Abe's news conference in Havana, Cuba, Sept. 23](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Use economic ties with Cuba as leverage for North Korea issues](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Castro](#) (Asahi)

ECONOMY

- [GE taps 'internet of things' to monitor Tepco power plants](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [METI, Patent Office to protect IoT data as "trade secret"](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan should eliminate forced overtime: labor minister](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Apple, Google may be eliminating rivals in app market, METI report](#) (Nikkei)
- [Ministry on alert for rise of 'intellectual property trolls'](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan-EU trade talks at make-or-break stage](#) (Nikkei)
- [Decommissioning Monju will inevitably affect Japan-U.S. relations](#) (Sankei)
- [Editorial: Gov't should admit nuclear fuel cycle project has failed](#) (The Mainichi)

SOCIETY

- [Bestsellers in August 2016](#) (NIPPAN)

OPINION POLLS

- [53% in favor of eliminating spousal deduction, cabinet support drops to 58%, Nikkei poll](#) (Nikkei)
- [51% have high hopes for DP leader Renho, Nikkei poll](#) (Nikkei)
- [Lawyers group to stand against death penalty](#) (The Japan News)

TV PROGRAMS

Opposition camp united to derail TPP legislation

The secretaries general of the ruling and opposition parties appeared live on NHK's Sunday morning talk show "Nichiyo Toron" to discuss major topics for the extraordinary Diet session to be convened on Sept. 26, such as the FY2016 supplementary budget and the GOJ legislation to ratify the TPP. Ruling party representatives underscored the importance of passing the TPP bills this year, with the LDP's Nikai saying: "Up until now, Japan has expressed support for whatever the U.S. thinks is right. But the time has come for Japan to take the lead instead.... We will urge the GOJ to fully disclose information [on the TPP negotiation process] so as to ensure that the legislation can be approved during this Diet term." Opposition officials, however, dismissed the need to ratify the regional free trade pact quickly. DP Secretary General Noda said: "We cannot endorse the TPP accord because Japan failed to win what should have been won and protect what should have been protected. The U.S. will not ratify it anytime soon, as the two U.S. presidential candidates and House Speaker Ryan are negative about it. Why does Japan have to be in a hurry?" The JCP's Koike stressed that the opposition bloc is firmly united in rejecting the TPP legislation on account of "gross negligence" on the part of the GOJ in disclosing relevant information.

Shrinking Japanese population

NHK's "NHK Special" on Sunday carried a report on the Japanese population, which this year recorded the first decline in the nearly 100 years during which Japan has been conducting a national census. The program said even the population of Tokyo is expected to start declining in 2020, when it hosts the Olympics. Many young people who came to Tokyo to find jobs are living on low salaries, adding that financial difficulties are making it impossible for them to consider getting married. The situation in regional areas is particularly serious. Hokkaido's Yubari City, which went bankrupt in 2007, has begun decreasing government services as the city's population has dropped from about 110,000 to less than 9,000. The program reported on the city's drastic measures to cut costs due to financial difficulties.

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