



Afternoon Alert - Thursday, September 29, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks led with reports that a Tokyo metropolitan government investigative team released today a report saying that the total cost for the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics in 2020 will exceed 3 trillion yen unless changes are made, and recommended reviewing the construction plans for three athletic facilities. TV Asahi led with a report that a 14-year-old boy in South Carolina is suspected of firing a gun at an elementary school playground on Wednesday, wounding two students and a teacher, after shooting and killing his father at home.

SECURITY

Police bind protesters with rope at helipad construction site

Ryukyu Shimpo and Okinawa Times gave top play to reports saying that on Wednesday riot police bound a dozen protesters with rope and removed them from a site near the H Area Northern Training Area. The protesters were trying to prevent workers from cutting down trees for the helipad construction there. According to Ryukyu Shimpo, a man in his 50s twisted his ankle and was taken to the hospital in an ambulance. Okinawa Times quoted a senior Okinawa police officer as saying that they moved the protesters to a safe place because they could have been injured by falling trees. However, the protesters' attorney criticized the police by saying that tying them up was dangerous and illegal.

Protesters hold rally in Tokyo against Futenma relocation, helipad construction

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo wrote that a group opposing Futenma relocation and the helipad construction in Okinawa held a rally at the Hibiya Open Air Concert Hall in Tokyo on Wednesday. According to the organizer, some 2,500 people participated in the event.

- [Japan, U.S. to test improved interceptor missile](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Gov't mulls invoking special criminal law to arrest Okinawa helipad protesters](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)

ECONOMY

MRJ arrives in U.S.

NHK reported that Mitsubishi Regional Jet (MRJ), Japan's first domestically produced passenger jet, arrived at an airport in Washington State on Thursday morning, Japan time, after it left Aichi on Monday. The network said Mitsubishi Aircraft is planning to fly three additional MRJs to the U.S. and conduct 2,500 hours of test flights there to obtain certifications before delivering the aircraft to airlines in 2018.

Three Japanese firms considering combining nuclear fuel operations

NHK reported this morning that Hitachi, Toshiba, and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries are considering combining their nuclear fuel operations next year. Noting that their nuclear fuel operations have been in the red since the March 11 nuclear disaster, the network said the three firms are considering placing their nuclear fuel business units under a new holding company. The network said the three companies are hoping to reach a basic agreement by the end of this year.

- [Hitachi, Toshiba, Mitsubishi Heavy near nuclear fuel tie-up deal](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Gov't, private sector in active discussions over reviewing economic statistics](#) (Mainichi)
- [18 errors found in TPP-related documents](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [JA Zen-Noh to cut sales prices of ag materials by at least 10%](#) (Mainichi)
- [New raw milk market to be launched, bypassing agricultural cooperatives](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gov't aiming to host 2025 World Expo in Osaka to bolster post-Olympic economy](#) (Mainichi)

AMBASSADOR

Ambassador Kennedy talks about “A Broader View”

The Huffington Post Japan posted a recent interview with Ambassador Kennedy, during which she underscored the importance of studying abroad and introduced the Embassy’s video project “[A Broader View](#),” in which Japanese people who are active in a variety of fields discuss their experiences in the U.S. The Ambassador explained that the Embassy launched the project to encourage Japanese students who are interested in studying abroad. The Ambassador said that studying abroad will help develop individuals who can work together with people of different backgrounds on global challenges, and will be a great investment in the students’ own future as well as the future of their country. The Ambassador also discussed issues related to the downward trend in the number of Japanese students studying abroad, including the financial burden and concern about finding jobs. She said that studying abroad is an advantage rather than a disadvantage because Japanese companies are seeking people with overseas experience. Her final message was: “Just do it! Come to the U.S.!”

POLITICS

- [Prime minister’s schedule on September 28](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of Upper, Lower House representative interpellations, Sept. 28](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [PM Abe says the issue of eligibility for election is “basis of democracy”](#) (Sankei)
- [DP chief Renho projects uniqueness in first Diet faceoff with PM Abe](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Gov’t on the defensive over TPP mistranslation, price of imported rice](#) (Yomiuri)
- [MOFA officials focusing on Diet affairs to pass TPP ratification bill](#) (Bungeishunju)
- [MOD officials receive new Minister Inada with mixed feelings](#) (Bungeishunju)
- [BOJ Governor Kuroda may be reappointed](#) (Bungeishunju)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Oshima](#) (Asahi)

INTERNATIONAL

- [Editorial: Democrat Clinton shows her caliber in the 1st U.S. presidential debate](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Clinton showed up Trump in first presidential debate](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Presidential candidates should convey vision for “making America great”](#) (Sankei)
- [Japan, Singapore to hold vice-ministerial talks on high-speed railway system](#) (Asahi)
- [12th Tokyo-Beijing Forum to set up platform for “security dialogue”](#) (Mainichi)

EDUCATION

- [MEXT estimates 78,000 will become eligible for college scholarships that require no repayment](#) (Nikkei)

SOCIETY

- [Editorial: International pledges to help refugees and migrants are only a first step](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

TV PROGRAMS

Defense research at universities

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" reported on Wednesday night that as the SDF's defense equipment becomes increasingly high-tech, the Ministry of Defense is promoting the "dual use" of technologies for commercial and defense purposes. According to the program, the MOD requested 11 billion yen in the next fiscal year's budget to subsidize universities and companies engaged in basic research on defense equipment. While noting that Japanese scientists had long upheld the principle of not engaging in scientific research for military purposes, the program said the relationship between universities and the MOD is changing, and joint research between universities and the MOD is increasing. Not only the MOD but also military officials of the U.S., UK, and South Korea are approaching Japanese universities. While some universities are willing to cooperate with the MOD if the research is not for military purposes, other universities are against any cooperation with the MOD, expressing concern about the possible use of their research for military purposes. Nobel laureate Toshihide Masukawa is reportedly alarmed by the recent trend and is calling on young scientists to hold discussions on dual use.



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