



Afternoon Alert - Friday, September 30, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK, NTV, and Fuji TV gave top play to follow-up reports on the train crash in New Jersey, which killed one person and injured many others, including a Japanese man in his 50s. Other networks led with reports that the Tokyo Metropolitan Government has been unable to identify who made the decision not to put a layer of clean soil beneath the main buildings of the new fish market in Toyosu.

POLITICS

PM Abe hopes to submit labor reform bill to next ordinary Diet session

NHK-BS reported this afternoon that PM Abe expressed his intention at a Lower House Budget Committee meeting today to map out an action plan for labor reform by the end of this fiscal year in order to rectify long working hours and realize equal pay for equal work, and submit related bills to the ordinary Diet session next year. PM Abe reportedly said: "Reforming work styles is a pillar of structural reform. If we rectify long working hours, it will be easier for women and the elderly to find jobs and improve labor productivity. We also need to realize equal pay for equal work and fill the gap between regular and non-regular workers, which would expand the middle class and lead to higher consumption."

- [Prime minister's schedule on September 29](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of Upper House representative interpellations, Sept. 29](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Editorial: First head-to-head between Abe, DP chief Renho fails to constitute debate](#) (The Mainichi)

- [Cartoon: Renho and Abe](#) (Mainichi)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Renho](#) (Asahi)
- [Number of LDP members now over 1 million](#) (Mainichi)
- [DP groups moving to realign forces after recent presidential race](#) (Yomiuri)
- [More and more young people are supporting ruling parties](#) (Asahi)
- [Hurdles that Defense Minister Inada needs to clear before becoming prime minister](#) (THEMIS)

SECURITY

[Governor, legislator exchange heated words over construction at Henoko, Naha Airport](#)

Okinawa Times wrote that Governor Onaga responded sharply to a question from LDP legislator Suematsu at a prefectural assembly session on Thursday. Suematsu asked the governor why the prefectural government is handling construction at Henoko and Naha Airport differently despite the fact that both sites involve runway construction. Suematsu asked the governor why he is not asking a third-party panel to review the approval of landfill work at Naha Airport like he did for Henoko. He also asked the governor whether he arbitrarily pointed out defects because he opposes the Henoko plan. Onaga said in reply: "Many people in Okinawa are supportive of the construction at Naha Airport, but against the Henoko project. I am not instigating the people of Okinawa. You shouldn't look down on them." Suematsu said: "There is no difference between the two sites, because they both involve runway construction. What you are saying no longer has anything to do with the law." Onaga said in reply: "I am trying to fulfill my campaign pledge with confidence. Stopping the construction at Henoko will serve the will of the Okinawan people."

[Police explain why they bound protesters with rope](#)

Ryukyu Shimpo wrote that the chief of the Okinawa Prefectural Police commented during a prefectural assembly session on Thursday on the riot police's recent use of ropes to bind protesters and remove them from the helipad construction site at the Northern Training Area. He said that the police used ropes because there was risk of the protesters sliding down a steep slope at the site. The police chief also said the protesters violated the Act on Special Measures Concerning Criminal Cases because they entered the U.S. military facility.

- [Former MOD chief Nakatani may visit Okinawa](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)
- [Yamato City base affairs council demands info on aircraft relocation to Iwakuni](#) (Asahi)

- [UK's fighter "Typhoon" to participate in joint exercise with SDF](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Komura calls for efforts to project strength of Japan-U.S. alliance](#) (Sankei)

INTERNATIONAL

[Japanese envoy in Moscow at odds with counterpart in Kiev over Crimea election](#)

Thursday evening's Mainichi wrote from Moscow that Japanese Ambassador to Russia Kozuki on Wednesday dismissed a statement released on Sept. 23 by the Japanese Embassy in Ukraine regarding the Duma election held in Crimea in mid-September. The statement said that "the validity and results of the poll cannot be accepted." The Moscow-based Japanese diplomat said: "The statement was released by the ambassador in Ukraine. It does not represent the view of the Japanese government.... The character of the statement reflects the fact that it was not issued either by the Japanese Embassy in Moscow or the Japanese Foreign Ministry." Kozuki's remark was interpreted as paying consideration to the Putin administration ahead of the Russian leader's visit to Japan in December.

- [Japan remains reluctant to take extra steps over ex-"comfort women"](#) (Kyodo News)
- [China arrests senior North Korean bank official](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Mitsui to acquire coal mine interest in Mozambique](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: New U.S. President must be aware of global responsibility](#) (Nikkei)

ECONOMY

- [BOJ prepares for long-term fight to achieve 2% inflation goal](#) (Kyodo News)
- [LDP agricultural director Koizumi criticizes JA Zen-Noh for taking commissions](#) (Sankei)
- [CITES proposal for regulating domestic ivory trade may affect Japanese market](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Reduce long working hours first in efforts to reform work styles](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Costs of reactor scrapping really nothing to do with new players](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [World's largest hydrogen plant may be built in Fukushima](#) (Jiji Press)

- [Cartoon: Abe and Kuroda](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: TPP](#) (Akahata)

SCIENCE

- [Japan's ispace testing rover with eye on Lunar Xprize](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

EDUCATION

- [Academic achievement gap closing between top, underperforming areas](#) (Kyodo News)
- [International students top 200,000](#) (Nikkei)
- [School teachers learn teaching skills from Juku instructors](#) (Asahi)

SOCIETY

- [List of 22 Japanese women active on world stage: Business](#) (Forbes Japan)
- [List of 22 Japanese women active on world stage: Connecting Japan and the world](#) (Forbes Japan)
- [List of 22 Japanese women active on world stage: Researchers](#) (Forbes Japan)
- [List of 22 Japanese women active on world stage: International Organizations](#) (Forbes Japan)
- [List of 22 Japanese women active on world stage: Entrepreneurs](#) (Forbes Japan)

TV PROGRAMS

Creating a society that tolerates diversity

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" reported on the Sagami-hara massacre that occurred two months ago, in which 19 residents of a facility for the disabled were killed and many others were injured by a 26-year-old man who claimed that the disabled "only create *unhappiness*." The program said many disabled and socially vulnerable people in Japan are feeling uncertain about their place in society following the horrific incident, adding that some fear that Japanese society is becoming intolerant of diversity. The program also introduced Fujisoft Kikaku Inc., which hires about 130 people with physical and intellectual disabilities as well as people who are suffering from depression,

and lets them work together. The employees help each other with their work and are able to work freely without hiding their disabilities or illnesses. Journalist Akira Ikegami stressed the importance of diversity and said that seeking a homogeneous society is dangerous.

