



Afternoon Alert - Monday, October 17, 2016

The following information reflects the reporting of the cited news media and does not reflect the opinions of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Japan Media Highlights is intended for USG use only and should not be forwarded. Visit the website [here](#). For more information, contact [TokyoMATT@state.gov](mailto:TokyoMATT@state.gov).

## HEADLINES

### Noon news

NHK gave top play to a report that China successfully launched a manned spacecraft and placed it into orbit this morning. NTV led with a report that the inaugural meeting of a panel of experts on the Emperor's possible abdication will be held this afternoon. TV Asahi gave top play to a report that the ruling parties are "shocked" by the news that opposition-backed Ryuichi Yoneyama won the Niigata gubernatorial election, adding that the election result will likely affect the GOJ's nuclear policy and PM Abe's strategy to dissolve the Lower House for a snap election in January. TBS and Fuji TV also gave top play to the victory of Yoneyama, who this morning reiterated his opposition against restarting the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear station.

## POLITICS

### PM Abe sends "masakaki" tree offering to Yasukuni Shrine

Several networks reported at noon that PM Abe sent a "masakaki" tree offering to Yasukuni Shrine for its four-day autumn festival that began today, adding that Health Minister Shiozaki also sent an offering to the shrine. The networks said PM Abe is expected to forgo visiting the shrine during the festival as he has in previous years. He last visited the shrine in December 2013.

- [Prime minister's schedule on October 14](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on October 15](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on October 16](#) (Nikkei)

- [Anti-nuclear candidate wins Niigata governor race](#) (Kyodo News)
- [LDP shelves its 2012 draft constitutional amendments](#) (Nikkei)
- [Renho faces the challenge of maintaining influence within DP](#) (Mainichi)
- [64% say they will “definitely vote” in Tokyo by-election, Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Court rejects lawsuit to void July national election in Japan](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

## SECURITY

### **Defense Ministry submits draft plan for NTA reversion**

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo both reported over the weekend that the Okinawa Defense Bureau on Friday submitted to the Okinawa prefectural government and the municipal governments of Higashi and Kunigami a draft plan for the reversion of part of the Northern Training Area. Under the plan, the vacated land will be handed over to local administration about 16 months after the return following the removal of unexploded shells and surveys for pollution and decontamination. Noting that such operations customarily take about three years to complete and that the two communities hosting the training area are hoping to register the area as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the articles said the GOJ is trying to cut the transition period in half in order to ease local opposition to the ongoing helipad construction. According to the articles, the prefectural government refused to accept the document on account of a procedural flaw.

Okinawa Times expressed concern over whether the training site can be decontaminated in just 18 months. Claiming that the U.S. military plans to return only the land that is unsuitable for training and the GSDF may conduct joint training with the U.S. military in the remaining portion of the extensive area, the daily asserted that the security burden on northern Okinawa may actually increase as a result.

### **U.S. Navy to operate stealth warship in Pacific**

Kyodo reported that the USS Zumwalt, the U.S. Navy’s newest and most advanced surface ship, was commissioned on Saturday in Baltimore, Maryland, noting that the stealth vessel will be homeported in San Diego for operations in the Pacific, including stopovers in Sasebo. PACOM Commander Harris said the ship will play an important role in dealing with the challenges posed by China and Russia.

- [Column: Pentagon report says Japan might possess nukes in 10 years](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Immigration procedure to check database of terrorist faces](#) (The Japan News)

## INTERNATIONAL

- [Survey of newspaper editorials on U.S. presidential election](#) (Sankei)
- [“Kazamidori” column: How Clinton would deal with Japan remains unknown](#) (Nikkei)
- [SoftBank to form \\$100 bil. fund with Saudi Arabia](#) (The Japan News)
- [Saudi riches back SoftBank’s pursuit of IoT supremacy](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan withholds dues to UNESCO over listing of Nanjing Massacre file](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Ambassador Power on need to “close loophole” in sanctions against DPRK](#) (Asahi)
- [Ruling parties of Japan, China to hold exchange meeting next February](#) (Nikkei)
- [Kazakh President Nazarbayev to visit Japan on Nov. 6-9](#) (Kyodo News)

## ECONOMY

- [Japanese banks facing difficulty procuring dollars](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Governor election hampers Tepco’s quest to restart reactors](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Inflation target seen eluding BOJ’s Kuroda during his tenure](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Gov’t seeks to integrate Japan’s regional airlines](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Early ratification of TPP important for free trade and Japan’s future](#) (The Japan News)

## OPINION POLLS

- [58% are opposed to extending the term of the LDP president, Jiji Press poll](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [86% say that “newspapers will remain necessary,” Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Opinion poll & results from Yomiuri Shimbun](#) (Yomiuri)

## SOCIETY

- [Editorial: Improve environment so elderly can contribute throughout their lives](#) (The Japan News)
- [Bestsellers in September 2016](#) (NIPPAN)

## TV PROGRAMS

### **Concerns raised about future prospects for nation's scientific competitiveness**

NHK's "Nichiyo Toron" debate show on Sunday morning featured a discussion by professors, journalists, and analysts on the future prospects for the nation's scientific competitiveness since Japanese researchers have won Nobel Prizes in natural science for three consecutive years. They agreed that the awards represented the achievements of several decades ago and thus neither accurately reflect the viability of the current Japanese scientific community nor guarantee its competitiveness in the future. The participants expressed alarm over deep cuts in central government grants and subsidies for R&D especially in the area of basic research and a drop in the number of students seeking careers in STEM fields.

### **"Future of Capitalism" – Part 1: Will the global economy continue to grow?**

Sunday's "NHK Special" reported on capitalism, which is said to be facing a major crossroads. Although capitalism was believed to bring continued wealth to the world, the economies of developed nations have become sluggish. Capitalism has created giant gaps between the rich and the poor as evidenced by the Panama Papers. Some experts point out that economic frontiers have disappeared, warning that global economic growth has reached a limit. The program reported, however, that the emerging "sharing economy" is a new possibility for further global economic growth, saying that companies such as Uber and Airbnb are threatening some of the world's largest businesses in transportation, hospitality, and other sectors.

---