



Afternoon Alert - Thursday, October 20, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NTV and TV Asahi gave top play to reports that North Korea apparently attempted to launch a Musudan mid-range ballistic missile at about 7 a.m. today but failed again. TBS and Fuji TV led with reports on the last presidential debate between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. NHK led with a report that an earthquake with a seismic intensity of 4 on the Japanese scale hit Chiba and Ibaraki prefectures just before noon today.

INTERNATIONAL

North Korea fails to launch ballistic missile again

All networks reported at noon that North Korea apparently attempted to launch a Musudan mid-range ballistic missile at about 7 a.m. today but failed again. NHK quoted FM Kishida as telling reporters: "This is a serious challenge to Japan and the rest of the international community and a violation of the UNSC resolutions...We immediately lodged a protest against North Korea through our embassy in Beijing." Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga reportedly said: "We will work closely with the U.S. and South Korea, strengthen pressure against North Korea, and urge it to refrain from provocations and abide by the UNSC resolutions. We will also take all necessary measures to collect information and conduct surveillance with a sense of urgency in order to be able to respond to any contingency."

- [JBIC to jointly finance Russian LNG development in Arctic Circle](#) (Sankei)
- [Abe to make one-shot bid to resolve territorial issue at Yamaguchi summit](#) (Shukan Toyo Keizai)

- [Russians have high hopes for Japan's economic cooperation](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Moscow holds event to mark 60th anniversary of Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration](#) (Mainichi)
- [Abe meets with Brazilian leader](#) (Asahi)
- [Interview with Edward Luttwak: "Philippine security cooperation with U.S. remains unchanged"](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Don't let UNESCO memory heritage list be used for political purposes](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Japan should show dignity in push for UNESCO reform](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Cartoon : Tokyo Olympics](#) (Asahi)

POLITICS

Opposition parties call on Farm Minister to resign

Most networks reported at noon that following Farm Minister Yamamoto's gaffe about "steamrolling" the TPP-related bills, the Democratic Party and three other opposition parties are upping the ante against the minister and this is affecting Diet deliberations. According to the reports, the four opposition parties held a meeting of their Diet affairs chiefs and confirmed that they will call for the resignation of Minister Yamamoto. DP Diet Affairs chief Yamai was quoted as telling reporters today: "The agricultural minister, who is responsible for providing thorough explanations of the TPP to the public, hinted at steamrolling the bills. He needs to step down."

- [Prime minister's schedule on October 19](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Constitutional commissions at Diet must have productive discussions](#) (The Japan News)
- [Tsuyoshi Tabata joins LDP parliamentary group in Lower House](#) (Mainichi)
- [Gaps between views of political parties on emperor's abdication](#) (Asahi)
- [Editorial: LDP amendment draft is a flawed perception of the Constitution](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: LDP should scrap conservative draft of revised Constitution](#) (The Mainichi)

SECURITY

Osaka governor again defends policemen who made derogatory remarks

TBS reported at noon that in addition to his tweet last night defending Osaka police officers who made derogatory remarks against base opponents in Okinawa, Osaka Governor Matsui defended the police officers again this morning by telling reporters: "Base opponents are also saying all kinds of crazy things. I think it's wrong to rap individuals as if they're devils or beasts."

- **Komeito team considering relocation of Futenma base to another U.S. base in Okinawa** (Okinawa Times)
- **Hokkaido mayors call for legislation to regulate foreign purchase of natural resources** (Sankei)
- **How the U.S. military spies on Okinawans and me** (The Japan Times)

ECONOMY

- **Upper House TPP special committee to be set up on Oct. 21** (Yomiuri)
- **New feud may set back Japan's TPP vote** (Nikkei Asian Review)
- **Diet debates Paris accord, Kishida admits it should have begun earlier** (Mainichi)
- **Japan to tighten oversight of high-frequency trading** (Nikkei Asian Review)
- **Honda to triple output of business jet** (Nikkei Asian Review)
- **Nishinoshima expands, and so do Japan's territorial waters** (Mainichi)

SOCIETY

- **Gov't, academia paying consideration to LGBT community** (Nikkei Evening edition)

TV PROGRAMS

Young Japanese attracted to "rakugo"

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" on Wednesday reported on the growing popularity of "rakugo," traditional Japanese comic storytelling, among young Japanese. The program reported on popular rakugo performer Shunputei Ichinosuke, who introduces classic rakugo stories in a modern

style, adding that young Japanese are drawn to rakugo because it excites their imagination. There are currently about 800 professional rakugo performers, and more than 1,000 rakugo performances are held per month in the Tokyo metropolitan area. The performances are held not only at traditional rakugo theaters but also at bookstores, cafes, and bars, making this traditional form of entertainment more accessible.

