



Afternoon Alert - Monday, October 31, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks led with reports that South Korean President Park's long-time acquaintance will be questioned this afternoon by prosecutors about the leak of official documents. Fuji TV reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters this morning that the political scandal will not affect the planned trilateral summit between Japan, South Korea, and China slated for December. NHK led with a report that an earthquake with a seismic intensity of 3 on the Japanese scale hit Nagano this morning.

AMBASSADOR

[Ambassador profiled as "front runner" in Asahi Shimbun](#)

In its Saturday morning supplement, [Asahi](#) profiled the Ambassador, highlighting her key role in realizing President Obama's historic trip to Hiroshima in May. In the "Front-Runner" column, the Ambassador talked about the Hiroshima visit and women's empowerment in Japan. The same edition of the paper gave inside-page play to Ambassador Kennedy's remarks on North Korea and Okinawa. She expressed resolve to seek at the UN Security Council a strong sanctions resolution against North Korea in coordination with Japan. She was quoted as saying: "The denuclearization of North Korea is one of the top priorities of U.S. foreign policy.... We must clearly demonstrate to North Korea that there are consequences for its actions that threaten regional peace and stability." She reiterated the U.S. commitment to defending Japan and South Korea by saying: "President

Obama has affirmed to Prime Minister Abe and President Park the U.S.'s unshakable commitment to defend its allies and provide deterrence with the full range of U.S. defense capabilities." On Okinawa, Ambassador Kennedy explained U.S efforts to reduce the base burden on Okinawa. While voicing U.S. gratitude to Okinawa for hosting U.S. bases, the Ambassador stressed that FRF construction off Camp Schwab is meant to reduce the burden on the island prefecture. "We would like to move forward," she said. That is why we are working closely with the Japanese government to return nearly 9,000 acres of land in the Northern Training Area. This will reduce U.S. military facilities by 20%."

ECONOMY

Visitors to Japan exceed 20 million for first time

NHK reported this morning that as of Sunday the number of foreign visitors to Japan exceeded 20 million in a year for the first time ever, saying that the relaxation of visa requirements, improved tax-free system, and expansion of flight routes between Japan and Asian nations have led to a rapid increase in the number of visitors mainly from China, South Korea, and Taiwan. The network said the GOJ is hoping to double the number of visitors to 40 million by 2020.

- [Foreign visitors to Japan this year have already hit record 20 mil.](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Gist of interpellations at Lower House special committee on TPP, Oct. 28](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [DP chief cites need to discuss food safety concerns under TPP](#) (Nikkei)
- [Another sales tax hike delay in Japan "can't be ruled out": Aso](#) (Kyodo News)
- [BOJ finds itself further behind 2% inflation target](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japanese working more unpaid overtime: survey](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Record number of foreign trainees went missing in 2015](#) (Sankei)
- [Abe gov't backing Osaka Expo plan in exchange for constitutional revision support](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Kagoshima governor accepts restart of reactor at Sendai plant](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Japan mulls having new utilities help pay Fukushima victims](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

OPINION POLLS

- [66% say TPP should be carefully deliberated; 57% opposed to SDF involvement in rescue missions, Kyodo News poll](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Kyodo News opinion poll & results from Tokyo Shimbun](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Pollees split over need to pass TPP during current Diet session, Nikkei poll](#) (Nikkei)

SECURITY

- [Gov't drawing up Cabinet order for SDF 'rush and rescue' missions](#) (The Mainichi)
- [DM Inada says situation in South Sudan wasn't suitable for SDF rescue operations](#) (Sankei)
- [Experts call for maritime crisis system](#) (The Japan News)
- [Govt eyes subsidies for border islands](#) (The Japan News)

INTERNATIONAL

- [Higher ranking Japanese official attends alleged secret talks with North Korea](#) (Asahi)
- [S. Korea president's Japan trip by year-end uncertain amid scandal](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan mulls return of Russian-held islets by vowing no U.S. presence](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan to offer expertise in developing regional cities in Russia](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japanese, Indian vice foreign ministers agree on opposing DPRK's nuclear arms development](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan, Taiwan hold 1st round of maritime cooperation dialogue](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan elected to serve on U.N. Human Rights Council](#) (Kyodo News)
- [IWC to set up fund for developing nations, picks Japanese chairman](#) (Kyodo News)

- [U.S. 'nuclear umbrella' drove Japan's vote against U.N. resolution](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Japan's vote against nuke ban talks mocks its anti-nuke credo](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: U.N.'s expanding of divide among nonnuclear countries regrettable](#) (The Japan News)
- [ROK defense minister refuses to provide defense information to Japan](#) (Asahi)
- [Special Advisor Shibayama to visit South Sudan](#) (Asahi)
- [Japan, China, S. Korea trade chiefs pledge to promote free trade talks](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Philippines' Duterte promises to stop cursing after warning by God](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Ramp up tie-up with Philippines based on 'rule of law' principle](#) (The Japan News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Oct. 30](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Oct. 29](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Oct. 28](#) (Nikkei)

EDUCATION

- [Low-income students with lower academic achievement to be eligible for loans](#) (Mainichi)

SOCIETY

- [Diversification of news delivery may lead young people to read news again](#) (FACTA)

TV PROGRAMS

[Chinese farmers evicted from cities struggle to start over](#)

"NHK Special" on Sunday reported on China, which has become the second largest economy in the world. The program said that while nearly 300 million farmers have moved to major cities to work in the "world's factory," a new project has begun to move those farmers to smaller cities in order to achieve more balanced economic development following the slowdown of the Chinese economy. The program reported on farmers struggling to find new jobs and homes and those who chose not to move out of the major cities.

Policy chiefs discuss Diet deliberations on TPP agreement

During NHK's "Nichiyo Toron" debate show on Sunday, Policy chiefs from the LDP, Komeito, Democratic Party (DP), Japanese Communist Party (JCP), and Nippon Ishin discussed the TPP. Vice Chairman of the LDP Policy Affairs Research Council Tamura stressed the need for Japan to swiftly ratify the TPP by saying that sufficient time has been spent on discussions in the Diet and ratification will boost Tokyo's position in the international community. Tamura expressed hope that Japan's ratification of the TPP will urge the U.S. to approve the accord and give Tokyo a stronger voice in international affairs. Vice Chairman of the Komeito Policy Research Council Ueda and Nippon Ishin policy chief Asada agreed on the need for early ratification. However, DP policy chief Ogushi said that it is not wise for Japan to approve the TPP agreement now because both the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates are opposed to it. Head of the JCP secretariat Koike called for thorough discussions on the matter. The panelists also discussed pension system reform and long working hours in Japan.

How to turn 100 and still be healthy

"NHK Special" on Saturday reported on the secret to longevity, welcoming Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara, who recently turned 105, as a program guest. The program looked at the diet and lifestyle of centenarians in Japan, which reached a record high of 65,692 in September 2016. Many of the centenarians reportedly maintained lower levels of chronic inflammation, which is one of the keys to longevity. The program also reported on centenarians in other nations, saying that the so-called Mediterranean diet and Japanese cuisine proved effective in reducing chronic inflammation. Researchers have also recently discovered that centenarians have higher levels of "microcirculation" which can be improved through exercise. Feelings of happiness and satisfaction deriving from volunteer work, love for family, and working for good causes reportedly help control chronic inflammation, and people's positive feelings apparently increase as they age.