



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, November 30, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NTV, Fuji TV, and TV Asahi led with follow-up reports on the arrest of pop singer ASKA in connection with use of stimulants. TBS gave top play to a report that more than 70% of the South Korean public was not satisfied with President Park's statement yesterday in which she said she will allow the national assembly to make a decision on her resignation. NHK also reported on President Park's statement.

SECURITY

Local media express rage over police crackdown on anti-base activists in Okinawa

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo gave prominent front- and inside-page coverage to yesterday's arrest by the local police of four pro-peace activists on charges of forcible obstruction of business by blocking the passage of vehicles involved in construction work at Camp Schwab in January. The fact that a peace activist facility in Naha City was one of the eight locations that the police searched in investigating the allegation particularly upset anti-base protestors, with a lawyer for one of the suspects saying that it is quite unusual for an arrest to be made in connection with a incident that occurred more than 10 months ago. The dailies underscored that the police "suppressed civic activities to silence base opponents," adding that the activists have renewed their determination to

continue protesting against the present Futenma relocation plan by saying that they will never succumb to "relentless harassment" by the police.

[Onaga displeased with media reports saying he “approved” helipad construction](#)

Two major Okinawa papers took up yesterday’s press remarks by Okinawa Governor Onaga, who took issue with local media stories a day earlier saying that he effectively "approved" the ongoing helipad construction at the Northern Training Area when speaking to reporters on Sunday. Onaga said on Tuesday: “I do not approve of the helipad construction. I'm not endorsing the construction of the helipads, because the central government has failed to conduct an environmental assessment for the Ospreys' use of the platforms.” The Okinawa leader, however, acknowledged that the language he used on Sunday was somewhat misleading.

In a related story, Okinawa Times reported from Washington on remarks made on Monday by an unnamed high-ranking DOS official, who commented on Governor Onaga’s alleged approval of the helipad construction by saying: “It's not surprising. We've never thought the Okinawa governor was opposed to the helipad construction. We were told that during a recent meeting with the central government, the governor clearly expressed a position welcoming the NTA return this year.” The U.S. diplomat also stressed that the helipad construction will lead to a reduction of the base-hosting burden on Okinawa since part of the training area will be returned to Japan as a result of the consolidation of facilities there.

- [Defense Ministry conducts test flight of future stealth fighter](#) (Nikkei)
- [MHI, NTT develop cybersecurity system for critical infrastructure](#) (Yomiuri)

INTERNATIONAL

- [“Inside story” of Abe-Trump meeting on Nov. 17](#) (Shukan Bunshun)
- [South Korea, Japan, U.S. eye nuclear envoy talks in mid-December](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Survey of newspaper editorials on forthcoming Japan-Russia summit](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Fidel Castro](#) (Asahi)

POLITICS

[LDP proposes committee vote on casino bill on Dec. 2](#)

Nikkei reported online on a meeting this morning between the ruling LDP and its junior partner Komeito party, during which the LDP side expressed hope for putting the casino legislation to a

Lower House committee vote on Friday for approval by the plenary session on Dec. 6. Komeito officials, however, were reportedly hesitant about this schedule and said that careful deliberations are necessary. Deliberations on the legislation to legalize gambling started this afternoon at the Cabinet Committee of the lower chamber.

- [Prime minister's schedule on November 29](#) (Nikkei)
- [Extension period of Okinawa special tax program to be shortened from five to two years](#) (Asahi)
- [Abe, opposition's Renho to face off in party leaders' debate next week](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Diet must adopt pension reform legislation in extended session](#) (The Japan News)
- [Experts' opinions on emperor abdication at gov't panel hearings](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Cartoon: Extension of Diet session](#) (Akahata)

ECONOMY

- [Gov't approves initial budget exceeding 97 trillion yen](#) (Asahi)
- [Corporations wary of equal pay for equal work](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan lower house passes pension reform bill amid opposition protest](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Fukushima decommissioning costs jump to 8 trillion yen](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japanese manufacturers tie up with European, U.S. rivals on IoT](#) (Mainichi)
- [Gov't endorses JA Zen-Noh reform program](#) (Nikkei)

SCIENCE

- [Expert committee on hydrofluorocarbons to be established](#) (Mainichi Evening edition)

SOCIETY

- [Beyond Tomorrow Executive Director Minami Tsubouchi](#) (Nikkei)

- [Atsuko Toko Fish, trustee of the Fish Family Foundation](#) (Nikkei)

TV PROGRAMS

Japanese eating more beef

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" reported on an increase in beef consumption in Japan, saying that lean beef in particular is growing in popularity. While lean beef used to be unpopular because of its tough and dry texture, people are starting to favor it for its "firm and healthy" qualities. The program said many supermarkets and restaurants are rushing to procure lean beef from across the nation. Producers are also beginning to breed cattle that produce lean beef in addition to cattle that produce the ever-popular marbled beef. The program said it might be possible in the future to control the flavor of meat using cell culture technology for regenerative medicine.

