



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, December 6, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters this morning that PM Abe's planned visit to Pearl Harbor is intended to remember the victims and not to offer an apology. Most commercial networks gave top play to reports on a traffic accident in Aoyama, Tokyo, this morning, in which five people were injured.

INTERNATIONAL

Suga says Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor not for apology

NTV reported at noon that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters this morning that Prime Minister Abe's planned visit to Pearl Harbor later this month is for the purpose of remembering the victims and not to offer an apology. He also said he believes it will be an opportunity to convey the value of reconciliation between the U.S. and Japan. All other networks carried similar stories. NHK also quoted Suga as saying that the visit is for the purpose of expressing determination never to allow the horrors of war to be repeated. Suga also reportedly said the premier's visit to Pearl Harbor is not connected to President Obama's visit to Hiroshima. Foreign Minister Kishida told reporters this morning that "it will be a good opportunity to convey the message that the U.S.-Japan alliance plays a significant role in the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region as well as the international community," and said he is planning to accompany the premier.

An NTV reporter said LDP members are pleased with PM Abe's announcement to visit Pearl Harbor since it will further increase the premier's approval rating. A senior Democratic Party official

reportedly said although it will be a historic accomplishment, it is intended to offset the territorial negotiations with Russia and the casino bill that are expected to face difficulties. According to the network, while Abe has been talking to his close aides about the possibility of visiting Pearl Harbor ever since he made his statement on the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII last year, he has been taking a negative attitude in order to avoid giving the impression that his visit to Pearl Harbor is being made in return for President Obama's visit to Hiroshima. The network also said the planned visit is aimed at maintaining good U.S.-Japan relations under the Trump administration.

Hibakusha, journalists react to Abe's planned Pearl Harbor visit

NHK's "News Watch 9" and the evening news shows of most commercial networks led with reports on Prime Minister Abe's announcement on Monday evening that he will visit Pearl Harbor with President Obama in late December to pay tribute to those killed there. NHK quoted Sunao Tsuboi, co-chairperson of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, as welcoming Abe's decision to visit Pearl Harbor by saying that it is a good idea to comfort the souls of the victims. Shigeaki Mori, the Hiroshima A-bomb survivor whom President Obama hugged in Hiroshima, said it is great that President Obama and Prime Minister Abe will visit Pearl Harbor together and discuss world peace there. A political reporter speculated that Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor is intended to reinforce stable relations between the U.S. and Japan by confirming reconciliation between the two nations. Noting that President-elect Trump posted a tweet on President Obama's trip to Hiroshima saying, "Does President Obama ever discuss the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor while he's in Japan? Thousands of American lives lost," a Washington correspondent speculated that Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor will be welcomed by the American people and have a positive impact on Japan's relations with the Trump administration. Kyodo News journalist Kenji Goto said on TV-Asahi's "Hodo Station" that by visiting Pearl Harbor, Abe probably intends to return the favor for President Obama's visit to Hiroshima and will try to put an end to discussion on postwar reconciliation. Goto added that the White House reacted strongly to Abe's meeting with Trump in November and that Abe will try to mend his strained ties with President Obama by holding their final summit in Hawaii.

- [Full text of PM Abe's statement on visit to Pearl Harbor](#) (Mainichi)
- [Abe's announcement on visit to Pearl Harbor creating stir in the political arena](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe's Pearl Harbor visit to showcase US-Japan ties](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [China bracing for influx of North Korean refugees](#) (Yomiuri)
- [A-bomb survivors hail Abe's planned trip to Pearl Harbor](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Abe to send message of reconciliation in Pearl Harbor](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

- [Abe returning favor for Obama's Hiroshima trip](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Commentary: Blaming Japan for Pearl Harbor attack counterproductive](#) (Mainichi)
- [Experts' perspectives on Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe returning favor for Obama's Hiroshima trip](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Commentary: U.S. two party system holding risk of racial division](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japanese banks eye 95 bil. yen loans to Russia's Gazprom](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Will foreign ministers' talks pave way for achievement at Abe-Putin meet?](#) (The Japan News)
- [Chinese ships enter Japanese waters around Senkakus](#) (Kyodo News)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter users divided over Abe's announcement on Pearl Harbor visit

Prime Minister Abe's unexpected announcement on his visit to Pearl Harbor has resonated strongly among Japan's Twitter users, with tens of thousands of tweets on the subject being posted since last night. People expressed different views on the historic visit, with Abe's supporters on the right largely supportive. One of the most popular tweets was: "The postwar era has come to an end very quickly over the past year or so because the prime minister has delivered such historic achievements as the enactment of the security laws, the comfort women accord with South Korea, the G8 Ise-Shima summit, President Obama's visit to Hiroshima, and Abe's Pearl Harbor trip." Pro-Abe Twitter users also credited Abe for making efforts to further deepen bonds with the U.S. ahead of the inauguration of the Trump administration, which they think will be extremely useful for holding China in check.

However, some conservative elements were not so pleased, saying that Abe should visit Yasukuni Shrine before paying homage to U.S. victims. One Twitter user took issue with Abe's Pearl Harbor visit being treated on a par with President Obama's visit to Hiroshima by saying: "The atomic bombing was a massacre of innocent citizens and hence illegal, while the Pearl Harbor attack was legal because the victims were largely service members." Twitter users on the left, while not objecting to the Japanese leader's visit per se, expressed doubts about his motives. Soda Kazuhiro, a popular film director known for his liberal views, tweeted: "If the prime minister were faithful to the revisionist view on history that treats Japan as the liberator of Asia in WWII, he would never be able to visit Pearl Harbor. However, he has decided to go in order to please the U.S. He doesn't care about compromising his own beliefs for the purpose of accommodating the U.S."

SECURITY

Secretary Carter “satisfied” with Japan’s share of cost of stationing USFJ

NHK briefly reported this afternoon that Secretary of Defense Carter told reporters while en route to Japan on Monday that he is satisfied with Japan's current share of the cost of stationing U.S. troops in Japan. The network also reported online that based on the SOFA, the GOJ not only pays the rent for land used by USFJ bases but also a portion of U.S. base workers' salaries and utility costs as part of the "sympathy budget." According to MOD, Japan will pay a total of about 760 billion yen for FY2016. The network also quoted the Secretary as saying that the U.S.-Japan alliance is stronger than ever and continues to evolve in response to new environments. The network said Secretary Carter is expected to exchange views with his Japanese counterpart on bilateral cooperation based on the guidelines for Japan-U.S. defense cooperation.

Opponents of NTA helipad construction to send letter to President

Ryukyu Shimpo wrote that ahead of the planned return of a large portion of the Northern Training Area later this month, some 100 people from 27 groups, including Diet members from Okinawa, scholars, and activists, plan to send a letter to President Obama calling for an immediate halt to the ongoing helipad construction there. The opponents claim that the construction is being carried out without taking into consideration Okinawans' wishes or the impact on the local environment. They will hold a news conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan on Wednesday and disclose the details of the letter and the names of the people who signed it.

Trash believed to belong to U.S. military dumped near NTA

Okinawa Times wrote that a local man found on Sunday in an area bordering the Northern Training Area several hundred retort pouches for food that are believed to belong to the U.S. military. The packages were reportedly labeled “Department of Defense” or “United States of America.” The man told the paper that the sight of the trash gave him an unpleasant feeling and that garbage should be disposed of properly.

Okinawa Prefecture launches English website on U.S. base issues

Okinawa Times wrote that the Okinawa Prefectural Government launched on Monday an English-language [website](#) to disseminate messages on base issues to the U.S. The website is intended to report on the views of Governor Onaga and the activities of the prefecture’s office in Washington to U.S. government officials, lawmakers, and other Americans.

- [U.S. defense chief inspects Japan’s largest naval vessel](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan ups pay, compensation for deaths for SDF personnel in S. Sudan](#) (Kyodo News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 5](#) (Nikkei)
- [Proportional representation votes received by major parties in recent elections](#) (Sankei)
- [JCP introduces first 254 candidates endorsed for single member districts in LH election](#) (Asahi)
- [Interview with JCP chief Shii: Hopes for a non-permanent coalition](#) (Nikkei)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Nippon Ham Fighters Otani](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)

ECONOMY

- [37% of Japanese firms in Europe say Japan-EU EPA would be beneficial, JETRO poll](#) (Mainichi)
- [Northeast Asia forum stresses stability in face of global risks](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Drug price revision must lead to a reasonable system](#) (Asahi)
- [Keidanren Chairman shows understanding for annual revisions](#) (Sankei)
- [Tokyo Governor Koike cautious about inviting casinos](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Scrap spousal deduction system to empower women](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Japan's total fertility rate rises slightly to 1.45](#) (Asahi)
- [Tepco seen staying under government control for some time](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

SCIENCE

- [Japan's greenhouse gas emissions fall for 2nd straight year](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Sea Shepherd ships depart for annual battle with Japanese whalers](#) (The Japan Times)

SOCIETY

- [First-ever survey on social recluses over 40 years of age now underway](#) (Mainichi Evening edition)

OPINION POLLS

- [Opinion poll & results from Yomiuri Shimbun](#) (Yomiuri)

TV PROGRAMS

[Lightning strikes cause increasing damage](#)

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" on Monday reported on lightning strikes in Japan, saying that an increasing number of high-rise buildings in Tokyo and other cities are being hit and damaged by powerful lightning strikes even in winter. The program pointed out that there are not enough buildings that have safety measures for lightning in Japan. The program also reported on the serious problem of lightning-induced electricity surges, which can affect medical equipment and disaster radio communication systems.

