



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, January 4, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Noon news

NHK and most commercial broadcasters led with reports on the first trading day of 2017 at the Tokyo Stock Exchange. The Nikkei Stock Average rose 415.31 points from Dec. 30 to 19,529.68 in morning trading due mainly to expectations for the improvement in the U.S. economy under the Trump administration. Finance Minister Aso commented at the opening of trading that he is confident that Japan will achieve sustainable economic growth by effectively utilizing its technological strength and excellent human resources.

NHK aired a live broadcast starting at 2:00 p.m. on the first news conference of the year by Prime Minister Abe in Ise, Mie Prefecture. The premier reiterated his resolve to move forward with the Abenomics growth strategy and create a society in which everyone can be actively engaged, regardless of gender, age, or physical and mental impediments. In response to a question from a reporter about the possibility of dissolving the Lower House for a snap general election in the near future, Abe stated that he has no such plan.

## SECURITY

### Inada leaves for Europe for talks with French counterpart, NATO official

NHK reported that Defense Minister Inada left for Europe this morning to attend a 2+2 meeting with France and discuss with her French counterpart Japan's strengthened defense cooperation with the nation, including the conclusion of an acquisition and cross-servicing agreement and response to China's maritime activities in the South China Sea. Ahead of her trip to Paris, Inada plans to visit

NATO headquarters in Brussels to discuss cyber defense and other issues with Secretary General Stoltenberg.

### **Onaga reiterates determination to block “construction of new base at Henoko”**

NHK reported online that during a New Year's message to prefectural government employees today, Okinawa Governor Onaga stated that blocking the construction of a new base at Henoko is a key objective of the prefectural government and that he will use all possible means to pursue this policy. Referring to such incidents last year as the murder of a Japanese woman by an American base contractor and the Osprey landing in shallow waters off Nago, Onaga stated that little has been done to reduce the excessive base-hosting burden on Okinawa.

### **Onaga plans visit to U.S.**

Ryukyu Shimpo ran a front-page report saying that Governor Onaga is making arrangements to visit the U.S. later this month to directly convey his intention to block the ongoing project to construct a new base at Henoko. He plans to reiterate the prefectural government's position on Futenma relocation before senior DOS and DOD officials in charge of U.S. bases in foreign nations are appointed by the Trump administration. This will be Onaga's third visit to the U.S. as governor. The Okinawa leader plans to host a symposium in Washington and invite scholars who have an influence on government policy to participate.

### **U.S. military imposes lighter punishment for DUI than Japan**

Okinawa Times gave top play to a report by British journalist Jon Mitchell claiming that the limits for driving under the influence of alcohol on U.S. bases in Japan had been lower than the limits set under Japanese law until the USFJ established new alcohol content standards in April 2016. The journalist argued that although the current limits are the same as the Japanese ones, punishment is much lighter than under Japanese law. The paper quoted a lawyer who helps victims of crimes involving U.S. service members as saying: "The U.S. military disregards Japan's domestic laws. The lighter punishment may be creating an environment encouraging U.S. service members to drive under the influence of alcohol off base."

- [Japan in talks with New Zealand for defense aircraft](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan launches public-private effort for New Zealand arms contract](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [U.S. swindles Japan with useless drone contract](#) (FACTA)

## **OPINION POLLS**

- [“Latent pro-independence faction” growing, 2016 Ryukyu Shimpo public opinion poll of Okinawa Prefecture residents](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)

- [85% support Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor, Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)
- [66% against casino legalization, Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)

## INTERNATIONAL

### **Chinese Coast Guard ships enter Japanese territorial waters around Senkakus**

NHK reported that four Chinese Coast Guard ships entered Japanese territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands shortly after 10 a.m. today and stayed there for about 90 minutes. Chinese Coast Guard ships last entered Japanese waters on Dec. 26, and this is the first such incident this year. The Japan Coast Guard is monitoring the moves of the ships, which are currently sailing in Japan's contiguous waters around the Senkakus. MOFA Asian and Oceanian Bureau Director-General Kanasugi lodged a protest with a minister-counselor at the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo by saying that the Senkaku Islands are an integral part of Japanese territory.

- [U.S., Japan, S. Korea to meet Thurs. over N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Interview with Asst. Sec. Russel: Obama's "affection" for Japan behind good bilateral ties](#) (Jiji Press)
- [Japan business lobby to send mission for talks with Trump officials](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Major diplomatic events in 2017](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Japan should strengthen bonds with the world](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Prevent expansion of antiglobalism / Response to Trump diplomacy necessary](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Trump administration should use U.S. influence to pursue world peace](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Balance between scientific research and military use questioned](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)
- [Japan to cooperate with U.S. in developing cyber defense experts](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan declined to join G-7 nations in condemning Russia over Syria](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Time to dispel public distrust, make capitalism work better](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)

- [Editorial: Protecting core democratic values will be tested in 2017](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Putin eager to work with Abe to build partnership in New Year message](#) (The Japan News)
- [Hokkaido to assign bureau chief in charge of Northern Territories economic activities](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Ceremony marking new name of Japan's de facto embassy in Taiwan held](#) (Kyodo News)

## POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 3](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 1 and 2](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 31](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 30](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe calls for "new nation-building" in Constitution's 70th year](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Japan should stop being swept along by the tide of the times](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Recommitment to constitutionalism a must as sun rises on uncertain 2017](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Abe should maintain spirit of tolerance, try to understand opposition](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Komeito agonizes over implementation law for new casino legislation](#) (Yomiuri)

## ECONOMY

- [Foreign labor, immigration policies fraught with challenges](#) (Shukan Toyo Keizai)
- [Japan-EU EPA, RCEP coming into the forefront amidst bleak TPP prospects](#) (Shukan Toyo Keizai)
- [2016 Retrospective: energy politics & policies](#) (Denki Shimbun)

- [60% of major Japanese companies expect economy to grow in 2017](#) (Kyodo News)
  - [New study to seek markers for judging effectiveness of immunotherapy drugs before treatment](#) (Mainichi)
  - [Many applications for marine resources development shelved for 40 years](#) (Asahi)
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