



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, January 10, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Noon news

NHK gave top play to a report that Prime Minister Abe met with Japanese Ambassador to South Korea Nagamine at the Kantei today and discussed future measures following the installation of a "comfort woman" statue in front of the Japanese Consulate General in Busan. NTV and Fuji TV led with reports on the announcement by Toyota that it will invest more than 1 trillion yen in the U.S. in the next five years. TBS gave top play to a report that prosecutors in Chile have not yet questioned a Chilean man put on the international wanted list in connection with a missing Japanese woman. TV Asahi led with a report that PM Abe and Tokyo Governor Koike met at the Kantei today and discussed the cost of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Suga comments on recall of Japanese Ambassador to South Korea

All networks reported at noon on the temporary recall of Japanese Ambassador to South Korea Nagamine in protest of the installation of the comfort woman statue in Busan and his meeting with Prime Minister Abe at the Kantei today. The networks also quoted Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga as telling reporters today: "The two governments confirmed that the comfort women issue would be finally and irreversibly resolved in the Japan-ROK agreement of 2015. The South Korean government has also said its intention to steadily implement the agreement remains unchanged. We will continue to call on the South Korean side to steadily implement the agreement, including the issue of the comfort woman statue." Suga reportedly said it has not yet been decided when Ambassador Nagamine will return to South Korea. In addition, Suga reportedly said: "South Korea is

a country with which we share extremely important and common values. In particular, Japan, South Korea, and the United States need to work closely to deal with North Korea."

### **ROK leader urges politicians to exercise restraint**

Asahi reported online on remarks made this morning by South Korean Prime Minister Hwang, who called for politicians of Japan and South Korea to refrain from making statements that could cause bilateral tension to escalate over a comfort woman memorial recently installed in Busan. The ROK premier reportedly underscored the significance of the 2015 Tokyo-Seoul accord on comfort women, noting that it is important for not just the two governments but all stakeholders to respect the meaning and spirit of the agreement and make efforts to develop future-oriented bilateral relations.

The same daily took up press remarks this morning by Defense Minister Inada, who pressed the Park administration to remove the Busan statue expeditiously. However, the defense chief concurrently stressed the importance of deepening security collaboration with Seoul by building on last year's major accomplishment of signing a bilateral GSOMIA.

- [Trump's Toyota tweet raises eyebrows among Japan lawmakers](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japanese leaders question Trump's protectionism after he hits Toyota](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Column: How far will Trump's bully pulpit take him?](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Column: Americans may foot the bill for Trump's protectionist games](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Opinion: Essence of U.S. diplomacy won't change](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Trump's criticism of Toyota's plan to build Mexico plant ignores reality](#) (The Japan News)
- [Recall of Japanese envoy triggers chorus of opposition to comfort women accord in the ROK](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan fears annulment of comfort women deal](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Concerns over bilateral accord with S. Korea on 'comfort women' issue](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: More measured reaction needed over 'comfort women' statue](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)

- [Editorial: Installation of new girl statue in Busan impairs Japan-ROK relations](#) (The Japan News)
- [METI Minister Seko to visit Russia Jan. 10–15](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan, EU to resume EPA negotiations on Jan. 17](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan to set up body to promote maritime safety in Southeast Asia](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Quake resistance design of Turkey nuclear plant questioned](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan's former Foreign Minister Komura cancels Iran visit](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Cambodia asks Japan to conduct feasibility study on airport rail link](#) (Kyodo News)

## SECURITY

### [Okinawa to seek new mechanism for dealing with U.S. military incidents](#)

Sunday's Ryukyu Shimpo reported that the Okinawa prefectural government is set to ask the GOJ and USG to create a new framework for taking its opinions into account when dealing with misconduct and accidents involving U.S. military personnel and hardware. The prefectural government is calling for such a mechanism since it was left out of the loop when the U.S. military decided in consultation with the central government to resume Osprey aerial refueling training. Pointing out that a similar dialogue framework involving the three parties was established in 1979 but became irrelevant in the early 2000s, the article said the viability of such a framework will depend on its participants and rules.

- [Japan defense chief to visit Guam to inspect missile defense system](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Okinawa affairs minister "disapproves of" resumption of Osprey training](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)
- [To counter threat of China, Japan accelerates security diplomacy in Europe](#) (Asahi)
- [U.S. Defense Department explores Japan's commercial technology](#) (Kyodo News)

## ECONOMY

## **Record number of foreigners visited Japan in 2016**

NHK reported this afternoon that the number of foreign visitors to Japan in 2016 reached a record of about 24.03 million due partly to the increase in the number of flights and cruise ships connecting Japan and Asia. The network also reported online that the relaxation of visa requirements for tourists from China and Vietnam and the improved duty-free system for foreign visitors contributed to the increase. The network added that the GOJ is planning to increase the number of foreign visitors to 40 million annually by 2020 through improving airports, ports, and other infrastructure and discovering new tourism resources.

- [Toyota's \\$10bn US investment seen as nod to Trump](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan's megabanks consider a pivot to America](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan gets U.S. cooperation to set new routes over Tokyo airport](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Kyushu Electric restarts Sendai nuclear reactor](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Takeda to buy U.S. cancer drug maker ARIAD Pharmaceuticals](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japanese drugmakers to start commercial production of new biological medicines](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan, Australia to confirm the importance of free trade](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gov't sets up casino planning office](#) (Mainichi)
- [Abe meets U.S. investor Soros after stressing economic focus](#) (Kyodo News)

## **POLITICS**

- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 9](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 8](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 7](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 6](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe says he won't think about election before passing budget](#) (The Japan News)
- [LDP, Kokoro to form unified parliamentary group in Upper House](#) (Nikkei)

- [Komeito, DP competing to woo Tokyo Gov. Koike](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Defense industry donations to LDP increase by 60%](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Trump intervention in businesses benefits no one](#) (The Mainichi)

## SCIENCE

- [Tokyo creating security guidelines for space systems](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Research team to develop micro Mars probe](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan Inc. taking lead in switch to green refrigerants](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Nuclear watchdog questions Environment Ministry's plan to reuse radioactive soil](#) (The Mainichi)

## EDUCATION

- [Commentary: Are female scholars taken seriously in Japan?](#) (The Japan Times)

## SOCIETY

- [Editorial: Japan's young people need more hope for future](#) (The Mainichi)
- [35% say they would find it offensive if colleagues were homosexual or bisexual, Rengo survey](#) (Nikkei)
- [Publisher ordered to suspend publication of book on conservative group](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Nikkei Online hits half-million paid subscribers](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

## AMBASSADOR

- [Ambassador Kennedy will be remembered for skill in coordinating between Washington and Tokyo regarding U.S. military base issues](#) (Sankei)

## TV PROGRAMS

### **Explosive rise of e-commerce in China**

Sunday evening's "NHK Special" reported on the growing rise in e-commerce in China, saying that online sales in the nation totaled about 60 trillion yen in 2015. The program said China is planning to

raise the purchasing power of the rural population through e-commerce. The program closely followed a village where many online shopping companies are located, saying that many young people from across the country come to the village to launch their own Internet services and realize their dreams. The program said the Chinese government has cooperated with private companies to create a service center for online shopping services.

### **Abe rules out snap election in near future**

NHK's Sunday morning talk show "Nichiyo Toron" aired live, one-on-one interviews with the leaders of major political parties, including LDP President/Prime Minister Abe, who dismissed speculation that he may dissolve the Lower House later this month for a snap election. Abe said: "I'm not thinking about that at all. Our first task should be to ensure economic reconstruction. Since the most effective tool is to enact the budget legislation, we will do our best to make this happen at an early date." Democratic Party President Renho noted that all members of the party must recognize that the public still has a very critical view of the largest opposition party. She stressed that she will accelerate electoral cooperation with other opposition parties with the ultimate goal of creating a two-party system in Japan. Japanese Communist Party Chairman Shii expressed confidence about deepening election cooperation within the opposition camp.

### **Hiroshima "Grandma" supports delinquent children**

Saturday evening's "NHK Special" reported on an 82-year-old woman named Chikako Nakamoto in Hiroshima who is known as "Ba-chan" (Grandma) by the many delinquent children she has helped to raise. Nakamoto worked as a volunteer probation officer for many years until she retired six years ago. She still welcomes children into her home and serves them homemade meals in the belief that "children act up when they're hungry." The program said 38,921 minors were arrested for criminal offenses in 2016, and 36.4% of them became repeat offenders, adding that the risk of children committing crimes is increasing due to growing income disparity and poverty. However, such children reportedly have no place to go because society is becoming increasingly intolerant. The program showed how Nakamoto touches the hearts of such children and provides them with opportunities to get back on track.

### **Great East Japan Earthquake – Five years later**

Monday evening's "NHK Special" reported on the situation in Fukushima Prefecture more than five years after the March 11 disaster. The program said a world-class medical magazine published data last year that was compiled by Japanese doctors showing that the suicide rate in Fukushima has been rapidly increasing since 2015, four years after the Great East Japan Earthquake. The program said there are about 150 calls a day in Fukushima from people seeking counseling, which is more than three times higher than in other prefectures. According to a professor, many of the callers are suffering from what is known as "ambiguous loss" since there has been no clear ending to the nuclear disaster. The program also reported on outreach efforts in Fukushima to support isolated elderly people.

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