



Afternoon Alert - Thursday, January 19, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Noon news

Most networks gave top play to reports that Administrative Vice Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Maekawa has decided to step down as early as tomorrow to take responsibility for the issue of senior MEXT officials lobbying Waseda University to secure a job for their retired colleague in 2015. NHK reported that MEXT is planning to take disciplinary measures against seven executives, including Maekawa. Fuji TV led with a report on President Obama's last press conference held on Wednesday, during which the President tried to keep President-elect Trump in check by stressing the success of his policy toward Russia.

## INTERNATIONAL

### LDP policy chief meets with Hudson Institute CEO

NHK reported this morning that visiting LDP policy chief Motegi met with Hudson Institute CEO Weinstein on Wednesday in Washington and agreed to further deepen the U.S.-Japan relationship under the new administration. The network said Weinstein is close to President-elect Trump. According to the network, Motegi told Weinstein: "How to deepen and develop the bilateral alliance and the economic relationship will be an important topic for us to discuss with the new Trump administration. I think this is a shared understanding between Japan and the U.S." Weinstein reportedly responded: "The United States is hoping to deepen the alliance with Japan. The U.S.-Japan relationship remains firm and I think we can build a better relationship under the new administration." In addition, Weinstein also expressed hope that a summit between Prime Minister Abe and Trump will be held at an early date. The network quoted Motegi as telling reporters after the

meeting: "Arranging Prime Minister Abe's visit to the U.S. and interactions between persons of influence as soon as possible and as frequently and extensively as possible is a pressing task."

An NHK reporter said although Motegi also held informal meetings with members of the Trump transition team during his visit in order to find out about the policies of the new administration, Motegi said "it appears difficult even in Washington to predict Trump's thinking." The reporter said Motegi will return to Japan on Friday and brief the premier on his visit.

- [LDP's Motegi, Michael Green hold talks in D.C.](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Develop strategy to prod U.S. administration to get involved with Asia](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Obama leaves legacy of lofty ideals, patchy execution](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Cartoon: Mr. Trump's favorite card](#) (Asahi)
- [Cartoon: President-elect and the media](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Japan, Russia consult on economic activities in Northern Territories](#) (Sankei)
- [Development of Northern Territories "will continue as planned," Russian deputy minister](#) (Mainichi)
- [Abe, Pacific island nations chart mutually beneficial cooperation](#) (Kyodo News)
- [LDP parliamentarians' league opposes tariff removal under EPA with EU](#) (Sankei)

## SECURITY

### [Okinawa vice governor denies allegations of influence peddling](#)

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo gave extensive top play to reports on the recent allegation that Okinawa Vice Governor Ageda asked the prefectural board of education to hire his acquaintances as public school teachers in 2015. Okinawa Times added that the vice governor also tried to use his influence to control the selection of senior members of the education bureau of the prefectural government in 2016. The board of education reportedly rejected Ageda's alleged requests, and the vice governor has categorically dismissed the allegations. Okinawa Times wrote that the influence-peddling scandal could affect the prefecture's negotiations on the Okinawa base issues with the GOJ, because Ageda is Governor Onaga's "right-hand man" and has served as a primary point of contact between the two parties.

- [National government and Okinawa governor at odds over local elections](#) (Asahi)
- [Defense spending swells due to additional budget requests](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [President-elect Trump pressures Japan to buy 100 F-35s](#) (THEMIS)
- [U.S. servicemen receive letters of appreciation](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)

## OPINION POLLS

- [49% think Abe administration should not prioritize constitutional amendment, Jiji Press poll](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Nearly half of Japanese expect no change in Japan-S. Korea ties](#) (Jiji Press)
- [63% approve of special law to allow one-time abdication, Asahi poll](#) (Asahi)

## POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 18](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe's Diet policy speech to address "nation building for the next 70 years"](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Diet to deliberate on 83 bills, treaties from Jan. 20](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan seeks to target terror attacks as criminal conspiracies](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Does Japan's leader spend too much time in parliament?](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Former JCP Chairperson Fuwa to be reelected as key party member](#) (Yomiuri)

## ECONOMY

- [Inbound tourists' spending a record 3.7 trillion yen](#) (Mainichi)
- [Inbound visitors from North America, Europe, Australia up 18% in 2016](#) (Nikkei)
- [Toshiba's nuclear loss could top \\$4.4bn](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Looming losses drive Toshiba toward another overhaul](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

- [Toshiba eyes spinning off flash memory business](#) (Kyodo News)
- [2 more nuclear reactors in southwestern Japan pass safety checks](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Corporate shutdowns, closures hitting new record amid declining bankruptcies](#) (Nikkei)
- [Establishing subsidiaries in Japan to become easier for foreign corporations](#) (Nikkei)

## SCIENCE

- [Cabinet Office report: international framework necessary for AI-related ethics](#) (Nikkei)
- [ISS released six microsatellites into orbit](#) (Mainichi)
- [Exploring the moon, Mars using commercial technologies](#) (Shukan Ekonomisuto)
- [Japan to ratify Nagoya Protocol on genetic resources](#) (Asahi)
- [Medical community uneasy over money vs life debate](#) (Mainichi)

## EDUCATION

- [Yamagata University sees the largest increase of joint research funds from private sector](#) (Nikkei)

## SOCIETY

- [26% of marriages are remarriages, 2015 MHLW statistical analysis](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan criminal cases sink below one million in 2016](#) (Jiji Press)

## TV PROGRAMS

### **Illegal workers' network in Japan**

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" on Wednesday reported on a number of cases in which foreign technical interns leave their workplaces before their term of residence expires. According to the program, a record 5,800 foreign workers fled their workplaces in 2016 and are believed to be working illegally in Japan. The program discovered an underground network that supports such

illegal workers, including providing jobs, creating fake residence cards, and arranging accommodations. An expert pointed out that the current system is problematic because it only allows foreign interns to stay in Japan for three years at maximum and companies are not allowed to retain them as employees after that.

## **AMBASSADOR**

- [\*\*Ambassador Kennedy leaves Japan: “See you again!”\*\*](#) (Mainichi)
  - [\*\*Editorial: Kennedy’s contribution to stronger Japan-U.S. alliance deserves praise\*\*](#) (The Japan News)
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