



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, February 21, 2017

The following information reflects the reporting of the cited news media and does not reflect the opinions of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Japan Media Highlights is intended for USG use only and should not be forwarded. Visit the website [here](#). For more information, contact TokyoMATT@state.gov.

HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that the Justice Ministry is planning to include concrete examples in legislation that penalizes preparing terrorist attacks or organized crime. Most commercial networks continued to lead with updates on the murder of Kim Jong Nam, saying that his son has apparently flown to Malaysia to confirm the identity of the body.

SECURITY

Okinawa to conduct survey of U.S. military flights at Futenma

Ryukyu Shimpo front-paged a report saying that the Okinawa prefectural government began this month an around-the-clock survey to track the number of U.S. military aircraft takeoffs and landings at MCAS Futenma by setting up high-performance cameras at two locations near the base. This is the first time for the prefectural government to conduct this type of survey. The local government decided to conduct the survey after learning from the Defense Ministry's Okinawa Bureau last year that it only has data on Osprey flights. The prefectural government hopes to use the data to persuade the central government that operations at the base should be suspended by February 2019.

U.S. service members arrested in Okinawa for trespassing, DUI

Okinawa Times reported that the Okinawa Police arrested a 21-year-old Marine assigned to Camp Hansen in the early morning hours of Feb. 18 in Naha on suspicion of trespassing. The paper wrote that the suspect was released shortly after the arrest because there was no risk of him escaping since he injured himself when jumping off a roof. According to the paper, alcohol was detected on

the breath of the suspect. The police also arrested a U.S. service member belonging to Kadena AB in the early morning hours of Feb. 19 in Naha on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol. The suspect admitted that he drank beer before driving, and a breathalyzer test detected double the permissible level of alcohol. Noting that both incidents occurred after 2:00 a.m., the paper wrote that the service members may have violated the liberty order issued by the U.S. military in Okinawa.

- [MEXT affiliate to monitor cyberattacks on universities](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Defense Minister Inada's inconsistent comments problematic](#) (The Mainichi)

INTERNATIONAL

Parliamentary vice minister of Cabinet Office to attend "Takeshima Day" ceremony

NHK reported at noon that National Public Safety Commissioner Matsumoto, who oversees maritime policies and territorial issues, told reporters today that he will send Parliamentary Vice-Minister of the Cabinet Office Mutai to a ceremony to be held on Feb. 22 in Matsue, Shimane, to commemorate "Takeshima Day." The network quoted Matsumoto as saying: "Takeshima clearly belongs to Japan, both in historical terms and under international law.... I've instructed Parliamentary Vice-Minister Mutai to reiterate the government's position and efforts at the ceremony." On the possible impact on the Japan-ROK relationship, Matsumoto reportedly said: "South Korea is our most important neighbor, which we share strategic interests with. We will continue to make efforts to deepen the cooperative relationship in the new era in a future-oriented manner. We have no intention to undermine bilateral ties." The network said this will be the fifth time for the GOJ to send a parliamentary vice minister to the annual ceremony, adding that the South Korean government always lodges a protest.

Bannon brings "intolerance" to the White House

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" on Monday reported on White House Chief Strategist Steve Bannon, believed to be the mastermind behind President Trump's executive order on immigration. The program reported on Bannon's background, saying there are growing concerns in the U.S. that Bannon is bringing "intolerance" to the White House. Tokyo University Professor Kiichi Fujiwara said Bannon probably wields the strongest influence over President Trump. He also said a travel ban would be counter-effective in terms of preventing terrorism in the U.S. Noting that the public is almost evenly split on the travel ban, the program claimed that those who support it do so because of their strong concern about homeland security rather than the ideology behind it. Despite the UK's decision to leave the EU, many British citizens are reportedly opposed to President Trump's executive order on immigration. Fujiwara said that while Tokyo should strive to maintain its strong

alliance with the Trump administration, it should also have a "Plan B" in case its relations with the new U.S. administration become tense.

Senior party officials discuss outcome of U.S.-Japan summit

NHK's "Nichiyō Toron" Sunday debate show aired a discussion by senior officials of five ruling and opposition parties. LDP Vice President Komura said the recent summit meeting between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe was a great success because the two leaders demonstrated to the world the solid alliance between their nations. Komeito Chief Representative Yamaguchi commented that the U.S. and Japanese leaders were able to develop a relationship of trust and strengthen the bilateral alliance. Democratic Party Deputy President Eda welcomed the confirmation at the summit of the basic framework of the U.S.-Japan security alliance, but expressed concern about the possibility of Washington applying pressure on auto and agricultural trade in the future. Japanese Communist Party Chairman Shii criticized Abe for "kowtowing" to President Trump both on the security and economic fronts. Nippon Ishin co-leader Katayama gave high marks to the summit for displaying the importance of U.S.-Japan relations, but added that it is necessary for Japan to think carefully about the specific steps it plans to take in the future vis-à-vis Washington.

Concerning the joint statement issued by President Trump and PM Abe saying that Japan will take on greater roles and responsibilities in the alliance, Shii expressed concern that the Trump administration may ask Japan to participate in its operations against ISIL in the future. However, Komura stated that Japan has no plan to participate in such operations. With regard to the new economic dialogue to be co-chaired by Vice President Pence and Deputy Prime Minister Aso, Komura expressed the view that the dialogue will be a win-win arrangement, but Eda expressed concern over the possibility of the U.S. taking a protectionist stance under the framework.

- [**Editorial: Trump's conciliatory moves toward Russia should be avoided for now**](#) (The Japan News)
- [**Editorial: Trump's divisive political style in the presidency creating chaos**](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [**Surging waves of history rocking the world**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**Tokyo gearing up for economic talks with Washington**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**Editorial: Use improved relations between U.S. and Israel for Middle East peace**](#) (The Japan News)
- [**Japan may offer military trucks to ASEAN**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**Editorial: Kim Jong Nam's murder shows more brutal N. Korean reign of terror**](#) (The Japan News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 20](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 19](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 18](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 17](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of interpellations at the House of Representatives Budget Committee, Feb. 17](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Designation of "state of emergency" to be proposed in Constitutional reform](#) (Mainichi)
- [Renho, Nippon Ishin contemplate cooperation in Diet](#) (Yomiuri)

ECONOMY

- [JA Zenno reform proposal calls for direct sales to retail, food service industries](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan carving out wider pathway for foreign service workers](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Job switching hits 7-year high in Japan](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Gov't plan to limit monthly overtime to 60 hours insufficient](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Mizuho, Sumitomo Mitsui Trust eye merging asset management banking](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Gov't pension fund earned 8 trillion yen from October to December](#) (Asahi)
- [Editorial: Risk of relying on external demand to achieve growth must be weighed](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Public, private sectors must join hands to promote farming, fishery exports](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japanese trade surplus with US down 26% for January](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan to Tighten Controls on Domestic Ivory Market](#) (Jiji Press)

- [Fisheries Agency to punish violators of bluefin catch limits from 2018](#) (The Japan Times)

SCIENCE

- [Keidanren's Sakakibara wary of possible outflow of technology](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan cabdrivers get tips on where they're needed from AI](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Tokyo Institute of Technology to operate AI supercomputer](#) (Nikkei)
- [Maglev technology ready for operation](#) (Asahi)
- [JAXA to expand mini-rocket team for successful second launch](#) (Nikkei)

OPINION POLLS

- [Approval rating for Abe cabinet increases to 66%, Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Opinion poll & results from Yomiuri Shimbun](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Opinion poll & results from Sankei Shimbun](#) (Sankei)
- [67% say Japan will not be able to speak with U.S. as equals on economic issues, Mainichi poll](#) (Mainichi)
- [Opinion poll & results from Mainichi Shimbun](#) (Mainichi)

EDUCATION

- [Editorial: Expanding free education cannot be made soft underbelly of Constitution revision](#) (The Mainichi)

TV PROGRAMS

Planet Earth II – Part 3: Surviving in remote islands

Sunday's "NHK Special" aired the third part of its "Planet Earth II" series, focusing on animals that survive on remote islands, including chinstrap penguins and marine iguanas, and on animals that adapt to living in cities, such as leopards in Mumbai and falcons in New York.

