



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, February 22, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that Tokyo Governor Koike is expected to announce today that Tokyo will shoulder the cost of building temporary facilities for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics. Most commercial networks continued to lead with updates on the murder of Kim Jong Nam.

INTERNATIONAL

Yachi confirms close cooperation with new National Security Advisor McMaster

NHK reported at noon that Secretary General Yachi of the National Security Council Secretariat held a telephone conference with newly appointed National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster today. The call was held at the request of McMaster, who took office on Feb. 20. According to the network, McMaster said Yachi was the first foreign counterpart he contacted and Japan is an important ally. He also expressed hope to exchange views and work closely with Yachi. Yachi reportedly responded by saying he looks forward to working with McMaster. The two officials reportedly discussed the regional situation and confirmed that Yachi will visit the U.S. for talks with McMaster at an early date. They also agreed to work closely to thoroughly implement the results of the recent summit.

Alt-right movement in the U.S.

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" reported on the growing white supremacist movement in the U.S., saying that the inauguration of President Trump is giving further impetus to the "alt-right" groups. The program interviewed Richard Spencer, who calls himself the alt-right movement leader, saying that he is gaining popularity especially among young white men who feel that they are being

discriminated against as a result of affirmative action. Spencer said in the interview that he thinks that his alt-right group was able to grow together with the President.

There are about 500 white supremacist groups in the U.S., and minorities are growing increasingly alarmed. The program said violence is increasing, and a growing number of minorities are joining militant groups as they think resolving racial discrimination through dialogue is impossible. Keio University Professor Watanabe said the recent phenomenon is the result of growing social disparity in the U.S., making some people become intolerant toward others. He added that the movement probably will not wane any time soon. Noting that white people are projected to become a minority in the future, Watanabe stressed the need to consider "true equality" regardless of skin color.

Historian warns against being too optimistic about Trump administration

NHK "News Watch 9" highlighted the views of the nation's foremost historian, former National Defense Academy President Iokibe, who advised the GOJ to be prepared for "surprise diplomatic maneuvering" by the Trump administration. While praising Prime Minister Abe for establishing a good rapport with President Trump during his recent visit to the U.S., the scholar voiced concern that some Japanese officials may be being too optimistic about the prospects for bilateral relations on account of the conciliatory line taken thus far toward Tokyo by the new U.S. leader. The historian took up President Nixon's unexpected overtures toward China in 1972, pointing out that they took Japan completely by surprise because Japanese people at the time had had a strong affinity for the U.S. on account of Nixon's decision to return Okinawa to Japanese administration. Noting that Japanese diplomats failed to detect behind-the-scenes moves pointing to reconciliation between Washington and Beijing ahead of Nixon's surprise visit to the Chinese capital, Iokibe underscored the importance for the GOJ to not only further deepen its alliance with the U.S. but also collect intelligence from multiple sources so as to be better prepared for any "diplomatic blitz" that might be staged by the "unpredictable" U.S. leader.

- [Survey of newspaper editorials on Abe-Trump summit](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: PM and President](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)
- [Abe thanks Trump for bringing price down of F-35s](#) (Sankei)
- [How Trump's plans might deal a blow to Japanese firms](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Gist of Japan-South Korea foreign ministerial meeting](#) (Sankei)
- [Gist of Japan-China foreign ministerial meeting](#) (Sankei)
- [Gist of Japan-Russia foreign ministerial meeting](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Kim Jong-un](#) (Sankei)

SECURITY

Cars with "Y" license plates spotted driving recklessly in Okinawa

Okinawa Times front-paged a protest filed on Tuesday with the Okinawa Defense Bureau by the Okinawa City government concerning a number of recent eyewitness accounts of vehicles with "Y"

license plates, which are reserved for members of the U.S. military, speeding through residential districts and posing a risk to school children. The daily speculated that U.S. military personnel were driving through residential areas on their way to and from their bases during the morning and evening rush hours in order to avoid traffic congestion on major roads. A bureau official said in response that it will ask the U.S. military authorities to instruct service members to drive carefully, especially in residential neighborhoods.

Okinawa leader fails to convey local qualms about Henoko construction on U.S. trip

A Washington correspondent for the Okinawa Times reported on Wednesday on Okinawa Governor Onaga's trip to the U.S. earlier this month, faulting him for failing to convey to U.S. officials the deep concerns of local people about the central government's determination to proceed with sea-based work for the FRF construction off Camp Schwab. The writer claimed that the governor appears to be hesitant to "cancel" the landfill permit, quoting a DOD source as saying that such an administrative step would no longer be effective. A former judge also speculated that the court might rule such a cancellation invalid in view of the progress in construction to date.

- **Editorial: Defense chief responsible for resolving SDF reporting snafu** (The Asahi Shimbun)

POLITICS

- **Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 21** (Nikkei)
- **LDP includes submission of constitutional revision motions to Diet in 2017 political platform** (Mainichi)
- **Japanese Communist Party and Liberal Party leaders say working together could help rebuild Japan** (Sande Mainichi)
- **Exclusive joint interview with Suga, Nikai on hot political topics** (Shukan Asahi)

OPINION POLLS

- **64% approve of Japan-U.S. summit, Sankei-FNN poll** (Sankei)
- **Those saying Japan-U.S. alliance "will deteriorate" drops dramatically to 24%, Sankei-FNN poll** (Sankei)
- **Majority of JCP supporters critical of Abe's diplomatic stance, Sankei-FNN poll** (Sankei)
- **Opinion poll & results from Asahi Shimbun** (Asahi)

ECONOMY

- **Gov't to reward good treatment of foreign trainees** (The Japan News)
- **Financial Services Agency to consolidate oversight of banks** (Yomiuri)

SCIENCE

- [Gov't introduces "sandbox system" to facilitate testing of new technology](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

EDUCATION

- [Forcible student loan collection surges 120-fold in 10 years](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

SOCIETY

- [Migrants exploiting refugee applicant loophole to work in labor-scarce Japan](#) (The Japan Times)
 - [Genuine asylum seekers in Japan lumped together with migrant laborers](#) (The Japan Times)
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