
 **JAPAN MEDIA
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Thursday, March 30, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks gave top play to reports that former South Korean President Park appeared for a court hearing today in Seoul. Fuji TV led with a report on a Toshiba shareholders' meeting today, saying it remains to be seen whether the company will be able to obtain support from its shareholders for selling its semiconductor business.

INTERNATIONAL

JBIC to provide loans to Iraq for first time in 31 years

NHK reported on its website that the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) will begin providing loans to Iraq for the first time in 31 years in light of the increasing demand for infrastructure development in the Middle Eastern nation and stabilizing security there. The network said that while Japan has been providing ODA to Iraq to help the nation rebuild itself, there has been no business investment by private firms due to the turmoil caused by the rise of the Islamic State. The network said JBIC will cooperate with Mitsubishi Tokyo UFJ Bank and Mitsui Sumitomo Bank to provide a total of about 53 billion yen in financing starting in FY2017 for the purchase of materials from Japanese companies for an Iraqi government project to build an electric power substation.

- [Abe-Putin summit eyed around April 27 in Russia: sources](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan's Abe calls Taiwan 'important partner'](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan provides used ship to Myanmar](#) (Asahi)
- [Japan, Mongolia ink extensive cooperation accord](#) (The Japan Times)

SECURITY

Okinawa college students experience Osprey flight

Ryukyu Shimpo reported that a group of some 15 college students in Okinawa were given an opportunity to fly on a Futenma-based Osprey last week, noting that the field trip was apparently arranged by U.S. Consulate General Naha. The students from Okinawa International University (OIU) and the University of Ryukyus were reportedly flown on the tilt-rotor plane from MCAS Futenma to the USS Bonhomme Richard offshore where they viewed a medical facility and the helicopters and vehicles on the amphibious assault ship. An OIU professor expressed concern about the tour by saying: "There is no question that this program will be used by the Marines for a PR campaign. The students should be taught about the actual roles that the Marines and the Ospreys play." According to the daily, reports on the tour have been posted on a U.S. military website and the USMC Japan Facebook page.

- [**MSDF conducts joint exercises with U.S. aircraft carrier twice in March**](#) (Sankei)
- [**Editorial: Strengthen crisis-response capability through bilateral alliance with U.S.**](#) (The Japan News)
- [**Japan-U.S. cooperation against North Korea deepens after security laws took effect**](#) (Yomiuri)

POLITICS

LDP expects Moritomo Gakuen scandal to die down soon

In an appearance on TV-Asahi's "Hodo Station," former Kyodo News managing editor Goto said the LDP is growing increasingly confident that Japanese voters will lose interest in the Moritomo Gakuen scandal in the near future in view of recent opinion polls showing strong approval for the Abe cabinet and continued doubts about the Democratic Party and other opposition groups despite the intense media frenzy that has rocked the administration. The journalist explained that although some LDP officials are insisting on filing criminal charges against Moritomo President Kagoike for committing perjury during his sworn Diet testimony last week, others are cautious about the idea since it will draw further attention and prolong the controversy unnecessarily. He projected that the Kantei and the ruling party will probably try to tone down the scandal in the belief that the public will soon get bored with it.

- [**Prime minister's schedule on March 29**](#) (Nikkei)
- [**LDP and Komeito are at odds over anti-conspiracy bill, Moritomo scandal**](#) (Sankei)
- [**Nationwide newspapers split on "anti-conspiracy bill" while majority of local newspapers nervous**](#) (Mainichi)
- [**166 Japanese state secrets not documented, panel reports**](#) (The Japan Times)
- [**Young LDP lawmakers propose introduction of "children's insurance"**](#) (Yomiuri)
- [**Is constitutional revision to provide free education a reasonable discussion?**](#) (Asahi)

ECONOMY

Uniqlo chief Yanai mentions possible withdrawal from U.S. market

TBS reported at noon that Chairman and President Yanai of Fast Retailing, the operator of the clothing retailer Uniqlo, referred to the possibility of the company's withdrawal from the U.S. market if the Trump administration asks it to set up manufacturing plants and hire workers in the U.S.. Yanai was quoted as saying: "President Trump asks automakers to build factories in certain places in the U.S., and the automakers say 'yes.' I don't think that's the issue. If he asked us to do that, I think we would prefer to withdraw [from the U.S. market]." The network said Yanai was responding to President Trump's calls for companies to create jobs in the U.S. by saying: "That would make it impossible to manufacture really good products at costs that benefit our customers." Yanai also said: "There's no point in doing business in the U.S. unless it's a good decision for our consumers."

- **Editorial: Expedite safe resumption of nuclear reactors** (Sankei Evening edition)

SCIENCE

- **Study: S. Korean nuclear disaster would hit Japan the hardest** (The Asahi Shimbun)

SOCIETY

- **Children of foreign workers require more linguistic support** (Mainichi)
 - **Handling of child abuse cases to be enhanced by increasing involvement of municipal gov'ts** (Asahi)
 - **Kirin to allow transgender employees to take paid leave for sex reassignment treatment** (Nikkei)
 - **The psychological perils of a Japanese homestay** (The Japan Times)
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