



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, April 18, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most commercial networks led with reports on a spring storm on Monday, forecasting that the temperature in the Kanto region could rise as high as 30 degrees Celsius today. NHK gave top play to inclement weather in northern Japan today.

INTERNATIONAL

Abe welcomes U.S. response to North Korea in meeting with Vice President Pence

NHK reported this afternoon that during a photo opportunity that took place ahead of his working lunch with Vice President Pence, Prime Minister Abe said he welcomes the Trump administration's position that all options are on the table with regard to its response to North Korea, including military action. Abe was quoted as saying that amid rising tensions over North Korea, he would like to send a clear message through the Vice President's visit to Japan that the strong bonds of the U.S.-Japan alliance are unwavering. The premier added that it is necessary to apply pressure on the DPRK so that it sincerely responds to dialogue. The Vice President was quoted as saying in response that the U.S. attaches importance to the U.S.-Japan alliance for maintaining peace and security in Northeast Asia and that the U.S. understands that Japan is facing increasing provocations from across the Sea of Japan. The Vice President was also quoted as saying that the United States is with Japan 100%, as President Trump has stated.

The network speculated that the two leaders discussed the response to North Korea and confirmed close U.S.-Japan cooperation in this regard.

NHK reported earlier on the Vice President's arrival at NAF Atsugi in Kanagawa at around noon. It said that Vice President Pence and Deputy Prime Minister Aso are expected to discuss ways to strengthen the bilateral economic relationship in order to promote regional and global economic growth and that the governments of the U.S. and Japan are making arrangements to release a document stating that both nations will continue to hold discussions on specific areas, such as economic policies, infrastructure, energy, and trade and investment rules.

- [**Abe stresses to VP Pence need for 'pressure' on North Korea**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**Japan-US dialogue seen sticking to basics for now**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**Abe, Pence to confer on North Korea**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**Trump salvo threatens Japan's currency strategy**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**Japan not manipulating the yen, Suga says in response to U.S. Treasury move**](#) (The Japan Times)
- [**Ex-trade minister Amari says Japan, U.S. should create fair, transparent trade rules**](#) (The Japan Times)
- [**Keidanren chairman hopes economic dialogue will cement Japan-U.S. ties**](#) (Mainichi)
- [**Japan, Australia to hold meeting of defense, foreign chiefs Thursday**](#) (Kyodo News)
- [**Editorial: North Korean brinksmanship a dead-end diplomatic ploy**](#) (The Mainichi)
- [**Cartoon: President Trump and PM Abe**](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)
- [**Japan, S. Korea fishermen to urge own gov'ts to curb illegal fishing**](#) (Kyodo News)
- [**Cartoon: Japan and India**](#) (Akahata)

China's 4-2-1 families

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on China's elderly population, saying that the nation's "One Child" policy has accelerated the aging of the population. The elderly population in China is currently 220 million, and it is expected to be close to 500 million by 2050. Only children in China are facing what is known as the 4-2-1 phenomenon of having to support two parents and four grandparents by the time they reach working age. This has reportedly resulted in an increase in disputes between

children and their elderly parents over financial assets. The Chinese government is hoping to develop new markets for elderly people to increase domestic demand and has set up special zones to build apartments for the elderly in cooperation with medical institutions. The Chinese government is also developing new cities for the elderly, which offer business opportunities for Japanese companies.

ECONOMY

Commerce Secretary Ross, Economy Minister Seko hold talks on trade and investment rules

NHK and TBS reported at noon that visiting Secretary of Commerce Ross met with Minister for Economy, Trade, and Industry Seko this morning, quoting Seko as telling Ross at the onset of the meeting: "We will engage in practical discussions on the economic dialogue after we receive instructions from Deputy Prime Minister Aso and Vice President Pence after their talks. I hope to do so in a timely and action-oriented manner." NHK said Seko told reporters after the meeting that they held "concrete, candid, and practical discussions" on trade policies and high-quality infrastructure. Noting that Secretary Ross expressed the view that trade talks with Japan are a top priority in addition to the renegotiation of NAFTA, the network said attention will be focused on what kind of discussions Minister Seko and Secretary Ross will embark on following the economic dialogue this afternoon.

U.S. meat federation calls for reduction of Japanese tariffs on U.S. beef

NHK reported this afternoon U.S. Meat Export Federation President Seng held a press conference in Tokyo today and called on the U.S. and Japan to swiftly conclude an FTA and reduce Japan's tariffs on U.S. beef. The network said that Seng, who visits Japan every year around this time for promotion purposes, pointed out that the 38.5% tariff on U.S. beef is high compared with other major markets in the world, and that the U.S. is being put at a disadvantage as the Japanese tariff on Australian beef was reduced after the effectuation of the Japan-Australia EPA. Seng was quoted as saying: "We want to be assured that with the TPP not being on the agenda of this administration, there will be a bilateral deal worked out as soon as possible with Japan."

- [Japan to assign specialist for handling trade litigation](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Gov't taps economist, senior banker as BOJ Policy Board member](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Tokyo Gas to take stake in planned US shale gas plant](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan sets July 24 as "day of telework" to promote work-style change](#) (Kyodo News)

- [Japanese farmers using biogas tech to turn waste into wattage](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Mitsubishi Heavy chief: In the nuclear business to stay](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on April 17](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of interpellations at Lower House audit, oversight committee, April 16](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Lower House finds 316 punishable crimes under anti-conspiracy bill](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Nagashima rumored to have left DP to set up another "LDP detachment"](#) (Shukan Bunshun)
- [Suga praises BOJ Gov. Kuroda](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)
- [Commentary: Can gov't put end to "Moritomo" scandal?](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Abe cabinet plagued by ministers' frequent gaffes](#) (Mainichi)
- [Tokyo governor says LDP "not included" in forces supporting her](#) (Mainichi)
- [Cartoon: The LDP and the Diet](#) (Akahata)

SECURITY

- [Okinawa Times publishes book refuting unfounded Internet information on base issues](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [U.S. airman arrested for possession of bullets in Okinawa](#) (Okinawa Times)
- [Japan opens up combat positions to women, eyes more women in SDF](#) (Kyodo News)

SCIENCE

- [Japan to launch record 8 rockets in fiscal 2017](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [AI to monitor TSE data to identify dubious trades](#) (The Japan News)

SOCIETY

- [Japan's child return rate under Hague Convention marks 30%](#) (Sankei)
- [Survey: Tokyo is the only local gov't ruling out same-sex couples as foster parents](#) (Mainichi)

OPINION POLLS

- [Over 75% approve of Japan having capability to attack DPRK bases in event DPRK launches ballistic missile targeting Japan, Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)
 - [Cabinet support up 1.9 points to 59%, Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)
 - [Opinion poll & results from Sankei Shimbun](#) (Sankei)
 - [Pollees split on anti-conspiracy bill, Asahi poll](#) (Asahi)
 - [Opinion poll & results from Asahi Shimbun](#) (Asahi)
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