



Afternoon Alert - Monday, May 1, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

All networks gave top play to reports that the MSDF destroyer Izumo will perform for the first time today the new duty of escorting a U.S. vessel that is involved in operations to defend Japan. The networks said Izumo left Yokosuka base this morning.

INTERNATIONAL

President Trump, PM Abe confirm close cooperation over DPRK

Fuji TV reported at noon that President Trump and Prime Minister Abe spoke by phone this morning, speculating that the two leaders confirmed close bilateral cooperation to urge North Korea to exercise restraint and exchanged views on China's role following North Korea's missile launch on Saturday. The network said this was the fourth teleconference between the two leaders since April. The network speculated that the premier also talked about his meeting with Russian President Putin last week.

Poll: 90% feel anxious about North Korea

TBS reported at noon on the results of its weekend survey, which found that 90% of respondents said they feel extremely or somewhat anxious about North Korea's recent moves. Only 9% said they do not feel anxious. Furthermore, 64% expressed approval and 21% expressed disapproval of the U.S. and Japanese response to North Korea, including the deployment of the USS Carl Vinson to the region and the joint military drills between the flattop and the SDF. Support for the Abe cabinet rose 6.3 points from last month to 63.3%, while nonsupport dropped 5.8 points to 34.8%.

- [Asian financial chiefs to gather amid inward-looking concerns](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Gov't steps up warning response](#) (The Japan News)
- [Abe says no time for talks with N. Korea after missile launch](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Gist of PM Abe's news conference on North Korea's missile launch, April 29](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gist of CCS Suga's news conference on DPRK's missile launch, April 29](#) (Yomiuri)
- [G-7 summit agenda likely to feature N. Korea issue](#) (The Japan News)
- [Commentary: DPRK's latest missile launch is message to UNSC and China](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: U.N. Security Council should impose severe, effective sanctions on N. Korea](#) (The Japan News)
- [Gist of joint press conference by Abe, Putin, April 27](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Analysis: Japan-U.S. unity on N. Korea hindering progress on Russia isle row](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Lay broad groundwork regarding northern territories negotiations](#) (The Japan News)
- [Gist of joint news conference by PM Abe, UK Premier May, April 28](#) (Nikkei)
- [China warns Japan over South China Sea](#) (Mainichi)
- [Kishida to attend NPT Preparatory Committee meeting](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Trump administration's modification of foreign policy only half complete](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Trump's plan for huge tax cuts fails to present fiscal resources](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Trump's first 100 days show risk of 'heavy hand' without strategy](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Growing presence of former LH member Muneo Suzuki in diplomacy with Russia](#) (FACTA)

- [Profile: Izumi Nakamitsu appointed U.N. under-secretary-general](#) (The Mainichi)

SECURITY

[Large rally held in Okinawa to protest FRF construction](#)

Sunday's Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo gave prominent front- and inside-page play to a large demonstration held in front of Camp Schwab on Saturday morning to oppose the offshore bank protection work being carried out for the construction of the Futenma replacement facility. Some 3,000 picketers gathered to protest what they called the Abe administration's "high-handed" posture of moving forward with the Futenma relocation initiative at all costs. In addition to vowing to block the construction project, the participants observed a moment of silence for the local woman who was killed exactly a year ago by an American who worked at Kadena Air Base.

- [French warship arrives for joint drills with Japan as North Korean tensions rise](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Tokyo Metro halts service for 10 minutes following DPRK missile report](#) (Mainichi)
- [GOJ to update its North Korean refugee policy](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan to expedite study of land-based Aegis missile defense](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

[Japan hopes to lead discussions at TPP preparatory meeting](#)

NHK reported this afternoon that 11 TPP members, excluding the U.S., will hold a working-level preparatory meeting in Toronto, Canada, on May 3-4 ahead of a ministerial meeting slated for the end of this month in Vietnam. Japan's chief negotiator Katakami told reporters this afternoon that the ministerial meeting in Vietnam will be an important meeting to discuss the overall direction of the TPP. He was also quoted as saying: "We expect various opinions will be raised. We hope that Japan will take the initiative at the preparatory meeting so that the 11 nations will be able to unite and discuss the future direction of the TPP." The network said that although the GOJ is planning to effect the TPP without the U.S., the talks are expected to face rough going since some nations are cautious about a TPP sans America. Meanwhile, the U.S. has indicated willingness to enter bilateral FTA talks with Japan.

- [Japan rescue fund to lead joint bid for Toshiba chip ops](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Gov't looking into fiscal integrity plan to scrap the goal of achieving a primary balance surplus](#) (Sankei)

- [Job availability best in over 26 years, but consumption tepid in March](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan's space industry to get private-sector boost](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on April 30](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on April 28, 29](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on April 27, 28](#) (Nikkei)
- [Former LH member Muneo Suzuki keen to resume political activities](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Renho](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

OPINION POLLS

- [51% back ramping up sanctions against North Korea, Nikkei poll](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe cabinet support rate remains steady at 60%, Nikkei poll](#) (Nikkei)
- [32% say they will vote for LDP in Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election, Nikkei poll](#) (Nikkei)

SCIENCE

- [Taiji town holds memorial service for whales](#) (Kyodo News)
- [EIA calls for closure of ivory market in Japan](#) (Asahi)

EDUCATION

- [60% of junior high teachers hit overwork death threshold](#) (The Japan News)

SOCIETY

70th anniversary of Japanese Constitution

Sunday's "NHK Special" reported that this year marks the 70th anniversary of the Japanese Constitution, focusing on how the pacifist nation was created. The program said declassified

documents show that Emperor Hirohito actually ordered an investigation into revising the Constitution. The program looked into how such phrases as "renunciation of war" and "aspiring sincerely to an international peace" came to be included in the Constitution.

What role should the emperor play?

Saturday's "NHK Special" reported on the system that recognizes the emperor as a symbol of the state and a final report submitted by the GOJ's blue ribbon panel on April 21 on Emperor Akihito's announcement last August that he would like to abdicate. The panelists discussed such issues as the roles the people expect the emperor to play, what the official duties of the emperor should be in the future, and whether they should be reduced or not. The panelists also discussed whether the law should be permanently changed to allow women as heirs to the throne.

- [Gov't grants 2017 decorations to 4,080 Japanese, 105 foreigners](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Three years after Japan signed Hague, parents who abduct still win](#) (The Japan Times)

