



Afternoon Alert - Thursday, June 1, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK and TV Asahi led with reports that Diet deliberations on the abdication bill began today. NTV gave top play to a report that President Trump said on Twitter he will announce his decision on whether to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Agreement at 3 p.m. (4 a.m. tomorrow Japan time). TBS led with a report that the quasi-zenith satellite Michibiki No. 2 was successfully launched from the Tanegashima Space Center this morning. Fuji TV led with a report that a fishing boat carrying 180 kg of gold was discovered in a fishing harbor in Karatsu, Saga, on Wednesday.

INTERNATIONAL

Senior Pentagon official expresses confidence in building up missile defense

NHK reported this morning that Vice Admiral Syring, the director of the Missile Defense Agency, held a press conference on Tuesday during which he said that the successful ICBM intercept test conducted by the U.S. earlier in the day "demonstrates an incredible accomplishment for the missile defense system" and shows the U.S. is "prepared to defend the homeland." He also said: "Our interceptor missiles are not lagging behind the threat and will evolve at a rate that will surpass the threat by 2020." The network said Syring expressed confidence in building a missile defense system that can respond to the threats posed by North Korea and Iran. The network added that the Pentagon is planning to conduct another test in August or September of 2018.

- [Trump's G-7 debut makes waves with allies](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

- [Sakhalin governor approves of study on joint economic activities in Northern Territories](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Abe's secretary Imai behind recent overtures toward China](#) (THEMIS)
- [Consul general in Busan replaced for objecting to recall over comfort woman statue](#) (Sankei)
- [Japan flustered by UN human rights concerns](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

SECURITY

[Okinawa reacts sharply to use of Kadena ramp by U.S. military aircraft from ROK](#)

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo reported that three U-2 reconnaissance aircraft belonging to the U.S. military's Osan AB in South Korea arrived at Kadena AB on Wednesday. Because all three aircraft were housed at hangars on a Navy ramp whose use was supposed to have been discontinued in accord with the 1996 SACO final agreement, local government officials and residents expressed rage at what they called the U.S. military's "unilateral breach" of the bilateral pact. Their anger was compounded by the fact that the U.S. military has recently conducted at the same base parachute drop training that in their view is in violation of the SACO agreement. They are alarmed by what appears to be the U.S. military's accelerated moves to strengthen base functions at Kadena. According to Ryukyu Shimpo, the GOJ is also unhappy about the use of the Navy ramp because its functions were formally transferred in January this year to other parts of the base at Japan's expense. It plans to ask the U.S. side not to use the facility again.

- [LDP's missile defense proposal lacks specifics](#) (Mainichi)
- [Head of UN Mission in South Sudan asks Japan for continued funding, thanks JGSDF](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan gov't mulls scholarships for Okinawa students](#) (Jiji Press)

ECONOMY

- [Gov't to focus on human resource investment in all generations](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan's draft growth strategy forgoes far-reaching reform](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Why isn't growth strategy producing results?](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: New growth strategy must bring about creation of new industries](#) (The Japan News)

- [Editorial: Gov't needs to examine effects of past growth strategy](#) (Sankei)
- [License renewal system eyed for casino operators](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan to add debt-to-GDP ratio as fiscal barometer](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [On 70th anniversary, top business lobby looks at what distance to keep from politics](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Interview: Keidanren to keep in step with Abe administration](#) (Jiji Press)
- [Emerging markets and high-tech drive auto industry change](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Now hiring: Foreign engineers to beat tech labor crunch](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Interview series \(Part 2\): JMA President Yokokura on healthcare reform](#) (Nikkei)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on May 31](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Gov't attempts to bury Kake scandal only deepening suspicions](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Yohei Kono to Abe: 'Article 9 should not be touched at all'](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Lower House member Masaru Wakasa submits resignation to LDP](#) (Yomiuri)

SCIENCE

[Suga comments on imminent U.S. decision on Paris accord](#)

Nikkei reported online on press remarks this morning by Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga, who was asked about President Trump's plan to announce his administration's official position on the Paris climate change agreement tomorrow (Japan time). The government spokesman said: "Dealing with climate change is a global challenge that the international society should address. We will keep lobbying the U.S. based on the judgment that its continued involvement is important."

[Preventing impact of near-Earth objects](#)

NHK's "Close-up Gendai +" reported on the possibility of near-Earth objects (NEO) impacting the Earth. Near-Earth objects are asteroids or comets whose orbits around the Sun bring them close to the Earth. There are reportedly about 16,000 of them in orbit today. The program reported on an international confab called the Planetary Defense Conference that was held recently in Tokyo, at

which scientists and experts discussed a scenario in which an asteroid that could potentially impact the Earth is discovered. The scientists concluded that the best way to avoid impact would be to fire an artificial object at the asteroid to change its orbit. An expert stressed the importance of swiftly discovering NEOs and holding thorough discussions on how to prevent their striking the Earth.

- [Deep-sea hydrothermal systems are “natural power plants”](#) (Asahi Evening edition)
- [Japan’s private sector sets its sights on the moon](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan puts 2nd satellite into orbit to enhance GPS](#) (Kyodo News)

SOCIETY

- [Prime Minister Abe unveils government push to solve day care crunch](#) (The Japan Times)
- [MHLW to raise employment rate of persons with disabilities to 2.3% for private companies by end of March 2021](#) (Mainichi Evening edition)
- [Sapporo becomes 1st major Japanese city to recognize LGBT couples](#) (Kyodo News)

TRENDING@JAPAN

- [Romancing the equation: the Japanese new love affair with math](#) (Asahi, Mainichi)
- [Video of mom raising newborn raises question where’s dad](#) (NHK)
- [More than vegetables, Fukushima farmers market provides pride and confidence](#) (Nikkei)