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 **JAPAN MEDIA  
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Friday, June 30, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Noon news

NHK and Fuji TV gave top play to reports on the heavy rains in the Kyushu region. NTV, TBS, and TV Asahi led with reports that three former TEPCO executives pleaded innocent at their trial today on criminal charges laid in connection to the 2011 Fukushima nuclear power plant accident.

## ECONOMY

### USTR calls for correction of trade imbalance

NHK reported on its website that USTR Lighthizer met with visiting Minister for Economy, Trade, and Industry Seko in Washington on Thursday and stressed the importance of correcting the trade imbalance in light of the U.S.'s huge trade deficit with Japan. The USTR also reportedly said the U.S. side will call on Japan to correct the trade imbalance during the bilateral economic dialogue sessions. Seko also met with Commerce Secretary Ross. According to the network, Seko told reporters after the meetings that he did not hold any concrete discussions about possible FTA talks or the contents or the progress of the bilateral economic dialogue. The network said the Trump administration is considering using the presidential power to limit imports of cheap steel products due to the security threat based on Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act, adding that nations around the world are increasingly worried about the spread of protectionism. Seko also reportedly said: "I was able to have substantial discussions [with my counterparts] during my stay. In particular, I exchanged views on Section 232. We need experts to conduct an analysis of how we should respond."

- [Hotel ships eyed to boost accommodations for 2020 Games](#) (The Japan News)

## SECURITY

### **[Yamaguchi leader announces acceptance of air wing transfer to Iwakuni](#)**

Asahi reported online that Yamaguchi Governor Muraoka told the prefectural assembly on Friday morning that he now embraces the planned relocation of carrier-borne squadrons from NAF Atsugi to MCAS Iwakuni. Pointing out that Iwakuni Mayor Fukuda made a similar announcement a week ago, the paper projected that the relocation of some 60 fighter jets and other aircraft will be implemented beginning in October, making the Marine installation one of the largest air bases in the Far East.

### **[Four Okinawa leaders to visit Tokyo to ask for reduced security burden on Kadena base](#)**

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo gave prominent front- and inside-page play to Thursday's joint press conference by Okinawa Governor Onaga and the leaders of three municipalities hosting Kadena AB. The four disclosed that they will visit Tokyo on July 7 to hold talks with the foreign and defense ministers to demand the discontinuation of parachute drop training and the use of the Navy ramp on the installation. Noting that it is extremely rare for the four local political leaders to hold a joint press event and meet with the cabinet ministers together, the papers explained that their anger toward the U.S. military has reached a new level since in their view the parachute drills and the use of the Navy ramp both run counter to U.S.-Japan agreements. The leaders underscored that they were "betrayed" by the U.S. military.

- **[USS Fitzgerald to leave for home shortly, preventing Japanese investigation of accident](#)** (Yomiuri)
- **[GSDF to join multinational peacekeeping exercise in Mongolia](#)** (Asahi)
- **[Okinawa media fail to report "inconvenient truth" about opponents to Henoko relocation](#)** (Sankei)
- **[Editorial: Boost S.E. Asian nations' maritime security through joint training](#)** (The Japan News)

## INTERNATIONAL

### **[U.S. imposes sanctions on Chinese bank for the first time](#)**

TBS, Fuji TV, and TV Asahi reported at noon that Treasury Secretary Mnuchin announced on Thursday that the U.S. will cut off a Chinese bank based in northeastern China on the border with North Korea from the U.S. financial system for laundering money for the DPRK. The networks said this is the first time for the U.S. to sanction a Chinese bank. Secretary Mnuchin was quoted as saying: "We are committed to targeting North Korea's external enablers and maximizing economic

pressure on the regime until it ceases its nuclear and ballistic missile programs." TBS said because it is crucial for North Korea to obtain foreign currency, the latest sanction is aimed at increasing pressure on the North. The network said the Treasury Department also froze assets in the U.S. of two Chinese nationals and a Dalian-based transport company. The network added that while President Trump has been complaining about China's response to North Korea and hinting at imposing unilateral sanctions, Secretary Mnuchin reportedly stressed that the sanctions are not targeting China and that the U.S. will continue to work closely with Beijing.

Newspapers carried similar stories, highlighting a comment made this morning by Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga, who said: "[The latest sanctions] represent the Trump administration's resolute stance toward North Korea. Japan strongly supports them .... We would like to continue to coordinate closely with the U.S. and other partners to resolve outstanding North Korean issues."

### **Busan assembly enacts ordinance to safeguard comfort woman memorial**

Asahi and Yomiuri reported online that the municipal assembly of Busan approved an ordinance today enabling the municipality to provide for the upkeep of the comfort woman statue built in front of the Japanese Consulate General in January by a civic organization. The article speculated that the removal of the controversial memorial has become even more difficult now that the installation was effectively given legal endorsement.

- [Japan backs latest U.S. sanctions against N. Korea weapons program](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Interview with Business Russia co-chair on Japan-Russia joint economic activities](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Mutual visits by Abe, Xi pushed back due to postponed trilateral summit](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Abe set to visit India in Sept. to promote bullet train technology](#) (Kyodo News)
- [S. Korean municipalities to manage comfort women statues](#) (Jiji Press)
- [JICA to provide assistance to ASEAN](#) (The Japan News)

## **POLITICS**

### **Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election**

NHK's "Close-up Gendai +" reported on the upcoming Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election, saying that particular attention will be focused on how voters evaluate Governor Koike's handling of the Tokyo government, which faces many issues such as the relocation of the fish market from Tsukiji to Toyosu and preparation for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics. The program reported on

policies of each political party, including Tomin First no Kai (Tokyoites First) led by Governor Koike, focusing on Kita-ku, where five candidates are competing for three seats. An NHK reporter said since the DP and JCP are taking a confrontational stance toward Abe, his administration will also be put to the test, adding that the outcome of the assembly election may affect his leadership. The reporter added that Governor Koike's party "Tomin First no Kai" may choose to participate in national politics depending on the outcome of the election.

- [Prime minister's schedule on June 29](#) (Nikkei)
- [Growing allegations against Prime Minister's aides](#) (Asahi)
- [Constitutional revision debate in the DP at standstill](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Inada's campaign speech 'on behalf of SDF' inexcusable](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Enough is enough. Abe should fire Inada immediately](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Cartoon: The oracle — "beware trouble with women"](#) (Sankei)
- [CCS Suga speaks harshly to Tokyo Shimbun reporter](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Abe seeks 14-year-old shogi whiz's advice](#) (Mainichi)

## EDUCATION

- [Quotas for Tokyo private universities enrollment to increase in fiscal 2018](#) (The Japan Times)

## SOCIETY

- [Justice Ministry to ban certain refugee status applicants from working from July](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Tougher sex crime penalties fail to eliminate serious concerns](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [New Tokyo ordinance cuts JK businesses by 40%](#) (Nikkei Evening edition)

## SOCIAL MEDIA

- [Candidates in metro assembly election reach out to young voters via Twitter](#) (Mainichi Evening edition)
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