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 **JAPAN MEDIA  
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, July 18, 2017

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#### HEADLINES

##### Noon news

NHK gave top play to a report that Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara, the former director of St. Luke's International Hospital, passed away at the age of 105 on Monday. NTV and Fuji TV led with reports on record rainfall in Niigata and Fukushima prefectures. TBS gave top play to a report that a 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck a Russian region in the Aleutian archipelago on Monday.

#### INTERNATIONAL

##### **U.S., Japan critical of ROK's proposal for dialogue with North**

Fuji TV reported at noon that the U.S. and Japan are critical of South Korea's proposal for holding dialogue with North Korea, quoting Foreign Minister Kishida as telling reporters in New York on Monday: "The leaders of the three nations have confirmed that now is the time to apply pressure." In addition, the network quoted a White House press secretary as telling reporters: "President Trump has been making it clear that we are not in a situation where conditions for holding dialogue have been met." The network said both the governments of the U.S. and Japan have countered the concrete moves toward dialogue by South Korean President Moon, who is considered to be conciliatory toward the North.

- [Japan says inter-Korean talks can coexist with pressure on North](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan seeks early adoption of new U.N. resolution against N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)

##### **Gov't spokesman comments on Chinese ships entering Japan's territorial waters**

Nikkei reported on press remarks on Tuesday by Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga, in which he

commented on the two Chinese Guard patrol boats that briefly entered Japan's territorial waters off Kyushu on Saturday and Aomori on Monday. He said: "We were told by the Chinese in advance that the two ships would travel to the Pacific Ocean through the Tsushima and Tsugaru straits," adding that MOFA has conveyed its "interest" in the passage to the Chinese government. Asked whether it was deemed "innocent" passage that is permitted under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the government spokesman said: "We haven't obtained any information indicating that it was not."

- [Chinese ships enter Japan waters north of Kyushu for 1st time](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Chinese gov't ships enter Japan waters off Aomori for 1st time](#) (Kyodo News)
- [4 Chinese coast guard ships enter Japanese waters near Senkakus](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Scrambles against China planes drop](#) (The Japan News)

### **Kishida announces \$1 billion in assistance for UN Sustainable Development Goals**

NHK reported this morning that Foreign Minister Kishida delivered a speech at a UN forum to discuss the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) held at the UN headquarters in New York on Monday, during which he announced that Japan will offer approximately \$1 billion by 2018 to fight poverty and resolve economic disparity in the world. The network noted that Kishida delivered his speech in English and quoted him as saying: "Japan's vision for the SDGs is to create a diverse and inclusive society in which no one is left behind." The network said Japan's measures include cooperating with seven UN institutions to reconstruct school buildings and provide education to evacuees in Syria.

- [New U.S. Ambassador to Japan described as bridge builder](#) (Jiji Press)
- [Japan-U.S. nuclear accord expiring in one year likely to be extended automatically](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Japan, Russia to discuss "movement of goods" framework in August](#) (Sankei)
- [Russia denies Hokkaido mayor entry over Japan's sanctions](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Analysis: China, Russia, North Korea testing Japan's composure](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Abe's Diplomacy Tested / Volatile Trump puts PM on political tightrope](#) (The Japan News)
- [Abe's Diplomacy Tested / Abe, Putin continue sparring over northern territories](#)

[solution](#) (The Japan News)

- [NEXI to introduce new insurance to increase Japan's infrastructure exports](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan to give \\$1 bil. in assistance to help children: Kishida](#) (Kyodo News)

## ECONOMY

### **GOJ drafts action plan to alleviate U.S. concerns about trade deficit**

NHK reported this morning that in response to deep-rooted concerns in the U.S. about the U.S. trade deficit with Japan, the GOJ has drafted an action plan to help promote understanding among the American public of the many jobs that are created in the U.S. as a result of Japanese investment. The network said the plan includes having Japanese Embassy officials and company employees hold seminars in cities in the U.S. to introduce the level of Japanese contribution and using social media to deepen the understanding of young Americans. The network added that since the second session of the economic dialogue between Finance Minister Aso and Vice President Pence will be held this fall and a U.S. mid-term election next year, the GOJ is hoping to communicate directly with U.S. citizens and prevent the implementation of hardline policies against Japan.

### **Researchers discuss Japan-EU EPA, "TPP 11," "One Belt, One Road"**

NHK's Sunday morning talk show "Nichiyo Toron" featured a live debate among university economists and private think tank analysts on key global trade issues, such as the rough accord reached between Japan and the EU regarding a bilateral EPA, the TPP minus the U.S., and China's "One-Belt, One Road" transcontinental trade and economic development initiative. They underscored the importance of the Japan-EU trade deal because it signifies the two major trading partners' strong commitment to pursuing free and open trade in the face of the Trump administration's propensity for protectionism and unilateralism as evidenced by its inclination to impose restrictions on steel imports. They also said Japan should exercise leadership to effectuate the TPP swiftly by persuading Vietnam and Malaysia to go along with the idea so as to display Tokyo's intention to build a robust economic order with key regional countries. On the economic dialogue between Japan and the United States, most panelists expressed concern that the GOJ may be pressured by the Trump administration to make concessions, especially in the agricultural market. On the other hand, some participants projected that no immediate progress will be made on the bilateral trade front given the prolonged absence of senior working-level officials in major USG departments.

- [Trump's tariff talk gives steelmakers jitters](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Structural reforms for agriculture must be promoted to cope with EPA](#) (The Japan News)

- [Tokyo Gas to ferry LNG to remote islands in Southeast Asia](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan proposal for country quotas for saury focus of int'l meeting](#) (Kyodo News)

#### OPINION POLLS

- [Cabinet support rate plummets to new low of 35%, Kyodo News](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Kyodo News opinion poll & results from Tokyo Shimbun](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

#### POLITICS

### **Abe's support rating enters "uncharted waters"**

TV-Asahi's nightly news show "Hodo Station" on Monday aired the results of the network's latest public opinion survey that put support for the Abe administration at 29.2%, down 8.7 points from a month ago, and nonsupport at 54.5%, up almost 13 points. Abe's approval rating plunged below 30% for the first time. As many respondents voiced distrust of Prime Minister Abe over his handling of various scandals, LDP lawmakers called the drop in support the "worst-ever crisis" facing the Japanese leader. The broadcaster explained that all Japanese prime ministers over the past 20 years have resigned within a year of their approval rates dropping below 30%, noting that Koizumi was able to keep his support rating above 40% throughout his 66-month premiership. According to the poll, the public has become skeptical of Abe's signature policy of amending the Constitution. Although seven out of ten were in favor of the idea of the Diet holding discussions on constitutional amendment, 45% expressed opposition to Abe's proposal of making the existence of the SDF explicit in the nation's supreme law. Half of respondents disapproved of Abe's idea of amending the Constitution in 2020, as opposed to 29% who were in favor of it.

Former Kyodo News managing editor Goto insisted that the public's distrust of the prime minister appears to be irreversible, projecting that his planned explanations at the Diet next week on his involvement in the Kake Gakuen scandal and the envisaged cabinet reshuffle in August probably will not boost his public standing. The journalist said, however, that Abe may be able to weather the political storm in view of the absence of viable rival politicians in the LDP and the public's apparent dismissal of the largest opposition Democratic Party, whose support rate dropped further in the poll despite the nation's growing doubts about the Abe administration.

- [Prime minister's schedule on July 16](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on July 15](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on July 14](#) (Nikkei)

- [Abe says to prioritize human resource development in FY2018 budget](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Gov't to request 4 trillion yen for human resources development in FY18 budget](#) (Mainichi)
- [Fumio Kishida distances himself from Abe, sizes up opportunity to become PM](#) (Nikkei)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Kake Gakuen scandal](#) (Asahi)
- [Editorial: It's time for DP to take action to cope with critical situation](#) (The Japan News)
- [Kishida aims to raise profile by being appointed to one of LDP's top three key posts](#) (THEMIS)

## SCIENCE

### **Gigantic creatures found in Antarctica's deep sea**

Sunday's "NHK Special" reported on creatures found in the depths of the ocean in Antarctica, which is regarded as the last frontier on Earth. A group of scientists investigated the deep sea using state-of-the-art submarines equipped with a 4K camera. The team found a surprisingly colorful world of soft corals, sea squirts, and other unique creatures at the bottom of the sea. The program showed giant starfish, sea sponges, a 10-meter jellyfish, a 2-meter squid, and a huge school of krill. According to the program, many deep sea creatures in Antarctica may have grown to gigantic proportions because the extremely cold waters with plenty of oxygen have protected them against predators. However, the program said the water temperatures in Antarctica are gradually increasing, changing the ecosystem in the area.

- [Space startup Astroscale to mass-produce cleanup satellites](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [JAXA tests grapefruit-sized video drone aboard ISS](#) (The Japan Times)

## SECURITY

### **Japanese carriers implement new security checks for U.S.-bound flights**

Kyodo reported today that in response to a request from the USG, JAL and ANA implemented stricter security screening on flights bound for the United States starting Tuesday by randomly checking passengers' electronic devices, including tablets, personal computers, and digital cameras, for explosives before they board aircraft. The two airlines said no problems or departure delays have occurred as a result of the new security measures.

- [Defense Ministry eyes strengthening unit to counter cyberattacks](#) (Kyodo News)

- [Labor union refuses to transport soil for Henoko landfill](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Yokota-based aircraft loses part in flight](#) (Akahata)
- [Radical leftist arrested for 2013 attack against Yokota base](#) (Sankei)
- [Defense Ministry to start facility maintenance in August to prepare for Okinawa bases' return](#) (Sankei)
- [Editorial: We renew our plea on Henoko base issue: Talk to Okinawa](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Central gov't, Okinawa should talk to avoid new court clash over Henoko base](#) (The Mainichi)



### **Okinawa legislature backs planned lawsuit to derail FRF construction**

The Saturday morning edition of the two major Okinawa papers gave top play to the prefectural assembly's adoption on Friday of a motion endorsing Governor Onaga's plan to file a new lawsuit against the central government to seek the suspension of the ongoing FRF construction work off Camp Schwab. The legislature also approved the litigation cost of about \$50,000 for hiring three attorneys. Ryukyu Shimpo projected that the governor will file the suit on July 19 at the earliest, whereas Okinawa Times said it will be filed on July 24 with the Naha District Court.

- [Parachute training planned for tomorrow off Okinawa](#) (Okinawa Times)