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 **JAPAN MEDIA  
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Thursday, August 3, 2017

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#### HEADLINES

##### Noon news

NHK and all commercial networks led with reports on the predicted lineup of new cabinet ministers who will be officially appointed by Prime Minister Abe today. NHK also reported on remarks made to the press this morning by the new members of the LDP leadership, including Policy Research Council Chairman Fumio Kishida, General Council Chairman Wataru Takeshita, and Election Committee Chairman Ryu Shionoya. Kishida expressed his readiness to make efforts to restore public trust in the LDP. Secretary General Nikai and Vice President Komura, who were reappointed to their posts, also made remarks to the press. Komura disclosed that he has told Abe to entrust discussions on constitutional revision to the party and expressed hope that the LDP will be able to submit its draft proposals to an extraordinary Diet session to be convened in the fall.

#### INTERNATIONAL

##### U.S. frustrated with stalled denuclearization on Korean Peninsula

Nikkei took up Secretary of State Tillerson's press remarks on Tuesday expressing hope for holding dialogue with North Korea "at some point" in the future, speculating that the comment reflects the Trump administration's frustration with its failure to curb North Korea's provocations. Pointing out that Pyongyang has probably concluded that Washington's repeated comments on the use of force are only bluffs and that China has made it clear that it will not heed U.S. calls for stronger actions toward the DPRK, the article speculated that the Secretary hinted at possible contact with the DPRK because the U.S. is running out of viable options to rein in the defiant regime. While expressing concern that the Trump administration may be tempted to bypass Japan in holding dialogue with the Kim dynasty, the article projected that North Korea will not respond to the U.S.'s overtures anytime soon and will instead try to improve its ballistic missile technology further in order to seek greater

concessions from the U.S.

- [Japan arranging ministerial talks with top U.S., China diplomats](#) (Kyodo News)
- [U.S. to push China, Asian states to ramp up pressure on N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan injects additional \\$1.2 mil. into Khmer Rouge tribunal](#) (Kyodo News)

## **POLITICS**

- [PROFILE: LDP's acting Diet affairs chief Okonogi is new national safety head](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: New Defense Minister Onodera well-versed in security policy](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: New environment minister a 70-yr-old ex-bureaucrat](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: New Justice Minister Kamikawa versed in public policy](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Olympic minister Suzuki known for quake reconstruction efforts](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Minister for Okinawa issues Esaki is hereditary politician](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Reconstruction minister Yoshino eager to rebuild 2011 disaster areas](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Farm minister Saito is valued by ruling party veterans](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Health minister Kato, a close Abe ally, known for pushing work reform](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Education minister Hayashi well-versed in policy matters](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: PM Abe's close aide Seko retains post as trade minister](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Land minister Ishii floated as next leader of Komeito](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Economy minister Motegi is policy expert with diverse background](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Internal affairs minister Noda touted as possible 1st female PM](#) (Kyodo News)

- [PROFILE: Retained top spokesman Suga is Abe's right-hand-man](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Foreign Minister Kono known as ardent debater on reforms](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: Retained Finance Minister Aso known as manga enthusiast](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: LDP's new policy chief Kishida candidate to succeed Abe](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: New LDP General Council head Takeshita versed in political wrangling](#) (Kyodo News)
- [PROFILE: LDP secretary general Nikai known for strong ties to China](#) (Kyodo News)
- [FOCUS: Abe's Cabinet reshuffle unlikely to give much-needed poll bump](#) (Kyodo News)
- [FOCUS: Abe's Cabinet reshuffle to affect fate of Japan's diplomacy](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Abe's new cabinet lineup characterized by heavyweights, factional balance](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Koizumi to be named LDP chief deputy secretary-general](#) (Yomiuri)
- [New top LDP executives differ on revision of Article 9 of Constitution](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Cartoon: Abe ponders cabinet reshuffle](#) (Asahi)
- [Maehara, Edano vie for DP leadership](#) (The Japan News)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Aug. 2](#) (Nikkei)

## ECONOMY

### Growing popularity of "three-day weekend" system

NHK'S "Close-up Gendai+" reported that 5.8% of companies in Japan now have three-day weekend systems in place, double the number ten years ago. The program said a growing number of companies are introducing the system in view of the labor shortage, adding that many employees are benefiting from the system because it allows them to balance work and childcare or nursing care and enjoy a fulfilling private life. The program said an increasing number of people, especially those born in the 1980s, want to have three-day weekends. There are also benefits for companies, such as improved quality of services. However, there are also challenges, such as the need for companies to hire more staff and decreased income for employees because they work less overtime.

The program reported on several companies that have successfully increased their employees' income while at the same time increasing their business performance.

- [Global concerns spread over possible U.S. steel import restrictions for security reasons](#) (Shukan Ekonomisuto)
- [Lobbying for opening casino at Tokyo fish market site heats up after Koike's election victory](#) (THEMIS)
- [Gov't to require online retailers to submit energy-saving plans](#) (Yomiuri)
- [JBIC to sign MOU with Washington state on infrastructure development](#) (Nikkei)
- [Juvenile Pacific bluefin tuna catch exceeded cap by 333 tons last season](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan's social security outlays hit record 114 trillion yen in FY15](#) (Asahi)
- [Gov't to support overseas promotion of Japanese films](#) (Nikkei)

#### EDUCATION

- [Japan-Egypt science collaboration school to start 4-year programs](#) (Nikkei)

#### SOCIETY

- [Japan's medical support system falls short amid influx of foreign tourists, residents](#) (The Japan Times)

#### OPINION POLLS

- [Highlights of the July 2017 Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll](#) (Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll Bulletin)

#### TRENDING@JAPAN

- [Japan's rising star athletes making a dash to the U.S.](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Youth lay down placards, take up policy debate in schools](#) (Asahi, Nikkei)
- [Millennials shape the new sharing economy](#) (Asahi, Nikkei)

#### SECURITY

- [MOD admits it has no clear plan for fixing defect in Osprey engine filters](#) (Akahata)

- [U.S. marines to use new rocket launcher in joint exercise](#) (Akahata)
- [Yokota Air Base becoming military hub](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Only Japanese see cyberattacks as top security threat](#) (Jiji Press)



## **Base-hosting prefectures seek accord on disaster response cooperation with U.S. military**

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo wrote that the governors of the 15 prefectures hosting U.S. bases agreed at a regular meeting held in Tokyo on Wednesday to begin discussing the idea of concluding a special accord with the U.S. military on mutual cooperation in response to natural disasters. Kanagawa Governor Kuroiwa, who chairs the group, presented draft proposals, saying that conditions for the U.S. military's use of commercial airports in the event of natural disasters should be included in the U.S.-Japan Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). While expressing basic agreement, Okinawa Governor Onaga expressed reservations about the proposals by saying that the accord should not result in strengthening the functions of the U.S. bases for the purpose of disaster response. Kuroiwa and other members of the group visited the Foreign Ministry, Defense Ministry, and the U.S. Embassy to submit their requests on SOFA revision and other issues. Concerning the supplementary accord to limit and clarify the scope of the civilian component of the SOFA that was agreed upon between the U.S. and Japan in January, the governors requested that the U.S. provide a progress report on its review of the definition of the civilian component.

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