



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, September 19, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

All networks gave top play to reports on Prime Minister Abe's plan to dissolve the Lower House on Sept. 28 and hold a general election on Oct. 22. Fuji TV said that the premier is expected to announce his decision as early as Sept. 25.

INTERNATIONAL

Secretary Mattis issues warning to North Korea

NHK reported that Secretary of Defense Mattis issued another warning to North Korea by saying that there are "many military options" available to counter North Korea that would not necessarily create a grave risk of retaliation against Seoul. In addition, the Secretary reportedly told reporters on Monday that North Korea's ballistic missiles are aimed for "the middle of the Pacific" and that the North Koreans are "intentionally doing provocations that seem to press against the envelope for just how far can they push without going over some kind of a line in their minds that would make them vulnerable."

Onodera says North may be upgrading missiles for actual warfare

NHK reported that Defense Minister Onodera told reporters this morning that the ballistic missile North Korea launched on Sept. 15 is the same type as the one launched on Aug. 29, saying that North Korea may be enhancing its capabilities to operate ballistic missiles in actual warfare. Onodera reportedly said that based on its flight distance, altitude, and linear exhaust flames indicating that it was a liquid fueled device, it is thought to be the same model as the Hwasong-12

intermediate-range ballistic missile launched on Aug. 29. He was also quoted as saying: "Based on the images released by North Korea, we can confirm that the missile was launched from a mobile launch pad. There is a possibility that North Korea is improving its capabilities to operate ballistic missiles for actual warfare."

Japanese, Russian foreign ministers agree to cooperate closely on North Korea

TBS reported at noon that Foreign Minister Kono met with his Russian counterpart Lavrov at the UN headquarters in New York on Monday. The two ministers agreed to cooperate closely to ensure the complete implementation of the UNSC resolutions against North Korea. Kono was quoted as telling reporters: "It goes without saying that Russia also wants the UNSC resolutions to be implemented fully so we would like to work together closely." During the 30-minute meeting, Kono reportedly called on Russia to put pressure on North Korea as it has an influence over the nation. The two ministers also reportedly agreed to accelerate coordination on joint projects on the Northern Territories, including seafood farming and sightseeing tours.

- [Abe, African leaders affirm enforcement of U.N. sanctions on N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan, Israel affirm coordination on N. Korea sanctions](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Press occasion on North Korea's missile launch](#) (Kantei Website)
- [Editorial: Japan should play more active diplomatic role in N. Korea crisis](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Int'l community must block N. Korea from regularly launching missiles](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: N. Korean missiles passing over Japan must not become routine](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Diplomatic carrot-and-stick approach needed to solve N. Korean crises](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Japan-U.S. pressure provides good leverage for promoting U.N. reform](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan to host international health conference in mid-December](#) (Sankei)
- [Japanese man arrested for alleged spying in China: source](#) (Kyodo News)
- [ROK labor group to erect forced laborer statue in front of Japanese consulate general in Busan](#) (Nikkei)

China arrests Japanese national on espionage charges

NHK reported today that MOFA disclosed that a Japanese man in his 60s who was taken into custody in China in May has been arrested by the Chinese authorities on charges of espionage. According to the network, the Chinese media reported on Monday that Chinese prosecutors approved the arrest of the Japanese man. The network said a total of 12 Japanese citizens have been taken into custody in China since 2014 when the anti-espionage law was enacted. Four were released in July, but the eight others, including the man who was arrested, remain in custody.

POLITICS

- [Improved approval rate spurs Abe decision to dissolve Diet](#) (The Japan News)
- [Prolonged North Korean situation is behind PM Abe's decision on snap election](#) (Mainichi)
- [Abe set to call October election](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Security laws to become campaign issue in upcoming Lower House election](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Lower House election to have limited impact on budget formulation process](#) (Yomiuri)
- [DP Maehara shows negative stance on election cooperation with JCP](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Lower House dissolution casts shadow over Wakasa's new party](#) (Sankei)
- [LDP member says public will feel like they're being played for fools](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [SDF missions expanded in two years following enactment of security legislation](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Abe attempting to escape from scandals with call for election](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [DP secretary general negative about cooperating with JCP](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Ailing opposition Democratic Party must focus on Diet debate](#) (The Mainichi)
- [New party of Tokyo Gov. Koike's ally to be formed by Sept. 28](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Cartoon: DP President Maehara](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

- [Prime minister's schedule on Sept. 18, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Sept. 17, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Sept. 16, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Sept. 15, 2017](#) (Nikkei)

OPINION POLLS

- [Cabinet support rate recovers to 41%, over 80% say DPRK is "real threat," Jiji Press poll](#) (Jiji)
- [60% say consumption tax hike should be postponed," Jiji Press poll](#) (Jiji)
- [Cabinet support rate recovers to 50%, Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)

ECONOMY

Honda announces \$2.67 million investment in U.S. plant

NHK reported online that that Honda Motors announced on Monday that it will invest about \$2.67 million in its plant in Ohio and hire 300 more employees there in response to President Trump's call for foreign investment in the U.S. The network said the Ohio plant is Honda's biggest plant in the U.S., adding that the investment will be used to install equipment for the manufacture of its new Accord sedan model.

- [Bain proposes Apple, Dell join Japan-U.S.-South Korea consortium over Toshiba Memory sale](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Main points of "Work Style Reform" Action Plan](#) (Nikkei)
- [The future of cars: connected, autonomous, shared, electric](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Baby bluefin respond eagerly to new feed](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Itochu, Osaka Gas, Mitsui Engineering & Shipbuilding partner to build biomass power plant](#) (Nikkei)
- [LNG demand to increase 90% by 2030](#) (Nikkei)
- [Beyond Airbnb: Minpaku market poised for growth](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Microfinance body Grameen Bank to set up Japan branch next year](#) (Kyodo News)

SCIENCE

Mysteries of the Kuroshio Current

Sunday's "NHK Special" reported on the Kuroshio Current, an ocean current that has been affecting the lives of the Japanese people and their culture for many years. The program said there are many mysteries associated with the current. Although the current carries only a small number of plankton, it attracts many kinds of fish such as tuna and bonito. The program said this is because whirlpools are formed when the current hits the Japanese archipelago.

EDUCATION

- [Fukushima University students help with Houston disaster cleanup](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Students taking part in annual SKIP exchange program say more Japanese need overseas work experience](#) (The Japan Times)

SOCIETY

- [Kindergartens to accept 2-year-olds to address day care shortage](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Japanese people aged 90 and older top 2 million for 1st time](#) (Kyodo News)
- [No. of Japanese centenarians hits record 67,824 amid medical advances](#) (Kyodo News)

SECURITY

- [Japan, U.S., India to work together on strategic port development](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Maritime security cooperation can deepen Japan-India strategic ties](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Defensive steps against EMP attacks must be taken at command centers](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan should consider possessing cruise missiles to deal with DPRK threat](#) (Sankei)
- [DM Onodera announces U.S. forces parachuting drills at Kadena on Sept. 21](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

- [SDF chief of staff shows commitment to protecting Japan amid escalating tension over DPRK](#) (Seiron)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

- [Victim of robbery by U.S. soldiers received no compensation after nine years](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)
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