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Afternoon Alert - Friday, October 13, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK gave top play to a report that the G7 finance chiefs agreed to apply "maximum economic pressure" on North Korea over the "grave" threat posed by its missile and nuclear weapons development. TBS led with a report that the USG announced on Wednesday that the U.S. will withdraw from UNESCO. Fuji TV gave top play to a report that the Nikkei Stock Average reached the 21,000 mark for the first time in 20 years and 10 months. NTV gave top play to a report that the temperature in the Tokyo area has dropped by more than 10 degrees from yesterday. TV Asahi led with a report on the upcoming general election.

INTERNATIONAL

CIA director says U.S. boosting gathering and analysis of intelligence on North Korea

NHK reported that CIA Director Pompeo said during a speech on Thursday that the CIA is strengthening the gathering and analysis of intelligence on North Korea, including the movements of Kim Jong Un and other leaders as well as the economic situation. He was quoted as saying: "We are intent on delivering to the President intelligence not only about Kim Jong Un but also about the leaders around him and about what's going on in the commercial space and among a broader set of elites inside of North Korea."

Meanwhile, the network said White House Chief of Staff Kelly told a press conference on Thursday that North Korea is advancing the development of the technology for the reentry of ICBM warheads into the earth's atmosphere. According to the network, Kelly said it is a "manageable" threat at this

point and stressed the need to make a breakthrough before North Korea establishes the ability to deliver a nuclear missile to the U.S. mainland.

UAE to stop issuing visas to North Korean workers

NHK reported at noon that the foreign ministry of the United Arab Emirates announced that it will join international efforts to put an end to the nuclear and missile development programs by North Korea and stop issuing entry visas to North Korean nationals. The network also said that the UAE will no longer permit North Korean companies to start new businesses in the country. More than 1,000 workers from North Korea are believed to be working in the UAE. The network quoted DOS spokesperson Nauert as telling reporters on Thursday: "Very happy to hear that. There are many countries that are taking those steps that we have asked those countries to take."

- [U.S. allegedly plans to make Kim Jong-nam's son next DPRK leader after toppling Kim Jong Un](#) (Shukan Gendai)
- [Unveiling the Japan-U.S. Joint Committee](#) (Sande Mainichi)
- [G-7 vows to apply "maximum economic pressure" on N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [China holds hearing for Japanese man indicted on unrevealed charge](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Tokyo still top 'global power city' in Asia, and takes third spot in the rankings worldwide](#) (The Japan Times)

Heroes or traitors? – Syria's national soccer team

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on the national soccer team of Syria, whose hopes to participate in the World Cup for the first time were recently dashed. The program reported on several players who had left the team for political reasons but recently returned with the goal of bringing Syria to the World Cup. While some call them "heroes," others call them "traitors." The program explained that the internal conflict between the Assad government and the anti-government forces in Syria has divided the nation and the players left the team because the national team is supported by the Assad government.

ECONOMY

Former USTR says withdrawal from TPP "one of the biggest strategic mistakes"

NHK reported this morning on its one-on-one interview with visiting former USTR Froman, who said that the U.S. withdrawal from the TPP was "one of the biggest strategic mistakes" in recent years. "Soon after the U.S. administration withdrew from the TPP, the EU concluded an EPA with Japan," he added. The network said the former USTR also pointed out that the leadership that the U.S. has exercised over trade policy in the Asia-Pacific region could shift to China as a result of the withdrawal and said that China has very powerful regional strategies such as the One Belt, One

Road initiative. On the U.S.-Japan Economic Dialogue slated for next week, Froman reportedly said the United States' massive trade deficit with Japan over automobiles will be on the agenda as well as agriculture, including beef.

- [‘TPP 11’ should preserve all agreed-upon rules: ex-US trade chief](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan looks to jump-start fintech with legal overhaul](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Tokyo beckons fund managers with public-private money](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Kobe Steel scandal spreads to US as GM, Ford launch probes](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Renewable energy comes with higher power bills](#) (Yomiuri)

POLITICS

- [Why ruling parties are ahead in election result projections despite low cabinet support rate](#) (Nikkei)
- [Comparison of political parties’ campaign pledges on foreign, security policies](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe tells audiences to “observe the law” during stump speech](#) (Asahi)
- [Abe to reject press coverage of personal campaign meetings in Yamaguchi](#) (Asahi)
- [Party of Hope remains dependent on Koike’s popularity](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Party of Hope slows as CDPJ gains momentum](#) (Sande Mainichi)
- [Prime minister’s schedule on Oct. 12, 2017](#) (Nikkei)

OPINION POLLS

- [16% of independents will vote for LDP in proportional representation portion of LH election, Kyodo poll](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

EDUCATION

- [Letter to the editor: A little diplomat](#) (Asahi)

SOCIETY

- [Surge in domestic violence cases reported by women with disabilities](#) (Mainichi Evening edition)

SECURITY

DM Onodera says CH-53 flight operations should be suspended indefinitely

NHK reported at noon that although the U.S. side announced a 96-hour suspension of all flight operations of CH-53 helicopters, Defense Minister Onodera told reporters today that the flight operations should be suspended for an indefinite period of time. The defense chief was quoted as telling reporters this morning: "The view of the Ministry of Defense is that flight operations of CH-53 helicopters should be suspended without setting any deadline until the cause of the incident is identified and safety is confirmed....Our SDF experts will perform their duties in order to avoid a situation in which the suspension is automatically lifted or the investigation becomes perfunctory after a certain period of time ."

Onodera also reportedly said that he will ask the U.S. side to conduct a thorough environmental assessment given that the main rotor of the CH-35 helicopter that crashed on Okinawa International University contained radioactive strontium.

- [Japan expects U.S. to halt CH-53 helicopters for "indefinite period"](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Decision to introduce Aegis Ashore made without careful consideration](#) (Asahi)
- [Defense spending becomes campaign issue for Lower House election](#) (Asahi)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

Okinawa's frustration with U.S. military escalating

Ryukyu Shimpo and Okinawa Times continued to give intense coverage to the incident involving a CH-35 helicopter near the Northern Training Area on Thursday, highlighting the growing anger and frustration among local officials over what they view as the U.S. military's "insincere" handling of the case. While focusing on local investigators' inability to access the accident site on account of the SOFA, both papers wrote that the U.S. side turned down a request for meetings with Okinawa Area Coordinator Nicholson and Naha Consul General Ehrendreich made by LDP Policy Research Council Chairman Kishida, who canceled his planned election speeches in Okinawa for local LDP candidates to prioritize communications with the U.S. officials. After learning that he would not be able to meet with them, Kishida told the press: "I tried in vain to arrange meetings with the two U.S. officials to lodge a strong protest. I cannot comprehend why they chose not to meet with me. The insincere attitude of the United State is very regrettable."

Okinawa Times wrote that Okinawa prefectural government officials were also extremely displeased because Lt. Gen. Nicholson refused to go to the government office and instead asked them to visit him to discuss the helicopter incident. An unnamed senior Okinawa official said: "We will never visit a U.S. base. It goes without saying that the U.S. military should visit us because they are the ones who inflicted damage and caused concern." Ryukyu Shimpo took up yesterday's meeting in Tokyo between Defense Minister Onodera and USFJ Deputy Commander Chiarotti, claiming that the USFJ official offered an apology only in his personal capacity by saying: "I would like to extend my personal apologies to the landowner, who was directly impacted."

