



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, October 31, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

All networks led with reports that a 27-year-old man has been arrested on charges of disposing of bodies, saying that at least nine corpses were found in his apartment in Zama, Kanagawa.

ECONOMY

Japan's growing stockpile of plutonium

NHK's "Close-up Gendai +" reported on Japan's plutonium, which is under strict international control since it can be used to create nuclear weapons. The program said Japan currently possesses about 47 tons of plutonium, adding that many experts in the U.S. are increasingly concerned about the rising amount of plutonium in Japan's possession. According to the program, 47 tons of plutonium is enough for about 6,000 atomic bombs. Japan is permitted to extract plutonium from spent nuclear fuel under the Japan-U.S. Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, which will expire next year.

While Japan was originally planning to use the extracted plutonium for the Monju fast-breeder reactor, it has not been able to because the Monju reactor is set to be decommissioned. The GOJ also considered using the plutonium in regular nuclear reactors, but many of them are offline now following the March 11 nuclear disaster. What's more, operations are likely to resume soon at the Aomori reprocessing plant, which will produce up to eight tons of plutonium every year.

The program said U.S. experts are also concerned that South Korea may want to follow Japan's lead and start extracting plutonium. A senior member of the Trump administration told the network that although the administration is planning to automatically extend the nuclear cooperation agreement with Japan as it highly values the bilateral alliance, it will ask Japan to explain how it plans to use the

plutonium.

- [11 TPP negotiators meet in Tokyo, eye agreement next week](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Tough road ahead for 'TPP 11' even with New Zealand on board](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Settlement of investment disputes may be separated from EPA negotiations with EU](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Toyota opens new N. America facility in Kentucky](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Fake \\$100 notes found in Tokyo](#) (NHK World)
- [40% of companies in Japan taking steps to lower overtime cap, Mainichi Shimbun survey](#) (The Mainichi)

INTERNATIONAL

- [S. Korea favors visit by Japanese emperor when conditions ripe](#) (Kyodo News)
- [ROK cites "overemphasis" on Japan's damage for abstaining from UN vote on anti-nuclear resolution](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Japan, NATO agree on need for strong int'l pressure on N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Strange tales of Tsushima \(Part 1\): How the island became a virtual Korean territory](#) (Sankei)
- [China is waging a global fisheries war](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Cartoon: Trick or treat](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [U.S.-DPRK conflict could begin early next year, defense ministry official](#) (Shukan Gendai)

POLITICS

Kohei Otsuka to become Democratic Party chief

NHK reported this afternoon that Upper House member Kohei Otsuka will become the leader of the Democratic Party today since Otsuka was the only one who nominated himself for the position after the party began accepting candidates at noon today. The network said Otsuka will be officially selected as the party leader at the general assembly of members from both chambers which will begin at 3 p.m. today. According to the network, Otsuka is 58 years old and has been elected to the Upper House three times. After working at the Bank of Japan, he was first elected in 2001 on the

ticket of the now-defunct Democratic Party of Japan. The network said the term of the new DP leader ends in September 2018.

- [Prime minister's schedule on Oct. 30, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gov't mulls extra budget to support agriculture, human resources development](#) (Mainichi)
- [LDP seeks increase in Diet interpellation time for ruling parties](#) (Mainichi)
- [CDPJ to nominate Akamatsu as vice speaker of the Lower House](#) (Mainichi)
- [JCP to vote for its leader in Diet election for prime minister](#) (Mainichi)
- [LDP taps Moriyama as head of TPP headquarters](#) (Mainichi)
- [Hosoda is picked to lead LDP headquarters for constitutional revision](#) (Nikkei)

EDUCATION

- [Japanese youth who studied in U.S. now works at Facebook](#) (Asahi)

SOCIETY

Large number of fake \$100 bills found in Tokyo

TV Asahi's "Hodo Station" on Monday reported that a large number of fake \$100 bills have been found in Tokyo. The program said security camera footage at money exchange counters in Tokyo showed several men exchanging the fake bills. According to the program, the counterfeit bills are so expertly made that they were not identified by some detectors. An expert pointed out that the perpetrators are "professionals" who have apparently targeted money exchange booths in Shinjuku and Shibuya where many foreigners gather, adding that they may move to other parts of Japan popular with foreign tourists.

- [Japan to drastically tighten screening of refugee applicants, ban them from working](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Rohingya asylum seekers face dim prospects of gaining refugee status in Japan](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Law to improve Japan's controversial foreign intern program to come into effect](#) (The Mainichi)
- [420 Japanese municipalities seek to host pre-Olympics training camps](#) (Tokyo Shimbun Evening edition)

OPINION POLLS

- [40% used library in past year, Yomiuri nationwide survey on reading](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Opinion poll & results of Mainichi Shimbun's 71st survey on reading](#) (Mainichi)

SECURITY

B-2 participation in Japanese air show cancelled due to foul weather

Asahi wrote that the planned participation of a USAF B-2A strategic bomber in an ASDF military review in eastern Japan on Sunday was called off because the event was cancelled on account of inclement weather. According to the article, the B-2 Spirit was expected to make a "surprise" flight together with B-1 bomber(s) during the event that was planned at an SDF base in Ibaraki Prefecture. The two governments had reportedly made arrangements for both types of U.S. state-of-the-art military aircraft to fly in Japanese airspace with the goal of deterring North Korea.

Senior police official surveys security situation around U.S. Embassy

Asahi's metropolitan news section reported that the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department's Security Bureau Director Shimoda on Monday surveyed the security situation in the vicinity of the U.S. Embassy in the Akasaka district prior to President Trump's visit to Tokyo next week. The senior police official was briefed by local police officers on the deployment of additional riot police units around the building in preparation for possible acts of terrorism and protests.

- [Defense Minister Onodera to call for safe operation of Ospreys](#) (Mainichi)
- [Keidanren to announce cybersecurity proposals as early as December](#) (Sankei)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

F-35s arrive at Kadena amid local protest

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo front-paged the arrival of two USAF F-35As at Kadena AB on Monday, noting that they will be deployed there through next spring. This was the first time this Air Force variant of the F-35 Lightning II flew to the Asia-Pacific region. Ten additional F-35s originally based in Utah will soon be deployed to Okinawa for six months. The papers reported on strong opposition to the deployment from local officials and residents, who are concerned about noise. They are also worried that the installation will be used as a key platform for operating F-35s in the region.

- [Futenma sees a 2.7-fold jump in instances of noise in FY2016](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)

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