
 **JAPAN MEDIA
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Friday, November 24, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

All broadcasters led with reports regarding the discovery at a marina in Akita last night of a wooden boat carrying eight men, saying the men, who claim to be from North Korea, have told local authorities that the boat drifted after experiencing engine trouble and that they would like to return to North Korea. While quoting Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga as telling the press this morning that the GOJ will handle the matter appropriately in accordance with relevant statutes, the networks projected that Tokyo will begin consultations with the DPRK government for their repatriation.

INTERNATIONAL

Osaka chief decides to end sister-city relationship with San Francisco

Fuji TV and TBS took up press remarks this morning by Osaka Mayor Yoshimura, who disclosed that he will sever Osaka's sister-city relationship with San Francisco next month on account of its official decision to accept the donation of a set of comfort women statues. The mayor said: "Our relationship of trust has been completely destroyed.... The decision constitutes 'political bashing.' Japan's national interests will be served by saying no to what is not true." Yoshimura stressed that his government will no longer subsidize any private sector initiatives for exchanges with San Francisco. He also disclosed that he was told by the San Francisco mayor in writing yesterday that there is no room for discussion or meeting with the Osaka leader on the issue of the comfort women.

Moscow voices opposition to Tokyo's plan to introduce new missile defense batteries

NHK reported online on a press statement issued by the Russian Foreign Ministry yesterday ahead of Foreign Minister Lavrov's meeting with Foreign Minister Kono scheduled for today in Moscow, in which it voiced concern about Japan's plan to procure the Aegis Ashore platform. While projecting that the two ministers will discuss North Korea and other security issues in East Asia, the Russian statement said: "We will point out that the deployment of an American missile defense system in the Asia-Pacific region is dangerous." Defense Minister Onodera reportedly reacted to the Russian view by telling the press this morning: "The missile defense platform that Japan plans to adopt is purely defensive in nature to protect our people's lives and property from North Korea's ballistic missiles. It does not pose a threat to Russia or any of our other neighbors."

ROK lawmaker predicts President Moon will visit Japan early next year

NHK reported online on this morning's meeting in Seoul between visiting Komeito Chief Representative Yamaguchi and a South Korean parliamentarian close to President Moon, during which the Japanese official invited the president to visit Japan at an early date. In reply, the South Korean politician, who visited Tokyo in May as a presidential envoy, said: "I had hoped that Mr. Moon would visit Japan this year, but now I'm making efforts to arrange a Japan-South Korea summit for sometime early next year."

Newly declassified documents reveal further details of JFK assassination

NHK's "Close-up Gendai +" on Wednesday evening reported on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy 54 years ago and various conspiracy theories following the disclosure last month of about 30,000 declassified documents on the assassination. The program said while Lee Harvey Oswald is widely considered to have acted alone in carrying out the assassination, it interviewed an American journalist who believes that the CIA was involved and a former CIA chief who told the network that information from several intelligence agency chiefs in Eastern Europe show that Soviet Premier Khrushchev ordered the assassination. The network said that an American researcher has found several documents in the JFK files indicating that the FBI tried to give the public the impression that Oswald acted alone.

The program also reported on the disagreement in the U.S. between those who advocate the people's right to know and those who insist on the need to keep documents classified.

- [Commentary: Diplomatic strategy absent in U.S.](#) (Nikkei)
- [Taiwan, Japan sign 2 deals in talks on trade, other forms of exchange](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan, Taiwan sign customs assistance agreement to step up measure against drug smuggling](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Prepare for backlash from N. Korea after it was labeled terrorism sponsor](#) (The Japan News)

- [Editorial: North Korea shouldn't choose self-destruction](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Use North Korea's return to terrorism blacklist to curb threat](#) (The Mainichi)
- ["Seiron" column: The U.S.'s options in dealing with North Korea's nuclear arms, missiles](#) (Sankei)

ECONOMY

- [Mitsubishi Materials data scandal spreads to 3 subsidiaries](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Drug prices to be revised annually from fiscal 2021](#) (Yomiuri, Evening edition)
- [Editorial: Japan must make efforts to protect young bluefin tuna from overfishing](#) (The Japan News)
- [Nippon Paint bids for Axalta of US amid global reshuffling](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Nov. 23, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Nov. 22, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of Upper House representative interpellations, Nov. 22](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Doubts grow over discount in sale of land plot to Moritomo Gakuen](#) (The Japan News)
- [DP increasingly worried about its weakening political force](#) (Mainichi)
- [Rengo chairman says his organization is closest to Democratic Party](#) (Nikkei)

OPINION POLLS

- [Cabinet support rate rises to 46%, NHK public opinion poll](#) (NHK online)
- [Cabinet and political party support rates, NHK public opinion poll](#) (NHK online)

EDUCATION

- [Interview with Masato Ichikawa, Vice-President of Ritsumeikan University](#) (Nikkei)

SOCIETY

- [Cartoon: Talk of the town](#) (Mainichi)

SECURITY

Okinawa prosecutor seeks life imprisonment for former Kadena worker

NTV and TV-Asahi reported on today's court hearing in the trial of the former Kadena AB employee who stands accused of murdering a local woman last April, noting that the Okinawa prosecutor sought an indefinite prison term for the defendant by saying that the crime was "premeditated, selfish, and extremely heinous." The prosecutor argued that life imprisonment is justified because he was not able to control his sexual desire and correction would be difficult. The verdict will be handed down on Dec. 1.

USS Fitzgerald leaves for U.S. to undergo repairs

NHK reported that the USS Fitzgerald, which was involved in a fatal collision with a Philippine container ship off Shizuoka in June, departed Yokosuka Naval Base today to undergo repairs in the U.S. The warship will be transported on barges since it cannot sail for long distances under its own power.

Onodera comments on missile development with UK

NHK reported online on press remarks this morning by Defense Minister Onodera, who commented on the ongoing joint development of an air-to-air missile with the UK. The official disclosed that the two partners plan to begin producing a prototype next year for performance evaluation to be completed in six years. He said joint research has already been conducted on combining the two nations' technologies for detecting and intercepting enemy aircraft.

- [Japan, UK to collaborate on missile development](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Major US-Japan maneuvers send message to North Korea](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

Top Marine expresses "sympathy" for service member suspected of causing fatal traffic accident

Thursday's Ryukyu Shimpo led with comments made to the daily on Tuesday by USMC Commandant Neller, who expressed his condolences to the family of the Japanese victim who was killed in a recent DUI incident involving an Okinawa service member. The top Marine also said: "I feel deep sympathy for the Marine. I'm convinced it was not his intent." While promising to cooperate with the local police investigation, the Marine general reportedly asked for Japanese understanding for the fact that some 22,000 to 23,000 Marines are stationed in Japan, including in Okinawa, and said that "this individual made a bad mistake." While emphasizing that Gen. Neller did not mention

any measures to prevent a recurrence or tighten discipline, the daily expressed “anger and distrust” over what it viewed as the Commandant’s “defense” of the suspect, speculating that he will receive a dishonorable discharge.

In a related story, Thursday’s Okinawa Times took up Wednesday’s meeting between a group of LDP Okinawa chapter members and Naha Con Gen Ehrendreich, during which the local politicians lodged a protest over the fatal accident and proposed a range of measures to deter mishaps involving U.S. military personnel, such as a system to hold the supervisors of offenders accountable for their misconduct. According to the daily, the U.S. diplomat reportedly stated in reply that the USG will look into the ideas, including the establishment of a forum for discussion between Okinawa and the USG and the GOJ tasked with formulating measures to prevent a recurrence.

