
 **JAPAN MEDIA
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, January 2, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most broadcasters led with reports that some 60,000 people gathered in front of the Imperial Palace this morning to hear the Emperor's New Year's message.

SECURITY

Saga governor indicates acceptance of Japanese Ospreys at local airport

Kyodo reported on Saturday on its recent interview with Saga Governor Yamaguchi, who noted that he will make a final decision to accept the Defense Ministry's plan to deploy GSDF Ospreys at Saga Airport pending assurances from the central government about the safety of the aircraft, compensation for possible accidents and incidents involving the tilt-rotor planes, and measures to stimulate the local economy. "I plan to cooperate on issues of national defense," the governor said. He voiced displeasure at the idea reportedly being pursued by some ministry officials of finding a different location for the GSDF MV-22s on account of strong opposition to the Saga deployment by local fishermen.

- [Japan eyes electronic-warfare jet, could jam missile bases](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan studying SDF response to Korean Peninsula crisis: sources](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Okinawa gubernatorial race to be crucial election in 2018](#) (Yomiuri)

INTERNATIONAL

- [Nukes enable N. Korea to control own military, ex-N. Korean diplomat says](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Experts say U.S. could attack North Korea on March 18 or later](#) (Sankei)
- [Commentary: U.S. and China hold secret talks over the North Korean crisis](#) (Nikkei)

Asian Review)

- [Gov't seeks better China ties via Africa](#) (The Japan News)
- [Chinese cooperation eyed on African projects](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan serious about improving China relations: Chief Secretary Suga](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [China's flagship daily front-pages Xi meeting with Japanese lawmakers](#) (Kyodo News)
- [LDP, Komeito leaders make "considerable" achievements on China visit](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Wang seeks to boost exchanges with Japan](#) (The Japan News)
- [Chinese State Councillor Yang positive about holding Japan-China-ROK summit at early date](#) (Yomiuri)
- [China proposes talks aimed at easing Fukushima-linked food import ban](#) (Kyodo News)
- [LDP's Nikai: Gov't should react calmly to ROK president's criticism of comfort women deal](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Putin indicates hope for stronger Japan-Russia relations in 2018 in New Year message to Abe](#) (Yomiuri)
- [MOFA set to ease visa requirements for Indians](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gov't gears up support for Japanese willing to join int'l organs](#) (Kyodo News)

CORRECTED COPY: Hong Kong tanker seized by ROK in ~~October~~ → November for smuggling oil into DPRK

All Saturday papers took up a disclosure by the South Korean government that its naval authorities seized a Hong Kong-flagged tanker **on Nov. 24** for exporting refined oil products to North Korea by transferring them to a DPRK vessel in international waters in the East China Sea on Oct. 19 in violation of UN Security Council resolutions. The ship was chartered by a Taiwanese company that had notified the South Korean authorities ahead of the ship's departure from a South Korean port that its destination was Taiwan. The papers said North Korea has been desperate to smuggle on the high seas petroleum into the country, adding that the U.S., Japan, and South Korea are stepping up their surveillance in order to close loopholes in the UN economic sanctions against the Kim regime.

Yomiuri reported that Defense Secretary Mattis said on Friday: "Obviously if a government finds that there is a ship in their port conducting trade that was forbidden under the U.N. Security Council resolution, then they have an obligation and so far we have seen nations take that obligation seriously."

Sunday papers highlighted a Reuters' report alleging that several Russian tankers have engaged in similar smuggling operations involving the transport of oil to DPRK vessels in international waters near the Russian Far East. Monday's Yomiuri said a clandestine network of Chinese, Russian, and North Korean companies was formed in June 2017 for conducting illicit oil shipments to North Korea, with Chinese firms working as intermediaries between their Russian and DPRK partners to arrange

tanker shipments and payment.

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 31, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 30, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 29, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [New Year's reflection by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe](#) (Kantei Website)
- [Editorial: N. Korea strategy needed to change tension to stability / Also in 2018: Put Japan's sleeping cash to use](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Abe needs to focus on Japan's future, not his reign in power](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [LDP Nukaga faction said may cooperate with Ishiba in presidential election](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Interview: Edano denies stronger election cooperation with JCP](#) (Jiji Press)

ECONOMY

- [Japanese economy showing signs of exiting deflation](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Workforce continues to grow despite population decline](#) (Nikkei)
- [Business lobby chief vows to improve governance amid scandals](#) (Kyodo News)
- [NTT to work with U.S., German firms to set int'l standards for connected car communications](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan to consider moving up schedule for bullet train launch in India](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan to enforce penalties for bluefin catch quota violations starting next month](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Japan's need for foreign labor to get dire as 2050 nears](#) (The Japan Times)

SCIENCE

- [Plan to make Japan world leader in drug development](#) (Sankei)

EDUCATION

- ['Hometown tax' supports study abroad](#) (The Japan News)

SOCIETY

- [Number of new adults in Japan remains flat at 1.23 million](#) (Kyodo News)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

U.S. military flight regulations enforced less strictly in Okinawa than Europe

Monday's Ryukyu Shimpo led with a finding that the implementation of USAF flight regulations to mitigate noise pollution in the vicinity of bases appears to be less stringent in Okinawa than installations in Europe. According to an analysis of flight-related instruction manuals issued by base commanders, including those of Kadena AB, Aviano AB in Italy, Ramstein AB in Germany, and RAF Lakenheath in the UK, flights for some types of training are permitted until midnight at Kadena in the summer despite a bilateral noise prevention accord banning flights from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. In contrast, similar regulations at the European installations appear to be more strictly observed in part because

local aviation laws apply to U.S. military flights, which is not the case in Japan. The daily stressed that the flight regulations at the USAF bases in these European countries are defined more strictly to specify the aircraft models and the types of flights that can be exempted from standard rules and require the approval of the host country for flights conducted at irregular hours.

- [Okinawa to look into alternatives to FRF construction](#) (Okinawa Times)
 - [Okinawa Marine sentenced to 20 years in prison for child abuse](#) (Okinawa Times)
 - [Okinawa leader vows to thwart FRF construction](#) (Okinawa Times)
 - [Two U.S. base workers arrested in Okinawa for drunk driving](#) (Okinawa Times, Ryukyu Shimpo)
 - [One in ten Marines based in Japan](#) (Okinawa Times)
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