



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, January 3, 2018

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## HEADLINES

### Noon news

The top news item covered by broadcasters at noon was the traffic congestion due to people returning home after the New Year's holidays.

## INTERNATIONAL

### U.S. skeptical about DPRK's overtures to ROK

Most TV networks took up press remarks made on Tuesday by senior Trump administration officials regarding North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's New Year's message making overtures to South Korea. U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley said: "We don't think we need a band-aid and we don't think we need to smile and take a picture. We think we need to have them stop nuclear weapons and they need to stop it now." Her negative assessment of Kim's statement was echoed by State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert, who said, "If the ROK wants to sit down and have a conversation with the DPRK, that is certainly their choice.... But we aren't going to necessarily believe that Kim Jong-un is sincere and is credible in his talks." She added that Pyongyang may be trying to drive a wedge between the U.S. and South Korea.

The broadcasters also highlighted a tweet by President Trump in response to Kim's remark that the nuclear launch button is always on his desk. The President tweeted: "Please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!"

### American YouTuber apologizes for posting video of body filmed in Japan

NHK and Kyodo reported online on U.S. media stories on the apology offered by American YouTube celebrity Logan Paul for posting footage that he claimed he took in Japan showing the body of someone who had committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree. He made the video while walking with friends in Aokigahara forest near Mount Fuji, which is known as a suicide spot. Logan

offered an apology and removed the video in the face of a wave of criticism, explaining that although it was uploaded to “raise awareness of suicide and suicide prevention,” he should have put the camera down.

- [Commentary: Kim’s New Year speech seeks to split South Korea, America](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Ex-LDP heavyweight Kamei tells Abe he plans to visit DPRK to resolve nuclear, abduction issues](#) (Sande Mainichi)
- [No. of Japanese tourists to Guam plunging on N. Korea missile scare](#) (Kyodo News)

#### **POLITICS**

- [Prime minister’s schedule on Jan. 1-2, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Who will challenge Abe’s overwhelming power in the LDP presidential election?](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Rengo struggles to maintain optimum distance from CDPJ, Party of Hope, DP](#) (Yomiuri)
- [List of business leaders who dined, played golf with PM Abe in 2017](#) (Shukan Asahi)

#### **ECONOMY**

- [Toyota Tsusho poised to expand vehicle-to-grid system in Japan](#) (Asahi)
- [Japan’s JFE to offer infrastructure telemonitoring](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [90% of major companies predict “moderate economic growth” over next six months, Yomiuri poll of executives at 30 firms](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Over 80% of major Japanese companies expect economy to grow in 2018](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan economy on track to renew postwar expansion record](#) (Jiji Press)

#### **SCIENCE**

- [IHI to put methane-fueled rocket engine to practical use](#) (Yomiuri)

#### **EDUCATION**

- [The “2018 university problem”](#) (Sankei)
- [Gov’t to expand Japanese language education in Asia](#) (Yomiuri)

#### **SOCIETY**

- [Japan to open path to work visas for foreign nursing trainees](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Abuses still abound in labor-strapped Japan’s foreign ‘trainee’ worker system](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Govt to survey 4th-generation Japanese in Latin America](#) (The Japan News)

#### **SECURITY**

- [LDP to start discussing building nuclear shelters this month](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gov’t to compensate for self-driving car accidents caused by hackers](#) (Sankei)

#### **OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS**

## **U.S. military's dissent blocked Embassy Tokyo's bid to restructure Joint Committee in 1972**

Ryukyu Shimpo gave top play to a report on declassified USG documents showing that opposition by the U.S. military blocked an attempt by the U.S. Mission in Japan in 1972 to conduct a review of the U.S.-Japan Joint Committee. According to a diplomatic cable written by then-Ambassador Ingersoll in May 1972, the Embassy proposed to the State Department a review of the Joint Committee by capitalizing on the reversion of Okinawa to Japanese administration in the same month on the grounds that the Embassy had been “bypassed” by American uniformed officials since they maintained direct contact with the Japanese government. The Embassy side allegedly wanted its minister-counselor instead of the deputy USFJ commander to head the U.S. delegation.

Although the State Department seconded the idea, the USFJ and CINPAC reacted strongly and insisted on maintaining the existing framework by arguing that “military flexibility and readiness must be preserved.” A diplomatic cable written in August 1972 pointed to a compromise reached between the U.S. Embassy and the military, under which a minister-counselor would be appointed as the “acting representative” next to the deputy commander. The paper stressed that the “abnormal composition” of the Joint Committee, in which a senior military official represents the U.S. government in lieu of a civilian, has remained the same for decades. Five of the six U.S. members of the committee are military officers, while not a single SDF official is on the Japanese delegation.

The daily claimed in an accompanying piece that friction has long existed between the State Department and military authorities over the operation of the U.S. military in Japan, saying that U.S. diplomats have sometimes run into difficulty managing relations with Japan since the U.S. military's foremost priority has been to operate its forces with as few restrictions as possible.