



Afternoon Alert - Friday, January 5, 2018

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## HEADLINES

### Noon news

NHK, NTV, and TV Asahi led with reports that an earthquake early warning alarm went off at about 11 a.m. today, saying that the Japan Meteorological Agency's system apparently judged two separate earthquakes that occurred almost at the same time in Ibaraki and Ishikawa prefectures as one big earthquake. Fuji TV gave top play to a report that North Korea has accepted South Korea's offer to hold high-level talks at Panmunjom. TBS gave top play to a report that the cabinet officially decided this morning to present professional *shogi* player Yoshiharu Habu and professional *go* player Yuta Iyama with the People's Honor Award.

## INTERNATIONAL

### USG imposes additional sanctions on five Iran-based entities

NHK reported this morning that the Treasury Department announced on Thursday that it imposed sanctions on an additional five Iran-based entities for their involvement in the development of ballistic missiles. The network said the additional sanctions are aimed at demonstrating at home and abroad the U.S.'s tough stance toward the Iranian government and at pushing back against crackdowns on anti-government demonstrations in Iran. According to the network, the Treasury Department announced on Thursday that it sanctioned five Iran-based entities and that the sanctions included freezing their assets within the U.S. The Treasury Department said in a statement: "The Iranian regime prioritizes its ballistic missile program over the economic well-being of the Iranian people....The United States will continue to decisively counter the Iranian regime's malign activity."

### North Korea and South Korea to hold high-level talks on Jan. 9

NHK reported this morning that the South Korean government announced that North Korea has accepted Seoul's offer to hold high-level talks on Jan. 9, saying that these will be the first such talks in about two years. The network said the two sides are expected to exchange views on North

Korea's possible participation in the PyeongChang Olympics and the improvement of North-South relations. The planned meeting will be held at the truce village of Panmunjom. All commercial networks carried similar reports.

## **GOJ welcomes planned North-South talks, but wary of ROK's moves after Olympics**

Fuji TV reported at noon that although the GOJ had anticipated the postponement of joint military drills between the U.S. and South Korea, the GOJ is wary of South Korea's moves after the Winter Olympics are over. The network said although some within the GOJ welcome the planned North-South talks, one official pointed out that North Korea is not intending to hold serious dialogue and stressed that Japan will continue to apply maximum pressure on the North together with the U.S. and South Korea. The network also quoted a senior GOJ official as saying that "North Korea is just buying time" and "hoping to confuse the U.S., Japan, and South Korea." Another GOJ official also reportedly said that "South Korea is being pulled along at North Korea's pace," expressing concern that South Korea will adopt a flexible attitude toward the North depending on North Korea's moves after the PyeongChang Olympics and disrupt the trilateral cooperation of the U.S., Japan, and South Korea.

- [Japan will not change policy due to planned inter-Korean talks](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Komeito chief stresses need for dialogue with North Korea](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Japan, U.S. must seize chance of Kim's offer of talks with South](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Caution urged after N. Korea suggests taking part in Pyeongchang Olympics](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Senior Japan, ROK diplomats hold teleconference on North-South dialogue](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Cartoon: A continuing concern](#) (Asahi)
- [Abe to visit Baltics, Southeastern Europe from next week](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan offering financial aid to Asian medical students](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [With fast-track permanent residency rule, Japan looks to shed its closed image](#) (The Japan Times)

### **ECONOMY**

- [Samsung to supply hardware for Verizon's 5G service](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Mitsubishi Regional Jet facing growing headwind](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan's carmakers wrong-footed by America's love for big autos](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Mitsubishi Regional Jet stays on course for 2020 debut](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [M&As by Japanese firms hit record high in 2017](#) (Jiji Press)
- [Japan's Sompo Holdings to acquire U.S. surety insurers](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Sumitomo to team up with Michelin in N. American tire biz](#) (Jiji Press)

### **POLITICS**

- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 4, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of PM Abe's New Year's news conference, Jan. 4](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Abe urges LDP to intensify efforts to alter "occupation" Constitution](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Abe may announce candidacy in LDP presidential race after regular Diet session](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Cartoon: Disparity](#) (Akahata)
- [Cartoon: Defense budget](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)

#### **OPINION POLLS**

- [Highlights of the December 2017 Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll](#) (Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll Bulletin)
- [86% say Japanese economy will expand, Sankei poll of 121 companies](#) (Sankei)
- [75% say TPP 11 will be "a plus for Japanese economy," Sankei poll of 121 companies](#) (Sankei)

#### **SOCIETY**

- [Gov't to form panel on policies to encourage young people to move to the regions](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan sees paternity leave rate among civil servants rise](#) (Jiji Press)

#### **SECURITY**

- [Defense Ministry to establish subsidy for hiring SDF reserve personnel](#) (Nikkei)
- [Former Okinawa Gov. Nakaima criticizes Gov. Onaga](#) (SAPIO)

#### **OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS**

- [U.S. nuclear-powered submarine makes port call at White Beach in Okinawa](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)