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Afternoon Alert - Thursday, January 11, 2018

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#### HEADLINES

##### Noon news

All networks led with reports on heavy snowfall in regions along the Sea of Japan coast

#### INTERNATIONAL

##### Vice President Pence to visit Japan next month

NHK reported this morning on the White House announcement on Wednesday that Vice President Pence will lead the U.S. delegation to the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang and attend the opening ceremony on Feb. 9. The network said the Vice President will also visit Japan. According to the network, the White House released a statement saying: "The Vice President is traveling to the Olympic Games in South Korea to reinforce the strong U.S. presence on the Korean Peninsula and send a clear message of American resolve to the North Korean regime....The Vice President will reaffirm to the leaders of Japan and South Korea the United States' unwavering commitment to our allies...." The network speculated that the Vice President's visit is aimed at keeping North Korea in check during the Winter Olympics and reaffirming trilateral unity between the U.S., Japan, and South Korea.

Fuji TV said that according to sources, Vice President Pence is expected to visit Japan on Feb. 6 and meet with PM Abe on Feb. 7. The network added that arrangement is also underway for the Vice President to meet with Deputy PM Aso.

NHK reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told the press this morning: "I welcome the visit. It will be a very good opportunity to demonstrate at home and abroad the solid U.S.-Japan alliance. It would be a perfect opportunity to exchange views on North Korea and coordinate policies."

### **Foreign submarine spotted near Senkaku Islands**

NHK reported this afternoon that the MSDF has confirmed that a foreign submarine has been operating in the contiguous waters near Miyako Island and the Senkaku Islands since yesterday. The MOD reportedly believes it is Chinese. The network said a Chinese frigate was also spotted near one of the Senkaku Islands, adding that the MOD is collecting information and patrolling the area.

- [Japan protests S. Korea's demand for apology on "comfort women"](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Gov't frets over response to ROK demand for more steps on comfort women issue](#) (Mainichi)
- [Renewed 'comfort women' debate a blow to Tokyo-Seoul ties](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Officials of 30 companies to accompany PM Abe on European tour](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan to weigh Belt and Road projects case by case, Abe says](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Moon administration intends to undermine comfort women accord](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Seeking a strategy to overcome N. Korea crisis through dialogue](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Tokyo, Seoul must focus on goals of comfort women pact](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Cartoon: Winter Olympics](#) (Asahi)
- [PRC-DPRK joint ventures hiring North Koreans converting to Chinese firms to evade sanctions](#) (Yomiuri)
- [China calls time on North Korean businesses](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

<b>ECONOMY</b>
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- [Toyota, Mazda to build new \\$1.6 bil. plant in Alabama](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan, U.K. governments to support British nuclear project](#) (Asahi)

- [Japan's journey to budget surplus gets 2 years longer](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan banks to loan \\$3bn to Abu Dhabi National Oil](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [WWF urges Japan to close domestic ivory market by 2020](#) (Kyodo News)
- [80% of Japanese and 50% of South Koreans hopeful about TPP, poll of Japanese, Chinese, and South Korean company executives](#) (Nikkei)

## POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Jan. 10, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Junichiro Koizumi-led group pitches bill calling for 'immediate halt' to Japan's reliance on nuclear power](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Main points of proposed "zero nuclear power" bill](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

## SOCIETY

### Shogi and go players to receive People's Honor Award

NHK's "Close-up Gendai +" reported on professional shogi player Yoshiharu Habu, the first-ever holder of the seven major *shogi* titles, and professional *go* player Yuta Iyama, who has won seven major *go* titles twice. The government recently decided to present both of them with the People's Honor Award. In an interview with the program, they talked about their game strategies and goals.

- [Cybozu CEO leads suit against gov't for spouses' right to use different surnames](#) (Nikkei, Evening edition)
- [Supporters offer after-school care for children in poverty](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Coming of age: 1 in 8 new adults in Tokyo are not Japanese, ward figures show](#) (The Japan Times)

## SECURITY

### Defense Minister Onodera visits Aegis Ashore facility in Hawaii

NHK and Fuji TV reported at noon that on Wednesday Defense Minister Onodera visited on Kauai Island in Hawaii a test facility for the Aegis Ashore system, which the GOJ has decided to introduce in the future. NHK said the defense chief was briefed by Lt. Gen. Greaves, the Pentagon Missile Defense Agency director, adding that he examined the computer system that transmits orders to interceptor missiles and the latest SPY-6 radar currently under development. The network quoted Onodera as telling reporters afterwards that while the GOJ is currently thinking of using the system

for ballistic missile defense, it is hoping "to develop the system as a basic infrastructure that can serve various missile defense purposes," including defense against cruise missiles.

### **Surveillance cameras installed at Futenma school to monitor U.S. military flights**

NHK reported on Wednesday night that the central government has installed four cameras on the playground of the elementary school near MCAS Futenma where a window fell from a CH-53E helicopter last month to check whether the U.S. military is upholding its pledge to avoid flying aircraft over educational institutions in the vicinity of the Marine installation "to the fullest extent possible." The broadcaster added that the playground remains closed to pupils for safety reasons.

- [Okinawa vice governor protests U.S. military choppers' unscheduled landings](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gov't, ruling camp fear chopper accidents' impact on mayoral race in Okinawa](#) (Jiji Press)
- [Tokyo to create counterterrorism unit for the 2020 Olympics](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Defense official to visit Miyakojima to discuss facilities for GSDF security, missile units](#) (Sankei)

**OKINAWA LOCAL  
PRESS**

- [Okinawa reacts to Adm. Harris's remarks on helicopter mishaps](#) (Okinawa Times, Ryukyu Shimpo)
- [Survey of Okinawa mayors on helicopter mishaps](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)