

---

 **JAPAN MEDIA  
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Thursday, February 1, 2018

The following information reflects the reporting of the cited news media and does not reflect the opinions of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Japan Media Highlights is intended for USG use only and should not be forwarded. Visit the website [here](#). For more information, contact [TokyoMATT@state.gov](mailto:TokyoMATT@state.gov).

#### HEADLINES

##### Noon news

Most broadcasters led with reports on a fire that broke out at a facility for welfare recipients in Sapporo on Wednesday evening, killing 11 people. NTV gave top play to a report on a traffic accident on the Metropolitan Expressway this morning.

#### INTERNATIONAL

##### Japan, EU to provide financial assistance to Palestine

NHK reported this morning that during an extraordinary session of the international donor group for Palestine that was held in Brussels on Wednesday following the USG's announcement that it will partially freeze its assistance to Palestinian refugees, Japan and the EU announced that they will each provide several billion yen worth of additional financial assistance to Palestine. According to the network, in addition to the EU's announcement of about 5.7 billion yen in financial assistance to support Palestinian companies and stable power supply, Japan announced that it will provide about 4 billion yen worth of financial assistance to Palestine upon Diet approval. According to sources, the U.S. representatives at the conference did not raise any objections.

- [Editorial: Japan, China should build mutual trust](#) (Nikkei)
- [U.N. chief appoints Japanese to lead disaster reduction office](#) (Kyodo News)
- [S. Korean man found hanged at Japanese consulate in Busan](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Pro-N. Korea body raided over illegal sales of English study tools](#) (Kyodo News)

- [Cartoon: Kono and Wang talks](#) (Asahi)

## ECONOMY

- [Japan calls on U.S. to return TPP: Abe](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gov't to test safety of burying radioactive soil in spring](#) (Kyodo News)

## SECURITY

### **GSDF camps to accommodate DPRK refugees in contingency**

NTV reported at noon that the GOJ is considering setting up refugee camps at GSDF facilities in the event of an influx of refugees to Japan following an armed conflict in North Korea. The network said the Omura Immigration Control Center in Nagasaki would not be able to accommodate several thousand North Korean refugees, so the GOJ is considering setting up camps at GSDF facilities along the coast of the Sea of Japan, quoting a senior GOJ official as saying: "Private facilities cannot accommodate them because there could be agents in their midst." In addition, the network said the GOJ thinks it would be possible to evacuate about 60,000 Japanese nationals from South Korea to Tsushima, Nagasaki, within a few days using SDF transport vessels even if South Korean airports were shut down in a contingency.

### **Coincheck: Where did 58 billion yen worth of cryptocurrency go?**

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on an incident in which NEM cryptocurrency traded by the Japanese virtual currency exchange Coincheck was stolen by hackers. According to the program, approximately 58 billion yen worth of virtual currency owned by about 260,000 account holders suddenly disappeared last week. Coincheck, which was established in 2012 and is one of the major virtual currency exchanges in Japan, said it will reimburse its customers in Japanese yen. Experts pointed out the vulnerability of Coincheck's website, adding that the firm has not been able to develop technology to prevent unauthorized access.

### **U.S. interceptor missile test fails**

NHK and NTV reported at noon that several U.S. media outlets have reported that a new interceptor missile failed to hit a target in a test conducted off Hawaii on Wednesday. NHK said the U.S. and Japan are currently developing the SM3 Block IIA interceptor missile jointly in order to be able to respond to North Korea's ballistic missile attacks. The network said the test was carried out by staff at a testing facility for the Aegis Ashore system, adding that the Department of Defense is now conducting a detailed analysis of the failure. NHK said although the missile successfully shot down a target in the first interceptor missile test held last February, it failed in its second test in June. If it is confirmed that the interceptor missile failed to hit the target this time, it will be the missile's second failure. The network added that the USG decided last month to sell four of these missiles to Japan

for about 14.5 billion yen.

- [Wanted: A U.S. nuclear strategy tailored to Asia](#) (The Japan Times)

#### OPINION POLLS

- [47% say Art. 9 para. 2 should be “retained” while 15% say it should be “deleted.”](#)  
[Nikkei poll](#) (Nikkei)

#### POLITICS

- [Prime minister’s schedule on Jan. 31, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of interpellations at Lower House Budget Committee, Jan. 30](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Editorial: PM Abe’s promise for ‘thoroughness’ and ‘humility’ proves empty](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Labor union group leaning toward supporting CDPJ](#) (Mainichi)
- [Science budget for FY2018 increases but fails to meet target](#) (Mainichi)
- [New proposal weakens smoking limits](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Draft bill to ban indoor smoking rendered meaningless](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Can new bill help prevent health damage from passive smoking?](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: Constitutional revision](#) (Asahi)

#### SCIENCE

- [Government to analyze satellite images with artificial intelligence for disaster reduction](#) (The Japan Times)

#### EDUCATION

- [Girls Unlimited Program \(8\): Excited to imagine myself one year from now](#) (Asahi)
- [Editorial: Guarantee quality, time in full-scale primary school English teaching](#) (The Japan News)

#### SOCIETY

- [Shop exec nabbed for attempting to smuggle ivory to China](#) (The Mainichi)
- 

