



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, February 13, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report on the heavy snowfall in the Hokuriku region. All commercial networks gave top play to reports on the PyeongChang Olympics.

INTERNATIONAL

Abe comments on conversations with ROK, DPRK officials in PyeongChang

Asahi's website took up remarks made at the Diet this morning by Prime Minister Abe, who disclosed what was discussed during his conversations with top South Korean and North Korean officials on the sidelines of the PyeongChang Olympics opening ceremony last week. Abe reportedly urged ROK President Moon to honor the 2015 bilateral comfort women accord by saying: "I was heavily criticized at home for concluding the pact, but a future-oriented relationship cannot be built unless political leaders make decisions even at the risk of being criticized to some extent."

With regard to his brief conversation with Kim Yong Nam, President of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of North Korea, Abe explained that he mentioned such issues as North Korea's abductions and nuclear and missile development. The premier reportedly called for a settlement of the abduction issue by repatriating all Japanese victims.

FM Kono says Japan will not agree to unconditional dialogue

Jiji Press reported that Foreign Minister Kono commented this morning on Vice President Pence's comment in an interview with a U.S. newspaper that the U.S. "will talk" if North Korea wants to. He was quoted as telling reporters: "Japan, the United States, and South Korea are working together extremely closely with the understanding that we must continue to maximize pressure. Our policies remain unchanged." Jiji interpreted his remark to mean that Japan will not agree to unconditional

dialogue.

- [Japan stands firm on pressure policy amid reports of U.S. willingness to talk to North Korea](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gist of Japan-ROK summit on Feb. 9](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Amid thaw in ties, Seoul must stay firm on a nuke-free North](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Abe says he asked N. Korea ceremonial leader to return all abductees](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan wary of Pyongyang's move to divide allied nations](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan and South Korea still stuck on 'comfort women' deal](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Make Abe-Moon talks serve as a step forward to build future-oriented ties](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan, S. Korea politicians agree to seek denuclearized N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Abe-Moon meet chance for fresh start to stabilize bilateral ties](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: No improvement possible in Korea relations without denuclearization](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Abe, Moon should use Pyeongchang Games to promote calm dialogue](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: N. Korea's exploitation of Olympics for political propaganda unacceptable / IOC's handling undermines fairness](#) (The Japan News)
- [Komeito leader does not support U.S. NPR](#) (Nikkei)
- [Special advisor to PM to tour Germany, France, UAE, Singapore to promote Japan's food export](#) (Nikkei)
- [Thai junta 2nd-in-command claims Yingluck, Thaksin in Japan](#) (Kyodo News)

Former Thai leader visits Japan

NHK reported this afternoon on the finding that Yingluck Shinawatra, the former Thai Prime Minister, visited Japan with her older brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, according to Thai Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan. Yingluck fled Thailand and was reportedly staying in London after she was sentenced to five years in prison for negligence in performing her official duties. According to the network, the deputy prime minister told reporters about the visit after a photo was posted on the Internet that appeared to show Yingluck in Beijing. Although the deputy prime reportedly said Yingluck and her brother are in Japan, some media outlets in Thailand have reported that they have already left Japan. The network said the purpose of their visit to Japan is unknown.

ECONOMY

- [Gov't to reappoint BOJ chief Kuroda for another term: sources](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan expressway company wins road maintenance contracts in U.S.](#) (Mainichi)
- [Govt plans yen loans for Philippine railway](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan regulator to warn unregistered cryptocurrency operator](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Police question Japanese man over Coincheck cryptocurrency theft](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Agriculture ministry supports small and midsize food exporters as Japan enjoys global](#)

[washoku boom](#) (The Japan Times)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 9, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 10, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 11, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 12, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Aso becomes longest-serving finance minister in postwar Japan](#) (Kyodo News)

OPINION POLLS

- [83% say inter-Korea move toward reconciliation will not resolve Pyongyang's nuclear program, Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Support for use of dual surnames in Japan rises to over 40% in government survey](#) (The Japan Times)

SECURITY

- [Japan shifts gears on fighters with China, N. Korea in mind](#) (The Japan News)
- [U.S. fails to reimburse Japan's excess advance FMS payments promptly](#) (Mainichi)

AMBASSADOR

- ["It's beautiful": U.S. Ambassador Hagerty visits Shirakawago with family](#) (Mainichi, Regional edition)
- [U.S. Ambassador Hagerty tours sake brewery in Takayama, Gifu Prefecture](#) (Local TV networks)
- [U.S. Ambassador Hagerty visits Shirakawa Village, says snow-covered thatched-roof houses "spectacular"](#) (Chunichi Shimbun, Online)
- [U.S. Ambassador Hagerty visits Gifu Prefecture and takes walk through Shirakawa-go, enjoying its Gassho-zukuri style houses](#) (Gifu Shimbun, Online)
- [Ambassador Hagerty vows to promote Japan-U.S. grassroots exchanges](#) (Others, Gifu Shimbun)
- ["Not allow North Korea to hijack Olympics:" U.S. envoy to Japan](#) (Hokkoku Shimbun)
- [Ambassador Hagerty smitten with Kanazawa's culture](#) (Hokkoku Shimbun)

SOCIETY

- [Kind act sprouts into grass-roots movement to feed kids](#) (The Japan Times)
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