



JAPAN MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Afternoon Alert - Thursday, March 15, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

All networks led with reports that the ruling and opposition parties agreed to hold intensive deliberations at the Upper House next Monday over the Moritomo Gakuen scandal.

INTERNATIONAL

Abe needs to align approach toward DPRK with President Trump

TV Asahi's nightly news program "Hodo Station" took up President Trump's decision to replace Secretary Tillerson. Next the program turned to the DPRK, with former Kyodo News managing editor Goto claiming that GOJ officials are concerned that in meeting with strongman Kim Jong Un, the U.S. leader may cut a deal that is not beneficial to Japan. He asserted that there are gaps between the policy priorities of Tokyo and Washington regarding Pyongyang, claiming that although the issues of the abductions, nuclear development, and ballistic missiles are equally important from Japan's standpoint, the United States appears to be placing priority on preventing North Korea's nuclear proliferation and ICBM programs. According to Goto, Abe administration officials are concerned that the President might be tempted to condone North Korea's medium range ballistic missiles that are capable of reaching Japan in exchange for a pledge to terminate its ICBM program. The regular commentator noted that when Prime Minister Abe meets with the U.S. leader in early April, he must coordinate closely with the President to ensure that he has Japan's position in mind when he talks with the DPRK leader.

- [Editorial: Departure of int'l cooperation advocate raises concerns about U.S.](#)

[administration](#) (Nikkei)

- [Editorial: Restore confidence in U.S. diplomacy](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Kim Jong Un](#) (Asahi)

ECONOMY

Aso not to attend G20 due to Moritomo Gakuen scandal

NHK reported that Finance Minister Aso will forgo attending the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting slated for March 19 to 20 in Buenos Aires in order to deal with the issue of his ministry's falsification of documents on the controversial sale of state-owned land to private school operator Moritomo Gakuen. The network said Aso made the decision after it was decided that Upper House intensive deliberations on the issue will be held on March 19. According to the network, Aso is making arrangements to send State Minister of Finance Kihara to the G20 meeting on his behalf.

- [Editorial: New US steel tariffs an arrogant test of commitment to 'America First'](#) (The Mainichi)
- [G-20 finance chiefs to discuss fair trade, cryptocurrencies](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Nuclear reactor in central Japan back online, joins 2 units nearby](#) (Kyodo News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on March 14, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of interpellations at Upper House Budget Committee, March 14](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Parties preparing for testimony of key man in document scandal](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Consent to summon Sagawa signifies failure of ruling parties' aggressive Diet tactics](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Cartoon: Moritomo scandal](#) (Akahata)
- [LDP presents options for revision of pacifist clause of Constitution](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Nukaga leaves, reviving "Takeshita faction"](#) (Nikkei)
- [DM Onodera to play key role in Kishida's candidacy for LDP presidential election](#) (Shukan Bunshun)
- [Conservative group collects 10 million signatures supporting constitutional revision](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

SOCIETY

- [Vietnamese trainee made to engage in decontamination work in Fukushima](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Turkish Kurd seeking refugee status in Japan losing hope amid what critics call a flawed system](#) (The Japan Times)

OPINION POLLS

- [Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll on the Great East Japan Earthquake](#) (Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll Bulletin)

SECURITY

- [North Korea's cybertroops span the globe in quest for cash](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Suits to block Henoko base project definitively shown to be quixotic](#) (The Japan News)

**OKINAWA
LOCAL PRESS**

- [U.S. not a disinterested party on basing issue: Gov. Onaga](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)
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