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Afternoon Alert - Thursday, April 5, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that Defense Minister Onodera said his ministry will investigate the MOD's failure to inform then-Defense Minister Inada when the daily activity logs of a GSDF unit in Iraq were found last year. NTV, TBS, and TV Asahi gave top play to reports that the five CV-22 Ospreys that were unloaded from a ship in Yokohama on Wednesday would soon arrive at Yokota AB. Fuji TV led with a report that Los Angeles Angels' Shohei Ohtani hit a two-run homer on Thursday after hitting his first career home run on Wednesday.

INTERNATIONAL

- [Japan may face stronger pressure to open market at Abe-Trump summit](#) (Yomiuri)
- [U.S. begins studying quid pro quo for concrete denuclearization steps by North Korea](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea would be a crisis for Japan](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Presidents Trump and Xi](#) (Asahi)
- [Cartoon: Diplomacy in Northeast Asia](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Abe, Abadi to attend int'l confab on security in Iraq](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan protests to U.S., Russia over disputed island power plant plan](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

- [Commentary: U.S., China trade sanctions part of "deal-making" process](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan to spell out rules for cryptocurrency payments](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Coincheck accepts Monex takeover offer](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

POLITICS

Government document management called into question

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on the Ministry of Finance's doctoring of documents concerning Moritomo Gakuen, saying that although former tax agency chief Sagawa was summoned to the Diet

on March 27, the problem still has not been resolved. The program analyzed the 904 remarks made by Sagawa at the Diet last year . An NHK journalist said that the Moritomo documents were altered in more than 300 places, most of which were related to the negotiations on the sale of state-owned land. He said that Sagawa's remarks were generally in line with the original documents, adding that the only sections where Sagawa's remarks differed from the original documents were those connected to certain politicians. The journalist conjectured that the document tampering was aimed at fending off the opposition's questions on the possibility of political involvement in the controversial land sale. The program also reported on an employee of the Kinki Finance Bureau who committed suicide in March, saying that although altering government documents that have already been cleared is unprecedented, it appears that the ministry was pushing an employee of a local bureau to make the changes.

- [Prime minister's schedule on April 4, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Party of Hope decides to hold talks with DP on forming new party](#) (Asahi)
- [Komeito chief says constitutional revision will be difficult with low cabinet support rating](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Senior LDP official talks about Moritomo scandal, preventing similar incidents](#) (Mainichi)
- [Opinion poll analysis \(Part 2\): Cabinet nonsupport due to Abe's character not policies](#) (Nikkei)
- [Commentary: Grilling LDP over Moritomo scandal fails to raise opposition parties' support](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Cartoon: Moritomo scandal](#) (Akahata)

OPINION POLLS

- [Trend in average cabinet support rate, Saitama University Social Survey Research Center](#) (Saitama University Social Survey Research Center)

SCIENCE

[Japanese ships leave for whale hunt off northeastern coast](#) (Kyodo News)

SECURITY

Five CV-22 Ospreys arrive in Yokota

NHK reported at noon that five CV-22 Ospreys arrived at Yokota Air Base in Tokyo at about 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, saying that they are expected to be officially deployed at the base around this summer after participating in drills in the vicinity. The network said a total of ten Ospreys will be deployed and about 450 personnel will be transferred to Yokota over the course of the next few years, adding that this is the first time for the aircraft to be deployed at a U.S. base in Japan outside Okinawa. The network reported that the GSDF is also planning to introduce Ospreys, saying that the MOD is making arrangements to temporarily deploy five of them at Kisarazu Air Field in Chiba. The network said while there are voices of concern over safety, Ospreys operated by both the U.S. and Japan will be flying over the Tokyo metropolitan area in the future.

Broadcasters report Ospreys' arrival caught GOJ by surprise

NHK's "News Watch Nine," Asahi-TV's "Hodo Station," and TBS's "News 23" reported on the arrival in Yokohama of five CV-22 Ospreys earlier in the day, suggesting that this came as a surprise to the Japanese side because the U.S. military had previously announced that they would be deployed in 2020. On "Hodo Station" former Kyodo News managing editor Goto took issue with the 11th-hour notification by the U.S. side. The journalist also highlighted a view offered by an unnamed former defense minister, who attributed the last-minute announcement by the Defense Ministry to poor coordination within the ministry. Explaining that Japan's communications with the U.S. military have primarily been conducted lately by SDF uniformed officials following the disbandment of the Bureau of Operational Policy staffed by civilians a few years ago, the ex-defense chief reportedly noted that MOD civilians have sometimes been left out of the loop regarding U.S. military operations. Goto speculated that the GOJ's moves to empower uniformed officials in the past decade or so may have come at the expense of civilian control of the military. On "News 23," a Japanese security analyst said since the CV-22s are primarily used for special operations, their training in Japan will probably be more intense than that of the MV-22s and thus could be more dangerous.

- [CCS Suga hails Osprey deployment to Yokota](#) (Nikkei)
- [MOD at a loss with little information from U.S. military on Osprey deployment to Yokota](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [U.S. notified Japan of Osprey deployment on March 16](#) (Akahata)
- [Gov't draws up guidelines to assess seriousness of cyberattacks](#) (Nikkei)
- [New defense era / Reinforcing remote islands against China](#) (The Japan News)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

- [Ruling bloc's group in prefectural assembly to ask Okinawa governor to hold referendum](#) (Okinawa Times)
 - [Donations to Henoko Fund stand at 654 million yen as of end of March](#) (Okinawa Times)
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