



Afternoon Alert - Friday, April 6, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

All networks led with reports that yesterday the ASDF found the daily logs for three days of its activities in Iraq between 2003 to 2009.

INTERNATIONAL

FM Kono comments on possible resumption of Six-Party Talks

NHK reported on its website that Foreign Minister Kono expressed the view that the possibility of resuming of the Six-Party Talks should be carefully examined after assessing the outcomes of the inter-Korean and the U.S.-DPRK summits. Kono made the comment in response to multiple media reports that North Korea indicated its intention to return to the Six-Party Talks during the China-DPRK summit. Kono was quoted as telling reporters: "We will closely monitor the North-South summit and the U.S.-DPRK summit and take the best possible course together with the international community." He went on to say: "North Korea has not made any official announcement as of now. We must first confirm its clear commitment to denuclearization on such occasions as the North-South and U.S.-DPRK summits. That will be the starting point."

MOFA to split up its division in charge of Korean Peninsula affairs

NHK reported on its website that Foreign Minister Kono expressed the intention to split his ministry's Northeast Asia Division into two divisions, one for North Korea and the other for South Korea, in response to the recent increased activity related to North Korea. According to the network, MOFA's Northeast Asia Division, which is in charge of the Korean Peninsula, has been collecting information on the recent activity related to North Korea as it begins to reach out to South Korea and China. Kono reportedly said it has become difficult for one division to handle both North and South Korea given the increased workload related to North Korea and expressed the intention to split the division into two. According to the network, the ministry is planning to establish a First Northeast Asia

Division to be in charge of South Korea and Japan-ROK cooperation and a Second Northeast Asia Division to be in charge of North Korea and Japan-DPRK relations. The network said the ministry is planning to officially launch the new divisions as early as this summer.

[Iraqi prime minister expresses hope for Japan's role in Iraq's reconstruction](#)

NHK reported this morning on its exclusive interview with visiting Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi, during which he expressed hope for Japan's role in rebuilding the infrastructure of Iraq following its devastation by ISIL. The network said the Iraqi government claimed victory last year after regaining control of most of the areas that were dominated by ISIL. The Iraqi PM reportedly said that the infrastructure was destroyed by "Daesh" and that more than five million citizens were forced out of their own homes. He was also quoted as saying: "Restoring everything is a huge challenge for us. We need the support of the international community, including Japan." On Prime Minister Abe's announcement at an international conference held on Thursday that Japan is planning to take the lead in building a framework in which citizens can receive vocational training if they hand over their weapons, Al-Abadi reportedly welcomed the idea by saying that it will encourage the stabilization of Iraq.

- [Kim Jong Un offers to return to six-party talks](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan unveils initiative to boost security in Iraq amid spread of arms](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Cartoon: Trade war](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan to set up new N. Korea policy division](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Swiss, Bhutanese leaders to visit Japan next week](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

- [China seeks to divide US and allies with WTO dispute](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Both U.S., China should work to eliminate unilateralism in trade](#) (The Japan News)
- [Tokyo willing to host TPP negotiators' meeting in June or July](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Indian state to build 1st Japan-aided seawater desalination plant](#) (Kyodo News)
- [JVC Kenwood's digital radio system adopted by Embassy Tokyo](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on April 5, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [LDP, Komeito in tug-of-war over revision of referendum law](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Tamaki: Bureaucrats need to have pride again](#) (Mainichi)
- [Yomiuri's criticism of Abe administration draws attention to chief editor's political motives](#) (Sentaku)
- [Editorial: Does Defense Ministry truly grasp importance of GSDF activity logs?](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: Abe](#) (Akahata)
- [Gov't approves labor reform bill despite opposition criticism](#) (Kyodo News)

- [Opposition may field Education Ministry's Kake whistleblower as Upper House candidate](#) (Sentaku)

SOCIETY

Sensational MLB debut of Shohei Ohtani

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on Shohei Ohtani of the Los Angeles Angels, who made a phenomenal MLB debut by hitting a home run in two consecutive games. The program said he is the first MLB player in 98 years to be a starting member both as a pitcher and a batter during the first ten games of the season. The program said that although Ohtani performed poorly during spring training, he has managed to adapt to the MLB by changing his batting style. A commentator said that Ohtani should be able to win double-digit games as a pitcher and hit double-digit homers if he does not get injured this year, adding that he will become a baseball legend if he achieves this.

SECURITY

- [Ospreys' arrival in Yokota meant as pressure on North Korea ahead of U.S.-DPRK summit](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan launches 2nd defense satellite](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Okinawa vice governor asks central gov't to address Kadena noise issue](#) (Mainichi)
- [MOD to build air defense radar on Iwo Jima](#) (Mainichi)
- [New Defense Era / Japan needs stronger defense against cyber, space threats](#) (The Japan News)
- [GSDF central command inaugurated](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

- [Okinawa governor hospitalized for check-up](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)
 - [Evacuations due to U.S. military helos deprive Okinawa school's pupils of an education](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)
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