



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, April 11, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

All networks gave top play to reports on a major landslide that occurred in Nakatsu, Oita, early this morning, saying that a search for six missing people is still underway.

INTERNATIONAL

Secretary Ross comments on upcoming U.S.-Japan summit

NHK reported on its website that during a reception at the residence of the Japanese Ambassador to the U.S. held in conjunction with the annual cherry blossom festival in Washington D.C., Secretary of Commerce Ross expressed the view that the U.S.-Japan relationship will be strengthened at the upcoming summit in Florida. The network said that Japanese Ambassador Sugiyama, members of the Trump administration, and the Cherry Blossom Princesses attended the reception held on Tuesday. Secretary Ross reportedly said in his speech that "one of the goals of the Trump administration is to further strengthen the U.S.-Japan relationship and establish a stable economic system in the Asia-Pacific region." He also reportedly said: "The United States will continue to strengthen the relationship with Japan. This will be demonstrated when Prime Minister Abe visits the estate of President Trump soon." According to the network, the Secretary also joked that he hopes that the two leaders will disclose their golf scores this time. The network added that Japanese sake and local specialties of Fukushima were served at the reception.

Kono, Kang agree to put maximum pressure on DPRK

NHK reported at noon that Foreign Minister Kono met with his South Korean counterpart Kang this morning in Seoul. The network quoted Kang as saying at the beginning of the meeting: "While preparations are underway for inter-Korean and U.S.-DPRK summits, which will be major turning points in achieving North Korea's denuclearization, we hope to work together toward the common

goal of peacefully resolving the North Korean nuclear issue." In response, Kono reportedly said: "I hope that Japan and South Korea will work together closely in order to realize North Korea's denuclearization and bring peace, stability, and prosperity to Northeast Asia." Jiji carried a similar story, saying that the two ministers agreed to maintain maximum pressure on the North to have it relinquish its nuclear and missile programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner. Jiji added that Kono is expected to meet with South Korean President Moon later today.

- [Japan asks S. Korea to raise abduction issue at North-South summit](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Interview with CCS Suga on U.S.-DRPK summit, Japan's response](#) (Chuokoron)
- [With key posts in Trump administration left empty, prior coordination for Japan-U.S. summit stalls](#) (Nikkei)
- [PM Abe, IAEA chief agree on need for inspections to verify North Korea's denuclearization](#) (Sankei)
- [Japan lawmaker eyes trip to N. Korea in May](#) (Kyodo News)

China expands influence in Africa

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported that China is increasingly expanding its influence in Africa as part of President Xi's "One Belt One Road" initiative to create a massive economic zone connecting China with Europe and Africa. Noting that China is hoping to become a superpower and surpass the U.S., the program said it has built close relations with 54 African nations to create a new world order. China also began operating its first overseas military base in Djibouti last August, and has built railways in Kenya and Ethiopia to establish distribution channels. The program showed China's security monitoring systems being used in 12 African nations, and said many African people are learning Chinese. According to the program, some African nations are cutting their ties with Taiwan and establishing diplomatic relations with China.

AMBASSADOR

- [U.S. Ambassador meets families of Japanese abducted by North Korea](#) (Asahi)
- [U.S. amb. says abductee issue to be high priority](#) (NHK)
- [U.S. envoy to convey wishes of abductees' kin to Trump ahead of summit](#) (Kyodo News)
- [U.S. Ambassador Hagerty meets abductees' families](#) (Sankei)

ECONOMY

- [Small cryptocurrency exchanges find the going hard under greater government oversight](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Japan FY 2017 cryptocurrency transactions soar 20-fold to 69 tril. yen](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Gov't to help companies boost orders for LNG facilities](#) (Nikkei)
- [Infographic: Major plans to build coal-fired power plants](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Osaka Gas acquires natural gas-fired power plant in Michigan](#) (Nikkei)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on April 10, 2018](#) (Nikkei)

- [Local gov't document states vet school project was "PM matter"](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Abe aide: Kake's plan is a matter related to the prime minister](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Scandals in and out of school pose triple threat to Japan's Abe](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Ozawa says Liberal Party not joining new party planned by DP, Party of Hope](#) (Yomiuri)
- [DP Upper House member bolts party over plan to form new party with Party of Hope](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Interview: JCP leader warns the poison of Abe's "iron-fist rule" is spreading](#) (Mainichi)

OPINION POLLS

- [Survey of researchers reveals Japan's declining technological innovation capability](#) (Nikkei)

SOCIETY

- [Gov't eyes asking Internet providers to block websites carrying pirated content](#) (Asahi)

SECURITY

- [U.S. Marine gets 4 yrs for fatal drunk driving crash in Okinawa](#) (Kyodo News)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

DM Onodera says height limit for FRF airspace does not apply to Okinawa college

Okinawa Times front-paged a report saying that Defense Minister Onodera commented in Diet sessions on Tuesday on the recent finding that the height of some of the buildings at the National Institute of Technology, Okinawa College, exceeds the limit set by the Department of Defense for ensuring the safety of the airspace around the Futenma Replacement Facility at Henoko. The school is located near the FRF site. In response to questions from opposition lawmakers, Onodera stated that as a result of coordination with the U.S. side, the GOJ has confirmed that the college is not subject to the limit. The defense minister added that it is necessary to give sufficient consideration to flight safety around the base. Ryukyu Shimpo ran a similar inside-page story, quoting Onodera as reportedly saying that Japan and the United States have reached a basic agreement that aircraft at the base will fly over the sea rather than residential areas when taking off and landing.

