
 **JAPAN MEDIA
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Friday, April 20, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK and Fuji TV led with reports that Finance Minister Aso held a press briefing in Washington during which he said he hopes to hear the views of TV Asahi about an allegation that Vice Finance Minister Fukuda sexually harassed one of its female reporters. Aso also reportedly said he is not thinking about resigning. NTV gave top play to a report that Mt. Io erupted for the first time in 250 years on Thursday. TV Asahi led with a report that a hotline will be established between North Korea and South Korea today. TBS reported that a document was found at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology saying that Prime Minister Abe's aide Yanase would meet with Kake Gakuen officials.

INTERNATIONAL

President Trump eager for trade concessions from Japan

All nightly news shows on Thursday gave extensive coverage to the conclusion of the Mar-a-Lago summit between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe, highlighting the U.S. leader's strong call for Japan to rectify the bilateral trade imbalance. On the launch of a new sub-venue for economic discussions, they forecast strong U.S. pressure since it will be co-chaired by USTR Lighthizer, who was described by one broadcaster as the "strongest advocate of bilateral trade talks" within the Trump administration. An NHK reporter said the President appeared to be extremely eager to win concessions from Japan on the trade front prior to the midterm elections in November, predicting that Washington will probably use the metal tariffs as a tool to press Tokyo to buy more American products, such as agricultural items and autos.

U.S., Japan to propose establishment of UN panel on DPRK denuclearization

Asahi wrote that the governments of the U.S. and Japan are considering the idea of setting up a panel at the UN Security Council tasked with monitoring progress on North Korea's denuclearization, similar to the UN Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) established in 1999 to put Iraq's biological and chemical weapons program under international watch. The daily questioned whether it will be possible to launch the panel, since Russia might not agree to the establishment of such a watchdog at a time when its ties with Washington have soured over Syria.

- [PM Abe eyes dialogue with North Korea, denies that Japan is being left behind](#) (Yomiuri)
- [U.S. obligation to defend Senkakus, Henoko relocation confirmed at Japan-U.S. summit](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Trump talks a success for Abe, with much needed diplomatic win on North Korea](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Gist of second Japan-U.S. summit meeting, April 19 \(Japan time\)](#) (Mainichi)
- [Gist of Abe-Trump joint news conference, April 19](#) (Nikkei)
- [Talks highlight bilateral gap on trade](#) (The Japan News)
- [Commentary: Japan-U.S. negotiations will be tough](#) (Mainichi)
- [New framework in line with Japan's policy](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Business sector reacts to new trade talks agreed at Abe-Trump summit](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Trump and Abe avoid the rough over two days at Mar-a-Lago](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Japan, U.S. make free trade a key plank in new trade talks](#) (Nikkei)
- [FOCUS: Abe fails to make tangible progress in changing Trump's trade stance](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Abe's reliance on ties with Trump weakens Japan's regional clout](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Stick to the principle of free and fair trade](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Trump sees big arms sales as quick fix for Japan trade deficit](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Cartoon: U.S.-Japan summit](#) (Mainichi)
- [G-20 finance chiefs to talk free trade amid U.S. protectionism](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japanese, Russian vice-ministers meet in advance of Abe's May visit to Russia](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan foreign minister to visit Canada, Switzerland, Belgium](#) (Kyodo News)

AMBASSADOR

- [Trump looking to rid North Korea of chemical and biological weapons as well as nuclear arsenal: ambassador](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Hagerty: Trump, Abe had thoughtful discussions](#) (NHK)

ECONOMY

Finance Minister Aso calls for multilateral resolution of trade imbalances

Friday evening's Nikkei took up remarks made by Finance Minister Aso in Washington on Thursday at the outset of the G-20 financial ministerial meeting. He was quoted as saying on trade imbalances: "These should be resolved multilaterally, not bilaterally." He reportedly expressed

concern about escalated trade friction between the U.S. and China by saying: "Inward-looking policies do not serve the interests of any country. Tit-for-tat retaliatory measures sow confusion in financial markets." Yomiuri ran a similar story.

- [Infographic: Japan's key exports to the United States \(FY2017\)](#) (Nikkei)
- [Infographic: Japanese investment in Israel is on rise as more and more companies enter market](#) (Mainichi)
- [Gov't approves multiple dose of expensive anti-cancer drugs](#) (Sankei)

POLITICS

- [Ishiba says he identifies with Kishida faction's policies](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Prime minister's schedule on April 18-19, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe's right-hand man faces calls to quit as scandals pile up](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan business lobby says finance minister should not resign](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan aims to increase number of foreign-law attorneys](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Nonpartisan lawmakers visit war-linked Yasukuni Shrine](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Cartoon: Finance Ministry scandal](#) (Asahi)

SCIENCE

- [JAXA to conduct takeoff, landing tests of reusable rockets in spring 2019](#) (Nikkei, Evening edition)
- [Japan consortium helps with TESS discovery of planets from the ground](#) (Nikkei)

SOCIETY

Inmate escapes from prison with no walls

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on a recent incident in which an inmate escaped from prison in Ehime Prefecture and is still at large, explaining that the prison was one of four in Japan that have no walls, no iron bars, and no locks on the cells. The program said the inmates are also allowed to work together with the general public, adding that such prisons were built for the purpose of helping inmates readjust to society more easily. However, a total of 20 inmates have escaped from the prison over the past 57 years.

SECURITY

- [Japan defense minister to travel to U.S., meet Pentagon chief Fri.](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Tokyo airport starts CT scanning baggage ahead of 2020 Olympics](#) (Kyodo News)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

- [35 years of bonds passed onto next generation](#) (Okinawa Times)
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