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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks gave top play to reports on the announcement by the South Korean government that the leaders of South Korea and North Korea will meet at 9:30 a.m. on Friday at the demilitarized zone. According to the reports, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is expected to walk to the South Korean side of Panmunjom and the summit will begin at 10:30 a.m. Fuji TV led with a report on allegations that pop musician Tatsuya Yamaguchi kissed a female high school student against her will.

ECONOMY

Former Trump associate calls for measures to expand U.S. corporate presence in Japan

Nikkei carried an interview with Ado Machida, who was a senior member of the Trump transition team, in which he urged the Japanese government to put forward ideas to help U.S. companies win more business opportunities in Japan. While speculating that the Trump administration's ultimate goal is to seal an FTA with Japan, the American businessman underscored the importance for the GOJ to present proposals for helping "U.S. businesses achieve success in the Japanese market" in the future bilateral consultations for a "free, fair, and reciprocal trade deal." He noted that this aspect was not fully addressed in the Economic Dialogue led by Vice President Pence and Deputy Prime Minister Aso. Machida said if the planned bill on the implementation of integrated resorts is enacted, U.S. casino operators will benefit. He also mentioned that the planned expansion of landing slots at Haneda Airport will present U.S. airlines with more business opportunities.

- [Is the Indo-Japan rail project a boondoggle?](#) (The Japan Times)

INTERNATIONAL

- [Nikai to visit Russia](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe eager to “make success” of Chinese PM Li’s visit to Japan](#) (Kyodo News)
- [G-7 foreign ministers show unified resolve to keep pressure on N. Korea](#) (The Japan News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister’s schedule on April 25, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Opposition still fails to crack “30% support” for Abe cabinet despite numerous scandals](#) (FACTA)
- [LDP officials hint at Lower House dissolution amid impasse with opposition](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Okada group’s non-participation prevents new party from becoming top opposition party](#) (Mainichi)
- [Party of Hope’s Nagashima to join Matsuzawa’s splinter party](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Opinion: Will a change of prime minister serve the national interest?](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Aso takes a body blow](#) (Asahi)

OPINION POLLS

- [Cartoon: Abe at the brink](#) (Akahata)

SECURITY

- [LDP committee proposes creating space operations body under Defense Ministry](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gov’t to mandate background checks on students at research reactors](#) (Kyodo News)

SOCIETY

People with disabilities forced to undergo sterilization

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on the former Eugenic Protection Act, which authorized the sterilization of people with various disabilities and disorders to prevent births of “inferior” offspring. The law was in effect until 1996. Forced sterilization was reportedly permitted when a prefectural government panel approved it after receiving a recommendation from a doctor. The program said more than 16,000 people with "disabilities" were forced or duped into undergoing sterilization, adding that many of them were diagnosed as "disabled" without being properly examined. The program interviewed two people who were forcibly sterilized under the law, saying that one of them was later found to have no disabilities and the other was labeled as disabled simply because he was a juvenile delinquent.

- [Japan’s press freedom ranking rises in 2018 — due in part to deteriorating conditions elsewhere](#) (The Japan Times)
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