



Afternoon Alert - Friday, April 27, 2018

The following information reflects the reporting of the cited news media and does not reflect the opinions of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Japan Media Highlights is intended for USG use only and should not be forwarded. Visit the website [here](#). For more information, contact TokyoMATT@state.gov.

HEADLINES

Noon news

All TV networks gave extensive coverage to the start of the landmark summit between South Korean President Moon and DPRK leader Kim Jong Un this morning, airing footage showing the two leaders walking back and forth across the inter-Korean border at Panmunjom. They also reported intensely on public reactions in South Korea, as well as reactions in Japan, the United States, and China. The broadcasters added that the USG and the GOJ are paying close attention to the language the DPRK leader will use in describing his purported commitment to denuclearize, wondering whether he will make additional pledges on ending his regime's missile and nuclear programs.

INTERNATIONAL

USG closely observing inter-Korean summit

All broadcasters reported that the White House released a comment on the summit between Kim and Moon, quoting Press Secretary Sanders as saying: "We are hopeful that talks will achieve progress toward a future of peace and prosperity for the entire Korean Peninsula. The United States appreciates the close coordination with our ally, the Republic of Korea, and looks forward to continuing robust discussions in preparation for the planned meeting between President Donald J. Trump and Kim Jong Un in the coming weeks." NHK opined that it is very unusual for the White House to issue a comment on a summit between foreign governments especially before it took place, speculating that this reflects the Trump administration's keen interest in the discussions between the two Korean leaders.

The network's Washington correspondent claimed that since North Korea has repeatedly reneged on its previous commitments to denuclearize, some Trump administration officials are very skeptical about Kim's sudden peace overtures. Washington is paying close attention to what the DPRK leader will say in the summit with Moon about denuclearization since this will be a sign of his degree of

serious about the upcoming meeting with President Trump. The journalist added that with the midterm elections in November in mind, the President will probably be eager to come up with a viable road map for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in his meeting with Kim Jong Un. He added that incoming Secretary of State Pompeo is likely to be deeply involved in the preparations for the U.S.-DPRK summit.

TV-Asahi asserted that some USG officials are worried that South Korea is buoyed by the historic nature of the summit and be tempted to make major concessions on such issues as a peace treaty, which could affect the presence of U.S. troops in South Korea. Fuji TV projected that President Trump will hold teleconferences with Prime Minister Abe and other regional leaders over the weekend to share and analyze the takeaways from the Korean summit in preparation for his sit-down with Kim Jong Un.

Senior GOJ officials comment on inter-Korean summit

All TV networks reported on Japan's response to the commencement of the historic inter-Korean summit between President Moon and Kim Jong Un, quoting Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga as telling the press this morning: "Serious discussions will be held between the two Korean leaders, who are accompanied by key officials in charge of politics, diplomacy, and national defense. We are hoping they will hold positive talks toward a comprehensive settlement of the abduction, nuclear, and missile issues." Foreign Minister Kono said: "I greatly respect South Korea's efforts to arrange the historic summit.... As we are in constant coordination with South Korea, we will learn about the results without delay." TV-Asahi predicted that President Moon will probably phone Prime Minister Abe tomorrow to brief him on what was discussed in the meeting with Kim. TBS claimed that the Abe administration's foremost interest in the Inter-Korean summit is what the DPRK will say about the issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens, which President Moon was supposedly planning to bring up.

- [Abe's adviser: Prime Minister said no need to rush for summit with DPRK](#) (Yomiuri, Evening edition)

Foreign Minister Kono hopes to meet with Secretary Pompeo soon

NHK's website took up a comment issued by Foreign Minister Kono on the Senate confirmation of Michael Pompeo as secretary of state. "The importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance is growing amid the increasingly severe security situation in this region, including the North Korea problem," he said. "We would like to coordinate closely with the United States to bring peace and stability to the region and the international community. I would like to meet with the Secretary as soon as possible and exchange views with him in a candid manner so as to further strengthen the ironclad bond between the U.S. and Japan." The foreign minister also told the press: "Since I was able to forge very solid bonds with former Secretary Tillerson, I would like to do the same with Secretary Pompeo."

SECURITY

[Suga comments on compensation for Okinawa murder](#)

NHK reported online that today marked the second anniversary of the murder of an Okinawa woman by U.S. base worker Kenneth Shinzato, noting that the victim's father released a comment expressing his unabated grief over the loss of his daughter, who was only 20 years old at the time. The report also took up remarks made this morning by Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga, who commented on the bereaved family's request for compensation filed with the GOJ and the USG. The government spokesman was quoted as saying: "We would like to make utmost efforts in good faith. Consultations are still underway at various levels between the U.S. side and the Defense Ministry and Foreign Ministry. We will continue to cooperate with the United States to create a solid mechanism to prevent such a tragedy from happening again."

- [Ex-MSDF top brass: Japan needs to redefine how far to share intelligence](#) (Asahi)
- [YouTube video of U.S. fighter jet flying low over Iwate Pref. raises questions](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Startling reality of U.S. military in Japan — Training, maintenance insufficient](#) (FACTA)

ECONOMY

- [Osaka governor says casino resort could open by fiscal 2023](#) (The Japan Times)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on April 26, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of interpellations at Lower and Upper Houses Budget Committees, April 26](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Abe, Suga dine with 15 junior LDP lawmakers](#) (Mainichi)
- [Under new management: LDP's Takeshita faction looks to regroup, field viable candidate](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Abolishment of broadcast law clause not mentioned at gov't panel](#) (Mainichi)
- [Cartoon: Abe shares Aso's fate](#) (Mainichi)
- [Cartoon: Abe blows trial bubbles](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Abe partially draws his sword](#) (Asahi)

OPINION POLLS

- [60% opposed to amendment of Japan's Constitution under Abe, Kyodo News poll](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Opinion poll & results from Kyodo News survey on the Constitution](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

SCIENCE

- [Infographic: Average annual temperature deviation in Japan](#) (Mainichi)

SOCIETY

- [Interview with Dr. Shoko Kiyohara: “Information posted by celebrities carries weight”](#) (Asahi)
 - [Infographics: Asahi Shimbun Digital online poll on fake news – Part 1](#) (Asahi)
 - [Infographics: Asahi Shimbun Digital online poll on fake news – Part 2](#) (Asahi)
 - [Infographics: Asahi Shimbun Digital online poll on fake news – Part 3](#) (Asahi)
-

