

Afternoon Alert - Monday, June 18, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

All networks led with extensive coverage of the major earthquake that hit Osaka and the surrounding area. Three people including a 9-year-old girl were killed and more than 200 people were injured in the quake.

INTERNATIONAL

President Trump says he made the decision to halt drills with South Korea

Fuji TV took up a tweet posted on Sunday by President Trump regarding the planned suspension of joint military exercises between the U.S. and South Korea, in which he said: "Holding back the 'war games' during the negotiations was my request because they are very expensive and set a bad light during a good faith negotiation. Also, quite provocative." The President underscored that the joint drills "can start up immediately if talks break down."

FM Kono welcomes results of U.S.-DPRK summit

NHK's "Nichiyo Toron" Sunday debate show aired a one-on-one interview with Foreign Minister Kono, during which he expressed his views about the results of the U.S.-DPRK summit held in Singapore on June 12. Kono stated that it is significant that North Korea's intention to denuclearize was put in writing in the joint statement and that the sanctions will remain in place if Pyongyang prolongs the denuclearization process. The foreign minister dismissed concerns that Japan's security will be undermined if the United States suspends its joint military drills with South Korea, saying that the drills will be resumed if the DPRK fails to act in good faith. He added that according to discussions between Secretary of Defense Mattis and Defense Minister Onodera last week, the United States is not considering a troop drawdown in South Korea, and drills between the United States and Japan will continue. Kono emphasized that the DPRK will not be provided with rewards in phases and that the sanctions will be lifted only when the denuclearization is implemented in a

complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner.

Concerning the issue of the abductions of Japanese nationals, the foreign minister said it was significant that President Trump raised the issue at his summit with the DPRK leader. He said Japan is prepared to provide economic assistance to North Korea only after the two nations normalize their diplomatic relations. When asked about the possibility of Prime Minister Abe meeting with Kim Jong Un, Kono said that Japan will not hold a summit just for the sake of holding one.

- [Abe campaigns for summit with Kim on abductions: Japan's leader urges 'big decision' by North Korea to settle long-standing issue](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan mulls role in int'l funding for N. Korea's denuclearization](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Abe discusses Japan-U.S. summit in April, U.S.-DPRK summit, DPRK ties, U.S. Forces Korea](#) (Sankei)
- [Russia or UN? Abe and Kim must agree on summit site: Pleasing Putin will rile China and US, but hurdles high for New York](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Deputy CCS comments on DPRK claim that abduction issue has been resolved](#) (Yomiuri)
- [LDP's Kishida comments on U.S.-DPRK summit, denuclearization, abduction issue](#) (Nikkei)
- [Osaka floats out-of-box thinking for ties with North](#) (The Japan Times)
- [EDITORIAL: A fresh, coherent strategy needed for Abe's summit talks with Kim](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Expert: For DPRK's denuclearization, concrete actions must start](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Cooperation with U.S., South Korea necessary to solve abduction issue](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: The pressure's building](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Japan protests Russia's plan to conduct missile tests near Northern Territories](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan sends imperial family member to Russia for 1st visit in century](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

- [Gist of Japan government's economic policy blueprint](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Gov't approves four plans aimed at "achieving fiscal health through economic growth"](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gov't to introduce new residency status for foreign workers, make nurseries free](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Narrow down strategy measures; focus effort on most effective steps](#) (The Japan News)
- [Casino bills said to be Abe's "trump card" for influencing Pres. Trump on DPRK policy](#) (Shukan Shincho)
- [Reducing Japan's plutonium stockpile easier said than done](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: After interest rate hike, Fed must keep an eye on uncertain global economy](#) (The Japan News)
- [Tokyo venture firms to build new hub for start-ups "Gotanda Valley"](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Hitachi seeks Japanese partners in building \\$27bn UK nuclear plant: Conglomerate](#)

[looks to power companies for both funding and expertise](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

• [Trouble-hit nuclear reactor in southwestern Japan resumes operations](#) (Kyodo News)

• [Editorial: Decommissioning Fukushima reactors should promote disaster reconstruction](#) (The Japan News)

SECURITY

• [Japan eyes longer-term military hardware procurement contracts with U.S. to cut costs](#) (Mainichi)

• [Iwakuni: Local communities and the U.S. base – Part 1: State-of-the-art fighters deployed for Asia strategy](#) (Chugoku Shimbun)

POLITICS

• [Prime minister's schedule on June 15, 2018](#) (Nikkei)

• [Prime minister's schedule on June 16, 2018](#) (Nikkei)

• [Prime minister's schedule on June 17, 2018](#) (Nikkei)

OPINION POLLS

• [Views split on U.S.-DPRK summit, Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)

• [Cabinet support rate inches up amid hopes for Abe's diplomacy, Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)

• [Opinion poll & results from Yomiuri Shimbun](#) (Yomiuri)

• [Support for PM Abe's cabinet at 45%, surpasses disapproval: Kyodo News poll](#) (Kyodo News)

• [Voters want Abe-Kim talks, pessimistic on abduction issue, Asahi poll](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)

• [Few convinced that scandals dogging Abe suitably resolved, Asahi poll](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)

SOCIETY

Japan's soccer team tackles World Cup under new manager Nishino

Sunday's "NHK Special" reported on the Japanese national men's soccer team, which will play against Colombia in two days at the World Cup in Russia. Noting that the Japanese team's ranking dropped to 61st this year, the program said Japan will need to "slay giants" in the World Cup because it will be pitted against Colombia, Poland, and Senegal, which are all ranked much higher than it, in the first round. The program focused on the team's new manager, Akira Nishino, who assumed his post only 30 days ahead of the World Cup. The program aired an interview with Nishino, who talked about his strategy for building a strong team in a short period of time.

• [Osaka quake causes auto, electronics plants to suspend operations](#) (Kyodo News)

• [3 dead, dozens injured as M6.1 quake hits Osaka](#) (Kyodo News)

• [Marijuana tops paint thinner as most abused substance in Japan](#) (Kyodo News)

