

Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, June 19, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK, TV Asahi, and Fuji TV led with reports on the powerful earthquake and aftershocks that hit the Osaka region on Monday and the ongoing efforts to restore lifelines in the region. NTV led with a report that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un arrived in Beijing this morning on his third visit to China. TBS gave top play to reports that the chairman of Kake Gakuen held a press conference this morning and denied that he spoke to Prime Minister Abe about establishing a veterinary department

INTERNATIONAL

GOJ officials comment on suspension of U.S.-ROK drills

NHK reported that while Defense Minister Onodera expressed understanding for the official announcement by the U.S. and South Korean governments of the cancellation of the U.S.-ROK joint military drills in August, he also said that Japan will call on the U.S. and South Korea to continue to hold drills that are necessary to maintain deterrence in the region. "I think the decision was made from the viewpoint of having the defense authorities of the U.S. and South Korea support diplomatic efforts to resolve the North Korean issue," he was reported as saying. However, he also reportedly said: "The joint military drills between the U.S. and South Korea are an important pillar for ensuring regional peace and stability, and we will continue to work closely with the U.S. and South Korea. I have confirmed with Secretary Mattis that we will steadily carry out U.S.-Japan joint military exercises." He added: "It is inconceivable that North Korea would conduct ballistic missile or nuclear tests while engaged in negotiations with the U.S., but we will closely monitor the situation since North Korea has yet to take any concrete actions."

According to the broadcaster, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga said: "I understand that the announcement was made based on the commitment made by President Trump at the U.S.-DPRK summit. Secretary of State Pompeo has said that the suspension of the U.S.-ROK joint military drills is premised on the continuation of productive and well-intentioned negotiations and if it is determined that that is not the case, the President's commitment to suspend the drills will no longer be effective." Suga added: "In any case, the U.S. position is to maintain its commitment to the defense of its allies and its commitment to the U.S.-Japan alliance and the posture of the U.S. forces in Japan remains the same. We will continue to work closely with the U.S. and South Korea for regional peace and stability."

The network said Foreign Minister Kono told reporters: "We understand that the drills will be suspended as long as North Korea is negotiating in good faith. If it is determined that North Korea is not negotiating in good faith, the drills will be resumed. There will be no impact on U.S.-Japan joint military exercises."

Taiwan lodges protest against ANA, JAL for referring to Taiwan as part of China

NHK reported this morning that Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs lodged a protest against JAL and ANA for referring to Taiwan as "Taiwan, China" on some of their official Chinese language websites. According to the network, the two carriers changed "Taiwan" to "Taiwan, China" on their websites for customers from mainland China and Hong Kong while calling the island simply "Taiwan" for customers from Taiwan on their Japanese and English language sites. According to the Taiwanese media, the Chinese authorities have asked 44 foreign airlines not to treat Taiwan as a state, and JAL and ANA apparently followed that instruction. The two carriers reportedly released a comment saying: "We changed the description of Taiwan on our websites for Chinese customers on June 12 in order to make it easier for them to understand. As for the protest by the Taiwanese authority, we are confirming the facts."

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un arrives in China

NHK reported that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un arrived at a Beijing airport at about 11 a.m. today, saying that Kim is expected to hold his third summit with President Xi to brief him on the Singapore summit in an effort to further strengthen relations with China to obtain its support in the upcoming negotiations with the U.S. All other networks carried similar stories.

- [Japan questions Seoul's plan to raise awareness of "comfort women"](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Foreign Minister Kono planning Europe trip in early July](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Former defense minister predicts U.S. Forces Korea will not be withdrawn](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Commentary: Beginning of the end to the 1953 regime?](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Cartoon: High-wire act](#) (Kanagawa Shimibun)

ECONOMY

- [Japan takes aim at U.S. trade policy after tariffs imposed](#) (Kyodo News)

- [Japan seeks talks with S. Korea over antidumping duties on steel bars](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan's cryptocurrency industry drafts self-policing rules](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Cartoon: Abe serves big business](#) (Akahata)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on June 18, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of interpellations at Upper House Budget Committee, June 18](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Coordination underway to extend Diet session for one month](#) (Mainichi)
- [Fiscal turnaround a major issue in LDP presidential election](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Abe, Kishida meet to discuss North Korea, Diet, LDP presidential race](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Two "unconventional" bureaucrats at Abe's Kantei wield power in economic, trade policies](#) (Sentaku)

OPINION POLLS

- [Cabinet support rate rebounds to 40% level, Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)
- [Opinion poll & results from Sankei Shimbun](#) (Sankei)
- [Infographic: Who is suitable to serve as next LDP president, Kyodo News poll](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Kyodo News opinion poll & results from Tokyo Shimbun](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

SECURITY

- [Akita governor, mayor critical of Defense Ministry on deployment of Aegis Ashore](#) (Kahoku Shimpo, Online)
- [Iwakuni: Local communities and the U.S. base – Operation of U.S. military planes up 2.6-fold, Chugoku Shimbun survey](#) (Chugoku Shimbun)
- [Iwakuni: Local communities and the U.S. base – Part 2: In the vicinity of the peace city of Hiroshima](#) (Chugoku Shimbun)
- [Gov't to send SDF honor guards to France for military parade](#) (Mainichi, Evening edition)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

[Ginowan Mayor Sakima eyed as possible candidate for next Okinawa governor](#)

Ryukyu Shimpo wrote that it has learned from several members of a committee of the LDP Okinawa chapter discussing the selection of their candidate for the Okinawa gubernatorial election to be held in the fall that Ginowan Mayor Sakima has emerged as their prime candidate. The paper wrote that if Sakima runs in the gubernatorial race, an election to select his successor as Ginowan mayor would be held and Deputy Mayor Matsukawa is regarded as a strong candidate for that post. According to the paper, senior members of the LDP headquarters and the Abe administration approve of Sakima as a candidate and are strongly supporting the idea. The paper added that although Sakima has expressed reservations about running, he may agree to do so if his supporters agree with the idea.

- [Local assembly adopts resolution protesting U.S. base commander's refusal to meet lawmakers](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)

