



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, June 27, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK and TV Asahi led with updates on the arrest of a former SDF member on Tuesday on charges of stabbing a police officer to death, stealing his gun, and fatally shooting a security guard in Toyama. NTV, TBS, and Fuji TV led with reports on an explosion at a fireworks factory in Hamamatsu, Shizuoka, this morning, which killed one person.

INTERNATIONAL

Suga comments on U.S. request to halt imports of Iranian oil

NHK reported at noon that concerning the Trump administration's request to completely halt imports of Iranian oil by November, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters this morning: "Japan and the United States are discussing the U.S. plan to reinstate sanctions against Iran and I would like to refrain from commenting on the details of the discussions. We are carefully analyzing the impact of the U.S. measures and will continue to discuss this with the U.S. and other relevant nations so that it will not negatively affect Japanese firms." In addition, Suga reportedly disclosed that Japan is also in contact with Iranian authorities. He refrained from commenting on when Japan is planning to reach a conclusion on how to respond to the U.S. request.

- [U.S. urging allies to halt Iran oil imports by Nov. 4](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japanese law to be revised for prompt handover of children under Hague Convention](#) (Sankei)
- [MOJ to clarify rules for handing over children of divorced parents](#) (Yomiuri)
- [FM Kono meets Palestinian counterpart to discuss sustainable economic development](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Expert: U.S.-DPRK summit outcome good for China; Japan's diplomacy being put to the test](#) (Shukan Ekonomisuto)

ECONOMY

- [METI calls on big firms to treat start-ups as equal partners to create innovation](#) (Nikkei)
- [China invites Japan, U.S. to join AIIB](#) (Mainichi)
- [Tokai Carbon to acquire major U.S. materials manufacturer](#) (Nikkei, Evening edition)
- [Editorial: Allowing casino users to borrow betting money poses danger](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Voting on TPP-related bill put off](#) (The Japan News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on June 26, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Hosono's reports failed to list loan of 50 million yen for 2017 election](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Prospective Diet deliberation schedule in the next few weeks](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Abe is certain to secure 3rd term as LDP chief: senior party lawmaker](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Nikai has no doubt that Abe will be reelected to third term as LDP president](#) (Sankei)

OPINION POLLS

- [56% say regulations on indoor smoking at restaurants and bars "inadequate," Nihon Yoron Chosakai poll](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

SCIENCE

"Hayabusa 2" reaches Ryugu asteroid

All networks reported that the Japanese probe "Hayabusa 2" reached an asteroid called Ryugu, located about 300 million kilometers from the Earth, at 9:35 a.m. today. The probe was launched four years ago by JAXA. NHK said that the probe will observe the surface of the asteroid from a distance of 20 kilometers until around August, and then land on the asteroid three times to collect rock samples from this autumn to next spring. The network said it is believed that on the asteroid there are water and organic substances dating back to the birth of the solar system 4.6 billion years ago.

- [Japan's Hayabusa2 probe reaches asteroid to search origin of life](#) (Kyodo News)

SOCIETY

GOJ map shows probability of strong quakes by area

All major evening news on Tuesday reported that the GOJ's Earthquake Research Committee released the latest map showing the probability of earthquakes with seismic intensity of lower 6 or above on the Japanese intensity scale of 0 to 7 occurring in Japan within the next 30 years. The committee updates the map annually based on the latest studies of faults and mega-quakes linked to marine trenches. According to the latest map, the probability in eastern Hokkaido saw a significant rise due to the revised assessment that a major earthquake with a magnitude of 8.8 or higher could occur in the area. In addition, the probability of earthquakes in the Kanto region and the coastal region facing the Pacific remained high. The probability for Chiba was 85%, followed by 82% for

Yokohama and 81% for Mito, Ibaraki. The city of Shizuoka was slightly lower at 70%, while the risk for Tokyo's Shinjuku district was 48%, and Nagoya 46%. The probability was 56% for Osaka, which suffered lower 6 tremors last week. The committee chairman Hirata said: "An earthquake with a seismic intensity of lower 6 occurred in Osaka recently. There is no area in Japan that has a zero probability of being hit by at least a lower 6 earthquake, so everyone across Japan should be aware that earthquakes with a seismic intensity of lower 6 could occur. Aging buildings should be reinforced and people should secure the furniture, fixtures, and fittings in their homes."

Japanese companies shifting to innovative office designs

NHK's "Close-up Gendai +" reported that many Japanese companies are changing their office designs to encourage creative thinking that leads to the development of new products and services. The program reported on several companies with unique offices, including an IT company that maintains 24-hour connections with its branch offices through huge monitors and another IT company that moved its office to a resort area to reduce commuting time and allow its employees to enjoy stress-free lives.

- [Chance of major quake rises in Hokkaido region in next 30 years](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)

SECURITY

- [Selection of Okinawa gubernatorial race candidates starts based on "Henoko relocation"](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Japan must rethink need for Aegis Ashore missile shield](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Iwakuni: Local communities and the U.S. base – Review rules for conducting training](#) (Chugoku Shimbun)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

Anti-base group says more buildings at Henoko exceed height limit

Ryukyu Shimpo gave top play to a report saying that the All-Okinawa Council released on Tuesday the results of its survey conducted in the Henoko and Toyohara districts concerning the height limit set by the United States for ensuring the safety of the airspace around the Futenma Replacement Facility at Henoko. The anti-base group insisted that in addition to seven public facilities, including an elementary school and a community hall, at least four apartment buildings apparently exceed the 54.52-meter height limit. Based on the results of the survey, the group plans to make another request to relevant parties that the construction at Henoko be suspended. Okinawa Times ran a similar front-page story.

- [Onaga plans to initiate national debate on SOFA](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)

