
 **JAPAN MEDIA
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, August 1, 2018

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HEADLINES**Noon news**

Most TV networks led with coverage of the scorching heat in most parts of Japan.

INTERNATIONAL**Secretary Pompeo to call for maintaining sanctions on North Korea**

TBS and TV-Asahi highlighted press remarks on North Korea made on Tuesday by DOS Press Secretary Nauert. She reportedly said that when Secretary Pompeo attends ASEAN-related meetings in Singapore later this week, he is likely to call for maintaining the existing sanctions on the DPRK. She was quoted as saying: "He will certainly have conversations with his counterparts from other governments about the importance of maintaining those sanctions and keeping sanctions in place." As for a possible meeting between the Secretary and his DPRK counterpart on the margins, the spokesperson reportedly stated: "I certainly can't preclude any interaction taking place, but we have no meetings on the schedule. Nothing is planned." On a Washington Post story claiming that North Korea is moving ahead with the production of ICBMs, Nauert reportedly said: "What we're going on is the commitment that Chairman Kim made to our President, and that is the commitment to denuclearize, and that is something that we certainly anticipate, that he will hold up his end of the bargain and his commitment on that."

Meanwhile, NHK took up Nauert's comment on the return of the remains of U.S. service members who were killed in the Korean War. She welcomed the North Korean gesture by reportedly saying: "We see that as Chairman Kim fulfilling part of the commitment that he made to the President." The spokesperson reportedly underscored that North Korea did not ask for any money nor did the U.S. offer any money for the remains of fallen Americans.

Osaka sounds out new San Francisco mayor on comfort women statue

Yomiuri wrote on its website that the Osaka municipal government has sent a letter to San Francisco Mayor Breed to ask her how she feels about the comfort women statue that her predecessor, Mayor Lee, decided to accept as a city monument last November before he suddenly passed away the following month. Osaka is reportedly keen to learn the new mayor's position on the matter since Osaka Mayor Yoshimura chose to end his city's sister-city relationship with San Francisco based on the former mayor's decision. The Osaka leader will reportedly go ahead and sever ties if Mayor Breed upholds Mayor Lee's position.

Russia reiterates concern about Japan's plan to install new defense missile system

TBS reported on the Japan-Russia foreign and defense ministerial meeting held in Moscow on Tuesday, during which the Russian side reportedly voiced apprehension about the Aegis Ashore batteries that the SDF plans to introduce, while the Japanese participants urged their Russian counterparts not to build military facilities in the Northern Territories. But the two sides agreed to coordinate closely to achieve the denuclearization of North Korea and expand bilateral cooperation in the security arena.

- [Kono to arrive in Singapore today](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Gist of outcome of "2-plus-2" talks between Japan and Russia](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan, Russia at odds over Tokyo's missile defense plan](#) (Kyodo News)
- [JET program strengthens Japan-U.S. ties](#) (Sankei)
- [Myanmar to allow visa-free entry for tourists from Japan, S. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japanese antinuclear group to send fact-finding mission to N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [U.N. chief to visit Nagasaki for 73rd anniv. of atomic bombing](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

Japan, EU, others affirm coordination on proposed U.S. auto tariffs

NHK reported that senior officials from Japan, the EU, Canada, Mexico, and South Korea held a meeting in Geneva on Tuesday to discuss the Trump administration's proposal to impose additional import duties on vehicles. The participants reportedly agreed to enhance mutual coordination to dissuade Washington from going ahead with the new tariffs. They also reportedly exchanged views on the changes in WTO rules that the U.S. is calling for with the goal of correcting "unfair trade."

- [Editorial: BOJ's allowing long-term interest rate to rise is time-buying measure to deal with side effects of monetary easing](#) (Mainichi)
- [U.K. expresses intention to join TPP-11](#) (Asahi)
- [Editorial: Effectively reduce plutonium](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan pachinko industry zeroing in on casino money](#) (Asahi)
- [Vice Minister of Finance Shigeaki Okamoto](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan to propose raising fishing quotas for Pacific bluefin tuna](#) (The Mainichi)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on July 31, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Cartoon: Not so fast, Mr. Abe](#) (Akahata)

SOCIETY

Western Japan flooding demonstrates importance of building community ties

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on the recent flooding in Western Japan that took the lives of over 200 people, making it the worst flood of the Heisei era in casualties. The network examined what local governments and communities could have done to save lives based on the recognition that similar disasters may occur more frequently in the future due in part to global warming. As more than 90% of the 51 people who were killed in the flood in the town of Mabi in Kurashiki, Okayama, were elderly residents, the program said that the local government's issuance of an evacuation advisory appeared to be insufficient. The program stressed that building and maintaining close community ties is critical for a smooth and orderly evacuation in times of disaster.

- [Japan-America Student Conference celebrating 70th anniversary in fostering Japan-U.S. exchange sprouts](#) (Asahi, Evening edition)

SECURITY

GOJ launches new terrorism prevention taskforce ahead of Tokyo Olympics

All broadcasters reported that on Wednesday the Abe administration set up a new interagency taskforce charged with collecting and analyzing intelligence to deter and combat international terrorism in preparation for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Personnel from 11 ministries and agencies, including the National Police Agency, MOFA, and the Justice Ministry, will be assigned to the panel under the Kantei's leadership.

- [Japan launches body to share terrorism information ahead of Olympics](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Public-private cooperation needed to guard Olympics from cyber-attacks](#) (The Japan News)
- [2 years to go: Tokyo police tightening waterfront security ahead of 2020 Games](#) (Jiji Press)

**OKINAWA
LOCAL PRESS**

Hearing on withdrawal of Henoko landfill permit to be held on Aug. 9

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo wrote that the Okinawa prefectural government notified the Okinawa Defense Bureau on Tuesday that a hearing will be convened on Aug. 9 so that the defense bureau can make its own case regarding Governor Onaga's intention to rescind the landfill permit for FRF construction off Camp Schwab. The local government reportedly explained that the governor plans to rescind the permit because several findings related to the geological features of the vicinity, including an active fault and fragile seabed, have come to light after the permit was issued in 2013 by then-Governor Nakaima. The governor reportedly insists that the rescindment is warranted because the construction site for the FRF has been found to be vulnerable. Although the bureau is expected to refute the governor's argument in the hearing, the Okinawa leader will probably withdraw the permit in mid-August.
