
 **JAPAN MEDIA
HIGHLIGHTS**

Afternoon Alert - Friday, August 10, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that the Japanese economy returned to a growth path in the April-June quarter, saying that the real GDP grew at an annualized rate of 1.9%. TBS gave top play to a report on the conclusion of the first day of trade talks between the U.S. and Japan. NTV led with a report on the return of extreme heat across Japan today after the typhoon. Fuji TV reported that the annual rush of Obon summer holiday travelers got into full swing today. TV Asahi led with a report that the "38 North" website disclosed satellite imagery of North Korea's nuclear facility in Yongbyon taken on July 31, which indicate that North Korea is modifying one of its cooling systems. The network said North Korea may be continuing to develop the nuclear facility in case negotiations with the U.S. break down.

ECONOMY

U.S., Japan remain apart in ongoing trade talks

NHK, TBS, Fuji TV, and TV Asahi reported at noon on the conclusion of the first day of the new "FFR" (free, fair, and reciprocal) talks between the U.S. and Japan. TBS said that about 120 minutes of the 150 minutes of discussion on the first day were devoted to one-on-one talks between Economic Revitalization Minister Motegi and USTR Lighthizer. Motegi told reporters after the meeting: "We were able to deepen our understanding of each other's positions and views. We had good discussions." According to NHK, Motegi also said: "We are not pessimistic...The discussions are still ongoing. I will provide you the details after the talks are finished." TBS claimed that while the U.S. side expressed eagerness to launch bilateral FTA talks with Japan, the Japanese side urged the U.S. to return to the TPP. The network said there was apparently no specific reference from either side to the alleged U.S. plan to raise tariffs on auto imports. NHK and Fuji TV aired video of Motegi saying: "The United States basically wants to move forward with bilateral talks, Japan

basically takes the position that the TPP is the best option for both nations.” A TV Asahi reporter opined that what the GOJ really wants is to swiftly conclude the talks before the U.S. escalates its requests, adding that top-level officials of relevant ministries and agencies are accompanying Motegi so that quick decisions can be made. An NHK reporter claimed the two nations are expected to discuss the possibility of the U.S. raising tariffs on auto imports on the second day of talks, adding that attention will be focused on to what extent they will be able to resolve the differences in their positions.

NHK reported online that a USTR official told reporters after the conclusion of the first day of talks that “USTR Lighthizer and Economic Revitalization Minister Motegi had a constructive exchange of views on bilateral trade issues.” The official also reportedly said: “We understand each other’s positions and will hold additional discussions.”

Meanwhile, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga reportedly told reporters this morning: “The discussions are still ongoing, so we would like to wait for the results. Japan has been working on expanding free trade and strengthening the multilateral trade system and putting it into practice. We will make thorough efforts not only on bilateral relations but also on how the two nations can cooperate in the development of the Asia Pacific region.”

- [Cartoon: Game of trade](#) (Asahi)
- [Japan’s farming industry leery of U.S. demands beyond TPP](#) (Mainichi)
- [U.S. presses for bilateral trade pact while Japan remains cautious](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Ministry to establish communications rules for 5G era](#) (Sankei)
- [METI calls companies’ attention to U.K.-EU negotiations](#) (Mainichi)

INTERNATIONAL

- [Japan foreign minister, U.N. chief see need to keep N. Korea sanctions](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Nagasaki mayor urges shift from nuclear-reliant security policies](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Abe should keep pledge to lead on elimination of nuclear weapons](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [LDP Nikai expresses hope for progress in economic cooperation in Northeast Asia](#) (Mainichi)
- [Abe unveils plan to hold wise men’s conference in Nagasaki this fall](#) (Sankei)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister’s schedule on August 9, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Commentary: Unbridled “insistence on secrecy” regarding Prime Minister Abe’s movements is worrisome](#) (Mainichi)
- [“Not all visitors are indicated in ‘Prime Minister’s Schedule’ articles.” source](#) (Mainichi)

- [Shigeru Ishiba to announce candidacy for LDP presidential race as party factions line up behind Abe](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Cartoon: Not enough time](#) (Mainichi)

SOCIETY

- [European embassies court Japanese students following Tokyo Medical University's gender discrimination scandal](#) (Asahi, Evening edition)

SECURITY

- [Gov. Takeshi Onaga's death muddles long-standing U.S. base relocation plan in Okinawa](#) (The Japan Times)
- [U.S. serviceman's wife indicted without arrest for hit-and-run](#) (NHK)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

Pressure mounting on vice governors to decide whether to withdraw landfill permit

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo reported on the Okinawa prefectural government's decision on Thursday not to hold a second hearing for the Defense Ministry to present its case on the potential cancellation of the landfill permit for FRF construction. The papers said that now that all the administrative procedures for the rescindment have been completed, it is up to the two vice governors to make a final decision on whether to follow through with the late Governor Onaga's intention to revoke the permit. The dailies said pressure is mounting on the two deputies to quickly make a decision since the landfill work could start off Camp Schwab as early as a week from now.

According to Okinawa Times, some local government officials reckon that the vice governors may be unwilling to withdraw the permit on the grounds that unlike Governor Onaga, they have not been given a popular mandate to make "highly political decisions." Ryukyu Shimpo wrote they will not have to revoke the permit hastily if the Defense Ministry chooses not to start the landfill operation on Aug. 17 as planned, explaining that some LDP officials are reportedly doubtful about beginning the work at this juncture out of concern about the possible impact on the by-election to pick Onaga's successor in late September. Since one of the two vice governors is scheduled to leave for Latin America on official business early next week, a final decision will perhaps not be made until after his return.

- [Nikai makes a condolence visit to Okinawa on the loss of Onaga](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)

