



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, August 15, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report on the annual Memorial Ceremony for the War Dead held in Tokyo today to commemorate the end of WWII. All commercial networks gave top play to reports that the Japan Meteorological Agency raised the alert level for a volcano on Kuchinoerabu Island in Kagoshima and urged residents to prepare for possible evacuation.

INTERNATIONAL

North Korea says abduction issue has already been resolved

NHK reported online that North Korea's state-run paper, Rodong Sinmun, pushed back against Japan by saying that the abduction issue "has already been completely resolved" and that Japan "should sincerely settle its past." According to the network, it also claimed: "The trend in international politics over the issue of the Korean Peninsula has completely changed since the start of this year and many nations are working actively to develop their relationships with us. Only Japan has been excluded. It is making a fuss about the abduction issue, which has already been resolved." The paper also reportedly criticized Japan by saying: "We are the ones who should be complaining about abductions, because Japan forcibly dragged people away from the Korean Peninsula, made them work, and forced its women to become sex slaves. Instead of clinging to the abduction issue, it should sincerely settle its past."

FM Kono expresses hope for Peru to swiftly complete TPP procedures

NHK reported this morning that Foreign Minister Kono, who is currently visiting Central and South America, met with Peruvian Foreign Minister Popolizio in Lima on Tuesday. The network said Kono agreed with Popolizio to work closely to maintain a free and open trade system and expressed hope that Peru will swiftly complete the domestic TPP procedures in order to realize the early effectuation of the trade pact. The network said the TPP will go into force after six of the eleven member nations complete their domestic procedures, adding that three nations, including Japan, have already completed the procedures. Popolizio reportedly said: "Our two nations share the same basic values of free trade and multilateral cooperation. I hope that our cooperative relationship will grow deeper and more constructive." Kono reportedly said: "Our two nations are both members of the TPP and are important partners for promoting free trade. We will continue to work closely toward the early

effectuation of the TPP." In addition, the two ministers reportedly agreed to call on other nations to maintain the UNSC sanctions against North Korea in order to achieve complete its denuclearization.

- [Japan, Peru to seek early implementation of TPP](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan shifts focus of its development assistance to Indo-Pacific](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japanese economy minister Motegi to visit Africa next week](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Arms Trade Treaty Conference to open in Tokyo on Aug. 20](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Expert: Drafting "fifth document" on Japan-China relationship an urgent task](#) (Mainichi)
- [Expert: Japan should join forces with U.S. to counter China](#) (Mainichi)

ECONOMY

- [U.S. economist on U.S.-China trade war, Japan's response, Trump's trade policies](#) (Nikkei)
- [Trade war poised to roil global finance, Princeton economist warns](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Commentary: Japan has the potential to keep global free trade alive](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Over 50% of companies say "trade war will have negative impact," Sankei poll of 121 major companies](#) (Sankei)
- [Intellectual property arbitral body to open](#) (The Japan News)

POLITICS

PM Abe sends ritual donation to Yasukuni Shrine

NHK reported online that Prime Minister Abe sent a ritual donation to Yasukuni Shrine today, the anniversary of the end of WWII. According to the network, Abe made the donation as the president of the LDP but did not visit the shrine himself. Masahiko Shibayama, an LDP lawmaker who serves as a special advisor to the prime minister, visited the shrine and delivered the donation on behalf of Abe. "As I did last year, I visited the shrine on behalf of LDP President Shinzo Abe," Shibayama told reporters. "President Abe told me to offer prayers for the souls of our forefathers and that he is sorry he cannot visit today." All other networks carried similar stories.

- [Prime minister's schedule on Aug. 14, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Abe must show strategy for economy, diplomacy and constitutional revision](#) (The Japan News)
- [Deputy CCS Nishimura on PM Abe, his relation with Pres. Trump, North Korea issues, more](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: LDP presidential race](#) (Sankei)

SOCIETY

- [Chinese man files suit over harassment at Japan immigration center](#) (Jiji)
- [Support for working women growing in Japan, but smaller companies lag behind](#) (The Japan Times)

SECURITY

Onodera asks for thorough safety management in response to Osprey landing at Amami Airport

NHK reported that that in relation to reports that a U.S. military Osprey landed at Amami Airport in Kagoshima Prefecture on Tuesday afternoon, Defense Minister Onodera told reporters that the U.S.

side had informed him that the Osprey made a precautionary landing because a warning light came on. He added that he called for thorough safety management.

- [Landfill work to relocate U.S. base in Okinawa to be postponed](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Transformation taking place in anti-Henoko relocation All Okinawa Council](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gov't mulls introducing ultra-small satellites to watch Senkakus](#) (Sankei)
- [China buys land on Miyakojima to monitor SDF](#) (Sentaku)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

GOJ decides to put off Henoko landfill work until October or later

Ryukyu Shimpo and Okinawa Times claimed that the GOJ has notified the Okinawa prefectural government that it will not begin the landfill work off Camp Schwab on this Friday as planned based on the view that “this is a time of mourning” for the late Governor Onaga. The prefectural government reportedly reckons that the landfill operation will not commence until after the special election to pick Onaga’s successor on Sept. 30. Ryukyu Shimpo described the postponement as an offer of “armistice” from the GOJ, speculating that it was intended to prevent the operation from having adverse effects on the election campaign of Ginowan Mayor Sakima, who officially declared his candidacy in the gubernatorial race yesterday.

According to Okinawa Times, some of Onaga’s supporters are urging the two vice governors who are currently performing the gubernatorial duties to promptly rescind the landfill permit irrespective of the timing of the landfill work based on the assessment that it will not be possible to revoke it if Sakima wins. However, others say the new governor should be the one to decide whether to rescind the permit because the vice governors have not been given a popular mandate to make such “highly political decisions.” The daily added that GOJ officials are hopeful that the prefectural government will choose to put off a decision until after the by-election based on the judgment that the issue would become a major campaign issue if the permit were withdrawn prior to the race because the GOJ would then have no choice but to take the matter to the court without delay.