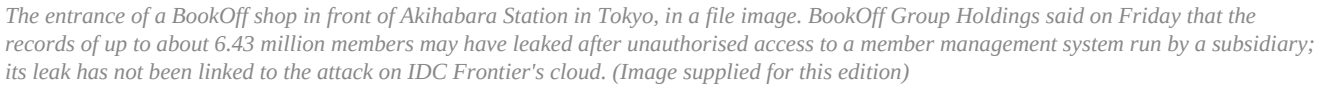


By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor, with Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform



Several of the figures are maximums. BookOff said

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

The prize will be presented in Oslo on December 10. President Donald Trump, whom Ms Takaichi had said she would nominate, according to the White House, was not chosen.

WEATHER — TOKYO



26°C

Low 16°C · Sunny



Sapporo

23°



Osaka

29°



Fukuoka

25°



Naha

30°

Sunny over most of Japan; 29°C in Kyoto, Osaka and Matsue, 30°C in Naha. Koguma very strong by early Sunday, about 500 km east of Chichijima early Monday. Nolo extratropical by Monday. Full weather, Page 13.

- Data: JR East says about 6.09 million records kept on IDC Frontier's cloud may have leaked; BookOff, Daiichi Kosho, Skyticket and Lawson report separate breaches.
- Nobel: the Peace Prize goes to Navi Pillay, 85, former ICC judge and UN human rights chief.
- ICC: Washington sanctions the court itself; Takaichi is deeply concerned, and Japan joins seven countries in backing the court.
- Politics: the food tax cut bill goes to the Diet; the prime minister puts the saving at about 36,000 yen per person a year.
- Markets: the Nikkei ends 11 yen lower at 69,030.92 after a morning fall of nearly 900 yen on reports about OpenAI. TOPIX up 13.35.
- Sport: the Climax Series opens at 2 p.m.; Michihiro Arai takes world judo silver at 100 kg.

- No. 29 (Koguma): very strong by Sunday.
- About 500 km east of Chichijima Monday.
- No. 28 (Nolo): extratropical by Monday.
- No landfall on the main islands.

- 2 p.m.: Climax Series begins.
- From 8 p.m.: slight sea-level changes.
- Tokyo sunny, 26 degrees.

MARKETS	
Nikkei 225	69,030.92 ▼ 11.19
TOPIX	4,104.81 ▲ 13.35
Yen (NY)	157.9 per \$
US 10-year	5.23%
NY crude	\$90.78
Nasdaq (Thu)	▼ 1.25%
BOJ policy rate	1.25%

- Koguma: the map and the bulletins, Page 3.
- Food tax cut goes to the Diet, Page 5.
- Pillay: from Durban to Oslo, Page 7.
- Washington sanctions the ICC itself, Page 6.
- JR East: what was on the cloud, Page 9.
- Skyticket: 14.64 million records, Page 10.
- Influenza at advisory level, Page 14.
- The Climax Series opens today, Page 16.
- Nobel week in review, Page 17.
- Editorial: The hail keeps falling, Page 19.

- Sun. Oct. 11: judo mixed team; new moon.
- Mon. 12: Sports Day; Izumo Ekiden.
- Tue.-Wed.: rain from a front.
- Wed. 14: final stages begin.

- Fri.: peace, Navi Pillay.
- Mon.: economic sciences.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

FROM PAGE 1

JR East Says 6.09 Million Records May Have Leaked in the Cloud Attack, as BookOff, Big Echo's Operator and Skyticket Report Separate Breaches Running to Millions More

Continued from Page 1

Some customers are not waiting. Six Apart, the blogging software company, said it was moving 31 servers to the cloud of Sakura Internet. Ibaraki Prefecture's website and services of Kodaira, a city in western Tokyo, were among the public services affected.

A record year

Security companies had counted 506 leak incidents this year by Wednesday, the most on record, the Yomiuri Shimbun reported, and the announcements have continued since. The newspaper also reported concern that leaked records could be combined with the help of artificial intelligence into fuller profiles of individuals.

That is the danger that matters most to customers. An e-mail address on its own is of limited use to a criminal. Matched with a date of birth from one leak, a telephone number from another and a home address from a third, it becomes the raw material of a convincing fraud.

TYPHOONS

Ogasawara Faces Koguma's Closest Approach Early Monday: Swell First, Then the Question of How Close the Storm Comes

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

For the roughly 2,500 people of the Ogasawara Islands, the weekend will be spent watching Typhoon No. 29, Koguma, which is forecast to make its closest approach early on Monday.

The Japan Meteorological Agency expects the storm to be about 500 km east of Chichijima at 3 a.m. on Monday, a strong typhoon with a central pressure of 960 hPa and maximum winds of 40 m/s.

At that distance the islands are expected to lie outside the area that could have storm-force winds, according to the agency's forecast. But forecasts several days ahead carry uncertainty, and the circle within which the centre is expected to lie widens with time.

Swell first

The first effect will be the sea. Weathernews said high waves would reach the Ogasawara Islands in the second half of the three-day weekend, after the Izu Islands and the Pacific coast of the Kanto region at its start.

Swell from a powerful typhoon can travel far ahead of the storm, and arrives on beaches and harbour walls under clear skies.

The ship

The islands have no airport, and their link with Tokyo is the passenger ship Ogasawara Maru, which takes about a day to make the crossing. Its schedule is often changed when a typhoon approaches, and residents and visitors should check with the operator before travelling.

Two storms in a week

Typhoon No. 28, Nolo, is passing far to their north-east and has weakened to a tropical storm, so Koguma is now the storm that matters.

Islanders are used to typhoons. Houses are built to withstand them, and the routine of securing boats, checking supplies and following the bulletins is a familiar one.

Fishing boats are likely to stay in harbour once the swell builds, and visitors whose plans depend on the sea, for dolphin and whale watching or diving, should expect changes.

What to watch

The key information over the weekend will be the agency's updated forecasts of Koguma's track and size. If the track shifts west, or the area of gales widens, warnings for the islands will follow.

Anyone on the islands should keep away from the coast while the swell is running, and keep a radio or phone charged in case power is cut.

Each company has warned customers to treat with suspicion any e-mail, text message or telephone call that claims to come from it. Those whose password hashes were taken have been urged to change their passwords, above all where the same password is used for other services.

The announcements came on the eve of a three-day weekend, when many customers will be travelling, shopping and booking online, and so receiving exactly the kinds of message that fraudsters imitate.

The government's active cyber defence laws, in force since October 1, allow the authorities to neutralise servers used in serious attacks, but the monitoring of communications on which the system depends is not due to begin until next autumn. For the millions of customers now waiting for notices from the companies, the first line of defence is their own caution.

TYPHOONS

Strong, Very Strong, Violent: How Japan Grades Typhoons, and Why Its Wind Speeds Look Lower Than America's

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Koguma is a strong typhoon today and is forecast to become very strong by early Sunday. The words have precise meanings.

In Japan a tropical cyclone in the western North Pacific becomes a typhoon when its maximum sustained winds reach about 17 metres per second, or 34 knots. Below that it is a tropical depression.

The Japan Meteorological Agency then grades typhoons by strength. A strong typhoon has winds of 33 m/s or more, a very strong typhoon 44 m/s or more, and a violent typhoon 54 m/s or more.

It also grades them by size, measured by the radius of gales. A large typhoon has gales of 15 m/s or more extending 500 km from the centre, and a very large one 800 km.

International names

Internationally the agency, which serves as the regional centre for the western North Pacific, uses a different set of terms. A storm with winds of 34 to 47 knots is a tropical storm, one of 48 to 63 knots a severe tropical storm, and one of 64 knots or more a typhoon.

That is why the maps in today's edition describe Nolo as a tropical storm. In everyday Japanese it is still called a typhoon, a term that covers all three international grades.

Ten minutes or one

Japanese and American wind figures are not directly comparable. The agency uses the average wind over ten minutes, while American forecasters use one minute.

A one-minute average is higher than a ten-minute one for the same storm, so a typhoon described here with winds of 45 m/s would carry a higher figure in an American bulletin.

The scale in practice

The strength of a typhoon is only part of its danger. A weaker, slower storm can bring more rain than a strong, fast one, and storm surges depend on the shape of the coast as much as on the wind.

The agency's warnings for each area, not the label of the storm, are the guide to action.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Food tax cut goes to the Diet, Page 5.

Pillay: from Durban to Oslo, Page 7.

Washington sanctions the ICC itself, Page 6.

JR East: what was on the cloud, Page 9.

Skyticket: 14.64 million records, Page 10.

Influenza at advisory level, Page 14.

TYPHOONS

Why Typhoons Turn North in Autumn: The Pacific High, the Westerlies and the Curve That Keeps Most Storms Away From Tokyo

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

Both storms on today's map show the same pattern: a long journey westward across the Pacific, then a turn to the north and finally to the north-east.

Typhoons have little power to choose their own path. They are steered by the winds around them, above all by the great area of high pressure over the North Pacific, known in Japan as the Pacific high.

Air flows clockwise around the high. On its southern side the winds blow from east to west, carrying storms westward; on its western edge they turn north; and further north, the prevailing westerlies take over and carry storms north-east.

The autumn curve

In summer the high is strong and extends far to the west, so storms can travel a long way towards China or Okinawa before turning.

In autumn the high weakens and retreats eastward, and the westerlies move south. Storms tend to turn earlier, often over the waters east of Japan, as Koguma and Nolo are forecast to do.

When the turning point lies close to the main islands, however, an autumn storm can be carried rapidly towards them, and some of the most damaging typhoons have struck in September and October.

Weakening in the north

As a typhoon moves north it passes over cooler water, which supplies less of the heat and moisture that power it, and it meets stronger winds aloft that tilt and disrupt its structure.

It then often becomes an extratropical low, the fate forecast for Nolo by Monday and for Koguma by Thursday.

Forecasting the turn

The timing of the turn is one of the hardest parts of a typhoon forecast, because it depends on the interaction of the storm with large weather systems thousands of kilometres away.

That is why the forecast circles on the map widen with time, and why forecasts are updated every few hours as a storm approaches.

TYPHOONS

Swell Reaches the Izu Islands and the Kanto Coast at the Start of the Long Weekend; Even on a Sunny Day the Sea Is Dangerous

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

Swell from the two storms in the Pacific is reaching the Izu Islands and the Pacific coast of the Kanto region at the start of the three-day weekend, and the Ogasawara Islands will be affected in its second half, Weathernews said.

The forecast for the main islands is fine, and many people will head for the coast. The sea, the company warned, is dangerous even when the sky is clear.

Why the waves arrive first

Swell is made by wind blowing over the ocean far away. Once formed, the long, regular waves travel faster than the storm itself and can cross thousands of kilometres with little loss of energy.

When they reach shallow water near a coast they slow, steepen and grow, breaking with a force that can sweep people off rocks and breakwaters.

Swell often comes in sets, with several larger waves after a period of smaller ones. Anglers and walkers caught off guard by a sudden set are among the typical victims of typhoon seasons.

Where to be careful

Breakwaters, rocky shores and river mouths are the most dangerous places. Beaches that face the open Pacific, from the Boso Peninsula in Chiba to the Shonan coast in Kanagawa and the Izu Peninsula in Shizuoka, can see large surf.

Lifeguards have left most beaches after the summer season, and help can be slow to arrive.

Ferries

Ferries to the Izu Islands may be delayed or cancelled when the swell is high. Travellers should check with

the operators on the morning of departure.

A distant earthquake

The Japan Meteorological Agency has also said that slight changes in sea level, of less than 20 centimetres, may occur on Japan's coasts from about 8 p.m. today after a large earthquake in Panama. No damage is expected, but it is one more reason to keep a respectful distance from the water's edge tonight.

The simplest advice is the oldest: watch the sea from a safe distance, and never turn your back on it.

TYPHOONS

Nolo Weakens to a Tropical Storm, Passes Far South-East of Tokyo on Sunday and Becomes an Extratropical Low by Monday

By the Weather Desk

Typhoon No. 28, Nolo, has weakened to a tropical storm and is moving away from the Ogasawara Islands, the Japan Meteorological Agency said on Saturday.

At 6 a.m. its central pressure was 994 hPa, with maximum winds of 23 m/s near the centre. It was about 590 km north-east of Chichijima, moving north-north-west at 15 km/h, and gales reached 500 km to its north-west.

The agency forecasts it to weaken as it turns north and then north-east, passing about 730 km east-south-east of Tokyo early on Sunday, and to become an extratropical low by Monday.

In the bulletin issued at about 4 a.m., its position at 3 a.m. was given as 29.9 degrees north, 147.0 degrees east, with a forecast position about 720 km east-south-east of Tokyo at 3 a.m. on Sunday.

No storm-force winds

Nolo no longer has an area of storm-force winds, the agency said. Its winds are now below the threshold of 25 m/s.

Its gales, however, cover a wide area, and the seas around it remain rough. Ships in the waters east of the Izu Islands and the Ogasawara Islands should take care.

A long track

Nolo has travelled a long way. On the agency's map, its track can be followed westward across the Pacific from early in the week.

It crossed the Pacific on a westward course before slowing and turning, a path typical of storms steered by the edge of the Pacific high-pressure system.

Effects on land

The storm is not expected to affect the main islands directly, but its swell, combined with that of Typhoon No. 29, will keep waves high on Pacific coasts over the weekend.

Fishermen, surfers and anglers should take particular care. High waves can arrive suddenly, even under blue skies.

TYPHOONS

The Two Storms at 3 a.m. Saturday

By the Weather Desk

NO. 29, KOGUMA: Strong typhoon near Minamitorishima, 20.8N 152.8E.

MOVING: West-north-west at 25 km/h.

STRENGTH: 970 hPa; winds 40 m/s, gusts 55 m/s.

WINDS: Storm force 85 km all round; gales 390 km north, 280 km south.

OUTLOOK: Very strong, 955 hPa, by early Sunday; about 500 km east of Chichijima early Monday; extratropical by early Thursday.

NO. 28, NOLO: Tropical storm near the Ogasawara Islands, 29.9N 147.0E.

MOVING: West-north-west at 15 km/h.

STRENGTH: 994 hPa; winds 23 m/s, gusts 35 m/s.

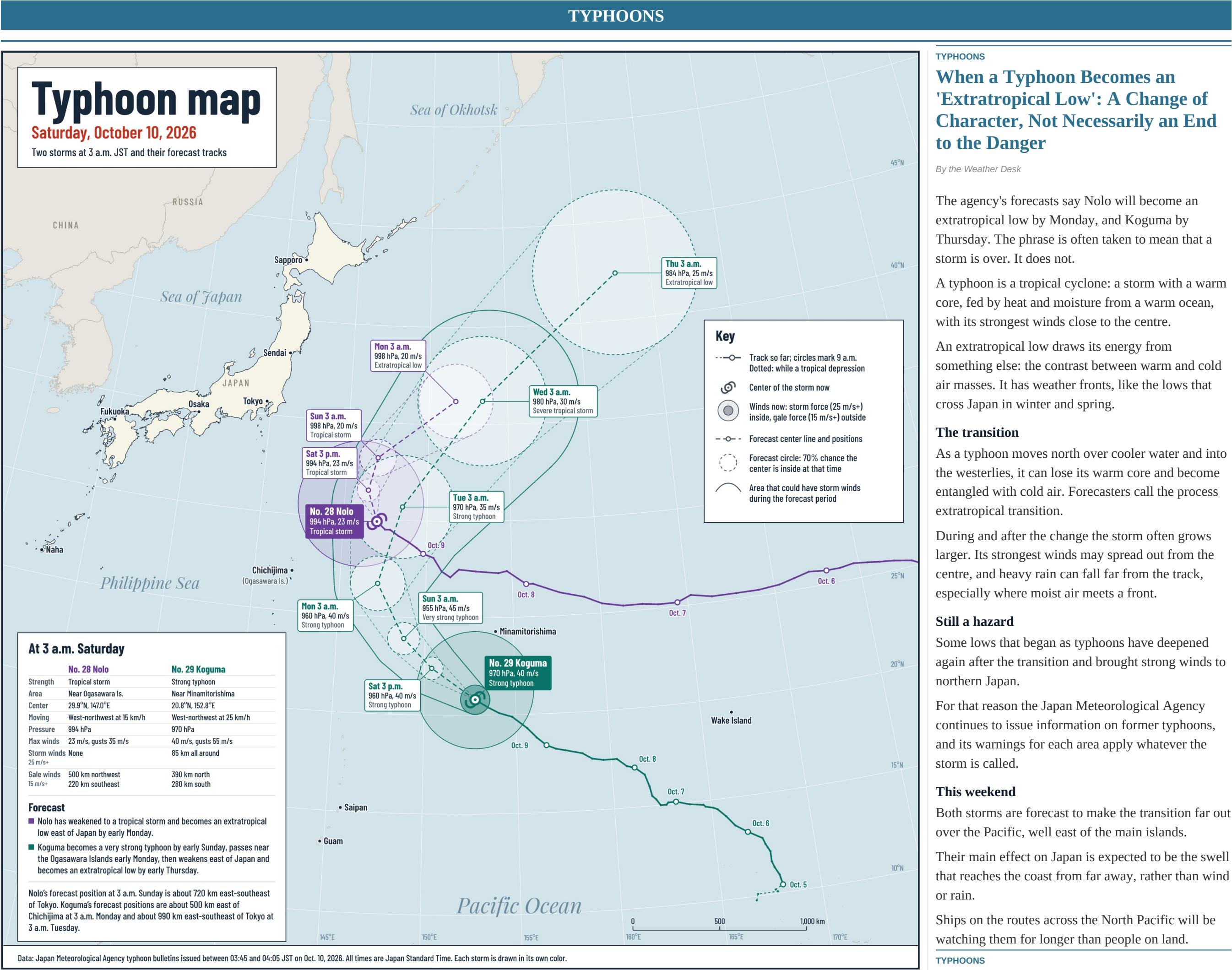
WINDS: No storm-force area; gales 500 km north-west, 220 km south-east.

OUTLOOK: About 720 km east-south-east of Tokyo early Sunday; extratropical by early Monday.

CHICHIJIMA: West of the area that could see storm-force winds from Koguma.

MAIN ISLANDS: No landfall forecast; swell on Pacific coasts.

SOURCE: Japan Meteorological Agency bulletins, 3:45 to 4:05 a.m.



Two storms at 3 a.m. on Saturday and their forecast tracks, in the map supplied for this edition: Typhoon No. 29 (Koguma), a strong typhoon near Minamitorishima, forecast to be very strong by early Sunday, to pass about 500 km east of Chichijima early on Monday and to become an extratropical low by early Thursday; and No. 28 (Nolo), now a tropical storm near the Ogasawara Islands, forecast to be about 720 km east-south-east of Tokyo early on Sunday and extratropical by early Monday. The shaded discs are each storm's present areas of storm-force winds and gales; each dashed circle is where the centre is expected to be at that time with a probability of 70 per cent; the outlines enclose the areas that could have storm winds. (Data: Japan Meteorological Agency typhoon bulletins issued between 3:45 and 4:05 a.m. on October 10)

TYPHOONS

Koguma, a Strong Typhoon, Is Forecast to Be Very Strong by Early Sunday and to Pass About 500 km East of Chichijima Early Monday; Nolo Weakens to a Tropical Storm

By the Weather Desk

Typhoon No. 29, Koguma, was a strong typhoon at 3 a.m. on Saturday near Minamitorishima, the country's easternmost island, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency.

Its centre was at 20.8 degrees north, 152.8 degrees east, and it was moving west-north-west at 25 km/h.

Its central pressure was 970 hectopascals, with maximum sustained winds of 40 metres per second and gusts of 55 m/s. Storm-force winds of 25 m/s or more extended 85 km in all directions from the centre, and gales of 15 m/s or more reached 390 km to the north and 280 km to the south.

Koguma's forecast

The agency expects Koguma to strengthen further. By 3 p.m. on Saturday its pressure is forecast to fall to 960 hPa, with winds of 40 m/s, and by 3 a.m. on Sunday to 955 hPa, with winds of 45 m/s, making it a very strong typhoon.

It is then forecast to turn north and pass near the Ogasawara Islands early on Monday. At 3 a.m. Monday it is expected to be about 500 km east of Chichijima, a strong typhoon with a pressure of 960 hPa and winds of 40 m/s.

By 3 a.m. Tuesday it is forecast to be about 990 km east-south-east of Tokyo, at 970 hPa with winds of 35

m/s, and by 3 a.m. Wednesday a severe tropical storm of 980 hPa and 30 m/s, weakening east of Japan.

By 3 a.m. Thursday it is expected to have become an extratropical low, with a pressure of 984 hPa and winds of 25 m/s.

Nolo

Typhoon No. 28, Nolo, has weakened to a tropical storm. At 3 a.m. on Saturday it was near the Ogasawara Islands, at 29.9 degrees north, 147.0 degrees east, moving west-north-west at 15 km/h.

Its pressure was 994 hPa, with maximum winds of 23 m/s and gusts of 35 m/s. It no longer has an area of storm-force winds; gales extend 500 km to the north-west and 220 km to the south-east.

It is forecast to remain a tropical storm of 994 hPa through Saturday afternoon, to be about 720 km east-south-east of Tokyo at 3 a.m. on Sunday, with a pressure of 998 hPa and winds of 20 m/s, and to become an extratropical low east of Japan by 3 a.m. on Monday.

Reading the map

The map shows each storm's track so far, from October 5 for Koguma and October 6 for Nolo, and its forecast positions. Each dashed circle is the area

within which the centre is expected to lie at that time with a probability of 70 per cent; the circles widen as the forecast reaches further ahead.

The solid outline around each forecast track encloses the area that could have storm-force winds during the forecast period. On the map, Chichijima lies to the west of Koguma's outline, but the islands are close enough for swell and high waves.

The shaded discs around each centre show the present areas of storm-force winds and of gales. Koguma's, near Minamitorishima, includes a small dark inner disc of storm-force winds; Nolo's, larger and paler, is a disc of gales only.

The main islands

Neither storm is forecast to reach the main islands. The fine weather over most of the country is expected to last through the three-day weekend, but swells from both storms are reaching the Pacific coast.

The map is based on the agency's typhoon bulletins issued between 3:45 and 4:05 a.m. on Saturday. All times are Japan Standard Time.

TYPHOONS

When a Typhoon Becomes an 'Extratropical Low': A Change of Character, Not Necessarily an End to the Danger

By the Weather Desk

The agency's forecasts say Nolo will become an extratropical low by Monday, and Koguma by Thursday. The phrase is often taken to mean that a storm is over. It does not.

A typhoon is a tropical cyclone: a storm with a warm core, fed by heat and moisture from a warm ocean, with its strongest winds close to the centre.

An extratropical low draws its energy from something else: the contrast between warm and cold air masses. It has weather fronts, like the lows that cross Japan in winter and spring.

The transition

As a typhoon moves north over cooler water and into the westerlies, it can lose its warm core and become entangled with cold air. Forecasters call the process extratropical transition.

During and after the change the storm often grows larger. Its strongest winds may spread out from the centre, and heavy rain can fall far from the track, especially where moist air meets a front.

Still a hazard

Some lows that began as typhoons have deepened again after the transition and brought strong winds to northern Japan.

For that reason the Japan Meteorological Agency continues to issue information on former typhoons, and its warnings for each area apply whatever the storm is called.

This weekend

Both storms are forecast to make the transition far out over the Pacific, well east of the main islands.

Their main effect on Japan is expected to be the swell that reaches the coast from far away, rather than wind or rain.

Ships on the routes across the North Pacific will be watching them for longer than people on land.

TYPHOONS

Minamitorishima, Where Koguma Was at 3 a.m.: Japan's Easternmost Island, a Triangle of Coral Far Out in the Pacific

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Typhoon No. 29, Koguma, was near Minamitorishima at 3 a.m. on Saturday. Few Japanese have ever seen the island, but it matters a great deal to the country.

Minamitorishima, also known as Marcus Island, is Japan's easternmost territory. It is a small, flat, triangular coral island far to the south-east of Tokyo, and the only Japanese island that sits on the Pacific Plate.

It has no civilian population. The only people there are staff of the Japan Meteorological Agency, who run a weather station, and personnel of the Maritime Self-Defense Force.

An economic zone

Because it is Japanese territory, it gives Japan an exclusive economic zone of about 430,000 square kilometres around it, a vast area of ocean and seabed.

In 2013 Japanese researchers reported finding deep-sea mud rich in rare-earth elements in that zone. Rare earths are essential for magnets in electric motors and electronics, and China dominates their supply.

The government has supported research into whether the mud could be recovered from depths of several thousand metres, a technical challenge on a scale never attempted.

A weather outpost

The island's weather station sends observations that help forecasters track storms crossing the Pacific, including this week's.

For the staff stationed there, a passing typhoon is a familiar event: they take shelter in reinforced buildings and keep the observations going.

Koguma

The typhoon was forecast to move away from the island to the north-west and north, passing east of the

TYPHOONS

Ogasawara Islands early on Monday.

TYPHOONS

The Ogasawara Islands: A World Heritage Site a Day's Voyage From Tokyo, Returned to Japan in 1968

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

The Ogasawara Islands lie about 1,000 kilometres south of Tokyo, yet they are part of Tokyo Metropolis, administered as the village of Ogasawara.

Only two islands are inhabited by civilians: Chichijima, the main island, and Hahajima to its south. About 2,500 people live there.

History

The islands were settled in the 19th century by a mixed community that included Westerners and Pacific Islanders before Japan established its claim. After the Second World War they were under American administration until their return to Japan on June 26, 1968.

Descendants of the early settlers still live on Chichijima, and the islands' culture reflects that varied past.

Nature

Because the islands have never been connected to a continent, their plants, snails, insects and birds evolved in isolation, and many species are found nowhere else. They are sometimes called the Galapagos of the Orient.

UNESCO added them to its World Heritage list in 2011 for their natural value.

Getting there

The islands have no airport. The passenger ship Ogasawara Maru makes the voyage from Tokyo in about a day, typically leaving every six days or so, and visitors usually stay until the next sailing.

An airport has been debated for decades, weighed against the cost and the risk to the islands' unique environment.

Typhoons

Typhoons are a regular part of island life. Houses are built to withstand strong winds, and residents follow the forecasts closely each autumn.

This weekend they are watching Koguma, forecast to pass about 500 km to the east early on Monday.

TYPHOONS

The Three-Day Weekend: Sunshine on the Main Islands Through Sports Day, Then Rain From a Front on Tuesday and Wednesday

By the Weather Desk

The three-day weekend that ends with Sports Day on Monday is expected to bring fine weather to most of the main islands, while the two storms remain far out over the Pacific.

From Saturday to Monday, sunny or cloudy skies are expected from northern to western Japan, and rain is forecast for Tuesday and Wednesday as a front crosses the country, according to the weekly forecast.

Saturday

Saturday is sunny over most of the country, with highs of 29 degrees in Kyoto, Osaka and Matsue and 30 in Naha. Tokyo expects 26 degrees and Sapporo 23.

Fukuoka is cloudy until the evening, and Kagoshima cloudy with some rain in the morning.

Outdoors

The weekend is a busy one for events. The Climax Series opens today in Tokyo and Tokorozawa, both under roofs, and Monday brings the Izumo Ekiden, the first of the season's big university relay races, in Shimane Prefecture.

Autumn festivals continue in many towns, and the weather favours trips to the mountains, where the leaves are beginning to turn in the north.

Cautions

Swell from the typhoons will make Pacific beaches dangerous, and slight changes in sea level after the earthquake in Panama may occur from this evening.

Influenza has reached advisory level nationwide, and crowds at stations and events give the virus opportunities. Washing hands and staying at home when ill are simple precautions.

Warm for October

Temperatures are above the usual for mid-October in many places. The Japan Meteorological Agency said on Friday that the El Niño in the Pacific has reached a record strength, and it expects warm air to cover Japan more easily this autumn and winter.

The coming front will bring a change, with rain, cooler air and a more autumnal feel by the middle of next week.

TYPHOONS

At Sea and on the Coast

By the Weather Desk

IZU ISLANDS AND KANTO: Swell from the start of the long weekend.

OGASAWARA: High waves in the second half of the weekend.

KOGUMA: About 500 km east of Chichijima early Monday.

NOLO: About 720 km east-south-east of Tokyo early Sunday.

SEA LEVEL: Slight changes possible from about 8 p.m. today after the Panama earthquake.

BREAKWATERS: Keep off when waves are high.

FERRIES: Check before travelling.

BEACHES: Most lifeguards have left for the season.

FISHING: Avoid rocky shores and river mouths.

THE RULE: Never turn your back on the sea.

POLITICS

Takaichi: Sanctions on the ICC Are Not Compatible With Japan's Position; Tokyo Will Support the Court and Keep Working on Washington

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said on Friday night that the American sanctions on the International Criminal Court were not compatible with Japan's position and that she was deeply concerned.

In a post on X, she wrote that Japan had consistently valued the rule of law in the international community and supported the court, which plays that role, and that it would provide the support needed for the court to fulfil its proper role and functions.

Japan would also continue to work on the United States, she wrote, the Asahi Shimbun reported. Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi said Japan would keep in close communication with the court's president, Tomoko Akane, and with other countries.

Earlier, Japan had joined Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Britain in a joint statement by their foreign ministers saying that they regretted and strongly disagreed with the sanctions.

A Japanese president

For Japan the matter is unusually close to home. Ms Akane, a former Japanese prosecutor, has led the court since March 2024, the first Japanese to do so. Washington placed her under sanctions in August over the court's arrest warrant for Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, according to AFP.

Japan joined the court in 2007 and is the largest contributor to its budget. Its governments have presented support for the court as part of their commitment to the rule of law in international affairs, a theme that runs through Japanese diplomacy.

The ally

The dispute is a delicate one for a government that regards the alliance with the United States as the foundation of its diplomacy and defence.

Tokyo's approach has been to state its disagreement plainly while keeping the conversation with Washington open. The prime minister's post followed that pattern: a clear objection, a promise of support for the court, and a commitment to keep talking to the Americans rather than to retaliate.

The sanctions provide a grace period of 180 days. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said the period gives the court and its 125 member states a chance to address American concerns, and that the measures could be adjusted.

Whether Japan can help find a way through those six months, without abandoning either the court or the ally, is the test the episode sets for its diplomacy.

POLITICS

'A Very Honourable Sanction': Takaichi E-mailed Furuya After China Penalised Him, the LDP Veteran Says Before Flying to Taiwan

By William | Senior Political Analyst

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi sent an e-mail to the Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker Keiji Furuya after China imposed sanctions on him this spring, calling them a very honourable sanction, Mr Furuya said on Friday.

He disclosed the message to reporters at Haneda Airport before leaving for Taiwan, where he is to attend the celebrations of the island's National Day today, Jiji Press and Kyodo News reported.

Mr Furuya described the e-mail as an example of the prime minister's wit. To be singled out and remembered by a great power was itself an honour, he said, according to the reports.

He stressed that it would not affect relations between Japan and China.

The sanctions

China announced the sanctions in March, citing Mr Furuya's repeated visits to Taiwan. They bar him from entering China and freeze any assets he holds there.

Mr Furuya, a member of the House of Representatives, chairs the Japan-ROC Diet Members' Consultative Council, the cross-party group of lawmakers who support relations with Taiwan.

Sanctions of this kind have little practical effect on Japanese politicians, few of whom hold assets in China. Their purpose is to signal displeasure and to discourage others.

Double Ten

October 10 is Taiwan's National Day, known as Double Ten, which marks the uprising in Wuchang in 1911 that led to the fall of the Qing dynasty. Japanese lawmakers have attended the celebrations in Taipei for many years.

Beijing regards such visits as interference in its internal affairs. Japan's position, set out in the joint communique of 1972, is that it fully understands and respects China's position that Taiwan is an inalienable part of its territory, while keeping non-governmental working relations with Taiwan.

China reacted angrily last November when Ms Takaichi told the Diet that an emergency over Taiwan involving the use of force could constitute a situation threatening Japan's survival, the condition under which Japan may exercise collective self-defence.

Whether Beijing chooses to respond to the e-mail, or to Mr Furuya's visit, will become clear in the coming days.

POLITICS

Okinawa Assembly Protests Over the Naha Killing, Saying the Case Shows the Limits of Discipline and Training in the American Forces

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

The Okinawa Prefectural Assembly on Friday passed a resolution and a written opinion protesting over the killing of a woman in Naha, for which a member of the United States Marine Corps has been arrested.

The texts say the case shows the limits of maintaining discipline through education and training, and that the American forces are not functioning as an organisation, according to reports.

They demand an apology and compensation for the victim's family, full co-operation with the investigation and a revision of the Status of Forces Agreement, and are addressed to both the Japanese and the American governments.

They were passed by a majority. Two independent members voted against them on the ground that they did not go far enough.

The case

A 20-year-old lance corporal from the Futenma air station was arrested on October 4 on suspicion of the robbery and murder of a woman aged 39 in a hotel in Naha. He denies the allegation.

The American forces suspended operations for three days and imposed a curfew on their personnel from

midnight to 5 a.m. for 30 days, which took effect on Friday.

The governor, Genta Koja, told Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi on Wednesday of his strong indignation. She replied that measures to prevent a recurrence would be discussed between Japan and the United States.

A familiar demand

The assembly has passed resolutions of this kind many times after crimes involving American personnel. The call for a revision of the agreement itself, rather than changes in how it is applied, is a long-standing one in Okinawa.

The Japanese and American governments have preferred to improve the agreement's operation through supplementary agreements and changes in practice, arguing that this is quicker and more flexible than reopening the treaty text.

Okinawa, which makes up well under 1 per cent of Japan's land area, hosts about 70 per cent of the land used exclusively by American forces in the country, a burden its leaders raise in every such case.

Prosecutors must decide within 23 days of the arrest whether to indict the suspect. The assembly's texts will be delivered to the two governments in the coming days.

POLITICS

Parties Ask Platforms to Act on Paid-for Views, AI Content and Bots in Election Posts, Before New Rules Take Effect in March

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

A council of ruling and opposition parties on Friday set out the measures it wants social media companies to take against false information during elections, including steps on the schemes that pay posters according to the number of views.

The requests also cover content generated by artificial intelligence, the bots that amplify posts automatically, and priority display for the official sites of candidates and parties.

They are to be reflected in guidelines being drawn up by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications under the amended Information Distribution Platform Act. The ministry is expected to issue the guidelines by the end of the year, according to reports.

The amendment, submitted by six parties, passed in July and takes effect on March 1 next year, in time for the unified local elections in April.

It requires platform operators to take necessary measures against harmful false information, but it carries no penalties and leaves the specific steps to the operators.

No deletions

The council made clear that it was not asking operators to delete individual posts. Freedom of expression must be respected, it said, and the measures must not cause excessive chilling of expression.

Why money matters

Monetisation is at the centre of the concern. When a platform shares advertising revenue with posters according to views, sensational and false claims can become a business, and elections, which draw large audiences, become an opportunity.

Several recent elections, among them the Tokyo gubernatorial election and the Hyogo gubernatorial election of 2024, set off intense debate over the role of social media and the spread of unverified claims.

Candidates and their supporters have increasingly used video sites and short clips to reach voters directly, bypassing newspapers and television. That has opened politics to new voices, and it has also allowed claims to spread to millions of people before anyone has checked them.

A difficult balance

Measures aimed at false information can easily catch legitimate criticism, and a government that decides what is false holds a power that democracies are right to be wary of. The council's emphasis on platform design rather than deletion reflects that concern.

The ministry's draft will show how far operators are expected to go, and the unified local elections will be the first test.

POLITICS



Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi at the rostrum of the House of Representatives, in a file image. She told the House of Councillors on Friday that cutting the consumption tax on food would reduce the burden by about 36,000 yen per person a year. (Photo: WPM Productions)

POLITICS

The Food Tax Cut Goes to the Diet: Takaichi Says It Will Save About 36,000 Yen a Person a Year and Should Show Up in Shop Prices

By Michael Hayes | Deputy Editor, Politics & Policy

The cabinet on Friday approved and sent to the Diet a bill to cut the consumption tax on food from 8 per cent to 1 per cent for two years from April 2027, the central promise of Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's economic programme.

Answering questions in the House of Councillors the same day, Ms Takaichi said the cut would reduce the burden on households by about 36,000 yen per person a year, and that the lower rate would basically be reflected in prices.

The ruling parties want the bill enacted during the current extraordinary session. The opposition has pressed the government on how the lost revenue will be made up, and on what happens when the two years end.

The plan sets a direction for that, too. After the temporary cut, the government intends to move to benefits linked to income, paid once a year from fiscal 2030, Nikkei reported.

The local share

The consumption tax is shared between the national government and local authorities. Of the present 8 per cent rate on food, 6.24 points are national tax and 1.76 points go to prefectures and municipalities as the local consumption tax.

A cut in the rate therefore reduces local revenue as well as national revenue. Local governments asked over the summer for the gap to be filled from other

sources, and how it will be done is one of the questions raised in the Diet this week.

In her policy speech on Monday, Ms Takaichi said the cut would give households breathing room and that it would not be financed by issuing deficit-covering bonds.

Will shoppers see it?

Whether a lower tax reaches the shelf is not automatic. Retailers set their own prices, and a cut can be absorbed into margins, particularly when the costs of ingredients, energy and wages are rising, as they are now.

The prime minister's assurance that the reduction would basically be reflected in prices is a statement of expectation. The government has not yet said how it would monitor prices after the change.

The figure of 36,000 yen is an average. Households that spend more on food gain more in yen; lower-income households, which spend a larger share of what they earn on food, gain more as a proportion of their income.

The bill now goes to committee, where the questions about funding will be asked again, at greater length. The photograph shows Ms Takaichi at the rostrum of the House of Representatives, in a file image.

other than meals eaten in restaurants, and for newspapers delivered on subscription at least twice a week. Alcohol is taxed at the standard rate.

Each rate combines a national and a local portion. Of the standard 10 per cent, 7.8 points are national consumption tax and 2.2 points local consumption tax; of the reduced 8 per cent, 6.24 points are national and 1.76 points local.

The local consumption tax is collected with the national tax and then distributed to the prefectures, which pass half of it on to municipalities, broadly according to population and other measures.

A fixed share of the national portion also flows to local authorities through the local allocation tax, the system that evens out revenue between richer and poorer areas.

Two hits

Because of these links, a cut in the food rate reduces local revenue in two ways: directly, through a smaller local consumption tax, and indirectly, through a smaller pool for the allocation tax.

The national portion of the consumption tax is earmarked by law for social security: pensions, medical care, nursing care and measures to support families with children.

Prefectures and municipalities run much of that system in practice, from health insurance for the self-employed to nursing care and childcare. A shortfall in their revenue is felt in services residents use every day.

The question

That is why the funding of the cut is not only a national question. Local governments asked this summer for any lost revenue to be made up from other sources.

The government's bill would bring the rate on food to

1 per cent for two years from April 2027. The answer to how the gap is filled will be found in the budget for fiscal 2027, which is compiled in December.

POLITICS

Upper-House Opposition Agrees to Demand Yana's Resignation and Weighs a Censure Motion; the Minister Is Rebuked at an LDP Meeting

By the Politics Desk

Six opposition parties in the House of Councillors agreed on Friday to demand the resignation of the agriculture minister, Kazuo Yana, and to consider submitting a censure motion against him, Jiji Press reported.

Mr Yana was also criticised by fellow lawmakers at a meeting of the Liberal Democratic Party, and apologised, according to reports.

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi again ruled out dismissing him. Answering questions in the upper house on Friday, she repeated that she wanted him to stay in his post and to work as hard as anyone.

The case concerns remarks Mr Yana made at a party gathering in May, in which he said road budgets for two towns whose mayors had not supported him had been cut drastically. He has withdrawn the remarks and apologised, and denies ever influencing the budgets.

What a censure would mean

A censure motion in the upper house has no legal force. A minister who is censured is not obliged to resign, and the cabinet's standing is not affected in law.

Its effect is political. Opposition parties have in the past refused to take part in deliberations attended by a censured minister, which can slow the progress of bills and committee business.

That matters this session. The government wants the Diet to pass the bill cutting the consumption tax on food, and any delay in the upper house would complicate its timetable.

Pressure from inside

The criticism within the LDP may matter more to Mr Yana than the opposition's demands. Ministers survive attacks from across the chamber more easily than a loss of confidence on their own benches.

The prime minister's calculation, set out on Thursday when she told him to repay the public with his work, is that dismissing him would only encourage the opposition to look for its next target.

The opposition has not said when it would submit a motion. Its timing will probably depend on how Mr Yana's answers go when the budget committees meet.

POLITICS

Censure Motions: What the Upper House Can Do to a Minister, and What It Cannot

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

A censure motion is a resolution in which the House of Councillors declares that it holds a member of the cabinet responsible for a failing. It is the upper house's sharpest instrument against the government, and it has no legal force.

The constitution gives the House of Representatives alone the power to bring down a cabinet. Under Article 69, if the lower house passes a motion of no confidence, the cabinet must resign unless the house is dissolved within ten days.

The upper house has no equivalent power. Its censure motions express a view; they do not compel anyone to do anything.

A record of use

The first censure motion against a minister to pass under the present constitution was adopted in 1998, against Fukushima Nukaga, then head of the Defence Agency, over a scandal in its procurement office. He resigned the following month.

In 2008 the house censured a prime minister for the first time, Yasuo Fukuda. Taro Aso and Yoshihiko Noda were also censured, in 2009 and 2012. None of them left office as a direct result.

In 2011 the house censured two ministers in Mr Noda's cabinet, the defence minister, Yasuo Ichikawa, and the consumer affairs minister, Kenji Yamaoka. Both were replaced in a reshuffle the following month.

Why it still matters

In practice a censured minister can find it hard to do the job. Opposition parties have sometimes refused to take part in deliberations at which the minister appears, holding up bills and committee business.

A censure also gives a prime minister a public reason, if one is wanted, to make a change without appearing to bow to the opposition's earlier demands.

Whether a motion passes depends on how the parties line up in the house on the day of the vote.

For Kazuo Yana, the agriculture minister, the importance of a motion would lie less in its words than in what followed them.

POLITICS

How China Punishes Foreign Politicians: The Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law, and the Japanese Lawmakers It Has Reached

By Michael Hayes | Deputy Editor, Politics & Policy

China's Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law, adopted in June 2021, gives Beijing a legal basis for retaliating against foreign individuals and organisations it accuses of interfering in its internal affairs or supporting sanctions against it.

The measures available include refusing visas or entry, deportation, freezing property in China and barring Chinese companies and individuals from dealing with those named. They can be extended to family members and to organisations linked to the targets.

Who has been targeted

Beijing has used the law and similar measures against American defence companies over arms sales to Taiwan, against members of the United States Congress and against European lawmakers and researchers after the European Union imposed sanctions over the treatment of the Uighurs in Xinjiang.

Japanese politicians have also been named. Last year China imposed sanctions on Seki Hei, a member of the House of Councillors who was born in China and has written critically about it.

In March this year it imposed sanctions on Keiji Furuya, who chairs the cross-party group of Japanese lawmakers supporting relations with Taiwan, citing his repeated visits there.

The effect

For most of those named, the practical effect is small. Few have assets in China or plans to go there.

The purpose is political: to signal displeasure, to deter others from following the same course and to show a domestic audience that Beijing responds.

Japan's view

Japan's government has protested against measures aimed at members of the Diet, regarding them as an attempt to influence the activities of elected lawmakers.

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's private description of the sanctions on Mr Furuya as very honourable, disclosed on Friday, shows how such measures can have the opposite of their intended effect, turning a penalty into a badge.

For Mr Furuya, who left for Taiwan on Friday to attend its National Day, the sanctions have plainly not changed his course.

POLITICS

The Status of Forces Agreement: The 1960 Text That Governs American Troops in Japan, and Why Okinawa Wants It Rewritten

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The Status of Forces Agreement between Japan and the United States was signed in 1960, together with the revised security treaty. It sets the rules under which American forces use bases in Japan and how their personnel are treated under Japanese law.

It has never been formally amended. Changes have been made instead through agreements on how it is applied, and through supplementary agreements on particular subjects.

Criminal cases

Article 17 deals with criminal jurisdiction. In general, Japan has the right to try American personnel for crimes committed off duty, while the United States has the primary right over offences committed in the

POLITICS

course of official duty.

A long-standing grievance concerns custody. Under the agreement, a suspect held by the American side may remain in American custody until indicted by Japanese prosecutors.

After the rape of a schoolgirl in Okinawa by three American servicemen in 1995, the two governments agreed that the United States would give sympathetic consideration to Japanese requests for custody before indictment in cases of murder or rape.

In the Naha case, Japanese police arrested the suspect themselves, so the custody question has not arisen.

Supplementary agreements

In 2015 the two governments signed a supplementary agreement on environmental matters, giving Japanese authorities more access to bases for inspections, and in 2017 one that narrowed the definition of the civilian component covered by the agreement.

Okinawa's demand

Okinawa's leaders argue that such changes depend on American goodwill and can be reversed, and that only a revision of the text itself would put Japanese law and the rights of residents on a firmer footing.

The two governments reply that improvements in practice are quicker and more flexible. The prefectural assembly's resolution on Friday repeated the demand for revision once more.

POLITICS

The Unified Local Elections of April 2027: Why Japan Holds So Many Local Votes at Once, and the First Test of the New Social Media Rules

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Every four years, in April, Japan holds a large share of its elections for governors, mayors and local assemblies on the same days, in what are known as the unified local elections.

The practice began in 1947, when the first local elections under the new constitution were held together. The next round, in April 2027, will be the 21st.

Over the decades the share of elections held in the unified cycle has fallen, because resignations, deaths and mergers of municipalities have moved many contests to other dates. Yokohama's mayoral election on October 18 is one such case. Today only about a quarter of local elections fall in the unified cycle.

Two rounds

The elections are held in two rounds two weeks apart: the first for prefectural governors and assemblies and the mayors and assemblies of the largest cities, the second for other municipalities.

Turnout has been declining for years, and in many smaller towns there are not enough candidates to require a vote at all.

The new rules

The 2027 elections will be the first held under the amended Information Distribution Platform Act, which takes effect on March 1 next year and requires social media companies to take measures against harmful false information.

On Friday the parties set out what they want those measures to include, from steps on paid-for views to the handling of content generated by artificial intelligence.

Why local elections matter

Local governments run schools, welfare, waste collection and disaster preparedness, and spend much of the country's public money.

They are also where many national politicians begin their careers, and where the parties test their strength between general elections.

Whether the new rules make the campaigns cleaner, or merely move the problems elsewhere, will be one of the stories of next spring.

POLITICS

Seven Candidates Contest Yokohama's Mayoral Election After Yamanaka's Resignation; All Oppose a Casino, the Asahi Reports

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

Seven candidates are standing in the election for mayor of Yokohama, which will be decided on October 18 after the resignation of Takeharu Yamanaka over a power harassment problem.

Mr Yamanaka, 54, is among them, seeking a fresh mandate without the backing of any party. He has said he will carry out the policies he promised and make measures against harassment a priority.

All the candidates oppose bringing a casino resort to the city, the Asahi Shimbun reported.

That question decided the election of 2021, when Mr Yamanaka won on a promise to withdraw the city's bid for an integrated resort with a casino at Yamashita Pier. The city withdrew the bid soon afterwards.

The field

Atsumi Harasawa, 59, a lawyer, is backed by the prefectural organisations of the Liberal Democratic Party, the Japan Innovation Party and the Democratic Party for the People, and supported by Komeito's group in the city assembly.

Kazuma Nakatani, 43, a former member of the House of Representatives, is backed by the prefectural federation of the Constitutional Democratic Party. Yuka Asaka, 46, is the Communist Party's candidate, and Atsushi Fukuyama, 37, a company executive, is recommended by Sanseito.

The others are Shoko Fujikawa, 51, the representative of a citizens' group who has campaigned against casino plans, and Shinichiro Baba, 50, a company executive.

The issues

Disaster preparedness, measures against harassment, education costs and the redevelopment of the waterfront are among the issues, together with the question of whether to continue Mr Yamanaka's policies.

The election came at short notice: the resignation took effect less than a month before campaigning began on October 4.

The city had about 3.14 million eligible voters as of September 1, which makes the election one of the largest local contests in the country.

POLITICS

Politics Digest

By the Politics Desk

TAX: The food consumption tax bill goes to the Diet; the prime minister puts the saving at about 36,000 yen per person a year.

ICC: The prime minister says American sanctions on the court are not compatible with Japan's position and that she is deeply concerned.

YANA: Six upper-house opposition parties agree to demand the agriculture minister's resignation and consider a censure motion.

CHINA: The prime minister called Beijing's sanctions on Keiji Furuya a very honourable sanction in an e-mail, he says.

TAIWAN: Mr Furuya travels to Taiwan for today's National Day celebrations.

OKINAWA: The prefectural assembly protests over the Naha killing and demands a revision of the Status of Forces Agreement.

ELECTIONS: Parties ask for steps on paid-for views, AI content and bots in election posts.

YOKOHAMA: Seven candidates contest the mayoral election on October 18.

COURTS: The man who attacked Takashi Tachibana with a machete is sentenced to nine years.

DIET: The upper house holds its second day of questions on the policy speech.

POLITICS

The Week Ahead

By the Politics Desk

SATURDAY, OCT. 10: Climax Series first stages begin, 2 p.m.; Taiwan's National Day; judo heavyweights in Baku.

SUNDAY, OCT. 11: Judo mixed team final day in Baku; Typhoon No. 29 very strong by early morning.

MONDAY, OCT. 12: Sports Day holiday; Izumo Ekiden; Nobel economics prize; Koguma passes east of Ogasawara.

TUESDAY, OCT. 13: Tokyo markets reopen; American bank results; rain from a front begins.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 14: Climax Series final stages begin; American consumer prices.

OCTOBER 14 AND 15: Nada no Kenka Matsuri in Himeji.

OCTOBER 17 AND 18: Kawagoe Festival.

OCTOBER 18: Yokohama mayoral election.

OCTOBER 24: Japan Series begins.

DIET: Committee debate on the food tax cut bill; the opposition weighs a censure motion against the agriculture minister.

INTERNATIONAL

Washington Sanctions the ICC Itself: Dealings With the Court Barred After a Grace Period, as Rubio Calls It a 'Rogue Court'

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

The United States on Friday designated the International Criminal Court itself for sanctions, the first time it has targeted the institution rather than individual judges and prosecutors.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the measures hours after the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Navi Pillay, a former judge of the court.

He called the court a rogue court and said the sanctions would cut off its resources and cripple its ability to operate. "Either the ICC will end its threats, or we will end the ICC," he said. President Donald Trump would never allow the court to prosecute Americans, he added.

What they do

The designation blocks any property of the court in the United States and bars Americans from providing it with funds, goods or services. Companies that deal with it risk penalties.

There is an initial grace period of six months, 180 days according to Kyodo News, and exemptions for some transactions, including telecommunications, software, pension payments and matters relating to detainees, according to reports.

Mr Rubio said the period would give the court and its member states a chance to address American concerns, and that the measures could be adjusted depending on the response.

The practical effects could be wide. The court, which employs about 900 people, depends on banks, insurers and technology suppliers, many of which are tied to the American financial system and may be unwilling to risk penalties.

The court's reply

The court called the measures an assault on the rule of law and on the very foundations of the international legal order, and said they shook the simple principle that no one is above the law.

"The Court cannot stand alone," it said. "Its fate now rests also in the hands of the states that created it." It urged its 125 member states to defend it, and added: "History will judge this moment."

The background

The administration had already sanctioned more than a dozen of the court's judges and prosecutors over its investigations involving Israel and Afghanistan. Neither the United States nor Israel is a member of the court.

Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, for whom the court issued an arrest warrant in 2024, praised the decision, calling the court a political body that poses a mortal threat to law-abiding democracies.

At the UN General Assembly last month, Mr Trump urged all members of the court to leave it. Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger announced their withdrawal last year, and Chad and Venezuela moved to follow in July.

INTERNATIONAL

Eight Countries, the EU and the UN Back the Court; Belgium Calls for Europe's Blocking Statute and the Netherlands Vows to Stand Firm

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

Japan, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Britain said in a joint statement by their foreign ministers on Friday that they regretted and strongly disagreed with the American sanctions on the International Criminal Court.

If put into effect, the sanctions would have a significant impact on the court's work, its dedicated staff and their families, the ministers said.

They reaffirmed their continued and unwavering support for the independence, impartiality and integrity of the court, and committed themselves to

constructive and inclusive dialogue with countries that are not members.

Europe

The Dutch foreign minister, Tom Berendsen, whose country hosts the court in The Hague, called the decision deeply regrettable and said the Netherlands would stand firm in defence of the court. Service providers could keep working with it during the six-month period, he noted.

Belgium's foreign minister, Maxime Prévot, said he would raise the matter with his European Union counterparts on Monday and at the forthcoming European Council, and called for the activation of the EU's blocking statute, which forbids European companies to comply with certain foreign sanctions.

The EU called the sanctions extremely regrettable and said it stood ready to take all necessary measures so that the court could continue its work, AFP reported.

The United Nations

Secretary-General António Guterres was deeply alarmed by the expected effects on the court's ability to carry out its mandate, his spokesman said, describing the decision as a serious blow to international criminal justice.

Volker Türk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the post Ms Pillay once held, called the sanctions unacceptable and urged immediate measures to protect the court.

Rights groups

Human Rights Watch said the administration's aim was to destroy the court and shield American and Israeli officials from charges. Amnesty International urged states to resist the measures.

The coming months will show whether the court's supporters can turn statements into practical protection: banking, insurance and software that do not depend on American goodwill.

INTERNATIONAL

Two Courts in The Hague: The ICJ Judges Disputes Between States, the ICC Tries People, and Japanese Judges Lead Both

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The Hague is home to two international courts whose names are often confused.

The International Court of Justice, founded in 1945 under the UN Charter, is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. It settles legal disputes between states and gives advisory opinions, and it sits in the Peace Palace.

Its 15 judges are elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council for terms of nine years.

The International Criminal Court, created by the Rome Statute of 1998, is not part of the UN. It tries individuals, not states, for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression.

Its 18 judges are elected by the court's member states, also for nine years.

Japanese at the head

Both courts are currently led by Japanese judges. Yuji Iwasawa has been president of the ICJ since March 2025, and Tomoko Akane president of the ICC since March 2024.

Hisashi Owada, a former Japanese diplomat, was president of the ICJ from 2009 to 2012.

The United States

The United States has appeared before the ICJ many times, though it withdrew its acceptance of the court's compulsory jurisdiction in the 1980s after a case brought by Nicaragua.

It is not a member of the ICC, and it rejects the court's claim to jurisdiction over citizens of countries that are not members.

Japan's interest

Japan, which defends its interests in disputes over territory and the sea by appealing to law rather than force, has a stake in the standing of both courts. It appeared before the ICJ in the whaling case brought by Australia, which it lost in 2014, and it said it would abide by the judgment.

Pressure on either court is felt in Tokyo, and this week the pressure on the criminal court came from Japan's closest ally.

INTERNATIONAL



Navi Pillay, the former judge of the International Criminal Court and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday. (Image supplied for this edition)

INTERNATIONAL

From Durban to Oslo: Navi Pillay, the Lawyer Who Defended Apartheid's Prisoners, Helped Make Rape a Crime of Genocide and Challenged the Powerful at the UN

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

Navanethem Pillay was born in Durban in 1941 into a family of Indian Tamil origin, at a time when South Africa's laws sorted its people by race and closed most doors to those who were not white.

In 1967 she opened her own law practice in Natal, the first woman in the province to do so. Established firms would not employ her, she has recalled.

For almost three decades she defended opponents of apartheid and their families. She won a case that gave political prisoners on Robben Island, Nelson Mandela among them, access to lawyers.

She studied at Harvard Law School, earning a master's degree and, in 1988, a doctorate, the first South African to obtain a doctorate in law there.

In 1995, after the end of apartheid, she became the first woman of colour to serve on South Africa's High Court. The same year the United Nations General Assembly elected her a judge of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, set up after the genocide of 1994.

Rwanda

She served on the tribunal for eight years, four of them as its president. She sat in the trial of Jean-Paul Akayesu, a former mayor, which in 1998 produced the first judgment by an international court that rape could constitute an act of genocide.

The ruling changed the way international law treats sexual violence in war, and it is cited in courts and tribunals to this day.

The Hague and Geneva

In 2003 she was elected one of the first judges of the International Criminal Court and sat in its Appeals Chamber until 2008, when she became the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In six years in that post she pressed for accountability in Sri Lanka and Syria, and in 2013 her office launched the UN's Free and Equal campaign against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. Governments of many kinds found her uncomfortable.

From 2021 she chaired the UN commission of inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, which concluded in September last year that Israel had committed genocide in Gaza. Israel rejected the finding.

She also sits as a judge ad hoc at the International Court of Justice in the case brought by The Gambia against Myanmar over the treatment of the Rohingya. Last year she received the Sydney Peace Prize.

The prize

Announcing this year's award in Oslo, Jørgen Watne Frydnes, the chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, said judges like her guard the thin red line between order and chaos, and that the international legal system is under tremendous pressure, with its institutions under attack.

An international legal system that holds war criminals to account is a precondition for a peaceful

world, the committee said.

Ms Pillay heard the news while attending a seminar in Nuremberg, the city where leaders of Nazi Germany were tried after the Second World War. She dedicated the prize to all the survivors of international crimes.

The prize, worth 12 million Swedish kronor, will be presented in Oslo on December 10. The photograph shows Ms Pillay in a portrait supplied for this edition.

INTERNATIONAL

The ICC Under Pressure: Key Dates

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

1998: The Rome Statute, the court's founding treaty, is adopted.

2002: The court begins work in The Hague.

2007: Japan joins and becomes the largest contributor to the budget.

2023: The court issues an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin; Russia opens criminal cases against its officials.

2024: Tomoko Akane becomes president in March; in November an arrest warrant is issued for Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

2025: President Donald Trump authorises sanctions against the court in February; judges and prosecutors are designated during the year; Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger announce their withdrawal.

JULY 2026: Member states vote to dismiss the prosecutor, Karim Khan, over his conduct; Japan welcomes the decision.

AUGUST 2026: Washington sanctions Ms Akane and other officials.

SEPTEMBER 2026: Mr Trump urges all members to leave the court.

OCTOBER 8: Russia asks for Ms Akane's extradition, according to reports.

OCTOBER 9: The United States designates the court itself, hours after the Peace Prize goes to its former judge Navi Pillay.

INTERNATIONAL

How American Sanctions Reach Beyond America: Banks, Dollars and Software

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

American sanctions are administered by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control. A designated person or entity is added to its list of Specially Designated Nationals, and any property it holds in the United States, or in American hands, is frozen.

Americans, wherever they are, are barred from dealing with it.

In principle that leaves foreigners free to carry on. In practice the reach is much wider, because so much of the world's finance runs through the dollar and through American banks.

A European bank that pays a sanctioned party in dollars must route the payment through the American system, where it can be stopped. Many banks avoid any dealings with a designated party, in any currency, rather than risk their access to the United States.

Software and services

Technology raises similar questions. Courts, like companies, depend on e-mail, cloud storage and software, much of it supplied by American firms or their subsidiaries.

When the court's then prosecutor was sanctioned last year, reports said he lost access to an e-mail account run by an American provider.

Insurers, payroll services, landlords and travel companies can all be drawn in, because each must decide whether serving a sanctioned party is worth the risk.

Europe's shield

The European Union has a tool designed for such cases. Its blocking statute, adopted in 1996 in response to American sanctions on Cuba, Iran and Libya, forbids European companies to comply with listed foreign sanctions and allows them to claim damages.

It has rarely been used to much effect, because companies caught between the two systems often choose the American market.

Japan

Japanese banks and companies face the same pressures, and Japan has no law equivalent to the European statute.

That is why the grace period matters. It gives the court's supporters time to arrange banking, insurance and technology that do not depend on decisions taken in Washington.

INTERNATIONAL

Three Japanese Judges in The Hague: Saiga, Ozaki and Akane, and the Country That Pays the Largest Share of the Court's Bills

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Japan became a member of the International Criminal Court on October 1, 2007, the 105th state to join.

It came late. Successive governments had supported the court's aims but took years to prepare the domestic legislation needed to co-operate with it, including laws on surrendering suspects and protecting evidence.

Once inside, Japan quickly became the court's largest financial contributor, because members' shares of the budget are set broadly in proportion to the size of their economies.

The judges

Its first judge, Fumiko Saiga, a diplomat who had been Japan's ambassador for human rights, took office in 2008 but died in office the following year.

Kuniko Ozaki, a former diplomat and expert on international law, served from 2010 to 2018 and was one of the court's vice-presidents.

Tomoko Akane, a career prosecutor, became a judge in 2018 and was elected president by her fellow judges in March 2024, the first Japanese in the post. Her nine-year term as a judge runs until 2027.

Beyond the bench

Japan has also tried to increase the number of Japanese on the court's staff, which remains small compared with its financial contribution, and supports programmes to train young lawyers in international justice.

In 2022 it joined other members in referring the situation in Ukraine to the court, a step that allowed the prosecutor to open an investigation without waiting for judicial approval.

Under pressure

Ms Akane has spoken publicly about the pressure on the court from powerful states. Russia has opened a criminal case against her, and the United States has placed her under sanctions.

Japan's government has said repeatedly that it supports the court's independence. This week's sanctions on the institution itself will test what that support means in practice.

INTERNATIONAL

When Pillay Came to Tokyo: In 2010 She Met Minorities, a Man Fighting His Conviction, and the Families of Abductees

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

Navi Pillay visited Japan in May 2010 as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and spent much of her time listening to people who said they faced discrimination, Kyodo News recalled on Friday.

She met representatives of minority groups including the Ainu and Koreans living in Japan.

Among those she met was Megumi Komori of the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism, a non-governmental organisation, who is now its acting secretary-general.

Ms Komori recalled that Ms Pillay listened closely to the people affected, and spoke not as a UN official but as someone firmly convinced that discrimination must not exist. It was very encouraging, she said.

The award would send a message to the world about ending rising racism and division, Ms Komori said on Friday.

A long fight

Also at the meeting was Kazuo Ishikawa, who was convicted in the Sayama case, the killing of a schoolgirl in Saitama Prefecture in 1963, and who sought a retrial for decades, insisting on his innocence. He died last year at 86.

The abductees

Ms Pillay also met Sakie Yokota, now 90, and other families of Japanese abducted by North Korea, and listened to their accounts.

Mrs Yokota's daughter Megumi was abducted in Niigata in 1977, at the age of 13. Her return remains the central demand of the families' association, and the abductions have long been raised by Japan at the UN's human rights bodies.

An open question

UN human rights bodies have repeatedly urged Japan to set up an independent national human rights institution, a step it has not yet taken.

For those who met her, Friday's award was a reminder of a visitor who came to hear rather than to lecture, and who took what she heard back to Geneva.

INTERNATIONAL

Lawyers and Judges Among the Laureates: The Peace Prize's Long Link With International Law, From 1904 to Pillay

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Navi Pillay joins a line of Peace Prize laureates whose work lay in law rather than in diplomacy or protest.

Alfred Nobel's will asked that the prize go to the person who had done the most for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses.

The Norwegian committee soon read the will to include the building of law between nations. The Institute of International Law, a body of jurists founded in Ghent in 1873, received the prize in 1904.

In 1911 the prize was shared by the Dutch jurist Tobias Asser, a figure of the Hague peace conferences, and the Austrian pacifist Alfred Fried. Elihu Root, the American secretary of state who promoted treaties of arbitration, was honoured for 1912.

Rights

After the Second World War, René Cassin, one of the principal authors of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, was honoured in 1968.

In 1974 the prize was shared by Seán MacBride, the Irish lawyer and a founder of Amnesty International, and Eisaku Sato, the Japanese prime minister, who was honoured for his policy on nuclear weapons.

Shirin Ebadi, the Iranian lawyer and former judge, won in 2003 for her work for democracy and human rights, especially those of women and children.

Recent years

In 2024 the prize went to Nihon Hidankyo, the confederation of survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Last year the laureate was María Corina Machado, the Venezuelan opposition leader.

A message

The committee's choices are often read as messages to the world as much as rewards for past work.

This year's is unusually direct. The chair spoke on Friday of a legal order under tremendous pressure, and within hours the United States imposed sanctions on the court where Ms Pillay once sat.

INTERNATIONAL

December 10 in Oslo: How the Peace Prize Is Presented, and Why It Is the Only Nobel Not Given in Stockholm

By the International Desk

Navi Pillay will receive the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo on December 10, the anniversary of the death of Alfred Nobel in 1896.

The other prizes are presented the same day in Stockholm by the King of Sweden. The Peace Prize alone is awarded in Norway, as Nobel's will required.

Why Nobel chose Norway is not known for certain. At the time Norway and Sweden were joined in a union under the Swedish king, and some historians think he believed the Norwegian parliament, the Storting, would be less exposed to the pressures of power politics.

INTERNATIONAL

The committee

The prize is decided by the Norwegian Nobel Committee, whose five members are appointed by the Storting. They are often former politicians, but they act independently of the government.

The ceremony

The ceremony is held in Oslo City Hall in the presence of the King of Norway. The chair of the committee gives a speech explaining the award, and the laureate receives a gold medal and a diploma and later delivers the Nobel lecture.

The prize money, this year 12 million Swedish kronor, is the same as for the other prizes.

Protests and absences

Not every laureate has been able to attend. Some have been imprisoned or prevented from travelling by their governments, and their chairs have been left empty.

Ms Pillay is expected to travel freely. Her lecture, coming two months after the United States imposed sanctions on the court where she served, will be followed closely around the world.

In Japan it will also be a reminder of Nihon Hidankyo, the atomic bomb survivors' confederation, which received the prize in the same hall two years ago.

INTERNATIONAL

Magnitude 7.7 Earthquake Strikes Panama; a Cathedral Collapses in Penonomé, and Japan's Coasts May See Slight Sea-Level Changes From This Evening

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

A magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck southern Panama at 12:56 p.m. local time on Friday, 2:56 a.m. on Saturday in Japan, the United States Geological Survey said.

Its centre was about 10 kilometres south-west of the small community of Pitaloza Arriba in Herrera province, on the Azuero Peninsula, at a shallow depth of about 10 kilometres. Japanese reports gave the depth as 12.6 kilometres.

The shaking was felt in Panama City, more than 150 kilometres away, where people poured into the streets, and as far away as Colombia.

Video showed a Catholic cathedral collapsing in Penonomé, in Coclé province, and part of a hotel's facade falling onto a car.

Omar Smith of the National Civil Protection Service said damage was concentrated in the central provinces of Veraguas, Herrera and Los Santos, and that there was none in the capital. No deaths were immediately reported.

President José Raúl Mulino urged calm, writing on social media that what had happened should not be used to cause alarm or disorder. A second strong earthquake, of magnitude 6.6, followed about two and a half hours later near the Pacific coast.

The tsunami

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said at first that waves of 1 to 3 metres were possible along some coasts of Panama, with smaller waves elsewhere in Central and South America. The warnings for Panama were lifted before 5 a.m. Japan time.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said at 3:26 a.m. that slight changes in sea level, of less than 20 centimetres, might occur along Japan's coasts, but that no damage was expected.

The earliest changes could come at about 8 p.m. today and could continue for about a day, Weathernews reported. Anglers and people on beaches and harbour walls should take care this evening.

The Panama Canal was operating normally, Reuters reported.

A long way off

Tsunamis can cross the whole Pacific. The tsunami from the great Chile earthquake of 1960 reached Japan about a day later and left about 140 people dead or missing here.

That is why the agency issues information on distant earthquakes even when the effect it expects is small. This was at least the fourth earthquake of magnitude 7 or more in Latin America this year, CBS News reported.

INTERNATIONAL

Two Renoirs Stolen From the Painter's Riviera Home, Now a Museum, Are Recovered, and Six People Are Arrested

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

Two paintings by Pierre-Auguste Renoir stolen last month from the Renoir Museum in Cagnes-sur-Mer, in southern France, have been recovered and six people arrested, local authorities said on Friday.

The works are Portrait of Madame Colonna Romano and Young Woman at the Well, the Associated Press reported.

In the theft, in September, the thieves cut through a fence and climbed in through a window in the early morning. They took four paintings worth about 9 million euros in all, but abandoned two of them as they fled.

The whole operation took less than three minutes, according to the regional prosecutor's office, and a national search for the thieves followed.

The mayor of Cagnes-sur-Mer, Bryan Masson, praised the investigators. "These two paintings are not simply works of art. They are part of our city's history, our heritage," he said. "Knowing they have been recovered is an immense relief."

The authorities did not say where the paintings had been found or how the suspects had been traced.

The house

The museum occupies Les Collettes, the estate among olive trees where Renoir spent his last years and where he died in 1919.

Crippled by rheumatoid arthritis, he went on painting there despite the pain. The house, the studio and the garden have been preserved, and the museum opened in 1960.

A run of thefts

The theft came less than a year after the robbery of crown jewels from the Louvre in Paris in October last year, which led to calls for better security and more money for France's cultural sites.

Smaller museums, with valuable collections and modest budgets, are the hardest to protect.

Renoir is among the most loved painters in Japan, where his works hang in collections such as the Artizon Museum in Tokyo and the Pola Museum of Art in Hakone.

INTERNATIONAL

World Digest

By the International Desk

OSLO: The Nobel Peace Prize goes to Navi Pillay, 85, former ICC judge and UN human rights chief.

WASHINGTON: The United States imposes sanctions on the International Criminal Court itself.

THE HAGUE: The court calls the measures an assault on the rule of law; Japan and seven other countries strongly disagree with them.

PANAMA: A magnitude 7.7 earthquake strikes the south; a cathedral collapses in Penonomé.

CAGNES-SUR-MER: Two Renoirs stolen in September are recovered; six people are arrested.

FLORIDA: Hurricane Isaias nears the western Panhandle with winds of about 115 mph.

TAIPEI: Taiwan marks its National Day today.

PYONGYANG: North Korea's ruling party marks the 81st anniversary of its founding today.

BAKU: Michihiro Arai of Japan takes silver at 100 kg at the world judo championships.

BANGKOK: Sumo's governing body announces a tour of Bangkok in June 2027.

ECONOMY

Nikkei Ends Almost Flat After Falling Nearly 900 Yen on Reports of Slower OpenAI Sales; TOPIX Rises as Most Shares Gain

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The Nikkei Stock Average closed at 69,030.92 on Friday, down 11.19 yen, its third consecutive fall, after recovering almost all of a drop that had reached nearly 900 yen in the morning.

Chip-related shares led the early decline after reports in the United States that revenue at OpenAI, the developer of ChatGPT, was growing more slowly

than expected.

The Financial Times reported that the company was on track for annualised revenue of about 50 billion dollars, below earlier reports that put the figure near 70 billion.

In New York on Thursday, the Nasdaq Composite fell 1.25 per cent and the Philadelphia Semiconductor Index 3.38 per cent. SoftBank Group, one of OpenAI's largest investors, fell for a second day in Tokyo, Nikkei reported.

Buying spreads

Buyers returned as the session went on. The broader TOPIX rose 13.35 points to 4,104.81, rebounding after recent falls, and more than 70 per cent of the shares on the Prime Market rose. Turnover on the Prime Market was about 7.85 trillion yen.

The Nikkei briefly turned positive near the close before slipping back.

The gap between the two indices told the day's story. The Nikkei is weighted by share price and leans heavily on a few chip-related companies and SoftBank Group; the TOPIX weights companies by market value and includes banks, trading houses and manufacturers across the economy.

A long weekend

Tokyo's markets are closed until Tuesday because of Monday's Sports Day holiday. Results from the big American banks are due on Tuesday and American consumer prices on Wednesday, the next tests for investors.

The yield on the 10-year American Treasury note stood at 5.23 per cent on Thursday, and the yen was about 157.9 to the dollar in New York.

The question

Matt Maley of Miller Tabak in New York said investors were becoming somewhat sceptical about how long the enormous spending on artificial intelligence could last, Bloomberg reported.

Friday's recovery suggested that many in Tokyo saw the morning's fall as a buying opportunity, or chose to put money into shares outside technology. How long that distinction holds depends on the answer to Mr Maley's question.

ECONOMY

Why a Report on OpenAI's Sales Moves Tokyo: SoftBank, Chip Machines and the Cost of the AI Boom

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

OpenAI does not trade on any stock exchange, yet a single report on its revenue knocked nearly 900 yen off the Nikkei average in the first hours of trading on Friday.

The link runs through investment. The boom in artificial intelligence has been driven by spending on data centres, which need vast numbers of advanced chips, and the companies that make those chips need equipment and materials in which Japanese firms are strong.

Makers of chip-making and testing equipment such as Tokyo Electron and Advantest are among the heaviest components of the Nikkei average, so their share prices move the index more than most.

SoftBank Group has made OpenAI one of its largest investments and is a partner in Stargate, the venture announced in January last year to build AI infrastructure in the United States.

The chain

If OpenAI's sales grow more slowly than expected, investors begin to ask whether it can pay for the computing capacity it has agreed to buy, and whether the chain of spending behind it will slow.

Each link in that chain, from cloud companies to chip designers to equipment makers, depends on the next one continuing to spend.

The numbers

The Financial Times reported that OpenAI was on track for annualised revenue of about 50 billion dollars. Some outlets had reported last month that it was on track for nearly 70 billion.

Annualised revenue projects a year's sales from the current rate. It is not an audited annual figure, and OpenAI, as a private company, does not publish full accounts.

Rates

The question has sharpened because borrowing has become expensive. The yield on the American 10-year Treasury note was 5.23 per cent on Thursday, and many data-centre projects are financed with debt.

Friday's recovery in Tokyo, and the rise in the TOPIX, suggested that investors were separating the AI trade from the rest of the market rather than abandoning shares altogether.

The next tests come later this month, when American chipmakers and cloud companies report their quarterly results.

ECONOMY

Markets at a Glance

By the Markets Desk

NIKKEI 225: 69,030.92, down 11.19; a third straight fall.

INTRADAY: Down nearly 900 yen in the morning.

TOPIX: 4,104.81, up 13.35.

PRIME MARKET: More than 70 per cent of shares rose; turnover about 7.85 trillion yen.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY: Nasdaq down 1.25 per cent; Philadelphia Semiconductor Index down 3.38 per cent.

US 10-YEAR YIELD: 5.23 per cent.

YEN: About 157.9 to the dollar in New York.

OIL: West Texas Intermediate up 2.8 per cent at 90.78 dollars a barrel.

GOLD: 4,134.68 dollars an ounce.

NEXT: Tokyo closed until Tuesday; American bank results on the 13th, consumer prices on the 14th.

BUSINESS

Why Listed Companies Announce Leaks on the Exchange: Timely Disclosure, TDnet and What Investors Are Told

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

When BookOff Group Holdings announced on Friday that the records of up to about 6.43 million members may have leaked, its notice was posted not only on its own website but also on TDnet, the Tokyo Stock Exchange's system for company disclosures.

Listed companies in Japan are bound by the exchange's timely disclosure rules. They must announce promptly any information that could materially affect investors' decisions, from results and mergers to accidents, lawsuits and incidents that may damage the business.

A serious cyberattack or data leak often falls within that duty, because it can bring costs, claims from customers, lost sales and damage to a company's reputation.

What investors look for

Investors reading such a notice want to know how many customers are affected, what kind of data was involved, whether operations have been disrupted, and whether the company expects any effect on its results.

Early notices often cannot answer the last question. Companies typically say that the effect on earnings is under examination and that they will announce anything material when it becomes clear.

Two audiences

A disclosure on a leak therefore serves two audiences at once: customers, who need to protect themselves, and shareholders, who need to judge the damage to the business.

The two do not always want the same thing. Customers want as much detail as possible about what was taken; investors want an estimate of cost that companies are rarely able to give early.

A busy week

This week several listed companies made announcements of this kind, and Tokyo's market, closed for the three-day weekend, will have its first chance to react on Tuesday.

Over time, the way companies handle incidents, how quickly they disclose, how clearly they explain and how well they recover, is becoming part of how investors judge the quality of their management.

Shareholders increasingly ask boards about cyber risk at annual meetings, and some institutional investors now include it in their assessment of governance.

ECONOMY



The head office of East Japan Railway Company near Shinjuku Station in Tokyo, in a file image. The company said on Friday that about 6.09 million records of customers of its group's services, kept on IDC Frontier's cloud, may have leaked. (Image supplied for this edition)

BUSINESS

JR East's 6.09 Million: What the Railway Says Was on the Attacked Cloud, Who Is Affected and What Happens Next

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

East Japan Railway Company said on Friday that data on customers of its group's services, kept on IDC Frontier's cloud, may have leaked in the ransomware attack on the provider earlier in the week.

The largest group of records is about 4.03 million e-mail addresses registered with View Card, the group's credit card company.

About 1.67 million are e-mail addresses registered with Ekinet, the online service for reserving Shinkansen and limited express tickets.

About 390,000 belong to members of Otona no Kyujitsu Club, the club for older travellers, and may include membership numbers, dates of birth and the expiry dates of their cards as well as e-mail addresses.

The total, about 6.09 million, is cumulative: a customer registered with more than one service is counted more than once.

Not included

Names, addresses, telephone numbers and credit card numbers were not among the data, the company said. Train services were not affected, and no misuse of the data had been confirmed.

The company said it would contact the customers concerned.

A customer's customer

JR East's case shows how an attack on one provider can reach people who never chose that provider. Members of Ekinet and View Card signed up with the railway, not with a cloud company most of them had never heard of.

The railway, like hundreds of other companies and local governments, used IDC Frontier's service to run parts of its systems. When the provider was attacked, the data its customers held there were exposed together.

The next questions

Customers will want to know why the data were held where they were, whether they were encrypted, and how long it took the railway to establish what had been taken. Regulators will ask the same questions.

The photograph shows JR East's head office near Shinjuku Station in Tokyo, in a file image.

BUSINESS

View Card, Ekinet and the Otona no Kyujitsu Club: What the Three JR East Services Are, and Why the Records Differ

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The three services named by JR East on Friday serve different purposes, which is why the data the railway says may have leaked differ from one to the next.

View Card is the credit card business of the JR East group. Its cards can be linked to Suica, the group's

smart card, and earn points on travel and shopping.

Ekinet is the group's online reservation service for Shinkansen and limited express trains in eastern Japan, used to buy and change tickets from a computer or smartphone.

Otona no Kyujitsu Club is a membership club for travellers aged 50 and over, offering discounted fares, tours and courses. Its membership cards are issued as credit cards.

What the records contain

For View Card and Ekinet, the company said, the data that may have leaked are e-mail addresses.

For the club, the records may also include membership numbers, dates of birth and card expiry dates, because those details are part of a member's registration.

Not the payment data

Card numbers were not among the data, the company said. An expiry date cannot be used on its own to make a payment, but combined with other details it can lend credibility to a fraudulent message.

An e-mail that quotes a customer's membership number and date of birth is far more convincing than one that does not, which is why the club's members in particular should be wary.

What to watch for

Genuine notices from the company will not ask customers to enter card numbers or passwords through a link. A message that does should be treated as fraudulent.

Customers who are unsure can check the company's own website, reached by typing its address rather than following a link, or call the numbers printed on their cards.

BUSINESS

FSA Suspends New Sales at Prudential Life for Over Three Months After Employees Defrauded Customers; External Panel Points to Governance

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The Financial Services Agency on Friday ordered Prudential Life Insurance Japan to suspend the solicitation of new business from October 13 until January 31 next year, after employees defrauded customers of money over many years.

It also issued a business improvement order to the parent company, Prudential Holding of Japan, according to reports.

The victims number 676 and the damage 4.3 billion yen, the Asahi Shimbun reported. Other reports have given different figures for the sums involved, depending on how they are counted.

The panel

An external investigation committee reported on Thursday that the misconduct reflected structural problems in the company's governance, and pointed to a sales model that leaned heavily on staff members' personal connections.

The response

The company has disciplined 157 employees and dismissed 64 of them, according to reports. The president, Hiromitsu Tokumaru, and two other executives will return 30 per cent of their pay for three months.

From 2027 the company plans to guarantee its sales staff a minimum level of pay, a change intended to ease the pressure of pay that depends on commissions.

Prudential had already halted new sales of its own accord, for 90 days from February and then for 180 days from April.

Trust

Life insurance is sold on trust. A customer pays premiums for decades in return for a promise, often made in person by an agent the customer has come to know.

A case in which the sellers themselves took customers' money strikes at the heart of that arrangement, and it explains the severity of the agency's response.

An order to halt new sales is among the strongest measures the agency can take short of revoking a licence. Existing policies are not affected.

BUSINESS

What an FSA Sales Suspension Means for Policyholders: Existing Contracts Continue, New Business Stops

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Under the Insurance Business Act, the Financial Services Agency can order an insurer to improve its operations, to suspend all or part of its business, or, in the gravest cases, revoke its licence.

An order to suspend new sales does not affect existing policies. Policyholders remain covered, premiums are collected as before and claims are paid.

During the suspension the company may not solicit new contracts, the business on which its sales staff depend for much of their pay.

A business improvement order requires the company to submit a plan for putting things right and to report regularly on its progress until the agency is satisfied.

A precedent

The best-known recent case is that of Japan Post Insurance, which was ordered in December 2019 to suspend new sales for three months after inappropriate sales to many elderly customers.

In that case the suspension was only the start. It was well over a year before the company returned to normal selling, as it rebuilt its procedures and retrained its staff.

For customers

Customers of Prudential with questions about their own contracts can contact the company directly. The agency also runs a consultation desk for users of financial services.

Anyone who handed money to an agent outside the normal procedures for paying premiums should raise it with the company.

For the industry

Life insurers in Japan have long relied on face-to-face selling. The agency's action is a reminder that the relationships which make that model work can also hide abuse.

Other insurers can expect closer questions about how they supervise agents who work largely on their own.

BUSINESS

Beer Cartel Inquiry: Staff at the Brewers Acknowledge Coordinating Prices, Reports Say, as Investigators Search Branches and Homes

By Grace Park | Food & Restaurants

Sales staff at the four big brewers have acknowledged to the Japan Fair Trade Commission that they coordinated wholesale prices, according to reports on Friday.

Sankei News reported that staff at all four companies, Asahi, Kirin, Suntory and Sapporo, had acknowledged the coordination, while TBS reported that some of the companies had done so.

The Asahi Shimbun reported that several of the companies had told investigators that the prices of chu-hi, the canned drinks based on shochu, had also been adjusted.

The commission searched the four companies' head offices in Tokyo on Wednesday, and has since searched regional branches and the homes of employees, according to the reports.

Sales section managers are suspected of meeting informally and setting specific targets for the size of price increases, TBS reported.

The increases

The brewers raised the prices of beer-type drinks at around the same time in October 2022, October 2023 and April 2025, citing higher costs for malt, aluminium cans, energy and transport.

Each company has said it will co-operate fully with the investigation.

The law

Under the Antimonopoly Act, agreements between competitors to fix prices are banned as an unreasonable restraint of trade. The commission can order surcharges and, in serious cases, file a criminal complaint with prosecutors, a step it is said to be considering here.

No finding has been made. The reports describe what investigators have been told, not a conclusion, and

the companies are presumed not to have broken the law unless it is established that they did.

For drinkers

If coordination is established, the question will be how much of the increases reflected real costs and how much the agreement. For a product bought by millions of households every week, the answer matters.

BUSINESS

Cartels and the Fair Trade Commission: Surcharges, Leniency and the Rare Step of Criminal Charges

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The Antimonopoly Act, enacted in 1947, bans agreements between competitors to fix prices, limit output or divide markets, which it calls unreasonable restraints of trade. The Japan Fair Trade Commission enforces it.

Most cartel cases end in administrative action: a cease-and-desist order and a surcharge, a payment calculated as a percentage of the sales affected. For large companies the basic rate is 10 per cent.

Leniency

Since 2006 the commission has operated a leniency programme. The first company to report a cartel before an investigation begins receives full immunity from surcharges, and later applicants receive reductions, which since 2020 also depend on how much they co-operate.

The programme has transformed enforcement, because it gives each member of a cartel a reason to confess before the others do.

A record case

In March 2023 the commission ordered several regional electricity companies, among them Chubu Electric Power, Chugoku Electric Power and Kyushu Electric Power, to pay surcharges totalling about 101 billion yen for agreeing not to compete for each other's large customers. Kansai Electric Power, which reported the arrangement, escaped a surcharge.

Criminal cases

For the most serious cases the commission can file a criminal complaint with prosecutors. It does so rarely, usually no more than once a year.

Recent examples include bid-rigging over construction of the Chuo maglev line and over contracts connected with the Tokyo Olympics.

In criminal cases individuals can be imprisoned for up to five years and companies fined up to 500 million yen.

The brewers

The investigation of the four brewers is being conducted as a compulsory investigation with court warrants, the procedure used in cases that may be referred for prosecution. Reports that staff have acknowledged coordinating prices will strengthen the commission's hand, but no finding has been made.

BUSINESS

Cyber Insurance: What It Covers When Systems Stop or Data Leak, and What It Does Not

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

As attacks have multiplied, more Japanese companies have bought insurance against cyber incidents. The policies are relatively new, and their terms vary widely.

A typical policy covers the costs of responding to an incident: investigators to find out what happened, lawyers, call centres to answer customers, and the cost of notifying those affected.

Many also cover liability, such as claims from customers or business partners whose data or operations were harmed, and some cover the loss of income while systems are down.

The limits

Insurers have grown more careful as claims have risen. They ask about a company's defences before offering cover, and may refuse or raise premiums for companies without basic protections such as two-step verification and offline backups.

Policies usually exclude some events, such as acts of war, and the boundary between a criminal attack and one carried out on behalf of a state can be hard to draw.

BUSINESS

Ransoms

Whether insurance should ever reimburse ransom payments is debated. Critics say it encourages payment and so funds further attacks; insurers reply that their main role is to pay for recovery, not ransoms.

Smaller companies

Large companies often buy cover. Many small and medium-sized companies, which are frequent targets and have the least capacity to recover, do not.

The real protection

Insurance spreads the cost of an attack. It does not prevent one, and it cannot restore customers' trust or recover data that were never backed up.

The insurers' growing insistence on good security before they will offer cover may, in the end, be the most useful thing they do.

BUSINESS

Business Digest

By the Business Desk

- RAIL: JR East says about 6.09 million records may have leaked through the IDC Frontier attack.
- RETAIL: BookOff says up to 6.43 million member records may have leaked from a subsidiary's system.
- TRAVEL: Adventure says about 14.64 million Skyticket records were affected by unauthorised access.
- KARAOKE: Daiichi Kosho, operator of Big Echo, says data on about 8.72 million people may have been compromised.
- CONVENIENCE STORES: Lawson says 2,155,345 Lawson ID records were taken.
- INSURANCE: The FSA suspends new sales at Prudential Life from October 13 to January 31.
- BEER: Staff at the four brewers acknowledge coordinating prices, reports say.
- MARKETS: The Nikkei ends 11 yen lower at 69,030.92 after a morning fall of nearly 900 yen.
- FRAUD: Police arrest eight over a water heater inspection scam aimed at older people.
- HOLIDAY: Tokyo's markets reopen on Tuesday.

TECHNOLOGY

IDC Frontier Tells Customers Data in Four Zones Will Be Hard to Recover, and That Systems Must Be Rebuilt From Their Own Backups

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

IDC Frontier has told customers that some of the data held in the part of its cloud hit by Wednesday's ransomware attack are expected to be difficult to retrieve or restore, and that affected systems should be rebuilt from backups the customers hold themselves.

Virtual servers stopped in all four zones of the company's East Japan Region 1, which bear the names tesla, henry, pascal and joule, all of them units of measurement named after scientists.

The attack began at about 3:40 a.m. on Wednesday. The company has confirmed that it was a ransomware attack by a third party. Its 495 affected customers include companies and local governments, and no timetable for recovery has been given.

To prevent further damage and leaks, the company cut the affected region off from the network and shut down the management console that customers use to control their servers. No unauthorised access has been confirmed in its other regions.

Whether data were taken out, and the detailed route by which the attackers got in, were still under investigation, according to the company's third report, issued on Thursday.

What it means for customers

For customers that kept copies of their data elsewhere, recovery means rebuilding their systems on other platforms and restoring the copies. For those that relied entirely on what was stored in the affected zones, some data may be lost.

Six Apart, which develops the Movable Type publishing software, said it was moving 31 servers to the cloud of Sakura Internet.

Ibaraki Prefecture's website and services of the city of Kodaira in western Tokyo were among the public services affected. JR East said on Friday that data on its customers kept on the cloud may have leaked.

An unusual message

Cloud providers rarely tell customers that their data may not come back. The usual promise of the cloud is that the provider looks after the hardware, the storage and the copies, so that customers need not.

The message from IDC Frontier is a reminder that the promise has limits. The contracts of most cloud services leave responsibility for backing up customers' data with the customers, and this week many of them discovered what that means.

TECHNOLOGY

Regions and Zones: How a Cloud Is Divided to Survive Breakdowns, and Why Four Zones Could Fall Together in an Attack

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

Cloud providers divide their services into regions and zones. A region is a geographical area, such as eastern Japan; a zone is a separate group of facilities within it, with its own power, cooling and network connections.

The design is meant to make services resilient. If a fire, flood or power cut takes out one zone, customers who spread their systems across several can keep running in the others.

Physical failure and compromise

Zones protect against physical failures well. They are less effective against an attacker who gains control of the systems that manage all of them.

The software that creates virtual servers, stores data and controls access usually spans the zones of a region, so that customers can use them together. An intruder who reaches that layer may be able to affect every zone at once.

IDC Frontier said that virtual servers stopped in all four zones of its East Japan Region 1 after the attack, and that it shut down the console customers use to manage their servers, to prevent further damage.

Lessons for customers

For customers, the lesson is that spreading systems across zones of one provider guards against some risks but not others.

Copies of essential data held with a different provider, or offline, under separate passwords and controls, protect against the failure of the provider as a whole.

Lessons for providers

For providers, the lesson is to separate management systems as carefully as the data centres themselves, so that a breach in one place cannot reach everywhere.

Every large cloud provider in the world will be studying what happened at IDC Frontier when its investigation is published.

TECHNOLOGY

Three Copies, Two Kinds of Storage, One Somewhere Else: The Backup Rule the IDC Frontier Attack Has Brought Back Into Focus

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

IDC Frontier's advice to its customers this week, to rebuild from their own backups, raises a simple question for every organisation that uses a cloud: where are our copies?

A long-standing rule of thumb among system administrators is known as 3-2-1. Keep at least three copies of important data, on at least two different kinds of storage, with at least one copy kept somewhere else.

The rule predates the cloud, but it applies to it with particular force.

Why the cloud is not a backup

Data in a cloud service are usually stored redundantly, on several disks or in several machines, so that the failure of one piece of hardware does not lose anything.

Redundancy protects against breakdowns. It does not protect against an attacker who controls the system and encrypts or deletes the data, because the redundant copies are encrypted or deleted too.

Offline and immutable

Modern ransomware attacks often seek out backups first, so that victims cannot recover without paying. Defenders respond with copies that are offline,

disconnected from the network, or immutable, which cannot be changed or deleted for a set period even by an administrator.

Copies held with a different provider, under different credentials, add another layer, because an attacker who breaks into one service does not automatically gain access to the other.

Testing

A backup that has never been restored is a hope rather than a plan. Organisations that recover quickly from attacks are usually those that have practised restoring their systems, and know how long it takes.

For local governments and small companies, which often lack specialist staff, the lesson of this week may be the most useful one: ask the provider, in writing, what is and is not backed up, and by whom.

TECHNOLOGY

Skyticket's Operator Says 14.64 Million Customer Records Were Hit, Including Addresses and 4.13 Million Hashed Passwords; Card and Passport Numbers Were Not Leaked

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Adventure, the Tokyo company that runs the Skyticket travel booking service, said on Friday that about 14.64 million records of customer information had been affected by unauthorised access to its systems between October 2 and 4.

The data include names, dates of birth, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers and addresses, the company said.

About 4.13 million passwords were also taken, in hashed form, a scrambled version from which the original password is meant to be hard to recover.

Credit card numbers and passport numbers were not leaked, the company said. Travellers booking international flights often enter passport details, so that confirmation will come as some relief.

The largest of the week

By number of records, Adventure's is the largest of the five leaks announced on Thursday and Friday, ahead of Daiichi Kosho's 8.72 million and BookOff's 6.43 million.

It has not been linked to the attack on IDC Frontier's cloud.

The passwords

Hashing is designed so that a stolen list of hashes does not directly reveal passwords. But short or common passwords can often be recovered by attackers who try millions of guesses against the stolen hashes.

Customers who used their Skyticket password on any other site should change it there as well, choosing a different password for each service.

The addresses

The leaked home addresses are a more lasting problem. A password can be changed in a minute; an address cannot.

Combined with names, dates of birth and telephone numbers, they give fraudsters what they need to pose convincingly as a travel company, an airline or a delivery firm. Messages about refunds, cancelled flights or problems with bookings should be checked directly with the company concerned, not through links in the message.

TECHNOLOGY

BookOff Says Records of Up to 6.43 Million Members May Have Leaked From a Subsidiary's System; No Payment Data Held, It Says

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

BookOff Group Holdings, the second-hand retailer, said on Friday that the records of up to about 6.43 million members may have leaked after unauthorised access to a member information management system run by one of its subsidiaries.

The company confirmed the intrusion on Tuesday, October 6.

The data that may have leaked are names, dates of birth, gender, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, postcodes and addresses, password hashes, point card numbers and membership numbers.

The system does not hold credit card or other payment information, so none was exposed, the

company said. No alteration of member information has been confirmed.

What the company has done

It has blocked communications from the source of the attack, fixed a vulnerability and cut the system off from outside access.

It will contact affected members individually, in turn, as its investigation establishes who they are, and has warned members to be wary of e-mails, telephone calls and text messages that pretend to come from it.

The company

BookOff Group Holdings, based in Sagamihara, Kanagawa Prefecture, runs shops that buy and sell used books, games, clothing and other goods across Japan and abroad. Its point card and app are used by millions of shoppers.

Its leak has not been linked to the attack on IDC Frontier's cloud.

For members

Members who used the same password for BookOff and for other services should change it elsewhere too.

Because the data include home addresses and dates of birth, members should also be alert to letters and calls that use those details to appear genuine. The company's own notices are posted on its website.

TECHNOLOGY

Big Echo's Operator, Daiichi Kosho, Says Data on About 8.72 Million Customers and Employees May Have Been Compromised

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

Daiichi Kosho, the karaoke company that makes the DAM karaoke systems and runs the Big Echo chain of karaoke rooms, said on Thursday that personal data on about 8.72 million people may have been compromised.

About 8.63 million of them are customers, including users of Big Echo, and about 90,000 are employees, according to the company.

The data include names, dates of birth, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

The company said its investigation was continuing.

Karaoke and data

Karaoke chains collect more data than many customers realise. Membership schemes offer discounts and points, and online booking and smartphone apps require registration with a name, a telephone number and an e-mail address.

That data is valuable to the companies for marketing, and valuable to criminals for the same reason.

Not linked

The case has not been linked to the attack on IDC Frontier's cloud. It is one of five leaks announced on Thursday and Friday which between them involve about 38 million records.

For customers

Customers of Big Echo should treat with suspicion any message about their membership, points or bookings that asks them to click a link or give further details.

Employees whose data may have leaked face similar risks, and messages that appear to come from colleagues or from the company's personnel department deserve the same caution.

The company is expected to say more as its investigation proceeds, including how the intruders gained access.

TECHNOLOGY

Lawson Says 2.15 Million Lawson ID Records Were Taken Through a Feature That Shows Users Their Own Details

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

Lawson, the convenience store chain, said on Thursday that 2,155,345 records of personal information from Lawson ID, the shared account used for its apps and web services, had been taken by a third party.

The intruders exploited a mechanism designed to show users their own information within the app, the company said.

E-mail addresses and names were exposed. For customers who had entered them when applying for prizes and campaigns, gender, telephone numbers,

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addresses and newsletter settings were also exposed.

A second service, used in the Lawson app to reserve and pay for event goods in advance, was also breached. Names, telephone numbers and partial credit card numbers of 26 customers were exposed there.

When it happened

The unauthorised access to Lawson ID took place from September 12 to 14, and that to the reservation service on September 17. The company identified it in an investigation on October 7.

What Lawson has done

It has blocked the suspicious sources of access, suspended the reservation function, and reported the case to the Personal Information Protection Commission.

It will notify the customers affected one by one, from the address lawson_id@mailservice.lawson.jp, and plans to strengthen the security and monitoring of the systems concerned.

A lesson in design

The case shows how a feature built for convenience can become a door. A screen that shows customers their own details must check, every time, that the person asking is the customer, and attackers look for the cases in which it does not.

Lawson's leak has not been linked to the attack on IDC Frontier's cloud.

TECHNOLOGY

The Week's Cyber Incidents

By the Technology Desk

- MONDAY, OCT. 5: Yakiniku King app, run by Monogatari Corporation: 10,788,963 members; names, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers.
- WEDNESDAY, OCT. 7: IDC Frontier's cloud hit by ransomware at about 3:40 a.m.; 495 customers affected.
- SAME DAY: Nissui Logistics halts goods in and out at all 17 warehouses after a cyberattack.
- THURSDAY, OCT. 8: Lawson ID: 2,155,345 records taken.
- THURSDAY, OCT. 8: Daiichi Kosho, operator of Big Echo: about 8.72 million people.
- FRIDAY, OCT. 9: JR East: about 6.09 million records, through the IDC Frontier attack.
- FRIDAY, OCT. 9: Adventure, operator of Skyticket: about 14.64 million records.
- FRIDAY, OCT. 9: BookOff: up to about 6.43 million members.
- THIS YEAR: 506 leak incidents by October 7, a record, the Yomiuri reports.
- LINKED TO THE CLOUD ATTACK: Of the leaks above, only JR East's.

TECHNOLOGY

What a Password Hash Is, and Why a Stolen One Still Means You Should Change Your Password

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

Two of the companies that announced leaks this week, BookOff and Skyticket's operator, said password hashes were among the data taken. The term needs explaining, because it is both reassuring and not.

A well-run service does not store its customers' passwords as written. It runs each password through a mathematical function, a hash, which turns it into a string of characters, and stores only that string.

When a customer logs in, the service hashes the password typed and compares the result with the stored hash. If they match, the password was correct.

A good hash function works in only one direction. It is easy to turn a password into a hash and, in principle, impractical to turn the hash back into the password.

Where it breaks down

Attackers do not need to reverse the function. They can guess: take a list of millions of likely passwords, hash each one, and look for matches in the stolen list.

Common and short passwords fall quickly to this method. Long, unusual ones may survive for a very long time, especially when the service has used a deliberately slow hash and added a random value, known as a salt, to each password before hashing it. Customers rarely know which methods a company

used, and so cannot judge how safe their own hash is.

What to do

Anyone whose password hash was taken should change the password for that service, and for every other service where the same password was used.

A password manager makes it practical to use a different, long password everywhere. Two-step verification, which requires a code from a phone or a security key as well as the password, protects an account even when the password is known.

The rule that matters most is the simplest: never use the same password twice.

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Two-Step Verification: The Simplest Protection Against Stolen Passwords, and How to Turn It On

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Two-step verification, also called two-factor or multi-factor authentication, asks for something more than a password when someone logs in to an account.

The second step is usually a code sent by text message, a code generated by an authentication app on a smartphone, a confirmation on a registered phone, or a physical security key.

The point is that a criminal who has a customer's password, from a leak or a guess, still cannot log in without the second step.

Which kind

Codes sent by text message are better than nothing, but they can be intercepted, and criminals sometimes persuade telephone companies to transfer a victim's number to a new card.

Authentication apps and security keys are stronger. Passkeys, which a growing number of services now offer, replace the password altogether with a cryptographic key stored on the customer's device.

Where to start

Start with the accounts that matter most: e-mail, because it can be used to reset other passwords; banking and securities; online shopping; and the accounts of the main smartphone platforms.

The option is usually found in an account's security settings. Setting it up takes a few minutes.

A caution

Two-step verification protects against stolen passwords, not against being tricked. A fraudster who persuades a customer to read out a one-time code, by pretending to be the bank, can still get in.

No genuine company will ask a customer to read out a one-time code over the telephone. Anyone who asks for one is not who they say they are.

TECHNOLOGY

One Leak Is a Nuisance; Five Can Be a Profile: How Criminals Combine Stolen Records, and the Role of AI

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

Most of the leaks announced this week involve ordinary details: e-mail addresses, names, dates of birth, telephone numbers. None of them, alone, gives a criminal access to a bank account.

The danger lies in combination. Leaked records are bought and sold, and the same person appears in many of them, often under the same e-mail address or telephone number.

Matched together, records from a railway, a bookshop, a karaoke chain, a travel agent and a convenience store can tell a criminal where someone lives, how old they are, how they travel, what they buy and how they can be reached.

Why AI matters

Matching records has always been possible, but it was laborious. The Yomiuri Shimbun reported this week on concern that artificial intelligence could be used to combine leaked data into fuller profiles of individuals far more quickly.

The same tools can write fluent, personalised messages in natural Japanese, removing one of the old signs of fraud: clumsy language.

What a profile is for

A detailed profile makes possible what security specialists call targeted phishing: a message that refers to a customer's real membership, real address and real recent purchases, and asks for a password, a

card number or a payment.

It can also support fraud by telephone, in which a caller who knows a victim's date of birth and address sounds like a genuine official.

The defence

The best defence is a habit: never act on a message, however convincing, without checking it independently, through a website reached by typing its address or a telephone number printed on a card or bill.

Companies and the government can help by making clear what they will never ask for in an e-mail or a call. Customers can help themselves by remembering that a message which knows a lot about them is not, for that reason, genuine.

TECHNOLOGY

The Rules on Reporting Leaks: Why Announcements Come in Waves, and What Companies Must Tell Regulators and Customers

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Since April 2022, the Act on the Protection of Personal Information has required companies to report certain leaks of personal data to the Personal Information Protection Commission and to notify the people affected.

The obligation applies to four kinds of case: leaks of sensitive data such as medical information; leaks of data that could cause financial damage if misused, such as card numbers; leaks that may have been caused with a wrongful purpose, such as unauthorised access; and leaks involving more than 1,000 people.

Almost every leak announced this week falls into at least one of those categories.

Two reports

Companies must first make a preliminary report promptly, which the commission's guidelines describe as within about three to five days of becoming aware of the case.

A final report must follow within 30 days, or within 60 days when the leak may have been caused with a wrongful purpose, as in attacks by outsiders.

Why so many at once

These deadlines help explain why announcements tend to come in clusters after a large attack. Companies whose data sat with an affected provider, or which discover intrusions during checks prompted by a wider incident, reach the point of announcement at about the same time.

Companies often announce that data may have leaked before they know for certain, because the law and good practice favour early warning over certainty.

What customers are owed

People affected must be told what happened and what data were involved, so that they can protect themselves. Where individual notice is difficult, a public announcement can substitute.

The commission can investigate, give guidance and issue recommendations and orders. Its reports on major cases, published later, are often the most complete account of what went wrong.

TECHNOLOGY

The Personal Information Protection Commission: The Independent Watchdog That Receives Every Serious Leak Report

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The Personal Information Protection Commission is Japan's data protection authority. It was established in its present form in January 2016 as an independent administrative commission, meaning that it is not under the direction of a ministry.

It consists of a chair and eight members, supported by a secretariat.

Its powers

The commission oversees how companies and other organisations handle personal data under the Act on the Protection of Personal Information. It can require reports, carry out on-site inspections, give guidance and advice, and issue recommendations and orders.

Breaching its orders is a criminal offence. Since an amendment in 2020, companies that disobey can be fined up to 100 million yen.

Leak reports

Since April 2022, companies have been required to report serious leaks to the commission, and the number of reports has risen sharply. Every major leak announced this week falls within the reporting rules.

The reports allow the commission to see patterns across cases and to issue warnings, and its published reviews of major incidents are often the most detailed account of what went wrong.

The debate on fines

Unlike European regulators, the commission cannot impose administrative fines calculated on a company's turnover. Whether to introduce surcharges has been discussed in its periodic reviews of the law, and the debate is likely to intensify after this month's leaks.

International role

The commission also handles Japan's data agreements with other countries. Japan and the European Union recognise each other's data protection as adequate, allowing personal data to flow between them.

That arrangement, too, depends on Japanese companies and regulators being seen to take protection seriously.

TECHNOLOGY

Were You a Customer? Six Things to Do Now If Your Details May Have Leaked This Week

By the Technology Desk

With about 38 million records involved in the leaks announced on Thursday and Friday, many readers will have accounts with at least one of the companies concerned. These are the practical steps worth taking.

1. Wait for the company, but do not wait passively
- Each company has said it will contact the people affected. Note how it says it will do so: Lawson, for example, has given the address from which its notices will come.
2. Change passwords that were reused
- Where password hashes were taken, change the password for that service and for any other service that uses the same one. Start with e-mail, banking and shopping accounts.
3. Turn on two-step verification
- Many services allow a second step at login, such as a code sent to a phone or generated by an app. It protects an account even if the password is known.
4. Be suspicious of messages that know about you
- A message that quotes your name, membership number or address is not proof of anything. Do not follow links or call numbers given in an unexpected message; go to the company's site or use the number on your card.
5. Watch your statements
- None of the companies has said that full card numbers were taken. Checking card and bank statements for unfamiliar charges is still a sensible habit.
6. Know where to ask
- Consumer affairs centres, reached nationally on 188, give advice on suspicious contacts and fraud. The police consultation line, #9110, deals with concerns that may involve crime.

Point Cards and Apps: Why Japanese Retailers Hold So Much Data About Their Customers

By Grace Park | Food & Restaurants

Few countries have embraced loyalty points as thoroughly as Japan. Shoppers carry cards or apps for convenience stores, drugstores, bookshops, electronics chains and restaurants, and are asked at almost every till whether they have one.

The big shared schemes, such as Ponta, d Point, Rakuten Point and V Point, which absorbed the old T Point in 2024, are accepted across thousands of shops. Many chains run their own schemes as well.

The points are a reward. The data are the price.

What they collect

To join, customers usually give a name, a date of birth, a gender, an address or postcode, a telephone number and an e-mail address. Each purchase recorded against a card adds to a history of what a customer buys, where and when.

TECHNOLOGY

Retailers use the data to decide what to stock, where to open shops and which offers to send to whom. Sharing it with partners is governed by the terms customers accept, often without reading them.

The cost of a leak

The more data a company holds, the more there is to lose. This week's leaks at BookOff, Lawson and Daiichi Kosho all involved membership systems of this kind.

Purchase histories were not among the data the companies said were exposed. Contact details and dates of birth were.

A choice

Customers can reduce their exposure by joining fewer schemes, giving only the details that are required, and closing accounts they no longer use.

Companies can reduce it by collecting less and deleting what they no longer need, a principle written into data protection law and too often honoured in the breach.

TECHNOLOGY

Should Victims Pay a Ransom? Why the Police Say No, and Why Some Companies Still Do

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

When ransomware strikes, victims face a stark choice: pay the attackers for a key to unlock their systems and a promise not to publish stolen data, or refuse and rebuild.

Police and governments, including Japan's, advise against paying.

Payment funds the criminals' next attacks and rewards their business model. It does not guarantee that the key will work, that systems will be restored quickly or that stolen data will be deleted. Victims who pay are sometimes attacked again.

Paying a group that is subject to sanctions can also expose a company to legal risk in other countries.

Why some pay

Some companies pay nonetheless, because the alternative seems worse. A business that cannot operate for weeks may face collapse, and a hospital that cannot see patients faces something graver.

The decisive factor is usually the state of the victim's backups. A company that can restore its systems from clean copies has little reason to pay; one that cannot may feel it has no choice.

Double extortion

Modern groups usually steal data before encrypting it and threaten to publish it if no ransom is paid. Restoring from backups solves the first problem but not the second.

That is why preventing the theft, by keeping less data and protecting what is kept, matters as much as being able to recover.

The wider fight

Japan takes part in the international initiative against ransomware led by the United States, which seeks to disrupt the groups, trace their payments and deny them safe havens.

Each victim that refuses to pay, and each that reports to the police, makes the business a little less profitable.

TECHNOLOGY

62 Years Ago Today: A Satellite Over the Pacific Carries the Tokyo Olympics' Opening Ceremony to America

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

On October 10, 1964, as the Emperor opened the Tokyo Olympics in the National Stadium, television pictures of the ceremony crossed the Pacific by way of a satellite hanging high above the ocean.

The satellite was Syncom 3, launched by NASA in August 1964. It was the first geostationary satellite: placed about 36,000 kilometres above the equator, it circled the Earth once a day, in step with the planet's rotation, and so appeared to stand still in the sky.

Its predecessor, Syncom 2, had reached the same height in 1963 but in an inclined orbit, so that it drifted north and south each day. Syncom 3 sat over the Pacific near the international date line, where stations on both sides of the ocean could see it.

Kashima

In Japan the pictures were sent up from the Kashima station of the Radio Research Laboratories in Ibaraki Prefecture, and received in California.

Japan had already had a taste of satellite television. In November 1963, the first test of a television relay between Japan and the United States, by the satellite Relay 1, carried the news of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

A showcase

The Games were a showcase of Japanese technology and of the country's recovery. The Tokaido Shinkansen had opened on October 1, nine days before the ceremony, and the Tokyo Monorail to Haneda Airport in September.

The satellite broadcast showed the world that television had become global. Within a few years, live pictures from the other side of the world, including the first landing on the Moon in 1969, would be taken for granted.

The legacy

Geostationary orbit, first used in practice by Syncom 3, is now crowded with satellites for communications, broadcasting and weather.

Japan's Himawari weather satellites watch the western Pacific from geostationary orbit, and the typhoon maps in today's edition rely on what they see.

The technology that carried a ceremony across the Pacific in 1964 now carries forecasts of the storms that cross it.

TECHNOLOGY

62 Years Ago Today: Explorer 22 Is Launched, the First Satellite Fitted With Mirrors to Reflect a Laser From the Ground

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

On October 10, 1964, the United States launched Explorer 22, also known as Beacon Explorer B, from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

Its main task was to study the ionosphere, the layer of charged particles in the upper atmosphere that reflects and bends radio waves, by transmitting radio signals that were received on the ground.

It also carried something new: an array of retroreflectors, prisms that send light back exactly in the direction from which it came.

Measuring with light

Weeks after the launch, scientists at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center fired a laser at the satellite and caught the reflected pulse. By timing the round trip, they could measure the distance to the satellite with a precision radio could not match.

Satellite laser ranging, as the method is known, became one of the foundations of geodesy, the science of measuring the shape of the Earth, its rotation and its gravity.

The Moon, too

In 1969 the crew of Apollo 11 left a retroreflector on the Moon, and laser ranging to it, and to later reflectors, has measured the distance to the Moon to within centimetres. The Moon is moving away from the Earth at about 3.8 centimetres a year.

Ajisai

Japan launched its own laser geodetic satellite, the Experimental Geodetic Satellite known as Ajisai, in 1986. It is covered with reflectors and mirrors, and stations around the world still use it.

Laser ranging helps to fix the reference frame against which the movement of tectonic plates is measured, including the slow motions that load the faults beneath Japan.

A few prisms on a small satellite launched 62 years ago today began a way of measuring the planet that is still in daily use.

TECHNOLOGY

59 Years Ago Today: The Outer Space Treaty Takes Effect, Banning National Claims to the Moon and Nuclear Weapons in Orbit

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The Outer Space Treaty, the founding document of international space law, entered into force on October 10, 1967, less than nine months after it was opened for signature in London, Moscow and Washington.

Its principles are short and far-reaching. Outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, is free for exploration and use by all states and is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by use or occupation, or by any other means.

States undertake not to place nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in orbit, and the Moon and other celestial bodies are to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

States are responsible for national activities in space, whether carried out by government agencies or by private companies, and must authorise and supervise them.

Japan's laws

That last principle underlies Japan's own space laws. The Space Activities Act of 2016 created a licensing system for private launches and satellites.

The Space Resources Act of 2021 allows Japanese companies, with permission, to own resources they extract in space, a position that some lawyers argue sits uneasily with the treaty's ban on appropriation and others say is consistent with it.

The question is no longer theoretical. The Tokyo company ispace has twice tried to land on the Moon, in 2023 and 2025, and plans further missions.

A crowded orbit

In 1967 only a few countries could reach orbit. Today dozens operate satellites, private companies launch thousands, and the rules written for a contest between two superpowers are being tested by commerce.

The treaty has more than 110 parties, including all the major spacefaring nations.

Its entry into force is marked each year by the end of World Space Week, which closes today.

TECHNOLOGY

180 Years Ago Today: A Liverpool Brewer Finds Triton, Neptune's Great Moon, 17 Days After the Planet Itself Was Found

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

On October 10, 1846, the English astronomer William Lassell discovered Triton, the largest moon of Neptune.

Neptune itself had been found only 17 days earlier, on September 23, by Johann Galle at the Berlin Observatory, close to the position predicted by the French mathematician Urbain Le Verrier from irregularities in the orbit of Uranus.

Lassell was not a professional astronomer. He had made his fortune as a brewer in Liverpool and built his own telescopes, among the best of their day.

A moon going backwards

Triton is unusual. It is the only large moon in the solar system that orbits in the opposite direction to its planet's rotation, which suggests that it did not form with Neptune but was captured, probably from the Kuiper belt beyond.

It is about 2,700 kilometres across, roughly four-fifths the diameter of Earth's Moon.

Voyager

The only spacecraft to visit it, Voyager 2, flew past on August 25, 1989. Its pictures showed a young, icy surface with few craters and dark streaks laid down by plumes rising several kilometres from the surface.

With a surface temperature of about minus 235 degrees, Triton is among the coldest bodies measured in the solar system.

The name

The moon was not named Triton until decades after its discovery. The name, taken from a son of Poseidon in Greek mythology, was suggested by the French astronomer Camille Flammarion.

Scientists have proposed new missions to Triton, which some think may hide an ocean beneath its ice, but none has yet been approved.

TECHNOLOGY

World Space Week Ends Today, Between Two Anniversaries: Sputnik and the Treaty That Set the Rules

By the Technology Desk

World Space Week, which began on October 4, ends today.

The United Nations General Assembly declared the

week in 1999 to celebrate the contribution of space science and technology to the improvement of the human condition.

Its dates mark two anniversaries: the launch of Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite, by the Soviet Union on October 4, 1957, and the entry into force of the Outer Space Treaty on October 10, 1967.

Events are held around the world, many of them for schoolchildren, by space agencies, museums, universities and amateur astronomers.

Japan in space

Japan launched its first satellite, Ohsumi, in February 1970, becoming the fourth country to place a satellite in orbit with its own rocket.

Since then it has returned samples from two asteroids, with the Hayabusa and Hayabusa2 missions, and landed on the Moon with the SLIM spacecraft in January 2024, the fifth country to do so.

Its H3 rocket now carries the country's government satellites, and private companies are developing smaller launchers and lunar landers.

Everyday space

Much of what space provides is invisible. Satellite navigation guides cars and smartphones, with Japan's Michibiki system improving accuracy in the region. Weather satellites feed every forecast.

Communications satellites carry broadcasts and connect ships, aircraft and remote places that cables do not reach.

The week is a reminder of how much of daily life now depends on machines in orbit, and on keeping them safe.

TECHNOLOGY

Today in Technology History: October 10

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

1846: William Lassell discovers Triton, Neptune's largest moon, 17 days after Neptune is found.

1964: The opening ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics is relayed across the Pacific by Syncom 3, the first geostationary satellite.

1964: Explorer 22 is launched, the first satellite fitted with retroreflectors for laser ranging.

1967: The Outer Space Treaty enters into force.

1999: The UN declares October 4 to 10 World Space Week.

THIS WEEK, 1957: Sputnik 1 is launched on October 4.

THIS WEEK, 1876: The first two-way telephone conversation over outdoor wires takes place on October 9.

THIS WEEK, 2006: Google announces its purchase of YouTube on October 9.

THIS WEEK, 2026: A ransomware attack on a cloud provider reaches the customers of hundreds of companies and councils.

TODAY: World Mental Health Day.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology Digest

By the Technology Desk

RAIL: JR East says about 6.09 million records kept on IDC Frontier's cloud may have leaked.

CLOUD: IDC Frontier says some data in four zones will be hard to recover, and customers must rebuild from their own backups.

TRAVEL: Skyticket's operator reports about 14.64 million records affected; card and passport numbers safe.

BOOKS: BookOff says up to 6.43 million member records may have leaked.

KARAOKE: Daiichi Kosho says data on about 8.72 million people may have been compromised.

STORES: Lawson says 2,155,345 Lawson ID records were taken.

ELECTIONS: Parties ask platforms to act on paid-for views, AI content and bots.

MARKETS: A report on OpenAI's revenue drags chip shares; the Nikkei recovers to end flat.

SPACE: World Space Week ends today.

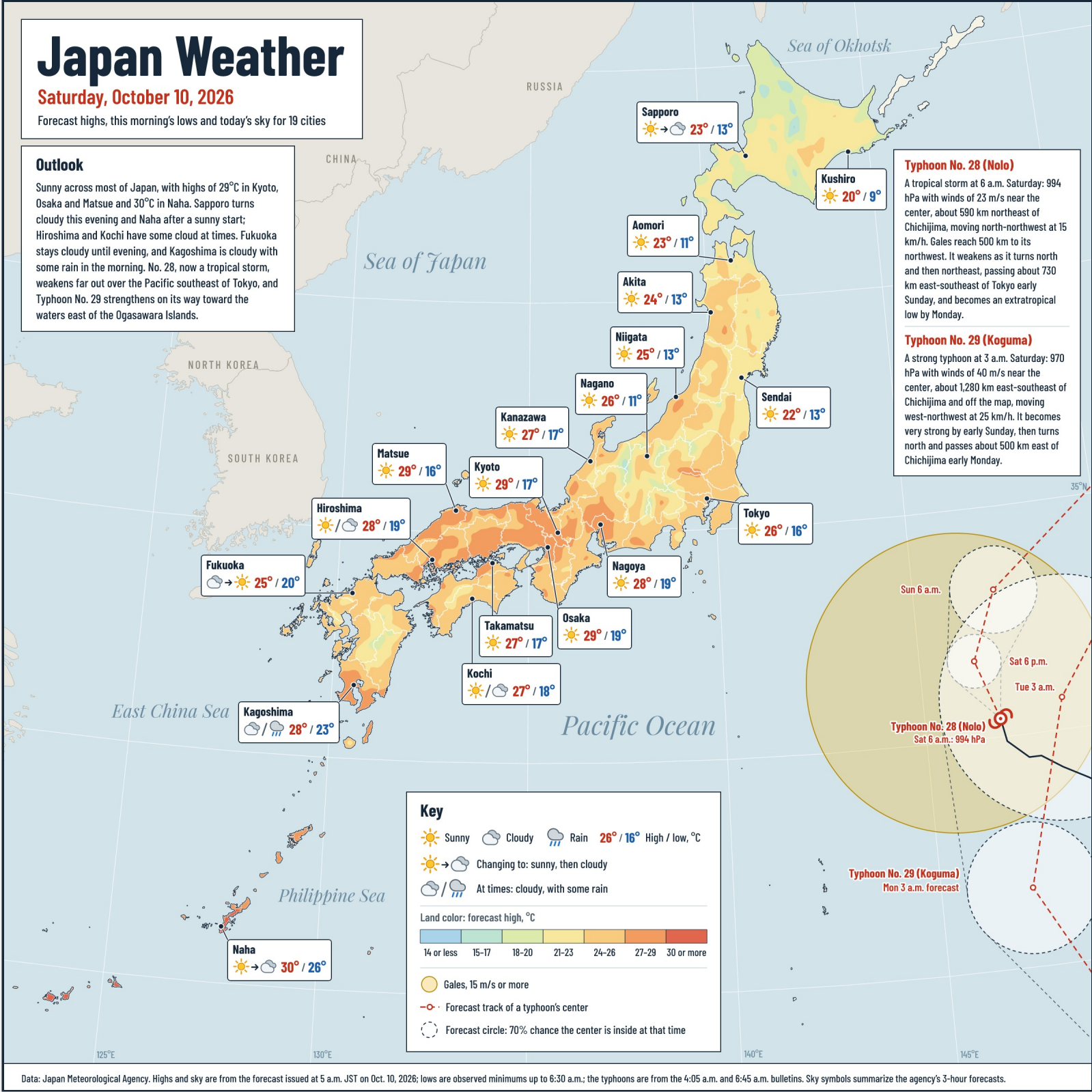
HISTORY: Syncom 3 relayed the Tokyo Olympics' opening ceremony 62 years ago today.

WEATHER & SOCIETY



26°C

Low 16°C this morning · Sunny · Koguma very strong by early Sunday, about 500 km east of Chichijima early Monday · Nolo extratropical by Monday



TODAY'S HIGHS AND LOWS — 19 CITIES				
Forecast highs and this morning's lows from today's weather map, °C, north to south. An arrow: the sky changes. A stroke: at times.				
	Sapporo	13°		23°
	Kushiro	9°		20°
	Aomori	11°		23°
	Akita	13°		24°
	Sendai	13°		22°
	Niigata	13°		25°
	Nagano	11°		26°
	Kanazawa		17°	27°
	Tokyo		16°	26°
	Nagoya		19°	28°
	Kyoto		17°	29°
	Osaka		19°	29°
	Matsue		16°	29°
	Hiroshima		19°	28°
	Takamatsu		17°	27°
	Kochi		18°	27°
	Fukuoka		20°	25°
	Kagoshima		23°	28°
	Naha		26°	30°

TODAY'S WEATHER

Sunny across most of Japan on the first day of the three-day weekend. The map, for 19 cities, gives Tokyo sunshine all day, a high of 26 and a low this morning of 16. Its outlook reads: sunny across most of Japan, with highs of 29 in Kyoto, Osaka and Matsue and 30 in Naha; Sapporo turns cloudy this evening and Naha after a sunny start; Hiroshima and Kochi have some cloud at times; Fukuoka stays cloudy until evening, and Kagoshima is cloudy with some rain in the morning. Highs range from 20 in Kushiro to 30 in Naha, the warmest city on the map.

REGIONAL FORECASTS

Hokkaido: Sapporo sunny, then cloudy, 23/13, cloud arriving this evening; Kushiro sunny, 20/9, the coolest high and the coldest morning on the map. Tohoku: Aomori sunny, 23/11; Akita sunny, 24/13; Sendai sunny, 22/13. Niigata and the Sea of Japan coast: Niigata sunny, 25/13; Kanazawa sunny, 27/17. Inland: Nagano sunny, 26/11, the widest range of the day, 15 degrees. Kanto: Tokyo sunny, 26/16. Tokai: Nagoya sunny, 28/19. Kansai: Kyoto sunny, 29/17; Osaka sunny, 29/19. Chugoku: Matsue sunny, 29/16, among the three warmest on Honshu; Hiroshima sunny with some cloud, 28/19. Shikoku: Takamatsu sunny, 27/17; Kochi sunny with some cloud, 27/18. Kyushu: Fukuoka cloudy, then sunny, 25/20, the sun breaking through in the evening; Kagoshima cloudy with some rain, 28/23, the rain mainly in the morning. Okinawa: Naha sunny, then cloudy, 30/26, the warmest morning and the narrowest range, 4 degrees.

THE TWO TYPHOONS

No. 29 (Koguma): a strong typhoon near Minamitorishima at 3 a.m., at 20.8 degrees north, 152.8 degrees east, about 1,280 km east-south-east of Chichijima, moving west-north-west at 25 km/h; 970 hPa; winds 40 m/s, gusts 55; storm-force winds 85 km all round, gales 390 km to the north and 280 km to the south. Forecast: 960 hPa and 40 m/s at 3 p.m. on Saturday; very strong by 3 a.m. on Sunday, 955 hPa and 45 m/s; turning north and passing about 500 km east of Chichijima at 3 a.m. on Monday, a strong typhoon of 960 hPa and 40 m/s; about 990 km east-south-east of Tokyo at 3 a.m. on Tuesday, 970 hPa and 35 m/s; a severe tropical storm of 980 hPa by 3 a.m. on Wednesday; an extratropical low of 984 hPa by 3 a.m. on Thursday. No. 28 (Nolo): weakened to a tropical storm; at 6 a.m., 994 hPa, winds 23 m/s

near the centre, about 590 km north-east of Chichijima, moving north-north-west at 15 km/h, gales reaching 500 km to the north-west; it weakens as it turns north and then north-east, passing about 730 km east-south-east of Tokyo early on Sunday, and becomes an extratropical low by Monday. No landfall on the main islands is forecast. The map of both storms is on the typhoon page.

SEA AND COAST

Izu Islands and the Pacific coast of Kanto: swell from the start of the long weekend, Weathernews says; Ogasawara Islands: high waves in the second half. Even under clear skies the sea is dangerous; keep off breakwaters and rocky shores. Panama earthquake: the Japan Meteorological Agency says slight changes in sea level, of less than 20 centimetres, may occur on Japan's coasts from about 8 p.m. today and may continue for about a day; no damage is expected. Island ferries: check the shipping line's announcements before setting out. Chiba and Kanagawa: the ground is still loose after Typhoon No. 25, and caution is advised in rain.

THE DAYS AHEAD

The agency's weekly forecast: mostly sunny or cloudy from northern to western Japan from Saturday to Monday, the Sports Day holiday, then rain from a weather front on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 13 and 14. Over the ocean to the south-east, Koguma is forecast to be very strong from early Sunday and to pass about 500 km east of Chichijima early on Monday; Nolo becomes extratropical by Monday. The El Niño in the Pacific reached a record strength in September, the agency said on Friday, and it expects warm air to cover Japan more easily this autumn and winter.

SUNRISE AND SUNSET

Tokyo: sunrise 5:42 a.m., sunset 5:14 p.m.; Osaka: sunrise 5:58 a.m., sunset 5:31 p.m.; Sapporo: sunrise 5:41 a.m., sunset 5:02 p.m.; Naha: sunrise 6:25 a.m., sunset 6:07 p.m.; Chichijima, which Typhoon No. 29 passes early on Monday: sunrise 5:27 a.m., sunset 5:09 p.m.. Calculated for Saturday, October 10. New moon falls in the early hours of Sunday, leaving dark skies over the fine weekend.

ABOUT THE MAP

The map cites the Japan Meteorological Agency: the highs and the sky are from the forecast issued at 5 a.m. today, the lows are observed minimums up to

6:30 a.m., and the typhoons are from the bulletins of 4:05 a.m. and 6:45 a.m. Its sky symbols summarise the agency's three-hourly forecasts. Two symbols joined by an arrow mean the sky changes during the day; two separated by a stroke mean one sky with the other at times. The colour of the land shows the forecast high in seven bands. On the right of the map are Typhoon No. 28's forecast track, with its circles for 6 p.m. Saturday and 6 a.m. Sunday and the edge of its gale area, Typhoon No. 29's forecast positions for 3 a.m. on Monday and Tuesday, and a panel describing both storms; No. 29's centre at 3 a.m. was off the edge of the map. The chart beside the map sets out each city's low and high, north to south. A United States map for today appears on the Weather Abroad page.

SOCIETY

Today's Weather: Sunshine Across Most of Japan, 29 Degrees in Kyoto, Osaka and Matsue and 30 in Naha; Some Rain in Kagoshima

By the Weather Desk

The three-day weekend opens with sunshine over most of the country, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency's 5 a.m. forecast.

Kyoto, Osaka and Matsue are forecast to reach 29 degrees and Naha 30. Nagoya, Hiroshima and Kagoshima expect 28, Kanazawa, Takamatsu and Kochi 27, and Tokyo and Nagano 26.

In the north, Sapporo and Aomori are forecast to reach 23 degrees, Akita 24, Niigata 25, Sendai 22 and Kushiro 20.

Cloud and rain

Sapporo turns cloudy this evening, and Naha after a sunny start. Hiroshima and Kochi have some cloud at times.

Fukuoka is cloudy until the evening, when the sun is forecast to break through, with a high of 25. Kagoshima is cloudy with some rain in the morning.

This morning's lows

Kushiro was the coldest of the 19 cities this morning, at 9 degrees. Aomori and Nagano fell to 11, and Sapporo, Akita, Niigata and Sendai to 13. Tokyo's low was 16.

Matsue recorded 16, Kyoto, Kanazawa and Takamatsu 17, Kochi 18, and Osaka, Nagoya and

Hiroshima 19. Fukuoka's low was 20, Kagoshima's 23 and Naha's 26.

The lows are the minimum temperatures observed up to 6:30 a.m.

The typhoons

Typhoon No. 28, now a tropical storm, weakens far out over the Pacific south-east of Tokyo, and Typhoon No. 29 strengthens on its way towards the waters east of the Ogasawara Islands. Neither is forecast to reach the main islands, but both are sending swell to Pacific coasts.

The weekend

The fine weather is expected to last through Monday's Sports Day holiday over much of the country, with rain from a front on Tuesday and Wednesday, according to the weekly forecast.

It is warm for mid-October in western Japan, though a jacket will be welcome in the north after dark.

SOCIETY

Society Digest

By the Society Desk

FLU: Influenza passes the advisory level nationwide for the first time this season; Okinawa is at warning level.

COURTS: The Supreme Court upholds 169 million yen in damages for copying band scores.

TACHIBANA: The man who attacked the NHK Party founder with a machete is sentenced to nine years.

FRAUD: Eight are arrested over a water heater inspection scam aimed at older residents.

EL NINO: The Pacific warming reaches record strength; a warm autumn and winter are expected.

LEAKS: JR East, BookOff, Skyticket, Big Echo's operator and Lawson report records exposed.

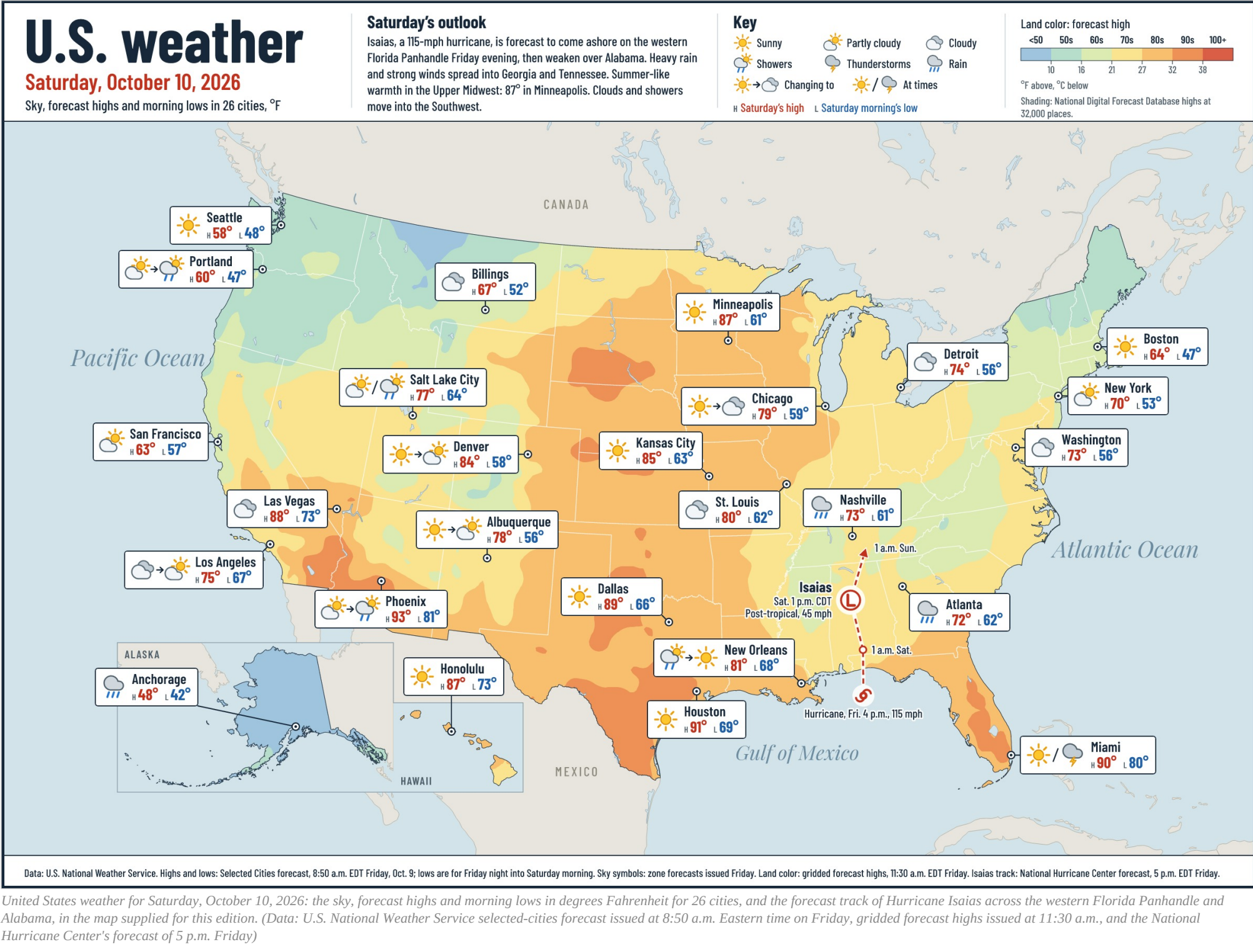
OKINAWA: The prefectural assembly protests over the killing of a woman in Naha.

SEA: Slight changes in sea level are possible on the coasts from about 8 p.m. after the Panama earthquake.

TODAY: World Mental Health Day.

WEATHER: Sunny and warm; 29 degrees in Kyoto, Osaka and Matsue.

WEATHER ABROAD



SOCIETY

Weather Abroad: Hurricane Isaias Is Forecast to Come Ashore on the Florida Panhandle, as Minneapolis Enjoys Summer-Like Warmth at 87 Degrees

By the Weather Desk

Hurricane Isaias, with maximum sustained winds of about 115 mph, was forecast to come ashore on the western Florida Panhandle on Friday evening, local time, which is Saturday morning in Japan, according to the National Hurricane Center's forecast issued at 5 p.m. Eastern time on Friday.

It was then forecast to weaken over Alabama, becoming a post-tropical low with winds of about 45 mph by 1 p.m. Central time on Saturday, and to move north towards Tennessee by early Sunday.

A hurricane with winds of 115 mph is a Category 3 storm on the Saffir-Simpson scale, the lowest category counted as a major hurricane.

Heavy rain and strong winds were forecast to spread into Georgia and Tennessee. Nashville expects rain and a high of 73 degrees Fahrenheit, and Atlanta rain and 72.

Warm in the middle

The Upper Midwest is summer-like. Minneapolis is forecast to reach 87 degrees, about 31 Celsius, and Kansas City 85, both in sunshine. Texas is hot and sunny, with 91 in Houston and 89 in Dallas.

Clouds and showers move into the Southwest. Phoenix expects 93 degrees with showers developing. Las Vegas is cloudy at 88, and Salt Lake City has showers at times, with a high of 77. Denver and Albuquerque turn partly cloudy after sunny starts, at 84 and 78.

The coasts

On the West Coast, Seattle is sunny at 58 degrees, Portland turns showery at 60, San Francisco is partly cloudy at 63 and Los Angeles brightens after a cloudy start, reaching 75.

In the North-East, Boston is sunny at 64 and New York partly cloudy at 70; Washington is cloudy at 73.

Chicago turns cloudy after a sunny start, at 79, Detroit is cloudy at 74 and St. Louis cloudy at 80.

Miami expects 90 degrees with sunshine and thunderstorms at times, and New Orleans clears after showers, with a high of 81. Billings is cloudy at 67.

Anchorage has rain and a high of 48 degrees, about 9 Celsius, and Honolulu is sunny at 87.

The figures

The highs and lows are from the National Weather Service's selected cities forecast issued at 8:50 a.m. Eastern time on Friday; the lows are for Friday night into Saturday morning. The coloured shading shows the gridded forecast highs issued at 11:30 a.m. Eastern time on Friday.

Schools and nurseries

In the week, eight schools were closed altogether, and 171 year groups and 758 classes were closed at nurseries, kindergartens and schools.

The dip in the previous week's figure was probably caused by clinic closures over the holidays in late September, Weathernews said.

What to do

Doctors advise people with symptoms such as a sudden high fever, aching joints and a sore throat to stay at home and to see a doctor. Antiviral drugs started within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms can shorten a fever by a day or two.

Washing hands with soap, keeping rooms ventilated and covering coughs reduce the spread. Vaccination is advised before the peak, which usually comes in winter.

With the three-day weekend and crowds at stations and events, the coming week will show whether the rise continues.

SOCIETY

Advisory and Warning: How Japan Measures an Influenza Season, and the Rules on Staying Home From School

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Japan measures influenza through a network of designated medical institutions, which report each week how many patients they have seen. The national

figure on Friday, 42,320 patients at an average of 11.35 each, implies about 3,700 reporting institutions.

Because the network samples clinics rather than counting every case, the average per institution, not the total, is the figure that matters.

The thresholds

An average of 1.0 per institution is taken as the start of an epidemic season.

An average above 10 signals an advisory. Before an epidemic, it means a large outbreak may follow within about four weeks; during one, it means the epidemic is continuing.

An average of 30 or more signals a warning, meaning a large epidemic is under way. The warning continues until the average falls below 10.

The levels are calculated for each public health centre's district, and prefectures use them to issue their own advisories and warnings.

Schools

Under the rules of the School Health and Safety Act, pupils with influenza must stay away from school until five days have passed since the onset of symptoms and two days since their fever went down, or three days for children below school age.

Schools may close classes, year groups or the whole school when many pupils are ill.

The vaccine

Influenza vaccines take about two weeks to become effective after injection, and their protection lasts for

several months, which is why doctors recommend vaccination in the autumn.

The vaccine does not prevent every infection, but it reduces the risk of serious illness, particularly for older people and those with chronic conditions.

SOCIETY

Supreme Court Upholds 169 Million Yen in Damages for Copying Band Scores: Not Protected by Copyright, but Copying Them for Profit Was Unlawful

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

The Supreme Court on Friday upheld an order for a website operator to pay about 169 million yen in damages to a publisher of band scores, finding that copying the scores and posting them free online to earn advertising revenue was unlawful even though the scores are not protected by copyright.

The Second Petty Bench, presided over by Justice Mamoru Miura, rejected the operator's appeal, finalising the ruling of the Tokyo High Court.

It is the first time the Supreme Court has recognised liability in tort for the commercial copying of material that falls outside copyright protection.

The case

The publisher, Fairy, a Tokyo company, pays licence fees to JASRAC, the music copyright society, and employs specialists who transcribe band recordings by ear into scores for guitar, bass, drums and keyboards, which it sells.

The website operator copied Fairy's scores for 579 songs over at least about six and a half years and published them free of charge, earning money from advertising.

The Tokyo District Court dismissed the claim in 2021, finding differences between the two sets of scores. The Tokyo High Court ruled in 2024 that they had been copied, citing a match of more than 90 per cent in the notation, and ordered the damages.

The reasoning

The Supreme Court said the operator had avoided the considerable effort required to produce band scores, and knew that its conduct had a direct and serious effect on the publisher's business, whose sales fell sharply in some periods.

If such copying were allowed, publishers who make transcriptions would be put at a marked disadvantage and fair competition could be harmed, the court said. The operator had gone beyond the bounds of free competition and interfered with the publisher's business, which amounted to a tort under civil law.

Why it matters

Transcriptions of recorded music are treated as outside copyright because they set down what the musicians played rather than creating a new expression. The ruling means that those who make them are not left without a remedy when their work is copied wholesale for profit.

The decision is expected to influence other cases over the commercial reuse of material that copyright law does not cover, from databases to other kinds of factual compilation.

SOCIETY

Why a Transcription Is Not a Copyright Work, and Why Copying It Can Still Be Unlawful: The Band Score Ruling Explained

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Japan's Copyright Act protects works in which thoughts or feelings are expressed creatively. A song is protected; so is an arrangement that adds creative choices of its own.

A band score made by ear from a recording sets out, as faithfully as possible, what the musicians on the record played. Its value lies in its accuracy, not in any creative contribution by the transcriber, and courts have therefore treated it as falling outside copyright.

The music itself remains protected. Publishers of scores pay licence fees to the copyright holders, usually through JASRAC, for the right to print the songs.

The 2011 precedent

In 2011 the Supreme Court ruled, in a case over the broadcast of excerpts from North Korean films, that using a work not protected under the Copyright Act is

SOCIETY

not a tort unless it infringes a legally protected interest different from the interests that copyright protects.

That ruling set a high bar. It was meant to stop courts from creating protection through the back door for material the law had chosen not to protect.

The new ruling

Friday's decision applies that test and finds the bar cleared. What was infringed, in the court's view, was not a copyright but the publisher's interest in carrying on its business free of unfair interference.

The factors the court stressed were the scale of the copying, its commercial purpose, the copier's awareness of the damage and the risk to fair competition if such conduct were allowed.

The limits

The ruling does not make transcriptions copyright works. A musician who writes out a part for personal practice, or a teacher who uses a few bars in a lesson, is in a very different position from a website that copied hundreds of scores to sell advertising.

Lawyers will now test how far the reasoning reaches, from databases and maps to other products whose value lies in effort rather than originality.

SOCIETY

Man Who Attacked Takashi Tachibana With a Machete in Kasumigaseki Is Sentenced to Nine Years for Attempted Murder

By the Society Desk

The Tokyo District Court on Friday sentenced a 32-year-old man to nine years in prison for attempted murder over an attack with a machete on Takashi Tachibana, the former member of the House of Councillors who founded the NHK Party.

The defendant, Shion Miyanishi, was also charged under the law that controls firearms and swords. Prosecutors had sought 12 years.

The attack took place on March 14 last year in the Kasumigaseki district of Tokyo, where Mr Tachibana was speaking in the street. He suffered injuries that took about three weeks to heal.

The case was tried before lay judges, as serious criminal cases are in Japan.

Violence and politics

The attack was one of a series of violent incidents involving politicians in recent years, after the assassination of the former prime minister Shinzo Abe during a campaign speech in Nara in July 2022 and the pipe bomb thrown at the then prime minister, Fumio Kishida, in Wakayama in April 2023.

Street speeches are central to Japanese campaigning, and each attack has prompted a review of how politicians are protected without cutting them off from voters.

Mr Tachibana

Mr Tachibana, a former employee of NHK, founded the party in 2013 to campaign against the public broadcaster's licence fees. He has been a combative and divisive figure, and his party's campaigns have often drawn controversy.

The sentence is not the end of the matter if either side appeals, which they may do within 14 days.

The sentence

The term of nine years is three years shorter than the 12 years the prosecutors had sought.

Whatever the views of the victim, a democracy cannot tolerate attacks on those who speak in public, and the courts' sentences in such cases are watched closely for the signal they send.

SOCIETY

Lay Judges: How Citizens Sit Alongside Professional Judges in Serious Criminal Trials Such as the Tachibana Case

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Since May 2009 Japan has tried its most serious criminal cases before panels that include ordinary citizens, known as saiban-in, or lay judges.

A typical panel consists of six lay judges and three professional judges, who together decide both guilt and the sentence.

The system covers crimes such as murder, attempted murder, robbery causing injury, arson of inhabited

buildings and other offences that can carry the heaviest penalties. The trial of the man who attacked Takashi Tachibana was one such case.

How citizens are chosen

Lay judges are drawn at random from the electoral rolls. Those selected can decline for certain reasons, such as age, illness or caring responsibilities, but otherwise are expected to serve.

Trials have been designed to be short and continuous, often lasting a week or two, so that citizens can take part without leaving their jobs for long.

Votes

Decisions are made by majority, but a verdict of guilty requires the agreement of at least one professional judge and one lay judge.

Lay judges are bound by confidentiality about the deliberations for life.

The effect

Research and court data suggest the system has changed sentencing in some areas, with heavier sentences for some sexual crimes and more suspended sentences with supervision in others.

It has also encouraged prosecutors and lawyers to present cases in plain language rather than in thick written files.

Appeals go to high courts staffed only by professional judges, who have generally respected the conclusions of lay judge panels.

SOCIETY

Eight Arrested Over a Water Heater 'Inspection' Scam That Told Older People Their Appliances Could Catch Fire; Sales of About 2.2 Billion Yen

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

The Metropolitan Police Department has arrested eight people, including the effective head of a renovation company in Tokyo's Shinjuku ward, on suspicion of fraud in a scheme in which older residents were told their gas water heaters were dangerous, according to reports on Friday.

Staff posing as inspectors told residents that their appliances could cause a fire if left alone, and persuaded them to pay for replacement work that was not needed, the police suspect.

The company is suspected of offering unneeded work to customers about 13,800 times across the country over about three years, TBS reported, and the police suspect that its sales came to about 2.2 billion yen.

How it worked

Schemes of this kind are known in Japan as inspection sales. A visitor offers a free check of a gas appliance, the roof, the plumbing or the electrical wiring, then announces a fault and presses for an immediate contract.

The victims are often elderly people living alone, who may find it hard to judge the claims or to refuse a persistent visitor.

The law

Under the Specified Commercial Transactions Act, contracts made in door-to-door sales can be cancelled without reason within eight days of receiving the contract document, a right known as cooling-off.

Where a seller has lied about the need for the work, contracts can also be cancelled later, and the police can pursue the case as fraud, as they have here.

What to do

Genuine gas companies carry out legally required safety checks on a schedule and announce them in advance. A visit that is unexpected, and ends with pressure to sign that day, is a warning sign.

Consumer affairs centres, reached on 188, give advice. Families with elderly relatives living alone can help by talking to them about such visits before one happens.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Influenza at advisory level, Page 14.

The Climax Series opens today, Page 16.

Nobel week in review, Page 17.

Editorial: The hail keeps falling, Page 19.

Weather: the map and the forecast, Page 13.

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Koguma: the map and the bulletins, Page 3.

SOCIETY

El Niño Reaches Record Strength: Sea off Peru 4 Degrees Above Normal, the Most Since Records Began in 1949; a Warm Autumn and Winter Expected

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

The El Niño in the Pacific has reached its greatest strength on record, the Japan Meteorological Agency said on Friday.

In September, the sea surface temperature in the monitoring area off the coast of Peru was 4.0 degrees above the baseline, the 30-year average, the highest since statistics began in 1949, Kyodo News reported.

The previous record was 3.6 degrees, in December 1997, Weathernews reported.

Strengthening

The agency said the El Niño had been gradually strengthening since the spring. Sea surface and subsurface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific are well above normal, and the trade winds in the central Pacific are much weaker than usual.

It expects the event to peak in November or December, when monthly deviations could reach 5.0 degrees, and a strong El Niño to continue through the winter.

Effects on Japan

The agency expects the westerly jet stream to run somewhat south of its usual position near Japan and to be weaker than usual, and warm air to cover the country more easily because of global warming and the effects of El Niño on the tropical atmosphere.

Temperatures are therefore forecast to be higher than normal this autumn and winter, Weathernews reported.

In 1997, during a similar strong El Niño, temperatures were well above normal nationwide in November and December, and the arrival of winter was delayed.

Around the world

El Niño is one cause of abnormal weather worldwide, Kyodo said. Strong events have been linked to drought in parts of South-East Asia and Australia, heavy rain on the Pacific coast of South America and higher global average temperatures.

For Japan, a warm winter can mean less snow at ski resorts, lower demand for heating, and changes in the catch of fish that follow the water temperature.

SOCIETY

El Niño and La Niña: The Pacific's See-Saw, and How Japan's Forecasters Watch It

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

El Niño is the name given to a periodic warming of the surface waters of the central and eastern equatorial Pacific. Its opposite, La Niña, is a cooling of the same waters.

The name, Spanish for the boy child, comes from fishermen in Peru, who noticed that warm water often appeared off their coast around Christmas.

Normally the trade winds blow from east to west along the equator, piling warm water up in the western Pacific near Indonesia and drawing cold water up from the depths off South America.

During an El Niño the trade winds weaken, warm water spreads eastward and the cold upwelling off Peru is suppressed. The shift moves the great areas of rising air and rainfall in the tropics, and with them weather patterns around the world.

How the agency decides

The Japan Meteorological Agency watches a monitoring area in the eastern equatorial Pacific known as NINO.3. It defines an El Niño as a period in which the five-month running mean of the sea surface temperature deviation stays at or above 0.5 degrees for six months or more.

The deviation is measured against a baseline, the average of the previous 30 years.

Japan's weather

Effects on Japan vary by season. In winter an El Niño tends to bring milder weather, as this year's forecast suggests; in summer it has been associated with cooler, wetter conditions in some years.

No two events are identical, and other influences,

including the Indian Ocean and long-term warming, can outweigh it.

Why it matters

El Niño affects farming, fishing and energy demand, and the markets that follow them. A strong event can raise food prices around the world through its effect on harvests.

The agency publishes its El Niño outlook once a month. The next will show whether the forecast peak is on course.

SOCIETY

Tsunamis From the Far Side of the Pacific: Chile in 1960, Tonga in 2022, and Why Japan Watches Distant Earthquakes

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

The Japan Meteorological Agency said early on Saturday that slight changes in sea level might reach Japan's coasts from about 8 p.m. after the magnitude 7.7 earthquake in Panama. No damage is expected. The warning reflects hard experience.

In May 1960 the largest earthquake ever recorded, of magnitude 9.5, struck southern Chile. Its tsunami crossed the Pacific and reached Japan about a day later, when no one expected it, leaving about 140 people dead or missing, many of them on the Sanriku coast.

The disaster led Japan to strengthen its system for warning of tsunamis from distant earthquakes and to work with other Pacific countries on sharing information.

Later cases

After the magnitude 8.8 earthquake in Chile in February 2010, the agency issued a major tsunami warning for part of the Pacific coast of Tohoku. Waves of more than a metre were observed in places, and aquaculture facilities were damaged.

In January 2022 the eruption of the undersea volcano Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai in Tonga produced sea-level changes in Japan that arrived earlier than a normal tsunami would have, driven by the pressure wave from the explosion. The agency issued tsunami warnings and advisories in the middle of the night.

The categories

The agency issues a tsunami warning when waves of more than a metre are expected, and a tsunami advisory for waves of 20 centimetres to a metre. Changes of less than 20 centimetres are announced as slight sea-level changes, with no damage expected, as on Saturday.

The Panama earthquake

Saturday's information is of the lowest category. The waves expected are small, but sea-level changes can produce strong currents in harbours and river mouths.

Those fishing or boating this evening should take care, and should keep listening for updates.

SOCIETY

World Mental Health Day: Japan's Workplace Stress Checks Are to Cover Smaller Employers, and Help Is a Call or a Message Away

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

Today is World Mental Health Day, observed on October 10 each year since 1992 to raise awareness of mental health and to encourage support for those who need it.

It was started by the World Federation for Mental Health and is supported by the World Health Organization.

At work

In Japan, much of the public effort has focused on the workplace. Since December 2015, employers with 50 or more workers have been required to offer employees an annual stress check, a questionnaire designed to identify high stress and lead to advice from a doctor.

An amendment to the Industrial Safety and Health Act passed last year extends the obligation to smaller workplaces, with a period of up to three years to prepare.

The health ministry runs a website for workers, Kokoro no Mimi, with information on stress, consultation services and the support available from employers.

SOCIETY

Where to turn

The ministry's Mamorou yo Kokoro website lists consultation services by telephone, chat and social media, many of them free and some available around the clock.

Local public health centres and mental health and welfare centres in each prefecture also provide advice, including for families worried about a relative.

The stigma

Mental illness still carries stigma in Japan, and many people hesitate to seek help, or wait until problems are severe. Campaigners say that speaking openly, at work and at home, is the first step towards changing that.

The day is a reminder that mental health is part of health, and that asking for help early is a sign of good sense, not of weakness.

Anyone struggling, or worried about someone else, can start by contacting one of the services listed on the ministry's website.

SPORTS

The Climax Series Opens Today: Inoue Faces Azuma at Tokyo Dome, and Seibu's Taira Takes On Nippon-Ham's Arihara in Tokorozawa

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

Professional baseball's play-offs begin today with the first stages of the Climax Series in both leagues, each starting at 2 p.m.

In the Central League, the Yomiuri Giants, second in the regular season, host the third-placed Yokohama DeNA BayStars at Tokyo Dome. In the Pacific League, the second-placed Saitama Seibu Lions host the third-placed Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters at Belluna Dome in Tokorozawa.

Both series are played over a maximum of three games at the higher-placed team's ground, and the home side goes through if the series ends level.

Two left-handers in Tokyo

The Giants start Haruto Inoue, a left-hander who reached ten wins for the first time this season. Against DeNA he has been outstanding, with five wins and one defeat in seven games and an earned run average of 0.77, Chunichi Sports reported. He said he would be careful of the home run.

DeNA reply with Katsuki Azuma, also left-handed, who has won ten or more games for the fourth season in a row. "Gekokujo," he said, using the old word for the lowly overthrowing the mighty. "That's all we have to do."

DeNA know the route. In 2024 they finished third, came through the Climax Series and went on to win the Japan Series.

Taira and Arihara

Seibu, in the play-offs for the first time in four years, start their ace, Kaima Taira, who won 12 games and took the league's earned run average title at 1.36, the only qualifying pitcher in the league under 2.00. Against Nippon-Ham this season he has four wins and no defeats in five games, with an ERA of 1.41, Daily Sports reported.

"Same as always. I'll just do my job," he said, adding that he would be wary of the long ball and try to keep putting up zeros. His manager, Fumiya Nishiguchi, called his consistency outstanding.

Nippon-Ham, in the play-offs for a third straight year, start Kohei Arihara, 34, who finished the regular season with seven wins, nine defeats and an ERA of 4.44 after being sent down to the farm team in the spring, but recovered in August with three wins and an ERA of 1.80.

In the Climax Series, including his years with SoftBank, he has four wins and one defeat in six games with an ERA of 1.50. Kota Tatsu, 22, and Hiromi Ito, 29, are to start the second and third games. The Fighters' manager, Tsuyoshi Shinjo, called Taira really good.

Seibu have lost nine consecutive play-off games since winning the second game of the final stage in 2018, Daily Sports noted, and their left-hander Chihiro Sumida, a ten-game winner, was injured late in the season.

What follows

The winners meet the champions in the final stages from Wednesday, October 14: the Hanshin Tigers at Koshien and the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks in Fukuoka. The Japan Series begins on October 24.

SPORTS

Arai Takes a Second World Silver at 100 kg, Beaten by Sulamanidze in Golden Score; Ikeda Wins Bronze at 78 kg for the Second Year

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

Michihiro Arai won the silver medal in the men's 100 kg class at the world judo championships in Baku on Friday, finishing second for the second year in a row after losing the final to Ilia Sulamanidze of Georgia in golden score, Kyodo News and Nikkei reported.

Golden score is the extra time played when a contest is level at the end of regulation time; the first score wins.

Sulamanidze, 25, won the silver medal at the Paris Olympics and has been ranked first in the world.

Ikeda's bronze

In the women's 78 kg class, Beni Ikeda won bronze, also for the second year running. She lost in the quarter-finals but came back through the repechage, the second-chance contests for quarter-final losers, and won her bronze medal contest.

Seven titles

Japanese judoka have won seven world titles in Baku, four in women's classes and three in men's, including Sanshiro Murao's second consecutive title at 90 kg on Thursday.

The heaviest classes, men's over 100 kg and women's over 78 kg, are contested today. The championships end on Sunday with the mixed team event; the final session begins at 6 p.m. in Baku, 11 p.m. in Japan.

A class of contenders

The 100 kg class is one of the most open in men's judo, and two finals in two years confirm Arai among its leading contenders as the cycle towards the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028 continues.

Defeat in golden score is the narrowest kind. A single throw or penalty, after minutes of evenly matched grappling, decides the contest.

For Ikeda, a second bronze shows the consistency that selectors value, and the margin she still has to close on the very best.

Japan's coaches will look at both contests closely before the team event, in which every member of the squad may be needed.

and Kyoto Sanga play Machida Zelvia.

On Sunday JEF United Chiba meet V-Varen Nagasaki, Mito HollyHock play Shimizu S-Pulse, Tokyo Verdy play Sanfrecce Hiroshima and Kawasaki Frontale play Nagoya Grampus.

A new calendar

This is the first season of the J.League's new calendar, which runs from August to the following spring, with a winter break. Nine rounds in, the table is tight, and the leaders change hands from week to week.

Kashiwa's supporters, among the loudest in the country, will enjoy the view from the top for at least a week.

SPORTS

Sumo Will Go to Bangkok for Three Days in June 2027 to Mark 140 Years of Japan-Thailand Relations; About 70 Wrestlers to Travel

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

The Japan Sumo Association will stage a three-day tour in Bangkok from June 11 to 13 next year to mark the 140th anniversary of relations between Japan and Thailand, it announced at a news conference at the Thai foreign ministry on Friday.

About 70 wrestlers will take part, with 135 people in all, including referees, the callers known as yobidashi, and the hairdressers who dress the wrestlers' topknots.

The venue is One Bangkok Forum, an event hall in the One Bangkok development in the centre of the city, with about 5,800 seats a day, or about 17,400 over the three days. Ticket prices and sales arrangements have not been announced.

The ring will be built with Thai soil, and the roof that hangs above it will be shipped from Japan.

The chairman's pitch

The association's chairman, Hakkaku, said it was preparing so that Thai people could enjoy sumo, and appealed to them to come and see its attractions.

Thailand's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Sihasak Phuangkitkeow, and the Japanese ambassador attended the announcement, and Thai government agencies are expected to co-operate.

Plans include a ring-entering ceremony by a yokozuna at the site of the old Japanese settlement in Ayutthaya, sumo events and student exchanges at Thammasat University, and a Japan festival beside the venue.

On the road

The tour will be sumo's third overseas trip in three years, after London last year and Paris this year.

The London tour, at the Royal Albert Hall, was the first there since 1991, and the wrestlers' visit drew large crowds and wide attention in Britain.

The association has staged tours abroad since the 1960s, using them to win new audiences and to build ties with the host countries, and they have often been timed to anniversaries of diplomatic relations, as Bangkok's is.

An old friendship

Japan and Thailand, then Siam, established relations in 1887. Thailand is home to one of the largest Japanese communities abroad and to thousands of Japanese companies, and Thai visitors are among the most numerous in Japan.

For the association, which has worked to rebuild its image and its audiences in recent years, a tour of an Asian capital is a chance to win new fans close to home.

University Ekiden, in November, runs from Atsuta Shrine in Nagoya to Ise, and the Hakone Ekiden, the best known of all, is run on January 2 and 3 between Tokyo and Hakone.

Speed over stamina

Because its stages are short, the longest about 10 kilometres, Izumo rewards speed and suits teams with many fast runners. Some of the strongest teams over Hakone's long, hilly stages have been beaten here.

For coaches, the race is a first look at how their squads have come through the summer's training, and at which first-year runners are ready.

The shoes

Shoe makers watch the season closely as a showcase. Mizuno unveiled this week a racing shoe weighing 96 grams and has said it aims for a share of more than 10 per cent at Hakone.

Brands compete for the feet of university runners because the televised relays draw audiences of millions, and the shoes are easy to spot on screen.

The weather

Fine weather is forecast over much of western Japan through Monday, before rain arrives from a front on Tuesday.

Warm conditions can make the later stages harder, and teams will watch the forecast for the morning of the race.

The race is broadcast nationally, and the Sports Day holiday gives it a large audience at home.

For the universities, the result also matters off the course. A strong showing in the televised relays raises a school's profile among prospective students, which is one reason the big running programmes recruit so keenly among the country's best high school runners.

SPORTS

The Ekiden: How a Relay Race Named After Old Post Stations Became Japan's Favourite Running Event

By the Sports Desk

The ekiden is a long-distance road relay, and it is a peculiarly Japanese passion.

The name combines eki, station, and den, to transmit, recalling the system of post stations along the old highways where messengers and horses were changed.

Instead of a baton, runners pass a cloth sash, the tasuki, worn over the shoulder. A team whose runner fails to reach the next relay point in time must start the next stage with a substitute sash, a fate dreaded by every team.

The first ekiden

The first race of the kind was held in 1917 between Kyoto and Tokyo, to mark the 50th anniversary of the move of the capital to Tokyo. The Hakone Ekiden began in 1920.

Today ekiden are run by schools, universities, companies and prefectural teams, at distances from a few kilometres to more than 200.

The university season

The three big university races are Izumo in October, the All-Japan University Ekiden in November and Hakone on January 2 and 3. Hakone, broadcast over two days, draws some of the largest television audiences of the year.

A team sport

The appeal lies partly in the team. A runner who has a bad day lets down nine or more teammates; one who makes up lost ground becomes a hero.

Critics say the focus on ekiden has kept Japanese runners from concentrating on the marathon and the track. Defenders say it has built a depth of distance running unmatched in most countries.

Beyond the universities

Companies field teams too: their national championship, the New Year Ekiden, is run on January 1 in Gunma Prefecture. Women's university teams meet in Sendai in the autumn and in Shizuoka Prefecture in December, and prefectural teams contest national relays in Kyoto and Hiroshima in January.

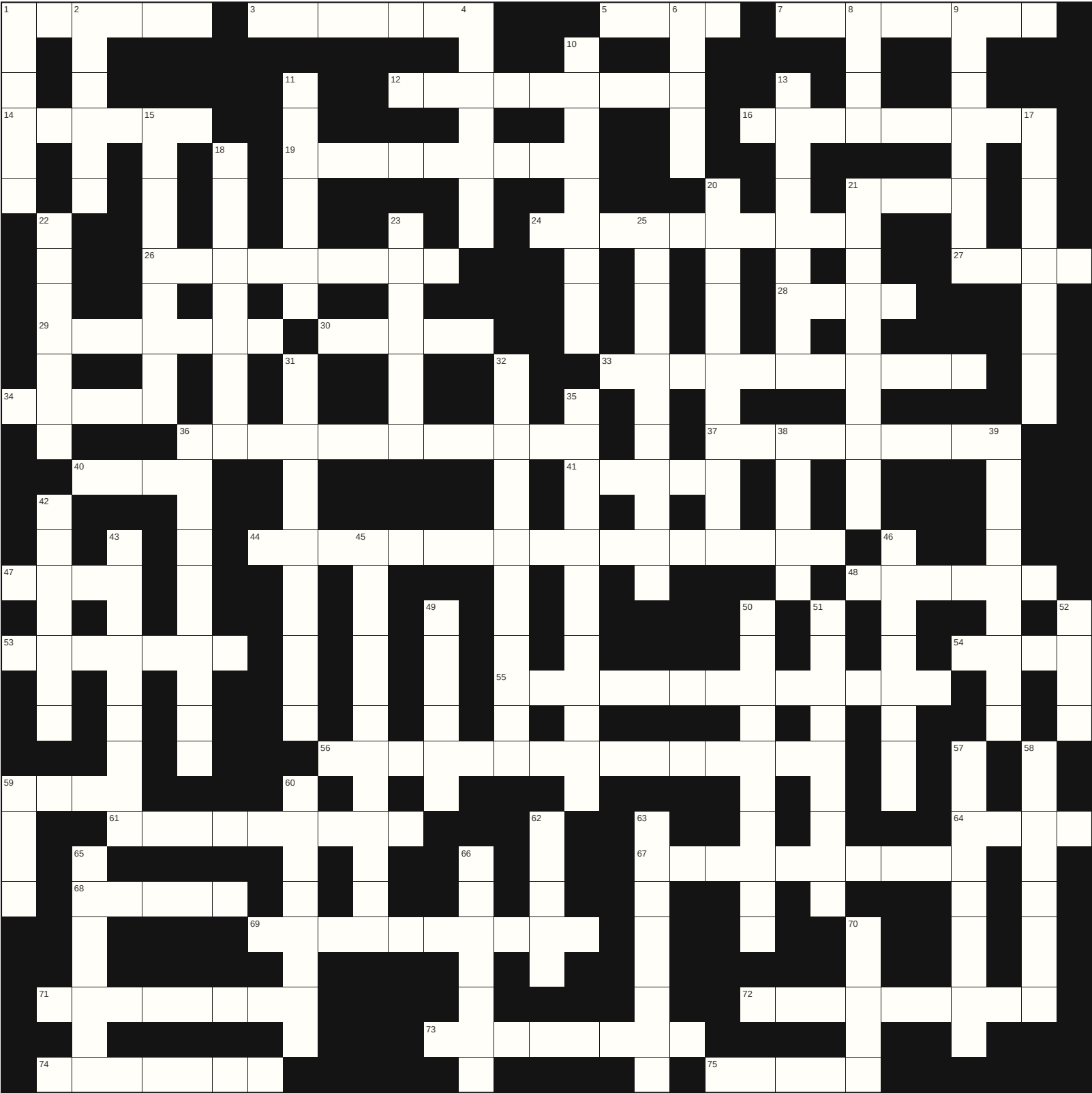
Monday's race in Izumo opens this season.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Today's Professional Puzzle — Constructed by James O'Neill — 79 Words



Solution will appear in tomorrow's edition. Puzzle difficulty: Professional.

ACROSS

- Its cool counterpart (2,4) (6)
- Air station of the arrested marine (7)
- Treasury office that runs sanctions lists (4)
- Candidate backed by the CDP (8)
- Israeli leader who praised the sanctions (9)
- ___ Internet, its new cloud (6)
- Pier once proposed for a casino (9)
- Travel site with 14.64 million records (9)
- Japanese prime minister who shared it (4)
- Main Ogasawara island (10)
- Les ___ his estate (9)
- Agriculture minister facing a censure motion (4)
- Judoka with a second silver at 100 kg (4)
- Probe that flew past in 1989 (7)
- Band score publisher that won (5)
- Georgian who beat him (11)
- ___ period of 180 days (5)
- Maker of DAM systems (7,5) (12)
- Islands returned in 1968 (9)
- Part of a cloud region (4)
- Province where she opened a law practice in 1967 (5)
- Yen saved per person a year (6-3,8) (17)
- Japanese chemistry laureate (4)
- Resort every candidate opposes (6)
- Western Tokyo city whose services were hit (7)
- Country off whose coast it is measured (4)
- What Nolo becomes by Monday (13)
- Japan's easternmost island (15)
- Scrambled form of a password (4)
- Unchangeable, as a good backup is (9)
- American secretary of state honoured for 1912 (4)
- A very ___ sanction, she wrote (10)
- Scorer of his first goal for them (5)
- Insurer ordered to halt new sales (10)
- Its credit card company (4,4) (8)
- City where she heard the news (9)
- ___ statute, Europe's shield (8)
- Non-binding upper-house motion (7)
- Japan's first ICC judge (5)

DOWN

- Convenience chain with 2.15 million ID records (6)
- Average that closed at 69,030.92 (6)
- ___ 69, on no-confidence (7)
- DeNA's starter (5)
- Okinawa governor (4)
- Level above ten per clinic (8)
- Old capital with a Japanese settlement (9)
- Replacement for the password (7)
- Former upper-house member attacked with a machete (9)
- Second-chance round (9)
- Company that runs it (9)
- Disease at advisory level (9)
- City at 87 degrees Fahrenheit (11)
- City of its first shop (10)
- Where she earned a doctorate in law (7)
- Upper-house member sanctioned by China last year (4,3) (7)
- Tax to be cut on food (11)
- Insurer whose HR system was accessed (7,4) (11)
- District of the attack (12)
- Paying posters by views (12)
- Medicine laureate of optogenetics (10)
- Japanese president of the ICC (5)
- Chip-testing equipment maker (9)
- Second-hand chain with up to 6.43 million records (4,3) (7)
- His attacker, sentenced to nine years (9)
- Prison whose inmates won access to lawyers (6,6) (12)
- Lay judges, in Japanese (8)
- Peace laureate Navi (6)
- Eight-day right to cancel (7,3) (10)
- Its station-front shop in the photograph (9)
- UN human rights chief Volker (4)
- Dutch foreign minister who vowed to stand firm (9)
- Norwegian parliament that appoints the committee (8)
- What keeps falling, says the caption (4)
- Irish lawyer who shared the 1974 prize (8)
- Final torchbearer of 1964 (5)
- Bait sent by e-mail (8)
- Where a safe copy is kept (7)
- First South African Peace laureate (7)
- Bronze medallist at 78 kg (5)

SPORTS

Gekokujo: How DeNA Went From Third Place to Japan Series Champions in 2024, and Why Azuma Invokes the Word

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

When Katsuki Azuma said this week that DeNA's task was gekokujo, he chose a word every Japanese baseball fan understands.

It comes from the Sengoku period of the 15th and 16th centuries, when vassals overthrew their lords and upstart warriors seized power across the country. In sport it describes a lower-ranked team beating its betters.

2024

Two years ago DeNA did exactly that. They finished third in the Central League, beat the Hanshin Tigers in the first stage of the Climax Series at Koshien and then beat the Yomiuri Giants, the champions, in the final stage at Tokyo Dome, overcoming the Giants' one-win advantage.

In the Japan Series they lost the first two games to the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks, then won four in a row to take the title, their first since 1998.

Critics and defenders

Their run revived the old argument about the Climax Series. Critics say a team that finishes third should not be able to win the Japan Series; defenders say the play-offs keep more teams in contention and give fans the drama they want.

The champions' advantage in the final stage, one win in the Central League and up to two in the Pacific under a rule introduced this season, is meant to reward the pennant winners.

2026

This year DeNA again finished third, and must win at Tokyo Dome against a Giants starter, Haruto Inoue, who has dominated them this season.

If they do, Hanshin, the Central League champions for the second year running, await at Koshien from Wednesday.

Azuma's single word was a statement of intent. The first game will show whether DeNA can live up to it again.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Skyticket: 14.64 million records, Page 10.

Influenza at advisory level, Page 14.

SPORTS

Belluna Dome: The Ballpark That Grew a Roof but Kept Its Open Sides, So the Weather Still Comes In

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Seibu's home ground in Tokorozawa, where the Pacific League's first stage begins today, is one of the most unusual stadiums in Japanese baseball.

It opened in 1979 as an open-air stadium, built into a natural hollow in the hills of the Sayama area, next to Seibu Kyujo-mae Station.

Between 1998 and 1999 a roof was added over the stands and the field. But the roof does not meet the stands: a gap runs around the stadium between the top of the seating and the roof.

Hot and cold

The result is a dome in which the outside air circulates freely. Games are protected from rain, but the stadium is hot in midsummer and cold in spring and late autumn, and fans come prepared.

In October, with afternoon starts, conditions are usually comfortable.

The stadium has carried several names under naming-rights agreements, among them MetLife Dome from 2017, and has been Belluna Dome since 2022.

Tokyo Dome

Today's Central League game is played in very different surroundings. Tokyo Dome, which opened in 1988 as the country's first domed stadium, has a fully enclosed roof held up by air pressure.

Because the inside is pressurised slightly above the outside, visitors pass through revolving doors that keep the air in.

A roof over October

For the Climax Series, the roofs mean that neither first-stage series should be interrupted by weather, a consideration that matters in a short series with no room for postponement.

Rain is not forecast on the main islands this weekend in any case. Fans in Tokorozawa will still feel the afternoon air.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Editorial: The hail keeps falling, Page 19.

Weather: the map and the forecast, Page 13.

SPORTS

Judo's Mixed Team Event: Six Contests, Three Men and Three Women, and the Olympic Final Japan Lost to France on a Random Draw

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

The world championships in Baku end on Sunday with the mixed team event, in which nations field teams of men and women together.

Each match consists of six contests, three for men and three for women, in weight groups: men's 73 kg, 90 kg and over 90 kg, and women's 57 kg, 70 kg and over 70 kg.

Judoka from neighbouring individual classes can fill each place, so a team's depth matters as much as its stars.

The first team to win four contests wins the match. If the score reaches three each, one weight group is drawn at random and its contest refought, under golden score, to decide the winner.

Olympic heartbreak

The event joined the Olympic programme at Tokyo 2020, where France beat Japan in the final at the Nippon Budokan.

At Paris 2024 the two met again in the final. With the score at three each, the random draw chose the heaviest class, and Teddy Riner, France's great heavyweight, beat Tatsuru Saito to give France the gold.

Japanese judo has not forgotten either defeat, and the team event has become a measure of national pride as well as of strength.

Japan's depth

Japan's seven individual titles in Baku this week show the depth of its squad across the weight classes, which makes it a favourite in any team competition.

The format also rewards tactics. Coaches decide the order of their judoka and must weigh fatigue, since some will have fought in the individual event days earlier.

The final session on Sunday begins at 11 p.m. Japan time.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Food tax cut goes to the Diet, Page 5.

Pillay: from Durban to Oslo, Page 7.

Washington sanctions the ICC itself, Page 6.

SPORTS

Sports Scoreboard

By the Sports Desk

JUDO, WORLDS, BAKU, DAY SIX: Men's 100 kg: Michihiro Arai (Japan) silver, losing the final to Ilia Sulamanidze (Georgia) in golden score.

WOMEN'S 78 KG: Beni Ikeda (Japan) bronze, through the repechage.

JAPAN: Seven titles so far, four women's and three men's.

TODAY: Men's over 100 kg and women's over 78 kg. Sunday: mixed team.

J1, FRIDAY: Kashiwa 4 Kobe 2; Kashima 2 Gamba Osaka 0.

J1 LEADERS: Kashiwa 21 points, Kobe 19.

CLIMAX SERIES, TODAY, 2 P.M.: Giants (Inoue) v DeNA (Azuma), Tokyo Dome; Seibu (Taira) v Nippon-Ham (Arihara), Belluna Dome.

FINAL STAGES: From Wednesday, Hanshin at Koshien and SoftBank in Fukuoka. Japan Series from October 24.

SUMO: A Bangkok tour is set for June 11 to 13, 2027.

MONDAY: Izumo All-Japan University Ekiden, six stages, 45.1 km.

CULTURE

Nobel Week in Review: Light-Switched Neurons, Neutrinos at the South Pole, a Japanese Chemist, a Poet of the Ancients and a Judge

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

With the award of the Peace Prize to Navi Pillay on Friday, five of this year's six Nobel prizes have been announced. The prize in economic sciences follows on Monday.

Medicine

The week began on Monday with the prize in physiology or medicine for Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann and Georg Nagel, for the work behind optogenetics, the technique of switching nerve cells on and off with light.

Its roots lie in proteins from algae that respond to light. Introduced into neurons, they allow researchers to control precisely which cells fire and when, and the method has transformed the study of the brain

CULTURE

since the mid-2000s.

Physics

On Tuesday the physics prize went to Francis Halzen, the leader of IceCube, the neutrino observatory buried in the ice at the South Pole. The detector, a cubic kilometre of instrumented ice completed in 2010, has traced high-energy neutrinos to their sources in space.

Japanese researchers, including a group from Chiba University, take part in the IceCube collaboration.

Chemistry

On Wednesday came a prize with a Japanese laureate: Kenso Soai, of the Tokyo University of Science, shared the chemistry prize with Henri Kagan of France for work on asymmetric reactions, in which molecules that are mirror images of each other are formed in unequal amounts.

Professor Soai's discovery of asymmetric autocatalysis, in which a product speeds up its own formation and multiplies a tiny initial imbalance, bears on the old question of why life uses molecules of only one handedness. He follows Ryoji Noyori, who won in 2001 for related work on asymmetric catalysis.

Literature

Thursday's literature prize went to Anne Carson, the Canadian poet and classicist, 76, whose books move between ancient Greek and modern English and between poetry, essay and translation.

Peace

Friday's Peace Prize, for a judge whose career ran from the courts of apartheid South Africa to the tribunals of The Hague, was followed within hours by American sanctions on the International Criminal Court, where she once sat.

The prizes are presented on December 10, the anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death: the Peace Prize in Oslo and the others in Stockholm.

CULTURE

62 Years Ago Today: The Tokyo Olympics Open Under a Clear Sky, and a Runner Born on the Day of Hiroshima Lights the Flame

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

On October 10, 1964, the Emperor declared the Tokyo Olympics open in the National Stadium, the first Games to be held in Asia.

The day was clear after rain the day before, and the image of a blue autumn sky over the stadium became part of the country's memory of the Games.

Athletes from 93 nations and regions marched in. Jets of the Air Self-Defense Force's Blue Impulse team drew the five Olympic rings in smoke above the city.

The last runner

The final torchbearer was Yoshinori Sakai, a 19-year-old university runner born in Hiroshima Prefecture on August 6, 1945, the day the atomic bomb was dropped on the city.

His run up the steps to the cauldron was meant as a message of peace and of the country's recovery from war, and it was understood as such around the world.

A showcase

The Games were a showcase of a rebuilt Japan. The Tokaido Shinkansen had begun running nine days earlier, expressways had been built across Tokyo, and the opening ceremony was relayed across the Pacific by satellite.

A holiday

In 1966 October 10 became a national holiday, Health and Sports Day, to commemorate the opening of the Games.

In 2000 the holiday moved to the second Monday of October, part of a reform that created more three-day weekends, and in 2020 it was renamed Sports Day. It falls this year on Monday, October 12.

In 2020 and 2021 the holiday was moved to July to coincide with the opening of the postponed Tokyo Games, the second Summer Olympics held in the city.

For many older Japanese, October 10 remains the day of the Olympics, whatever the calendar says.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Influenza at advisory level, Page 14.

The Climax Series opens today, Page 16.

CULTURE

BookOff and the Second-Hand Revolution: How a Shop in Sagamihara Changed the Way Japan Buys and Sells Books

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

BookOff, whose member records may have leaked, began in 1990 with a single shop in Sagamihara, Kanagawa Prefecture, founded by the entrepreneur Takashi Sakamoto.

Traditional second-hand bookshops in Japan priced books by their rarity and content, which required expert owners. BookOff did something different: it priced books largely by their condition and how recently they were published.

Its staff cleaned the books they bought and smoothed their edges so that used copies looked almost new. The bright, open shops, staffed by young employees who greeted customers loudly, were the opposite of the dusty stores of Kanda.

Growth and controversy

The model spread quickly across the country through company-owned and franchised shops, and later to games, music, clothing and household goods in larger stores.

Publishers and authors worried that cheap used copies of recent books were eating into sales of new ones, from which they earned royalties and the second-hand trade did not.

In 2009 a group including the printer Dai Nippon Printing and the publishers Kodansha, Shueisha and Shogakukan took stakes in the company, a sign of how central it had become to the book trade.

Overseas

BookOff also opened shops abroad, including in the United States, selling Japanese books, manga and goods to local readers and Japanese residents.

The data

Like most retailers today, the company runs a membership scheme with a point card and an app, which link customers' purchases and sales to their personal details.

That is the data that may have leaked this week. For a company built on the idea of giving old things a second life, the incident is a reminder that customers' information should never be one of them.

CULTURE

Karaoke, From a Kobe Bar to the World: The Japanese Invention Behind Big Echo, and the Ig Nobel 'Peace' Prize It Won

By the Culture Desk

Daiichi Kosho, which said this week that data on about 8.72 million people may have been compromised, is one of the giants of an industry Japan created: karaoke.

The word combines kara, empty, and oke, short for orchestra: music without the singer.

Daisuke Inoue, a musician who accompanied singers in bars in Kobe, is widely credited with building one of the first karaoke machines, the 8 Juke, in 1971. It played backing tracks on tape for a coin.

Mr Inoue never patented his machine. In 2004 he received the Ig Nobel Peace Prize, a satirical award then presented at Harvard University, for inventing karaoke and thereby providing an entirely new way for people to learn to tolerate each other.

The box

Karaoke spread from bars to the karaoke box, private rooms rented by the hour, which appeared in the 1980s and became a fixture of student life, office parties and family outings.

Daiichi Kosho became one of the leading makers of karaoke systems with its DAM line, which delivers songs to rooms over networks, and it operates its own chain of karaoke rooms, Big Echo.

Data and song

Modern karaoke is a data business. Machines track which songs are sung, scoring systems rate singers, and membership schemes and booking apps hold customers' names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

It is that customer data which may have leaked. The songs, the scores and the memories of a good night out are, so far as anyone has said, safe.

The world

Karaoke has spread to almost every country, from bars in Manila to living rooms in America, and the Japanese word is used around the world.

Few Japanese inventions have done more to bring strangers together in song, which may be why the Ig Nobel committee's joke had a grain of truth in it.

For Big Echo's customers, the practical advice this week is the same as for every other company named: be wary of messages that mention their membership, and check anything doubtful with the company directly.

CULTURE

Who Gets Paid When a Song Is Printed: JASRAC, NexTone and the Licences Behind Every Band Score

By the Culture Desk

A publisher that prints a band score of a popular song must pay for the right to reproduce the music, even if the transcription itself is not protected by copyright.

In Japan those rights are usually managed by collecting societies. The oldest and largest is JASRAC, the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers, founded in 1939.

Since 2016 a second major society, NexTone, has competed with it, managing the rights of many songwriters and publishers who chose it instead.

How licensing works

Collecting societies issue licences for many uses of music: performance in concerts and shops, broadcasting, recording, streaming and printing. They collect fees and pass them on, after deducting their costs, to the songwriters and music publishers they represent.

Score publishers pay for each song they print, usually on the basis of the number of copies sold and the price.

The ruling

Fairy, the publisher that won its case at the Supreme Court on Friday, pays licence fees to JASRAC for the songs it transcribes. The site that copied its scores paid nothing for the transcriptions, and the court found that it had interfered with Fairy's business.

The ruling did not concern the songwriters' rights, which were not at issue in the case.

A changing market

Printed music has been squeezed by free resources online, some legitimate and some not. Publishers have responded with digital scores and apps.

For guitarists and drummers learning a favourite song, an accurate score remains valuable, and the court has now made clear that the effort behind one deserves protection from wholesale copying.

CULTURE

The Japanese Painter Who Knocked on Renoir's Door: Ryuzaburo Umehara at Cagnes in 1909

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

The Renoir Museum in Cagnes-sur-Mer, from which two paintings stolen last month have now been recovered, has a particular place in the history of Japanese art.

In 1909 a young painter from Kyoto, Ryuzaburo Umehara, travelled to Cagnes to visit Pierre-Auguste Renoir, whose work he had admired since arriving in France the year before.

Renoir received him, and Umehara became, in effect, his pupil, visiting the older man and learning from his way of seeing and handling colour.

A lasting influence

Umehara returned to Japan in 1913 and became one of the leading painters of oil in Western style in the 20th century. His bold colours and free brushwork show Renoir's influence, transformed into something his own.

He is known especially for paintings of Beijing, including its Forbidden City, painted in the years around 1940, and of Sakurajima, the volcano in Kagoshima.

He received the Order of Culture in 1952 and lived until 1986, dying at the age of 97.

Writing about the master

Umehara later wrote recollections of his time with Renoir, describing the old painter working despite the illness that had crippled his hands.

His account is one of the reasons Renoir has long been loved in Japan, where his works are among the most popular in exhibitions.

The house today

Les Collettes, the house where Umehara visited, is now the museum. Its garden of old olive trees, which Renoir painted, still surrounds it.

For Japanese visitors to the Riviera, it is a place where the histories of French and Japanese painting meet, and the recovery of the stolen works will be welcome news in Japan too.

Umehara's own paintings hang in many Japanese museums, and his debt to the old man at Cagnes is part of every account of his life.

CULTURE

Festivals in the Coming Days

By the Culture Desk

TAKAYAMA, GIFU: The autumn festival at Sakurayama Hachiman Shrine ends today.

HIMEJI, HYOGO: Nada no Kenka Matsuri, the fighting festival of portable shrines, October 14 and 15.

KAWAGOE, SAITAMA: The Kawagoe Festival of floats, October 17 and 18.

ISE, Mie: The Kannamesai harvest rites at Ise Jingu, October 15 to 17.

KYOTO: The Jidai Matsuri, the Festival of the Ages, October 22.

KURAMA, KYOTO: The Kurama Fire Festival, October 22.

NAGASAKI: The Kunchi festival ended on Friday.

MONDAY: Sports Day; many local sports events.

WEATHER: Fine on the main islands through Monday.

ADVICE: Influenza is at advisory level; crowds call for care.

CULTURE

Words of the Day

By the Culture Desk

"Either the ICC will end its threats, or we will end the ICC." Marco Rubio, United States secretary of state.

"History will judge this moment." The International Criminal Court.

"The Court cannot stand alone." The court, urging its member states to defend it.

"Regret and strongly disagree." Japan and seven other countries on the sanctions.

"A very honourable sanction." The prime minister's e-mail to Keiji Furuya, as he recounted it.

"These two paintings are not simply works of art." Bryan Masson, mayor of Cagnes-sur-Mer.

"What happened should not be used to cause alarm or disorder." José Raúl Mulino, president of Panama.

"Gekokujo. That's all we have to do." Katsuki Azuma, DeNA pitcher.

"Same as always. I'll just do my job." Kaima Taira, Seibu pitcher.

"The hail keeps falling. Japan is fighting it." Taro Suzuki's cartoon today.

CULTURE

October 10 in History

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

1846: William Lassell discovers Triton, Neptune's largest moon.

1911: The Wuchang Uprising; Taiwan marks the date as its National Day.

1913: A blast set off by telegraph from Washington clears the Gamboa dike on the Panama Canal.

1945: The founding date of North Korea's ruling party.

1964: The Tokyo Olympics open, the first Games held in Asia.

1966: October 10 becomes a holiday, Health and Sports Day.

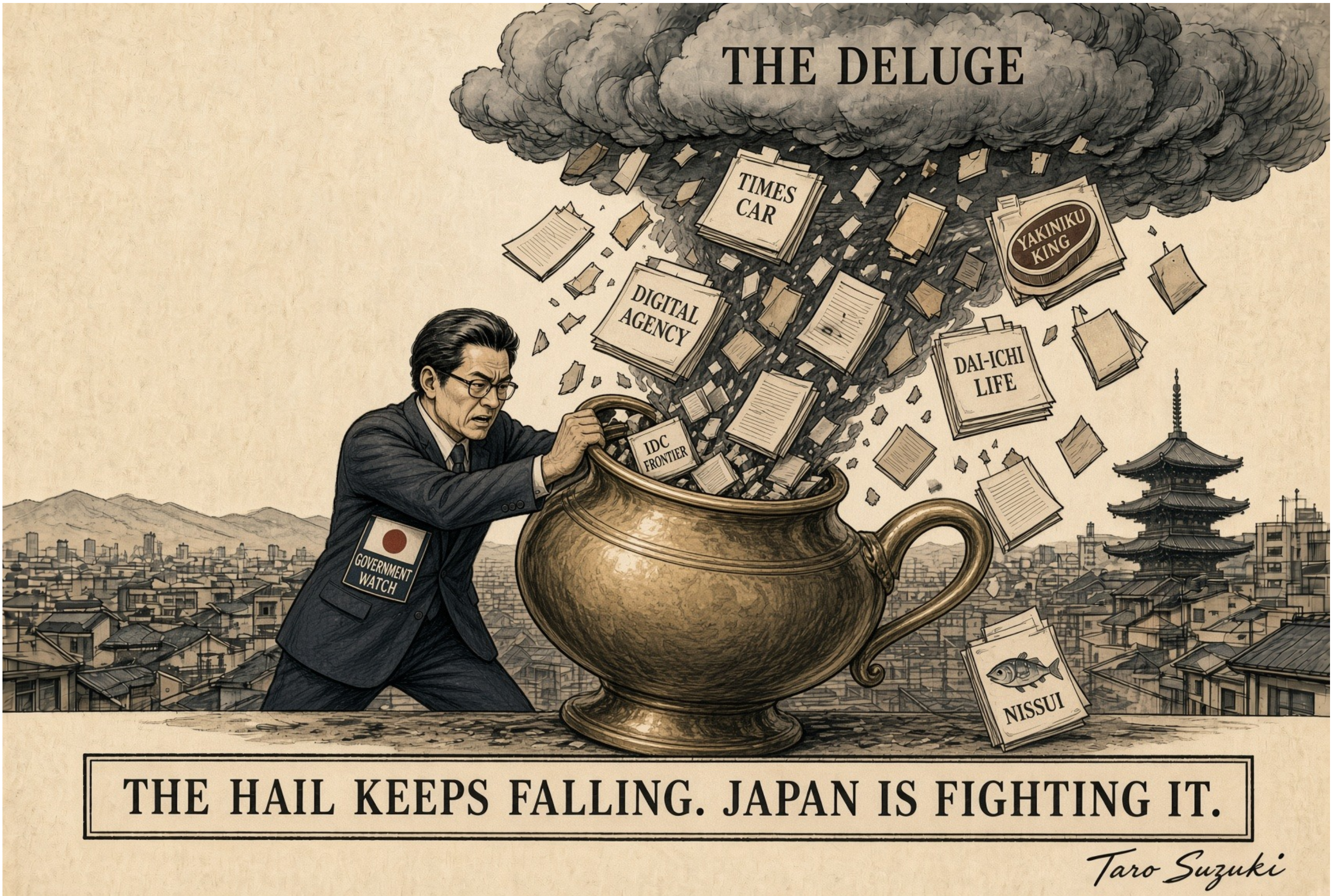
1967: The treaty that sets the ground rules for outer space takes effect.

1970: Fiji becomes independent.

1992: The first World Mental Health Day.

2003: Shirin Ebadi is named winner of the Peace Prize.

EDITORIAL & OPINION



Editorial cartoon by Taro Suzuki for The Japan Morning Post.

EDITORIAL

The Hail Keeps Falling. Japan Is Fighting It.

Six names on a storm cloud tell the story of a month in which leaks became routine. Fighting back means a state that hunts the attackers with its allies, companies that keep less and guard it better, and a public warned before the fraudsters arrive

By Samantha Ortiz | Editorial Page Editor

Taro Suzuki's cartoon today shows a storm. Beneath a dark cloud labelled The Deluge, files and loose papers tumble from the sky like hail, scattering over a city of tiled roofs with a five-storey pagoda on the skyline and hills beyond.

Some of the files carry names. Times Car. Digital Agency. Yakiniku King, its label shaped like a cut of meat. Dai-ichi Life. IDC Frontier. Nissui, with a fish on its cover, lying where it has fallen at the edge of the scene.

In the foreground a man in a dark suit and glasses, a badge on his sleeve bearing the Japanese flag and the words Government Watch, braces himself against a great brass pot and wrestles it into position beneath the cloud. One file, marked IDC Frontier, is already inside it. The rest keep coming.

The caption reads: The hail keeps falling. Japan is fighting it.

It is a fair summary of the past few weeks, and a generous one. The hail is real, and it is getting heavier. Whether Japan is fighting it well enough is the question the cartoon leaves us to answer.

The names on the files

Each label in the drawing stands for a case made public in the past month, and each is a reminder that no kind of organisation is immune.

In late September, Times Mobility, which runs the Times Car sharing service of the Park24 group, said that personal data on about 6.6 million accounts had been taken in an intrusion, and that for about 1.6 million of them the data included images of identity documents such as driving licences.

The Digital Agency, the body created to lead the digitisation of the state, disclosed in September that information on about 246,000 records relating to government staff, held in its shared government network service, may have been exposed through a vulnerability in network equipment.

Dai-ichi Life, one of the country's largest life insurers, said on October 2 that its personnel system had been accessed in late September, involving data

on about 120,000 current and former employees. It found no effect on customers' data.

On October 5, the operator of Yakiniku King, the barbecue restaurant chain, said that the records of 10.79 million members of its app had been taken: names, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.

On October 7, a ransomware attack shut down the cloud service of IDC Frontier, a SoftBank group company, leaving 495 companies and local governments without it. The same day Nissui Logistics stopped goods moving in and out of all 17 of its cold-storage warehouses after a cyberattack.

The cloud has not stopped. On Thursday and Friday, as reported on the front page today, Lawson, Daiichi Kosho, JR East, the operator of Skyticket and BookOff announced leaks that between them involve about 38 million records.

Only JR East's has been linked to the attack on IDC Frontier. The others are separate intrusions into separate systems. That is what makes the picture so troubling. This is not one storm but a change of climate.

Security companies had counted 506 leak incidents this year by Wednesday, the most on record, the Yomiuri Shimbun reported. The year is not over.

Why it is getting worse

Several forces are at work, and they reinforce one another.

The first is the industrialisation of crime. Ransomware is now a business with suppliers, customers and a division of labour. Developers rent their software to affiliates who carry out the attacks; brokers sell access to networks that others have already broken into; negotiators handle the ransom; launderers move the money.

A group need not be brilliant to do great harm. It needs only to buy the right tools and find a door left open.

The second force is concentration. Japanese organisations, like those everywhere, have moved

their systems to shared clouds and outsourced services. Done well, that improves security, because large providers can afford defences that small companies cannot. Done badly, or when the provider itself falls, it gathers many eggs into one basket.

This week showed both faces. A single attack on one provider stopped hundreds of customers at once, and a railway's customers found that their e-mail addresses had sat in a cloud most of them had never heard of.

The third force is artificial intelligence. The Yomiuri has reported concern that attackers are using AI to find weaknesses, and that leaked records can be combined with its help into fuller profiles of individuals. The same tools write fluent, personalised messages in natural Japanese, removing one of the old signs of fraud.

The fourth is the sheer value of data. Japanese companies collect a great deal of it, through point cards, apps and membership schemes, and much of it is kept for longer than it is needed. Every record kept is a record that can be stolen.

The second wave

The harm of a leak does not end with the announcement. It begins there.

An e-mail address alone is a small thing. An e-mail address combined with a name, a date of birth, a home address, a telephone number, a membership number and a record of recent travel is the raw material of fraud that can deceive careful people.

Japan already suffers from fraud on a large scale, from telephone scams aimed at the elderly to fake text messages that lead to counterfeit websites. The records stolen this month will feed that industry for years.

The victims of such fraud are disproportionately elderly. Many live alone, answer the telephone and trust official-sounding callers. A caller who already knows a person's name, address and date of birth has a head start that no amount of general advice can fully cancel.

That is why the most urgent task now is not to apportion blame but to protect the people whose data are out there. Companies must notify them quickly and clearly, tell them exactly what was taken, and explain how genuine messages from the company can

be recognised.

Banks, card companies and mobile carriers should expect a rise in attempted fraud and tighten their checks accordingly. The police should treat the coming months as a period of heightened risk and say so publicly.

Lawson's decision to give the address from which its notices will be sent is a small example of good practice. Every company affected should do the same.

When the systems stop

Not every attack steals data. Some simply stop work. At Nissui Logistics the attack halted the movement of frozen food through 17 warehouses, and clients such as Nichirei Foods had to move their goods elsewhere.

The cold chain cannot pause. Frozen goods must stay at minus 18 degrees or below from the factory to the shop, and a warehouse that cannot record what comes in and what goes out cannot load a lorry.

The lesson for every company with physical operations is to plan for a day without computers: to keep paper procedures, manual overrides and staff trained to use them, and to practise switching to them, as Japanese schools practise for earthquakes.

Resilience of this kind costs little compared with a week of lost business. It is also the best answer to ransomware, whose business model depends on victims believing that they have no choice but to pay.

Paying ransoms should be discouraged. Payment funds the next attack and guarantees nothing; stolen data may still be published or sold. The government should make clear that it expects companies, and above all public bodies, not to pay criminals.

The government's own house

The man in the cartoon wears a badge of the state, and he is doing his best. But one of the files in the hail bears the name of the Digital Agency itself.

The government cannot lecture companies about security while its own systems are found wanting. The agency was created to make the state's digital services better and safer. The exposure of data on government staff through a weakness in network equipment is precisely the kind of failure it exists to prevent.

The same applies to local governments, several of

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which were caught in the outage at IDC Frontier. Councils hold the most sensitive data of all, from tax records to welfare files, and many lack specialist staff.

The national programme to move their core systems to standardised platforms on approved clouds should be accompanied by clear, enforced rules on backups: copies kept offline or in a form that cannot be altered, held separately from the main systems, and tested regularly by restoring them.

IDC Frontier's advice to its customers this week, to rebuild from their own backups, was a hard lesson in where responsibility lies. Every council in the country should ask itself today whether it could follow that advice.

What Japan is doing

The caption says that Japan is fighting, and it is right to give credit where it is due.

On October 1 the active cyber defence laws took effect. They give the state a power it lacked: to have the police and, in serious cases, the Self-Defense Forces neutralise servers used in attacks.

The analysis of communications data on which much of the system depends is to begin next autumn, under the supervision of an independent commission, a safeguard that is right and necessary in a democracy.

The government reorganised its central cyber security office last year to give it more authority. The police have improved their capabilities and are co-operating with foreign forces; this week a suspected member of a ransomware group detained in Osaka was handed over to Germany.

These are real steps, and they were hard won. For years Japan lagged behind its allies because of legal and political caution about state involvement in cyberspace. That lag is closing.

Companies, too, are fighting. Several of those hit this month cut off the attackers, reported to the Personal Information Protection Commission and told their customers once they had established what was taken. That is how the system is meant to work, and it deserves acknowledgement as well as criticism.

What more is needed

But the hail is falling faster than the pot can catch it. Five further steps would help.

First, speed. The monitoring of communications should begin as soon as it can be done properly, not a day later than necessary. The attackers are not waiting for the next fiscal year, and the oversight commission should be staffed and ready in time.

Second, the alliance and its partners. Ransomware groups operate across borders, often from countries that do not extradite their nationals. They can be stopped only by the combined efforts of the democracies: shared intelligence, joint operations to take down their servers, sanctions on their members and those who launder their money, and pressure on the countries that shelter them.

Japan is part of the international initiative against ransomware led by the United States, and its police now work closely with American and European partners. It should do more: take part in more joint takedowns, share more of what it learns from attacks on Japanese companies, and be willing to name the countries that tolerate such groups.

Deterrence in cyberspace works the same way as elsewhere. Attackers must believe that they will be found and that there will be a cost. Japan cannot impose that cost alone. With its allies it can.

Responsibility for data

Third, responsibility. The companies that hold the most data, and the providers on which many others depend, must carry responsibilities in proportion.

The largest cloud providers and the logistics systems that keep food moving are now as essential to daily life as power lines and railways. They should be brought within the framework the state uses for core infrastructure, with duties to prepare, to report and to recover.

For ordinary companies, the Act on the Protection of Personal Information requires them to report serious leaks and to notify the people affected. It does not yet impose administrative fines of the kind used in Europe, a question the Personal Information Protection Commission has been discussing in its review of the law.

The case for fines has grown stronger this month. Penalties should be set at a level that makes security

an investment boards cannot ignore, with reductions for companies that had taken proper precautions and reported promptly. The aim is not to punish victims of crime but to make sure that negligence is never cheaper than care.

Keep less

Fourth, restraint. The simplest way to protect data is not to keep it. Companies should collect only what they need, delete what they no longer use, and separate the most sensitive information from the systems that face the internet.

A barbecue chain does not need to keep its customers' details forever. A car-sharing service that must check licences need not keep the images once the check is done, unless the law requires it. A railway's ticketing service and a credit card company need not keep e-mail addresses on the same cloud as everything else.

These are choices, and they are cheap compared with the cost of a leak. Data protection law already expects companies to keep data accurate and to delete it when it is no longer needed. The principle deserves to be enforced, and practised.

People

None of these measures will work without people who understand them. Japan has long been short of security specialists, in companies, in local government and in the state itself.

Pay for such work in Japan has often lagged behind pay abroad, and many organisations still treat security as a cost to be kept down rather than a capability to be built.

The government has begun to respond, in the police, in its central cyber office and in the Self-Defense Forces, whose Cyber Defense Command was set up in 2022 and is being expanded. Universities and companies must do more to train the experts the country needs, and to keep them.

Boards should include members who understand cyber risk, and investors should ask about it as routinely as they ask about profits. A company that cannot explain how it would recover from an attack is not well governed, however good its results.

The public

Fifth, the public. Customers cannot prevent leaks, but they can limit the damage. Using a different password for each service, turning on two-step verification and refusing to act on unexpected messages, however convincing, would defeat a great deal of the fraud that leaked data make possible.

The government should run a sustained public campaign on these simple habits, through television, schools, workplaces and local councils, aimed especially at older people living alone, who are the favourite targets of fraudsters.

Consumer affairs centres, on 188, and the police consultation line, #9110, should be advertised as widely as the emergency numbers.

The costs of complacency

Some will say that the leaks are an inevitable price of the digital economy, and that most of the data taken this month are of little value. That is complacent.

The costs are real: to companies, which lose business and face claims; to customers, who face fraud and anxiety; and to the country, whose digital economy depends on trust.

Cold storage stopped this week because a computer system could not be used. Hundreds of organisations lost a service on which they relied. A railway had to tell millions of customers that their details may be in criminal hands. These are not abstractions.

There is a cost to Japan's ambitions as well. The country wants to lead in artificial intelligence, in data centres and in digital government. None of that will be credible if its companies and agencies cannot keep their own data safe.

Nor is the danger only criminal. The same techniques used by ransomware groups are used by states. A country whose companies and councils can be paralysed by a gang can be paralysed by an adversary in a crisis, and Japan's neighbourhood is not a peaceful one.

The defence of Japan now includes the defence of its data and its networks. The active cyber defence laws recognise that. Their spirit should now inform everything from the procurement of government systems to the way a convenience store chain designs its app.

A national effort

There is no single fix. The pot in the cartoon is a good image: one vessel, however large, cannot catch everything that falls from a cloud of this size.

What is needed is a national effort in which the state, companies and citizens each do their part, and in which Japan works hand in hand with its allies, above all the United States, to take the fight to the attackers.

The state must lead, with laws, enforcement and the example of its own systems. Companies must invest, keep less and tell the truth quickly when things go wrong. Citizens must learn habits that protect them. And the allies must make the attackers pay.

Japan has the technology, the institutions and the friends to do this. What it has lacked, until recently, is a sense of urgency. The past month should have supplied it.

The next storm

The hail will not stop because we wish it to. The question is how much of it reaches the ground, and how much damage it does when it lands.

Mr Suzuki's official is fighting. He deserves support, and better tools than a single pot.

He also deserves a clear view of the sky. Those responsible for the systems behind every one of the names in this month's deluge owe the public a full account of what went wrong, so that the next organisation can avoid it.

The remedies are, for the most part, known. Most attacks succeed through old weaknesses: equipment left unpatched, passwords reused, accounts without a second step at login, backups never tested. Fixing them requires discipline more than genius.

That discipline must start at the top, in the cabinet, in boardrooms and in council offices. Those who sign off budgets must understand that a weakness left unfixed is a decision, and that its cost will one day be paid by people who were never consulted.

Japan has faced storms before and learned from them. Its building codes, its warning systems and its drills against earthquakes and typhoons are the envy of the world, born of hard experience. The same seriousness is now needed in cyberspace.

The hail keeps falling. Japan is fighting it. It must now fight harder, faster and together with its friends, before the next storm arrives.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: Japan Should Stand by the Court and Keep Talking to the Ally. The Six Months of Grace Are an Opportunity

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi was right to say plainly that the American sanctions on the International Criminal Court are not compatible with Japan's position. Japan is the court's largest funder, and its president is a Japanese judge.

She was also right to say that Japan would keep working on the United States rather than retaliating. The alliance is the foundation of Japan's security, and a disagreement over one institution, however serious, must not become a rift.

The grace period of 180 days gives Tokyo room to act on both commitments.

Japan should use it to help the court defend itself in practical ways: by helping arrange banking, insurance and technology that do not depend on American decisions, and by making clear that its own financial support will continue.

It should also take Washington's concerns seriously where they deserve it. The court has made mistakes. This summer its member states dismissed the prosecutor over his conduct, a step Japan supported. A court that answers to its members is stronger than one that claims to answer to no one.

Japan can make that case in Washington with more credibility than most. It is not a reflexive critic of American policy, and it shares Washington's concern about the reach of international bodies over the citizens of countries that have not joined them.

What it cannot accept is the destruction of a court that serves Japan's interests. For a country that relies on law, not force, in disputes over territory and the sea, an international legal order that holds the powerful to account is not an abstraction.

Russia has already sought the arrest of the court's Japanese president. Japan should not want to see

Washington's measures achieve what Moscow could not.

The joint statement Japan signed with its European partners and Canada was a good start. The next six months will show whether the democracies can turn words into protection, and whether Tokyo can help the court and its ally find a way back from confrontation.

That is a task suited to Japanese diplomacy: patient, private and firm.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: A Prize for the Law Is a Message Japan Should Welcome. A Non-Nuclear Democracy Needs Rules That Bind the Strong

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

The Norwegian Nobel Committee's choice of Navi Pillay honours a career spent insisting that law applies to the powerful as well as the weak.

Some will read the award as a rebuke to the United States, which imposed sanctions on the International Criminal Court within hours. Others will read it in the light of Ms Pillay's commission's finding on Gaza, which Israel rejects. Both readings are understandable, and neither is the whole story.

For Japan the prize carries a simpler message. Japan does not possess nuclear weapons, does not seek to change borders by force and relies on its alliance and on the rules of the international order for its security.

It has a direct interest in a world in which those rules are respected. When China rejected the arbitration ruling of 2016 on the South China Sea, it was the rules that Japan invoked. When Russia invaded Ukraine, Japan's response rested on the principle that aggression must not be rewarded.

Courts and tribunals are the instruments through which those principles are made concrete. They are imperfect and slow, and they make mistakes. But without them, the only argument left is power.

Ms Pillay's own career shows what courts can achieve. The tribunal for Rwanda, on which she sat, established that rape could be an act of genocide. That was not a political statement but a legal finding with lasting force.

Japan has contributed to that work. Its judges lead both courts in The Hague, and its money keeps the criminal court running.

Supporting international justice does not mean agreeing with every decision of every court. It means defending the institutions while pressing them to improve.

Ms Pillay dedicated her prize to the survivors of international crimes. Japan, whose citizens were abducted by North Korea and whose families still wait for answers, understands why that matters.

The prize is a reminder that the rule of law needs defenders. Japan should be among them.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: The Food Tax Cut Will Help Households. The Government Must Now Show Who Pays, and How the Two Years End

By Michael Hayes | Deputy Editor, Politics & Policy

The bill to cut the consumption tax on food from 8 per cent to 1 per cent for two years is now before the Diet, and its political appeal is obvious. Food prices have risen sharply, and the prime minister's figure of about 36,000 yen per person a year is real money for a family.

The cut is also better targeted than it looks. Lower-income households spend a larger share of their budgets on food, so they gain more relative to their incomes.

But a tax cut is only half of a policy. The other half is how it is paid for, and that half has not yet been set out with the clarity the Diet is entitled to expect.

The prime minister has said the cut will not be financed by deficit-covering bonds. That is the right commitment. The government should now say what will finance it instead, whether spending restraint, other revenue or the fruits of growth, and in what amounts.

Local governments deserve an answer too. Part of the consumption tax is theirs, and they run much of the welfare system that it is earmarked to support. They should not discover in December's budget that their

ANALYSIS

services must absorb the loss.

The question of prices also matters. The prime minister says the cut will basically be reflected in prices. The government should monitor that, publish what it finds, and be ready to name sectors where it is not happening.

Then there is the end of the two years. Temporary cuts have a way of becoming permanent, because raising the rate again is always politically painful. The plan for income-linked benefits from fiscal 2030 suggests the government is thinking ahead, but the path from one to the other needs to be spelt out.

None of this is an argument against the cut. Households need relief, and a government that promised it should deliver it.

It is an argument for doing it responsibly. Japan's public debt is among the highest in the developed world, and with long-term interest rates rising, the cost of carrying it is rising too.

A conservative government should be the first to insist that relief today must not become a burden on tomorrow's taxpayers.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: Takaichi's 'Honourable Sanction' Was a Private Kindness. Japan Should Be Unbowed and Also Careful

By William | Senior Political Analyst

Keiji Furuya's disclosure that Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi described China's sanctions on him as a very honourable sanction will please her supporters and irritate Beijing in roughly equal measure.

The sentiment is defensible. China punished a Japanese lawmaker for visiting Taiwan, as lawmakers of many democracies do. Being singled out by Beijing for that is, in a real sense, a mark of honour, and a prime minister may reasonably say so to a colleague.

Japan should not be cowed by measures of this kind. If it allowed China to dictate which of its lawmakers may travel where, it would surrender something more important than a visit.

The sanctions also have little practical effect. Few Japanese politicians hold assets in China, and an entry ban on a lawmaker who does not intend to go there is a gesture.

But gestures matter in diplomacy, and the prime minister's words were written in private, not delivered as policy. Their publication, on the eve of Taiwan's National Day, gives Beijing an opportunity to protest that it will not miss.

Relations between Japan and China have been difficult since last November, when the prime minister's remarks in the Diet on a Taiwan emergency provoked an angry response.

Japan's interest is to be firm on principle while keeping channels open on everything else: trade, the safety of Japanese citizens in China, maritime incidents and the management of a relationship that neither side can afford to let collapse.

Mr Furuya was careful to say that the e-mail would not affect relations between the two countries. That is the right message, and the government should repeat it.

Firmness and prudence are not opposites. A confident country can wear an honourable sanction lightly, without turning it into a cause.

The prime minister's wit served a friend well. Her diplomacy should now serve the country with the same calm.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: Okinawa's Assembly Is Right That Discipline Has Limits. The Alliance's Defenders Should Insist on Results That Can Be Measured

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

The Okinawa Prefectural Assembly's resolution protesting over the killing of a woman in Naha will be dismissed by some as routine. It should not be.

Its central claim, that the case shows the limits of maintaining discipline through education and training, is one that defenders of the alliance should take seriously, because the alliance depends on the consent of the people who live beside its bases.

After each serious crime the pattern is the same: a

curfew, a period of reflection, a promise of better training, and then a gradual return to normal. Okinawans have seen it many times.

The suspect in this case denies the allegation, and the courts must decide. But the question the assembly raises does not depend on the verdict. It is whether the measures taken after each case work.

The way to answer that is with evidence. The Japanese and American governments should agree on clear measures of misconduct by personnel, publish them regularly, and report what changes have been made and with what effect.

Such transparency would serve the alliance. It would show Okinawans that their concerns are taken seriously, and it would give the American forces credit when things improve.

The assembly also repeats its long-standing demand for a revision of the Status of Forces Agreement. The two governments have preferred to improve the agreement's operation in practice, and they have made real changes over the years.

They should be willing to explain, case by case, why those changes are sufficient, or to go further if they are not.

The alliance is indispensable to Japan's security, and Okinawa carries a disproportionate share of its burden. Those two facts must be held together.

A government that believes in the alliance should be the most demanding of all about the conduct of those who serve it.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: At Prudential, Trust Was the Product. Restoring It Will Take More Than a Three-Month Pause

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The Financial Services Agency's order to Prudential Life Insurance Japan to stop selling new policies until the end of January is severe. It is also deserved.

Life insurance is a promise kept over decades. Customers hand over money in return for the assurance that it will be there when they need it, and they often rely on the judgement of an agent they have come to know personally.

When the people making that promise take customers' money for themselves, as employees of the company did over many years, the damage goes beyond the sums involved.

The external committee's finding that the misconduct reflected structural problems of governance is the most important conclusion. It means the problem was not a few bad individuals but a system that allowed them to operate.

A sales model built on personal networks and commission can produce excellent service. It can also create pressure, isolation from supervision and opportunities for abuse.

The company's plan to guarantee a minimum level of pay for its sales staff from 2027 is a sensible step. So are the disciplinary measures and the pay cuts for executives.

But restoring trust will take longer than three months. Customers will want to know that every case has been found, that every victim has been compensated, and that supervision has changed.

The industry should take note. Japanese life insurers have long relied on face-to-face sales, and the agency will now be asking how each of them supervises agents who work largely on their own.

Regulation cannot replace integrity, but it can make dishonesty harder and its discovery more likely.

For Prudential, the pause in sales is a chance to rebuild from the foundations. It should be used for that, not merely waited out.

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CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

The Japan Morning Post corrects errors of fact as soon as they are identified. Correction requests may be sent to corrections@japanmorningpost.com, giving the date, page and headline of the article concerned.

The notes supplied for today's edition give the agriculture minister's name as Yan; he is Kazuo Yana. They refer to the prime minister as he; Sanae Takaichi is a woman. They describe the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly's resolution as protesting against the arrest of American soldiers; it protests over the killing of a woman in Naha, for which a marine has been arrested. They say that Trump was not elected; he was not chosen for the Peace Prize, for which Ms Takaichi had said she would nominate him, according to the White House last year.

The notes give the Giants' starter as Atsushi Inoue and as Inoue Haruto; he is Haruto Inoue. They give DeNA's starter as Katsuki Higashi; he is Katsuki Azuma. They spell the Georgian judoka Slaminidze; he is Ilia Sulamanidze. They again give the chemistry laureate as Kenzo Sugaki and Sogo, the physics laureate as Harzen and the medicine laureate as Deisseros; they are Kenso Soai, Francis Halzen and Karl Deisseroth. They give the American AI developer as Anthropique; it is Anthropic. They date the completion of IceCube to 2011; it was completed in December 2010.

The notes' technology summary presents BookOff, Big Echo and Skyticket, as well as JR East, as casualties of the IDC Frontier attack. Of the leaks announced on Thursday and Friday, only JR East's has been linked to the attack; BookOff, Daiichi Kosho, Adventure and Lawson described separate intrusions. The notes give Typhoon No. 29 as moving north-west and Typhoon No. 28 at 992 hPa with winds of 25 m/s; the Japan Meteorological Agency's bulletins shown on the supplied maps give west-north-west for No. 29 and 994 hPa and 23 m/s for No. 28, and this edition follows them. A note dating an American decision on the Dyna-Soar spaceplane to October 10, 1957 could not be confirmed and is not used. Items on the Asian Games, the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, the FIFA rankings, Masanori Ishikawa's farewell, Mizuno's racing shoe and other matters reported in previous editions are not repeated as news.

THE WEEK AHEAD

SATURDAY, OCT. 10: Climax Series first stages, 2 p.m.: Giants v DeNA at Tokyo Dome, Seibu v Nippon-Ham at Belluna Dome. World judo: men's over 100 kg, women's over 78 kg. Taiwan's National Day. World Mental Health Day. Slight sea-level changes possible on the coasts from about 8 p.m. after the Panama earthquake. Takayama autumn festival ends. SUNDAY, OCT. 11: World judo championships end with the mixed team event. New moon. Typhoon No. 29 forecast very strong.

MONDAY, OCT. 12: Sports Day; Izumo All-Japan University Ekiden; Nobel prize in economic sciences; Typhoon No. 29 about 500 km east of Chichijima. TUESDAY, OCT. 13: Tokyo markets reopen; American bank results; rain from a front on the main islands into Wednesday. WEDNESDAY, OCT. 14: Climax Series final stages begin at Koshien and in Fukuoka; American consumer prices; Nada no Kenka Matsuri in Himeji, to Thursday. OCT. 17 AND 18: Kawagoe Festival. OCT. 18: Yokohama mayoral election. OCT. 24: Japan Series begins. OCT. 29 AND 30: Bank of Japan policy meeting.

TYPHOON AND MARINE ADVISORIES

3 a.m. Saturday. No. 29 (Koguma): strong typhoon near Minamitorishima; 20.8 degrees north, 152.8 degrees east; moving west-north-west at 25 km/h; 970 hPa; winds 40 m/s, gusts 55; storm-force winds 85 km all round, gales 390 km north and 280 km south. Forecast: 960 hPa, 3 p.m. Saturday; very strong, 955 hPa and 45 m/s, 3 a.m. Sunday; about 500 km east of Chichijima, 960 hPa, 3 a.m. Monday; about 990 km east-south-east of Tokyo, 970 hPa, 3 a.m. Tuesday; severe tropical storm, 980 hPa, 3 a.m. Wednesday; extratropical, 984 hPa, 3 a.m. Thursday. No. 28 (Nolo): tropical storm near the Ogasawara Islands; 29.9 north, 147.0 east; moving west-north-west at 15 km/h; 994 hPa; winds 23 m/s, gusts 35; no storm-force area; gales 500 km north-west and 220 km south-east; forecast about 720 km east-south-east of Tokyo at 3 a.m. Sunday, extratropical by 3 a.m. Monday.

Izu Islands and the Kanto coast: swell from the start

EDITORIAL & OPINION

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1-2-3 Otemachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0004 | www.japanmorningpost.com | newsdesk@japanmorningpost.com

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of the long weekend. Ogasawara Islands: high waves in the second half of the weekend. Pacific coasts: slight sea-level changes of less than 20 centimetres possible from about 8 p.m. today for about a day after the Panama earthquake; no damage expected. Island ferries: sailings may change at short notice. Chiba and Kanagawa: ground still loose after Typhoon No. 25. No landfall on the main islands is forecast.

MARKET REFERENCE

Tokyo, Friday's close: Nikkei 225 at 69,030.92, down 11.19, a third day of losses, after falling nearly 900 yen in the morning. TOPIX 4,104.81, up 13.35; more than 70 per cent of Prime Market shares rose; turnover about 7.85 trillion yen. New York, Thursday: S&P 500 down 0.5 per cent; Nasdaq Composite down 1.25 per cent; Philadelphia Semiconductor Index down 3.38 per cent; Dow up 0.1 per cent. Ten-year Treasury yield 5.23 per cent; yen about 157.9 to the dollar; West Texas Intermediate 90.78 dollars a barrel; gold 4,134.68 dollars an ounce. Japanese long-term rate on Tuesday, October 6: 3.105 per cent. Bank of Japan policy rate: 1.25 per cent. Tokyo markets are closed until Tuesday.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS IN THIS EDITION

Front page: a BookOff shop in front of Akihabara Station, Tokyo, file image supplied for this edition. Economy and Business: the head office of East Japan Railway Company near Shinjuku Station, file image supplied for this edition. International: Navi Pillay, portrait supplied for this edition. Politics: Prime Minister Takaichi at the rostrum of the House of Representatives, file (WPM Productions). Typhoon page: map of the two typhoons supplied for this edition, from Japan Meteorological Agency bulletins issued between 3:45 and 4:05 a.m. on October 10. Weather: the Japan and United States maps supplied for this edition. Editorial page: cartoon by Taro Suzuki.

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THE RECORD BOOK

Leaks announced on Thursday and Friday: Skyticket, about 14.64 million records; Daiichi Kosho, about 8.72 million people; BookOff, up to about 6.43 million; JR East, about 6.09 million, the only one linked to the IDC Frontier attack; Lawson, 2,155,345. Together, about 38 million records. Leak incidents this year: 506 by October 7, a record. El Niño: 4.0 degrees above the baseline in September, the highest since 1949; the previous record was 3.6, in December 1997. Influenza: 11.35 patients per institution, about 7.3 times last year's 1.56. Band scores: 579 songs

copied; damages of about 169 million yen. Peace Prize nominations: 287. Panama: magnitude 7.7 at a depth of about 10 kilometres.

NOBEL WEEK

Monday, October 5: Physiology or Medicine, to Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann and Georg Nagel, for optogenetics. Tuesday, October 6: Physics, to Francis Halzen, for the detection of high-energy neutrinos from space with IceCube. Wednesday, October 7: Chemistry, to Henri Kagan and Kenso Soai, for the discovery of non-linear effects and autocatalysis in asymmetric organic synthesis. Thursday, October 8: Literature, to Anne Carson. Friday, October 9: Peace, to Navi Pillay of South Africa, former judge of the International Criminal Court and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Monday, October 12: the prize in economic sciences. Each prize is worth 12 million Swedish kronor; the prizes are presented on December 10, the Peace Prize in Oslo and the others in Stockholm.

PLAY-OFF CALENDAR

CENTRAL LEAGUE: first stage, Giants v DeNA at Tokyo Dome from today, 2 p.m., best of three, the Giants advancing if the series is level; starters Haruto Inoue and Katsuki Azuma. Final stage, Hanshin v the first-stage winner at Koshien from Wednesday, October 14; Hanshin start one win up. PACIFIC LEAGUE: first stage, Seibu v Nippon-Ham at Belluna Dome from today, 2 p.m., best of three, Seibu advancing if level; starters Kaima Taira and Kohei Arihara, with Kota Tatsu and Hiromi Ito to follow for Nippon-Ham. Final stage, SoftBank v the first-stage winner in Fukuoka from Wednesday; SoftBank start two wins up under this season's rule. Japan Series from October 24.

FESTIVALS AND SKIES THIS WEEK

Takayama autumn festival: Sakurayama Hachiman Shrine, ends today. Izumo All-Japan University Ekiden: Monday, from Izumo Taisha to the Izumo Dome. Nada no Kenka Matsuri, Himeji: October 14 and 15. Kannamesai, Ise Jingu: October 15 to 17. Kawagoe Festival: October 17 and 18. Jidai Matsuri and Kurama Fire Festival, Kyoto: October 22. New moon: early on Sunday, leaving dark skies over a fine weekend on the main islands.

DATA TERMS USED TODAY

Hash: a scrambled form of a password, stored instead of the password itself. Salt: a random value added to each password before hashing. Two-step verification: a second check at login, such as a code from a phone. Passkey: a cryptographic key stored on a device that replaces a password. Region and zone: a cloud provider's geographical area and the separate facilities within it. Offline or immutable backup: a copy that attackers cannot reach or alter. Double

extortion: stealing data before encrypting systems and threatening to publish it. Preliminary and final reports: the two reports a company must make to the Personal Information Protection Commission after a serious leak, the first within days and the second within 30 or 60 days.

THE SYMBOLS ON THE WEATHER MAP

A sun: sunny. A cloud: cloudy. A cloud with strokes beneath it: rain. Two symbols joined by an arrow: the first sky gives way to the second during the day. Two symbols separated by a slanting stroke: the first sky, with the second at times. The figure in red is the forecast high and the figure in blue the low observed this morning, in degrees Celsius. On the United States map the figures are in degrees Fahrenheit, and a sun partly hidden by cloud means partly cloudy.

UNITS AND CONVENTIONS

Wind speeds are given in metres a second; one metre a second is 3.6 kilometres an hour, or about 1.9 knots. Pressure is in hectopascals. Temperatures are in degrees Celsius except on the United States map. Times are Japan Standard Time unless another place is named; Japan is at present nine hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time, eight ahead of London, seven ahead of Oslo and Paris, five ahead of Baku, two ahead of Bangkok, 13 ahead of New York, 14 ahead of Panama and the Gulf Coast and 16 ahead of Los Angeles. Japanese names are given with the family name last. A person arrested or charged is presumed innocent until convicted, and a company under investigation has not been found to have broken the law.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Police: 110. Fire and ambulance: 119. Coast guard, for emergencies at sea: 118. Disaster message dial: 171. Police consultation, not an emergency: #9110. Consumer hotline: 188. Anyone who receives a message about a data leak, a refund or an account problem should not follow its links, and should contact the company through its official site or a number found independently. Typhoon and tsunami information is published by the Japan Meteorological Agency at www.jma.go.jp.

ABOUT THE OPINION PAGES

The editorial states the view of the editorial page and is written by its editor; it takes its subject from the day's cartoon. Articles headed Analysis are the judgment of the writer whose name they carry. The news pages report; the opinion pages argue, and say that they are doing so. Letters in reply are welcome at letters@japanmorningpost.com.

SOURCES FOR THIS EDITION

Reports in this edition draw on the Saturday morning papers and Friday night's wires: Yomiuri Shimbun, Asahi Shimbun, Nihon Keizai Shimbun, Sankei News, Kyodo News, Jiji Press, NHK, TBS, TV Asahi, Chunichi Sports, Daily Sports, Sports Hochi, Reuters, AFP, the Associated Press, Bloomberg, the Financial Times, CBS News and Al Jazeera; on the announcements of JR East, IDC Frontier, BookOff Group Holdings, Daiichi Kosho, Adventure and Lawson; on the Norwegian Nobel Committee for the Peace Prize; on the joint statement of eight foreign ministers; on the health ministry for influenza; on the Japan Meteorological Agency and Weathernews for weather, El Niño and the Panama earthquake; on the United States Geological Survey and the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center; and on the United States National Weather Service and National Hurricane Center for the map of American cities. Where accounts differ the difference is stated.

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TOMORROW'S EDITION

Sunday's edition carries the first games of the Climax Series in Tokyo and Tokorozawa; the heavyweight finals of the world judo championships; Typhoon No. 29 as it nears its closest approach to the Ogasawara Islands; and the latest on this week's data leaks and on the American sanctions against the International Criminal Court.