

★ GMO REFUSES RANSOM AS NOON DEADLINE NEARS ★ RAKUTEN TRAVEL, SHINKANSEN MEMBERS HIT BY LEAKS ★ MERZ HEADS FOR JAPAN ★ ISRAEL VOTES ★ JAPAN SERIES GAME 3 IN FUKUOKA ★

GMO's Attacker Threatens to Publish Customer Data and Strike With Ransomware at Noon Today as Breaches Reach Rakuten Travel, Shinkansen Booking Members and Bandai Namco

GMO says it will not pay and is examining customers' computers; Rakuten reports up to 2.6 million users exposed, three JR companies are caught up in the Yumilink breach, and a gift-card issuer loses 550 million yen

By Maya Suzuki | Technology Correspondent



Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi greets a visitor, in a file photo. She holds talks with Bangladesh's Prime Minister, Tarique Rahman, on Tuesday, and Germany's Chancellor, Friedrich Merz, arrives on Wednesday for his first visit to Japan as Chancellor. Analysis, Page 21. (File photo: WPM Productions)

The person GMO Internet Group believes broke into its Onamae.com Desktop Cloud service has warned that customers' information will be published and a ransomware attack carried out at noon on Tuesday, the company said late on Monday, as a run of intrusions at Japanese companies spread to Rakuten Group's travel business, the shinkansen booking services of three JR companies and a logistics arm of Bandai Namco.

GMO said in its seventh report on the breach, posted at 11:10 p.m., that it would not comply with the attacker's demands. Paying, it said, would not guarantee that the information already taken would be deleted or that it would not be misused. It said it had reported the warning to the police and other authorities and was working with them.

Because customers were the people most worried, the company said, it would first explain its response to them directly by e-mail.

Computers under examination

On Sunday GMO asked customers around the country to let it examine the computers they had used to connect to the service. Many agreed, and company staff visited them to collect the machines. The group's own team of white-hat hackers began analysing them on Monday to establish the extent of the damage, including whether malware, ransomware among it, had actually been installed, and to find a remedy.

If that work shows that customers need to take particular steps, GMO said, it will tell users individually by e-mail and post updates on its website.

The demand

Masatoshi Kumagai, GMO Internet Group's chairman and president, disclosed on his blog on Monday that the attacker had at one point demanded 50 million dollars, about 7.9 billion yen, in crypto-assets. A timeline in the company's report says an extortion e-mail asking for about 8 billion yen arrived on October 21, the day the service was suspended. GMO consulted the police the next day, and on October 24 it decided to compensate customers and asked the government to use its new active cyber defence powers against the attacker.

NHK reported on Monday that the hacker group believed responsible was now demanding 1 million dollars, about 157 million yen, by noon on Tuesday, and was also threatening customers. GMO's own reports have not mentioned that figure.

What customers are asked to do

In a separate notice on Monday evening, GMO repeated four requests to everyone who used the

service. They should run a full virus scan, not a quick one, on every computer and smartphone that connected to it, and copy important photographs and documents to an external drive kept off the network.

From a separate device known to be safe, and only through official websites rather than links in e-mails or text messages, they should log out of every session, change the passwords for their foreign exchange, securities, e-mail and Google accounts, and turn on multi-factor authentication. They should also remove unfamiliar linked apps, forwarding rules, browser extensions and registered devices, and leave browser synchronisation switched off until the checks are finished.

The fourth request is to help with the investigation. GMO stressed that it will never ask for passwords or authentication codes, and warned customers not to respond to anyone offering, for a fee, to recover money they have lost.

Rakuten Travel

Rakuten Group said on Monday that an outsider had gained unauthorised access to parts of two Rakuten Travel websites. On an overseas hotel booking site, some pages of which are run by its subsidiary Rakuten Travel Xchange, the names, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers and internal ID numbers of up to about 2.6 million users who had logged in may have been exposed.

For up to about 40,000 bookings made through the affected pages, the details of the stay and the names of companions were also involved, and for up to about 36,000 of them, part of the payment card information: the issuer identification number, the last four digits, the cardholder's name, the expiry date and the card brand. Full card numbers, security codes, passwords, passport details and home addresses were not affected, the company said.

Rakuten detected the problem on September 10 and closed the hole on September 16. A second intrusion, at a multilingual booking site, was found on October 20 and fixed the next day; it may have exposed the e-mail addresses and ID numbers of up to about 860,000 users and the details of up to about 40,000 accounts used by hotel staff. The company said it had found no secondary damage and had reported both cases to the Personal Information Protection Commission and to authorities abroad.

Shinkansen members

Central Japan Railway, West Japan Railway and Kyushu Railway said that member information for their shinkansen booking services, Smart EX and Express Reservation, may have leaked through the

POLITICS

Merz Sets Off on His First Visit to Japan as Chancellor, Seeking Closer Ties With Takaichi on Economic Security and the Defence Industry

The German leader begins an Asian tour in Singapore on Tuesday and is in Japan on Wednesday and Thursday; Siemens Energy plans an Asian wind-power hub in Eniwa, Hokkaido

By Michael Hayes | Political Correspondent

Germany's Chancellor, Friedrich Merz, left Berlin on Monday on a three-nation tour of Asia that will bring him to Japan on Wednesday for his first visit since he took office in May last year, Kyodo News reported.

He will be in Japan on Wednesday and Thursday and will hold talks with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi. The two leaders are expected to discuss Ukraine, where Russia's invasion continues, and East Asian security, including the Taiwan Strait, and to agree to strengthen co-operation on economic security and the defence industry.

Merz will also attend a German-Japanese business summit and visit Japanese companies that work with German firms.

Singapore and Seoul

The tour begins in Singapore on Tuesday. After Japan, the Chancellor goes on to South Korea on Thursday and Friday, accompanied by senior executives of major German companies.

A hub in Hokkaido

Ahead of the visit, Siemens Energy, the German power equipment maker, plans to open a facility in Eniwa, Hokkaido, in January to maintain wind turbines and store materials. It is to serve as the company's wind-power base for Asia, covering Japan, the Philippines and Vietnam, Kyodo reported.

Siemens Energy has also signed a memorandum of co-operation with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry under which the two sides will work together on bringing floating offshore wind power into commercial use in Japan and on training specialists. Eniwa plans to work with the city of Muroran, which is trying to attract a base for assembling and manufacturing generating equipment.

Hokkaido is one of the "strategic industrial clusters" the government has chosen to draw large-scale investment in offshore wind. Siemens Energy intends to use parts made in Japan, which local officials hope will help the regional economy.

Ties that have deepened

Security co-operation between the two countries has grown quickly over the past five years. They signed an agreement on the protection of classified information in 2021, the year the German frigate Bayern visited Tokyo, and in 2022 German Eurofighter jets flew to Japan for the first time. The two governments held their first full intergovernmental consultations, with economic security at the top of the agenda, in Tokyo in March 2023.

In 2024 they signed an acquisition and cross-servicing agreement allowing their forces to supply each other with fuel, food and other goods, and the German frigate Baden-Wuerttemberg called at Tokyo before sailing through the Taiwan Strait in September, the first German warship to do so in more than two decades.

The Chancellor's place

Merz, the leader of the Christian Democratic Union, became Chancellor in May last year at the head of a coalition with the Social Democrats. His government has made rearmament and support for Ukraine central to its programme.

For Japan, Germany is the largest economy in Europe and an important source of advanced manufacturing

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WEATHER — TOKYO

/

22°C

Low 15°C · Mostly cloudy with sunny spells

Sapporo

14°

Osaka

24°

Fukuoka

23°

Naha

28°

Tokyo 22°C, mostly cloudy with sunny spells; Nagoya sunny at 26°C and Kochi at 27°C; rain spreading over the north from midday; Kushiro 4°C this morning; In-fa a very strong typhoon at 965 hPa near the Marshall Islands. Full weather, Page 15.

TODAY IN BRIEF

- Cyber: GMO's attacker sets a noon deadline; GMO refuses to pay and examines customers' PCs.
- Leaks: Rakuten Travel, up to 2.6 million users; shinkansen members caught in Yumilink breach.
- Politics: Merz begins an Asian tour; Japanese diplomats see the reporter held in Moscow.
- World: Trump calls Brazil's vote rigged; Israelis vote; Mecca alliance chiefs meet Iran's President.
- Weather: Dry and warmer from Kanto to Kyushu; rain over the north; In-fa near the Marianas Friday.
- Sports: Haru Matsumoto v Katsuki Azuma in Game 3; SoftBank lead 2-0.

IN-FA

- 965 hPa, very strong.
- 950 hPa from Wednesday.
- Marianas on Friday.
- Near Ogasawara Sunday.

TODAY

- Tokyo 22, some sun.
- GMO deadline at noon.
- JS Game 3, 6 p.m.
- Israel votes.

MARKETS

Nikkei 225 (Mon)	62,189.65 ▼ 503.51
Topix (Mon)	3,972.98 ▲ 7.17
Dow (Mon)	52,361.58 ▲ 146.42
Nasdaq (Mon)	26,169.38 ▲ 214.04
NY crude (Mon)	\$101.76 ▼ 1.51
Yen (NY, 5 p.m.)	157.43-53 per \$
Bank of Japan	meets Oct. 29-30

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THE WEEK

- Oct. 28-29: Merz visits.
- Oct. 27-28: Fed meets.
- Oct. 29-30: BOJ meets.
- Nov. 1: Tenno Sho.

ALERTS

- GMO: full virus scan.
- JR EX: no e-mail links.

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Continued from Page 1

breach at Yumilink, a provider of e-mail delivery services whose system they used to send some messages to members. E-mail addresses, member ID numbers, names in katakana and membership types are involved. The railways said dates of birth, addresses, telephone numbers and card details were not, and that no leak had been found in their own reservation system.

Yumilink said on Monday that a cumulative total of about 51.62 million records held for its corporate customers may have leaked, up from the roughly 9 million it estimated on October 19, and that the number could rise as its investigation continues.

Bandai Namco and a gift-card loss

Bandai Namco Holdings said its logistics subsidiary, Bandai Logipal, had suffered unauthorised access that may have exposed customers' names, addresses and telephone numbers, including those of buyers on Ichiban Kuji Online, the prize-draw shopping service whose deliveries the subsidiary handles. The intrusion was discovered on October 21, and the related logistics systems were stopped.

FROM PAGE 1

Merz Sets Off on His First Visit to Japan as Chancellor, Seeking Closer Ties With Takaichi on Economic Security and the Defence Industry

Continued from Page 1

technology. Economic security co-operation between the two has centred on secure supplies of critical minerals and semiconductors, areas in which both have sought to reduce their dependence on China.

Predecessors

Merz's predecessor, Olaf Scholz, chose Tokyo for his first trip to Asia as Chancellor in April 2022 and returned in March 2023 for the intergovernmental consultations. Japan has meanwhile loosened its own rules on exporting defence equipment, opening the way for joint development and production with partners in Europe.

TECHNOLOGY

Shinkansen Booking Members Caught Up in the Yumilink Breach as JR Central, JR West and JR Kyushu Reverse Their Earlier All-Clear

E-mail addresses, member numbers and names in katakana for Smart EX and Express Reservation users may have leaked; the railways say their own reservation system was not breached

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Members of the online booking services for the Tokaido, Sanyo and Kyushu shinkansen were told on Monday that their e-mail addresses and other details may have leaked, after Central Japan Railway, West Japan Railway and Kyushu Railway learned that data they had passed to an e-mail delivery company had been viewed or taken by outsiders.

The three companies run Smart EX and Express Reservation, the services that let passengers book and change shinkansen seats online and board with a registered card or smartphone. They said in a joint statement that the information came from Cuenote FC, a service run by Yumilink that they used to send some e-mails to members.

What was involved

The data that may have leaked are e-mail addresses, member ID numbers, names written in katakana and the type of membership. The railways said other forms of members' names, dates of birth, addresses, telephone numbers, card numbers and card expiry dates were not involved, and that no leak had been confirmed from the reservation system itself.

The e-mails sent through the service included promotional messages to some members and notices that departure times had changed because of the Kumamoto earthquake, according to the companies.

Separately, Gifty Group said an outsider had exploited a vulnerability in one of its subsidiary's systems on Sunday to issue new digital gift vouchers worth about 550 million yen. The company shut the system the same day, said customers' existing gifts had not been touched and that no leak of personal information had been found, and will book the loss as an extraordinary item.

The deadline

The breaches come a day after Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi told ministers that Japan would choose every response option against attacks whose nature had been established, including neutralising the servers used in them, and promised an emergency package of measures as early as next week. Whether GMO's attacker carries out Tuesday's threat, and what the government does if it does, will be the first test of that promise.

A change of position

When Yumilink first disclosed the intrusion on October 16, the railways said Smart EX and Express Reservation users were not affected. They were told on Monday, after further investigation, that third parties had viewed or obtained the member data, and reported the matter to the Personal Information Protection Commission the same day. They have stopped using the delivery service and plan to contact the members concerned by e-mail or other means.

The number of members affected is still being confirmed. CBC Television, a Nagoya broadcaster, reported a total of about 170,000 across the three companies.

The wider breach

Yumilink said on Monday that a cumulative total of about 51.62 million records from its corporate customers may have leaked, including at least registered e-mail addresses, and that it was still checking whether names and addresses were among them. It detected the intrusion on October 16, estimated on October 19 that about 9 million records were involved, and raised the figure after analysing the malicious programs the attackers had left behind.

How to protect yourself

The railways and security specialists advise members not to log in through links in e-mails that claim to come from Smart EX, Express Reservation or JR, but to open the official website or app directly. Nobody should reply to a request to re-register a card or to send a member ID and password.

Passwords are not among the information that may have leaked, and no general password reset has been ordered. Anyone who has typed their details into a suspicious site should change the password on the official service, and on any other service where the same password is used.

Why addresses matter

An e-mail address and a real name are enough for a convincing fake message. Criminals who know that someone is a shinkansen member can send a bogus notice about a cancelled train or a refund, and the more genuine details a message contains, the more likely its recipient is to trust it.

TECHNOLOGY

Pay or We Publish: How Ransom Gangs Squeeze Their Victims Twice, and Why Paying Buys Nothing Certain

Encrypting a company's files is no longer enough for many attackers; the threat to leak stolen data is what keeps the pressure on

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The threat GMO Internet Group received on Monday, to publish customers' information and launch a ransomware attack at a set hour, follows a pattern that security specialists call double extortion.

The first squeeze

Ransomware is malicious software that scrambles the files on a victim's computers so that they cannot be used. For years the criminals behind it made their money by selling the key to unscramble them. Companies with good backups learned to restore their systems without paying, and the business model weakened.

The second squeeze

From around 2019, gangs began copying data before they scrambled it and threatening to publish it if the victim did not pay. The threat works even against a company with perfect backups, because the harm now falls on its customers, its partners and its reputation. Some groups run websites where they post the names of victims who refuse, with a countdown to publication.

Why deadlines

A deadline is a pressure tactic. It is meant to force a decision before a company has finished its investigation, consulted the police or worked out what was actually taken. Attackers often exaggerate what they hold.

No guarantee

Paying does not buy certainty. Criminals who have copied data can keep it, sell it or demand more money later, and there is no court in which a victim can enforce the promise to delete it. That is the reason GMO gave on Monday for refusing.

Governments' line

Japan joined other members of the International Counter Ransomware Initiative in a 2023 statement saying that governments should not pay ransoms. Police in Japan advise companies not to pay and to report attacks.

The numbers in Japan

The National Police Agency counted 222 ransomware cases reported by companies and organisations in 2024, about 63 per cent of them at small and medium-sized businesses, up from about half the year before. The real figure is thought to be higher, because not every victim reports.

What victims should do

Specialists advise isolating infected machines, preserving logs, informing the police and the Personal Information Protection Commission where personal data is involved, and telling customers quickly and plainly what has happened and what they should do.

The customers' part

For individuals, the advice is the same as after any leak: expect convincing fake messages, change reused passwords, and treat any request for money or credentials with suspicion.

POLITICS

Merz in Asia: The Tour at a Glance

By the Political Desk

WHO: Friedrich Merz, Germany's Chancellor since May 2025, leader of the Christian Democratic Union.

LEFT BERLIN: Monday, October 26.

TUE. 27: Singapore.

WED. 28 - THU. 29: Japan, his first visit as Chancellor.

TALKS: With Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

EXPECTED: Agreement to strengthen co-operation on economic security and the defence industry.

ON THE AGENDA: Ukraine; East Asia, including the Taiwan Strait.

BUSINESS: A German-Japanese business summit and visits to Japanese companies working with German firms.

THU. 29 - FRI. 30: South Korea, with senior executives of major German companies.

ALONGSIDE: Siemens Energy plans an Asian wind-power maintenance hub in Eniwa, Hokkaido, from January.

POLITICS

Japan and Germany: Recent Milestones

By the Political Desk

2021: Agreement on protecting classified information.

2021: The frigate Bayern visits Tokyo.

2022: German Eurofighters fly to Japan for the first

time.

MARCH 2023: First intergovernmental consultations, in Tokyo.

2024: Agreement on mutual supply between the forces.

2024: The frigate Baden-Wuerttemberg calls at Tokyo.

SEPT. 2024: The frigate sails through the Taiwan Strait.

MAY 2025: Friedrich Merz becomes Chancellor.

OCT. 28-29, 2026: Merz's first visit to Japan as Chancellor.

THE AGENDA: Economic security and the defence industry.

ECONOMY

Why Hokkaido? Siemens Energy's Choice and the Long Road for Japan's Offshore Wind

Japan aims for 10 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2030 and up to 45 by 2040, but projects have stumbled on costs; deep water off Hokkaido makes floating turbines the next frontier

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

Siemens Energy's plan for a wind-power maintenance and storage base in Eniwa, south of Sapporo, puts a German manufacturer at the centre of one of the Japanese government's most ambitious energy goals.

The targets

In a vision drawn up with industry in December 2020, the government set targets for offshore wind of 10 gigawatts of capacity by 2030 and 30 to 45 gigawatts by 2040, including floating turbines. Offshore wind is seen as essential if Japan is to raise the share of renewable energy in its power supply.

Turbines already turning

Hokkaido is already home to one of Japan's first large commercial offshore wind farms, at Ishikari Bay New Port, which began commercial operation on January 1, 2024, with 14 turbines of 8 megawatts each made by Siemens Gamesa, the wind business of Siemens Energy. The plant, with a total capacity of 112 megawatts, is run by a company owned through JERA and Green Power Investment.

Setbacks

The industry has had a difficult few years. Mitsubishi Corporation, which won the first round of government auctions for three large projects off Akita and Chiba prefectures, announced in August 2025 that it would withdraw from them, citing a sharp rise in construction costs.

Going floating

Much of the sea around Japan drops off steeply, limiting the places where turbines can stand on the seabed. Floating turbines, moored in deeper water, open far larger areas, and legislation passed in 2025 allows wind farms to be built in Japan's exclusive economic zone beyond its territorial waters. The memorandum Siemens Energy signed with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry covers the commercialisation of floating offshore wind and the training of specialists.

Clusters

The government has designated Hokkaido one of its strategic industrial clusters for offshore wind, hoping to build a domestic supply chain of parts makers, ports and maintenance companies around the wind farms. Eniwa plans to work with the port city of Muroran, which is seeking a base for assembling and manufacturing generating equipment.

Maintenance matters

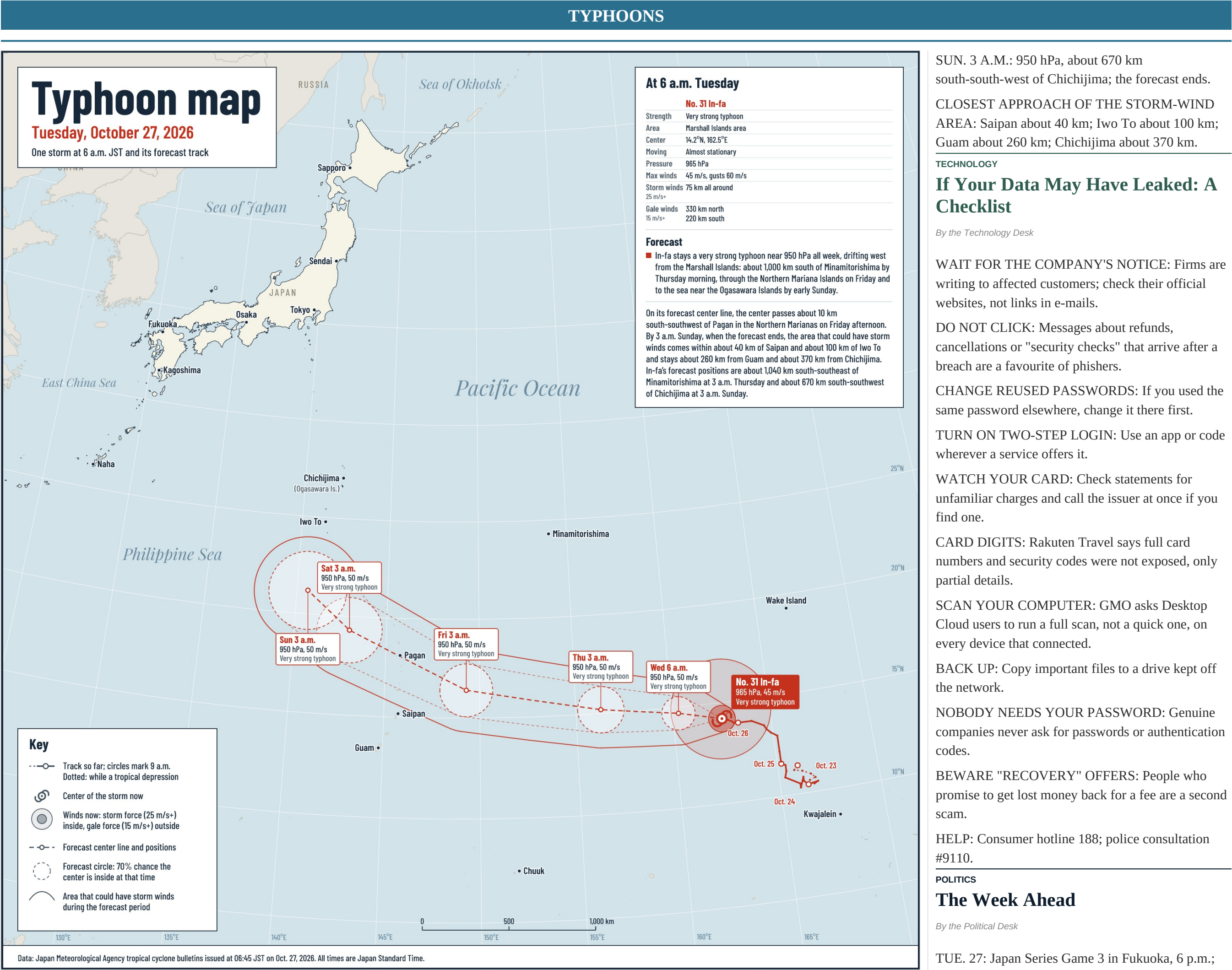
A wind turbine at sea needs regular inspection and repair for decades. A maintenance hub close to the wind farms, with spare parts in storage, shortens the time turbines stand idle when something breaks, which is why the location of such bases matters to project economics.

The German angle

The plan was disclosed before Chancellor Friedrich Merz arrives in Japan on Wednesday, and it fits the economic-security theme the two governments have set for his visit: building supply chains with trusted partners.

What comes next

Siemens Energy plans to set up the facility in January. Its use of Japanese-made parts is meant to spread the benefit to local companies.



Typhoon No. 31, In-fa, at 6 a.m. on Tuesday, with its forecast track, in the map supplied for this edition. A very strong typhoon in the Marshall Islands area at 14.2N, 162.5E, almost stationary, with a central pressure of 965 hPa and maximum winds of 45 m/s, gusting to 60; storm-force winds of 25 m/s or more extend 75 km all round, and gales of 15 m/s or more 330 km to the north and 220 km to the south. Forecast: 950 hPa and 50 m/s from 6 a.m. Wednesday until the forecast ends at 3 a.m. Sunday, a very strong typhoon throughout, drifting west to about 1,040 km south-south-east of Minamitorishima by 3 a.m. Thursday, through the Northern Mariana Islands on Friday, when the forecast centre line passes about 10 km south-south-west of Pagan in the afternoon, and to about 670 km south-south-west of Chichijima by 3 a.m. Sunday. By then the area that could have storm-force winds comes within about 40 km of Saipan and about 100 km of Iwo To, and stays about 260 km from Guam and about 370 km from Chichijima. Each dashed circle is where the centre is expected to be at that time with a probability of 70 per cent; the solid red outline is the area that could have storm-force winds during the forecast period. The line from the east is the track so far, with circles at 9 a.m. from October 23. (Data: Japan Meteorological Agency tropical cyclone bulletins issued at 6:45 a.m. on October 27)

TYPHOONS

In-fa Holds as a Very Strong Typhoon and Is Now Forecast to Cross the Northern Mariana Islands on Friday and Reach the Waters Near the Ogasawara Islands by Early Sunday

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Typhoon No. 31, In-fa, stayed almost stationary as a very strong typhoon near the Marshall Islands on Tuesday morning, and the Japan Meteorological Agency now expects it to drift west through the Northern Mariana Islands on Friday and reach the waters near the Ogasawara Islands by early Sunday, a day later than it forecast on Monday.

At 6 a.m. on Tuesday the centre was at 14.2 degrees north and 162.5 degrees east. Its central pressure was 965 hectopascals and its maximum winds 45 metres a second, with gusts of 60, according to the agency's 6:45 a.m. bulletin, which the map on this page shows.

Storm-force winds of 25 metres a second or more extend 75 km in every direction from the centre. Gales of 15 metres a second or more reach 330 km to the north and 220 km to the south.

A slightly weaker peak

The agency now forecasts In-fa to deepen to 950 hectopascals, with winds of 50 metres a second, by 6 a.m. on Wednesday and to hold that strength until the forecast ends at 3 a.m. on Sunday, remaining a very strong typhoon throughout. On Monday evening it had expected a deeper storm of 940 hectopascals.

The track

At 3 a.m. on Thursday the forecast position is about 1,040 km south-south-east of Minamitorishima. The storm then moves through the Northern Mariana

Islands on Friday. On the agency's forecast centre line, the centre passes about 10 km south-south-west of Pagan, a volcanic island in the chain, on Friday afternoon.

By 3 a.m. on Sunday the forecast position is about 670 km south-south-west of Chichijima, the main inhabited island of the Ogasawara group.

The islands nearest the danger

The solid red line on the map marks the area that could have storm-force winds during the forecast period. By the time the forecast ends, that area comes within about 40 km of Saipan and about 100 km of Iwo To, and stays about 260 km from Guam and about 370 km from Chichijima.

On Monday evening's forecast, Saipan lay inside that area. The shift reflects a track that now runs a little further north of Saipan and Guam than before.

Reading the map

Each dashed circle is the area in which the centre is expected to be at that time, with a probability of 70 per cent; the circles widen with time because the forecast becomes less certain. The shaded circles around the storm show the storm-force winds inside and the gales outside. The line from the east is the track so far, with circles marking 9 a.m. from October 23; the dotted part is the period when In-fa was still a tropical depression.

MOVING: Almost stationary.
PRESSURE: 965 hPa.
WINDS: 45 m/s, gusting to 60.
STORM-FORCE WINDS: 75 km all round.
GALES: 330 km to the north, 220 km to the south.

Uncertainty ahead

Storms in this part of the Pacific often move west under the subtropical high and then turn north as they reach its western edge. Where and when that turn comes will decide how close In-fa passes to the Ogasawara Islands and whether it threatens the main islands of Japan next week. The agency's forecast does not yet extend that far.

Weather at home

In-fa is not affecting Japan's main islands. Tuesday's weather map shows a mostly dry day from Kanto to Kyushu, with rain spreading over northern Japan from midday.

What to watch

Residents of the Ogasawara Islands and Iwo To, and ships and aircraft operating between Japan and the Marianas, should follow the agency's bulletins, which are updated every three hours, and more often as a storm nears land.

WED. 6 A.M.: 950 hPa, 50 m/s; very strong.
THU. 3 A.M.: About 1,040 km south-south-east of Minamitorishima.
FRI.: Through the Northern Mariana Islands; centre line about 10 km from Pagan in the afternoon.

SUN. 3 A.M.: 950 hPa, about 670 km south-south-west of Chichijima; the forecast ends.

CLOSEST APPROACH OF THE STORM-WIND AREA: Saipan about 40 km; Iwo To about 100 km; Guam about 260 km; Chichijima about 370 km.

TECHNOLOGY

If Your Data May Have Leaked: A Checklist

By the Technology Desk

WAIT FOR THE COMPANY'S NOTICE: Firms are writing to affected customers; check their official websites, not links in e-mails.

DO NOT CLICK: Messages about refunds, cancellations or "security checks" that arrive after a breach are a favourite of phishers.

CHANGE REUSED PASSWORDS: If you used the same password elsewhere, change it there first.

TURN ON TWO-STEP LOGIN: Use an app or code wherever a service offers it.

WATCH YOUR CARD: Check statements for unfamiliar charges and call the issuer at once if you find one.

CARD DIGITS: Rakuten Travel says full card numbers and security codes were not exposed, only partial details.

SCAN YOUR COMPUTER: GMO asks Desktop Cloud users to run a full scan, not a quick one, on every device that connected.

BACK UP: Copy important files to a drive kept off the network.

NOBODY NEEDS YOUR PASSWORD: Genuine companies never ask for passwords or authentication codes.

BEWARE "RECOVERY" OFFERS: People who promise to get lost money back for a fee are a second scam.

HELP: Consumer hotline 188; police consultation #9110.

POLITICS

The Week Ahead

By the Political Desk

TUE. 27: Japan Series Game 3 in Fukuoka, 6 p.m.; Israel's general election; the local ceasefire in Oleshky, Ukraine, due from 10 a.m. Japan time; Prime Minister Takaichi and Bangladesh's Prime Minister Tarique Rahman hold talks; Chancellor Merz in Singapore.

TUE. 27 - WED. 28: The U.S. Federal Reserve meets.

WED. 28: Japan Series Game 4; Merz arrives in Japan; the Russia-Africa summit opens in Moscow.

THU. 29: Japan Series Game 5, if needed; the European Central Bank meets; the Bank of Japan's two-day meeting begins; a free telephone consultation on schooling for disabled children, 03-3593-0631.

FRI. 30: The Bank of Japan announces its decision; GMO's deadline for e-mailing customers about compensation; the UN exhibition on the Tokyo Trial closes.

SAT. 31: Japan Series Game 6, if needed, in Yokohama; Halloween.

SUN. NOV. 1: Japan Series Game 7, if needed; the Tenno Sho (Autumn) at Tokyo; In-fa forecast near the Ogasawara Islands.

TUE. NOV. 3: Culture Day; U.S. midterm elections.

FRI. NOV. 6: GMO announces how to claim for losses; Pope Leo XIV begins his South American tour; Yuki Kawamura's G League season opens.

DEC. 12: The detention of the Hokkaido Shimbun reporter held in Moscow runs until this date.

TYPHOONS

How the Forecast Changed Overnight

By the Weather Desk

MONDAY, 6 P.M. BULLETIN: Centre at 14.1N 162.8E, 965 hPa, moving slowly west-northwest.
TUESDAY, 6 A.M. BULLETIN: Centre at 14.2N 162.5E, 965 hPa, almost stationary.
PEAK STRENGTH: Was 940 hPa and 50 m/s from Wednesday; now 950 hPa and 50 m/s from Wednesday.
ARRIVAL NEAR OGASAWARA: Was Saturday

TYPHOONS

afternoon; now early Sunday.

MINAMITORISHIMA: Was about 960 km away on Thursday; now about 1,040 km.

SAIPAN: Was inside the possible storm-wind area; now about 40 km outside it.

GUAM: Was within about 60 km of that area; now about 260 km.

IWO TO: Was reached by that area; now about 100 km outside it.

CHICHIJIMA: Was about 250 km from that area; now about 370 km.

WHAT STAYS THE SAME: A very strong typhoon all week, heading west toward the Ogasawara Islands.

TYPHOONS

Pagan, Saipan and Guam: The Islands in In-fa's Path and Their Ties to Japan

A volcanic island emptied by an eruption in 1981, a commonwealth of the United States and a territory that hosts major American bases

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The Northern Mariana Islands, where In-fa is forecast to pass on Friday, are a chain of 14 islands stretching north from Guam toward Japan's Ogasawara and Volcano Islands.

A commonwealth

The islands form the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, a self-governing territory in political union with the United States. Most of the population lives on Saipan, Tinian and Rota, the southern islands. Guam, the southernmost island of the Marianas, is a separate United States territory.

Pagan

Pagan, near the middle of the chain, is a volcanic island with two volcanoes. A large eruption of Mount Pagan in May 1981 forced the evacuation of the island's residents, and it has had at most a handful of inhabitants since. The forecast centre line on Tuesday's map passes about 10 km south-south-west of it on Friday afternoon.

Japan's history in the islands

The Northern Marianas were administered by Japan under a League of Nations mandate after the First World War, and tens of thousands of Japanese settlers lived there, many working on sugar plantations. In June and July 1944 the Battle of Saipan ended with the fall of the island to American forces and the deaths of most of its Japanese garrison and many civilians.

The loss of Saipan led to the resignation of Prime Minister Hideki Tojo's Cabinet that July and brought Japan's main islands within range of American B-29 bombers, which began raiding Tokyo from the Marianas in November 1944. The aircraft that dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 took off from Tinian.

Bases

Guam is home to Andersen Air Force Base and a large naval base, and the islands of the Marianas have grown in importance to American military planning in the Pacific.

Visitors

Saipan and Guam have long been popular with Japanese tourists because they are within about three to four hours' flight of Tokyo.

Typhoon country

The waters east of the Philippines and around the Marianas are among the most active in the world for tropical cyclones. Super Typhoon Yutu struck Tinian and Saipan in October 2018 and was one of the strongest storms to hit United States territory.

What In-fa may bring

The Japan Meteorological Agency's forecast keeps the area that could have storm-force winds about 40 km from Saipan and about 260 km from Guam by early Sunday. Residents and visitors should follow local warnings issued by the United States National Weather Service office in Guam.

The name

In-fa means fireworks. The name was contributed to the list used for storms in the region by Macao, and it was last used in 2021, when Typhoon In-fa brought heavy rain to eastern China.

TYPHOONS

In-fa Is the Year's 31st Typhoon, Already Well Above the Annual Average of About 25 With Two Months of the Season to Go

The record, 39, was set in 1967; Champi became the 30th days before In-fa formed

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

In-fa, Typhoon No. 31, is the 31st typhoon of 2026, a count that already exceeds the yearly average with more than two months of the year left.

The Japan Meteorological Agency numbers typhoons in the order they form each year. Its average for the 30 years from 1991 to 2020 is about 25 a year.

The record

The largest number in a single year since the agency's records began in 1951 is 39, in 1967. The smallest is 14, in 2010.

Approaching and landing

On average about 12 typhoons a year come close to Japan, and about three make landfall on one of the four main islands, according to the agency's figures for the same period.

Late-season storms

Typhoons can form in every month, but most appear between July and October. Storms that form in late October and November often stay over the ocean or curve away to the north-east before reaching the main islands, although some have caused serious damage late in the year.

Champi

The previous storm, Typhoon No. 30, Champi, brought record October rain to parts of Nagasaki and Saga prefectures before becoming an extratropical low in the East China Sea on Sunday night.

What counts as a typhoon

In Japan, any tropical cyclone in the north-western Pacific with maximum sustained winds of 17 metres a second or more is called a typhoon and given a number. Internationally, the term is reserved for stronger storms, with winds of 33 metres a second or more.

Why the count varies

The number of typhoons in a year depends on sea temperatures and on patterns such as El Nino and La Nina, which shift where storms form and how strong they become.

What it means for In-fa

In-fa formed far to the south-east, near the Marshall Islands, and is forecast to stay over the ocean through Sunday morning. Its path after that, and whether it threatens Japan's main islands, is not yet known.

Preparation

The agency advises residents in typhoon-prone areas to check hazard maps and evacuation routes before storms approach, not after.

POLITICS

Japanese Diplomats See the Hokkaido Shimbun Reporter Held in Moscow for the First Time, Two Weeks After His Arrest, and Find Him in Good Health

Tokyo renews its demand for his immediate release; the embassy will not say what he told them about the spying charge, and his detention runs until December 12

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

Officials from the Japanese Embassy in Moscow met the Hokkaido Shimbun reporter held by Russia on espionage charges on Monday, the first consular visit since his arrest on Sakhalin two weeks ago, and found that he had no health problems, the Foreign Ministry said.

The ministry said it would continue to press the Russian government strongly for his immediate release, for humanitarian consideration and for fair and equitable treatment.

The reporter, whom a Moscow court record cited by Russian media identifies as Yuki Imai, aged 34, was detained in Sakhalin Oblast in Russia's Far East on October 13 and is being held at a detention centre in Moscow.

What was not said

The embassy said it could not disclose what he had said about the espionage allegation, and that it could not say when the next visit would take place. Visits by a lawyer appointed by the Hokkaido Shimbun will

be arranged separately from the consular visits.

His detention has been ordered until December 12, and the investigation by the Federal Security Service, the FSB, is expected to continue, Kyodo News reported.

Two weeks of waiting

The consular convention between Japan and the Soviet Union, which still governs relations with Russia, provides for consular visits within four days of a detention. Japan had asked for early access, but none was granted until Monday.

The director-general of the Foreign Ministry's European Affairs Bureau, Nakamura, met an official of the Russian Foreign Ministry's department dealing with Asia in Moscow on October 20.

The accusation

The FSB has said the reporter collected information about Russia's defence capabilities on the instructions of Japanese intelligence, including how many residents of the Kuril Islands had been mobilised for the war in Ukraine. He has been charged under the article of the Russian Criminal Code covering espionage by foreigners, which carries a prison sentence of 10 to 20 years.

He was registered with the Russian Foreign Ministry as a correspondent and was based in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. The Hokkaido Shimbun has said his safety is its first priority.

A protest earlier

Japan summoned the Russian ambassador, Nikolai Nozdrev, soon after the arrest to protest that Moscow had told Tokyo nothing while releasing one-sided information about the reporter, and asked for prompt information and for contact with him.

Relations at a low

The case comes at one of the lowest points in relations between the two countries. President Vladimir Putin visited Etorofu, one of the Russian-held islands Japan claims as its Northern Territories, in August, and on October 2 Japan imposed sanctions on 35 vessels Russia uses to export oil.

What comes next

Pre-trial detention in Russia is ordered two months at a time and is routinely extended, and trials on charges involving state secrets are held behind closed doors. Japan's immediate aim is regular access to the reporter and information about the case.

POLITICS

The Detained Reporter: How the Case Has Unfolded

By the International Desk

OCT. 13: The Hokkaido Shimbun correspondent is detained in Sakhalin Oblast and flown to Moscow.

THE CHARGE: Espionage by a foreign national, Article 276 of the Russian Criminal Code; 10 to 20 years.

THE CLAIM: The FSB says he gathered information on the mobilisation of Kuril residents for the war in Ukraine.

THE COURT: A Moscow court orders him held for two months.

PROTEST: Japan summons Russia's ambassador, Nikolai Nozdrev.

OCT. 20: Nakamura, the Foreign Ministry's European Affairs director-general, meets a Russian official in Moscow.

OCT. 26: Embassy officials make the first consular visit and find him in good health.

JAPAN'S DEMAND: Immediate release, humanitarian consideration, fair and equitable treatment.

LAWYER: Appointed by the Hokkaido Shimbun; visits separately.

DEC. 12: The current detention order expires.

POLITICS

Politics in Brief

By the Political Desk

BANGLADESH: Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi holds talks and a luncheon with Bangladesh's Prime Minister, Tarique Rahman, on his official visit on Tuesday.

GERMANY: Chancellor Friedrich Merz arrives in Japan on Wednesday for two days, his first visit as

Chancellor.

RUSSIA: Embassy officials have seen the Hokkaido Shimbun reporter held in Moscow; Japan demands his immediate release.

UN: China's ambassador used an exhibition on the Tokyo Trial to accuse Japan's "right-wing forces" of questioning its legitimacy.

CYBER: The government is preparing an emergency package of cybersecurity measures, promised by the Prime Minister for as early as next week.

TAX: Takaichi wants the consumption tax cut bill passed early in the extraordinary Diet session.

SEATS: The parties remain divided over cutting House of Representatives seats: 45 in the ruling parties' bill, 31 in the Liberal Democrats' compromise.

ENERGY: Tohoku Electric has restarted the No. 2 reactor at Onagawa after replacing a leaking valve.

FUKUDA: A private funeral has been held for former Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, who died on October 22 at 90; a farewell gathering is to follow.

WIND: Siemens Energy plans an Asian wind-power hub in Eniwa, Hokkaido, ahead of the Merz visit.

POLITICS

A Private Bridge to Russia: Japanese Speech Contest for Russians Is Held Online for the First Time as Official Exchanges Lie Dormant

A 21-year-old student from Astrakhan who wants to translate Japanese books wins the Kotonoha contest, funded by private donations

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

While the governments of Japan and Russia trade protests, a group of private organisations has kept one small channel open: a Japanese speech contest for Russians, held online for the first time on Sunday and paid for by donations, Kyodo News reported from Moscow.

The Kotonoha Japanese Speech Contest was organised by an executive committee of private bodies with long experience of cultural and language exchange between the two countries, including the Kanagawa Japan-Eurasia Association and the Russia-Japan Association. Its chairman is Yoichi Shibata.

Why it is unusual

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the large speech contests that Japanese public bodies used to hold in Russia have stopped. The organisers wanted to keep ties between people alive while relations between the governments are frozen.

The contestants

Nine people, men and women from their teens to their 30s, took part, from places including the Voronezh and Astrakhan regions in southern Russia.

The winner

The contest was won by Angelina Kozak, 21, a university student in Astrakhan who hopes to work as a tour guide. In her speech she described how she had discovered the appeal of her home city's history and scenery.

She began studying Japanese on her own at university, enjoys Japanese detective novels and hopes to become a translator who brings Japanese books to Russian readers.

Next year

Shibata said he wanted to keep holding the contest next year and beyond.

The backdrop

The contest took place as Japan pressed Russia for access to the Hokkaido Shimbun reporter held in Moscow, and two months after President Vladimir Putin's visit to Etorofu, which Tokyo called unacceptable.

Small channels

People-to-people exchanges between Japan and Russia have shrunk. Visa-free visits by former residents of the Northern Territories were halted during the pandemic, and Russia withdrew from the arrangement in 2022. Holding the contest online allowed participants to take part without travelling.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Reading Week turns 80, Page 19.

Editorial: demands refused, Page 20.

POLITICS



Tokyo Skytree and the Sumida River, in a file photo. The Cabinet set the requirements on Tuesday for designating a vice-capital that could take over the capital's functions if a major disaster struck Tokyo; Hokkaido, Aichi, Osaka and Fukuoka meet the tests on population and economic size. (File photo: WPM Productions)

POLITICS

Cabinet Sets the Requirements for a 'Vice-Capital' to Back Up Tokyo; Hokkaido, Aichi, Osaka and Fukuoka Meet the Size Tests

A prefecture needs a designated city, at least 1.2 per cent of the population and 2.1 per cent of GDP, and either special wards or a city-prefecture pact; Osaka's Ishin aims for a referendum on its metropolis plan next spring

By Michael Hayes | Political Correspondent

The Cabinet approved on Tuesday a government order setting out the requirements a region must meet to be designated a "vice-capital", able to take over the functions of the capital if a major disaster made it difficult to keep them running in Tokyo, Kyodo News reported.

Four prefectures, Hokkaido, Aichi, Osaka and Fukuoka, meet the requirements on population and economic size, and all four are preparing to seek designation.

The tests

Among the requirements, a prefecture must contain a city designated by government ordinance, the status held by Japan's largest cities, and must account for at least 1.2 per cent of the national population. Its prefectural gross domestic product must be at least 2.1 per cent of the national total.

Two routes

There is also an administrative condition. Either the designated city must be reorganised into special wards, like Tokyo's 23 wards, or the city and the prefecture must conclude a formal co-operation agreement.

Three agreements and a referendum

Hokkaido, Aichi and Fukuoka plan to take the agreement route and have set up forums with their designated cities, Sapporo, Nagoya and Fukuoka.

Osaka is taking a different path. Nippon Ishin no Kai, the party based in Osaka, is pursuing its long-held plan to reorganise Osaka City into special wards, the so-called Osaka metropolis plan, and is aiming for a

referendum of residents next spring.

Twice rejected

Voters in Osaka City narrowly rejected the metropolis plan in referendums in 2015 and 2020.

Why a backup

The government says a vice-capital would ensure that the state could keep functioning if a major earthquake struck the capital, and that the policy would also help correct the concentration of people and functions in Tokyo.

The process

The government published a draft of the order on October 2 and invited public comment before Tuesday's decision.

Coalition politics

Creating a vice-capital has been a central demand of Ishin, the Liberal Democrats' coalition partner, and was included in the agreement under which the two parties formed their coalition.

What comes next

With the requirements fixed, the four prefectures can move ahead with their applications. How many regions are eventually designated, and what functions and investment would follow, has yet to be settled.

emergency, and the policy is also meant to strengthen regional economies by encouraging investment outside Tokyo.

Osaka's plan

Osaka's leaders have long argued that their city, Japan's second commercial centre, should play that role. Nippon Ishin no Kai has made the reorganisation of Osaka City into special wards, modelled on Tokyo's 23 wards, the centrepiece of its programme for more than a decade.

2015

In May 2015 Osaka City's voters rejected the plan in a referendum, by about 50.4 per cent to 49.6 per cent. Toru Hashimoto, then the mayor and the party's founder, announced that he would leave politics.

2020

A revised plan, to divide the city into four special wards, was put to a second referendum in November 2020 and rejected again, by about 50.6 per cent to 49.4 per cent. The mayor at the time, Ichiro Matsui, said he would retire.

The third try

Ishin is now aiming for a third referendum next spring, linking the plan to the vice-capital system. The new rules offer another route, a co-operation agreement between city and prefecture, which the other candidate regions intend to use.

The designated cities

Japan has 20 cities designated by government ordinance, which carry out many functions normally handled by prefectures. Sapporo, Nagoya, Osaka and Fukuoka are among them.

The debate

Supporters say a second centre would make the country more resilient and its economy more balanced. Sceptics question how much real government work would move, and at what cost.

POLITICS

German Leaders in Japan

By the Research Desk

AUGUST 2007: Chancellor Angela Merkel's first official visit to Japan.

JULY 2008: Merkel at the G8 summit at Lake Toya, hosted by Yasuo Fukuda.

MARCH 2015: Merkel visits Tokyo.

MAY 2016: Merkel at the G7 summit in Ise-Shima.

FEBRUARY 2019: Merkel's last visit to Japan as Chancellor.

APRIL 2022: Olaf Scholz chooses Tokyo for his first Asian trip as Chancellor.

MARCH 2023: Scholz returns for the first intergovernmental consultations.

MAY 2023: Scholz at the G7 summit in Hiroshima.

OCT. 28-29, 2026: Friedrich Merz's first visit as Chancellor.

THE AGENDA: Economic security, the defence industry, Ukraine and the Taiwan Strait.

POLITICS

The Tokyo Trial in Numbers

By the Research Desk

OPENED: May 3, 1946, at Ichigaya, Tokyo.

JUDGES: 11, from 11 Allied nations.

PRESIDENT: Sir William Webb of Australia.

DEFENDANTS: 28 charged as Class A war criminals.

JUDGMENT: November 1948.

DEATH SENTENCES: Seven, carried out on December 23, 1948.

LIFE SENTENCES: 16.

DISSENT: Radhabinod Pal of India argued for acquittal.

PEACE TREATY: Japan accepted the judgments under Article 11 in 1951.

THE EXHIBITION: At UN headquarters until Friday, organised by China.

EDITORIAL

Quotes of the Day

By the Editorial Desk

"We will not comply with the attacker's demands." - GMO Internet Group, in its seventh report.

"Deleted or that it is not misused." - GMO, explaining its refusal.

"Looked like a rigged election." - President Donald Trump, on Brazil.

"According to the Bible, this land is the homeland of the Jewish people." - Daniela Weiss, the settler leader.

"It's the kind of thing that fires you up." - Katsuo Hirata, Hanshin's new head coach.

"I look forward to returning to the continent where I spent much of my life." - Pope Leo XIV.

"Japanese right-wing forces are questioning the legitimacy of the Tokyo Trial under various pretexts." - Fu Cong, China's UN ambassador.

"It was a warm period. Predators were increasing on land." - Ryosuke Motani, palaeontologist.

"Membership helped boost investor confidence." - President Jose Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste, on ASEAN.

"I want to keep holding it next year and beyond." - Yoichi Shibata, organiser of the Kotonoha speech contest.

EDITORIAL

Today's Numbers

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

\$50 MILLION: The attacker's earlier demand of GMO, about 7.9 billion yen; refused.

\$1 MILLION: The demand by noon on Tuesday, NHK reports.

2.6 MILLION: Rakuten Travel users whose details may have leaked.

36,000: Bookings with partial card data involved.

51.62 MILLION: Records that may have leaked from Yumilink's clients.

550 MILLION YEN: E-gifts issued fraudulently through Gifty's system.

\$100 BILLION: What Anthropic could raise, U.S. media say.

60,000: Microsoft employees offered voluntary retirement, media report.

146.42: Points gained by the Dow on Monday.

80: Years since the Tokyo Trial opened, and editions of Reading Week.

TECHNOLOGY

October's Breaches: What Each Company Has Said

By the Technology Desk

GMO INTERNET (Onamae.com Desktop Cloud): Unauthorised trades in customers' accounts; a \$50 million demand refused.

YUMILINK (e-mail delivery): About 51.62 million records from clients may have leaked, cumulative.

JR CENTRAL, JR WEST, JR KYUSHU: Smart EX and Express Reservation member data via Yumilink.

RAKUTEN TRAVEL: Up to about 2.6 million users; up to 36,000 partial card records.

JOSHIN DENKI: Up to just over 6 million people, from three systems.

SAGAWA EXPRESS: Up to 53.23 million records, including duplicates.

TIMES CAR: About 6.62 million accounts; a class action is being prepared.

BANDAI NAMCO: Its logistics subsidiary Bandai Logipal, including Ichiban Kuji Online buyers.

GIFTY: About 550 million yen of e-gifts issued fraudulently; no personal data leak confirmed.

ALSO: Iwai Cosmo Securities and an Environment Ministry newsletter.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Weather: the map and the forecast, Page 15.

Crossword, Page 19.

GMO: noon deadline, no ransom, Page 1.

In-fa to pass the Marianas, Page 3.

Reporter in Moscow seen, Page 4.

Trump: Brazil vote 'rigged', Page 7.

Israel votes today, Page 6.

Anthropic files for IPO, Page 9.

How Yumilink grew to 51m, Page 12.

Japan Series Game 3, Page 18.

Reading Week turns 80, Page 19.

POLITICS

The Vice-Capital: How a Region Qualifies

By the Political Desk

PURPOSE: To take over the capital's functions if a disaster disables Tokyo, and to ease Tokyo's concentration.

DECIDED: A Cabinet order on Tuesday, October 27.

CITY: The prefecture must contain a government-designated city.

POPULATION: At least 1.2 per cent of the national total.

ECONOMY: Prefectural GDP of at least 2.1 per cent of the national total.

ROUTE ONE: Reorganise the designated city into special wards.

ROUTE TWO: A formal co-operation agreement between city and prefecture.

QUALIFY ON SIZE: Hokkaido, Aichi, Osaka and Fukuoka.

AGREEMENT ROUTE: Hokkaido, Aichi and Fukuoka.

OSAKA: Ishin aims for a referendum on special wards next spring.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

In-fa to pass the Marianas, Page 3.

Reporter in Moscow seen, Page 4.

Trump: Brazil vote 'rigged', Page 7.

POLITICS

Why Japan Wants a Back-Up Capital, and Why Osaka Has Twice Voted Narrowly Against Remaking Itself

The government puts the chance of a magnitude-7 quake beneath Tokyo at about 70 per cent within 30 years; Ishin's plan to turn Osaka City into special wards lost by less than a percentage point in 2015 and 2020

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The idea of a vice-capital rests on a fear that has shaped Japanese planning for decades: that a great earthquake could disable the government, the Diet, the central bank and the headquarters of most large companies in a single morning.

The risk

The government's earthquake research committee puts the probability of a magnitude-7 earthquake striking directly beneath the capital region within 30 years at about 70 per cent.

Concentration

Tokyo and its surrounding prefectures are home to about 30 per cent of Japan's population, and an even larger share of corporate headquarters, universities and government functions. Successive governments have promised to spread them out, with limited success.

What a vice-capital would do

Under the new system, a designated region would be prepared to take over functions of the capital in an

POLITICS



The Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, in a file image. China's UN ambassador used an exhibition on the Tokyo Trial on Monday to attack Japan's defence policies; Tokyo says its build-up responds to pressure from China, including coast guard ships' repeated entry into the waters around the islands. (File image: WPM Productions)

POLITICS

China Opens a Photo Exhibition on the Tokyo Trial at UN Headquarters and Accuses Japan's 'Right-Wing Forces' of Questioning Its Legitimacy

Ambassador Fu Cong also attacks Japan's easing of arms-export rules and its use of collective self-defence; the display marks 80 years since the tribunal opened

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

China's mission to the United Nations opened a photo exhibition on the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, known as the Tokyo Trial, at UN headquarters in New York on Monday, using the 80th anniversary of the tribunal's opening to criticise Japan's defence policies.

The exhibition, titled "Justice and Peace for All Humankind", is set up beside a passageway on the ground floor of the headquarters building and runs until Friday. It shows photographs taken inside the courtroom and a table of the verdicts handed down on the Class A war criminals, Kyodo News reported.

The ambassador's charge

Speaking at the opening ceremony, China's ambassador to the UN, Fu Cong, said that Japanese right-wing forces were questioning the legitimacy of the Tokyo Trial under various pretexts.

He also criticised Japan's plans to lift its restrictions on exporting weapons and the exercise of the right of collective self-defence, the policy under which Japan may use force to defend a close partner under attack in certain circumstances.

A campaign this year

China has repeatedly accused Japan this year of "new militarism" in connection with the anniversary of the trial, which opened on May 3, 1946. Kyodo said the exhibition appeared aimed at drawing international attention to the defence build-up pursued by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's government.

POLITICS

The Tokyo Trial: Eleven Judges, 28 Defendants and Seven Executions, and a Judgment Japan Accepted in 1951

The International Military Tribunal for the Far East sat from May 1946 to November 1948; one judge's dissent still shapes the debate

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The International Military Tribunal for the Far East, the subject of China's exhibition in New York, was set up by the Allied powers after Japan's surrender to try the country's wartime leaders.

The court

The tribunal was established under a charter issued in January 1946 by General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. It had 11 judges, from the United States, Britain, China, the Soviet Union, France, the Netherlands, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India and the Philippines, and was presided over by Sir William Webb of Australia.

The defendants

Twenty-eight political and military leaders were charged as Class A war criminals, accused of crimes against peace, the planning and waging of aggressive war, as well as conventional war crimes. The trial opened in the former Army Ministry building in Ichigaya, Tokyo, on May 3, 1946.

The verdicts

Judgment was delivered in November 1948. Of the 25 defendants still on trial at the end, all were found guilty. Seven, including the wartime Prime Minister Hideki Tojo, were sentenced to death and hanged at

Japan's position

Japan accepted the judgments of the tribunal in the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951, and successive governments have said they do not dispute that. Tokyo argues that its post-war record as a peaceful democracy speaks for itself, and that its defence spending is a response to the build-up of China's own forces and the threats from North Korea and Russia.

The context

Relations between Tokyo and Beijing have been strained this year. On Monday China's Foreign Ministry used its condolences on the death of former Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, a champion of better ties, to say that Japan's current leaders should "deeply reflect".

The setting

Exhibitions at UN headquarters are commonly organised by member states' missions, and the choice of venue gives China an audience of diplomats from every member state in the weeks of the General Assembly's autumn session.

Japan at the UN

Japan joined the United Nations in December 1956. It has served as a non-permanent member of the Security Council 12 times, more than any other country, and is the third-largest contributor to the organisation's regular budget after the United States and China.

Sugamo Prison on December 23, 1948. Sixteen were sentenced to life imprisonment, one to 20 years and one to seven years.

Two defendants died during the proceedings, and one was found unfit to stand trial.

The dissent

Radhabinod Pal, the Indian judge, wrote a long dissent arguing that the defendants should be acquitted because, in his view, the charge of crimes against peace had been applied after the fact. His opinion is often cited in Japan by critics of the tribunal; other judges also wrote separate opinions.

The peace treaty

Under Article 11 of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, signed in 1951 and in force from April 1952, Japan accepted the judgments of the tribunal and of other Allied war crimes courts. The Japanese government has maintained that position since.

Yasukuni

The enshrinement of 14 Class A war criminals at Yasukuni Shrine in 1978 has made visits to the shrine by Japanese leaders a recurring source of friction with China and South Korea.

Why it matters now

China has made the 80th anniversary of the trial part of a campaign against what it calls Japan's revival of militarism. Japan rejects the comparison, pointing to its eight decades as a peaceful democracy.

The building

The courtroom in Ichigaya, where the tribunal sat, has been preserved as part of the Ministry of Defense's grounds and can be visited on organised

tours.

INTERNATIONAL

Saudi, Turkish and Pakistani Security Chiefs Meet Iran's President in Tehran, the First Such Talks Since the Mecca Defence Alliance Was Formed

They agree to keep talking to ease tensions; Egypt's parliament authorises President Sisi to send troops to Saudi Arabia, which is under Houthi attack

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

Senior security officials from Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan met Iran's President, Masoud Pezeshkian, in Tehran on Monday, the first high-level meeting between Iran and the three countries since they formed the Mecca Defence Alliance, a collective defence framework in the Middle East.

The visitors were the Saudi Defence Minister, Prince Khalid bin Salman, the head of Turkey's National Intelligence Organisation, Ibrahim Kalin, and Pakistan's Field Marshal Asim Munir, according to Iran's state news agency, IRNA. The secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council also attended.

Keep talking

The two sides agreed to continue their dialogue to ease tensions in the region, Kyodo News reported. The talks came amid reports that the United States and Israel might attack Iran again, and the situation in Yemen was also discussed.

Pezeshkian said Iran was ready to work to resolve disputes and confrontations, and called for unity among Islamic countries, with the aim of reducing American influence in the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia's line

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry said it welcomed the mediation between the United States and Iran led by Qatar and Pakistan, and stressed the importance of resolving the crisis through dialogue and diplomacy.

Egypt's step

In Cairo, the House of Representatives on Monday authorised President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to provide military support to Saudi Arabia, including sending troops, Kyodo reported. The required two-thirds majority was reached, and no vote by the Senate is needed. Sisi had already said he supported the policy, so a deployment could follow.

The chamber had met in an emergency session at Sisi's request on October 18 but reached no conclusion.

Under attack

Saudi Arabia has been under attack by the Houthis, the Iran-aligned armed group in Yemen, which said on Sunday it had fired ballistic missiles at the airport in Riyadh on the day it partly reopened. Members of the Mecca alliance have said they will take the steps needed to send military units to Saudi Arabia quickly.

How the alliance grew

The alliance grew out of a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement that Saudi Arabia and Pakistan signed in Riyadh in September 2025, under which aggression against either country is treated as aggression against both. Turkey joined in an expanded agreement concluded in August, and the three activated what they called deterrence measures on October 5, the day after Yemeni government forces began an offensive against the Houthis.

Oil

Hopes that tensions would ease pushed the price of American crude down by \$1.51 to \$101.76 a barrel in New York on Monday, although continued attacks on Saudi Arabia kept supply worries alive.

Why Japan cares

Japan imports most of its crude oil from the Middle East, much of it from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and any disruption in the region feeds directly into petrol and electricity prices at home.

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INTERNATIONAL

Israelis Vote Today After CNN Reports That Netanyahu Urged Trump to Join an Attack on Iran Before Polling Day

Trump did not agree but signalled a joint operation could come soon, possibly after the U.S. midterms, the network said; Netanyahu's Likud trails in the polls

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

Israelis go to the polls in a general election on Tuesday after a report that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had urged President Donald Trump to join Israel in attacking Iran before polling day.

The U.S. network CNN reported on Monday that Netanyahu had asked Trump to take part in an attack. Trump did not agree, but signalled that a joint operation could happen soon, possibly after the United States midterm elections on November 3, and preparations were said to be under way, Kyodo News reported from Jerusalem.

A motive?

Netanyahu's right-wing Likud is trailing in opinion polls. If the CNN report is accurate, Kyodo said, he may have hoped that a military operation would rally voters behind him and change the momentum of the campaign. Kyodo's report carried no comment from either government.

A second appeal

The report came a day after the American news site Axios said Netanyahu had asked Trump twice in three days for a stronger public endorsement before the vote, and had even proposed the wording.

The settlers' champion

The election will also test support for the far-right forces that have backed Netanyahu's government through the war in Gaza. Daniela Weiss, 81, who leads the settlement group Nachala and is known on the far right as the "godmother" of the movement, told Kyodo that the expansion of settlements under the current government had been "historic".

"According to the Bible, this land is the homeland of the Jewish people," she said at Kedumim, a settlement near Nablus in the northern West Bank. She said the settlement had begun with about 10 families on empty land, and claimed that more than 300 communities had been created.

The United Nations and most governments, including Japan's, regard Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank as illegal under international law.

The vote

The 120 seats of the Knesset are allocated by nationwide proportional representation, and a party needs 3.25 per cent of the vote to win seats. A government needs the support of 61 members.

When results come

Polls close at 10 p.m. Israel time, 5 a.m. on Wednesday in Japan, when broadcasters publish exit polls. After the official results, the President asks the member most likely to command a majority to form a government, a process that often takes weeks.

Iran

Israel and the United States struck Iran's nuclear facilities in June 2025, and fears of a new round of fighting have shaped the final days of the campaign.

INTERNATIONAL

Israel's Election Day

By the International Desk

VOTING: Tuesday.

POLLS CLOSE: 10 p.m. in Israel, 5 a.m. on Wednesday in Japan.

EXIT POLLS: Published by broadcasters as the polls close.

THE KNESSET: 120 seats, by nationwide proportional representation.

THRESHOLD: 3.25 per cent of the vote to win seats.

MAJORITY: 61 seats.

NETANYAHU'S LIKUD: Trailing in the polls.

THE CNN REPORT: Netanyahu urged Trump to join an attack on Iran before the vote.

AFTER THE COUNT: The President asks a member to try to form a government.

TIME DIFFERENCE: Israel is seven hours behind Japan.

INTERNATIONAL



Secretary of State Marco Rubio, left, shakes hands with Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, in a file photo. Rubio said on Monday that Washington had helped arrange the return to Venezuela of the opposition leader and Nobel laureate Maria Corina Machado. (File photo: WPM Productions)

INTERNATIONAL

Rubio Says Washington Helped Machado Return to Venezuela and Told Caracas Not to Obstruct Her

The Nobel peace laureate left in December to collect her prize and is back for the first time; she had tried to return after June's earthquakes

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Monday that the United States had helped arrange the return to Venezuela of the opposition leader Maria Corina Machado, winner of the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize, Kyodo News reported from Washington.

Rubio told reporters that Washington had asked the Venezuelan authorities in advance to accept her return, and that she had been told she would not be obstructed.

Home again

Machado left Venezuela in December 2025 in time for the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo. The opposition announced on Sunday that she had returned, the first time she has been back since.

An earlier attempt

She had tried to go home after the major earthquakes that struck Venezuela in succession in June this year, Rubio said, but he had urged her to wait so that the transport of relief supplies could take priority.

The prize

Machado was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her campaign for a democratic transition in Venezuela. She had spent much of the previous year in hiding after the disputed 2024 presidential election.

Washington's role

The Trump administration has made Venezuela a focus of its policy in Latin America. Rubio, the son of Cuban immigrants, has long been one of the most outspoken critics of the government in Caracas.

The risk

Opposition leaders in Venezuela have faced arrest and exile. Machado's safety now depends on the authorities keeping the assurance Rubio described.

What to watch

Whether she can move and speak in public freely will show how far the assurances Rubio described reach.

Other cities

In New Taipei, the most populous municipality, the DPP's Su Chiao-hui faces Lee Shu-chuan, the joint candidate of the Kuomintang and the Taiwan People's Party. In Kaohsiung, the DPP's Lai Jui-lung faces Ko Chih-en of the Kuomintang.

Opposition co-operation

The Kuomintang and the smaller Taiwan People's Party, which together hold a majority in the legislature, are working together in several races, with the TPP backing the Kuomintang's candidates in Taichung, Kaohsiung and Tainan.

The stakes

The last local elections, in 2022, were a heavy defeat for the DPP, and Tsai Ing-wen, then President, resigned as party chair afterwards. This year's results will be read as a verdict on President Lai Ching-te, who took office in May 2024, ahead of the presidential election due in January 2028.

China

China, which regards Taiwan as part of its territory, has stepped up military pressure around the island in recent years.

Japan's interest

For Japan, whose westernmost island, Yonaguni, lies about 110 kilometres from Taiwan, stability across the Taiwan Strait is a central security concern.

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INTERNATIONAL

Trump Offers \$1 Million for Reports of Voting Fraud That Lead to Convictions, as Six Citizens Sue Over the Exclusion of Reporters From the White House

The President repeats unsupported claims about undocumented immigrants and Democrats a week before the midterms; the plaintiffs say barring CNN and two other outlets violates the public's right to know

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

President Donald Trump called on Americans on Monday to report voting fraud in next week's midterm elections and in past elections, promising on social media to pay 1 million dollars, about 157 million yen, to anyone whose report led to an arrest and conviction, Kyodo News reported from Washington.

Trump has claimed without evidence that undocumented immigrants and supporters of the Democratic Party could commit fraud. He still maintains that fraud in postal voting cost him the 2020 presidential election.

The political mood

Rising prices have fuelled public discontent, and Trump's Republican Party is trailing in the midterm campaign. The elections on November 3 will decide all 435 seats in the House of Representatives and about a third of the Senate.

The lawsuit

In New York, six citizens filed a lawsuit against Trump and his administration on Monday, arguing that the exclusion of reporters from three news organisations, including CNN, from White House coverage on September 18 violated the public's right to know.

The plaintiffs are a human rights activist, a political journalist, a historian, a high school teacher, the editor of a legal trade magazine and the editor of a student newspaper. The administration said at the time that the outlets were spreading "fake news".

An unusual plaintiff

The three news organisations are themselves suing the administration. A suit brought by readers and viewers rather than by the media is unusual, Kyodo said.

The stakes

Access to the White House press pool has been a recurring battleground in Trump's second term. In 2025 the administration took control of which outlets join the pool from the White House Correspondents' Association, which had organised it for decades.

Courts and elections

Election officials in both parties say large-scale voter fraud is extremely rare in the United States, and courts rejected dozens of challenges to the 2020 result.

INTERNATIONAL

Trump Says Brazil's Election 'Looked Like a Rigged Election' as Washington Shows Its Displeasure at Lula's Fourth Term

The President offers no evidence; his administration had good relations with Lula's opponent, Flavio Bolsonaro, and has pressed Brazil's left-wing government for months

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

President Donald Trump said on Monday that Brazil's presidential election "looked like a rigged election", expressing his displeasure that the left-wing President, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, had won a fourth term the day before, Kyodo News reported from Washington.

Trump made the remark to reporters at an air force base outside Washington. He did not offer evidence.

The result

Lula won Sunday's run-off with 51.79 per cent of the valid votes against 48.21 per cent for Senator Flavio Bolsonaro, the pro-American candidate of the right, according to Brazil's electoral authorities. Lula will become the first President in Brazil's history to serve a fourth term, which runs until January 2031.

A strained relationship

The Trump administration has sought to expand American influence across the Western Hemisphere and has stepped up pressure on Lula's government, which has been critical of the United States. Flavio Bolsonaro had good relations with the administration.

His father, the former President Jair Bolsonaro, was convicted by Brazil's Supreme Federal Court in September 2025 of plotting a coup after his defeat by Lula in 2022, and sentenced to 27 years and three months in prison.

Tariffs and sanctions

In 2025 Washington imposed tariffs of 50 per cent on many Brazilian goods, citing what Trump called the persecution of the elder Bolsonaro, and sanctioned the Supreme Court justice who oversaw his case, Alexandre de Moraes. Lula's government called the measures an attack on Brazil's sovereignty.

Brazil's voting system

Brazil introduced electronic voting machines in 1996 and has used them at every polling station since 2000, and results are usually known within hours of the polls closing. The system is run by the Superior Electoral Court, which has repeatedly defended its security against allegations of fraud.

Japan's view

Brazil is home to the largest community of people of Japanese descent outside Japan, and Tokyo has kept warm relations with governments of both left and right in Brasilia. Lula paid a state visit to Japan in March 2025.

An echo

The remark comes as Lula prepares for his new term, and it echoes the claims of fraud that Trump has made about the 2020 United States election, which he lost and whose result courts and election officials upheld.

INTERNATIONAL

Putin to Host Leaders From More Than 20 African Countries at a Russia-Africa Summit in Moscow on Wednesday and Thursday

Moscow seeks wider co-operation in energy and farming as the West keeps up pressure over Ukraine; 33 government agreements are expected to be signed

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

President Vladimir Putin will attend a Russia-Africa summit in Moscow on Wednesday and Thursday with leaders from more than 20 African countries, including Ethiopia and Kenya, the Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said on Monday, Kyodo News reported.

Russia, at odds with Western countries over its invasion of Ukraine, wants to expand co-operation with African nations, especially in energy and agriculture.

Documents

Three main documents, including a final declaration, are expected to be adopted, according to the state news agency TASS, and 33 intergovernmental agreements are expected to be signed.

Meetings on the side

Putin plans separate talks with several leaders on the sidelines, including those of Egypt and the Republic of the Congo.

The earlier summits

The first Russia-Africa summit was held in Sochi in 2019 and the second in St Petersburg in 2023. At the second, Russia promised free grain to several African countries after it pulled out of the arrangement that had allowed Ukraine to export grain across the Black Sea.

Competition for Africa

Russia's push is one of several. China holds its own summits with African leaders, and Japan has held the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, TICAD, since 1993. The ninth TICAD was held in Yokohama in August 2025.

Influence on the ground

Russian security contractors have operated in several African countries, particularly in the Sahel, where military governments have turned away from France and toward Moscow.

Why it matters

African countries make up more than a quarter of the UN's members, and their votes matter in the General Assembly, where Russia has sought to blunt Western efforts to isolate it.

The timing

The summit falls in the week a localised ceasefire, mediated by the United States, was due to begin in Oleshky in southern Ukraine.

INTERNATIONAL



Pope Leo XIV at the window above St Peter's Square, in a file image. The Vatican said on Monday that he would go ahead with his tour of Uruguay, Argentina and Peru from November 6 to 17 after surgery on his right lung this month. (File image: WPM Productions)

INTERNATIONAL

Pope Leo XIV Will Go Ahead With His South American Tour in November After Lung Cancer Surgery, the Vatican Says

Uruguay, Argentina and Peru from November 6 to 17; tests found adenocarcinoma in the lobe removed this month, and his doctors see no need to change plans

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

Pope Leo XIV will make his planned tour of Uruguay, Argentina and Peru from November 6 to 17, the Vatican said on Monday, after doctors judged that he was recovering well from surgery to remove part of his lung, Kyodo News reported from Rome.

The operation

A routine check-up had found an early-stage nodule in his lung. He was admitted to hospital on October 13 and underwent surgery. Pathological examination confirmed that the lower lobe of the right lung that was removed contained adenocarcinoma, a type of lung cancer. He left hospital on October 17, earlier than first expected.

Looking forward

The Pope said he was looking forward to returning to the continent where he had spent much of his life.

A missionary's return

Leo XIV, the first Pope from the United States, was sent to Peru as a missionary and worked there and elsewhere in South America for more than 20 years in total. He also holds Peruvian citizenship.

INTERNATIONAL

Pope Leo XIV in South America

By the International Desk

DATES: November 6 to 17.

COUNTRIES: Uruguay, Argentina and Peru.

HIS HEALTH: Recovering well, the Vatican says.

THE OPERATION: Part of the right lung removed this month.

THE FINDING: Adenocarcinoma, an early-stage lung cancer.

IN HOSPITAL: October 13 to 17.

PERU: Where he served as a missionary and bishop.

CITIZENSHIP: He also holds Peruvian nationality.

THE FIRST: The first Pope from the United States, elected in May 2025.

HIS WORDS: He looks forward to returning to the continent where he spent much of his life.

INTERNATIONAL

Serbia's Student List Begins Preparing a New Government After Two Years of Protests End 14 Years of Rule by Vucic's Party

A Belgrade political scientist compares the result to Orban's defeat in Hungary in April; Serbia ranks lowest in Europe on a corruption index

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

Student List, the political force born of nearly two years of student-led protests in Serbia, began preparing on Monday to form a government after Sunday's parliamentary election made a change of power after 14 years virtually certain, Kyodo News reported from Belgrade.

The ruling party had conceded defeat on Sunday night. The protesters had demanded a democratic government free of corruption and of political control of the media.

The itinerary

Peru, where he served as a bishop, will be the emotional heart of the tour. Argentina is the home country of his predecessor, Pope Francis.

His health

The Pope, who was elected in May 2025, disclosed the discovery of the nodule after the Angelus prayer earlier this month, telling the faithful in St Peter's Square that it had been found at a very early stage.

The demands of travel

Papal tours involve long flights, open-air Masses and many public appearances. Doctors judged that no change to the schedule was needed, the Vatican said.

Why it matters

South America is home to a large share of the world's Catholics, and the tour will be the Pope's first major journey since his operation.

A movement that moved a country

A professor at the University of Belgrade's Faculty of Political Science told Kyodo that the young people's appeals had moved Serbian society, and described their campaign as "a fight for the revival of democracy and the establishment of the rule of law".

The comparison with Hungary

He compared the result to Hungary's election in April, in which the right-wing party of Prime Minister Viktor Orban lost power after 16 years.

Under the former President, Aleksandar Vucic, Serbia had been governed by a dominant ruling party that used the media and state institutions to its advantage, the professor said.

Corruption

The students reserved their strongest criticism for corruption. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2025 ranked Serbia 116th out of 182 countries and territories, the lowest in Europe.

How it began

The protests began after the collapse of a concrete canopy at the railway station in Novi Sad in November 2024, which killed 16 people. Students blamed corruption and negligence in the station's renovation and led months of demonstrations, some of the largest in Serbia's history.

What comes next

Forming a government will require building a majority in the 250-seat National Assembly. The new leaders will face the task of reforming institutions while managing Serbia's balancing act between its bid to join the European Union and its traditional ties with Russia and China.

Japan and Serbia

Japan has supported Serbia's economic development for years, and Japanese companies, including makers of car components, have built factories there.

INTERNATIONAL

U.S. Court Rules That the Firing of Maurene Comey, a Prosecutor and Daughter of a Trump Foe, Was Illegal and Orders Her Reinstatement

Career prosecutors are protected by civil service law, the federal court in New York finds; the Justice Department is expected to appeal

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

A federal court in New York ruled on Monday that the Trump administration had acted illegally in firing Maurene Comey, a federal prosecutor and daughter of the former FBI director James Comey, a political foe of President Donald Trump, and ordered her reinstatement and the payment of her lost salary, Kyodo News reported.

Who she is

Ms Comey was a career prosecutor rather than a political appointee. Among the cases she handled was that of Jeffrey Epstein, the wealthy financier charged with the sex trafficking of minors, who died by suicide in jail in 2019. She was dismissed in July of last year.

The question

The central legal question was whether the President or the Attorney General has the power to dismiss career federal prosecutors. The court held that such prosecutors are protected under civil service law and that the government's position conflicted with Supreme Court precedent.

Appeal

The Justice Department plans to appeal, according to American media.

Her father

James Comey led the FBI from 2013 until Trump fired him in May 2017, during the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election. He has been one of the President's most prominent critics since.

A wider fight

The case is one of many in which officials removed by the administration have challenged their dismissals in court, testing the limits of the President's power over the federal workforce.

What it means

If the ruling stands, it would strengthen the protection of career government lawyers against dismissal for political reasons.

INTERNATIONAL

Timor-Leste's Ramos-Horta, a Year After Joining ASEAN, Says Membership Has Lifted Investor Confidence but Is Wary of Drills With China

The President would take part in multilateral exercises but is cautious about bilateral ones with Beijing, he tells Kyodo in Dili

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

President Jose Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste said membership of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations had helped raise investors' confidence in his country, a year after it became the bloc's 11th member, and that foreign investment had grown since.

He was speaking to Kyodo News in an interview in the capital, Dili, on Monday, the first anniversary of Timor-Leste's entry into ASEAN.

China and the military

Ramos-Horta met President Xi Jinping in China in 2024, and the two agreed to strengthen co-operation, including on military exercises. In the interview he said Timor-Leste would join multilateral military exercises, but he was cautious about bilateral exercises with China.

A careful balance

Neighbouring Indonesia has carried out joint navigation training with China in waters east of Taiwan and is expanding military co-operation with Beijing. Kyodo suggested that Ramos-Horta might be keeping his distance from both to avoid unsettling foreign investors.

The country

Timor-Leste, a country of about 1.4 million people on the eastern half of the island of Timor, became independent in 2002 after a long struggle against Indonesian rule. Ramos-Horta shared the Nobel

Peace Prize in 1996 for his efforts to bring a peaceful end to the conflict.

Japan's role

Japan has been one of Timor-Leste's largest donors since independence, and the Self-Defense Forces took part in UN peacekeeping there in the early 2000s, building roads and bridges.

Why it matters

Timor-Leste lies on the sea routes between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, close to Australia. How it manages its relations with China is watched closely in Canberra and Tokyo.

Oil and gas

The country depends heavily on revenue from offshore oil and gas, which is declining, and is trying to diversify its economy and attract investment.

INTERNATIONAL

Jordan's Army Strikes 'Terrorist Bases' in Southern Syria in Retaliation for the Church Shooting That Killed Nine in Karak

Syria's state news agency says five civilians, including women and children, were killed; Jordan arrests three suspects

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

Jordan's army carried out a military operation against what it called terrorist bases in southern Syria on Monday, in retaliation for a shooting at a church in Karak, in central Jordan, on October 23, Jordan's state news agency, Petra, reported.

The army said it had destroyed several bases and vehicles and inflicted casualties on many members of the groups, Kyodo News reported from Cairo.

Civilian deaths

Syria's state news agency said the attack killed five civilians, including women and children. Syrian media reported explosions at several places in southern Syria on Monday.

The church attack

Nine people were killed and 34 injured in the shooting at the church in Karak, a historic town south of the capital, Amman.

Arrests

Jordan's public security authorities said on Monday that they had arrested three "terrorists" who had been hiding in Karak.

A rare cross-border strike

Jordan has largely stayed out of the wars around it, and military action across its border is unusual. In the past it has struck smuggling groups in southern Syria that move drugs and weapons across the frontier.

Syria's situation

Syria's government has been trying to establish control over the country since the fall of President Bashar al-Assad in December 2024, and the south has been unstable.

Christians in Jordan

Jordan has an ancient Christian community, and attacks on churches are rare. The Karak shooting caused shock across the country.

What comes next

How Syria responds to the strike will decide whether the incident stays a one-off or worsens relations between the two neighbours.

INTERNATIONAL

France's Interior Minister Calls the Shooting That Killed One and Injured Seven Near Paris 'Racist Terrorism'

The 39-year-old suspect is reported to have told police he targeted Black and Arab people; anti-terrorism prosecutors add an aggravating factor, and about 3,000 people join a vigil

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

France's Interior Minister, Laurent Nuñez, said on Monday that a shooting in the Yvelines department west of Paris last week that killed one person and injured seven was an act of racist terrorism, Kyodo News reported from Paris.

"It is racist terrorism," Nuñez told the news channel BFMTV, saying the suspect had been driven by hatred and racism to kill.

The attack

A man opened fire in Yvelines on October 23. Among the victims were people of African and Arab descent, and investigators believe citizens of immigrant background may have been the targets.

INTERNATIONAL

The suspect

A 39-year-old man living in the department was arrested. Shortly after his arrest he told police that he had targeted Black and Arab people, according to local media.

The prosecutors

Olivier Christen, France's chief anti-terrorism prosecutor, told a news conference on Monday that the suspect denied a racist motive. Prosecutors nonetheless believe there was one, based on the backgrounds of the victims and the suspect's reported statements, and are applying an aggravating circumstance that increases the possible penalty.

Mourning

About 3,000 people attended a vigil in Paris on Monday, carrying placards against racism and mourning the victims, local media reported.

Other unrest

The shooting came at a tense time in France. President Emmanuel Macron said that order had been maintained during demonstrations on October 24 and that stronger security had paid off, NHK reported. High school students who have been protesting about conditions in their schools have received proposals for improvements from the government but plan to keep demonstrating, NHK said.

The national anti-terrorism prosecutor

France created a specialised national anti-terrorism prosecutor's office in 2019 to handle terrorism cases across the country. Its handling of the case shows that investigators regard the attack as an attempt to spread terror, not only as murder.

A long list

France has suffered a series of deadly attacks since 2015, among them the coordinated assaults in Paris in November of that year that killed 130 people and the lorry attack in Nice on Bastille Day 2016 that killed 86. Most of those attacks were carried out by Islamist extremists.

INTERNATIONAL

Oleshky: The Town Across the Dnipro From Kherson That Was Flooded When the Kakhovka Dam Burst and Has Been Cut Off Since

Occupied by Russia since 2022, it lies on the river's left bank, where fighting and mines have made it almost impossible to reach

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Oleshky, where Russia and Ukraine agreed to a localised ceasefire from 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Japan time, is a small town on the left, or eastern, bank of the Dnipro River, across the water from the city of Kherson in southern Ukraine.

Before the war

The town had a population of roughly 24,000 before Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, and was known for its farms, orchards and the sandy country of the lower Dnipro.

Occupation

Russian forces seized the area in the first days of the invasion in February 2022. When Ukraine recaptured Kherson city, on the right bank, in November 2022, Russian troops withdrew across the river, and the Dnipro became the front line.

The flood

In June 2023 the Kakhovka dam upstream was destroyed, releasing a flood that swept down the river. Oleshky was among the worst-hit places, with many homes submerged and residents trapped.

Cut off

Since then the town has been isolated, with roads mined and the river crossing under constant threat from drones and artillery. Ukraine has dropped baby food and toys to residents by drone, its government said last week.

The ceasefire

The ceasefire, mediated by the United States, is meant to allow humanitarian aid to be delivered and residents who wish to leave to be evacuated. Ukraine's human rights commissioner, Dmytro Lubinets, has said mines must first be cleared from the road into the town.

How long

President Volodymyr Zelensky has said he expects the ceasefire to last several days. A complete halt to fighting, even in a limited area, would be unusual in this war, Kyodo News noted.

Annexation claims

Russia claims to have annexed the Kherson region, along with three others, in September 2022, a move rejected by Ukraine and most of the world.

What to watch

Whether aid reaches the town and residents can leave safely will test whether limited agreements of this kind can work, and whether they might be repeated elsewhere along the front.

INTERNATIONAL

World in Brief

By the International Desk

UKRAINE: A local ceasefire mediated by the United States was due to begin in Oleshky, in Russian-occupied Kherson region, at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Japan time, to allow aid in and residents out.

BRITAIN: A London court gave the American singer Chris Brown, 37, an eight-month prison sentence suspended for a year for hitting a music producer over the head with a bottle at a nightclub in 2023.

GERMANY: Chancellor Friedrich Merz begins his Asian tour in Singapore on Tuesday.

RUSSIA: Moscow hosts a Russia-Africa summit on Wednesday and Thursday.

EGYPT: Parliament authorised President Sisi to send troops to Saudi Arabia.

UNITED STATES: Six citizens sued the administration over the exclusion of reporters from three outlets, including CNN.

VATICAN: Pope Leo XIV will tour Uruguay, Argentina and Peru from November 6 to 17.

VENEZUELA: Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington helped Maria Corina Machado return home.

SERBIA: The student-led Student List is preparing to form a government.

TIMOR-LESTE: President Jose Ramos-Horta said ASEAN membership had raised investor confidence.

ECONOMY

Tokyo Stocks Jump More Than 1,100 Points at the Open, Recovering All of Monday's Loss After Wall Street's Rebound

The Nikkei average stood at 63,332.29 at 9:15 a.m., up 1,142.64; it had fallen 503.51 on Monday as technology shares slipped

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance

Share prices in Tokyo rose sharply at the start of trading on Tuesday, with the Nikkei Stock Average gaining more than 1,000 points within minutes of the opening and recovering all of Monday's fall, Kyodo News reported.

At 9:15 a.m. the 225-issue index stood at 63,332.29, up 1,142.64 points from Monday's close, a rise of about 1.8 per cent.

Monday's fall

On Monday the Nikkei average had dropped 503.51 points to 62,189.65 as technology shares slipped. The broader Topix index, which covers far more companies, was little changed, ending 7.17 points higher at 3,972.98.

The lead from New York

Tuesday's rise followed a rebound on Wall Street, where the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 146.42 points to 52,361.58 and the technology-heavy Nasdaq Composite rose 214.04 points to 26,169.38 on Monday, with buying driven by expectations of growth in artificial intelligence.

A busy day for AI

Anthropic, the American AI developer, filed on Monday for a stock market listing that could be the largest in history, with Mizuho Financial Group and Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group among its lead underwriters. Meta announced plans to raise up to 95 billion dollars by selling shares, and SpaceX agreed to lease AI chips and equipment worth about 40 billion dollars.

Oil

Crude oil fell back in New York, with American crude for December delivery down 1.51 dollars at 101.76 dollars a barrel, as hopes grew that tensions in the Middle East would ease. High oil prices raise costs for Japan, which imports almost all of its crude.

The yen

The dollar was quoted at 157.49 to 157.51 yen early on Tuesday, Japan time, having ended the New York session at 157.43 to 157.53 yen. A weak yen tends to support the shares of Japanese exporters by raising the value of their overseas earnings in yen terms.

The week ahead

The Federal Reserve holds its policy meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday, the European Central Bank meets on Thursday, and the Bank of Japan holds its two-day meeting on Thursday and Friday, decisions that could move both shares and the currency.

Trading hours

The Tokyo Stock Exchange's morning session ends at 11:30 a.m. Trading resumes at 12:30 p.m. and closes at 3:30 p.m., half an hour later than before the exchange extended its hours in November 2024.

Next

The closing figures will appear in Wednesday's edition.

BUSINESS

Anthropic Files to List on Nasdaq in What Could Be the Largest Share Sale in History, With Mizuho and MUFG Among Its Lead Underwriters

U.S. media say the AI developer could raise more than 100 billion dollars at a valuation of 1.5 to 2 trillion dollars; the listing is reportedly planned for mid-November

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

Anthropic, the American developer of artificial intelligence, said on Monday that it had filed a prospectus for an initial public offering with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, moving closer to what is expected to be the largest share sale in history.

The company plans to list on the Nasdaq exchange. American media, citing people familiar with the matter, reported that the listing is planned for mid-November and that it could raise more than 100 billion dollars, about 16 trillion yen, at a valuation of 1.5 trillion to 2 trillion dollars, Kyodo News reported. The schedule could change.

Not yet decided

The number of shares to be offered and the expected price had not been decided, according to the prospectus.

Japanese banks

Mizuho Financial Group and Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group are among the lead underwriters, through their American securities subsidiaries. Both have expanded their investment banking in the United States: Mizuho bought the advisory firm Greenhill in 2023, and MUFG is the largest shareholder of Morgan Stanley.

The market's reaction

Anthropic's filing helped lift stocks in New York on Monday, particularly shares of companies connected with AI.

The company

Anthropic was founded in 2021 by former employees of OpenAI, including Dario Amodei, its chief executive, and his sister, Daniela Amodei, its president. It develops the Claude family of AI models and has received large investments from Amazon and Google.

Size in perspective

The largest initial public offering so far is Saudi Aramco's in December 2019, which raised about 29.4 billion dollars including additional shares sold later. A sale of more than 100 billion dollars would be more than three times as large.

The race for capital

Developers of AI are spending enormous sums on data centres and chips, and the costs have pushed them to raise money in ever larger amounts. Meta announced its own plan to raise up to 95 billion dollars on the same day.

Risks

A listing would expose Anthropic to the scrutiny of public markets at a time when investors are questioning how quickly spending on AI will produce profits. Shares of several technology companies have swung sharply in recent weeks on those doubts.

What comes next

The company and its underwriters will set a price range and market the shares to investors before the listing.

BUSINESS

From Filing to First Trade: How a Listing Like Anthropic's Works in the United States

After the prospectus come regulators' questions, a price range, the roadshow and a night of pricing; underwriters often keep the right to sell extra shares

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance

Anthropic's filing of a prospectus with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission on Monday is the first public step in a process that usually takes several weeks before shares begin trading.

The prospectus

The registration statement describes the company's business, finances, risks and management. The commission's staff review it and may ask for changes and more information, and the company files amended versions.

A price range

Once the review is far enough along, the company and its underwriters set a price range and the number of shares to be offered. Anthropic's filing did not yet include those figures.

The roadshow

Executives and bankers then present the company to large investors such as pension and mutual funds, in meetings known as the roadshow, and collect indications of how many shares each would buy and at what price.

Pricing

On the evening before trading begins, the company and its underwriters set the final price based on demand. Shares are allocated to investors and begin trading on the exchange the next morning.

The underwriters

Lead underwriters organise the sale, guarantee it in most cases and are paid a fee. They often have an option to sell up to 15 per cent more shares than planned if demand is strong.

Lock-ups

Insiders and early investors usually agree not to sell their shares for a period after the listing, often 180 days, to avoid a flood of selling.

Japanese participation

Mizuho Financial Group and Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group are among Anthropic's lead underwriters through their American securities units, and Japanese institutional investors may take part in the offering.

The timing

American media report that Anthropic is aiming for mid-November. The schedule can change with market conditions.

BUSINESS

Business in Brief

By the Business Desk

ANTHROPIC: Filed for a Nasdaq listing; Mizuho and MUFG are among the lead underwriters.

META: Plans to raise up to \$95 billion through share sales for AI.

MICROSOFT: About 60,000 employees offered voluntary retirement, media report.

SPACEX: Agreed to lease about \$40 billion of chips and equipment for AI.

ORACLE: Unveiled AI agents for accounting, HR and procurement.

UMIOS: To buy Canada's High Liner Foods for about 89 billion yen.

GIFTY: About 550 million yen in e-gifts issued fraudulently through its system.

SIEMENS ENERGY: Plans a wind-power maintenance hub in Eniwa, Hokkaido.

ONAGAWA: Tohoku Electric restarted the No. 2 reactor.

RAKUTEN: Up to 2.6 million Rakuten Travel users' details may have leaked.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Crossword, Page 19.

GMO: noon deadline, no ransom, Page 1.

ECONOMY



The Tokyo Stock Exchange at Kabutocho. Wall Street rose on Monday as Anthropic's plan to list its shares revived hopes for artificial intelligence, after the Nikkei average fell 503.51 points in Tokyo. (Photo: TG2 (CC))

ECONOMY

Wall Street Rebounds as Anthropic's Listing Plan Revives Hopes for AI; the Nasdaq Gains 214 Points and the Dow 146

Nvidia and Goldman Sachs lead the rise while caution ahead of the Fed and the midterms limits gains; crude falls to \$101.76 and the dollar firms to 157.5 yen

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance

Stocks in New York rose on Monday after Anthropic, the American developer of artificial intelligence, filed to list its shares, reviving hopes for growth in AI-related businesses after a week in which doubts about the returns on the technology had weighed on markets.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed 146.42 points higher at 52,361.58, recovering part of Friday's 652-point fall. The Nasdaq Composite, heavy with technology shares, rose 214.04 points to 26,169.38, its first gain in three trading days, Kyodo News reported.

Leaders and laggards

The chipmaker Nvidia and the investment bank Goldman Sachs were among the most prominent gainers. The drugmaker Merck fell.

Gains were limited because investors were cautious before the Federal Reserve's policy meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday and the midterm elections on November 3.

Oil

American crude for December delivery fell \$1.51 to \$101.76 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, its first fall in three trading days, as hopes grew that tensions in the Middle East would ease. Continued attacks on Saudi Arabia by the Houthis in Yemen kept supply worries alive and limited the fall.

The yen

In New York the dollar was quoted at 157.43 to 157.53 yen at 5 p.m., 66 sen stronger than on Friday, as investors focused on the strength of the American economy and the rebound in stocks reduced demand

for the yen as a haven. The euro was at 1.1169 to 1.1179 dollars and 175.96 to 176.06 yen.

Tokyo's turn

Tokyo's market fell on Monday, with the Nikkei Stock Average down 503.51 points at 62,189.65 as technology shares slipped. The rebound in New York gave investors a firmer lead into Tuesday's trading.

The week's events

Besides the Fed, the European Central Bank meets on Thursday and the Bank of Japan holds its two-day meeting on Thursday and Friday. Large American technology companies report their quarterly results around this time of year, and investors will look for evidence that heavy spending on AI is paying off.

AI spending

The same day, Meta announced plans to raise up to 95 billion dollars by selling shares to pay for AI data centres and chips, and SpaceX agreed to lease about 40 billion dollars' worth of semiconductors and equipment for its AI business.

The mood

The swings of recent days show how much markets now depend on the promise of AI. Strong demand for Anthropic's shares would be read as a vote of confidence in the industry; a disappointing listing would feed the doubts.

Two stages

The company began a public offering of about 35 billion dollars of common stock and of preferred stock that can later be converted into common shares on Monday. From the January to March quarter of 2027, it plans to sell common stock to raise up to a further 60 billion dollars.

Chipmakers interested

Three semiconductor companies, Nvidia, Advanced Micro Devices and Broadcom, have shown interest in contributing funds, according to the report.

Why shares

Large technology companies have generally financed their investment from the cash their businesses generate and from borrowing. Selling new shares on this scale dilutes existing shareholders, and it signals how much money the race to build AI capacity now demands.

Circular money

Investment by chipmakers in the companies that buy their chips has become a feature of the industry, and critics say such arrangements can inflate demand. Supporters say they share the risk of building capacity that both sides need.

The scale

The plan comes as Meta, Microsoft, Alphabet and Amazon each spend tens of billions of dollars a year on data centres, and as newer AI developers turn to stock markets and leasing to raise money.

Market reaction

Investors will judge whether the returns justify the spending. Doubts about that have caused sharp swings in technology shares in recent weeks.

For Japan

Japanese suppliers of chipmaking equipment, materials and power infrastructure are among the companies that benefit from the building boom, and their share prices have tended to follow the fortunes of American AI stocks.

BUSINESS

Microsoft Offers Voluntary Retirement to About 60,000 Employees, More Than a Quarter of Its Workforce, as AI Spending Weighs

Staff in the United States, Canada, Britain and India in Copilot, Xbox and finance are eligible, media report; those who accept leave on December 31

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

Microsoft announced a voluntary retirement programme on Monday for some employees in the United States, Canada, Britain and India, and about 60,000 people, more than a quarter of its workforce, are eligible, according to European and American media cited by Kyodo News.

The company is making large investments in artificial intelligence that are weighing on its finances, and it plans to cut staff substantially to make its operations more efficient, Kyodo reported.

Who is eligible

According to the media reports, the offer covers employees at or below a certain job level in areas including Copilot, the company's conversational AI service, the Xbox games business and finance. Some marketing, sales, technical and security departments are excluded.

The timetable

Eligible employees must decide by early December whether to accept, and those who do will leave on December 31.

The size of the company

Microsoft employed about 228,000 people worldwide at the end of June 2025, according to its annual report, so the figure reported would amount to roughly a quarter of the total.

A pattern

Microsoft cut about 15,000 jobs in several rounds in 2025 while increasing its spending on data centres for AI. Other large technology companies have also reduced staff while pouring money into the technology.

The paradox

AI is both the reason for the spending and, its makers argue, a tool that lets companies do more with fewer people. The cuts show both sides of that bargain.

In Japan

Japan was not among the countries named in the reports as covered by the programme.

What comes next

How many employees accept will become clear in December.

BUSINESS

Oracle Unveils AI That Can Handle Accounting, Human Resources and Procurement, and Can Be Operated From ChatGPT

The software checks the books, plans headcount and hunts for wasted spending, acting only within limits a person has approved

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

Oracle, the American business software company, announced on Monday a feature that lets artificial intelligence carry out a company's back-office work, including accounting, human resources and procurement, at its annual event in Las Vegas, Kyodo News reported.

Its business software can also be operated through ChatGPT, the conversational AI developed by OpenAI, and other AI tools.

What it does

The AI checks account books, plans headcount and the allocation of materials and resources, and looks for unnecessary spending, investigates the causes and proposes savings.

A human in charge

It carries out these tasks only within the scope that a person has approved, Oracle said. The aim, the company said, is to let people concentrate on important decisions.

Agents

The industry calls such systems AI agents: software that does not just answer questions but takes actions on a user's behalf. Business software makers are racing to build them into their products.

The stakes

Accounting, payroll and purchasing are among the most routine tasks in any company and among the most promising for automation. They are also areas where mistakes can be costly, which is why the limits on the AI's authority matter.

Not stated

The product's name, release date and price were not given in the report.

Security

Giving software the power to act on a company's systems raises security questions, an issue sharpened by this month's wave of breaches in Japan.

The trend

Microsoft, Salesforce and others are making similar moves, and the competition is changing how companies buy and use business software.

BUSINESS

Umios to Buy Canada's High Liner Foods for About 89 Billion Yen to Sell More Seafood in North America

The former Maruha Nichiro will turn Alaska pollock into finished products for supermarkets and restaurants; completion is planned for January

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance

Umios, the Japanese frozen food and seafood group formerly known as Maruha Nichiro, said on Monday that it would acquire High Liner Foods, a large Canadian seafood processor, for about 89 billion yen, to raise its profitability in North America, Kyodo News reported.

The plan

Umios will process pollock and other fish caught in Alaska into finished products for sale in the region.

The target

According to Umios, High Liner Foods has the largest sales of frozen seafood products for both retail and restaurant customers in the United States and Canada.

Closer to customers

Umios said the acquisition would let it grasp the needs of North American consumers and customers directly and use them in developing products.

Timing

The deal is expected to be completed in January.

The company

Maruha Nichiro, one of Japan's largest fishery companies, changed its name to Umios this year. It already owns fishing and processing businesses in Alaska.

Why North America

Japan's own market for fish is shrinking as the population falls and eating habits change, while demand for convenient frozen seafood in North America is growing. Japanese food companies have been buying abroad to find growth.

Pollock

Alaska pollock is one of the world's largest fisheries and the source of fish sticks, fillets and surimi, the paste used in imitation crab and in Japan's kamaboko fish cakes.

Rivals

Nissui, another major Japanese fishery group, also has large seafood businesses in North America, and competition for the market has intensified.

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BUSINESS



A SpaceX Dragon spacecraft in orbit above the Earth, in a NASA photograph. SpaceX agreed on Monday to lease about 40 billion dollars' worth of chips and equipment, including Nvidia's next-generation Vera Rubin, for its AI business. (Photo: NASA)

BUSINESS

SpaceX Agrees to Lease About 40 Billion Dollars of AI Chips and Equipment, Including Nvidia's Next-Generation Vera Rubin

The deal with an unnamed U.S. asset manager is to expand the Grok model and a cloud service; delivery is expected in the first half of 2027

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

SpaceX, the American space company, said on Monday that it had agreed with an American asset management company to lease semiconductors and related equipment worth about 40 billion dollars, about 6.3 trillion yen, to strengthen its artificial intelligence business, Kyodo News reported from New York.

What it will be used for

SpaceX plans to use the equipment to expand its generative AI model, Grok, and a cloud service that provides computing power to businesses.

The chips

The procurement includes Vera Rubin, the next generation of AI chips from Nvidia.

The timetable

The paperwork is to be completed by the end of this year, with delivery expected in the first half of 2027.

Why lease

Leasing lets a company obtain expensive hardware without paying the full price up front. The asset

manager buys the equipment and rents it out, spreading the cost over time.

The arms race

The deal is one of several this autumn in which companies have committed huge sums to secure the scarce chips needed to train and run AI models.

Nvidia's place

Nvidia's processors dominate the market for AI computing, and its new generations are often sold out long before they are delivered.

The question

As with Meta's share sale, the deal shows how much capital the AI race requires, and raises the same question investors have been asking: how soon it will pay for itself.

BUSINESS

The AI Money Race, in One Day

By the Business Desk

ANTHROPIC: Files to list on Nasdaq; more than \$100 billion possible, U.S. media say.

VALUATION: \$1.5 trillion to \$2 trillion reported.

META: Up to \$95 billion from share sales for data centres and chips.

FIRST STEP: About \$35 billion of common and convertible preferred stock.

SPACEX: About \$40 billion of chips and equipment, leased.

THE CHIP: Nvidia's Vera Rubin, among others.

MICROSOFT: About 60,000 offered voluntary retirement, media report.

ORACLE: AI agents for accounting, HR and procurement.

WALL STREET: The Nasdaq rose 214 points on the news.

JAPAN'S ROLE: Mizuho and MUFG among Anthropic's lead underwriters.

BUSINESS

The Biggest Share Sales So Far

By the Business Desk

SAUDI ARAMCO, 2019: About \$29.4 billion including additional shares, the record.

ALIBABA, 2014: About \$25 billion in New York.

SOFTBANK CORP., 2018: About 2.6 trillion yen, Japan's largest.

VISA, 2008: About \$17.9 billion.

FACEBOOK, 2012: About \$16 billion.

ARM, 2023: About \$4.9 billion on the Nasdaq.

TOKYO METRO, 2024: About 350 billion yen, Japan's biggest since SoftBank Corp.

ANTHROPIC, 2026: More than \$100 billion reported as possible.

VALUATION: \$1.5 trillion to \$2 trillion, U.S. media say.

TIMING: Mid-November, reportedly.

BUSINESS

Gifty Group to Book a Special Loss of About 550 Million Yen After an Intruder Issued E-Gift Vouchers Through Its System

Customers' existing gifts were not touched and no personal data leak has been found; the company does not expect a significant hit to revenue or operating profit

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance

Gifty Group, which runs the eGift digital gift service, said on Monday that an outsider had exploited a vulnerability in part of a subsidiary's system to issue new e-gift vouchers, causing an estimated loss of about 550 million yen.

What happened

The company found the activity on Sunday, identified the vulnerability and stopped the system the same day, cutting off issuance through that route. It does not plan to resume using the system.

Customers

The intruder did not use customers' existing e-gifts, and the company confirmed that customers' assets had not been reduced or damaged. The loss falls on the group. No leak of personal information has been confirmed.

Services

Some services for exchanging e-gifts were temporarily disrupted and are being restored in turn, while the main services are operating normally, the company said.

Accounts

The group will book the loss as an extraordinary loss in the fourth quarter of the year ending in December. It does not expect a significant impact on revenue or operating profit at present.

Police

The company is consulting and reporting to the police, investigating the full extent of the incident and plans to strengthen its controls and monitoring of e-gift issuance. It apologised to customers, partners and shareholders.

Not PHP

The company said the incident was unrelated to the vulnerabilities in the programming language PHP that have forced many Japanese organisations to take systems offline this month, Kyodo News reported.

Why vouchers

Digital vouchers can be resold or exchanged for goods quickly, which makes them attractive to criminals and hard to trace once spent.

TECHNOLOGY

When a Company Must Report a Leak: Japan's Rules Since 2022, and the Clock That Starts When a Breach Is Found

Leaks of sensitive data, data that can cause financial harm, data taken with malicious intent, or data on more than 1,000 people must be reported to regulators and the people affected

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Each of this month's breach announcements has included a line saying the company has reported to the Personal Information Protection Commission. That report is not a courtesy. Since April 2022 it has been a legal obligation in many cases.

The rule

The amended Act on the Protection of Personal Information requires businesses to report a leak, or a suspected leak, to the commission and to notify the people concerned when it falls into one of four categories.

The four categories

The first is leaks of sensitive personal information, such as medical records or criminal records. The second is leaks of data that could cause financial damage if misused, such as credit card numbers or login details for online banking.

The third is leaks that may have been caused for an improper purpose, which includes cyberattacks and theft by insiders. The fourth is any leak involving the data of more than 1,000 people.

Two reports

A company must send a preliminary report promptly, which the commission's guidelines describe as within about three to five days of becoming aware of the leak. A final report is due within 30 days, or 60 days when the leak may have been caused for an improper purpose, such as an attack.

Telling the people affected

Companies must also notify the individuals concerned, or, where that is difficult, publish the facts so that people can find out. That is why so many notices now appear on corporate websites.

Penalties

The commission can give guidance, issue recommendations and order companies to take measures. Failure to obey an order can lead to fines.

Outsourcing

When a company hands data to a contractor, such as an e-mail delivery provider, it remains responsible for supervising how that contractor protects the data. That principle is at the heart of the Yumilink case, in which the clients of one provider are notifying their own customers.

Why the numbers keep changing

Early reports are often estimates. As investigators examine logs and malicious software, the scope of a leak can grow, as it did at Yumilink, or shrink when duplicates are removed.

What individuals can do

Anyone who receives a notice should read it on the company's official website, follow its advice and treat follow-up messages asking for passwords or payment with suspicion.

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TECHNOLOGY

Report It, or Do Not Pay at All: How Britain and Australia Are Changing the Rules on Ransoms

Australia requires large businesses to report payments within 72 hours; Britain plans to ban payments by public bodies and operators of critical infrastructure

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Japan's government is preparing an emergency package of cybersecurity measures at a time when several of its partners have already tightened their rules on ransom payments.

Australia

Australia's Cyber Security Act, passed in 2024, requires businesses with annual turnover above 3 million Australian dollars, and certain operators of critical infrastructure, to report any ransom payment to the government within 72 hours. The obligation took effect in May 2025.

The aim is not to punish victims but to give the government a picture of who is paying, how much and to whom, so that it can track criminal groups and warn others.

Britain

Britain's government consulted in 2025 on proposals to ban ransom payments by public sector bodies, including local councils, schools and the National Health Service, and by operators of critical national infrastructure. It has said it will go ahead with the ban and with a regime under which other victims must tell the government before they pay.

The United States

American companies are not banned from paying, but the Treasury Department has warned that paying a group under sanctions can breach sanctions law, and the FBI urges victims to report attacks and not to pay.

The international pledge

In 2023, members of the International Counter Ransomware Initiative, including Japan, declared that their governments should not pay ransoms.

Japan today

Japan has no law that bans payments or requires them to be reported, although companies must report many data leaks to the Personal Information Protection Commission, and operators of critical infrastructure must report serious incidents.

The debate

Supporters of bans say they remove the incentive for criminals to target the institutions concerned. Critics worry that a ban could leave a hospital or utility unable to restore vital services, or push payments underground.

Reporting first

Many specialists favour mandatory reporting as a first step, because it gives governments information without forcing victims into an impossible choice.

What to watch

Whether the Takaichi government's emergency package addresses ransom payments directly will show how far Japan intends to go.

TECHNOLOGY

Rakuten Travel: The Two Intrusions

By the Technology Desk

SITE 1: An overseas hotel booking site, some pages run by Rakuten Travel Xchange.

FOUND: September 10; cause identified September 15; fixed September 16.

LOGGED-IN USERS: Up to about 2.6 million; names, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, ID numbers.

BOOKINGS: Up to about 40,000; booking details and companions' names.

CARDS: Up to about 36,000; first digits, last four, name, expiry and brand.

NOT EXPOSED: Full card numbers, security codes, passwords, passports, home addresses.

SITE 2: A multilingual booking site; found October 20, fixed October 21.

SITE 2 USERS: Up to about 860,000 e-mail addresses and ID numbers.

HOTEL STAFF: Up to about 40,000 accounts.

REPORTED TO: The Personal Information Protection Commission and authorities abroad.

TECHNOLOGY



An N700A train on the Tokaido Shinkansen, in a file photo. Members of the Smart EX and Express Reservation booking services were told on Monday that their e-mail addresses and names may have leaked through the breach at the e-mail delivery company Yumilink. (Photo: Akihiko Maeda)

TECHNOLOGY

From Five Systems to 49: How the Yumilink Breach Grew From 9 Million Records to 51.6 Million in Ten Days

Attackers used a program flaw and a support worker's credentials to plant malicious software; the company first estimated a fraction of the damage and warned of fake e-mails using its name

By Maya Suzuki | Technology Correspondent

When Yumilink, a Tokyo company whose Cuenote FC service sends e-mail on behalf of businesses, first disclosed an intrusion on October 19, it said five systems were involved and estimated that about 9 million records, counting duplicates, might have leaked. By Monday it was saying that data had been taken from 49 systems, and the cumulative total had risen to 51,628,280.

How they got in

In its first report, the company said the attackers had exploited a vulnerability in a program, obtained the login credentials of a member of its support and quality-control staff, and installed a malicious program that they used to extract data from databases. They also tried to use the same credentials to get into other systems.

The company did not say what kind of vulnerability was used.

What it did

Yumilink said it had fixed the vulnerable program, deleted the staff member's credentials, built a system to detect malicious programs and removed that person's account information from its other systems. It reported the intrusion to investigators and is working with outside experts.

Why the count grew

The company said on Monday that further analysis of the malicious programs had shown that more data had been taken than it first thought, and that the number could rise further. The records include at least registered e-mail addresses; it is still checking whether names, addresses and other details are among them.

TECHNOLOGY

The Yumilink Breach: A Timeline

By the Technology Desk

- OCT. 16: Unauthorised access confirmed in the early morning.
- THE METHOD: A program flaw, a support worker's credentials, malicious software.
- OCT. 19: Disclosure; five systems; about 9 million records estimated.
- OCT. 20: Warning about fake e-mails using the Cuenote name.
- THE RAILWAYS: Initially say shinkansen booking members are not affected.
- OCT. 26: Second report: 49 systems; 51,628,280 records, cumulative.
- SAME DAY: JR Central, JR West and JR Kyushu say member data may have leaked.
- DATA: At least e-mail addresses; for JR members, also IDs and katakana names.
- CONTACT: 03-6820-0088, weekdays 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- STILL CHECKING: Whether names and addresses of other clients' customers are involved.

Who is affected

Because Yumilink sends mail for many companies, the people affected are the customers of its customers. On Monday Central Japan Railway, West Japan Railway and Kyushu Railway said members of their shinkansen booking services were among them, a week after saying they were not.

The phishing warning

On October 20 Yumilink warned that fake e-mails were being sent from an address using its Cuenote name, with subject lines such as a request to confirm use of a service, impersonating a credit card company. It said it never sends such messages.

A contact point

The company has set up a dedicated contact line, 03-6820-0088, on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The lesson

A single compromised account inside a service provider can open the door to data held for dozens of client companies. Security specialists advise companies to give such providers only the information they need, and to keep track of what they have shared.

Part of a wave

The breach is one of a run of intrusions at Japanese companies this month, including GMO Internet Group's Onamae.com Desktop Cloud, Joshin Denki, Sagawa Express, Times Car and Rakuten Travel.

TECHNOLOGY

SoftBank Resumes All Emergency Alert Messages After a Pause Caused by the PHP Vulnerability

Disaster and evacuation alerts from national and local governments are flowing again; carriers had halted parts of their systems for maintenance

By Maya Suzuki | Technology Correspondent

SoftBank resumed sending all emergency alert messages, including disaster and evacuation information from national and local governments, on Monday evening, after halting the service for maintenance when a serious vulnerability was found in the programming language PHP, NHK reported.

What stopped

The company had suspended distribution of earthquake early warnings last week because of the PHP problem, according to an earlier NHK report.

Why it mattered

Emergency alert messages reach every compatible phone in an area at once, without the user needing to sign up, and are one of the main ways Japanese residents learn of earthquakes, tsunami, heavy rain and missile launches.

The PHP flaws

Critical vulnerabilities in PHP, which runs a large share of the world's websites, have forced ministries

and companies to take systems offline this month while they apply fixes, and smaller operators are thought to be slow to follow.

Other carriers

NTT Docomo had also suspended parts of its emergency messaging service last week as a precaution.

Advice

Residents can also get emergency information from television, radio, disaster apps and their municipalities' announcements, which remain the main channels when phone alerts are interrupted.

Lesson

The episode showed how a flaw in widely used software can reach even the systems people depend on in disasters, and why alternative channels matter.

Check your phone

Users can confirm in their phone's settings that emergency alerts are switched on.

What remains

It was not clear from the reports whether every carrier's services had been fully restored.

TECHNOLOGY

An Armoured Amphibian That Spent Its Whole Life in the Sea 237 Million Years Ago Is Described for the First Time

A Japanese researcher at UC Davis and a Peking University colleague report a 70-centimetre fossil from Guizhou; its bony armour probably stopped it losing water

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

Researchers have described the first known amphibian that lived its entire life in the sea, from a fossil about 237 million years old found in Guizhou Province in southern China, an area that was then under the sea.

The study, published on Monday in the journal Nature Ecology & Evolution, was led by Ryosuke Motani, a professor at the University of California, Davis, and Jiang Dayong, a professor at Peking University, Kyodo News reported.

The fossil

The fossil, a complete skeleton excavated in 2004, dates from the Late Triassic period and belongs to a newly named species. The animal was more than 70 centimetres long, with a flat body and a large, wide head.

Armour

Its skeleton shows many features typical of amphibians, and its whole body was covered with bony armour.

A problem solved

Amphibians normally take in water through their skin, and in seawater they lose water from their bodies instead. The armour probably prevented that loss, the researchers say. The animal probably drank through its mouth and expelled salt through its gills.

Why the sea

"It was a warm period. Predators were increasing on land, and when it went to the sea it may have found it full of food and with few enemies, an easy place to live," Motani said.

A rare move

Living amphibians, such as frogs and salamanders, are almost entirely creatures of fresh water and land; a handful of frogs can tolerate brackish water, but none lives in the open sea.

The Triassic seas

The Triassic period, which followed the greatest mass extinction in Earth's history, saw many groups of reptiles return to the sea, among them ichthyosaurs, which Motani has studied for decades. Guizhou's rocks have produced many important fossils of these marine reptiles.

The researcher

Motani, a Japanese palaeontologist, has spent much of his career studying how land animals adapted to life in the oceans.

What it adds

The find shows that amphibians, too, took part in the move to the sea during the Triassic, at least briefly, a chapter that had been missing from the fossil record.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

GMO: noon deadline, no ransom, Page 1.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology in Brief

By the Technology Desk

GMO: The attacker set noon on Tuesday to publish customer data and launch ransomware; GMO refuses to pay.

RAKUTEN TRAVEL: Up to about 2.6 million users' details may have leaked; up to 36,000 partial card records.

SHINKANSEN: Smart EX and Express Reservation member data may have leaked through Yumilink.

BANDAI NAMCO: Its logistics arm, Bandai Logipal, suffered unauthorised access.

GIFTY: About 550 million yen of e-gifts were issued fraudulently.

AI: Oracle launched agents to run accounting, HR and procurement.

CHIPS: SpaceX will lease about \$40 billion of chips, including Nvidia's Vera Rubin.

SCIENCE: A 237-million-year-old armoured amphibian lived its whole life in the sea.

HEALTH: The health ministry warns of headphone hearing loss.

ENERGY: Siemens Energy plans a wind-power hub in Eniwa, Hokkaido.

TECHNOLOGY

1980: The ARPANET Goes Down for Four Hours, the First Major Crash of the Network That Became the Internet

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

On October 27, 1980, the ARPANET, the research network funded by the United States Defense Department that grew into the internet, stopped working for about four hours.

The cause

The failure began in the routers of the day, called Interface Message Processors, which exchanged status messages about the state of the network. Corrupted messages carrying different timestamps began to circulate endlessly, and the machines could not discard them.

Two flaws

The Computer History Museum attributes the crash to two weaknesses: error-checking that was used when messages were transmitted but not when they were stored, and a routine for deleting old messages that could not cope with one message carrying several timestamps.

The fix

Engineers had to bring the network back by restarting the machines, effectively clearing the bad messages out of the system.

The report

Eric Rosen of Bolt Beranek and Newman, the company that ran the network, analysed the incident in RFC 789, published in 1981, which became a classic study of how a small fault can spread through a network.

The network then

The ARPANET had first linked four sites in California and Utah in 1969 and by 1980 connected research centres across the United States.

Japan connects

Japan's first academic network linking universities, JUNET, began in 1984, and Japan joined the internet proper later that decade.

Lessons

The crash showed that a network's control system could itself be the weak point, a lesson that has been relearned many times, including in large cloud outages.

Resilience

The idea of building networks that could keep working when parts failed was central to the ARPANET's design, but the 1980 crash showed how much depended on the software that managed it.

Why it matters today

As companies in Japan cope with this month's wave of cyberattacks, the old lesson stands: small flaws in shared systems can cascade.

TECHNOLOGY



The Onagawa nuclear power plant in Miyagi Prefecture, in a file photo. Tohoku Electric restarted the No. 2 reactor on Monday after replacing a valve that had leaked water containing traces of radioactivity. (File photo: WPM Productions)

TECHNOLOGY

Tohoku Electric Restarts Onagawa No. 2 Reactor After Replacing a Leaking Valve Worn by Rust From Old Pipe Cleaning

Water with traces of radioactivity had leaked into a drain tank; the company will fix valves in place during future cleaning to keep debris out

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance

Tohoku Electric Power restarted the No. 2 reactor at its Onagawa nuclear power plant in Miyagi Prefecture on Monday after replacing a valve in its water supply equipment that had been leaking, Kyodo News reported. The reactor had been shut down since October 17.

The leak

On October 15 the company announced that water containing a trace of radioactive material had leaked from a valve on the No. 1 high-pressure feedwater heater into a drain tank. The water was recovered, and there was no effect outside the plant, it said.

The cause

When the company took the valve apart, it found erosion on part of it caused by foreign matter. Rust and other debris had come away from the inside of the pipes during cleaning in a past periodic inspection, and the valve, as it opened and closed, had caught the debris and been left with a slight gap.

The flow of water gradually widened the gap and increased the leak.

The fix

In future cleaning, workers will use tools to hold valves in position so that foreign matter cannot get in.

TECHNOLOGY

The Health Ministry Warns of 'Headphone Hearing Loss' and Urges Listeners to Turn It Down and Rest Their Ears for 10 Minutes an Hour

Damage to the ear's hair cells is hard to reverse once it becomes serious; noise-cancelling devices can help people avoid raising the volume on trains and in cafes

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare is warning that listening to music and other sound at a high volume through headphones or earphones for long periods raises the risk of hearing loss that can be difficult to reverse, and has produced videos and leaflets urging people to rest their ears, Kyodo News reported.

How the damage happens

Continuous loud sound damages the hair cells in the inner ear, which pass the vibrations of sound to the brain. Once the condition becomes severe, recovery is difficult, the ministry says.

Why it is growing

Headphones and earphones are now used on the commute, for music and videos and for online meetings, and the spread of smartphones has made it easy to listen for hours.

The advice

The ministry advises keeping the volume low and resting the ears for about 10 minutes every hour.

Noisy places

In noisy places such as trains and cafes, people tend to turn the volume up further than they realise. Products with noise cancelling, which reduce background noise, can help listeners keep the volume down, the ministry says.

The plant

The Onagawa plant straddles the city of Ishinomaki and the town of Onagawa. The No. 2 reactor returned to service in 2024, the first boiling water reactor of the type used at the Fukushima Daiichi plant to restart after the 2011 disaster, and the first reactor in an area hit by the tsunami to do so.

Why it matters

Nuclear power supplies a growing share of electricity in eastern Japan as utilities try to cut fuel imports and emissions, and an extended shutdown would have raised costs for Tohoku Electric.

Confidence

For residents, how openly the company explains problems, even small ones, matters as much as the technical fix.

Policy

The government's energy plan seeks to make maximum use of nuclear power alongside renewable energy.

The signs

Doctors say early signs can include ringing in the ears, a feeling that the ears are blocked, and difficulty hearing conversation. Anyone who notices such symptoms should rest their ears and consult an ear, nose and throat specialist.

A global concern

The World Health Organization has warned that more than a billion young people worldwide are at risk of hearing loss from unsafe listening practices, and has published guidance for safe listening devices.

Children

Parents are advised to check the volume on devices used by children, whose habits form early.

The takeaway

The ministry's message is simple: lower the volume, take breaks, and do not try to drown out the noise around you.

TECHNOLOGY

1904: New York's Subway Opens, With the Mayor at the Controls of the First Train and a Fare of Five Cents

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

On October 27, 1904, New York City opened its first subway line, run by the Interborough Rapid Transit Company, from City Hall in lower Manhattan to 145th Street and Broadway.

The first line

The line ran about 9.1 miles, or roughly 15 kilometres, with 28 stations, and was built largely by the cut-and-cover method, in which streets were dug up, the tunnel was built and the road was laid over it again.

The opening

Mayor George B. McClellan Jr. took the controls of the first train after the opening ceremony and drove it for much of the way uptown. In the evening the line opened to the public, and crowds packed the trains.

The fare

A ride cost five cents, and the nickel fare lasted until 1948.

Express tracks

Unlike London's underground lines, New York's main routes were built with four tracks, allowing express trains to pass local ones, a design that helped the city spread northward.

The network today

The system has grown into one of the largest in the world, with more than 470 stations, and runs 24 hours a day.

Tokyo's turn

Tokyo's first subway, from Ueno to Asakusa on what is now the Ginza Line, opened on December 30, 1927, promoted as the first underground railway in Asia.

The idea spreads

Noritsugu Hayakawa, the businessman behind it, had been inspired by the London Underground and spent years raising money for a line that many thought impossible in a city prone to earthquakes.

Why it matters

The subway reshaped New York, letting workers live far from the factories and offices of lower Manhattan, as Tokyo's railways would later do on an even larger scale.

A date to remember

New Yorkers still mark the anniversary, and the original City Hall station, closed to passengers since 1945, is shown to visitors on occasional tours.

TECHNOLOGY

1938: DuPont Announces Nylon, the First Fully Synthetic Fibre, and Promises Stockings Stronger Than Silk

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

On October 27, 1938, the American chemical company DuPont announced a new synthetic fibre, which it called nylon, at a forum in New York organised by the New York Herald Tribune.

The announcement

Charles Stine, a vice-president of the company, described it as the first man-made organic textile fibre made entirely from raw materials such as coal, water and air, and said it could be made stronger and more elastic than natural fibres.

The inventor

The polymer had been developed by a team led by Wallace Carothers, a chemist at DuPont's laboratory in Delaware, who had made it in 1935. Carothers did not live to see its success; he died in 1937.

Stockings

Nylon stockings went on sale across the United States in May 1940, and women queued to buy millions of pairs in the first days.

War

During the Second World War nylon was diverted to parachutes, ropes and tyres, and stockings became scarce until peace returned.

Japan and silk

Nylon dealt a heavy blow to the Japanese silk industry, which had relied on exports of raw silk to the United States for stockings.

Japan and nylon

After the war, Toyo Rayon, now Toray Industries, signed a licence agreement with DuPont in 1951 and began large-scale production of nylon, a turning point for Japan's synthetic fibre industry.

Everywhere

Nylon is now used in clothing, carpets, fishing lines, car parts and countless other products.

The name

DuPont chose the name nylon as a generic word rather than a trademark, so that it could be used freely, a decision that helped it enter everyday language.

The legacy

The fibre's success opened the age of synthetic materials and helped make the chemical industry one of the largest in the world.

TECHNOLOGY

1961: The First Saturn I Rocket Flies From Cape Canaveral, the Opening Step on the Road to the Moon

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

On October 27, 1961, NASA launched the first Saturn I rocket from Cape Canaveral in Florida, in a test known as SA-1.

A test flight

Only the first stage was live. The upper stages were dummies, and the rocket flew a suborbital path of about 15 minutes over the Atlantic.

Eight engines

The first stage clustered eight H-1 engines, an approach chosen to produce large thrust quickly by combining engines that were already being developed.

Von Braun's team

The rocket was developed by Wernher von Braun's team at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama.

Kennedy's goal

The flight came five months after President John F. Kennedy asked Congress in May 1961 to commit the United States to landing a man on the Moon before the end of the decade.

The family

The Saturn I led to the Saturn IB, which launched the first crewed Apollo mission in 1968, and to the giant Saturn V, which carried Apollo astronauts around the Moon in 1968 and to its surface from 1969.

Ten flights

The Saturn I flew 10 times between 1961 and 1965 without a failure, testing hardware and launching satellites.

Japan's rockets

Japan's own launch programme was then in its infancy: the University of Tokyo's small Pencil rocket had been tested in 1955, and the country launched its first satellite, Ohsumi, in 1970.

The legacy

The clustering of engines pioneered on the Saturn I has been used by many rockets since, including today's reusable boosters.

A milestone

The flight was the first step in the Saturn programme that, less than eight years later, put people on the Moon.

TECHNOLOGY

1986: London's 'Big Bang' Sweeps Away Fixed Commissions and Moves Share Trading From the Floor to Screens

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

On October 27, 1986, the London Stock Exchange carried out a set of reforms known as the Big Bang, transforming the City of London.

What changed

Fixed minimum commissions on share deals were abolished, the old separation between brokers, who dealt for clients, and jobbers, who made markets, was ended, and outside companies, including foreign banks, were allowed to own member firms.

Screens

Trading moved from the floor of the exchange to telephones and computer screens, using a system that displayed dealers' quotations. Within months, the trading floor was almost deserted.

Thatcher's government

The changes followed an agreement between Margaret Thatcher's government and the exchange to settle a competition case, and they were part of a wider drive to open up Britain's economy.

The effect

American and European banks bought up British firms, and London grew into one of the world's leading financial centres.

TECHNOLOGY

Tokyo follows

A decade later, in November 1996, Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto announced Japan's own financial Big Bang, a programme of deregulation intended to make Tokyo as free, fair and global as London and New York.

The end of the floor

The Tokyo Stock Exchange closed its trading floor in April 1999 and moved all trading to computers.

Mixed results

Critics of the London reforms say they encouraged a culture of risk-taking that contributed to later crises, while supporters credit them with making the City competitive.

Technology's role

The Big Bang was as much a technological revolution as a regulatory one, a step toward today's markets, in which orders are executed by computers in fractions of a second.

A name

The phrase Big Bang, borrowed from cosmology, has been used for sweeping reforms ever since.

TECHNOLOGY

1994: 'Have You Ever Clicked Your Mouse Right Here? You Will.' The Web's First Banner Advertisement Appears

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

On October 27, 1994, HotWired, the website of Wired magazine, began running what is generally regarded as the first banner advertisement on the World Wide Web.

The words

The advertisement, for the telephone company AT&T, read: "Have you ever clicked your mouse right HERE? You will."

The campaign

It was part of AT&T's "You Will" campaign, which had begun in 1993 with television commercials directed by David Fincher and narrated by Tom Selleck, predicting technologies such as electronic toll collection, video on demand and smartwatches.

The click

The banner took users to a page promoting AT&T. Accounts of the time say a remarkably high share of those who saw it clicked, because the format was new.

The business model

HotWired's decision to sell space on its pages helped establish advertising as the main way of paying for free content on the web, a model that later made Google and Facebook among the world's most valuable companies.

Japan

Japanese portals and newspaper websites soon adopted banner advertising, and the industry grew rapidly from the late 1990s.

The predictions

Many of the technologies the campaign foretold came true, but they were mostly brought to market by newer companies rather than by AT&T.

Banner blindness

As banners multiplied, users learned to ignore them, a habit that researchers call banner blindness, and advertisers moved to search, social media and video.

The darker side

Online advertising also fed the tracking of users across websites, a practice that regulators in Europe and elsewhere have since restricted.

Thirty-two years on

The small rectangle that appeared on HotWired that day was the beginning of an industry worth hundreds of billions of dollars a year.

TECHNOLOGY

1994: A Team Led by Japanese Astronomer Tadashi Nakajima Finds Gliese 229B, the First Brown Dwarf Beyond Doubt

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

On October 27, 1994, astronomers observing a faint companion of the red dwarf star Gliese 229 found the object that became the first brown dwarf to be identified beyond doubt.

What a brown dwarf is

Brown dwarfs are objects heavier than planets but too light to sustain the hydrogen fusion that powers stars. They had been predicted in theory for decades, but none had been confirmed.

The team

The discovery was made by a team led by Tadashi Nakajima, then at the California Institute of Technology, using a coronagraph, which blocks the light of a bright star, on the 60-inch telescope at Palomar Observatory in California.

The proof

Follow-up observations found methane in its atmosphere, something seen in giant planets such as Jupiter but impossible in a star. The discovery was announced in 1995.

Where it is

Gliese 229 lies about 19 light-years from Earth, in the constellation Lepus.

A twist

In 2024, astronomers reported that Gliese 229B is in fact a pair of brown dwarfs orbiting each other closely, which explained why it had seemed puzzlingly faint for its mass.

The researcher

Nakajima later worked at the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan, which operates the Subaru Telescope in Hawaii.

Thousands since

Since then, thousands of brown dwarfs have been found, many by infrared surveys from space.

Why it matters

Brown dwarfs fill the gap between stars and planets and help astronomers understand how both form.

A Japanese contribution

The find remains one of the best-known contributions by a Japanese-led team to modern astronomy.

TECHNOLOGY

1997: The Dow Falls 554 Points and New York's Circuit Breakers Halt Trading for the First Time

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

On October 27, 1997, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 554.26 points, or 7.18 per cent, as the Asian financial crisis spread to Wall Street.

The halt

The fall triggered the New York Stock Exchange's circuit breakers for the first time since they were introduced after the crash of October 1987. Trading was halted for half an hour in the afternoon, and when the fall deepened after it resumed, the market was closed for the day.

The trigger

The selling followed a slump in Hong Kong, where the stock market had fallen sharply amid fears over the region's currencies.

The rebound

The next day the Dow rose 337 points, then its largest gain in points, and the sell-off came to be known as a mini-crash.

The rules changed

Critics said the halts had added to panic by making investors rush to sell before trading stopped. The thresholds were later revised, and today's circuit breakers are based on percentage falls.

Japan's crisis

Japan's own financial crisis deepened the following month, when Sanyo Securities, Hokkaido Takushoku Bank and Yamaichi Securities collapsed in November 1997.

Asia's crisis

The Asian crisis had begun in Thailand in July 1997 with the collapse of the baht and spread to Indonesia and South Korea, which needed help from the International Monetary Fund.

Technology

Circuit breakers are a reminder that markets run on systems that can amplify fear; they were designed to give people time to think.

Today

The Tokyo Stock Exchange limits how far the price of an individual share may move in a single day.

The lesson

The episode showed how quickly trouble in one market could cross oceans in a connected world.

TECHNOLOGY

October 27 in Technology

By the Research Desk

1811: Isaac Singer, whose company made the sewing machine a household product, is born in New York State.

1904: New York's subway opens.

1938: DuPont announces nylon.

1961: The first Saturn I flies.

1968: Lise Meitner, who helped explain nuclear fission, dies in Cambridge, England.

1980: The ARPANET crashes for about four hours.

1986: London's Big Bang.

1994: The first web banner advertisement appears on HotWired.

1994: Gliese 229B, the first confirmed brown dwarf, is observed.

1997: Circuit breakers halt the New York Stock Exchange for the first time.

SOCIETY

Former Osaka Chief Prosecutor's Trial Resumes Two Years After He Admitted the Charge, With a Plea of Not Guilty Expected

Kentaro Kitagawa is accused of sexually assaulting a subordinate who was drunk and unable to resist; the prosecutor who accused him has since resigned

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

The trial of Kentaro Kitagawa, a former chief of the Osaka District Public Prosecutors Office accused of sexually assaulting a subordinate, resumes at the Osaka District Court on Tuesday, two years after he admitted the charge at his first hearing, and he is expected to plead not guilty, NHK reported.

He is charged with quasi-forcible sexual intercourse, an offence covering sexual acts against a person who is unable to resist, in this case a subordinate who was drunk.

The case

The assault is alleged to have taken place in September 2018, while Kitagawa was serving as chief prosecutor in Osaka, after a social gathering. He retired from the prosecution service the following year and was arrested in June 2024.

A change of plea

At his first hearing in October 2024 he admitted the charge. Two months later his lawyer said he would contest it, arguing that he had believed the woman consented, a reversal that drew strong criticism.

The victim

The woman, a prosecutor, spoke publicly about the case and her suffering, a rare step for a victim in Japan. She submitted her resignation from the Osaka District Public Prosecutors Office in April this year.

On the same day she applied to a prosecution review panel to challenge a decision not to indict a fellow deputy prosecutor whom she had accused of leaking information about the investigation and making defamatory remarks about her. That prosecutor received a reprimand last year for, among other things, inappropriately disclosing her name to colleagues, according to the Osaka High Public Prosecutors Office.

Why it matters

The case has raised questions about how Japan's prosecution service, which is supposed to protect victims of sexual crime, treats women within its own ranks.

The law

Japan revised its sex crime laws in 2023, replacing the offences of forcible and quasi-forcible sexual intercourse with a single offence of non-consensual sexual intercourse and listing circumstances, such as intoxication, in which a person cannot form or express refusal. Kitagawa is being tried under the law in force at the time of the alleged offence.

What comes next

The court will hear the prosecution's case and the defence's argument in coming sessions. A verdict date has not been set.

Help

Victims of sexual violence can call the national one-stop support line on #8891.

SOCIETY

Kumamoto Publishes Its Draft Plan to Rebuild From the Earthquake, With 'Minimising Hardship' and 'Creative Reconstruction' as Its Pillars

The draft comes a day before three months have passed since the earthquake; the prefecture aims to speed the rebuilding of homes and livelihoods

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

Kumamoto Prefecture published a draft plan on Tuesday for reconstruction after this year's Kumamoto earthquake, setting out two main goals: minimising the hardship of people affected and the "creative reconstruction" of the disaster-hit areas, Kyodo News reported.

The draft was released a day before the three-month mark since the earthquake.

Minimising hardship

The first pillar aims to speed up the rebuilding of residents' homes and livelihoods.

Creative reconstruction

The second calls for rebuilding the affected areas in ways that leave them better than before, a phrase the prefecture also used after the earthquakes of 2016.

The 2016 precedent

In April 2016 two powerful earthquakes struck Kumamoto within 28 hours, devastating Mashiki and other towns and damaging Kumamoto Castle. The prefecture's recovery plan then also put minimising people's hardship at its heart.

The details

Kyodo's report did not give the plan's time frame, budget or numerical targets.

Lessons learned

The government has drawn on Kumamoto's experience in disaster policy, including the system, first used on a large scale in 2016, of sending relief supplies before municipalities ask for them.

Logistics

A Kyodo analysis of truck travel data published on Monday examined how hauliers coped with the cutting of a main transport route after the earthquake by taking detours.

The earthquake

The earthquake, which the Japan Meteorological Agency named the 2026 Kumamoto Earthquake, struck at about 4:27 p.m. on July 28 with a magnitude of 7.1 and registered the maximum intensity of 7 on the Japanese scale.

The road ahead

The draft is a step toward the prefecture's final reconstruction plan, which will guide spending and rebuilding for years.

EDITORIAL

Words in the News

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

DOUBLE EXTORTION: Stealing data before encrypting it, then threatening to publish it.

RANSOMWARE: Malicious software that locks files until a ransom is paid.

SUPPLY CHAIN ATTACK: Breaching a supplier to reach its clients' data.

BIN: The first digits of a card number, identifying the issuer.

CONSULAR VISIT: A meeting between diplomats and a citizen held abroad.

CLASS A WAR CRIMINALS: Leaders convicted of crimes against peace at the Tokyo Trial.

G LEAGUE: The NBA's official development league.

IPO: A company's first sale of shares to the public.

BROWN DWARF: An object too heavy for a planet, too light for a star.

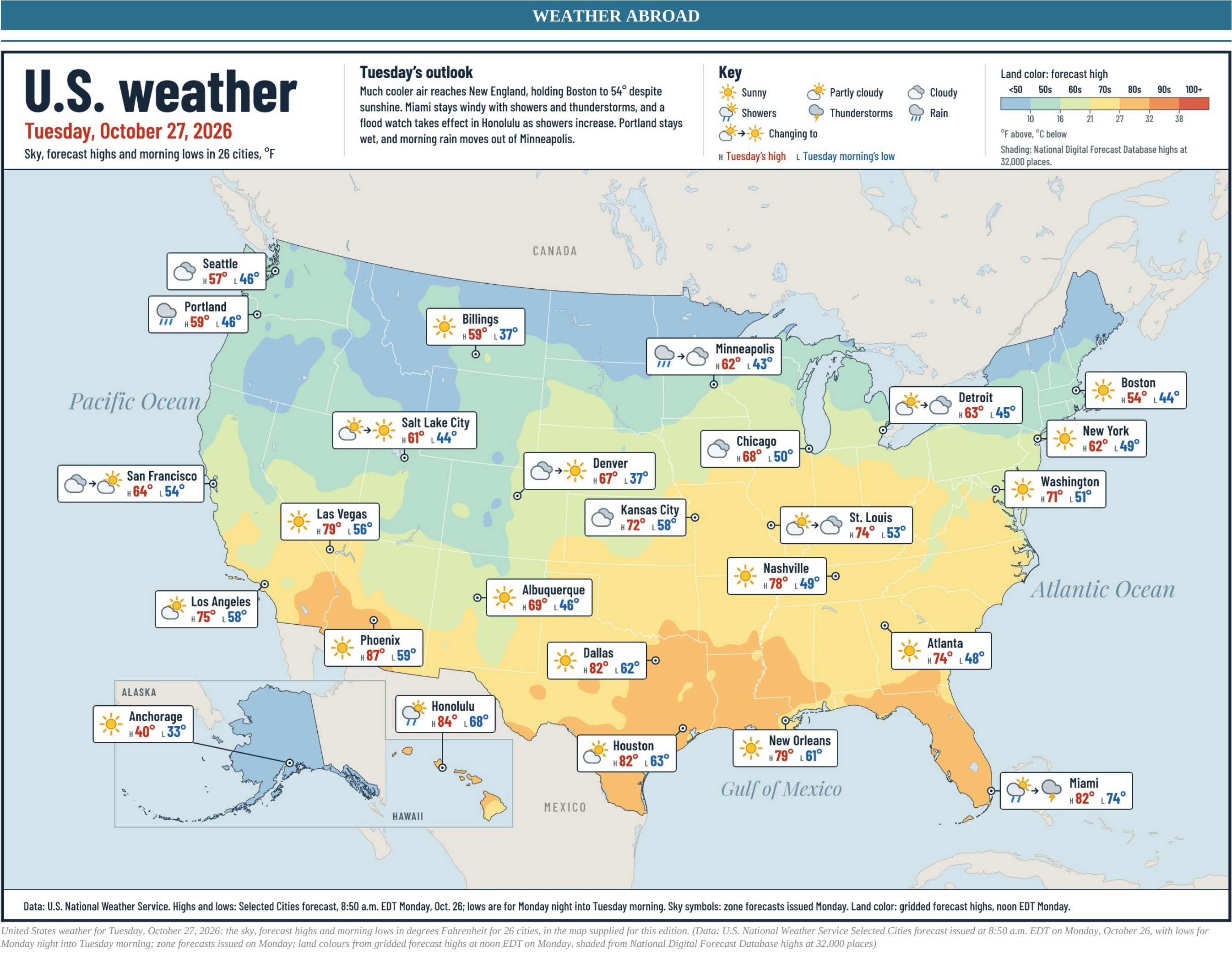
FEEDWATER HEATER: Equipment that warms water before it enters a reactor.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Japan Series Game 3, Page 18.

Reading Week turns 80, Page 19.

Editorial: demands refused, Page 20.



SOCIETY

Much Cooler Air Holds Boston to 54 in Sunshine, a Drop of 15 Degrees, While Minneapolis Warms by 14 and Honolulu Prepares for Flooding

New York falls 8 degrees to 62; Phoenix is the hottest city at 87, and Denver has the widest range, from 37 to 67

By the Weather Desk

Much cooler air reaches New England on Tuesday, holding Boston to 54 degrees Fahrenheit despite sunshine, 15 degrees lower than on Monday's map, the biggest drop of any city, according to the map of the United States supplied for this edition.

Miami stays windy with showers and thunderstorms, and a flood watch takes effect in Honolulu as showers increase, the map's outlook says.

- The Northeast

New York is sunny at 62, 8 degrees cooler than on Monday, and Washington sunny at 71, unchanged. Their mornings were at 49 and 51; Boston's was 44.
- The Midwest

Morning rain moves out of Minneapolis, which turns cloudy and reaches 62, 14 degrees warmer than on Monday, the biggest rise on the map. Chicago is cloudy at 68, 6 degrees warmer, and Detroit turns from partly cloudy to cloudy at 63, 5 cooler.

- The Plains and the Mississippi

Kansas City is cloudy at 72 and St Louis turns cloudy at 74. Nashville is sunny at 78.
- The Northwest

Portland stays wet, with rain and a high of 59, and Seattle is cloudy at 57.
- The Rockies

Denver clears from cloud to sunshine and reaches 67, 7 degrees warmer than on Monday, after a low of 37; its range of 30 degrees is the widest on the map. Billings is sunny at 59 after 37, and Salt Lake City turns sunny at 61.
- The South and Southwest

Phoenix is the hottest city on the map, sunny at 87. Las Vegas is sunny at 79, Albuquerque at 69, Dallas at 82, Atlanta at 74 and New Orleans at 79. Houston is partly cloudy at 82.

- Florida

Miami has showers turning to thunderstorms, with a high of 82 after a low of 74, the warmest night on the map.
- California

Los Angeles is partly cloudy at 75, and San Francisco's cloud gives way to partial sunshine, at 64.
- Alaska and Hawaii

Anchorage is sunny but cold, at 40 after a low of 33, the coldest on the map, 7 degrees cooler than on Monday. Honolulu has showers, with a high of 84 and a low of 68.
- The colours

The land colours show highs below 50 over the high ground of the interior Northwest and Montana, northern New England and Alaska; the 50s and 60s across the northern states and the Great Lakes; the 70s from California's valleys across the central Plains

to the Ohio Valley and the Southeast; and the 80s over the deserts of Arizona and southern California, Texas, the Gulf Coast and Florida.

About the map

The highs and lows are from the National Weather Service's selected cities forecast issued at 8:50 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time on Monday, October 26; the lows are for Monday night into Tuesday morning. Japan is 13 hours ahead of New York until America's clocks go back on November 1.

- SOCIETY

The U.S. Map at a Glance

By the Weather Desk

HOTTEST: Phoenix, 87; Honolulu, 84.

COLDEST: Anchorage, 40; Boston, 54.

COLDEST MORNING: Anchorage, 33; Billings and Denver, 37.

WARMEST NIGHT: Miami, 74; Honolulu, 68.

BIGGEST FALL FROM MONDAY'S MAP: Boston, down 15 to 54.

ALSO COOLER: New York, down 8; Anchorage, down 7; Detroit and Kansas City, down 5.

WARMER: Minneapolis, up 14; Denver, up 7; Billings and Chicago, up 6.

RAIN: Portland; morning rain in Minneapolis; showers in Honolulu.

STORMS: Miami, showers turning to thunderstorms.

- WIDEST RANGE: Denver, 37 to 67; NARROWEST: Anchorage, 33 to 40.

SOCIETY

The U.S. Map in Celsius

Tuesday's highs and lows, converted and rounded to the nearest degree

By the Weather Desk

NEW YORK: 17 / 9.

WASHINGTON: 22 / 11.

BOSTON: 12 / 7.

CHICAGO: 20 / 10.

MINNEAPOLIS: 17 / 6.

DENVER: 19 / 3.

LOS ANGELES: 24 / 14.

PHOENIX: 31 / 15.

MIAMI: 28 / 23.

HONOLULU: 29 / 20.

- ANCHORAGE: 4 / 1.

SEATTLE: 14 / 8.

SOCIETY

Births to Foreign Nationals in Japan Reach a Record of About 23,000, and the Number of Municipalities Where They Exceed One in 10 Births Has Tripled

The figure has set a record for three years running as Japan's own births keep falling; the foreign population reached 4.28 million in June

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

About 23,000 children were born in Japan to foreign nationals last year, a record for the third year in a row, NHK reported on Tuesday.

The number of cities, towns and special wards where children of foreign nationals made up more than 10 per cent of all births has tripled from six years earlier, according to the broadcaster's analysis.

- A changing country

The rise reflects the growing number of foreign residents. The foreign population reached a record 4,281,026 at the end of June, 3.4 per cent of the total, according to the Immigration Services Agency.
- Japan's own births

At the same time, births to Japanese nationals have fallen year after year to the lowest levels since records began, making foreign families a larger share of the newborns in many communities.
- Scale

Births to Japanese nationals in Japan numbered about 686,000 in 2024, the lowest on record, so children of foreign nationals now account for a noticeable share of the total in many places.
- Schools and clinics

The change brings new needs: interpreters in maternity clinics, Japanese-language support in nursery schools and primary schools, and information

SOCIETY

on health check-ups and child allowances in many languages.

Policy

The government has been expanding the routes by which foreign workers can come to Japan and stay long-term, including a new system to replace the technical intern training programme from 2027.

The debate

Immigration has become a more prominent political issue, with parties divided over how many foreign workers Japan should accept and how to help them integrate.

Local response

Municipalities with many foreign residents have set up multilingual consultation desks, and some offer classes for parents on Japanese schooling.

The numbers to watch

Final figures for births in Japan for last year, including those to foreign nationals, are compiled by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

SOCIETY

Boy Suspected of Hiding a Camera Where Girls Changed for PE Is Sent to Family Court; Images Were Shared in a LINE Group

About 20 students were changing at a private high school in Nagoya when another boy found the device; some girls have found it hard to go to school since

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

Prosecutors in Nagoya sent a male student at a private high school to the Nagoya Family Court on Monday on suspicion of hiding a small camera in a classroom where female students changed their clothes, Kyodo News reported.

He is suspected of breaking the law that punishes the photographing of people in sexual situations without consent, and the Aichi prefectural ordinance on preventing nuisance behaviour, among other offences.

How it was found

About 20 female students were changing for a physical education class shortly before the camera was discovered. A different male student found it.

Shared online

Images recorded on the camera were later shared in a group on the LINE messaging app, Kyodo said.

The suspicion

According to investigative sources, the boy is suspected of placing the camera in April and filming the students as they changed. The prefectural police sent papers on the case to prosecutors on October 14.

The victims

Some of the girls have found it difficult to attend school because of the psychological distress.

The law

The law on sexual photography, which took effect in July 2023, made secretly filming people's private parts or underwear, and sharing such images, a crime nationwide, filling gaps in prefectural ordinances. It also allows the confiscation and deletion of the images.

Family court

Because the suspect is a minor, his case will be dealt with by the family court, which decides on protective measures rather than criminal punishment in most cases.

Schools

Cases of hidden cameras in schools have prompted education boards across Japan to check changing rooms and toilets and to teach students about the harm such images cause.

Help

Victims of image-based abuse can consult the police on #9110 or the national helpline for sexual violence, #8891.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

In-fa to pass the Marianas, Page 3.

Reporter in Moscow seen, Page 4.

Trump: Brazil vote 'rigged', Page 7.

Israel votes today, Page 6.

Anthropic files for IPO, Page 9.

How Yumilink grew to 51m, Page 12.

Japan Series Game 3, Page 18.

SOCIETY

Lawyers Offer a Free Nationwide Telephone Consultation on Thursday for Families of Disabled Children Struggling to Get Them Into School

Refusals by kindergartens over medical care and pressure toward special-needs schools are among the problems; the line has taken more than 150 calls since 2018

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

Families of children with disabilities who are having trouble getting them into kindergarten or school can consult lawyers free of charge by telephone on Thursday, the Tokyo Bar Association and the Second Tokyo Bar Association said, Kyodo News reported.

The line, 03-3593-0631, will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on October 29, and calls are accepted from anywhere in Japan.

Who answers

Lawyers familiar with the rights of children and of people with disabilities will take the calls.

Typical problems

Examples include being refused a place at a kindergarten because a child needs medical care, and wanting a child to attend the local school but being urged to send them to a special-needs school instead.

A long-running service

The consultation began in 2018 and has handled more than 150 inquiries.

The lawyers' message

Kawabe, one of the lawyers involved, urged anyone unsure whether their situation qualified to call anyway.

The law

Japan's law on eliminating discrimination against people with disabilities requires schools and other bodies to make reasonable accommodation, and since April 2024 that obligation has also applied to private businesses, including private kindergartens.

Medical care

Children who need medical care, such as tube feeding or suctioning, are often turned away because schools lack nurses. A 2021 law requires national and local governments to support such children and their families.

Inclusive education

A UN committee in 2022 urged Japan to move away from separate special-needs education toward inclusive schooling. The government has said it does not intend to abolish special-needs schools, arguing that they meet the needs of some children.

How placement is decided

Since the rules were revised in 2013, the local board of education decides which school a disabled child attends after weighing the child's needs and the views of parents and specialists, and is expected to respect the family's wishes as far as possible.

The gap

Problems arise when a family's wish for the local school meets a school's doubts about whether it can provide the support a child needs; such cases are among the examples the bar associations gave.

SPORTS

Mizuho PayPay Dome: Japan's First Stadium With an Opening Roof, and the Hawks' Fortress Since 1993

Three games of the Japan Series will be played there this week, starting on Tuesday night

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

The Japan Series moves on Tuesday to Mizuho PayPay Dome in Fukuoka, home of the SoftBank Hawks and the venue for Games 3, 4 and, if needed, 5.

The first of its kind

The stadium opened in 1993 as Fukuoka Dome. It was the first stadium in Japan with a roof that can open, although the roof is rarely opened for games.

Its names

It has changed names several times under sponsorship deals, becoming Fukuoka Yahoo! Japan Dome, then Fukuoka PayPay Dome and, from 2024, Mizuho PayPay Dome Fukuoka.

The capacity

It holds about 40,000 spectators for baseball.

The move to Kyushu

The Hawks moved to Fukuoka from Osaka in 1989, when the supermarket group Daiei bought the club from the Nankai railway. They played at Heiwadai Stadium until the dome opened. SoftBank bought the team in 2005.

Home advantage

The Hawks draw some of the largest crowds in the Pacific League, and their supporters have filled the dome for most of the club's title runs since it opened.

Hosting the Series

Under this year's schedule, Games 3 to 5 are in Fukuoka and Games 6 and 7, if needed, in Yokohama.

Beyond baseball

The dome is also used for concerts and other events, and a hotel and shopping complex stand beside it.

Tuesday

Game 3 begins at 6 p.m., with SoftBank leading the series 2-0.

SPORTS

Hanshin Bring Back Katsuo Hirata as Head Coach for a Third Time to Help Fujikawa Chase a Third Straight Pennant

The 67-year-old leaves the farm team, where he developed the young players behind this season's title; Yutaka Wada is expected to take over in the minors

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

The Hanshin Tigers are moving Katsuo Hirata, the manager of their second team, to the first team as head coach for next season, making him manager Kyuji Fujikawa's right-hand man as the club pursues a third consecutive Central League title, Daily Sports reported.

"It's the kind of thing that fires you up," Hirata, 67, said on Monday after Hanshin beat the Giants 1-0 in the Phoenix League at Hinata Sunmarine Stadium Miyazaki. "My job is to support the manager in every way. We have a high goal of three in a row."

Third time

It will be his third spell as head coach. He held the post in 2005 and 2023 under the former manager Akinobu Okada and helped win the league title both times; 2023 also brought Hanshin's first Japan Series title in 38 years.

The farm

Hirata began his fourth spell as second-team manager last season and has sent several young players to the first team. "I'd rather have a strong player, in mind and body, than a skilful one," is his coaching motto, the paper said.

The player

A shortstop from Nagasaki Prefecture who joined Hanshin from Meiji University, Hirata won four straight Gold Gloves from 1984 and was a member of the 1985 team that won the Japan Series.

Wada's move

Yutaka Wada, 64, this season's head coach, who managed Hanshin from 2012 to 2015, is expected to become the second-team manager, the paper reported.

New faces

Hanshin have also asked Kenji Yano, 46, a former Giants outfielder and coach who is the same age as Fujikawa, to become a batting coach, Daily Sports reported. Four coaches, including three batting coaches, will not return.

The contract

Hanshin announced on Monday that Fujikawa had agreed a contract running until 2029, after leading the club to its first back-to-back pennants.

Young players

Hirata said the young players' attitude in the Phoenix League, the autumn instructional league in Miyazaki, would count toward selection for the spring camp in February.

Next season

The aim is clear: a third straight pennant, which no Hanshin team has ever achieved.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Japan Series Game 3, Page 18.

Reading Week turns 80, Page 19.

SPORTS

Yuki Kawamura Joins the Clippers' G League Team After His NBA Contract Ends; He Opens the Season on November 6

The Japan guard is on the San Diego Clippers' training camp roster; he played 18 games for the Chicago Bulls last season

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

Yuki Kawamura, the Japan national team guard, has been placed on the training camp roster of the San Diego Clippers, the Los Angeles Clippers' affiliate in the NBA's development league, the G League, the team announced on Monday, Kyodo News reported.

The team's first game of the season is at home in Oceanside, California, on November 6, against the Phoenix Suns' affiliate.

The background

Kawamura signed with the Clippers, the club of his Japan teammate Rui Hachimura, to take part in their NBA training camp, but the contract was terminated in mid-October.

Last season

He played 18 games for the Chicago Bulls last season, averaging about 11 minutes, 3.4 points and 2.6 assists.

His path

Kawamura, a star of Japan's team at the 2024 Paris Olympics, made his NBA debut for the Memphis Grizzlies in 2024. At 172 centimetres, he is one of the smallest players to have played in the league.

The G League

The G League is the NBA's official development league. Players there can be called up by their parent club during the season.

Hachimura

Hachimura scored five points in the Clippers' defeat by the Oklahoma City Thunder on Sunday.

The road back

For Kawamura, the G League offers playing time and a chance to show the Clippers and other teams that he belongs in the NBA.

Japan's team

He remains a central figure for Japan's national team, which has relied on his speed and passing since the Paris Games.

SPORTS

Hiroshima Win Their 10th Game of the B Premier Season by 26 Points; Alvark Tokyo Score 112 and Sendai Edge Shimane by One

Kawasaki beat Utsunomiya 92-89 in a Monday round of nine games

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

The Hiroshima Dragonflies beat the Yokohama B-Corsairs 90-64 on Monday to improve to 10 wins and one defeat in the B Premier, the new top division of Japan's B.League, Kyodo News reported. Nine games were played.

Alvark Tokyo

Alvark Tokyo beat Saga Ballooners 112-88 to move to nine wins and three defeats.

Sendai

The Sendai 89ers edged the Shimane Susanoo Magic 86-85, also improving to 9-3.

Kawasaki

The Kawasaki Brave Thunders beat the Utsunomiya Brex 92-89 and are 4-7.

Nagoya

Nagoya Diamond Dolphins began the week unbeaten after eight games, having beaten Sunrockers Shibuya on Sunday.

The new league

The B Premier began this season with stricter requirements for clubs, including arenas of at least 5,000 seats and minimum revenue, in an effort to make Japanese basketball one of the strongest leagues in Asia.

The calendar

Clubs play most games at weekends, with occasional midweek rounds such as Monday's.

Next

The season runs until the spring, followed by the play-offs.

SPORTS



The umpires line up at home plate with figures from both clubs before Game 1 of the Japan Series at Yokohama Stadium on Saturday, in a file photo. SoftBank lead DeNA 2-0, and Game 3 is in Fukuoka on Tuesday. (File photo: WPM Productions)

SPORTS

SoftBank Send Left-Hander Haru Matsumoto Against DeNA's Ace Katsuki Azuma as the Japan Series Moves to Fukuoka for Game 3

The Hawks lead 2-0 after two extra-inning wins in Yokohama; three games at Mizuho PayPay Dome could decide the title, starting at 6 p.m. on Tuesday

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

The Japan Series resumes in Fukuoka on Tuesday evening, with the SoftBank Hawks two wins from a second straight title and the Yokohama DeNA BayStars needing to start winning at Mizuho PayPay Dome.

SoftBank have named Haru Matsumoto, a 25-year-old left-hander, as their starting pitcher for Game 3, and DeNA will send their ace, Katsuki Azuma, also left-handed. The game begins at 6 p.m.

Two long nights

SoftBank won both games in Yokohama in extra innings. In Game 2 on Sunday, Hotaka Yamakawa tied the score with a pinch-hit home run in the ninth, and Yuto Kawamura won it 4-3 with a solo home run in the 10th.

Preparing at the dome

Both teams' pitching staffs worked out at the dome on Monday, the travel day, with the starters playing catch and doing other light work, Kyodo News reported. Some DeNA position players also took ground balls.

Matsumoto

Matsumoto, born in Osaka, had elbow ligament replacement surgery while at Asia University and recovered to help it win the national collegiate championship in his final year. SoftBank drafted him in the fifth round in 2022, and he made his debut in June 2023. He was part of the team that won the Japan Series last year.

Azuma

Azuma, 30, from Mie Prefecture, joined DeNA from Ritsumeikan University as a first-round draft pick and won the Central League's Rookie of the Year award in 2018. He led the league with 16 wins in 2023 and is the anchor of DeNA's rotation.

The numbers

Teams that have won the first two games of a Japan Series have gone on to take the title 28 times in 37 series, about 76 per cent, Kyodo said. But SoftBank know the other side of that statistic: in 2024 they won the first two games against DeNA and then lost four in a row.

The schedule

Games 3, 4 and 5 are in Fukuoka on Tuesday, Wednesday and, if needed, Thursday. Games 6 and 7, if needed, would be played in Yokohama on Saturday and Sunday.

DeNA's season

DeNA finished third in the Central League and reached the Series through the Climax Series, aiming for their first title since 2024.

SoftBank's aim

A win in Game 3 would put SoftBank one victory from back-to-back championships with two more home games to come.

Fine margins

Both games in Milwaukee were decided by a single run.

Experience

This is Tampa Bay's third World Series and Milwaukee's second. Whichever club wins will be champion for the first time.

The schedule

Game 4 and, if needed, Game 5 are also in St Petersburg. If the series goes beyond that, it returns to Milwaukee for Games 6 and 7.

The odds

Teams that have taken a 2-0 lead in the World Series have usually gone on to win it, but three wins in Florida would put the Rays one victory from the title.

Japan time

Games in St Petersburg begin at 8 p.m. Eastern time, 9 a.m. the next day in Japan.

Next

The result of Game 3 will appear in Wednesday's edition.

SPORTS

The Two Best Records in Baseball and No Title Between Them: How the Brewers and the Rays Reached the World Series

Milwaukee won 103 games and swept the Dodgers; Tampa Bay, with one of the smallest payrolls, beat Cleveland, and its ALCS hero spent eight seasons with the Brewers

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

The World Series that resumes in Florida this week is between the two clubs that won the most games in the major leagues this season, and whichever of them wins will be champion for the first time.

Milwaukee's season

The Brewers finished the regular season 103-59, the best record in baseball, which gave them home advantage in the World Series. They beat the Los Angeles Dodgers four games to none in the National League Championship Series, sealing the sweep with a 6-4 win in Los Angeles, a year after the Dodgers had swept them at the same stage on the way to a second straight title.

Tampa Bay's season

The Rays went 98-64 and beat the Cleveland Guardians four games to two in the American League Championship Series, winning the deciding Game 6 by 7-3 at Tropicana Field. Junior Caminero, who hit 42 home runs in the regular season, hit a two-run homer in the clincher.

A familiar face

The most valuable player of that series was Freddy Peralta, who started Games 2 and 6 and also pitched in Game 4. Peralta spent eight seasons with Milwaukee before joining Tampa Bay in a trade from the New York Mets at this year's trade deadline.

Doing more with less

Tampa Bay's payroll this season was 98.3 million dollars, 25th among the 30 major league clubs, according to American media. The Rays are managed by Kevin Cash, who has been in charge since 2015 and also led the club to the 2020 World Series.

The ballpark

Tropicana Field, the domed stadium in St Petersburg that hosts Games 3, 4 and 5, had its roof torn apart by Hurricane Milton in October 2024. The Rays played all their home games in 2025 at Steinbrenner Field in Tampa, the New York Yankees' spring training ground, before returning to the repaired Tropicana Field this season. The club's new owners are looking for a site for a new ballpark that could open in 2029.

The regular-season meeting

The two teams met three times at the start of the season, with Milwaukee winning two of the games.

Old histories

The Brewers began as the Seattle Pilots in 1969 and moved to Milwaukee a year later. They reached the World Series once before, in 1982, as an American League club, losing to the St Louis Cardinals in seven games. They moved to the National League in 1998, the year the Rays, then called the Devil Rays, played their first season.

Near misses

Tampa Bay changed its name to the Rays in 2008 and reached the World Series that autumn, losing to the

Philadelphia Phillies. It returned in 2020 and lost to the Dodgers.

The schedule

Game 4 is on Tuesday night in Florida and Game 5, if needed, on Wednesday night; both start at 8 p.m. Eastern time, 9 a.m. the next day in Japan. If the series goes further, Games 6 and 7 are in Milwaukee on Friday and Saturday.

SPORTS

The World Series in Japan Time

By the Sports Desk

GAME 1: Brewers 3, Rays 2, in Milwaukee.

GAME 2: Brewers 5, Rays 4, in Milwaukee.

GAME 3: Tuesday, 9 a.m., St Petersburg.

GAME 4: Wednesday, 9 a.m., St Petersburg.

GAME 5: Thursday, 9 a.m., St Petersburg, if needed.

GAME 6: Saturday, 9 a.m., Milwaukee, if needed.

GAME 7: Sunday, November 1, 9 a.m., Milwaukee, if needed.

REGULAR SEASON: Brewers 103-59, Rays 98-64.

PREVIOUS SERIES: Brewers 1982; Rays 2008, 2020.

TITLES: Neither club has won.

SPORTS

The Finalists' Japan Series Titles

By the Sports Desk

HAWKS (as Nankai): 1959, 1964.

HAWKS (as Daiei): 1999, 2003.

HAWKS (as SoftBank): 2011, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2025.

HAWKS TOTAL: 12 titles.

BAYSTARS (as Taiyo Whales): 1960.

BAYSTARS (as Yokohama): 1998.

BAYSTARS (as DeNA): 2024, beating SoftBank after losing the first two games.

BAYSTARS TOTAL: Three titles.

THIS YEAR: SoftBank lead 2-0.

AT STAKE: SoftBank's second straight title, or DeNA's second in three years.

SPORTS

Hanshin's Coaching Changes

By the Sports Desk

HEAD COACH: Katsuo Hirata, 67, from second-team manager.

HIS RECORD: Head coach in the title years of 2005 and 2023.

SECOND TEAM: Yutaka Wada, 64, expected to move from head coach.

WADA: Managed Hanshin from 2012 to 2015.

BATTING: Kenji Yano, 46, a former Giants player and coach, has been asked to join.

DEPARTING: Four coaches, including three batting coaches.

THE MANAGER: Kyuji Fujikawa, signed until 2029.

THE GOAL: A third straight Central League pennant.

THE SEASON: Hanshin's first back-to-back pennants.

AUTUMN: Young players are in the Phoenix League in Miyazaki.

SPORTS

The Sports Week Ahead

By the Sports Desk

TUE. 27: Japan Series Game 3, Fukuoka, 6 p.m.

WED. 28: Japan Series Game 4, Fukuoka; Levain Cup.

THU. 29: Japan Series Game 5, if needed.

SAT. 31: Japan Series Game 6, if needed, Yokohama.

SUN. NOV. 1: Japan Series Game 7, if needed; the Tenno Sho (Autumn) at Tokyo.

TENNIS: The Toray Pan Pacific Open at Ariake through the week.

BASKETBALL: The B Premier continues at the weekend.

NOV. 6: Yuki Kawamura's G League season opens.

NOV. 8: The Kyushu sumo tournament opens.

MLB: The World Series continues in St Petersburg.

SPORTS

Japan Series Game 3 at a Glance

By the Sports Desk

WHEN: Tuesday, 6 p.m.

WHERE: Mizuho PayPay Dome, Fukuoka.

SERIES: SoftBank lead 2-0.

GAME 1: SoftBank won in extra innings in Yokohama.

GAME 2: SoftBank 4, DeNA 3, 10 innings; Kawamura's home run won it.

SOFTBANK STARTER: Haru Matsumoto, left-hander, 25.

DENA STARTER: Katsuki Azuma, left-hander, 30.

HISTORY: Teams up 2-0 have won 28 of 37 series.

THE WARNING: SoftBank led DeNA 2-0 in 2024 and lost.

NEXT: Game 4 on Wednesday; Game 5, if needed, Thursday.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Reporter in Moscow seen, Page 4.

Trump: Brazil vote 'rigged', Page 7.

Israel votes today, Page 6.

Anthropic files for IPO, Page 9.

How Yumilink grew to 51m, Page 12.

Reading Week turns 80, Page 19.

Editorial: demands refused, Page 20.

Weather: the map and the forecast, Page 15.

SPORTS

Brewers Take a 2-0 World Series Lead to St Petersburg, Where the Rays Must Start Winning at Home in Game 3

Milwaukee won both games at home by a single run; Games 3, 4 and, if needed, 5 are at Tropicana Field, starting at 9 a.m. Japan time

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

The Milwaukee Brewers carried a two-games-to-none lead in the World Series to St Petersburg, Florida, where Game 3 against the Tampa Bay Rays was scheduled for Monday night, local time, Tuesday morning in Japan.

On Sunday's off day the Brewers held a full team practice at the Rays' ballpark, while the Rays rested all but a few of their players, Kyodo News reported. Neither club had named its Game 3 starter in the report.

Game 1

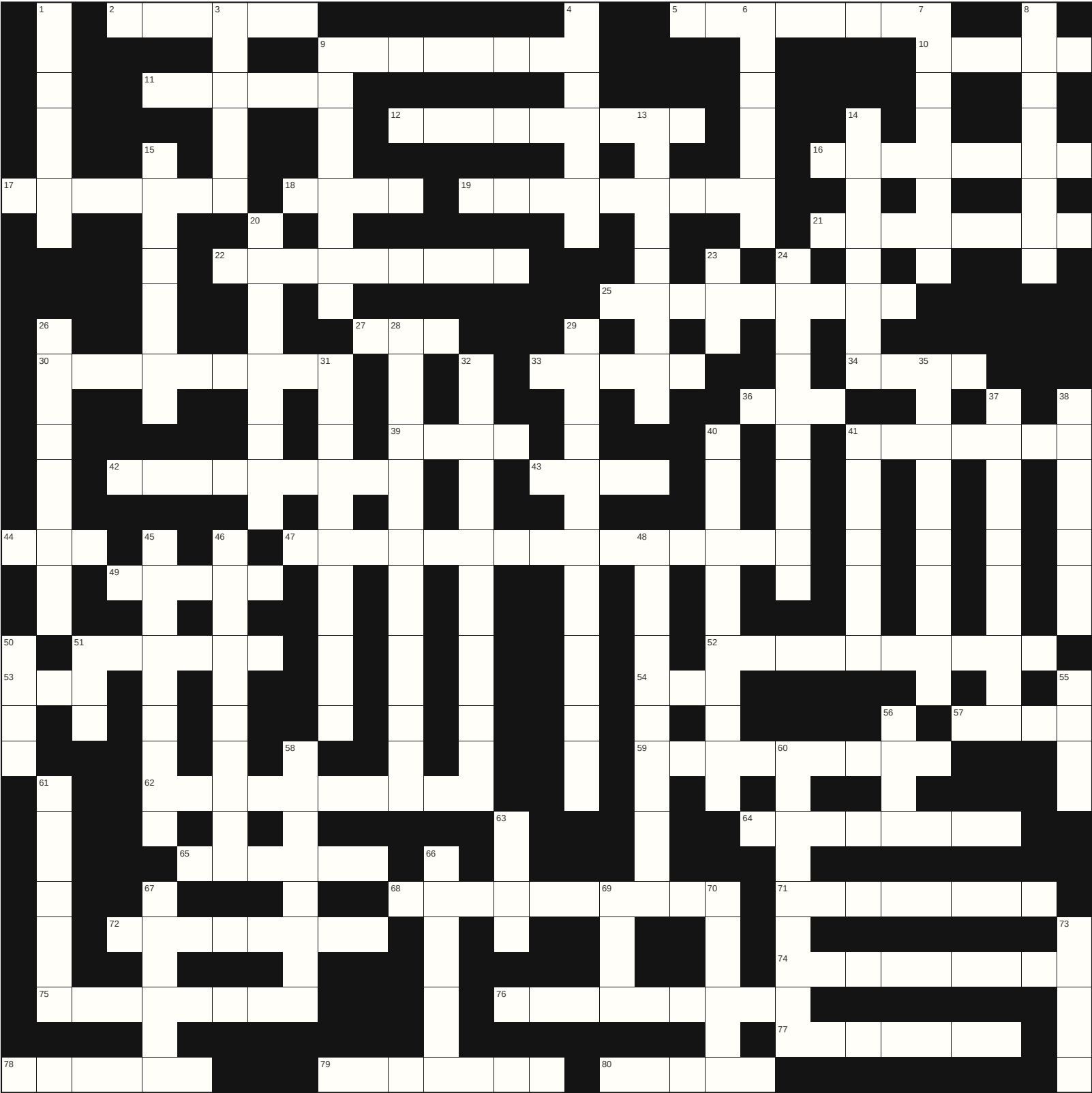
The Brewers won the opener 3-2 in Milwaukee on Friday night.

Game 2

Milwaukee came from four runs down to win Game 2 5-4 on Saturday. Tampa Bay scored four times in the first inning, but the Brewers chipped away, tied the game on Sal Frelick's home run in the sixth and went ahead on Cooper Pratt's run-scoring hit in the seventh. Their bullpen did not allow a run from the second inning on.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Today's Professional Puzzle — Constructed by James O'Neill — 83 Words



Solution will appear in tomorrow's edition. Puzzle difficulty: Professional.

SPORTS

Scoreboard

Monday's results

By the Sports Desk

B PREMIER: Hiroshima 90, Yokohama BC 64.
B PREMIER: Alvark Tokyo 112, Saga 88.
B PREMIER: Sendai 86, Shimane 85.
B PREMIER: Kawasaki 92, Utsunomiya 89.
STANDINGS: Hiroshima 10-1; Alvark Tokyo and Sendai 9-3.
PHOENIX LEAGUE: Hanshin 1, Giants 0, in Miyazaki.
JAPAN SERIES: Rest day; SoftBank lead DeNA 2-0.
WORLD SERIES: Brewers lead Rays 2-0; Game 3 in St Petersburg.
G LEAGUE: Yuki Kawamura named to the San Diego Clippers' camp roster.
TODAY: Japan Series Game 3, Fukuoka, 6 p.m.

SPORTS

Sports in Brief

By the Sports Desk

BASEBALL: Japan Series Game 3 in Fukuoka on Tuesday at 6 p.m.; Haru Matsumoto v Katsuki Azuma; SoftBank lead 2-0.
HANSHIN: Katsuo Hirata will move from second-team manager to head coach; Yutaka Wada is expected to take over the farm team.
PHOENIX LEAGUE: Hanshin beat the Giants 1-0 in Miyazaki on Monday.
BASKETBALL: Yuki Kawamura joins the San Diego Clippers of the G League; their season opens on November 6.
B PREMIER: Hiroshima 90, Yokohama BC 64; Alvark Tokyo 112, Saga 88; Sendai 86, Shimane 85; Kawasaki 92, Utsunomiya 89.
TENNIS: The Toray Pan Pacific Open continues at Ariake in Tokyo.
RACING: The Tenno Sho (Autumn) is at Tokyo on Sunday; Masquerade Ball tops the JRA's ratings ranking for Japanese horses.
SUMO: The Kyushu tournament opens in Fukuoka on November 8.
FOOTBALL: Mito HollyHock's new coach, Naoki Mori, takes charge against Cerezo Osaka in the Levain Cup on Wednesday.

BASKETBALL: Rui Hachimura scored five points for the Clippers on Sunday.

CULTURE

The 80th Reading Week Opens on Letter and Print Culture Day With the Slogan 'Quiet, but on an Adventure'

Events run until November 9 around Culture Day; the week was first held in 1947, in the hope of building a peaceful nation through books

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

Japan's 80th Reading Week begins on Tuesday and runs until November 9, with libraries, bookshops and schools across the country holding events to encourage reading.

This year's slogan, chosen by the organisers, the Reading Promotion Movement Council, is "Shizuka da kedo, boken-chu", which might be translated as "Quiet, but on an adventure". The education ministry supports the campaign.

Letter and Print Culture Day

October 27 is also Letter and Print Culture Day, created under a 2005 law to promote the written and printed word, and the first day of Reading Week.

Origins

The first Reading Week was held in November 1947, two years after the end of the war, by publishers, booksellers, libraries and newspapers who hoped to build a peaceful, cultured nation through the power of reading. From the following year it was set for the two weeks around Culture Day, November 3.

Events

Libraries hold book fairs and talks, schools run reading campaigns, and bookshops promote recommended titles.

Reading habits

In the Agency for Cultural Affairs' survey for 2023, 62.6 per cent of respondents said they did not read a single book in a typical month, up from 47.5 per cent five years earlier, with smartphones taking up more of people's time.

Bookshops

The number of bookshops in Japan has fallen sharply over the past two decades, and the government has set up a project to support them.

The slogan

The choice of words suggests the inner journey a reader takes while sitting still, a reminder that reading is one of the cheapest and quietest adventures there is.

Autumn

In Japan autumn has long been called the season for reading, when the long evenings and cool weather invite people to pick up a book.

Culture Day

Culture Day, a national holiday, is when the Order of Culture is conferred at the Imperial Palace.

CULTURE

Reading Week at a Glance

By the Culture Desk

EDITION: The 80th.

DATES: October 27 to November 9.

SLOGAN: "Shizuka da kedo, boken-chu" ("Quiet, but on an adventure").

ORGANISER: The Reading Promotion Movement Council.

SUPPORT: The education ministry.

FIRST HELD: November 1947.

WHY THESE DATES: The two weeks around Culture Day, November 3.

OCTOBER 27: Also Letter and Print Culture Day, under a 2005 law.

NON-READERS: 62.6 per cent read no books in a month, a 2023 survey found.

WHERE: Libraries, schools and bookshops nationwide.

EDITORIAL

October 27 in History

By the Research Desk

1858: Theodore Roosevelt, 26th President of the United States, is born in New York.
1858: Makoto Saito, later Prime Minister of Japan, is born.
1904: New York's first subway line opens.
1938: DuPont announces nylon.
1961: NASA flies the first Saturn I rocket.
1962: An American U-2 is shot down over Cuba during the missile crisis.
1986: London's financial Big Bang.

DOWN

1. First country on the Pope's tour (7)
3. City forecast sunny at 26 (6)
4. Port city working with Eniwa (7)
6. Group whose travel site was breached (7)
7. Where the reporter was detained (8)
8. Rays slugger who hit 42 home runs this season (8)
9. Site of the first banner ad (8)
13. Cyber cover that must not fund ransoms (9)
14. Kind of visit made on Monday (8)
15. Brokerage that collapsed in 1997 (8)
20. Home of the Rakuten subsidiary, and Merz's first stop (9)
23. Counter Ransomware Initiative, in short (3)
24. Iranian President who met the security chiefs (10)
26. Haru, SoftBank's Game 3 starter (9)
28. Cancer found in the Pope's lung (14)
29. Top-rated horse for the Tenno Sho (two words) (14)
31. German jet that flew to Japan in 2022 (11)
32. Autumn league in Miyazaki (two words) (13)
35. Bullet train whose booking members were affected (10)
37. Attack GMO was threatened with at noon (10)
38. Gas that proved the brown dwarf (7)
40. Where the Nagoya boy's case went (two words) (11)
41. Islands around which China's coast guard sails (7)
45. B Premier club with 10 wins (9)
46. Timor-Leste's President (hyphenated name) (10)
48. Kind of attack through a vendor (two words) (11)
50. Microsoft games console business (4)
51. Network excluded from White House coverage (3)
55. Ichiban ___ Online, the prize-draw service (4)
56. Country whose President met the alliance (4)
58. Up to 40,000 of these were involved (8)
60. ___ Field, St Petersburg venue for World Series Game 3 (9)
61. Kremlin aide who announced the summit (7)
63. Expected new Hanshin farm manager (4)
66. ___ Week, now in its 80th year (7)
67. Software firm with back-office AI agents (6)
69. City of the Nobel ceremony (4)
70. Fish paste for imitation crab (6)
73. Merz's last stop (5)

1997: Circuit breakers halt the New York Stock Exchange for the first time.

2016: Prince Mikasa, the uncle of the Emperor Emeritus, dies aged 100.

TODAY: Reading Week begins; Letter and Print Culture Day.

EDITORIAL

Festivals and Events This Week

By the Culture Desk

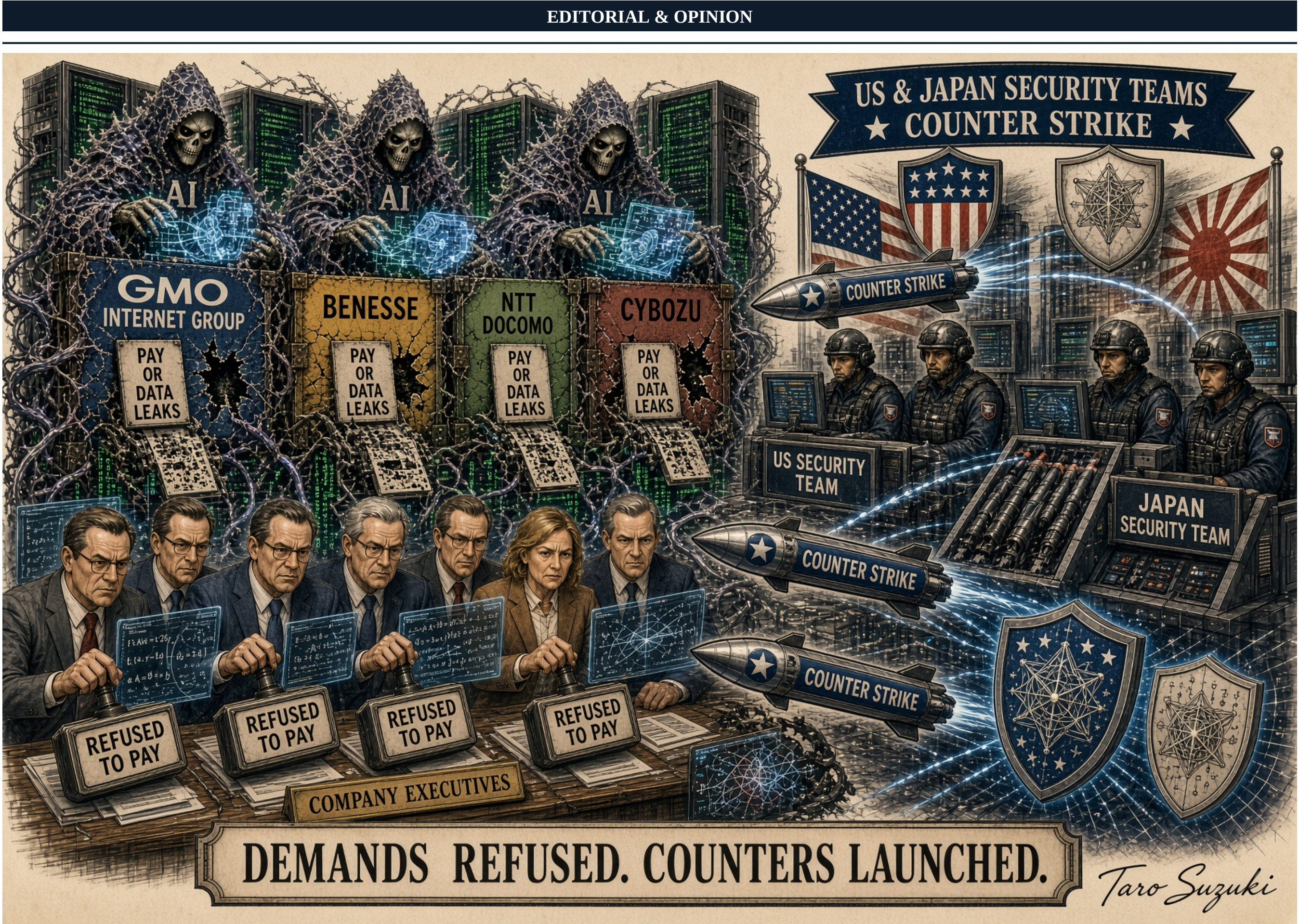
NATIONWIDE: The 80th Reading Week, from Tuesday to November 9.
TOKYO: The Tokyo International Film Festival in Hibiya, until November 4.
NARA: The Shosoin Exhibition at the Nara National Museum, until November 9.
KOCHI: The National Cultural Festival, opened by the Emperor and Empress on Sunday.
FUKUOKA: Japan Series Games 3 to 5 at Mizuho PayPay Dome, Tuesday to Thursday.
YOKOHAMA: Japan Series Games 6 and 7, if needed, October 31 and November 1.
TOKYO RACECOURSE: The Tenno Sho (Autumn), Sunday.
HALLOWEEN: Saturday, October 31.
NOVEMBER 3: Culture Day, with the Order of Culture ceremony at the Imperial Palace.
ARIAKE: The Toray Pan Pacific Open tennis, this week.

INTERNATIONAL

Taiwan's Nine-in-One Elections

By the International Desk

POLLING DAY: Saturday, November 28.
CITIES AND COUNTIES: 22.
POSTS TO FILL: 11,051.
VOTERS: About 19.65 million.
FIRST-TIME VOTERS: About 600,000.
CANDIDATES: 19,695.
TERMS: Four years.
TAIPEI: Chiang Wan-an (KMT) v Puma Shen (DPP).
NEW TAIPEI: Su Chiao-hui (DPP) v Lee Shu-chuan (KMT).
NEXT PRESIDENTIAL VOTE: January 2028.



Editorial cartoon by Taro Suzuki for The Japan Morning Post.

EDITORIAL

Demands Refused, Counters Launched: Japan Must Make Extortion Unprofitable and Make the Attackers, Not the Victims, Pay

GMO is right not to pay the people threatening its customers. The government's emergency package must turn refusal into national policy, protect the companies that refuse, and give the new defence powers, used with our allies, real force

By Samantha Ortiz | Editorial Page Editor

At noon on Tuesday, the people who broke into GMO Internet Group's Onamae.com Desktop Cloud service say they will publish the company's customers' information and launch a ransomware attack. They first demanded about 8 billion yen in crypto-assets; NHK reports that they are now asking for 1 million dollars by the deadline. GMO has said no. It is the right answer, and it should become Japan's answer.

The cartoon on this page shows a row of company executives stamping "Refused to pay" on the demands of hooded figures marked AI, while American and Japanese security teams strike back. Its caption is four words long: "Demands refused. Counters launched." The first half describes what one company did on Monday. The second half describes what the country has not yet done, and must.

Why refusing is right

GMO gave its reason plainly. Paying, it said, would not guarantee that the information already stolen would be deleted, or that it would not be misused. That is the heart of the matter. A ransom is a payment to a criminal for a promise that cannot be enforced. There is no court in which a victim can sue an extortionist for failing to delete what he took.

Experience abroad bears this out. Change Healthcare, a large American health payments company, paid a ransom of 22 million dollars in 2024, and its data surfaced again in a second round of extortion. Colonial Pipeline paid about 4.4 million dollars in 2021 to restore fuel supplies on America's East Coast; the FBI later recovered part of it, which shows that criminals can be traced, but the company's payment did not buy it safety.

Every ransom also pays for the next attack. It funds the tools, the stolen credentials and the rented servers that criminals use against the next victim. It marks the payer as a company that pays. And for a Japanese firm, it would advertise to the world that Japanese

businesses, seen abroad as wealthy and reluctant to confront wrongdoers in public, are the easiest targets on earth.

What refusal costs

Saying no is not free. GMO's customers are frightened, some have already lost money, and the attacker is now threatening them directly to put pressure on the company. A firm that refuses to pay must therefore do everything else well: tell customers the truth quickly, help them protect themselves, compensate them fairly and work openly with the police.

On those tests GMO has much to answer for, as its chairman has admitted. Masatoshi Kumagai wrote on his blog that engineers inside the company had warned of security problems before the attack and that the response had been inadequate. But on the decision that matters most this week, the company has been firm and clear. It has collected customers' computers to look for malware, told them step by step how to protect their accounts, promised compensation and warned them not to trust anyone offering to recover their money for a fee. That is what refusal should look like.

The month in numbers

GMO is not alone, and that is what makes this moment dangerous. In the space of a few weeks Japan has learned of possible leaks of up to 6 million people's data at Joshin Denki, up to 53.23 million records at Sagawa Express and data on about 6.62 million Times Car accounts. On Monday Rakuten Group said the details of up to about 2.6 million users of a Rakuten Travel overseas booking site may have been exposed, including partial card information for up to 36,000 bookings.

The e-mail delivery company Yumilink now says a cumulative 51.62 million records held for its clients may have leaked, among them the e-mail addresses and names of members of the shinkansen booking

services run by three JR companies. A Bandai Namco logistics subsidiary has reported an intrusion. A gift voucher company lost about 550 million yen when an outsider used a flaw in its system to issue vouchers. Critical flaws in PHP, the programming language behind a large share of the world's websites, have forced ministries and companies to take services offline.

Not all of these are the work of one gang, and not all involve ransoms. Some may never be explained. But together they show a country whose digital walls are being tested in many places at once, faster than its defenders can respond.

Somebody else's server

The Yumilink case deserves particular attention, because it shows how one weak point can expose millions of people who never dealt with the company that failed. The attackers, by the company's account, used a flaw in a program to obtain the credentials of a support employee, planted malicious software and extracted data from systems serving dozens of clients. Its first estimate of 9 million records has grown more than fivefold.

The railways that used Yumilink's service told their members at first that they were not affected. On Monday they had to say that they were. Japanese companies outsource a great deal of their digital work, and the law already makes them responsible for supervising contractors who handle personal data. Too often that supervision consists of a contract and a checklist. It must mean sending contractors only the data they need, checking how they protect it and being able to say at once what was shared when something goes wrong.

The state's promise

On Monday evening Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi told a meeting of ministers that the situation had become serious and that, against cyberattacks whose nature had been established, Japan would strategically select and carry out every response option, including neutralisation. She promised an emergency package of measures as early as next week. Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara said the government would decide on neutralisation whether or not anyone asked it to.

These are the right words. The active cyber defence laws enacted in May last year, whose main provisions

took effect on October 1, allow the police and, in serious cases, the Self-Defense Forces to access and disable the servers used in attacks, including servers abroad, with the approval of an independent commission. They also let the government analyse communications data to spot attacks earlier, and require operators of critical infrastructure to report serious incidents.

The powers are new and untested. Their first use will be studied by attackers, by allies and by the public. It should be chosen with care, against an adversary whose responsibility is well established, in a way that protects ordinary people and can later be explained. But a power that is never used deters nobody. If the facts support it, the government should not shrink from acting simply because the victim is a private company rather than a power grid or a hospital. An attack that drains the trading accounts of ordinary people and then threatens to publish their data is not a minor nuisance.

What "counter" means

The cartoon's American and Japanese security teams are firing missiles marked "Counter strike". The image is a cartoonist's, and it makes a serious point: defence that only absorbs blows invites more of them. But Japan's law does not authorise revenge, and it should not. Neutralisation means stopping an attack, by taking control of or disabling the servers that carry it, not punishing whoever is behind it. Punishment is the work of courts, sanctions and, where states are responsible, diplomacy.

That distinction matters, because it is what makes the new powers legitimate at home and acceptable to our partners abroad. It also matters for accuracy. Attribution in cyberspace is hard, and acting on the wrong suspect would damage innocent people and Japan's credibility. The government must take the time to be sure, and then act decisively.

The alliance in cyberspace

Japan does not face this alone, and it should not try to. The most effective blows against ransomware gangs in recent years have come from police and intelligence services working together across borders.

In February 2024 an international operation led by Britain's National Crime Agency and the FBI took down the infrastructure of LockBit, one of the most prolific ransomware groups in the world, the same

EDITORIAL & OPINION

group whose software paralysed the container terminals at the port of Nagoya in July 2023. Japan's National Police Agency took part and developed a tool to help victims recover their files. That is what counters launched looks like in practice.

In December 2024 the National Police Agency and the FBI, with American military investigators, jointly attributed the theft of about 48.2 billion yen in bitcoin from the exchange DMM Bitcoin to TraderTraitor, a group linked to North Korea. In January last year the police agency attributed a long campaign of attacks on Japanese ministries, think tanks, politicians and journalists, known as MirrorFace, to actors linked to China.

Joint attribution of this kind is a weapon in itself. It tells adversaries that they have been seen, it shows the public that the government knows what it is facing, and it lays the ground for sanctions and prosecutions. The emergency package should commit Japan to doing more of it, with the United States and with other partners such as Britain, Australia and the European Union.

Who is attacking

We do not know who broke into GMO's service, Joshin's networks or Yumilink's systems, and it would be wrong to guess. Much of the world's ransomware is the work of criminal groups whose members operate from countries that will not extradite them, above all Russia. North Korea steals crypto-assets on an industrial scale to fund its weapons programmes. Groups linked to China conduct espionage against Japanese institutions.

What these actors have in common is that they treat Japan as a rich target with weak defences and few consequences. Changing that calculation is the purpose of deterrence. It requires defences that are harder to breach, investigations that end in names and indictments, and the credible possibility that attack infrastructure will be taken down.

Never pay: from slogan to policy

In November 2023 Japan joined other members of the International Counter Ransomware Initiative in a statement that governments should not pay ransoms. That pledge binds the state, not companies. The emergency package should go further.

First, the government should state clearly, as a matter of national policy, that it expects companies and public bodies not to pay ransoms, and it should explain why. A firm that is told by the state that refusing is the right thing to do is in a stronger position with its board, its customers and its insurers.

Second, any organisation that receives an extortion demand should be required to report it promptly to the police and to the National Cybersecurity Office, whether or not it pays. At present Japan does not know how many companies are being extorted, how much is being demanded, or how much is being paid. Without that information, the state is fighting blind.

Third, if a company does pay, it should be required to say so to the authorities, so that investigators can trace the money. Several of our allies are moving in this direction. Britain has proposed banning ransom payments by public bodies and operators of critical national infrastructure and requiring other victims to notify the government before paying. Japan should study that approach seriously.

Protect those who refuse

A policy that tells companies not to pay must also help them survive the consequences. The emergency package should provide rapid technical help to victims, especially small and medium-sized businesses, which accounted for about 63 per cent of the ransomware cases reported to the National Police Agency in 2024. Many have no security staff at all.

It should also ensure that customers whose data is published are protected, through quick warnings about fraud and support from consumer and police hotlines. GMO's decision to examine customers' computers itself is admirable, but a smaller company could not do the same. The state should be able to send experts where they are needed.

Lead by example

The state should also put its own house in order. Ministries, local governments, hospitals and schools hold some of the most sensitive data in the country, and they have been hit before. In October 2021 a ransomware attack encrypted the electronic medical records of Handa Hospital in Tsurugi, Tokushima Prefecture, and it took about two months to restore

normal services. A year later an attack on Osaka General Medical Center forced it to suspend emergency care and many routine services for weeks.

Both cases showed how much depends on unglamorous preparations: offline backups, rehearsed recovery plans and contracts with suppliers that set out who is responsible for what. Every public body should be able to answer, today, how long it would take to restore its essential systems from scratch, and whether it has ever tried. The emergency package should require them to find out.

Insurers and advisers

Cyber insurance can help companies recover from attacks, and it can push them to adopt better defences as a condition of cover. It must not become a way of financing extortion. Insurers operating in Japan should be expected to make clear that their policies are not a source of ransom money, and to use their leverage to demand basic precautions from the companies they insure.

The same goes for the consultants and negotiators who advise victims. Their duty should be to help companies recover and report, not to broker payments quietly. If Japan is serious about refusal, the whole industry around incidents must be pulling in the same direction.

Measure what matters

The government should publish, every year, how many attacks were reported, how many extortion demands were received, how many were paid, how many attackers were identified and how many cases ended in prosecution or the takedown of infrastructure. Policy that cannot be measured cannot be improved, and public confidence depends on seeing results.

Fix the doors

Most intrusions still begin with ordinary failures: unpatched software, reused passwords, accounts without multi-factor authentication, contractors with too much access. The PHP flaws have shown how slowly many organisations apply fixes, even when the danger is public and the remedy is available.

The government should require the operators of essential services and the suppliers of software to the state to patch critical vulnerabilities within fixed deadlines, and should publish guidance that smaller companies can actually follow. It should also press software makers to build products that are secure by default, so that safety does not depend on every customer doing everything right.

Boards and bosses

Security is still treated in too many Japanese companies as a matter for the IT department. It is a matter for the board. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry's guidelines on cybersecurity management, revised in 2023, already say that executives must lead, set budgets, understand their supply chains and prepare for incidents. Few would claim that most boardrooms meet that standard.

The GMO case should change that. A chairman has had to explain on his blog that warnings from his own engineers were not acted on in time. Every chief executive in Japan should ask this week whether the same could be said of their own company, and should ask for an honest answer.

The citizen's part

Individuals cannot stop a gang from breaking into a company's servers, but they can limit the damage. Use different passwords for different services, turn on two-step login, keep software up to date, back up important files and be wary of every message that arrives with a sense of urgency. The flood of leaked e-mail addresses and names this month means that convincing fake messages will keep coming for a long time.

People

Japan is short of security professionals, and the shortage is felt most outside Tokyo and outside large companies. The country needs more of the white-hat hackers GMO has put to work examining its customers' computers, in companies, in the police and in the Self-Defense Forces. Pay, career paths and training must reflect how valuable these people have become.

Speed

Attackers using artificial intelligence can find weaknesses, write convincing lures and move through networks faster than ever. Defenders can use the same tools, and they must. But the decisive factor

is often not technology but speed: how quickly a company notices an intruder, how quickly it tells its customers, how quickly the government decides. The emergency package should set expectations for all three.

Honesty with the public

The government should also be honest with the public about what it is doing and why. Citizens are entitled to know, in general terms, when and against whom the new powers have been used, and what the independent commission has approved. Openness after the fact is the price of secrecy in the moment, and it is what will keep public support for these powers.

The noon deadline

Nobody can say what will happen at noon on Tuesday. The attackers may publish what they have, or some of it, or nothing. They may already have sold it. They may try to infect the computers of customers who used the service. GMO's customers should follow the company's advice, run full scans, change their passwords and be suspicious of every message that asks for money or credentials.

What is certain is that refusing to pay is the only answer that does not reward the attack. The company has given it. Now the state must give the second half of the cartoon's answer.

What the package must contain

Next week's emergency package should be judged by a simple question: will it make attacking Japan less profitable and more dangerous? To pass that test it should do six things. It should make refusal to pay ransoms national policy and require the reporting of demands and payments. It should provide rapid help to victims, especially small businesses. It should set deadlines for fixing critical flaws and hold suppliers responsible for the security of their products. It should expand joint investigations and attributions with the United States and other partners. It should invest in people. And it should show that the new defence powers will be used, carefully but in earnest, when the facts justify it.

Deterrence is a choice

For years Japan treated cybersecurity as a technical problem for engineers. It is now a question of national security and of national will. The country that built the world's most reliable railways and safest cities can build digital defences to match. It needs to decide that it wants to, and to accept that defence sometimes means acting, not only enduring.

The executives in the cartoon have done their part. They refused. The question this week is whether the government, with its allies, will launch the counters the cartoon imagines: not missiles, but investigations, indictments, sanctions and, when necessary, the neutralisation of the machines being used against us. The law allows it. The public expects it. The attackers are watching to see whether we mean it.

OPINION

Merz's First Visit Is a Chance to Turn Germany's Interest in Asia Into a Lasting Security Partnership

Europe's largest economy has learned that what happens in the Taiwan Strait matters in Berlin; Tokyo should make the most of it

By William | Senior Political Analyst

Chancellor Friedrich Merz arrives in Japan on Wednesday, a year and a half into his term, and the timing of his first visit says something about Germany's priorities. He comes after Singapore and before Seoul, with economic security and the defence industry at the top of the agenda.

For most of the post-war era, Germany looked at Asia through the window of its export order books. China became its biggest trading partner, and Japan remained a respected but distant one. That has changed.

The war in Ukraine taught Germany that economic dependence on an authoritarian power can become a strategic weakness. Its experience with Russian gas is the model Japan has long feared with Chinese minerals and components.

Since 2021 the two countries have signed an agreement to protect classified information, held their first intergovernmental consultations, and signed an agreement allowing their forces to supply each other. German warships and fighter jets have come to the Indo-Pacific, and a German frigate sailed through the Taiwan Strait in 2024.

These are symbolic steps, but symbols matter. They

tell Beijing that Europe's largest economy regards the security of East Asia as its business.

The task for Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi is to make the symbols durable. Joint work on defence equipment, which Japan's looser export rules now permit, would bind the two industries together. So would co-operation on critical minerals and semiconductors.

Germany's industrial base and Japan's technology are complementary. Both countries make high-quality machinery and both face competition from China's state-backed manufacturers.

There will be limits. German companies remain heavily invested in China, and Berlin will be cautious about language on Taiwan that could provoke retaliation. Japan should not expect Germany to sound like the United States.

But Japan does not need Germany to sound like America. It needs Germany, and Europe, to understand that a crisis in the Taiwan Strait would hit European economies as surely as Russian aggression hit them.

The Siemens Energy plan for Hokkaido shows the business side of the partnership. The leaders should use this week to show the strategic side.

OPINION

The Weakest Link Is Often Somebody Else's Server, and Japanese Companies Must Start Counting What They Share

The Yumilink breach shows how outsourcing spreads risk to millions of people who never chose the supplier

By Maya Suzuki | Technology Correspondent

Members of the shinkansen booking services learned on Monday that their e-mail addresses and names may be in criminals' hands. They never dealt with Yumilink, the company that was breached. Their railway did.

That is the modern shape of a data leak. Companies hand pieces of their customers' information to dozens of suppliers, for e-mail, payments, analytics, delivery and customer support, and each supplier becomes a door into the data.

Yumilink's own account is instructive. The attackers, it said, exploited a flaw in a program, obtained a support employee's login details and planted malicious software that extracted data. The first estimate of 9 million records grew to more than 51 million as the investigation went on.

None of this is unusual. What is troubling is how little many client companies seem to know about what they have shared. The railways first said their members were not affected and had to correct themselves a week later.

The law already makes companies responsible for supervising contractors who handle personal data. In practice, supervision often means a contract and a questionnaire.

It should mean three things. Send each supplier only the data it needs: an e-mail service needs an e-mail address, not a member number and a name. Know exactly what has been shared, with whom and when. And test suppliers' defences, not just their promises.

Smaller suppliers will need help to meet higher standards, and the large companies that depend on them should provide it.

The government's emergency package should include guidance on managing supply-chain risk and encourage the use of certified security standards for service providers.

For individuals, the practical lesson is to treat every unexpected message that uses your real name with suspicion. The criminals who hold these lists are counting on familiarity to lower people's guard.

The breach wave of October will end. The habit of sharing too much with too many will not, unless companies decide to change it.

OPINION

Calling Brazil's Election Rigged Weakens America's Hand in the Region It Most Wants to Lead

Washington has real concerns about Lula's government, but questioning a clean count helps only those who want to divide the democracies

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

President Donald Trump said on Monday that Brazil's presidential election "looked like a rigged election". He offered no evidence.

OPINION

Brazil's electoral system is not perfect, but it is fast, transparent and respected. Electronic voting has been used for decades, results are known within hours, and the Superior Electoral Court has defended the system against every challenge.

Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva won the run-off by more than three percentage points, a clear margin by the standards of a polarised country.

Washington has legitimate quarrels with Lula. His government has been soft on Venezuela, warm toward China and Russia, and critical of American policy in the Middle East. Those differences deserve frank discussion.

But casting doubt on the vote itself is a different matter. It tells Brazilians that their democracy is suspect because the wrong candidate won, and it hands Lula a grievance that will rally his supporters.

It also undermines the case the United States makes elsewhere. When Washington criticises elections in Venezuela or Russia, it relies on the credibility of its judgment. That credibility is spent each time it is used against a democracy whose result it merely dislikes.

For Japan, which has close ties with Brazil and the largest community of Japanese descent outside Japan living there, stability in Brasilia matters. A Brazil pushed toward China by quarrels with Washington would be bad for the democracies' common interests in the Pacific and the Atlantic alike.

Japan's government has kept warm relations with Brazilian leaders of left and right, and it should continue to do so.

Brazil is also a partner in the Group of 20 and a major supplier of food and minerals to Japan, interests that do not change with the party in power in Brasilia.

The best answer to Lula's foreign policy is competition: better trade terms, investment and partnership than China can offer. Doubting the ballot box is not a policy. It is a gift to the very rivals America wants to outcompete.

OPINION

China's Tokyo Trial Exhibition at the UN Is About Japan's Defence Today, Not the Judgments of 1948

Beijing uses history to cast Japan's response to China's own military build-up as militarism; Tokyo should answer with facts, calmly

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

China's mission to the United Nations opened an exhibition on the Tokyo Trial at UN headquarters on Monday. Its ambassador, Fu Cong, used the occasion to attack Japan's loosening of arms-export rules and its use of collective self-defence.

The juxtaposition is the message. Beijing wants the world to see a straight line from the Japan judged in 1948 to the Japan of Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

The line does not exist. Japan accepted the tribunal's judgments in the San Francisco Peace Treaty and has not disputed them since. In the eight decades since the war, it has been a peaceful democracy that has not waged war.

Its defence spending has risen because its neighbourhood has changed. China has carried out one of the fastest military build-ups of modern times, sends its coast guard into the waters around the Senkaku Islands and holds exercises around Taiwan. North Korea has fired missiles over Japan.

When China accuses Japan of "new militarism", it asks the world to judge the defender by the standards of 1941 and the challenger by none at all.

That is why Japan should take the exhibition seriously without overreacting. Most diplomats in New York know the difference between history and current affairs.

The right response is calm and factual: Japan's record at the UN, its contributions to development and peacekeeping, its support for the rule of law at sea, and the transparency of its defence budget compared with China's.

Japan should also continue to acknowledge the suffering caused by the war, as its leaders have done, because that is both right and the strongest answer to the charge that it denies its past.

It would help, too, if Japan's friends spoke up. The democracies that sat in judgment in Tokyo in 1946 are today Japan's partners, and their governments know the difference between Japan's defence policy and the militarism they once fought.

Beijing's campaign will continue through the anniversary year. Each time, Japan's best argument will be its conduct.

OPINION

Two Weeks Before a Consular Visit: Russia's Handling of the Hokkaido Shimbun Reporter Is Itself a Message

The delay breached the spirit of a convention Moscow still recognises; Japan must keep up the pressure without closing every channel

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

It took Russia nearly two weeks to let Japanese diplomats see the Hokkaido Shimbun reporter it accuses of spying. The consular convention between the two countries provides for visits within four days.

The delay was not an accident. Russia uses access as leverage, granting it slowly to show who controls the case.

The reporter, whom Russian court records identify as Yuki Imai, is in good health, the Foreign Ministry says. That is a relief, but it is the beginning of a long process, not the end of one.

Russia's security service accuses him of gathering information on the mobilisation of Kuril Islands residents for the war in Ukraine. In most countries that would be called reporting.

Japan has rightly demanded his immediate release, humane treatment and fair handling. It should keep saying so, in public and in private, at every level.

It should also keep channels open. The Foreign Ministry's European Affairs director-general met a Russian official in Moscow last week. Quiet diplomacy has a role, even with a government that has made relations so difficult.

Other countries have experience of these cases. Several Western citizens held on espionage charges in Russia have gone home through exchanges negotiated over long periods. Japan has no such history with Russia, but it should learn from those who do.

The detention also sends a message to journalists. Covering Russia's Far East, which matters greatly to Japan, has become dangerous.

Newspapers will have to weigh the risks carefully. But Japan should not let Russia decide what Japanese readers are allowed to know.

The reporter's detention runs to December 12. Japan should use every day until then.

OPINION

Anthropic's Listing Will Be a Referendum on Whether the AI Boom Can Pay for Itself

A share sale of more than 100 billion dollars would test investors' patience with spending that has yet to show matching profits

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

Anthropic's decision to file for a listing on the Nasdaq exchange will turn a private bet on artificial intelligence into a public one. American media say the company could raise more than 100 billion dollars, more than three times the largest share sale on record.

The figure is a measure of how much capital the AI race now requires. On the same day, Meta announced plans to raise up to 95 billion dollars by selling shares, and SpaceX agreed to lease about 40 billion dollars of chips.

Investors have been willing to finance this spending because they believe AI will transform how work is done. The returns, so far, have come mostly to the companies selling chips and cloud services.

That is why recent weeks have seen sharp swings in technology shares whenever doubts surface. A successful listing would reassure markets that investors still believe in the long-term promise. A weak one would add to the doubts.

For Japan, the stakes are concrete. Mizuho and MUFG are among the lead underwriters. Japanese makers of chip equipment and materials depend on continued investment. And Japanese companies are among the customers deciding how much to spend on AI.

There is also a broader question. Public markets demand disclosure. A listed AI developer will have to explain its costs, risks and governance to anyone who buys a share.

That transparency is welcome. AI systems are

becoming powerful enough to matter for security, as this month's wave of attacks on Japanese companies shows.

Investors should look past the excitement to the fundamentals: revenue, costs, competition and the durability of each company's position.

Regulators, too, will be watching. A listing of this size will draw in pension funds and individual savers around the world, including in Japan, and the quality of the disclosure will matter as much as the price.

Whatever the outcome, the listing will be a landmark in the history of the technology industry, and a test of the boom that has carried markets in recent years.

OPINION

Turn It Down: Hearing Loss From Headphones Is Quiet, Gradual and Largely Preventable

The health ministry's warning deserves attention from parents, employers and the companies that make our devices

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

Watch any train carriage in Tokyo and count the people wearing headphones or earphones. It is often most of them.

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare is now warning that this habit carries a cost. Loud sound over long periods damages the hair cells of the inner ear, and once hearing loss becomes serious it is hard to reverse.

The advice is simple: keep the volume down and rest your ears for about 10 minutes every hour. Noise-cancelling devices help, because they let people hear clearly without raising the volume over the roar of a train.

The difficulty is that hearing loss is gradual. It does not hurt, and people often notice it only when conversations become hard to follow.

Young people are most at risk, because they listen for longest and their habits form early. Parents should check the volume settings on their children's devices and talk about why they matter.

Employers, too, have a role. Online meetings mean many office workers now wear headsets for hours. Breaks are good for ears as well as eyes.

Device makers can make it easier to do the right thing: clear warnings, sensible default limits and reminders when listening has gone on too long. Many phones already offer such features; they should be easier to find.

Hearing loss isolates people and is linked to other health problems in later life. Prevention costs nothing.

The ministry's videos and leaflets are a start. The message deserves repeating in schools and workplaces.

Turn it down, take a break and protect a sense that cannot easily be replaced.

INTERNATIONAL

The Mecca Defence Alliance

By the International Desk

WHAT: A collective defence framework in the Middle East.

SIGNED BY: Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan.

MONDAY: Their security chiefs met Iran's President in Tehran.

SAUDI ARABIA: Defence Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman.

TURKEY: Intelligence chief Ibrahim Kalin.

PAKISTAN: Field Marshal Asim Munir.

THE OUTCOME: Agreement to keep talking to ease tensions.

EGYPT: Parliament authorised President Sisi to send troops to Saudi Arabia.

THE THREAT: Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia from Yemen.

MEDIATION: Saudi Arabia welcomes Qatar and Pakistan's role between the U.S. and Iran.

MORE INSIDE TODAY

GMO's Attacker Threatens to Publish Customer Data and Strike With Ransomware at Noon Today as Breaches Reach Rakuten Travel, Shinkansen Booking Members and Bandai Namco — Page 1

Merz Sets Off on His First Visit to Japan as Chancellor, Seeking Closer Ties With Takaichi on Economic Security and the Defence Industry — Page 1

Shinkansen Booking Members Caught Up in the Yumilink Breach as JR Central, JR West and JR Kyushu Reverse Their Earlier All-Clear — Page 2

Pay or We Publish: How Ransom Gangs Squeeze Their Victims Twice, and Why Paying Buys Nothing Certain — Page 2

Merz in Asia: The Tour at a Glance — Page 2

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Why Hokkaido? Siemens Energy's Choice and the Long Road for Japan's Offshore Wind — Page 2

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EDITORIAL & OPINION

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

The Japan Morning Post corrects errors of fact as soon as they are identified: corrections@japanmorningpost.com. In Monday's preview of Game 3 of the Japan Series and in the week ahead, SoftBank's starting pitcher was misnamed Hare Matsumoto; he is Haru Matsumoto. In Monday's tennis report, the player who lost in the first round of the Toray Pan Pacific Open was misnamed Moka Uchijima; she is Moyuka Uchijima. The notes supplied for today's edition are Monday's list of subjects, most of which were reported in Monday's edition. They give the record restaurant bankruptcies as the first half of fiscal 2014; the figure is for the first half of fiscal 2026. They give the re-elected mayor of Niigata as Nakahara Hachii; he is Yaichi Nakahara. The technology history they list is for October 26, which Monday's edition marked; today's page covers October 27.

Not repeated today because they were reported in Monday's edition: the death of former Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and the tributes to him, including China's; the Prime Minister's ministerial meeting on cybersecurity and the promised emergency package; GMO's 7.9 billion yen demand and the share price fall; the Joshin Denki leak; the Times Car class action; the AI Act review; the Emperor and Empress in Kochi; the indictment of the U.S. Marine in Okinawa; Kadena's ban on BYD vehicles; Tomoka Nishiyama's decision to turn professional; the record restaurant bankruptcies and the rise of bento lunches; Doctor S on the Tokaido Shinkansen; the Type 25 missile exercise; the Koizumi-Hakkanen talks; the local elections in Fukushima, Naha and Niigata; Takuya Kimura's donation to Chiba; the Saganoseki demolition; FC Tokyo's 6-0 win over Mito; Haruto Takahashi's Sawamura Award; and the opening of the Tokyo International Film Festival. Items attributed to other news organisations are reported as those sources gave them. Where we could not confirm the reading of a name we give the surname only.

THE WEEK AHEAD

TUE. 27: Japan Series Game 3 at Mizuho PayPay Dome, Fukuoka, 6 p.m., Haru Matsumoto v Katsuki Azuma; Israel's general election, with exit polls at 5 a.m. Wednesday, Japan time; the local ceasefire in Oleshky due from 10 a.m. Japan time; Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi meets Bangladesh's Prime Minister, Tarique Rahman; Chancellor Friedrich Merz in Singapore; Reading Week begins. OCT. 27-28: U.S. Federal Reserve. WED. 28: Japan Series Game 4; Merz arrives in Japan; the Russia-Africa summit opens in Moscow; the Levain Cup. THU. 29: Japan Series Game 5, if needed; the European Central Bank; a free telephone consultation on schooling for disabled children, 03-3593-0631, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Merz goes on to South Korea. OCT. 29-30: Bank of Japan. FRI. 30: GMO's deadline for e-mailing customers about compensation; China's Tokyo Trial exhibition at the UN closes. SAT. 31: Japan Series Game 6, if needed, Yokohama; Halloween. NOV. 1: Japan Series Game 7, if needed; the Tenno Sho (Autumn) at Tokyo; In-fa forecast near the Ogasawara Islands; America's clocks go back. NOV. 3: Culture Day; U.S. midterm elections. NOV. 4: Tokyo International Film Festival awards. NOV. 6: GMO announces how to claim for losses; Pope Leo XIV begins his South American tour; Yuki Kawamura's G League season opens. NOV. 8: Kyushu sumo tournament opens. NOV. 9: Reading Week ends. DEC. 12: The detention order for the Hokkaido Shimbun reporter held in Moscow expires.

TYPHOON AND MARINE ADVISORIES

6 a.m. Tuesday. No. 31, In-fa: very strong typhoon in the Marshall Islands area, 14.2N, 162.5E; 965 hPa; winds 45 m/s, gusts 60; almost stationary. Storm-force winds 75 km all round; gales 330 km to the north and 220 km to the south. Forecast: 950 hPa, 50 m/s from 6 a.m. Wednesday until 3 a.m. Sunday; about 1,040 km south-south-east of Minamitorishima at 3 a.m. Thursday; through the Northern Mariana Islands on Friday, the centre line passing about 10 km south-south-west of Pagan in the afternoon; about 670 km south-south-west of Chichijima at 3 a.m. Sunday. By then the area that could have storm-force winds comes within about 40 km of Saipan and about 100 km of Iwo To, and stays about 260 km from Guam and about 370 km from Chichijima. The main islands of Japan are not affected. Emergencies at sea: 118.

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MARKET REFERENCE

Monday close, Tokyo: Nikkei 225 62,189.65, down 503.51; Topix 3,972.98, up 7.17. New York, Monday: Dow 52,361.58, up 146.42; Nasdaq 26,169.38, up 214.04, its first rise in three days; crude for December \$101.76 a barrel, down \$1.51. New York, 5 p.m.: dollar 157.43-53 yen, 66 sen stronger than Friday; euro \$1.1169-79 and 175.96-176.06 yen. Federal Reserve meets October 27-28; European Central Bank October 29; Bank of Japan October 29-30.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS

Front: Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi greeting a visitor, file photo, WPM Productions. The typhoon map, the Japan and United States weather maps and the editorial cartoon by Taro Suzuki were supplied for this edition. File photos and images reused from earlier editions, WPM Productions: Tokyo Skytree, the Senkaku Islands, Marco Rubio and Toshimitsu Motegi, Pope Leo XIV, the Onagawa nuclear plant and the line-up before Game 1 of the Japan Series. The Tokyo Stock Exchange: TG2 (CC). The Tokaido Shinkansen: Akihiko Maeda. The SpaceX Dragon spacecraft: NASA, a United States government work. Agency news photographs are not reproduced.

SYMBOLS, UNITS AND TIMES

Map symbols: sun, sunny; cloud, cloudy; cloud with strokes, rain; an arrow, one sky giving way to another; a slanting stroke, one sky with the other at times. Today's Japan map gives forecast highs and this morning's observed lows, in degrees Celsius; Monday's gave the highs observed during the day, so comparisons between the two are approximate. The U.S. map gives forecasts in Fahrenheit. Wind in metres a second (1 m/s is 3.6 km/h). Pressure in hectopascals. Storm grades: a tropical storm has winds of 17 to 24 m/s, a severe tropical storm 25 to 32 m/s, and a typhoon 33 m/s or more, strong from 33, very strong from 44 and violent from 54. Japan is 9 hours ahead of London, 8 ahead of Paris and Rome and 7 ahead of Israel; it is 13 hours ahead of New York and 16 ahead of Los Angeles until America's clocks go back on November 1. A person arrested, sent to a family court, indicted or referred to prosecutors is presumed innocent until convicted.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Police 110. Fire and ambulance 119. Coast guard 118. Disaster message dial 171. Police consultation #9110. Consumer hotline 188. Sexual violence one-stop support #8891. Child guidance centres 189. Onamae.com Desktop Cloud customers: help.onamae.com/contact or 03-5456-2560, 24 hours a day; GMO will never ask for passwords or authentication codes. Yumilink: 03-6820-0088, weekdays 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Smart EX and Express Reservation members should open the official site or

app directly rather than links in e-mails. Anyone whose data may have leaked should change reused passwords, turn on two-step verification and ignore links in unexpected messages. Schooling for disabled children, free consultation on Thursday: 03-3593-0631.

OPINION AND SOURCES

The editorial is the view of the editorial page, and today's cartoon is by Taro Suzuki. Analysis articles are the judgment of their writers. Reports draw on Kyodo News, including its reports carried by the Kumamoto Nichinichi Shimbun; on GMO Internet Group's reports of October 26; on the announcements of Rakuten Group, Central Japan Railway, West Japan Railway, Kyushu Railway, Yumilink, Bandai Namco Holdings, Gifty Group, Umios and Tohoku Electric Power, as reported; on Impress Watch, Daily Sports, CNN, Axios and the Agency for Cultural Affairs as cited; on the Japan Meteorological Agency; and on the U.S. National Weather Service for the American map.

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TOMORROW'S EDITION

Wednesday: Game 3 of the Japan Series, Israel's election results, the outcome of GMO's deadline, the Japan-Bangladesh summit, Chancellor Merz's arrival, the Federal Reserve's meeting, In-fa's approach to the Mariana Islands and the government's emergency cybersecurity package.

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