

Takaichi Promises a Cut in the Tax on Food and Tells Markets There Is 'No Need to Worry'; She Does Not Say Where the Money Will Come From

Opening the Diet, the prime minister protests to Washington over the killing in Naha, calls for fewer seats in the lower house and asks for a debate on the constitution; the head of the business federation wants the funding named 'as soon as possible'

By Michael Hayes | Deputy Editor, Politics & Policy, with Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent



Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi at the rostrum of the House of Representatives, in a file image. She delivered her policy speech to both houses on Monday, the first day of the extraordinary session, promising a cut in the consumption tax on food and protesting to the United States over the killing in Naha. (Photo: WPM Productions)

Prime Minister Takaichi told the Diet on Monday that she would pass a cut in the consumption tax during the session that opened that day, and that the cost would be met without borrowing. She did not say how.

The policy speech, delivered to each house in turn on the first afternoon of the extraordinary session, put the economy ahead of everything else. Ms Takaichi restated the phrase she has made her own, responsible expansionary fiscal policy, and said the tax cut was meant to give households a little more room.

On the question that has followed the proposal since it was made, she offered a sentence. The money for the tax cut and for the benefit that accompanies it would be secured without relying on deficit-financing bonds, so as to keep the confidence of the market, she said, and there was no need to worry.

Asahi Shimbun's account of the speech notes that the source of that money was not made clear. The chairman of Keidanren, Yoshinobu Tsutsui, said it should be shown as soon as possible, Sankei reports.

Before she began the speech proper, the prime minister turned to Okinawa. The arrest of a Marine from Futenma on suspicion of robbery and murder was a heinous crime, she said. It was extremely regrettable, and the Japanese government strongly protested to the American side.

The photograph on this page shows her at the same rostrum in a file image.

The tax and the sentence

The measure at the centre of the speech is a reduction in the consumption tax on food and drink, which is at present charged at eight per cent. A bill is to be put to this session, together with one creating an annual payment to people on low and middle incomes from fiscal 2030.

Ms Takaichi presented both as answers to prices. Tokyo's consumer prices rose 2.7 per cent in the year to September. Wages have risen too, but for most households more slowly.

She was careful about the bond market, which has punished other governments for unfunded promises. She would achieve a strong economy and sustainable public finances together, she said, without putting off necessary policies and reforms, and would raise the market's trust in the government by orthodox means.

She also reminded the opposition of its own record. A cut in the consumption tax had figured often among the opposition parties' proposals, she observed, and in the cross-party council on social security there had been much that the parties shared.

What she did not supply was a number, or a list. Taking the tax off food altogether would cost something like five trillion yen a year, by the finance

ministry's earlier estimates. The government has not said which spending will be reduced or which revenue raised to cover whatever it finally proposes.

The market's answer

The speech began in the lower house at seven minutes past two, with the stock market still open. By the close the Nikkei average had risen 1,637 yen, to 69,946.86, having passed 70,000 during the afternoon for the first time in about three months.

The rise had more to do with New York than with Nagatacho. Friday's weak American employment figures lowered expectations for interest rates, and four expensive shares accounted for some two-thirds of the gain. But the government will have noted that nothing in the speech disturbed it. The report is alongside.

The yen was at 157.66 to the dollar at four o'clock.

The Bank of Japan, meanwhile, is moving towards the judgment that underlying inflation has reached about two per cent, Jiji Press reports. If it says so in the outlook it publishes at the end of the month, the case for a further rise in interest rates will be stronger, and so will the cost of servicing whatever the government borrows.

Okinawa before everything

The decision to open with Okinawa was itself a signal. The governing party's candidate won the governorship there last month, and the government has no wish to see that gain undone by a crime committed within weeks.

The prime minister told both houses that she had strongly demanded of the United States full co-operation with the investigation and tighter discipline among its forces.

In Naha, at about the same hour, Governor Genta Koja was handing a letter of protest to the senior American officer on the island, Lieutenant General Benjamin Watson. He asked for a review of the Status of Forces Agreement. The general offered co-operation and concern, and no apology. The report is on the politics pages.

The governor is expected in Tokyo this week.

Seats, and the constitution

Two other passages will shape the session.

On the size of the House of Representatives, Ms Takaichi said she expected thorough discussion with a view to a reduction being achieved during this Diet. The cut is a condition of her coalition. The opposition parties mean to block it, though the Democratic Party for the People has said it could accept it on conditions.

On the constitution she said she strongly expected

ECONOMY

Nikkei Jumps 1,637 Yen and Touches 70,000 for the First Time in Three Months, Closing Just Short

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

Tokyo share prices rose sharply on Monday, and the Nikkei average briefly regained 70,000 before ending the day 53 yen below it.

The index closed at 69,946.86, up 1,637 yen, or 2.4 per cent, from Friday. It was the first close above 69,000 since August 17. During the afternoon it traded above 70,000 for the first time in about three months.

The broader TOPIX rose 54.22 points to 4,145.22. Turnover on the Prime market was about 7.75 trillion yen.

The cause was imported. The American employment report published on Friday showed only 29,000 jobs added in September, and traders concluded that interest rates in the United States would stay lower for longer. Technology shares, whose valuations depend most on cheap money, rose in New York and then in Tokyo.

Advantest, the maker of equipment for testing semiconductors, reached a record high.

The gain was concentrated to an unusual degree. Four high-priced shares accounted for about 1,084 yen of the 1,637, by Nikkei's calculation. Across the Prime market only about 56 per cent of issues ended higher.

That is a feature of the index and not of the day. The Nikkei average is calculated from share prices and not from the size of companies, so that a handful of expensive stocks can move it by hundreds of yen. The TOPIX, which is weighted by market value, rose 1.3 per cent.

The yen stood at 157.66 to the dollar at four in the afternoon, little changed.

Friday's fall of 647 yen was recovered two and a half times over.

The index has now risen by about 20,000 since the start of the year. It took thirty-four years, until February 2024, to regain the peak of 38,915 that it reached at the end of 1989, and a little over two and a half more to approach twice that figure.

The narrowness of Monday's advance is the usual caution. An index that can be lifted a thousand yen by four companies can be lowered a thousand by the same four, and each of them depends on the continued building of data centres for artificial intelligence.

Dealers said the afternoon's move through 70,000 brought out sellers who had bought near that level in the summer and had waited three months to get their money back. The index slipped below the line in the last half-hour.

Trading took place against the opening of the Diet. The prime minister's promise of a tax cut funded without new borrowing was delivered less than an hour and a half before the close, and the bond market showed no alarm.

Today brings two speeches the market has been waiting for. The finance minister, Satsuki Katayama, addresses the securities industry's annual convention at three, and the governor of the Bank of Japan, Kazuo Ueda, at 3:35. An auction of about 2.6 trillion yen of ten-year government bonds is held in the morning.

Jiji Press reports that the central bank is moving towards the view that underlying inflation has reached about two per cent, a judgment that could appear in the outlook report it publishes after its meeting on October 29 and 30.

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WEATHER — TOKYO

28°C

Low 19°C · Sunny with some cloud

Sapporo

22°

Osaka

26°

Fukuoka

24°

Naha

28°

Three typhoons. No. 27: large, strong, 950 hPa at 6 a.m.; about 750 km east-south-east of Tokyo this evening. No. 28 near Wake Island; No. 29 in the Marshall Islands. No landfall forecast. Cooler mornings from tomorrow. Full weather, Page 13.

TODAY IN BRIEF

- Diet: the prime minister promises to pass a cut in the consumption tax on food this session, funded without deficit bonds, and does not say how. Keidanren asks for the funding 'as soon as possible'.
- Okinawa: she protests to Washington over the killing in Naha. The governor hands a protest to the senior American officer, who offers co-operation and no apology.
- Markets: the Nikkei rises 1,637 to 69,946.86 after passing 70,000. The Bank of Japan is close to judging that underlying inflation has reached 2%. Its governor speaks at 3:35 p.m.
- Science: the Nobel Prize in medicine goes to Deisseroth, Hegemann and Nagel for optogenetics. Physics is announced this evening.
- World: the United States withdraws all twelve B-1 bombers from a base in England; Trump cites a threat linked to Iran. A Qilin ransomware suspect caught in Osaka is handed to Germany.
- Weather and sport: three typhoons at once; No. 27 passes 750 km from Tokyo tonight. Uta and Hifumi Abe win world judo titles. Japan win the Kirin Cup. Seibu clinch second place.

THREE TYPHOONS

- No. 27: 950 hPa; 750 km from Tokyo this evening.
- No. 28 (Nolo): 960 hPa, near Wake Island, moving west.
- No. 29 (Koguma): 1,000 hPa, Marshall Islands.
- No landfall in Japan is forecast.

TODAY

- 3 p.m.: finance minister. 3:35: the Bank's governor.
- 6:45 p.m.: Nobel Prize in Physics.
- Tokyo sunny with cloud, 28 degrees.

MARKETS

Nikkei 225	69,946.86 ▲1,637
TOPIX	4,145.22 ▲54.22
Yen, 4 p.m.	157.66 per \$
Prime turnover	¥7.75 trillion
BOJ policy rate	1.25%
Tokyo CPI, Sept.	+2.7% y/y
U.S. payrolls, Sept.	+29,000

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THE WEEK

- Wed. to Fri.: fine, cooler mornings.
- Sat. Oct. 10: Climax Series begins.
- Mon. 12: Sports Day.

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constructive and lively debate across party lines. The difficulty is that the parties favouring revision do not agree on where to begin: with a clause on emergencies, on which there is the widest support, or with the ninth article, which matters most to her own party. She is said to regard next spring as the decisive moment.

She announced that a comprehensive strategy on population would be drawn up by the end of the year. The country had to reverse the fall in births, she said, and at the same time build a form of state suited to a smaller population.

A minister's apology

The opposition's first target was not the prime minister. Kazuo Yana, the agriculture minister, withdrew and apologised for remarks in which he boasted that road budgets had been cut for towns whose mayors had not supported him.

He acknowledged that the voice on a recording of the remarks was his. He denied that he had ever approached the land ministry on the matter, and said

he would not resign.

Party leaders put their questions on the speech later in the week.

Also today

The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded on Monday evening to two Germans and an American for optogenetics, the technique of switching nerve cells on and off with light. A report is on the technology pages.

There are three typhoons on the weather map this morning, for the first time in an October in five years. The nearest, No. 27, passes well east of Tokyo this evening. The map is on Page 3.

The United States has withdrawn all twelve of its bombers from a base in England after what President Trump called a threat linked to Iran. The report is on the international pages and is the subject of today's editorial.

FROM PAGE 1

Nikkei Jumps 1,637 Yen and Touches 70,000 for the First Time in Three Months, Closing Just Short

Continued from Page 1

Markets in mainland China remain closed for the National Day holiday until Wednesday.

TYPHOONS

The Fujiwhara Effect: What Happens When Two Typhoons Come Within Reach of Each Other

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

Sankei reports this morning that the two new typhoons may influence each other's paths. The phenomenon has a Japanese name, known to forecasters all over the world.

Sakuhei Fujiwhara was a meteorologist at the Central Meteorological Observatory in Tokyo, of which he later became director. In 1921 he published a study of how two vortices in a fluid behave when they are close together.

He showed, in experiments with water and in analysis of weather charts, that they do not simply pass. Each is carried along by the circulation of the other, so that the pair revolves around a point between them.

For typhoons the interaction begins when the centres are within about 1,000 kilometres of each other, and becomes strong within a few hundred.

What follows depends on their relative size. Two storms of similar strength may circle each other for a day or more before separating. A large storm may swing a small one round itself like a stone on a string, and then absorb it. Or one may be flung off in a direction no forecast anticipated.

That last possibility is why forecasters dislike the situation. The numerical models handle a single storm well. They are less reliable when two are close, because a small error in the position of either changes the outcome for both.

A well-known case occurred in the summer of 2016, when a typhoon south of Japan was pushed south-west by another, looped, and came back to strike northern Honshu from the Pacific, a path no typhoon had taken since records began.

On today's map the forecast positions of Nos. 28 and 29 for the weekend are several hundred kilometres apart near Minamitorishima.

No. 27 will be gone by then and plays no part.

The agency's forecasts already take the interaction into account as far as the models can. The wide circles are the honest expression of what they cannot.

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TYPHOONS

No. 28 Was a Hurricane on Sunday: The Storm That Crossed the Date Line and Changed Its Title

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

Typhoon No. 28 did not form in the usual sense. It arrived.

Until Monday morning it was Hurricane Nolo, a storm of the central Pacific tracked by the American forecasters in Honolulu. At 9 a.m. Japan time it crossed the 180th meridian, the International Date Line, into the part of the ocean for which the Japan Meteorological Agency is responsible.

At that moment it became a typhoon and was given the next number in this year's sequence. It kept its name, which is Hawaiian. The notes supplied for this edition render the name as Noro and translate it as slow, which appears to be an accident of machine translation.

The difference between a hurricane and a typhoon is one of address. Both are tropical cyclones with sustained winds above a set threshold. East of the date line they are called hurricanes. West of it they are typhoons.

Japanese forecasters call such a storm a border-crossing typhoon. The last was No. 8 of 2023.

They are uncommon because of distance. A storm must hold together across several thousand kilometres of ocean, and most that form near Hawaii weaken or turn north before they reach the line.

Nolo is a very strong storm this morning, with a central pressure of 960 hectopascals. It is moving west at 25 kilometres an hour, faster than either of the other two.

The forecast has it weakening steadily over cooler water, to a severe tropical storm by Thursday near Minamitorishima, Japan's easternmost island.

It is then expected to slow and turn north. Weathernews suggests it could approach Honshu around Sunday and Monday, affecting mainly the coast.

On the map supplied for this edition its position on Sunday morning is east of Japan, at 992 hectopascals.

TYPHOONS

The Line Where a Hurricane Becomes a Typhoon, and Tuesday Becomes Monday

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The boundary that Typhoon No. 28 crossed on Monday has no physical existence and two distinct functions.

The first is the one everybody knows. The International Date Line runs down the middle of the Pacific, roughly along the 180th meridian. A traveller crossing it westward moves the calendar forward a day. Crossing eastward, the same day is lived twice.

The line exists because the Earth is round and time

zones add up. Going west around the globe, each zone is an hour earlier. After twenty-four of them a whole day has been lost, and somewhere it has to be restored.

The 180th meridian was the natural place. It is on the opposite side of the world from Greenwich, and it runs almost entirely through open ocean.

The line is not straight. It bends east to keep the whole of Russia on one side and west to do the same for Alaska's islands. In the south it makes a large detour around island nations that chose to share a date with their trading partners in Asia and Australia.

No treaty fixes it. Each country decides which side it is on.

The second function is meteorological. The meridian itself, without the bends, divides the area of responsibility of the American hurricane centre in Honolulu from that of the Japan Meteorological Agency.

A tropical cyclone that crosses from east to west is handed from one to the other. It keeps its name and changes its title, because the word typhoon is used west of the line and hurricane east of it.

The storm does not notice. Its winds were the same on both sides.

For forecasters the handover is routine. The two centres exchange data continuously and agree the position before the storm arrives.

TYPHOONS

From the Other Side of the Line: A Short History of Hurricanes That Became Typhoons

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Typhoon No. 28 belongs to a small class of storms with two careers.

The Pacific north of the equator is divided for forecasting purposes into three regions. The eastern, off Mexico, and the central, around Hawaii, are covered by American centres. Everything west of the 180th meridian is covered by Japan.

A storm that crosses from one region to another keeps the name it was given first. That is why a typhoon may carry a Hawaiian or a Spanish name.

The most recent before this week was Dora in 2023, which began off Mexico, crossed the whole of the central Pacific as a major hurricane and entered the western Pacific as Typhoon No. 8.

Hector made the same journey in 2018. In 2015, an unusually active year in the central Pacific, two storms crossed.

The most powerful was Ioke in 2006. It formed south of Hawaii, reached the highest category of intensity and held it for days as it travelled west, passing over Wake Island, where the American garrison had been evacuated, and close to Minamitorishima.

One of the longest-lived tropical cyclones on record was also of this kind. John, in 1994, lasted thirty-one days, crossed the date line westward as a typhoon and then crossed back as a hurricane.

Crossings in the other direction, from west to east, are much rarer, because the prevailing motion of tropical storms is westward.

Central Pacific names are drawn from the Hawaiian language and are used in order from a list of four sets. Because few storms form there, a single set can last several years.

Japan's numbering takes no account of origin. Nolo is No. 28 because it was the twenty-eighth storm of the year to be a typhoon in Japan's region, in whatever ocean it began.

TYPHOONS

No. 29 Is Small Today and Forecast to Be Strong by Friday; the Ogasawara Islands May See It Over the Holiday

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

The third storm on the map is the weakest and the one that forecasters are watching most closely.

Typhoon No. 29, named Koguma, is the tropical depression noted in Monday's edition near the Marshall Islands. It reached tropical-storm strength at 9 a.m. on Monday.

This morning it had a central pressure of 1,000 hectopascals and winds of 18 metres a second, the minimum for a typhoon in the Japanese classification.

It was moving slowly north-north-west.

The forecast is for steady growth. It is expected to be a severe tropical storm by early Thursday and a strong typhoon by early Friday. By Saturday the map gives 955 hectopascals and winds of 40 metres a second.

Its track runs north-west, towards Minamitorishima, which it is expected to be near over the weekend.

What happens after that is uncertain, and matters. If the storm continues west, Weathernews says, it would affect the Ogasawara Islands during the three-day weekend and the Izu Islands after it.

The islands have just come through one typhoon. Supplies there depend on a ship that sails from Tokyo about once a week and does not sail in a heavy swell.

The name Koguma is Japanese. It means the Little Bear, the constellation that contains the pole star. Each of the ten names Japan contributed to the regional list is a constellation.

The forecast circles for the weekend are wide, as they always are five days ahead. The storm's centre could be anywhere within several hundred kilometres of the plotted point.

A clearer picture should emerge by Thursday, when the first of the three storms will have gone.

TYPHOONS

The Three Storms at 6 a.m.

By the Weather Desk

NO. 27 CHOI-WAN: large, strong. 29.1 N, 145.6 E. 950 hPa. Winds 40 m/s, gusts 60. Moving north at 20 km/h.

No. 27 forecast: 960 hPa at 6 p.m.; 965 hPa Wednesday 6 a.m.; extratropical, 970 hPa, Thursday 3 a.m.

No. 27 and Tokyo: about 750 km east-south-east this evening.

NO. 28 NOLO: very strong. 25.7 N, 173.9 E. 960 hPa. Winds 45 m/s, gusts 65. Moving west at 25 km/h.

No. 28 forecast: 970 hPa at 6 p.m.; 980 Wednesday; 985 Thursday to Saturday; 992 Sunday.

No. 28 path: near Minamitorishima early Thursday; east of Japan by Saturday.

NO. 29 KOGUMA: tropical storm. 12.8 N, 167.4 E. 1,000 hPa. Winds 18 m/s, gusts 25. Moving north-north-west slowly.

No. 29 forecast: 992 hPa Wednesday; 985 Thursday; 970 Friday; 955 Saturday and Sunday.

No. 29 path: near Minamitorishima over the weekend.

Landfall in Japan: none forecast.

TYPHOONS

Three at Once: How Unusual Is It, and What Is the Record?

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The broadcasters' phrase for this morning's weather chart is triple typhoon. It is the first time three have existed on the same day in an October for five years.

In the season as a whole it is not especially rare. Three typhoons at once occur in many years, usually in August or September, when the sea is warmest and storms form in quick succession.

October is later in the season, and the storms that do form tend to be fewer and stronger.

The record for simultaneous typhoons is five. It was set in August 1960, when five were on the chart together for a short time.

Four at once has happened on a number of occasions since.

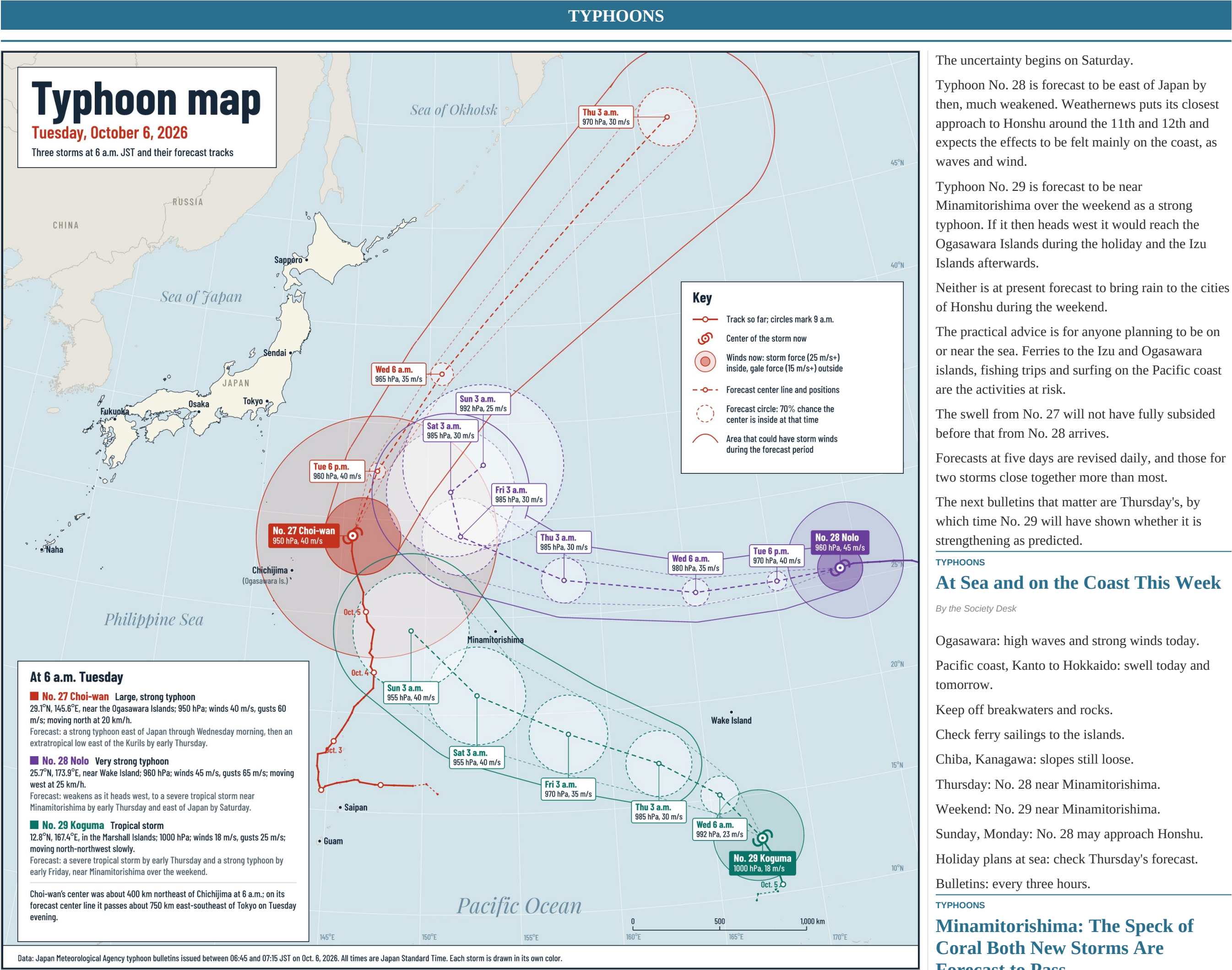
What is unusual about the present three is their arrangement. They did not form in a chain along the same breeding ground. One came up from the south past the Ogasawara Islands, one came in from the central Pacific, and one formed in the Marshall Islands.

The year's total now stands at 29. The average for a full year is about 25, and the season has nearly three months to run.

The highest annual total on record is 39, in 1967.

Counts of storms say little about damage. A year of many typhoons that stay at sea does less harm than a year with one that strikes a city.

So far this October none of the three is forecast to come ashore.



Three storms at 6 a.m. on Tuesday and their forecast tracks, in the map supplied for this edition: Typhoon No. 27 (Choi-wan) in red, No. 28 (Nolo) in purple and No. 29 (Koguma) in green. The shaded discs are each storm's present areas of storm-force winds and gales; each dashed circle is where the centre is expected to be at that time with a probability of 70 per cent. (Data: Japan Meteorological Agency typhoon bulletins issued between 6:45 and 7:15 a.m. on October 6)

TYPHOONS

Three Storms on One Map: No. 27 Leaving, No. 28 Arriving From Hawaii's Side of the Ocean, No. 29 Growing in the Marshalls

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

The map on this page shows something that has not been seen in an October for five years. There are three typhoons in the western Pacific at once.

The positions are those of 6 a.m. today, from bulletins the Japan Meteorological Agency issued between 6:45 and 7:15. Each storm is drawn in its own colour.

In red is Typhoon No. 27, Choi-wan, the storm that passed the Ogasawara Islands overnight. Its centre was at 29.1 degrees north, 145.6 degrees east, about 400 kilometres north-east of Chichijima. It is large and strong, with a central pressure of 950 hectopascals and winds of 40 metres a second, gusting to 60, and is moving north at 20 kilometres an hour.

It is weakening. The pressure was 925 hectopascals on Monday morning. The forecast gives 960 at 6

o'clock this evening, when the centre line passes about 750 kilometres east-south-east of Tokyo, and 965 on Wednesday morning. By 3 a.m. on Thursday it is expected to be an extratropical low of 970 hectopascals east of the Kuril Islands.

In purple, far to the east, is No. 28, Nolo. It was at 25.7 degrees north, 173.9 degrees east, in the region of Wake Island. It is very strong, at 960 hectopascals with winds of 45 metres a second and gusts of 65, and is moving west at 25 kilometres an hour.

It too is forecast to weaken as it comes: to 970 hectopascals this evening, 980 tomorrow and 985 by Thursday, when it will be a severe tropical storm near Minamitorishima. It is then expected to turn north and be east of Japan by Saturday.

In green, at the lower right, is No. 29, Koguma. It is a tropical storm in the Marshall Islands, at 12.8 degrees

when the forecast centre line passes about 750 kilometres to the east-south-east.

The figure has moved about from day to day: about 730 kilometres in Saturday's forecast, 770 in Sunday's, 800 in Monday's and 750 today. The timing has shifted as well, from Tuesday afternoon back to Tuesday evening.

No landfall is expected. The effect on the Pacific coast of eastern and northern Japan will be swell, which is forecast to remain high today and tomorrow.

On Wednesday the storm turns north-east and accelerates. By early Thursday it is expected to have become an extratropical cyclone east of the Kuril Islands.

The centre stayed several hundred kilometres to the east of the Ogasawara Islands throughout, as forecast. Shipping to the islands will resume when the swell subsides.

north, 167.4 degrees east, with a pressure of 1,000 hectopascals and winds of 18 metres a second, drifting north-north-west.

This is the one forecast to grow. The map gives 985 hectopascals by Thursday, 970 by Friday and 955, with winds of 40 metres a second, by Saturday and Sunday, when it is expected near Minamitorishima.

The forecast circles for the weekend overlap. Nos. 28 and 29 may come close enough to affect each other's paths, an interaction described elsewhere on this page.

None of the three is forecast to make landfall in Japan in the period the map covers.

Both new storms were named at 9 a.m. on Monday.

In Chiba and Kanagawa the ground is still loose after Typhoon No. 25, and the agency continues to advise caution even in light rain.

TYPHOONS

The Holiday Weekend: What the Two New Storms Could Mean for Saturday to Monday

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The three-day weekend that ends with Sports Day on Monday the 12th had been forecast, until yesterday, as a run of clear autumn weather. The two new typhoons have complicated that.

The forecast for the main islands through Friday has not changed. High pressure builds from Wednesday, and the mornings of the 7th to the 9th will be noticeably cooler, the Japan Weather Association says.

The uncertainty begins on Saturday.

Typhoon No. 28 is forecast to be east of Japan by then, much weakened. Weathernews puts its closest approach to Honshu around the 11th and 12th and expects the effects to be felt mainly on the coast, as waves and wind.

Typhoon No. 29 is forecast to be near Minamitorishima over the weekend as a strong typhoon. If it then heads west it would reach the Ogasawara Islands during the holiday and the Izu Islands afterwards.

Neither is at present forecast to bring rain to the cities of Honshu during the weekend.

The practical advice is for anyone planning to be on or near the sea. Ferries to the Izu and Ogasawara islands, fishing trips and surfing on the Pacific coast are the activities at risk.

The swell from No. 27 will not have fully subsided before that from No. 28 arrives.

Forecasts at five days are revised daily, and those for two storms close together more than most.

The next bulletins that matter are Thursday's, by which time No. 29 will have shown whether it is strengthening as predicted.

TYPHOONS

At Sea and on the Coast This Week

By the Society Desk

Ogasawara: high waves and strong winds today.

Pacific coast, Kanto to Hokkaido: swell today and tomorrow.

Keep off breakwaters and rocks.

Check ferry sailings to the islands.

Chiba, Kanagawa: slopes still loose.

Thursday: No. 28 near Minamitorishima.

Weekend: No. 29 near Minamitorishima.

Sunday, Monday: No. 28 may approach Honshu.

Holiday plans at sea: check Thursday's forecast.

Bulletins: every three hours.

TYPHOONS

Minamitorishima: The Speck of Coral Both New Storms Are Forecast to Pass

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The forecasts for Typhoons No. 28 and No. 29 mention the same place, and few Japanese could find it on a map.

Minamitorishima is the easternmost point of Japan. It lies about 1,850 kilometres south-east of Tokyo, alone in the ocean, more than a thousand kilometres from the nearest other land.

It is a triangle of raised coral about one and a half square kilometres in area, and nowhere more than nine metres above the sea.

Nobody lives there permanently. A few dozen staff of the Self-Defense Forces, the Meteorological Agency and the land ministry are stationed on rotation, supplied by aircraft using a short runway.

The weather station is one of the most valuable in the Pacific precisely because there is nothing near it. It also measures the background composition of the atmosphere for international monitoring.

The island is administratively part of the village of Ogasawara and therefore of Tokyo.

Its importance to Japan lies in the sea around it. The island generates an exclusive economic zone larger than the country's land area.

On the floor of that zone, about 6,000 metres down, are muds rich in rare-earth elements, the metals used in magnets and electronics. Trial recovery of the mud began this year.

The staff are accustomed to typhoons. The buildings are low and reinforced, and in the worst storms personnel have been flown out in advance.

With two storms forecast to pass within a few days of each other, whether to do so again will have to be considered this week.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Okinawa's governor protests to the general, Page 5.

Yana apologises and stays, Page 5.

American bombers leave England, Page 7.

The Bank of Japan nears a verdict on 2%, Page 8.

A Nobel for switching nerve cells with light, Page 9.

TYPHOONS

TYPHOONS

Wake Island: The Atoll Typhoon No. 28 Is Passing, and Its Place in Japanese Memory

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Typhoon No. 28 was located this morning in the region of Wake Island, a name that means more to older Japanese than to younger ones.

Wake is an atoll of three low islets around a lagoon, about 3,200 kilometres east of Tokyo and 3,700 west of Honolulu. Its land area is about seven square kilometres.

It had no inhabitants when the United States annexed it in 1899. In the 1930s an American airline built a hotel and a seaplane base there as a refuelling stop for its flying boats on the first air route across the Pacific.

The navy followed with an airfield. It was unfinished in December 1941, when Japanese aircraft bombed the island within hours of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The first Japanese landing was beaten off by the small garrison of Marines, the only time in the war that an amphibious assault was repelled by shore guns. A second, larger force took the island on December 23.

Japan held it until the surrender, under the name Otori-shima. Bypassed by the American advance and cut off from supply, the garrison of several thousand lost a large part of its strength to starvation.

After the war Wake became a refuelling stop for military transports. It is administered by the American air force and has a runway nearly 3,000 metres long, a few dozen contractors and no permanent population.

Typhoons cross it from time to time. A powerful one in 2006 damaged most of its buildings after the staff had been flown out.

The island lies west of the International Date Line.

The storm now to its north-east was a hurricane until Monday morning.

POLITICS

Emergency Powers: How Other Democracies Wrote Theirs, and Why Japan's Constitution Has None

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The clause that Japan's parties find it easiest to agree on adding to the constitution is one that most other democracies have had for generations.

The absence is deliberate. The pre-war constitution gave the emperor wide power to issue ordinances in an emergency, and governments used it to bypass the Diet. The drafters of 1946 left such powers out.

The present text has a single provision. When the lower house is dissolved, the cabinet may convene the upper house in emergency session. Anything it decides lapses unless the new lower house approves it within ten days.

That covers a few weeks. It does not cover a disaster so large that an election cannot be held when members' terms expire.

Germany faced the question in the 1960s, with the abuse of emergency decrees in the Weimar years in mind. Its solution, adopted in 1968 after long controversy, keeps parliament in charge. A small joint committee of both chambers takes over if the full parliament cannot meet, and the terms of members are extended automatically.

France took the opposite course in 1958. Its constitution allows the president to assume exceptional powers when the institutions of the republic are gravely threatened. The article has been used once, in 1961.

The United States constitution has no general emergency clause. Presidents act under statutes passed by Congress.

The Japanese drafts under discussion are closer to the German model than the French. The least controversial would do no more than extend members' terms.

The more ambitious would let the cabinet issue orders with the force of law, subject to later approval. That is the element opponents compare to the pre-war ordinances.

The earthquake of 2011 struck weeks before local elections that had to be postponed by special legislation. Supporters of a clause point to it. So do

opponents, who note that the legislation was passed.

POLITICS

Why the General Did Not Apologise, and What American Commanders Have Said Before

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

The governor of Okinawa reported after Monday's meeting that the American commander had not apologised, and gave the reason he had been offered. The suspect denies the allegation, and an apology cannot be made for something that has not been established.

The position is consistent with American legal habit. An apology by a commanding officer can be read as an admission on behalf of the accused, who is entitled to be presumed innocent, and military lawyers advise against it.

It is also consistent with what the forces have done in the past, which has varied with the state of the evidence.

In 1995 the three servicemen accused of raping a schoolgirl were in custody and the facts were not in dispute. The American ambassador and the commander of forces in Japan both apologised within days, and the president did so later.

In 2016, after a base worker was arrested over the killing of a young woman, the commander in Okinawa apologised to the governor in person, and the president expressed his regret to the prime minister.

Where a suspect has denied the charge, commanders have confined themselves to condolence, concern and a promise of co-operation. That is what General Watson offered on Monday.

The distinction is clear to lawyers. It is less so to a community that has seen the same sequence many times and measures sincerity by what is said in the first week.

The governor did not press the point. He noted that the general had spoken of co-operating with the investigation and of preventing a recurrence.

A Japanese official in the same position would probably apologise at once, for the disturbance caused if for nothing else. The expectation of that gesture, and its absence, is one of the smaller frictions in the relationship.

If the suspect is charged and convicted, an apology will follow. By then it will be months old.

POLITICS

'As Soon as Possible': The Business Federation Wants the Tax Cut's Funding Named

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The chairman of Keidanren, Yoshinobu Tsutsui, responded to the prime minister's policy speech on Monday by asking for the one thing it did not contain.

The source of funds for the reduction in the consumption tax should be made clear as soon as possible, he said, Sankei reports.

The business federation is not opposed to the government's economic programme. It has welcomed the emphasis on investment and on growth. Its concern is with the country's credit.

Japan's public debt is more than twice its annual output, the highest ratio among the advanced economies. For years that cost little, because interest rates were at zero. They no longer are. The Bank of Japan's policy rate stands at 1.25 per cent, and each rise feeds through to what the government pays on new borrowing.

Large companies borrow in the same market. When the yield on government bonds rises because investors doubt the state's finances, companies' own borrowing costs rise with it.

Mr Tsutsui, who came to the chairmanship from a life insurer, knows the bond market from the buyer's side. Insurers are among the largest holders of long-dated government debt.

The prime minister said in her speech that the money would be found without recourse to deficit-financing bonds. That rules out the simplest answer. It leaves cuts in other spending, increases in other taxes, or the natural growth of revenue as prices and wages rise.

The last is the one the government's supporters favour. Tax receipts have exceeded forecasts for

several years running. Its critics reply that a windfall cannot be relied upon to pay for a permanent reduction.

The bill itself, when it is published, will have to contain the answer.

Until then the federation's request stands as the politest form of a question the opposition will put more roughly.

POLITICS

A Prefecture Just Won, a Crime Within Weeks: Why the Government Is Hurrying to Calm Okinawa

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

The speed and the level of the government's response to the killing in Naha have a political explanation as well as a moral one, the morning papers report.

Last month the candidate supported by the governing parties won the governorship of Okinawa, ending years in which the prefecture was led by opponents of the plan to move the Futenma air station to Henoko.

For the government it was the most valuable local victory in a decade. It promised to remove the chief political obstacle to the relocation and offered a working relationship with Naha that Tokyo had not enjoyed since 2014.

The arrest of a Marine on suspicion of murder, before the new governor had settled into his office, has put that at risk. There is a sense of crisis in the government, by the papers' account, and a determination to bring the matter under control quickly.

That is the background to the prime minister's decision to protest in her own words at the start of her policy speech, and to the foreign minister's summoning of the ambassador on Sunday.

It also explains the governor's tone. Mr Koja was elected with the government's backing, and has used language as strong as any of his predecessors would have. He cannot be seen to do less.

A rally was held in Okinawa on Monday at which speakers asked how long the people of the prefecture were to go on enduring, Jiji Press reports.

The governor will come to Tokyo this week to ask the prime minister for measures against a recurrence. He has said the matter cannot be overlooked.

What he takes home will matter. If it is no more than a promise of stricter discipline, the opposition in the prefectural assembly will say that a governor friendly to Tokyo obtained nothing that a hostile one could not.

The government's interest and Okinawa's, for once, point the same way. Both need the Americans to offer something that can be shown.

POLITICS

Keidanren: The Business Lobby Whose Chairman Asked the Awkward Question

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The organisation whose chairman asked on Monday for the tax cut's funding to be named has no formal role in government and a great deal of informal weight.

Keidanren, the Japan Business Federation, was founded in 1946. Its members are some 1,500 of the country's largest companies, together with the main industry associations.

Its chairman was for decades described as the prime minister of the business world. The post has traditionally gone to the head of a great manufacturer: a steel company, a car maker, an electronics group.

Yoshinobu Tsutsui, who took office last year, broke the pattern. He came from Nippon Life, the country's largest life insurer, and is the first chairman from the financial sector.

That background colours his priorities. An insurer holds government bonds by the tens of trillions of yen and has to match them against promises to policyholders stretching decades ahead. Fiscal credibility is not an abstraction to such a company.

The federation's influence has declined from its height, when its political donations were allocated among parties by formula. It remains the body that ministers consult on tax, trade and labour law, and its annual wage guidance sets the tone for the spring pay round.

Under its recent leaders it has pressed for higher wages, which a generation ago it would have resisted, and for reform of social security to contain the burden on the working-age population.

It has supported a higher consumption tax in the past as the fairest way to pay for an ageing society. A cut therefore runs against its settled view.

Mr Tsutsui chose his words on Monday with care. He did not oppose the measure.

He asked for the arithmetic, which is what a creditor asks.

POLITICS

'Responsible Expansionary Fiscal Policy': Three Words the Prime Minister Uses, and the Argument Inside Them

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The phrase at the head of Monday's policy speech has been Ms Takaichi's slogan since before she became prime minister, and each of its words is doing work.

Expansionary is the substance. She belongs to the school in her party which holds that Japan's long stagnation was prolonged by governments that tightened too soon, raising taxes and trimming budgets whenever a recovery began.

On that view the state should spend, particularly on investment in technology, defence and infrastructure, until growth is established, and should worry about the debt afterwards. A growing economy, the argument runs, shrinks the debt relative to its size without anyone having to repay it.

Responsible is the qualification. It is addressed to the bond market and to the finance ministry, and it means that the spending is to be selective and that the ratio of debt to output is to fall over time.

The older orthodoxy, which she has set aside, was to aim for a surplus on the budget before interest payments by a fixed year. That target was missed repeatedly for two decades.

Her critics say the adjective is decoration. Spending that is not matched by revenue adds to the debt, whatever it is called, and a country that owes more than twice its output cannot assume that lenders will always be patient.

Her supporters point to the evidence of the past three years. Nominal growth has returned, tax revenue has risen faster than forecast, and the debt ratio has edged down.

The test of the phrase is what happens when the two words conflict. A tax cut is expansionary. Whether it is responsible depends on the funding she has not yet described.

In Monday's speech she offered the market a formula: a strong economy and sustainable finances together.

The market, for the moment, has taken her at her word.

POLITICS

Politics Digest

By the Politics Desk

DIET: The 222nd session opened with a ceremony attended by the Emperor in the chamber of the House of Councillors.

TAX: The prime minister said a bill to cut the consumption tax would be passed this session and funded without deficit bonds.

OKINAWA: She protested to the United States over the arrest of a Marine. The governor handed a protest to the senior American officer on the island.

AGRICULTURE: Kazuo Yana withdrew and apologised for his remarks about road budgets and declined to resign.

BUSINESS: The chairman of Keidanren asked that the tax cut's funding be shown as soon as possible.

SEATS: The opposition aims to block a reduction in lower-house seats. The Democratic Party for the People would accept it on conditions.

CONSTITUTION: The prime minister called for debate across party lines. She is said to see next spring as decisive.

POPULATION: A comprehensive strategy is to be drawn up by the end of the year.

CHINA: The speech spoke of dialogue with Beijing, Jiji Press reports.

YOKOHAMA: Campaigning continues for the mayoral election of October 18.

POLITICS



Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, in the city of Ginowan, Okinawa, seen from the air in May 2010. The Marine arrested on Sunday is assigned to the base. The governor of Okinawa protested to the senior American officer on the island on Monday. (Photo: Sonata, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0)

POLITICS

Governor Hands the General a Protest and Asks for the Agreement to Be Reviewed; the General Offers Co-operation, Not an Apology

Koja tells the senior American officer in Okinawa that discipline and human-rights education 'are not functioning at all'

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

The governor of Okinawa, Genta Koja, called the senior American officer on the island to the prefectural office on Monday afternoon and protested to him in person over the arrest of a Marine for robbery and murder.

Lieutenant General Benjamin Watson, who holds the post of Okinawa Area Coordinator, came with the American consul general. The governor handed him a written protest.

It could never be forgiven, Mr Koja told them. He was obliged to say that discipline and education in human rights among American military personnel were not functioning at all. The prefecture asked for prevention every time such a case occurred, he said.

He asked for full co-operation with the investigation, for thorough measures against a recurrence, and for a review of the Status of Forces Agreement, Kyodo News reports.

The general replied that the forces took with the utmost seriousness how much concern and anxiety this grave incident had caused the community in Okinawa. They had co-operated actively with the

The agriculture minister, Kazuo Yana, withdrew on Monday the remarks that have made him the opposition's first target of the session, and apologised for them.

The remarks were made at a party gathering in May. In a recording that became public last week, a speaker says that road budgets were cut drastically for two towns whose mayors had not supported him.

Mr Yana had already admitted making the statement. He now acknowledged that the voice on the recording was his.

He denied the substance. He had never approached the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism about either town's allocation, he said, and what he had told the gathering was not a description of anything he had done.

He said he would not resign.

That leaves the opposition with a choice of charges. If the boast was true, a member of the Diet used his influence to punish municipalities for the politics of their mayors. If it was false, a minister told his supporters that he had done so in order to impress them.

The opposition parties prefer the first reading and want to see how the two towns' allocations were decided.

The remarks date from before the present session, and the minister's defence is that they were loose talk.

Ministers have survived worse and fallen for less. What usually decides it is whether anything new emerges. A second recording, or an official who remembers a telephone call, would end the matter in a day.

Japanese investigators from the start, he said, and would go on doing so.

He did not apologise. Asked about that afterwards, the governor said the American side's position was that the suspect denied the allegation, and that an apology could not be made while the matter was not established. They had spoken of co-operation and of preventive measures, he said.

Earlier Mr Koja had summoned the director of the Okinawa Defense Bureau, Masaru Murai, and the foreign ministry's ambassador for Okinawan affairs, Masahiko Kiya, and made the same demands of the Japanese government. The mayor of Naha, Satoru Chinen, sat beside him at both meetings.

The governor described the loss of a resident's life as deeply regrettable and said he felt intense anger.

The base to which the suspect belongs, Futenma, is shown in the photograph with this report.

The suspect, a lance corporal aged 20, remains in police custody in Naha and denies the allegation.

For the moment Mr Yana stays, and the question of the road budgets will be put to him each time he rises to answer on rice.

POLITICS

Eight Per Cent on a Bag of Rice: The Tax the Prime Minister Wants to Cut, and What It Brings In

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The tax the prime minister has promised to reduce is the one Japanese people pay most often and notice most.

The consumption tax was introduced in 1989 at three per cent. It was raised to five in 1997, to eight in 2014 and to ten in 2019.

At the last increase a lower rate was created for the first time. Food and non-alcoholic drink bought to take home, and newspapers delivered on subscription, stayed at eight per cent. Meals eaten in restaurants pay ten.

The tax raises more than any other. It brings in something over 30 trillion yen a year for the national and local governments together, more than income tax or corporation tax.

By law its revenue is assigned to social security: pensions, medical care, nursing care and support for children. Those costs rise every year as the population ages.

The share of the tax collected on food at the reduced rate is roughly five trillion yen a year. That is the sum at stake if the rate on food were cut to zero.

Cutting it has a clear appeal. Poorer households spend a larger part of their income on food, so a reduction is worth proportionately more to them.

It also has a clear drawback, which economists of every school point out. Wealthy households spend more on food in absolute terms, so most of the money goes to people who do not need it. A payment aimed at low incomes costs less for the same relief.

The government proposes both: a tax cut now and a targeted payment from fiscal 2030.

The bill has not been published. The prime minister has said only that it will not be paid for with deficit bonds.

POLITICS

ANALYSIS: A Speech Written for the Bond Market, Delivered While It Was Open

By William | Senior Political Analyst

Prime ministers address the Diet. This one, on Monday, was addressing the people who buy Japanese government bonds, and the timing made the point: she rose at seven minutes past two, with nearly an hour and a half of trading left.

The passage that mattered was not the promise of a tax cut, which everyone expected. It was the assurance that the cut would be paid for without deficit bonds and that there was no need to worry.

A leader who tells markets not to worry is usually worried about them. Ms Takaichi has reason. She came to office with a reputation for favouring spending, and the yield on long-dated government debt rose in the weeks after her election as party leader.

She has seen what happened elsewhere. A British government lost office within weeks in 2022 after announcing tax cuts it could not fund. The lesson was studied in every finance ministry.

So the speech paired every expansionary sentence with a prudent one. A strong economy, and sustainable finances. Policies not postponed, and the market's trust raised by orthodox means.

The difficulty is that a sentence is not a source of revenue. Five trillion yen a year, if the tax on food went altogether, is about the size of the defence budget a decade ago.

There are respectable ways to find it. Tax receipts are running well ahead of forecasts. Some subsidies introduced as emergencies could be ended. But each has an owner in her own party.

The market gave her the benefit of the doubt on Monday. Shares rose and bond yields did not.

That benefit is a loan. It falls due when the bill is published, and the head of the business federation has already asked for the date.

The opposition will ask the same question with less courtesy. The answer she gives them will be read, first, by the people she was really talking to.

POLITICS

Fewer Seats in the Lower House: The Opposition Means to Block It, and One Party Names Its Price

By Michael Hayes | Deputy Editor, Politics & Policy

The prime minister's request that the Diet agree in this session to reduce the number of seats in the House of Representatives will meet organised resistance, the morning's reports say.

The opposition parties are aiming to stop the measure. The exception is the Democratic Party for the People, which has indicated that it could accept a reduction on conditions.

The cut is not the prime minister's own cause. It was the demand of her coalition partner, the Japan Innovation Party, which has campaigned for a smaller legislature since its origins in Osaka and made the reduction a term of the agreement under which the government was formed.

The lower house has 465 members. Of these, 289 are elected in single-seat constituencies and 176 by proportional representation in eleven regional blocks.

Where the cut falls decides who pays for it. A reduction in the proportional seats would hurt the smaller parties, which win most of their members there. A reduction in constituencies would require the boundaries to be redrawn and would take seats from rural prefectures.

That is why the smaller opposition parties object, and why the conditions of the Democratic Party for the People are expected to concern the method.

The government's argument is that politicians should share the sacrifices they ask of others. Its opponents answer that fewer members means less representation, and that the saving is trivial beside the budget.

In her speech Ms Takaichi said only that she

expected thorough discussion with a view to achieving the reduction in this Diet.

A bill that changes the electoral system has by custom been passed with the agreement of the main opposition parties.

Whether that custom survives the session is one of the things to watch.

POLITICS

From 512 to 465, and Perhaps Fewer: A Short History of the Size of the Lower House

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The House of Representatives that the prime minister wants to shrink is already the smallest it has been since the war.

The first post-war house had 466 members. The number rose with the population and with the return of Okinawa, to a peak of 512 in the late 1980s.

The electoral reform of 1994 replaced multi-member districts with the present mixture of single-seat constituencies and proportional representation, and set the total at 500.

It has been cut three times since. Twenty proportional seats were removed in 2000, making 480. Five constituencies went in 2014, making 475. A further six constituencies and four proportional seats went in 2017, making 465.

Each cut was presented as politicians sharing the public's burden, usually at the moment a tax was raised.

By international comparison the house is not large. Japan has roughly one lower-house member for every 265,000 people. Britain has one for about 105,000, Germany one for about 135,000 and France one for about 120,000. Among the large democracies only the United States has fewer representatives per head.

A smaller house saves little money. The whole Diet costs the taxpayer about a tenth of one per cent of the budget.

What a cut changes is the balance between the two kinds of seat. If proportional seats are removed, parties with thinly spread support lose members. If constituencies are removed, rural prefectures lose representation to the cities.

The Japan Innovation Party, which has made the cut its condition for governing, proposes a reduction of about a tenth.

On the present total that would mean some 45 to 50 seats, the largest single reduction ever made.

POLITICS

Two Doors Into the Constitution, and a Prime Minister Who Sees Next Spring as the Moment

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

Ms Takaichi's sentence on the constitution in Monday's speech was brief. She strongly expected, she said, constructive and lively debate across party lines.

Behind it lies a disagreement among the parties that want revision, which the morning papers describe as a gap between two proposals.

The first would add a clause on emergencies. In a great earthquake or an armed attack it would allow the terms of Diet members to be extended when elections could not be held, and, in some drafts, give the cabinet power to issue orders with the force of law.

This is the proposal on which agreement is widest. Parties that disagree about almost everything else accept that the present constitution makes no provision for a legislature that cannot be elected.

The second concerns the ninth article, by which Japan renounces war and, on its wording, armed forces. The Liberal Democrats have long wished to add a reference to the Self-Defense Forces so that their existence is beyond legal doubt.

For the prime minister's party the second is the purpose of the exercise. For several of its potential allies the first is as far as they are prepared to go.

Revision requires two-thirds of each house and then a majority in a national referendum. No amendment has been made since the constitution took effect in 1947.

The prime minister is reported to regard next spring as the decisive point. A draft would have to be agreed

POLITICS

in the constitutional commissions of both houses before a referendum could be called.

The choice before her is whether to accept the narrower amendment that could pass or hold out for the one she wants.

The opposition parties that oppose any revision will try to see that she is not offered the choice.

POLITICS

A Statement of Belief: What a Policy Speech Is, and How It Differs From the One in January

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The address the prime minister gave on Monday has a name in Japanese that translates as a statement of belief. It is one of two kinds of speech a prime minister makes to the Diet, and the distinction is observed carefully.

The other kind is the speech on administrative policy. It is delivered each January at the opening of the ordinary session, alongside speeches by the ministers of finance, foreign affairs and economic policy, and sets out the government's programme for the year with the budget.

A statement of belief is given at the start of an extraordinary or special session, or when a new prime minister takes office. It is shorter and more personal. It says what the prime minister intends in the months ahead.

Both are delivered twice, once in each house, the same text read from the same folder.

Neither is followed by an immediate vote. The response comes in the questions of the party leaders, which occupy several days in each chamber. The leader of each party speaks at length and the prime minister answers each in turn.

The speeches are drafted in the prime minister's office from material supplied by the ministries, and are revised until the morning of delivery. Prime ministers who care about language rewrite the opening and the close themselves.

Monday's departed from custom at the outset. A reference to a specific crime, before the formal opening, is rare.

There are precedents for beginning with a disaster or an incident. Speeches have opened with condolences after earthquakes, accidents and floods.

The words are studied closely by the ministries, whose budget requests depend on what was and was not mentioned.

They are studied also by the markets, which on Monday were open while she spoke.

POLITICS

What Happens Next: Three Days of Leaders' Questions, Then the Committees

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The policy speech is the first act of a session. The second, which begins after a pause of a day or two, is the reply.

Each party is allotted time in the plenary sitting of each house to question the prime minister on her speech. The leaders of the larger parties speak for themselves. Smaller parties send a senior member.

The questions are not exchanges. A leader speaks for up to half an hour, covering every subject he chooses. The prime minister then answers all of it from a prepared text, without interruption.

The questions are submitted in outline beforehand so that the answers can be drafted. This is routinely criticised as theatre. It has the merit of putting each party's priorities on the record at the start.

The lower house goes first and the upper house follows. The process takes about three days.

The real contest is in the budget committees, which sit next. There members question ministers directly, one question at a time, with television cameras present, and there is no script.

It is in the budget committee that the agriculture minister will be asked about road budgets, and the prime minister about where five trillion yen is to be found.

The government decides the length of the session when it is convened. Extraordinary sessions typically last two months and may be extended twice.

Bills go to the relevant standing committee before

returning to the plenary for a vote. A measure the government wants passed quickly can clear both houses in three or four weeks.

The consumption tax bill has not yet been introduced. Its text will be the first opportunity to see how the tax cut is to be paid for.

POLITICS

A 'Comprehensive Population Strategy' by December: The Numbers It Has to Answer

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Among the commitments in Monday's speech was one with a date: a comprehensive strategy on population, to be drawn up by the end of the year.

The prime minister described its purpose in two parts. The fall in births was to be reversed. And the country was to be reshaped for the smaller population it will have in any case.

The second part is the newer. Previous governments have spoken almost entirely of raising the birth rate.

The figures explain the change. The number of babies born to Japanese parents fell below 700,000 for the first time in 2024, to about 686,000. It was 1.2 million as recently as 2000.

The fertility rate that year was 1.15 children per woman, the lowest on record. A population holds steady at about 2.07.

Deaths exceed births by more than 900,000 a year. The population, which peaked at 128 million in 2008, is a little over 123 million and is falling by more than half a million annually.

Even if the birth rate rose tomorrow, the number of women of child-bearing age is already set by the births of the past thirty years. Decline is certain for decades.

A strategy that accepts this has to deal with matters that pronatalist policy avoids: which railway lines and schools to keep, how to staff hospitals and care homes, how many foreign workers to admit and on what terms.

The last is the most contested within the prime minister's own party.

The strategy is due as the budget for next year is compiled, so its first test will be whether it has money attached.

POLITICS

The Week Ahead

By the Politics Desk

TUESDAY, OCT. 6: Typhoon No. 27 passes about 750 km east-south-east of Tokyo in the evening. Finance minister speaks at 3 p.m., the Bank of Japan's governor at 3:35. Ten-year bond auction. Nobel Prize in Physics. World judo: women's 57 kg, men's 73 kg. Japan Open final.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 7: Typhoon No. 27 east of Japan. Nobel Prize in Chemistry. China's markets closed for the last day.

THURSDAY, OCT. 8: Typhoon No. 27 an extratropical low. No. 28 near Minamitorishima. Nobel Prize in Literature.

FRIDAY, OCT. 9: No. 29 forecast to be a strong typhoon. Nobel Peace Prize.

SATURDAY, OCT. 10: Climax Series first stages begin. Anniversary of North Korea's ruling party.

SUNDAY, OCT. 11: World judo ends. Typhoon No. 28 east of Japan.

MONDAY, OCT. 12: Sports Day, a public holiday.

THIS WEEK: Okinawa's governor visits Tokyo. Party leaders question the prime minister.

OCT. 18: Yokohama mayoral election. Asian Para Games open.

OCT. 29 AND 30: Bank of Japan policy meeting and outlook report.

INTERNATIONAL

The Service Britain Has and Japan Does Not: Who Looks for a Plot Like Fairford's

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

The arrests near Fairford were made by the police. The work that led to them belongs to an organisation Japan has no counterpart to.

The Security Service, known as MI5, was founded in 1909 to counter German espionage. Its task today is to protect the United Kingdom against threats to

national security: terrorism, espionage and sabotage by foreign states.

It has about five thousand staff. It gathers intelligence, by recruiting agents, intercepting communications under warrant and following suspects. It has no power of arrest.

When an investigation reaches the point of action, it is handed to the police, whose counter-terrorism command makes the arrests and assembles the case for court.

A separate service, MI6, gathers intelligence abroad, and a third agency intercepts foreign communications. The three work to a common set of priorities set by ministers.

Japan's arrangements are more diffuse. The security bureau of the National Police Agency and the public security divisions of the prefectural forces handle counter-espionage and counter-terrorism. The Public Security Intelligence Agency, under the justice ministry, watches extremist groups. The Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office collates. The defence ministry has its own intelligence arm.

None has the legal authority to intercept communications on the scale available to the British services, and there is no dedicated foreign intelligence service at all.

The government has said it intends to create a national intelligence bureau to pull these functions together.

Opponents warn of a return to the pre-war special police. Supporters reply that a country with fifty thousand foreign troops on its soil and three nuclear-armed neighbours cannot rely on being told things by others.

The Fairford case is likely to be cited by both.

INTERNATIONAL

Bombers and Japan: From Guam to Misawa, the Aircraft in the News Are Regular Visitors Here

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

The type of aircraft withdrawn from England at the weekend is a familiar sight in Japanese skies, and since last year on a Japanese runway.

American bombers in the western Pacific have for two decades operated mainly from Guam. Squadrons rotate through the air base there for months at a time, a practice the Air Force now calls a bomber task force.

From Guam they fly north to train with the Air Self-Defense Force. After North Korean missile tests it has become almost routine for a pair of B-1s to appear over the Sea of Japan with Japanese fighters on their wings.

In the spring of 2025 the Air Force went further and based a task force of B-1s at Misawa, in Aomori Prefecture, for the first time. The aircraft stayed for several weeks.

Misawa is shared by the American and Japanese air forces and by a civil airport. It is the northernmost of the main American bases in Japan and the closest to Russia.

The advantage of operating from Japan is time. A bomber from Misawa can reach the Korean peninsula or the waters around Taiwan hours sooner than one from Guam.

The disadvantage is the one Fairford has just illustrated. A forward base is closer to the enemy in every sense. Misawa is within range of Chinese, North Korean and Russian missiles, and its perimeter adjoins a town.

Bombers from Guam also exercise with South Korean and Australian aircraft, and the flights are announced afterwards with photographs.

Japan's own position on the visits has been supportive. The government describes them as strengthening deterrence.

The agreement under which American forces use bases in Japan requires prior consultation before major changes in deployment. Rotational visits by bombers have not been treated as falling under it.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

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INTERNATIONAL

Four Weeks to the Midterms: The Date Behind Washington's Calendar on Iran

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

Several of this week's reports from Washington mention the same date. The president is said to be considering a new round of strikes on Iran after it, and to have turned down a ceasefire proposal before it.

The date is November 3, when Americans elect a new Congress. Early voting has already begun in a number of states.

All 435 seats in the House of Representatives are contested, as they are every two years. So are 35 of the 100 seats in the Senate, and the governorships of 36 states.

The elections fall at the midpoint of a presidential term, which gives them their name. The president is not on the ballot. His party almost always loses seats.

At stake is control of both chambers. The president's party holds both. The loss of either would give the opposition the power to block legislation, to investigate the administration and to obstruct appointments.

Foreign policy is rarely decisive in such elections. The cost of living usually is. This year the two are connected, because the war with Iran has raised the price of petrol.

That is the constraint on the administration. Military action that pushed oil prices higher in October would be felt at the pump before voters went to the polls.

It is also the context in which the weak employment figures of last Friday should be read. An economy adding 29,000 jobs a month is not one an incumbent party wishes to defend.

For Japan the result matters chiefly through trade and security. A Congress controlled by the opposition would have more say over tariffs and over the conduct of the war.

Whatever the outcome, the president remains in office until January 2029.

INTERNATIONAL

World Digest

By the International Desk

WASHINGTON: President Trump said American bombers were withdrawn from a base in England because of a threat linked to Iran.

LONDON: Six men have been arrested near the base at Fairford since September 27. One has been released.

STOCKHOLM: The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine went to Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann and Georg Nagel for optogenetics. The physics prize is announced today.

TEHRAN: Iran is reported to be extending the range of its missiles.

RIYADH: The Houthi movement and Saudi Arabia continue to exchange attacks.

PARIS: A novel suspected of having been written with artificial intelligence was dropped from consideration for the Goncourt Prize.

BERLIN: A Russian suspected of belonging to the Qilin ransomware group was handed over by Japan on Friday.

KYOTO: Seventeen countries endorsed a statement on using artificial intelligence to speed scientific research.

BAKU: The Abe siblings both won world judo titles.

BEIJING: China's financial markets remain closed until Wednesday.

SANAA: The Saudi-backed Yemeni government has announced an offensive to retake the whole country from the Houthis.

TAIPEI: The first two of 66 new F-16 fighters ordered from the United States in 2019 arrived last week.

SEOUL: North Korea's ruling party marks its anniversary on Saturday. A missile was launched on October 3.

HONOLULU: The hurricane tracked by American forecasters as Nolo crossed the date line on Monday and is now Typhoon No. 28.

OSLO: The Nobel Peace Prize is announced on Friday.

INTERNATIONAL



A B-1B Lancer bomber of the United States Air Force, in a file photograph from March 2003. All twelve B-1s stationed at Fairford, in England, were flown back to the United States over the weekend, American newspapers report. (Photo: U.S. Air Force)

INTERNATIONAL

All Twelve American Bombers Leave a Base in England; Trump Says a Threat Was Detected and Points to Iran

The B-1s had been flying from Fairford against Iranian missile sites; six men have been arrested near the base since late September
By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

The United States has withdrawn every one of its strategic bombers from the British air base it has used to attack Iran, and President Trump said on Monday that it had done so because a threat had been detected.

Speaking to reporters at the White House, Mr Trump connected the threat with Iran. The people who created it had been identified, he said. He gave no details, Kyodo News reports.

American newspapers reported on Sunday that all twelve B-1 bombers stationed at Fairford, in the south of England, were flown back to the United States over the weekend. They described the move as highly unusual.

The reason given by officials was fresh intelligence that a new attack, backed by Iran, might be carried out against the base. The aircraft are of the type shown in the photograph with this article, a file image.

The withdrawal followed arrests. On September 27 police detained five British men near the base on suspicion of preparing an act of terrorism, after a report of a suspicious vehicle. On October 1 a man

holding British and Iranian nationality was arrested and later released.

The British prime minister, Andy Burnham, has said there are strong indications that Iran was involved. American and British officials increasingly believe that the Revolutionary Guards or the Iranian military command were behind it, by the newspapers' account. Iran denies any part.

Fairford has been the starting point for American strikes on the missile bases from which Iran attacks shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

Bombers are moved for many reasons, but rarely all at once and rarely home. The decision means that Washington judged the danger to the aircraft on the ground to be greater than the cost of flying missions from several thousand kilometres further away.

Mr Trump is reported to have told aides that he may resume attacks on Iran after next month's elections. There are separate reports that Iran is extending the range of its missiles.

The episode is the subject of today's editorial and cartoon.

prompted the withdrawal concerned the same group or a second one.

Iran's government says it had nothing to do with any of it.

INTERNATIONAL

The B-1: A Bomber Built for a Nuclear War and Used in Every Other Kind

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

The aircraft withdrawn from England at the weekend is the oldest idea still flying in the American bomber force, and the one that has dropped the most bombs.

The B-1 was designed in the 1970s to penetrate Soviet air defences at low level and high speed. Its wings pivot: swept forward for take-off and landing, swept back for a dash at close to the speed of sound a few hundred feet above the ground.

It was cancelled in 1977, revived in 1981 and entered service in 1986. One hundred were built.

With the end of the cold war its nuclear role was removed by treaty, and it was converted to carry conventional weapons only. It turned out to be well suited to the wars that followed.

It carries more than any other American bomber, about 34 tonnes of bombs and missiles in three internal bays, and can stay over a battlefield for hours. In Afghanistan and Iraq it delivered a large share of all the weapons dropped.

It has a crew of four and four engines with afterburners. Its range without refuelling is more than 9,000 kilometres.

Hard use has worn the fleet down. Fewer than fifty remain, at two bases, Dyess in Texas and Ellsworth in South Dakota, and the type is to be replaced by a new stealth bomber over the coming decade.

The photograph on this page was taken in March 2003 and shows an aircraft from the wing based in

South Dakota.

B-1s have been regular visitors to Japan. They have deployed to Misawa, in Aomori Prefecture, and have flown with Japanese fighters over the Sea of Japan after North Korean missile tests.

The twelve at Fairford were a quarter of the entire force.

INTERNATIONAL

Fairford: The Long Runway in the English Countryside That America's Bombers Use When There Is a War

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The base from which the bombers were withdrawn is a British air station with almost no British aircraft.

RAF Fairford lies in Gloucestershire, about 130 kilometres west of London, among stone villages and water meadows near the source of the Thames.

It was built in 1944 for the gliders and transports of the Normandy invasion. In the 1950s the runway was lengthened to more than 3,000 metres for American nuclear bombers, and it has remained an American forward base under British ownership ever since.

For most of the year it is quiet. Its purpose is to be ready. It has the hard standings, fuel and weapons storage to receive a bomber force at short notice, and is the only airfield in Europe so equipped for every type the United States flies.

The bombers come when they are needed. They flew from Fairford against Iraq in 1991, against Serbia in 1999 and against Iraq again in 2003.

This year they came for Iran. The flight to the Gulf and back takes most of a day.

The base is known to the British public for a different reason. Each July it holds one of the largest military air shows in the world, attended by well over a hundred thousand people.

That openness is part of its difficulty. The perimeter runs for many kilometres through farmland, with public roads and footpaths alongside. Protesters have cut through the fence in every war in which the base has been used.

Security is shared between the two countries. The British police and military guard the outside. The Americans guard the aircraft.

The arrests of September 27 were made by the British police, outside the wire.

INTERNATIONAL

Hired Hands: How Iran Is Accused of Operating in Europe Without Sending an Iranian

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

The men first arrested near Fairford were British. If the authorities are right about who directed them, that fits a pattern European security services have been describing for several years.

The head of Britain's domestic intelligence service said in 2024 that it had dealt with twenty plots backed by Iran since the start of 2022 that posed a potentially lethal threat to people in the country.

Most were aimed at Iranian dissidents and journalists working for Persian-language broadcasters in London. One presenter was stabbed outside his home.

A feature of these cases, by the service's account, is that the people who carry them out are rarely Iranian officials. They are recruited through intermediaries from the criminal world: drug traffickers, gang members, men who will do a job for money and may not know who is paying.

The advantages to the sponsor are obvious. A hired criminal is cheap and expendable, and if he is caught the trail leads to a middleman.

Similar cases have been reported in Sweden, where gangs were allegedly used to attack Israeli targets, and in Germany, the Netherlands and France.

Britain responded by placing Iran in the highest tier of a new register of foreign influence, which makes it an offence to act for the Iranian state in Britain without declaring it.

An attack on a military base would be a step beyond anything alleged so far. The targets until now have been individuals.

It would also be consistent with the logic of a state that cannot reach American bombers in the air and may have looked for them where they park.

Iran rejects all such accusations as fabrications. No one has yet been charged in the Fairford case.

INTERNATIONAL

The Raid Every Air Force Studied: What Happened to Russia's Bombers in June 2025

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

The fear behind the withdrawal from Fairford has a specific origin. On June 1, 2025, Ukraine attacked several Russian air bases in a single afternoon, some of them thousands of kilometres from the front.

It did so without aircraft or missiles. Over many months its security service had brought small quadcopter drones into Russia and concealed them in the roof spaces of prefabricated wooden cabins.

The cabins were loaded on to lorries, driven by Russians who had been hired for an ordinary haulage job and did not know what they were carrying, and parked at points near the bases.

At the chosen moment the roofs were opened by remote control. The drones, each carrying a small explosive charge, flew the short distance to the airfields and were steered on to bombers parked in the open.

Ukraine said it had struck more than forty aircraft. Independent analysts using satellite photographs confirmed the destruction of a smaller number, a dozen or more, including types that are no longer manufactured.

The operation was called Spider's Web.

Its implications were immediate. Russia's bombers had been protected against missiles by distance. Nothing protected them against a threat that started two kilometres away.

Air forces everywhere drew the same conclusions. Aircraft parked wingtip to wingtip on an open ramp are vulnerable to weapons costing a few hundred dollars. Shelters, netting, jammers and guns that can hit a small drone moved up the list of things to buy.

The method depended on people inside the target country who would drive a lorry without asking questions.

That is the element which, according to the British and American accounts, someone tried to arrange in Gloucestershire.

INTERNATIONAL

Iran Is Reported to Be Lengthening the Reach of Its Missiles

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

There are reports that Iran is increasing the range of its ballistic missiles, the morning's papers say, at the moment when the bombers that have been striking it have withdrawn to a greater distance.

The reports summarised for this edition give no figures.

Iran has for many years said that it limits the range of its missiles to 2,000 kilometres as a matter of policy. That is enough to reach Israel and every American base in the Middle East. It is not enough to reach western Europe.

The limit was always political and not technical. Iran has launched satellites, and a rocket that can place a satellite in orbit can carry a warhead much further than 2,000 kilometres.

The significance for Europe is direct. Fairford is about 4,000 kilometres from north-western Iran. So are the other bases in Britain and on the Continent from which American aircraft operate.

A missile of that range would have to be far more accurate than Iran's present ones to threaten an airfield with conventional warheads. It would nonetheless change the calculations of the governments that host those bases.

For Japan the development is a reminder of a familiar problem. North Korea followed the same path, from missiles that could reach its neighbours to ones that can cross the Pacific, in about twenty years.

The two countries have co-operated on missile technology in the past.

The reports come in the same week as the withdrawal of the bombers from England, and will be read alongside it.

Tehran has not commented on the reports.

ECONOMY



The Tokyo Stock Exchange at Kabutocho. The Nikkei average rose 1,637 yen on Monday to 69,946.86, after trading above 70,000 during the afternoon. (Photo: TG2 (CC))

ECONOMY

A Rally Carried by Four Shares: Inside Monday's 1,637-Yen Rise

Two-thirds of the Nikkei's gain came from a handful of expensive stocks; barely more than half the market went up
By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The Tokyo Stock Exchange, pictured here, recorded on Monday a gain of 2.4 per cent, and a closer look shows how narrow it was.

The Nikkei average rose 1,637 yen to 69,946.86. Of that, about 1,084 yen was contributed by four shares with very high prices, Nikkei reports.

Advantest, which makes the machines that test semiconductors before they leave the factory, was the most conspicuous. It reached the highest price in its history.

The breadth of the market told a quieter story. Only about 56 per cent of the shares on the Prime market rose. On Friday, when the index fell 647 yen, more than four in five had fallen.

So Friday's decline was general and Monday's recovery was selective. Investors bought the companies most closely tied to semiconductors and were lukewarm about the rest.

The trigger was the American employment report.

ECONOMY

The Bank of Japan Is Close to Saying That Underlying Inflation Has Reached Two Per Cent

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The Bank of Japan is moving towards a judgment it has withheld for more than a decade: that the underlying rate of inflation in the country has arrived at about two per cent.

Jiji Press reports that the assessment could be reflected in the outlook report the Bank publishes after its policy meeting on October 29 and 30.

The distinction between inflation and underlying inflation has been the foundation of the Bank's caution. Consumer prices have risen faster than two per cent for most of the past four years. The Bank's position has been that much of this was imported, through energy, food and the weak yen, and would fade.

Underlying inflation is what remains when those temporary influences are removed: the rate at which prices rise because wages are rising and companies expect to go on raising prices. The Bank has said repeatedly that this was approaching two per cent but had not reached it.

To say that it has would be to declare the objective of the past thirteen years achieved.

It would also remove the main argument for keeping interest rates below the level that neither stimulates nor restrains the economy. The policy rate is 1.25 per cent. Estimates of that neutral level vary, and many put it higher.

The evidence has been accumulating. Wage settlements have exceeded five per cent in successive years. Prices of services, which reflect labour costs more than import costs, have been rising steadily. Tokyo's consumer prices rose 2.7 per cent in September.

The governor, Kazuo Ueda, speaks to the securities industry this afternoon and will be listened to for any hint.

The timing is awkward for the government. A central bank preparing to raise rates and a prime minister promising to cut taxes are pulling in opposite

Only 29,000 jobs were added in September, and the unemployment rate rose to 4.2 per cent. A weaker labour market makes it less likely that American interest rates will rise and more likely that they will fall, and it is the shares of fast-growing technology companies that respond most to that.

Turnover was about 7.75 trillion yen, which is high. The index passed 70,000 in the afternoon and could not hold it. The level was last seen about three months ago.

The TOPIX rose 54.22 points to 4,145.22, a gain of 1.3 per cent against the Nikkei's 2.4.

The exchange's reform of that index, which begins this month, is intended in part to make it a better guide than the Nikkei to what the market as a whole is doing. Monday was a demonstration of the difference.

directions.

Each increase in rates also raises what the state pays to borrow, which bears on the question the prime minister declined to answer on Monday.

ECONOMY

'Underlying' Inflation: What the Bank of Japan Is Looking At When It Looks Past the Headline

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The phrase underlying inflation appears in almost every statement by the Bank of Japan and in no official statistic. It is a judgment, assembled from several measurements.

The headline figure is the consumer price index, a monthly average of the prices of several hundred goods and services. It is easily moved by a few items. A jump in the price of rice or petrol can raise it by a percentage point.

The first refinement is to leave out what is most volatile. The index excluding fresh food is the one the Bank's target is defined by. A further version excludes energy as well.

The Bank's own economists go further. They publish three measures each month designed to capture the general tendency of prices.

One is the trimmed mean. Every item is ranked by how much its price changed, the tenth with the largest rises and the tenth with the largest falls are discarded, and the average of the rest is taken.

Another is the weighted median, the change in the price of the item exactly in the middle. The third is the mode, the price change that occurs most often.

Beside these the Bank looks at wages, at prices charged between companies for services, and at surveys asking households and businesses what they expect inflation to be in five years.

If all of these settle near two per cent and stay there, inflation can be called underlying. It no longer depends on the exchange rate or on a harvest.

For most of the period since 2013 they did not. The measures rose when import prices rose and fell back afterwards.

What is different now is persistence. The measures

have stayed up after the import shock passed, because wages have taken over as the source.

ECONOMY

Today: The Finance Minister at Three, the Governor at 3:35, and 2.6 Trillion Yen of Bonds to Sell

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

Three events this afternoon and this morning will show what the people who lend to the Japanese government made of Monday's policy speech.

The first is an auction. The finance ministry offers about 2.6 trillion yen of ten-year government bonds, the benchmark maturity.

An auction is judged by how many bids are received for each yen on offer and by the gap between the average price paid and the lowest accepted. Strong demand and a small gap mean investors are comfortable. The reverse means they want a higher yield to compensate for risk.

This is the first sale of long-dated debt since the prime minister promised a tax cut without saying how it would be paid for.

At three o'clock the finance minister, Satsuki Katayama, addresses the annual convention of the securities industry. She will be expected to say something about funding. She is unlikely to say much.

At 3:35 the governor of the Bank of Japan, Kazuo Ueda, addresses the same audience. His subject will be the economy and prices.

The market will listen for two things. One is how he describes underlying inflation, following the report that the Bank is close to judging it has reached two per cent. The other is any comment on the weak American employment figures, which have made investors doubt that he will raise rates again soon.

The two readings conflict. Stronger domestic inflation argues for an increase. A slowing American economy argues for waiting.

The stock market closes at half past three, between the two speeches.

The yen, at 157.66 to the dollar on Monday afternoon, will give the quickest verdict.

ECONOMY

The Minister Who Speaks at Three: Satsuki Katayama, Guardian of a Budget Her Leader Wants to Stretch

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The finance minister who addresses the securities industry this afternoon knows the ministry she leads better than most of those who have held the post.

Satsuki Katayama joined the finance ministry from the University of Tokyo in 1982 and spent twenty-three years there. She was the first woman to serve as a budget examiner, the officials who scrutinise each ministry's spending requests line by line, and her portfolio was defence.

She left in 2005 to stand for the Diet and has sat in one house or the other for most of the time since.

When Ms Takaichi formed her government a year ago she made Ms Katayama the first woman to be finance minister in the ministry's history.

The appointment was read in two ways. To the prime minister's supporters it placed an ally who shared her expansionary instincts in the one ministry able to obstruct them. To the ministry's officials it put a former colleague, who understood their arguments, between them and a leader who did not share their caution.

Both readings have proved partly right. She has defended larger budgets than her predecessors would have. She has also been the member of the cabinet most attentive to the bond market, and has spoken repeatedly of the need to retain its confidence.

The phrase in Monday's policy speech about securing funds without deficit bonds bears the marks of her ministry.

Her task this afternoon is to give the buyers of government debt enough to keep them calm before this morning's auction results are digested and before the tax bill is published.

She speaks at three. The governor of the Bank of Japan follows at 3:35.

Between them they are responsible for the two halves

of economic policy, which this week are pointing in different directions.

ECONOMY

The Hall Where Governors Speak: This Afternoon's Convention of the Securities Industry

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The two speeches the market is waiting for today are delivered at an event that is otherwise of interest only to stockbrokers.

The national convention of the securities industry is held once a year in Tokyo by the association to which every brokerage in the country belongs. Several hundred executives attend.

By long custom the finance minister, the head of the financial regulator and the governor of the Bank of Japan each address it. The speeches are short, and for most of the past thirty years they were formal.

They have become more closely watched as monetary policy has become active again. A governor who is contemplating a change of course has few scheduled occasions on which to prepare opinion. This is one.

The audience has its own concerns. The brokerage industry has been transformed by the government's campaign to move household savings from bank deposits into investments. Tax-free investment accounts, expanded in 2024, have brought millions of first-time investors into the market.

Most of that money has gone into funds that track foreign shares, which the industry is glad of and the government less so.

The association's chairman usually takes the opportunity to ask for further tax advantages. The finance minister usually declines to promise them.

This year the exchange's reform of the TOPIX and the question of how the government will fund its tax cut give the proceedings more substance than usual.

The finance minister is to speak at three o'clock and the governor at 3:35.

The stock market closes at half past three, so that the governor's remarks will be traded first in currencies and bond futures and in shares only tomorrow.

ECONOMY

A Tax Cut Meets the Bond Market: What 'Without Deficit Bonds' Commits the Government To

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

The prime minister's assurance that the consumption tax cut will be funded without deficit-financing bonds is more specific than it sounds, and binds her more tightly.

Japanese law distinguishes two kinds of government bond. Construction bonds pay for public works, which leave an asset behind, and may be issued under the standing finance law.

Deficit-financing bonds cover ordinary spending that revenue does not. The finance law of 1947 forbids them. They are issued only under special legislation, renewed periodically, which is why the Japanese term calls them special bonds.

In practice they have been issued every year but a handful since 1975 and make up the greater part of new borrowing.

A tax cut reduces revenue. If nothing else changes, the gap is filled by exactly the kind of bond the prime minister has ruled out.

She must therefore find the money elsewhere, and there are three places. Spending can be cut. Other taxes can be raised. Or the estimate of revenue can be increased on the ground that the economy is growing faster than was assumed.

The third is the least painful and the least convincing to investors, since an estimate is not money.

The yield on the ten-year government bond is the market's running judgment. It has risen from well under one per cent three years ago to levels not seen since the 1990s, as the Bank of Japan has raised rates and reduced its purchases.

That yield is the rate at which the government refinances its debt. A sustained rise of one percentage point adds trillions of yen a year to interest costs within a few years.

Today's auction of ten-year bonds is the first occasion on which investors can respond with their money.

ECONOMY

ECONOMY

Why Four Stocks Can Move the Nikkei by a Thousand Yen

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Monday's figures contained an apparent contradiction. The Nikkei average rose 2.4 per cent, and yet nearly half the shares in the market did not rise at all.

The explanation lies in how the index is calculated, which has not changed in essence since it began in 1950.

The Nikkei average takes the share prices of 225 companies, adjusts some of them by a factor intended to make them comparable, adds them up and divides by a number that is altered whenever a company splits its shares or is replaced.

It is the prices that are added, not the values of the companies. A company whose shares trade at 50,000 yen therefore counts for fifty times as much as one whose shares trade at 1,000, whatever their relative size.

A few companies have very high share prices, because they have chosen not to split their stock. They include several makers of semiconductor equipment and one large retailer of clothing.

When those few move together, the index moves with them. On Monday four of them added about 1,084 yen.

Most of the world's major indices are built differently. They weight each company by the total value of its shares, so that the largest companies count most. The TOPIX is of this kind, as is the American index of 500 companies.

The only other famous index calculated from prices is the Dow Jones Industrial Average, from which the Nikkei's method was borrowed.

The Nikkei remains the number that newspapers and television quote, because it has been quoted for seventy-six years.

Anyone who wants to know how the average company fared on a given day should look at the other one.

ECONOMY

Advantest: The Company That Tests the Chips, and Why Its Shares Are at a Record

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The share that led Monday's rally belongs to a company whose products almost nobody outside the semiconductor industry has seen.

Advantest makes test equipment. Every chip that leaves a factory has to be checked, first while it is still part of a silicon wafer and again after it has been cut out and packaged. The machines that do this apply electrical signals to each chip and measure the response, millions of times a second.

The company was founded in Tokyo in 1954 as a maker of measuring instruments and moved into chip testers in the 1970s. It and one American rival now share most of the world market between them.

For decades testing was a steady and unglamorous business. What changed it was the arrival of the very large processors used to train and run artificial intelligence.

These chips contain tens of billions of transistors and are assembled in stacks with memory. They take far longer to test than ordinary chips, and a single undetected fault wastes a component worth thousands of dollars. The makers have responded by buying more testers and more advanced ones.

Advantest's sales and profits have multiplied in the past three years as a result.

Its shares are among the most expensive in Tokyo in yen terms, which gives the company an outsized influence on the Nikkei average. It is now one of the three or four largest weights in the index.

That is a large part of why the index can rise 2.4 per cent on a day when barely half the market goes up.

The risk is the obvious one. Demand for testers follows spending on data centres, and any pause in that spending would be felt at once.

For the moment a weak American jobs report is taken as good news for it, since lower interest rates make that spending cheaper to finance.

ECONOMY

Stacked, Hot and Expensive: Why the Chips That Run AI Have Made Testing a Growth Industry

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

The record set by a maker of test equipment on Monday reflects a change in how the most advanced semiconductors are built.

A conventional processor is a single piece of silicon in a package. If it is faulty, it is discarded and little is lost.

The processors used for artificial intelligence are different. Each is an assembly. A large logic chip is mounted on a base alongside several stacks of high-speed memory, each stack itself made of a dozen or more thinned chips bonded on top of one another.

The assembly is costly, and it cannot be taken apart. One defective layer in one memory stack spoils the whole.

Manufacturers therefore test at every stage. Each chip is tested on the wafer. Each memory stack is tested after bonding. The finished assembly is tested again, at its working temperature, under the electrical loads it will meet in a data centre.

Each of those tests takes longer than it used to. A modern logic chip has so many transistors that exercising all of them takes many minutes, during which the chip may draw hundreds of watts and has to be cooled by the tester.

The effect is that the amount of test equipment needed for each chip sold has risen sharply, at the same time as the number of chips has risen.

Two companies, one Japanese and one American, make most of the machines.

The business has a further attraction for investors. Testers are needed whoever wins the contest to design the best chip, and whichever foundry makes it. It shares the weakness of every supplier to the same boom. If the builders of data centres slow their orders, the testers stop shipping a few months later.

ECONOMY

The Road to Seventy Thousand: Thirty-Four Years to Regain a Peak, Two and a Half to Nearly Double It

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The Nikkei average's brief return above 70,000 on Monday belongs to a run without precedent in the index's history.

The background is the long stagnation. The index reached 38,915 on the last trading day of 1989, at the height of the land and share bubble. It then fell for more than nineteen years, to a low of about 7,000 in March 2009.

The old peak was not regained until February 2024, thirty-four years and two months later. A person who had bought at the top at the age of thirty was by then of pensionable age.

What followed was rapid. The index passed 40,000 the next month. After a sharp fall in the summer of that year it recovered, and in October 2025 it crossed 50,000.

This year it has added a further 20,000.

Several things combined. Inflation returned after a generation, which lifted companies' sales and profits in yen terms. The weak yen multiplied the value of earnings abroad. The exchange pressed companies to use their capital better, and they bought back their own shares in record amounts.

Foreign investors, who had largely ignored Tokyo for two decades, came back. And a small number of companies connected with semiconductors rose many times over.

That last factor distorts the picture. Because the Nikkei is weighted by share price, the handful of expensive technology stocks account for a disproportionate part of its rise. The TOPIX, which reflects the whole market, has risen much less.

At 4,145 it is about 44 per cent above its own bubble-era peak. The Nikkei is 80 per cent above its.

The difference between those two figures is roughly the contribution of four or five companies.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Three typhoons: the map and the bulletins, Page 3.

ECONOMY

Bad News There, Good News Here: Why a Weak American Jobs Number Lifted Tokyo

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

On Friday the United States reported that its economy had added only 29,000 jobs in September. On Monday Tokyo shares rose 2.4 per cent. The connection needs explaining, because on its face fewer jobs in Japan's largest export market is bad news.

The link is interest rates. The American central bank sets rates with two aims, stable prices and full employment. When hiring weakens, it has more reason to cut rates and less to raise them.

Lower American rates matter to share prices everywhere for two reasons.

The first is arithmetic. The value of a share is the value of the profits it is expected to earn in future, discounted at the going rate of interest. When that rate falls, distant profits are worth more today. Companies whose earnings lie furthest ahead, which means fast-growing technology companies, gain most.

The second is money. When safe American bonds pay less, investors move into riskier assets, including shares in other countries.

So a weak jobs report can lift markets, provided it is weak enough to move rates and not so weak as to suggest a recession. Traders call this the zone in which bad news is good news.

There is a complication for Japan. Lower American rates usually weaken the dollar and strengthen the yen, which hurts exporters. On Monday the yen barely moved, because the rising price of oil is pulling it the other way.

There is also a domestic twist. The same report lowered expectations that the Bank of Japan would raise its own rates soon, on the reasoning that it will not tighten into an American slowdown.

That reasoning may be tested this afternoon, when the governor speaks, and at the end of the month.

If the next American figures are weaker still, the mood will change. Markets welcome a slowdown until it starts to look like a slump.

ECONOMY

Markets at a Glance

By the Economy Desk

Nikkei 225: 69,946.86, up 1,637.

Intraday: above 70,000, the first time in about three months.

TOPIX: 4,145.22, up 54.22.

Prime market turnover: about 7.75 trillion yen.

Prime issues rising: about 56 per cent.

Yen: 157.66 to the dollar at 4 p.m.

Advantest: record high.

Bank of Japan policy rate: 1.25 per cent.

Today: ten-year bond auction, about 2.6 trillion yen.

Shanghai: closed until Wednesday.

BUSINESS

Business Digest

By the Business Desk

KEIDANREN: The chairman, Yoshinobu Tsutsui, asked the government to show how the consumption tax cut will be funded as soon as possible.

ADVANTEST: The shares reached a record on Monday.

TOPIX: The Tokyo Stock Exchange begins its index reform this month.

REGIONAL BANKS: Talks on integration among three banks in Tohoku continue.

TIMES MOBILITY: The car-sharing operator is still dealing with the taking of up to 6.6 million customer records.

OIL: The Group of Seven's release of 100 million barrels, weighted towards diesel, is under way.

CHINA: Mainland markets are closed for the National Day holiday until Wednesday.

UNITED STATES: A new body to co-ordinate policy on artificial intelligence is to weigh development against security.

FRAUD: A legal scholar of 72 lost 9.25 million yen

to an investment swindle. A report is on the society pages.

BONDS: About 2.6 trillion yen of ten-year government bonds are auctioned today.

BUSINESS

The Other Golden Week: Why Shanghai Has Been Shut Since Thursday

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Tokyo's rally on Monday took place without one of the usual influences on Asian trading. The stock exchanges of mainland China have been closed since October 1.

The reason is the National Day holiday, which marks the founding of the People's Republic on October 1, 1949.

The public holiday itself is three days. Since 1999 the government has rearranged the surrounding weekends so that most people have seven days off in a row, working a Saturday or Sunday before or after to make up.

The result is one of two great annual migrations. The other is the lunar new year.

Hundreds of millions of journeys are made in the week. Trains are booked out within minutes of tickets going on sale, and the motorways, which are free of tolls for the duration, are jammed.

For Japan the week matters commercially. Chinese tourists are among the largest groups of foreign visitors, and department stores and hotels plan for the holiday as they do for their own.

For markets it produces a week in which the largest economy in Asia sends no signals. Economic data are delayed, and the currency does not trade onshore.

When the exchanges reopen they must absorb a week of news at once, which often makes for a sharp first morning.

This year the mainland markets reopen on Thursday.

Japan's own Golden Week, a cluster of holidays at the turn of April and May, has the same effect in reverse.

TECHNOLOGY

A Nobel for Switching Nerve Cells On and Off With Light

Deisseroth of Stanford and the Germans Hegemann and Nagel share the medicine prize for optogenetics, born from a pond alga's sense of light

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded on Monday to three scientists who found a protein in a single-celled alga and turned it into a switch for the brain.

The Karolinska Institute in Stockholm named Karl Deisseroth, 54, of Stanford University in the United States, Peter Hegemann, 71, of the Humboldt University of Berlin, and Georg Nagel, 73, of the University of Würzburg.

The citation is for discoveries concerning light-gated ion channels and optogenetics.

Optogenetics is a method of controlling the activity of chosen nerve cells in a living animal by shining light on them. The committee described it as a technique that has made it possible to show how nerve cells give rise to memory, emotion and behaviour in the living brain.

The work began far from neuroscience. Mr Hegemann and Mr Nagel were studying how a green alga found in ponds swims towards light. They identified the protein responsible, a channel in the cell's membrane that opens when light strikes it and lets electrically charged particles through.

Nerve cells signal by exactly such flows of charge. Mr Deisseroth's laboratory showed that if the gene for the algal protein was placed in nerve cells, a flash of blue light would make them fire, with a precision of thousandths of a second.

The method spread through the world's laboratories within a few years. It allowed researchers to ask for the first time what a particular set of cells does, by switching it on or off and watching what the animal did.

It has begun to reach patients. A treatment that restores some sensitivity to light in people blinded by a disease of the retina has completed trials at an American company and is before the regulators, Nikkei reports.

The prize is worth 12 million Swedish kronor, about

TECHNOLOGY

190 million yen, and is shared equally. It will be presented in Stockholm on December 10.

No Japanese scientist was among the laureates this year. Last year's medicine prize was shared by Shimon Sakaguchi.

TECHNOLOGY

How It Works: A Gene From a Pond, a Virus to Carry It, and a Thread of Glass

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

The technique honoured in Stockholm on Monday can be described in four steps.

The first is the protein. A nerve cell is at rest when the inside of its membrane is electrically negative relative to the outside. It fires when positive ions rush in. The algal protein, called channelrhodopsin, is a pore that stays shut in the dark and opens in blue light, letting positive ions through.

The second is delivery. The gene that carries the instructions for making the protein is packed into a harmless virus, which is injected into the part of the brain to be studied. The virus enters the cells and they begin to make the protein and install it in their membranes.

The third is selection, and it is what makes the method powerful. The gene is attached to a genetic switch that is active only in one kind of cell. The virus may enter every cell nearby, but only the chosen kind makes the protein.

The fourth is light. A glass fibre thinner than a hair is placed so that its tip sits just above the cells. When a laser or a light-emitting diode at the other end is turned on, those cells fire, and no others.

Other proteins do the opposite. One, from a microbe that lives in salt lakes, pumps negative ions into the cell when lit with yellow light and silences it.

With the two together an experimenter can turn a set of cells on and off at will in an animal that is awake and moving.

Before this, the tools were crude. An electrode stimulates every cell near its tip. A drug acts over minutes and spreads. Neither could pick out one type of cell among the dozens tangled together in any cubic millimetre of brain.

The experiments are done mostly in mice. A mouse made thirsty, fearful, sleepy or sociable by a flash of light has become one of the standard demonstrations of modern neuroscience.

In people the same approach requires gene therapy, which is why the eye, accessible and enclosed, is where it has been tried first.

TECHNOLOGY

From Mice to Patients: The Blind Man Who Saw a Pedestrian Crossing

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

The first person to benefit from optogenetics was a man in France who had been blind for forty years.

He had retinitis pigmentosa, an inherited disease in which the light-sensing cells of the retina die. The nerve cells behind them, which carry signals to the brain, survive but have nothing to report.

Doctors in Paris injected into one of his eyes a virus carrying the gene for a light-sensitive protein, aimed at those surviving nerve cells. The cells began to respond to light themselves.

The protein is far less sensitive than a natural photoreceptor, so he wore goggles that captured the scene with a camera and projected it on to his retina in bright amber light.

After months of training he could locate and count objects on a table and make out the white stripes of a pedestrian crossing. The result was published in 2021.

It was a partial and modest recovery. It was also the first proof that the method works in a human being.

Several companies have since pursued the same idea with more sensitive proteins that need no goggles. One, in the United States, has finished its trials and applied for approval, Nikkei reports.

Japanese researchers have been among the pioneers. A group at Iwate University developed a modified protein that responds across the visible spectrum, and clinical work based on it has been under way.

The eye is suited to the method for three reasons. It is

small, so little virus is needed. It is sealed off from the immune system. And light reaches the retina without surgery.

The brain has none of those advantages, and treatments there are further off.

TECHNOLOGY

The Japanese Thread: A Laboratory in Sendai, a Laureate at MIT and Two Prizes Given in Japan

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

No Japanese name was read out in Stockholm on Monday. Japan's part in the story of optogenetics is nonetheless considerable.

In 2006, within months of the Stanford group's first paper, a laboratory at Tohoku University in Sendai led by Hiromu Yawo published its own demonstration that nerve cells given the algal protein could be driven by light. It was one of a small number of groups that reached the result independently.

The method's most celebrated experiments were carried out by a Japanese laureate. Susumu Tonegawa, who won the medicine prize in 1987 for work on antibodies, turned to the study of memory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In 2012 and 2013 his laboratory used optogenetics to label the cells in a mouse's brain that were active while a memory formed, and then to reactivate them with light. The mouse behaved as though it were remembering. In a further experiment the group created a false memory, of an event that had not happened.

The foundations of the prize-winning work were recognised in Japan before Stockholm. Mr Deisseroth received the Kyoto Prize in 2018.

He and the Austrian-born Gero Miesenböck shared the Japan Prize in 2023.

Japanese laboratories were also quick to supply the tools. Institutes in Japan have bred and distributed strains of mice and rats that carry the light-sensitive proteins in particular cells, saving researchers the work of injecting viruses.

And the country's strength in optics has made it a source of the fibres, light sources and microscopes on which the experiments depend.

The clinical work on the retina, described elsewhere on this page, has a Japanese branch as well.

The prize honours an idea that crossed from botany to psychiatry. Japan was on the route.

TECHNOLOGY

Three Chairs: The Scientists Who Shared Earlier Prizes for Optogenetics and Were Not Named on Monday

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

A Nobel Prize in the sciences may be divided among no more than three people. For a discovery to which many contributed, the rule guarantees that someone is left out.

Optogenetics is such a discovery, and the earlier prizes for it show who else was in the frame.

A European prize for brain research went in 2013 to six people: the three now honoured in Stockholm, and Ernst Bamberg, Edward Boyden and Gero Miesenböck.

Mr Bamberg, a biophysicist in Frankfurt, worked with Mr Nagel and Mr Hegemann on the characterisation of the algal proteins and was a co-author of the papers that described them.

Mr Boyden was a member of the Stanford laboratory when the decisive experiment was done, and was the first author of the paper reporting it. He has since led a laboratory of his own at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Mr Miesenböck had the idea first. In 2002, working in New York, he made nerve cells respond to light using a set of genes taken from the eye of a fruit fly, and in 2005 he controlled the behaviour of flies in that way. His method was more cumbersome than the single algal protein that superseded it.

The Nobel committee's citation names two things: the discovery of light-gated ion channels, and optogenetics. The first belongs to the two Germans. For the second it chose one name.

Such choices are always disputed, and the committee does not explain them. Its deliberations are sealed for

fifty years.

A further figure died before the prize could reach him. Dieter Oesterhelt, who in the 1970s discovered the first light-driven protein in a microbe and trained Mr Hegemann, died in 2022.

Nobel Prizes are not awarded posthumously.

TECHNOLOGY

From the Human Eye to a Salt Lake: The Family of Proteins That Answer to Light

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

The protein at the centre of this year's medicine prize has relatives in almost every form of life, including the reader's own retina.

All of them work on the same principle. A protein that spans the cell's membrane holds a small molecule derived from vitamin A. When a photon strikes that molecule it changes shape, and the protein around it changes shape in response.

In the human eye the protein is rhodopsin. Its change of shape sets off a chain of chemical signals that ends, after several steps, in an electrical message to the brain. It is exquisitely sensitive, and slow.

Microbes use the same trick more directly. In 1971 a German biochemist found in a microbe from salt lakes a protein that uses the energy of light to pump charged particles out of the cell. It is a solar-powered battery charger, and it works in a single step.

A related protein, found later in similar microbes, pumps negatively charged particles inward.

The algal proteins described in 2002 and 2003 by this year's laureates were a third kind. They are not pumps but channels: light opens a pore, and charged particles flow through it at once.

That directness is what made them useful. A nerve cell needs a rapid flow of charge to fire. A pore that opens within a thousandth of a second of being lit supplies it.

Since then researchers have searched the genomes of algae, fungi and bacteria and found hundreds of variants, sensitive to different colours and with different speeds. Others have been engineered in the laboratory.

One practical aim has been proteins that respond to red light, which passes through tissue far better than blue and could reach cells without a fibre.

The ancestry of the whole family goes back billions of years, to the first organisms that found a use for sunlight.

TECHNOLOGY

Physics Today: The Second Prize of the Week, and Japan's Long Record in It

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The Nobel Prize in Physics is announced in Stockholm this evening. Japan time, by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

Last year's went to three researchers working in the United States for experiments in the 1980s showing that the strange rules of quantum mechanics can govern an electrical circuit large enough to hold in the hand. Their work underlies one of the leading approaches to building quantum computers.

Physics is the science in which Japan first won a Nobel Prize and has won most often.

Hideki Yukawa received it in 1949 for predicting the existence of a particle that binds the atomic nucleus. The award, four years after the war, had an effect on national morale that older Japanese still describe.

Sin-Itiro Tomonaga followed in 1965, Leo Esaki in 1973 and Masatoshi Koshiba in 2002.

In 2008 three of the laureates were Japanese-born, for work in the theory of elementary particles. In 2014 the prize went to the three inventors of the blue light-emitting diode, all Japanese-born.

Takaaki Kajita won in 2015 for showing that the ghostly particles called neutrinos have mass, using a detector in a mine in Gifu Prefecture.

The most recent was Syukuro Manabe in 2021, honoured for the first reliable computer models of the Earth's climate. He had spent most of his career in the United States.

Japanese newspapers keep their usual lists of candidates.

The announcement is expected at about a quarter to

seven.

TECHNOLOGY

A Core Member of the Qilin Ransomware Gang Was Caught on Holiday in Osaka and Handed to Germany

The Russian, 28, is accused of building the system the group uses; Qilin claimed last year's attack on Asahi
By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

A Russian man described as a central member of Qilin, one of the most active ransomware gangs in the world, was detained by the Japanese authorities while travelling in Osaka and has been handed over to Germany, Asahi Shimbun reports.

The man is 28. He was surrendered to the German authorities on Friday under the Act of Extradition, at Germany's request. German prosecutors are investigating him on suspicion of extortion.

He is alleged to have gained access in September 2024 to a computer at a logistics company in Germany, to have taken its data and encrypted it, and to have demanded Bitcoin worth 165,000 dollars, about 26 million yen, for not publishing what had been stolen. The company paid.

Investigators say his role in the group is to build the system with which the attacks are carried out. The central members sit above a number of separate teams that do the actual breaking in, and the ransoms flow back up to them.

Qilin is the group that claimed responsibility for the attack on Asahi Group Holdings at the end of September last year. The brewer was unable to take orders or ship its products, and beer ran short in shops across the country.

The police forces of Japan, Germany and other countries have been investigating the group jointly.

Arrests of people at this level are rare. The organisers of ransomware gangs generally live in Russia or neighbouring states, which do not extradite their citizens, and are careful not to leave.

This one did. The reports do not say how he was identified or how long he had been in Japan.

The notes supplied for this edition say that he is to be extradited. He has already gone.

Germany will now decide whether to charge him. If convicted of extortion on a commercial scale he faces a long prison sentence.

TECHNOLOGY

Ransomware as a Franchise: How a Gang Like Qilin Is Organised

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

The arrest in Osaka was of a man said to build systems, not to break into them. The distinction says a good deal about how the business works.

Qilin appeared in 2022 under another name and adopted its present one, that of a mythical Chinese beast, soon afterwards. Its members are believed to be Russian speakers.

It operates what the security industry calls ransomware as a service. The core group writes the software that encrypts a victim's files, runs the website on which stolen data are published, and handles the negotiation and the payment.

The attacks themselves are carried out by others, known as affiliates. They obtain access to a company's network, by buying stolen passwords, by sending deceptive messages to staff or by exploiting a flaw that has not been repaired, and then deploy the core group's tools.

When a ransom is paid the two share it. The affiliate keeps the larger part, typically four-fifths or more.

The arrangement suits both. The developers need never touch a victim's network. The affiliates need no skill in writing software.

It also makes the group resilient. Arresting an affiliate removes one customer. To stop the operation, the people at the centre have to be reached.

Qilin's victims have included hospitals. An attack in 2024 on a company that processes blood tests for hospitals in London caused thousands of operations and appointments to be postponed.

In Japan it claimed the Asahi attack and said it had taken thousands of files.

Demands range from tens of thousands of dollars to millions. The 165,000 dollars in the German case is at the lower end.

TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY

Handed Over Without a Treaty: How Japan Extradites, and How Rarely

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

The surrender of a ransomware suspect to Germany last week was carried out under a law that Japan uses only a few times a year.

Japan has extradition treaties with two countries, the United States and South Korea. That is far fewer than most developed states. Britain and France each have more than a hundred.

The absence of a treaty does not prevent extradition. The Act of Extradition, passed in 1953, allows a person to be handed to any country that requests it, provided that country undertakes to do the same for Japan in a comparable case.

The procedure is judicial. A request arrives through diplomatic channels. The foreign minister passes it to the justice minister, who refers it to the Tokyo High Public Prosecutors' Office. The person is detained, and the Tokyo High Court examines the case.

The court does not try the accusation. It decides whether the conduct alleged would be a crime in Japan as well, whether there is reason to suspect the person of it, and whether any of the law's bars applies. The offence must not be political.

If the court approves, the justice minister makes the final decision. The whole process must be completed within about two months of detention.

One bar matters more than the rest. Japan does not extradite its own nationals unless a treaty provides for it. The man handed to Germany was Russian.

In the other direction Japan often fails. Countries that have abolished the death penalty are reluctant to return suspects to one that retains it, and that is one reason so few treaties have been concluded.

A cyber-crime suspect is a simpler matter. Extortion is a crime everywhere.

The reports say the hand-over took place on Friday.

TECHNOLOGY

The Week the Beer Ran Out: The Asahi Attack, a Year On

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

The group whose alleged system-builder was handed to Germany last week is known to the Japanese public for one event.

At the end of September last year the computer systems of Asahi Group Holdings, the country's largest brewer, were struck by ransomware. The company shut down the affected systems to contain the damage.

With them went the ability to receive orders and to dispatch goods. Breweries were intact and full of beer. There was no way of knowing who wanted it or of telling the lorries where to go.

Staff resorted to taking orders by telephone and fax and writing them out by hand. Shipments resumed within days at a fraction of normal volume.

Shops and bars ran short of the company's main brand. Rivals found themselves unable to meet the demand that shifted to them and rationed their own deliveries.

About a week after the attack, a group calling itself Qilin claimed responsibility on a site on the dark web and said it had taken thousands of the company's files.

Asahi later said that personal information on well over a million people, customers and employees among them, might have been exposed. Full recovery of its logistics took several months.

The episode became the standard illustration in Japan of what ransomware does to a modern company. The product was untouched. The information that moves the product was gone.

It prompted a round of spending on backups and on plans for operating without computers, and gave momentum to the cyber-defence law that took effect this month.

Whether the man now in German custody had any part in the Asahi attack has not been stated. The charge against him concerns a German company.

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Japan win the Kirin Cup, Page 14.

TECHNOLOGY

Following the Coins: Why Paying a Ransom in Bitcoin Leaves a Trail

By Ethan Cole | Technology & Science Editor

The German logistics company in the case reported this week is said to have paid about 165,000 dollars in Bitcoin. That choice of currency is standard among ransomware gangs, and is less safe for them than it looks.

Bitcoin is not anonymous. Every transfer ever made is recorded in a public ledger that anyone can download. What the ledger does not show is who owns each address.

Investigators work on that gap. When a victim pays, the receiving address is known. From there the money can be followed, hop by hop, as it is split and moved.

Criminals try to break the trail. They pass coins through mixing services that pool many users' funds, convert them into other cryptocurrencies designed to be opaque, or route them through exchanges in countries that ask no questions.

Sooner or later most want ordinary money. That means an exchange, and exchanges in most jurisdictions are now required to identify their customers.

Specialist firms sell software that clusters addresses belonging to the same owner and flags those linked to known gangs. Police forces use it routinely.

The method has produced results. American investigators recovered part of the ransom paid after an attack on a fuel pipeline in 2021 by tracing it to a wallet whose key they obtained.

It also explains how core members come to be identified. An operator who takes a percentage of every ransom accumulates a pattern of receipts that can be matched to spending in the real world.

A person so identified is safe only as long as he stays in a country that will not hand him over.

The suspect in this case travelled to Japan.

TECHNOLOGY

Qilin, Kirin: The Mythical Beast Behind a Hacker Gang's Name, and a Coincidence in the Beer Aisle

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

When it was first reported last autumn that Asahi had been attacked by Kirin, a number of readers assumed there had been a mistake.

There had not. The ransomware group that claimed the attack on the Asahi brewery calls itself Qilin, which is the Chinese name of a creature known in Japanese as the kirin.

The qilin is one of the auspicious animals of Chinese tradition. It is usually shown with the body of a deer, the tail of an ox, hooves, scales and a single horn or a pair of antlers, wreathed in flame. It appears at the birth or death of a sage and is so gentle that it will not tread on living grass.

The beast came to Japan with Chinese learning more than a thousand years ago. Its image is carved on temple gates and on the bridge at Nihonbashi in the centre of Tokyo.

It is also on a beer label. Kirin Brewery, Asahi's oldest rival, has used the animal as its emblem since the 1880s.

The modern Japanese word for a giraffe is the same. When the first giraffes were brought to Tokyo's zoo in 1907 they were given the mythical name, apparently to impress the officials who approved the purchase.

Why a group of Russian-speaking criminals chose the name is not known. Hacker groups favour names that sound powerful and are easy to search for.

The coincidence gave Japanese headline writers a difficult week, and several newspapers took to spelling the group's name in the Roman alphabet to avoid confusion.

Kirin the brewery had nothing to do with the matter.

The man handed to Germany last week is accused of building the gang's systems. Its name was someone else's idea.

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TECHNOLOGY

The Chatbot Said 'Quite Dangerous'. Prosecutors Say That Proves He Knew.

A drug-smuggling trial turns on a defendant's conversation with an AI before he collected a parcel from abroad
By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

A criminal court is being asked to decide what a person knows when a machine has told him, Yomiuri Shimbun reports on its front page.

The defendant is charged with smuggling the synthetic drug MDMA from Germany in March. He received a parcel sent from abroad. His defence is that he did not know what was in it.

The prosecution has put in evidence his conversation with ChatGPT. Before collecting the parcel, he asked it about the risk of accepting a package from overseas in return for a payment. The sum mentioned was 500,000 yen.

The reply described the arrangement as quite dangerous and said the contents were likely to be drugs or other illegal goods.

Prosecutors argue that having read this, he went ahead in the knowledge that what he was doing was probably unlawful. Under Japanese law that is sufficient. A smuggler need not know which drug he is carrying, only that it may well be an illegal one.

The defendant pleads not guilty. He told the court that he did not think the answer was a hundred per cent right.

That is the novelty. A search history shows what a person looked for. A conversation shows what he asked, in his own words, and what he was told.

Shuichiro Hoshi, a professor of criminal law at Tokyo Metropolitan University, told the newspaper that such records display a user's state of mind more objectively than search histories and are an effective means of proving intent.

He added a caution. These systems sometimes give wrong answers, and how far a reasonable person should be taken to believe them will change as the technology improves and spreads.

The court's answer will be read by every prosecutor in the country, and by a great many people who have asked a chatbot whether something was legal.

TECHNOLOGY

Knowing Enough: What a Court Must Find Before It Convicts the Person Who Signed for the Parcel

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

Cases of the kind now turning on a chatbot's reply are among the hardest in Japanese criminal law, and among the most often lost by prosecutors.

The facts are usually agreed. A parcel arrived from abroad. It contained drugs. The defendant took delivery. The only question is what was in his mind.

The law does not require certainty. It is enough that the defendant recognised the possibility that the parcel contained an illegal drug and accepted that risk. Lawyers call this conditional intent.

Nor need he have known which drug. The Supreme Court has held that awareness that the contents might be some harmful, prohibited substance is sufficient.

Proving even that much about another person's thoughts is difficult. Prosecutors rely on circumstances: a reward out of proportion to the task, instructions to use a false name, messages deleted afterwards, a story that changes.

Defendants reply that they believed the parcel held something else, such as cash, gold or documents, or that they were deceived by a friend.

These trials are heard by panels that include six citizens, and such panels have acquitted more readily than professional judges used to. Several of the acquittals returned in the early years of the system were in parcel cases.

A record of the defendant asking in advance whether the errand was risky, and being told that it was, speaks directly to the point.

The defence in the present case is that being told is not the same as believing.

A warning from a customs leaflet would be treated as notice. Whether a warning from a chatbot should be is what the court must decide.

TECHNOLOGY

How a Conversation With a Machine Reaches a Courtroom

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

The appearance of a chatbot conversation as evidence in a drug trial raises a practical question for anyone who uses such services: how do investigators get it?

The usual route is the device. When police arrest a suspect they seize his telephone and computer under a warrant. Applications that hold conversations with an AI service keep a history, and that history is visible to anyone who can unlock the device.

If the device is locked, forensic tools can often extract its contents. Japanese police have used them for years on messaging applications.

The second route is the provider. Conversations are stored on the company's servers. Investigators can ask for them, and in Japan can obtain a warrant requiring a company to produce records.

With a foreign provider that is slower. The request goes through a treaty process or relies on the company's willingness to respond. The large American companies publish the number of such requests they receive from each country.

Users can delete their histories, and some services offer a mode that does not keep them. Deletion from a telephone does not always mean deletion from a server, and providers' retention periods vary.

Once obtained, the record is treated like any other document. The prosecution must show that it is authentic and that the defendant was the one typing.

Its weight is a separate matter, and is what the court in the present case has been asked to decide.

There is no privilege attached to such conversations. What is said to a lawyer is protected. What is typed to a chatbot is not, even when the question is a legal one.

People have long been advised to assume that a search engine remembers what they asked. The same now applies, with more detail, to machines that answer back.

TECHNOLOGY

Seventeen Countries Sign a 'Kyoto Vision' for Using AI to Speed Up Science

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

Seventeen countries have endorsed a statement, named the Kyoto Vision, on the use of artificial intelligence to accelerate scientific research, the morning's papers report.

The summaries available give the number of countries and the purpose. They do not list the signatories or set out the text.

The idea behind it has moved in a few years from speculation to practice. Systems trained on large bodies of data now predict the shapes of proteins, propose new materials and suggest which experiments are worth running.

The Nobel Prize in Chemistry two years ago went in part to the developers of a program that predicts protein structures.

Governments have noticed that the countries able to combine such systems with large stores of experimental data and powerful computers will do science faster than those that cannot.

Japan's interest is plain. It has world-class laboratories and instruments and comparatively few of the largest AI models. An international framework that encourages the sharing of data and methods plays to its strengths.

The prime minister has promised an action plan on artificial intelligence by the end of the year, with investment concentrated in 17 strategic fields.

Kyoto in early October is the customary meeting place of an annual forum that brings science ministers, university presidents and the heads of research agencies together.

The announcement came on the day the Nobel committee honoured a technique that began with curiosity about an alga. That kind of discovery is not obviously one a machine would have suggested.

Whether declarations of this sort change how laboratories work depends on the money that follows them.

TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY

October 6, 1927: A Film Speaks, and an Industry Changes in Two Years

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Ninety-nine years ago tonight an audience in a New York cinema heard an actor on the screen speak.

The film was *The Jazz Singer*, made by Warner Brothers and starring Al Jolson. It was for the most part a silent picture with titles, like every other. But its songs had been recorded, and between two of them Jolson spoke a few unscripted lines.

The sound was not on the film. It was on large discs, played on a turntable geared to the projector. The projectionist had to place the needle at a marked point as each reel began. If a disc was scratched or the film had been repaired, picture and sound drifted apart.

The system had been used the year before for a film with a recorded orchestral score. What was new was a voice, in synchrony with a moving mouth.

The effect on audiences was immediate, and on the industry decisive. Within two years almost every studio in Hollywood had converted to sound, and thousands of cinemas had been wired.

Sound on disc did not last. A rival method that printed the sound as a photographic track along the edge of the film itself, so that the two could not separate, had replaced it by the early 1930s.

The change ended some careers and made others. Musicians who had accompanied silent films in cinema orchestras lost their work by the tens of thousands.

It also divided what had been an international art. A silent film could be shown anywhere with translated titles. A talking one could not.

In Japan the transition took longer than anywhere else, for a reason peculiar to the country, described on the culture page.

The question the film raised, of what it means to fix a human voice to an image and reproduce it, has returned this week in a Tokyo courtroom ruling on voices made by machine.

TECHNOLOGY

October 6, 1973: A War That Changed What Armies Feared and What Japan Paid for Oil

By Jonathan Mercer | Senior Editor, International Desk

On the afternoon of October 6, 1973, Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked Israeli positions along the Suez Canal and on the Golan Heights. It was the Jewish Day of Atonement, and Israel was taken by surprise.

The war lasted less than three weeks. Its effects on military technology, and on the world economy, lasted decades.

In its first days Israeli tanks and aircraft, which had dominated the war of 1967, were destroyed in large numbers by weapons that a single soldier or a small crew could operate. Egyptian infantry carried wire-guided anti-tank missiles. Batteries of Soviet-made surface-to-air missiles covered the canal.

The lesson drawn in every army was that the expensive platform could be defeated by the cheap precise weapon. The argument has been repeated in every war since, most recently with drones.

Both superpowers flew in supplies on a scale not seen before, and both watched the battlefield from orbit. The United States moved its nuclear forces to a higher state of alert.

The intelligence failure that allowed the surprise was studied for years. Israel had the information. It did not believe it.

The economic consequence came on October 17, when the Arab oil producers announced cuts in output and an embargo on countries that supported Israel. The price of crude quadrupled within months.

Japan, which imported almost all its oil and most of it from the Gulf, was hit harder than any other large economy. There was panic buying of household goods, and the long post-war boom ended.

The country's response, a national effort to save energy, build reserves and turn to nuclear power, shaped its economy for the next half-century.

The stockpile from which Japan is releasing oil this

month was begun because of that war.

TECHNOLOGY

On This Day in Technology: October 6

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

1927: The Jazz Singer opens in New York, with synchronised songs and speech.

The sound was on discs geared to the projector.

1973: the October war begins. Guided missiles and satellite reconnaissance come of age.

October 17, 1973: the oil embargo that led Japan to build its reserves.

Two days after Sputnik, October 4, 1957.

Three days after Atlantis first flew, October 3, 1985.

Five days after the first CD player, October 1, 1982.

Five days after NASA began work, October 1, 1958.

2005: the first paper on driving nerve cells with an algal protein. The word optogenetics followed a year later.

2026: the Nobel Prize for that work, announced yesterday.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology Digest

By the Technology Desk

CYBER DEFENCE: The law permitting the police and the Self-Defense Forces to neutralise servers used in attacks took effect on October 1. Monitoring of communications begins next autumn.

PHISHING: A group tracked as TA419, thought to be linked to China, has imitated the official website of the defense minister, Shinjiro Koizumi.

ELECTRONIC VOTING: Minokamo's council election was counted in an hour and seven minutes, the electronic part in 15. It was the fifth such election since the guidelines were revised.

TIMES MOBILITY: Up to about 6.6 million customer records were obtained by a third party, with about 1.6 million images of driving licences.

ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY: Unauthorised access at a research reactor site exposed driving-licence and other details of 175 people.

DISTILLATION: OpenAI has said it blocked in July an attempt to copy its models, centred on people connected with a company called Moon's Dark Side.

VOICE: The Tokyo District Court has held that a person's voice, imitated by AI, is protected as a mark of individual personality.

UNITED STATES: A new body, the SI Force, is to co-ordinate policy on artificial intelligence under the director of national intelligence and the chairman of the Federal Trade Commission.

LITERATURE: A novel suspected of being written with AI was removed from the running for the Goncourt Prize.

MARKETS: Shares in semiconductor equipment makers lifted the Nikkei above 70,000 for a time.

SOCIETY

She Called Him 'Brother' and Said Her Name Was Aiko: A Legal Scholar, 72, Loses 9.25 Million Yen

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

A legal scholar aged 72 has lost 9.25 million yen in an investment fraud conducted by someone he never met, the morning's reports say.

The person who contacted him gave the name Aiko and addressed him as brother.

The pattern is one the police now see daily. Contact begins on a social network or a messaging application, often with a message that appears to have been sent by mistake. A friendly correspondence develops over weeks.

At some point the new acquaintance mentions an investment that has done well for her, in foreign exchange, cryptocurrency or shares, and offers to show how it is done. The victim is directed to a website or an application that looks like a trading platform.

He transfers a small sum and sees it grow on the screen. He transfers more. The figures are invented. When he tries to withdraw, he is told that a tax or a fee must be paid first, and then another.

The form of address is part of the method. Terms of family affection, used early, create a sense of

obligation and make suspicion feel like bad manners.

That the victim was a scholar of law will surprise only those who have not followed such cases. Doctors, company executives and retired police officers have all been caught. Knowledge of the law is no protection against a patient and attentive correspondent.

Losses to frauds of this kind, in which investment advice or a romance is conducted through social media, have exceeded 100 billion yen a year.

The money is usually sent to accounts opened in other people's names and moved abroad within hours.

The police advise that any investment proposed by a person known only online should be assumed to be a fraud, and that no legitimate platform demands payment before it will release a customer's own money.

SOCIETY

Today's Map: 29 Degrees in Nagoya and 28 in Tokyo, Sun Returning to the North, Cloud Lingerin in Kansai

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

The weather map printed today shows a warm day over most of the country, with more sun than at any time since the weekend.

Tokyo is sunny with some cloud, at a forecast high of 28 degrees after a low this morning of 19. Nagoya is the warmest city on the map, sunny at 29 and 20.

Overnight rain is clearing the north. Kushiro goes from rain to sun, at 21 and 17. Sapporo is sunny with some cloud at 22 and 14, Aomori at 23 and 16 and Akita at 23 and 18. Sendai is cloudy, then sunny, at 24 and 18.

On the Sea of Japan side Niigata has rain giving way to cloud, at 22 and 18, and Kanazawa is cloudy with sunny spells at 23 and 19. Nagano, inland, is cloudy and the coolest city by day, at 20 and 16.

Kansai stays mostly cloudy after early rain, with some sun later, the map's summary says. Kyoto and Osaka are each 26 and 19.

In the west the day runs the other way. Matsue, at 25 and 14, and Hiroshima, at 27 and 17, start sunny and cloud over. Takamatsu goes from cloud to sun at 26 and 19.

Kochi is sunny at 28 and 19 and Kagoshima sunny at 27 and 18. Fukuoka is cloudy at 24 and 18. Naha is sunny, then cloudy, at 28 and 25.

The highs span nine degrees, from Nagano's 20 to Nagoya's 29. The lows span eleven, from 14 in Sapporo and Matsue to Naha's 25.

Matsue has the widest range of the day, 11 degrees. Naha has the narrowest, three.

At the lower right are the discs of Typhoon No. 27 at 6 a.m., with its forecast positions for this evening and tomorrow morning running off to the north-east.

The map cites the Japan Meteorological Agency: the forecast issued at 5 a.m. for the highs and the sky, observed minimums up to 8:30 a.m. for the lows, and the typhoon bulletin of 6:45 a.m.

SOCIETY

A Warm Tuesday, Then Three Cool Mornings: The Week Between Typhoons

By Emi Kondo | Society & Local News

Most of the country has a mild, bright day today, and a change tomorrow.

Tokyo's forecast high of 28 degrees is five above Monday's. Nagoya reaches 29.

In the Kinki region the weather recovers on the Pacific side during the day, while showers are scattered along the Sea of Japan coast. Highs are about 25, the broadcaster MBS reports. The map gives Kyoto and Osaka 26.

The north clears after overnight rain. Hokkaido and northern Tohoku turn sunny.

The warmth does not last. As the typhoon moves away to the north-east it pulls cooler, drier air down behind it. The mornings of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are expected to be distinctly colder, the Japan Weather Association says.

Days will be fine. This is the settled spell that forecasters have been promising since the middle of last week, the first of the autumn.

The capital had rain on 37 consecutive days until last

Friday. A week of clear skies will be the first since late August.

Cool, clear mornings of this kind are what set the autumn colours going on the high ground.

The weekend is less certain. Two more typhoons are on the map, and although neither is forecast to reach the main islands, one may pass close enough to disturb the coast.

Light clothing today, then, and something warmer for the morning commute from tomorrow.

SOCIETY

Why the Mornings Turn Cold When a Typhoon Leaves

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

Forecasters expect the mornings of Wednesday to Friday to be noticeably cooler than today's. The cause is the typhoon now moving away, though not in the way people usually suppose.

A typhoon is an area of very low pressure with air circulating anticlockwise around it. On its western side that circulation blows from the north.

As the storm passes east of Japan and heads north-east, the country comes under that northerly flow. Air that has been sitting over Siberia and the Sea of Okhotsk is drawn down across Hokkaido and Honshu.

The air is cooler than what it replaces. More important, it is dry.

Dry air makes for cold nights. Water vapour is the atmosphere's main blanket. On a humid night the ground's warmth is trapped near the surface. On a dry, clear one it radiates straight out to space.

Wind matters as well. Once the storm has gone and high pressure builds behind it, the air becomes still. Without wind to stir it, the coldest air settles into valleys and basins.

Inland cities feel it most. Nagano, Kofu and Kyoto, which lie in basins, can be five degrees colder at dawn than the coast.

The afternoons recover. The same dry, clear air lets the sun through, and the difference between the day's low and high can reach fifteen degrees.

It is this pattern, repeated through October, that turns the leaves. The pigments that colour maples form when sunny days are followed by cold nights.

The first frost of the season on low ground in Hokkaido usually comes at about this time.

SOCIETY

3,841 Underpasses Ranked in Four Grades of Flood Risk, With Barriers for the Most Dangerous

By Kenji Fukuda | Real Estate & Urban Development

Road underpasses liable to flood in heavy rain have been sorted into four grades of risk across the country, and barriers are being installed at those in the highest, Yomiuri Shimbun reports on its front page.

The survey covers 3,841 places.

An underpass is a stretch of road that dips beneath a railway or another road. In a cloudburst it becomes a basin. Water runs in from both ends faster than the pumps can remove it, and within minutes the lowest point may be more than a metre deep.

Drivers misjudge it. From behind a windscreen at night a flooded dip looks like a wet road. A car that enters stalls when water reaches the engine's air intake, and the pressure on the doors can then make them impossible to open.

People have drowned in this way in several prefectures in recent years, usually alone and within sight of dry ground.

The barriers are gates or inflatable booms that close the approach when sensors detect water. Some are operated remotely by road staff watching cameras. The newest close automatically.

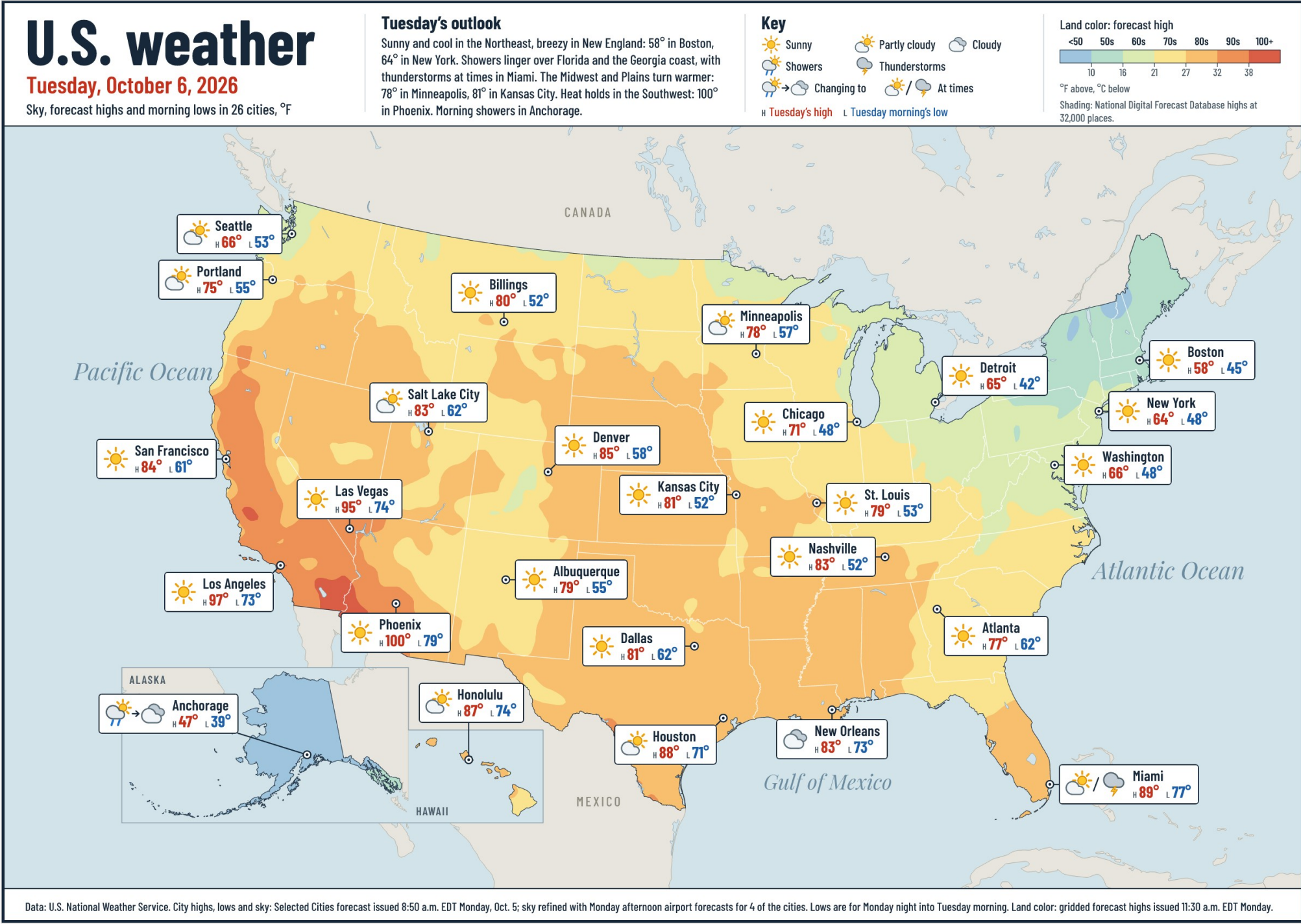
The grading is intended to decide where they go first. The summaries available do not set out the criteria.

Lower grades get warning signs, depth markers painted on the walls and lights that flash when the pumps are overwhelmed.

The measure follows a September in which the Pacific side of eastern Japan had its heaviest rain on record, and a typhoon that killed 15 people.

The advice to drivers does not depend on the grade. If water is standing in an underpass, turn round.

WEATHER ABROAD



SOCIETY

Weather Abroad: 100 in Phoenix, 58 in Boston, and a Warmer Midwest

The United States map for Tuesday, October 6, gives the sky, highs and morning lows for 26 cities in degrees Fahrenheit

By Rachel Kim | Washington-Tokyo Liaison

The United States map supplied for this edition is for today, Tuesday. It shows a country with a difference of more than forty degrees Fahrenheit between its north-eastern and south-western corners.

The Northeast is sunny and cool, and breezy in New England, the map's summary says. Boston has a forecast high of 58 degrees and a low of 45. New York is 64 and 48, Washington 66 and 48. All three are sunny.

In Celsius, Boston's high is about 14 and New York's 18.

The heat is in the Southwest. Phoenix is sunny at 100 and 79. Los Angeles is 97 and 73 and Las Vegas 95 and 74. San Francisco is 84 and 61. Phoenix's 100 is about 38 degrees Celsius.

SOCIETY

If the Car Is Already in the Water: What the Rescue Services Advise

By Kenji Fukuda | Real Estate & Urban Development

The grading of flood-prone underpasses reported today is aimed at keeping drivers out of them. For those who find themselves in one, motoring organisations and fire services give consistent advice.

Do not wait. A car floats briefly and then settles. The time in which escape is easy is measured in tens of seconds.

Release the seat belt and open the window at once. Electric windows usually continue to work for a short time after water reaches the floor.

Do not try the door first. When water outside is level with the lower part of the door, the pressure on it is greater than most people can push against. Tests by the national motoring federation found that doors became very difficult to open with water at about the height of the seat.

If the window will not open, break it. Side windows are made of toughened glass that shatters when struck at a corner with a pointed tool. A small emergency hammer, sold for the purpose and kept within reach, will do it. The windscreen is laminated and will not break.

If there is no means of breaking the glass, the last resort is to wait until the water inside has risen nearly to the level outside. The pressure on the door then equalises and it can be opened. This requires keeping calm with water at chest height.

Unbuckle children before yourself and send them out first.

The Midwest and the Plains turn warmer. Minneapolis, partly cloudy, is 78 and 57, ten degrees above Monday's forecast. Kansas City is 81 and 52, Chicago 71 and 48, St. Louis 79 and 53 and Detroit 65 and 42, all sunny.

Further west Denver is 85 and 58, Billings 80 and 52 and Albuquerque 79 and 55, all sunny. Salt Lake City is partly cloudy at 83 and 62.

The South is mostly dry. Dallas is sunny at 81 and 62, Nashville at 83 and 52 and Atlanta at 77 and 62. Houston is partly cloudy at 88 and 71. New Orleans is cloudy at 83 and 73.

Showers linger over Florida and the Georgia coast. Miami is partly cloudy with thunderstorms at times, at 89 and 77.

Once out, move to higher ground on foot. Do not go back for belongings.

The engine will stop when water enters the air intake, which in most cars is lower than drivers expect.

The simplest rule remains the one on the signs. If the depth cannot be seen, do not drive in.

SOCIETY

It Starts With a Wrong Number: The Anatomy of an Online Investment Fraud

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

The fraud that cost a 72-year-old scholar 9.25 million yen follows a script so standardised that police forces in several countries have published it.

STAGE ONE is contact. A message arrives from a stranger: a greeting meant for someone else, a question about a restaurant, a comment on a photograph. The sender apologises for the mistake and stays to talk.

STAGE TWO is trust. For two or three weeks there are daily messages about ordinary things. The sender has a name, a job, photographs, a story. There is no mention of money.

STAGE THREE is the opportunity. The sender mentions, in passing, a relative who works at a securities firm, or a method of trading she has learned. She is reluctant to share it. She is persuaded.

STAGE FOUR is the demonstration. The victim opens an account on a platform she recommends and deposits a small amount. The screen shows a profit. A first small withdrawal is honoured.

STAGE FIVE is the harvest. Encouraged, the victim deposits savings, then borrows. The balance on the

On the Pacific coast Seattle is partly cloudy at 66 and 53 and Portland partly cloudy at 75 and 55.

Anchorage has morning showers giving way to cloud, with a high of 47 and a low of 39, about 8 and 4 in Celsius. Honolulu is partly cloudy at 87 and 74.

The data are the National Weather Service's selected-cities forecast issued at 8:50 a.m. Eastern time on Monday, with the sky refined from airport forecasts for four of the cities. The lows are for Monday night into this morning.

For travellers, today's highs in Celsius are about 18 in New York, 19 in Washington, 22 in Chicago, 29 in Denver, 27 in Dallas, 29 in San Francisco and 32 in Miami.

screen climbs.

STAGE SIX is the lock. A withdrawal is refused. A tax must be paid, or a guarantee, or a penalty for an irregular transaction. Each payment produces a new demand.

The people sending the messages are often themselves captives. Investigations in south-east Asia have found compounds where workers lured by false job offers are held and made to run dozens of such conversations at once.

The photographs are stolen, and increasingly the messages are drafted by machine.

The single reliable defence is the first one. A stranger who writes by mistake and wants to keep talking is at work.

SPORTS

Brother and Sister, Champions on the Same Day Again: Uta Abe Wins a Sixth World Title and Hifumi a Record Fifth

It is the first time in three years that the Abes have won together; Japan has three golds from four classes in Baku

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

Uta and Hifumi Abe each won a world judo title in Baku on Monday, the first time since 2023 that the sister and brother have stood on the top step on the same day.

Uta, who is 26, won the women's 52 kilograms for the second year running and the sixth time in all. Hifumi won the men's 66 kilograms for the fifth time, more than any other Japanese man has won at the world championships.

They exchanged a high five before the medal

ceremonies. Both said, in the words Kyodo News reports, that they were simply happy.

Neither had an easy day. Uta was a few seconds from defeat in her quarter-final and needed extra time in her final. Hifumi had to beat the reigning champion, his own clubmate, to reach his.

The pair won Olympic gold within an hour of each other in Tokyo in 2021. In Paris three years later Hifumi won again and Uta was beaten in the second round, leaving the mat in tears before a crowd of thousands.

Last year at the world championships it was the other way about. Uta won. Hifumi finished third.

Monday restored the symmetry. Both have said that their aim is the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 2028.

With Wakana Koga's victory on Sunday, Japan has won three of the four titles decided so far. Ryuju Nagayama and Takeshi Takeoka have bronze medals.

All three of Monday's Japanese medallists, and Nagayama, compete for the same company team.

The championships continue today with the women's 57 kilograms and the men's 73.

SPORTS

Japan Beat New Zealand 2-1 to Win the Kirin Cup in Moriyasu's Last Match at Home

Ueda scores for the fourth game running and Doan gets the winner; it is Japan's first Kirin Cup in 15 years

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

Japan won the Kirin Cup on Monday night, beating New Zealand 2-1 at the National Stadium in Tokyo in what was Hajime Moriyasu's final match in charge on home soil.

Ayase Ueda put Japan ahead in the 28th minute. It was his fourth goal in the four matches Japan has played in September and October, one in each.

New Zealand equalised before the interval, and the score was 1-1 at half-time.

The winner came in the 71st minute from Ritsu Doan. Keito Nakamura, one of three substitutes sent on together, beat his man on the dribble and set it up. It was Doan's first goal for his country in 325 days.

Moriyasu is to step down after the Asian Cup, which opens in Saudi Arabia in January. He has been in charge since 2018.

He used the occasion to try something. Japan lined up with four defenders for the first time in 928 days, Livedoor News reports, having played with three at the back throughout the period in between.

The experiment survived its test. New Zealand's strength is in the air, and Japan did not concede from a high ball.

It was the first time Japan had won the Kirin Cup in 15 years. The semi-final against Ecuador on Thursday was won on penalties.

Japan finished the four-match series unbeaten.

Doan, who plays for Eintracht Frankfurt, said afterwards that the players and the manager shared a story deeper than most people's, Daily Sports reports.

SPORTS

Scoreboard

By the Sports Desk

JUDO, world championships, Baku, women's 52 kg: 1. Uta Abe (Japan). 2. Ariane Toro Soler (Spain).

JUDO, men's 66 kg: 1. Hifumi Abe (Japan). Bronze: Takeshi Takeoka (Japan).

JUDO, Japan after two days: three gold, two bronze.

FOOTBALL, Kirin Cup final, National Stadium: Japan 2 (Ueda 28, Doan 71), New Zealand 1. Half-time 1-1.

PACIFIC LEAGUE, Monday: Seibu 7, Lotte 1. Seibu clinch second place.

Pacific League: SoftBank 91-49-3, champions. Seibu 78-60-4. Lotte 63-76-3.

CENTRAL LEAGUE: Hanshin champions. Yomiuri second. DeNA third.

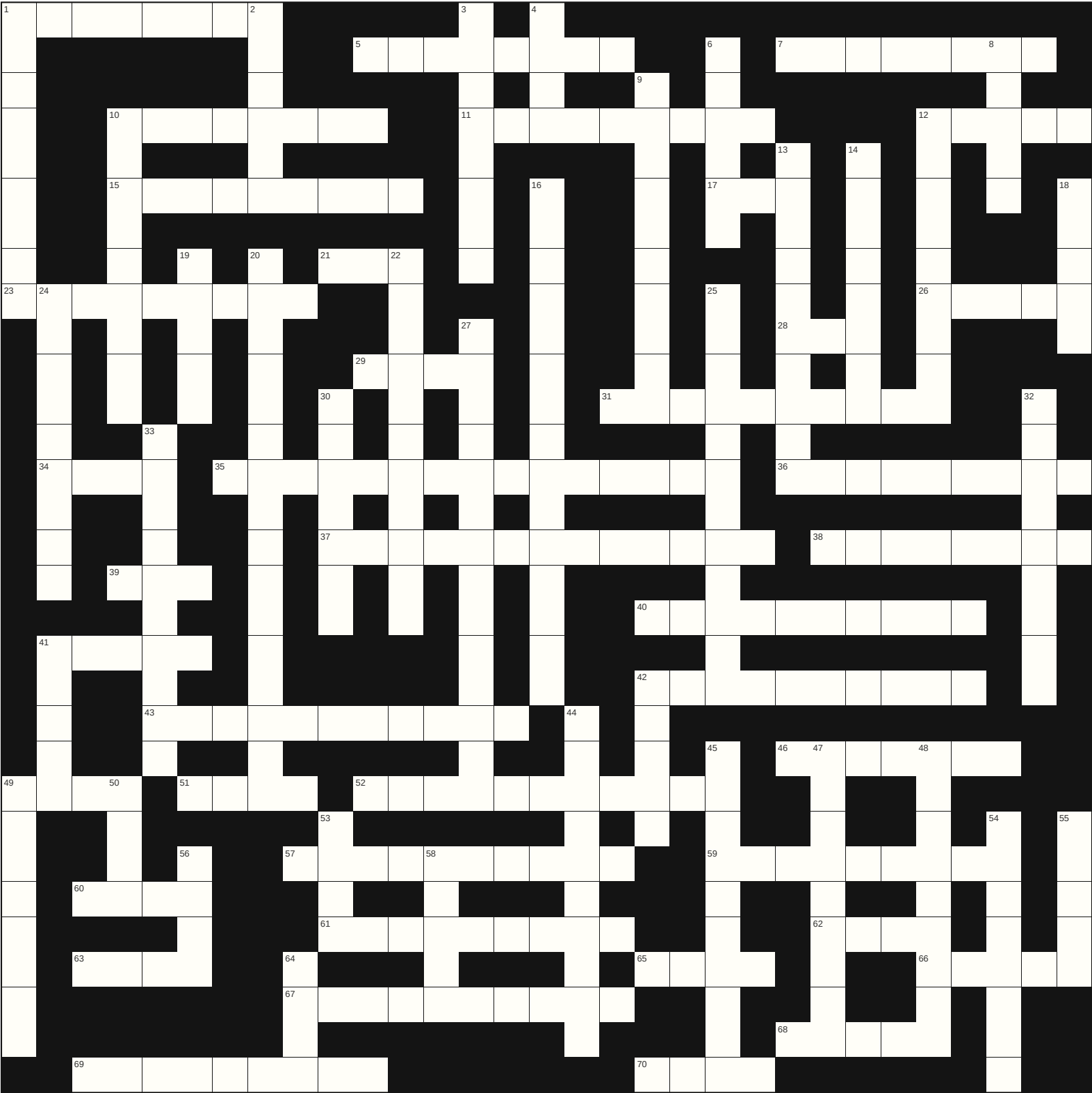
CLIMAX SERIES, first stage, from Saturday: Seibu v Nippon-Ham; Yomiuri v DeNA.

TODAY: World judo, women's 57 kg, men's 73 kg. Japan Open tennis, final.

HORSE RACING: Daryz won Sunday's Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Admire Terra 11th, Meisho Tabaru 14th.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Today's Professional Puzzle — Constructed by James O'Neill — 76 Words



Solution will appear in tomorrow's edition. Puzzle difficulty: Professional.

SPORTS

Four Seconds From Going Out, Then a Sixth Title: Uta Abe's Day

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

Uta Abe's sixth world championship was the hardest won of them.

She entered in the second round and won five contests. The one that nearly ended her day was the quarter-final, against a German opponent named Ballhaus.

Abe conceded a waza-ari, the lesser of the two main scores, and spent the rest of the contest chasing. With four seconds left on the clock the German was given her third penalty for passivity, which means disqualification. Abe went through.

Daily Sports called it a position from which there seemed no escape.

The final was against Ariane Toro Soler of Spain, who is ranked fifth in the world. Abe was the first to be penalised. The four minutes ended level and the contest went into extra time.

It was settled in the same way as the quarter-final. The Spaniard received a third penalty, and Abe was champion.

She wept afterwards, as she had in Paris, for a different reason.

Her six titles date from 2018, when she won her first at 18. She has now won the last two. The record for a Japanese woman is seven, held by Ryoko Tani, and Abe is one short of it.

Winning on penalties is not how she made her name. Her judo has always been attacking, built on throws to both sides. That she could win twice in a day when the throws would not come is a different kind of evidence.

She is 26. Tani won her seventh title at 32.

SPORTS

Hifumi Abe Beats the Champion in the Semi-Final and Wins a Fifth Title, the Most by a Japanese Man

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

The decisive contest of the men's 66 kilograms in Baku on Monday was not the final. It was a semi-final between two Japanese.

Takeshi Takeoka won this title last year and is ranked first in the world. Hifumi Abe, who finished third behind him then, is a double Olympic champion.

They train at the same club.

Abe won on a score. He went on to beat a Spanish opponent in the final.

It was his fifth world title. No Japanese man had won more than four.

Takeoka recovered to win a bronze medal.

The result reverses the order of a year ago and reopens a question the selectors thought they might be spared. Only one man can represent Japan in each weight class at the Olympics. For most of the past decade there was no doubt that at 66 kilograms it would be Abe.

Takeoka's victory last year, and his rise to the top of the rankings, suggested the succession had begun. Monday suggested otherwise.

Abe is 29. He has spoken of Los Angeles as his goal, and of winning there alongside his sister as they did in Tokyo.

His first world title was in 2017, when he was 20.

The rivalry has two years to run.

SPORTS

Number One in the World and Third on the Day: Takeoka's Bronze

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

The man with most cause for mixed feelings in Baku on Monday was Takeshi Takeoka.

He arrived as the reigning world champion at 66 kilograms and at the head of the world rankings. He leaves with a bronze medal.

His defeat came in the semi-final and was inflicted by Hifumi Abe, who trains in the same hall and wears the same club's name on his back.

Takeoka won the title last year in Abe's absence from the final. Abe had been beaten earlier in the day and took bronze. The two did not meet.

On Monday they did, and Abe won on a score.

Takeoka then had to return to the mat for the bronze-medal contest within the hour, which is the hardest thing the sport asks. A judoka who has just lost the chance of a title must fight again for a lesser prize while the disappointment is fresh.

He won it.

The result does not settle the question of who goes to Los Angeles. Takeoka remains high in the rankings, and selection will rest on results over the next two

years.

It does change the conversation. A year ago it was reasonable to ask whether Abe, approaching thirty, was being overtaken. That question has been answered for the present.

The two will presumably be back in the same training hall next week.

SPORTS

Seven: The Number Uta Abe Is Chasing, and the Woman Who Set It

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Uta Abe's sixth world title leaves her one short of a record that has stood for nineteen years.

It belongs to Ryoko Tani, who won the lightest women's class at the world championships seven times between 1993 and 2007.

Tani, who competed under her maiden name of Tamura for most of that period, was the most popular Japanese athlete of her generation. She stood 146 centimetres tall and was known by the name of a comic-book judo heroine.

Her first world title came at 18. She won six in a row, a sequence interrupted only because she was pregnant with her first child and did not compete in 2005. She returned in 2007 and won again.

She won the Olympic title twice, in Sydney and Athens, and three other Olympic medals.

She was later elected to the House of Councillors and served one term.

The comparison with Abe has limits. In Tani's time the championships were held every two years. They are now annual, so that a champion has more opportunities, and also more occasions on which to lose.

Abe's six have come in eight years. She missed the championships of 2021, which fell weeks before the Tokyo Olympics, and has not been beaten at a world championships since her first title.

If she wins next year she will equal the record at 27.

The men's record at the world championships is held by Teddy Riner of France, with eleven titles.

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SPORTS

Three Warnings and Out: How Penalties Decided Two of Uta Abe's Contests

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

Uta Abe won her quarter-final and her final in Baku in the same manner. In each, her opponent was given a third penalty. The rule behind that outcome is one of the most argued over in the sport.

The minor penalty in judo is called a shido, which means guidance. It is given for a list of offences. The commonest is passivity: failing to attack, or making attacks that are not real attempts to throw.

Others include stepping out of the contest area, refusing to take a grip, and holding the opponent's sleeve or collar in certain ways for too long.

The first two shido cost nothing in themselves. The third is a disqualification, and the opponent wins.

The system is intended to force action. Without it a judoka who was ahead could simply defend, and one who was outmatched could stall.

Its critics say it hands too much to the referee. Whether an attack was genuine is a matter of judgment, and a contest between two cautious fighters can be settled by which of them the officials consider less active.

In extra time the effect is stronger. There is no time limit. The contest ends with the first score or with a third penalty, so both fighters know that standing still will lose.

In Abe's quarter-final the German had scored and needed only to survive. With four seconds left she was judged to have stopped attacking.

The rules were adjusted last year, when a third level of scoring was restored, partly so that more contests would be decided by throws.

Monday's results suggest the penalties still have the last word more often than the rule-makers would like.

SPORTS

ANALYSIS: Japan's Judo Problem Is the Kind Other Countries Would Like to Have

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

The semi-final of the men's 66 kilograms in Baku on Monday was between the reigning world champion and a double Olympic champion. Both were Japanese, both wear the same club's badge, and only

SPORTS

one of them can go to Los Angeles.

That is the selectors' difficulty in a sentence. In at least four weight classes Japan's second choice would be favourite for a medal in most other teams.

The rule is one entrant per country per class at the Olympics. At the world championships a country may enter two in some classes, which is how Takeoka and Abe came to meet.

The All Japan Judo Federation has changed its method of choosing more than once. For a long time the national championships decided it. After several champions failed at the Games, it moved to early selection on international results, naming Olympic entrants a year or more ahead so that they could prepare without the strain of a trial.

Early selection rewards the established name. It would have given Abe the place without argument a year ago. It would have given it to Takeoka last winter.

The case for waiting is Monday's result. Form changes. An athlete named too soon may be the wrong one by the time the Games arrive.

The case against is what happened in Paris, where Japan's judoka, selected early and heavily favoured, won fewer gold medals than expected.

Other federations solve the problem by not having it. France has one heavyweight. Japan has to explain to a world champion that he is staying at home.

The depth is itself the achievement. It is produced by a school and university system in which a child who takes up judo at six can find a strong opponent every day until he is twenty-two.

The selectors' headache, in other words, is the price of the thing that makes them the envy of the sport.

SPORTS

One Company, Five Medals: The Car-Park Operator Behind Japan's Judo Champions

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Readers of the results from Baku will have noticed the same name in brackets after several of the Japanese medallists.

Uta Abe, Hifumi Abe, Takeshi Takeoka and Ryuju Nagayama all compete for Park24.

The company is not a sports organisation. It operates pay-by-the-hour car parks, under the Times brand, on small plots of land in cities throughout Japan, and runs the country's largest car-sharing service.

Its judo club was founded in 2010 and has become the strongest men's team in the country. Its coaches have included Olympic champions.

The arrangement is typical of Japanese sport. An athlete who leaves university joins a company as an employee. The company pays a salary, provides a training hall, coaches and travel, and expects in return the publicity of results and, traditionally, a career in the firm afterwards.

Judo, athletics, volleyball, rugby and baseball were all built on this model. It has weakened in team sports, where professional leagues have taken over, and survives in individual ones.

For the athlete it offers security that prize money in judo could never provide. For the federation it means that the cost of maintaining a world-class squad falls largely on private companies.

It has a disadvantage that Monday displayed. When the two best men at a weight belong to the same club, they train together every day and meet as rivals a few times a year.

The company has been in the news for a different reason this month. Its car-sharing arm is the one from which millions of customer records were taken.

In Baku its name has had a better week.

SPORTS

Today in Baku: Women at 57 Kilograms, Men at 73

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

The third day of the world judo championships moves up a weight class for each sex.

The women's 57 kilograms and the men's 73 are decided today. Preliminary rounds begin at 4 p.m. Japan time and the finals at 11.

Japan's entries at 57 kilograms are Akari Omori and Momo Tamaoki.

The class has been harder for Japan than the two

below it. Its Olympic champion in Paris was a Canadian of Japanese descent, Christa Deguchi, who was born and trained in Nagano and chose to represent her father's country.

The men's 73 kilograms was for a decade the property of Shohei Ono, twice Olympic champion and regarded by many as the best judoka of his time. He stepped away from competition after Tokyo, and Japan has been looking for a successor.

The team's start could hardly have been better. Three gold medals and two bronze from the first four classes put it well clear at the top of the table.

The individual classes continue through Saturday, when the heavyweights fight.

The mixed team event closes the championships on Sunday.

Results from these championships count towards qualification for the Los Angeles Olympics.

Finals are shown late at night in Japan because Baku is five hours behind.

SPORTS

Three Hundred and Twenty-Five Days: Doan Ends His Wait With the Goal That Wins the Cup

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

Ritsu Doan had not scored for Japan in 325 days when the ball came to him in the 71st minute on Monday.

The chance was made by Keito Nakamura, who had come on a few minutes earlier with Junya Ito and Ao Tanaka in a triple substitution that changed the game. Nakamura went past his marker on the left and pulled the ball back.

Doan finished it. Japan led 2-1 and held the lead without alarm for the remaining twenty minutes.

He is 28 and plays for Eintracht Frankfurt. To most Japanese supporters he is still the player of two evenings in Qatar four years ago, when he came off the bench against Germany and again against Spain and scored the equalising goal each time.

Both matches were won. Both were turned by substitutions made by the manager whose last home game this was.

That is what Doan had in mind when he spoke afterwards of a story shared with the manager that went deeper than most people's, as Daily Sports reports him.

His position has been less secure since. Japan has more right-sided attackers of quality than it can fit into a team, and Doan has been in and out of the starting eleven.

A goal in a final, even of a friendly tournament, is a useful thing to have scored when a new manager is about to make his own judgments.

The match was played at the National Stadium in Tokyo.

Japan's next fixtures are the last before the Asian Cup in January.

SPORTS

Eight Years, Two World Cups and a Farewell: Moriyasu Takes His Leave of Tokyo

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

Hajime Moriyasu's last home match as manager of Japan ended as he would have wished, with a trophy and a narrow win.

He was appointed in 2018, after the World Cup in Russia, and has held the post longer than any of his predecessors.

His reputation was made in a single fortnight in Qatar in 2022. Japan, drawn in a group with Germany and Spain, beat both, each time after trailing at half-time and each time through changes he made from the bench.

The team went out in the next round on penalties. He was kept on, the first Japan manager to be retained after a World Cup.

His style on the touchline is undemonstrative. He takes notes in a small book, bows to the crowd, and has rarely criticised a player in public.

His critics found him cautious and slow to change a team that was not working. His defenders pointed to results, and to the number of players he brought through who now hold places at leading European clubs.

Before managing the national side he won the J.League three times with Sanfrecce Hiroshima, the club where he spent most of his playing career as a holding midfielder.

He was a member of the Japan team that conceded a late equaliser in Doha in 1993 and missed the country's first World Cup. Beating Germany in the same city twenty-nine years later closed a circle that every Japanese football follower understood.

His successor, Go Oiwa, takes over in March.

The Asian Cup in January, a competition Japan has won four times and Moriyasu has not, is his last chance of a title that matters.

SPORTS

The Kirin Cup: A Trophy Older Than the Professional League

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The competition Japan won on Monday night is a relic of the years when the national team had to invite the world to come to it.

It was first held in 1978 under another name. Japanese football was then amateur. The national side had not qualified for a World Cup and drew small crowds.

The tournament brought foreign clubs and second-string national teams to Japan for a week in early summer to give the home players stronger opposition than they could find in Asia. Famous European and South American clubs took part, and usually won.

The brewer whose name it carries became sponsor in 1980 and has backed the national team continuously since, one of the longest such arrangements in world sport.

From 1992 it was restricted to national teams. That was the year before the professional league began, and the Cup's history from then on tracks the national side's rise.

Its format has changed repeatedly: three teams playing each other, four teams in a knockout, and in some years no tournament at all when the international calendar left no room.

In the gaps the sponsor attached its name to single friendly matches, played under a slightly different title.

Japan's victory on Monday was its first in the competition for fifteen years.

The trophy matters less than what it stands for. The matches are among the few the national team plays at home against opponents from other continents.

For a manager on his way out, it was a title to leave with.

SPORTS

Seibu Clinch Second Place and a Home Play-Off for the First Time in Seven Years

A bases-loaded walk to the pinch-hitter Nakamura breaks a 1-1 tie in the eighth; Takahashi allows one run in six innings

By Haruto Yamamoto | Sports Reporter

The Seibu Lions secured second place in the Pacific League on Monday night with a 7-1 victory over the Lotte Marines at Chiba.

The result means the first stage of the Climax Series, which begins on Saturday, will be played at Seibu's own ground against the third-placed Nippon-Ham Fighters. It is the first time in seven years that Seibu have hosted a post-season series.

The score flattered them. After seven innings it was 1-1, Seibu having been held by the craft of Lotte's starter, Nishino.

The game turned in the eighth against the relief pitcher Masuda. Two walks, a sacrifice bunt and a third walk filled the bases with one out. Takeya Nakamura was sent up to bat for another player and drew a fourth walk, which forced in the go-ahead run.

Seibu added four in the ninth on hits by Nishikawa, Canario and Kojima.

Kona Takahashi started and went six innings, allowing seven hits and one run, a solo home run to Yamaguchi in the third that was the Lotte batter's 38th of the season. Nevin's sacrifice fly had levelled the score in the fourth.

It was Seibu's 142nd game. Their record is 78 wins, 60 defeats and 4 draws.

The team has scored 500 runs in a season for the first time in five years, Sankei Sports notes.

SoftBank won the pennant with 91 wins and finished twelve games ahead.

The notes supplied for this edition give the winning pitcher's name as Kosei Takahashi. He is Kona Takahashi.

SPORTS

From 91 Defeats to Second Place in Two Years: A Recovery With One Precedent

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

Seibu's second place has to be measured from where the club stood two seasons ago.

In 2024 the Lions lost 91 games and finished last by a wide margin. They ended the year 42 games below an even record. It was the worst season in the history of a franchise that had won the Japan Series thirteen times.

This year they are 18 games above an even record with one game to play.

Nikkan Sports has looked for precedents. A team that finished 40 or more games under has climbed to 15 or more over within two seasons only once before, the newspaper finds: the Kintetsu Buffaloes of 1975.

The causes are not mysterious. The collapse of 2024 was one of batting. The team scored fewer runs than any other in either league. Its pitching was respectable throughout.

The recovery has been at the plate. Five hundred runs is not a large total by historical standards, but it is the club's first in five years.

Kona Takahashi's season is a small version of the team's. In 2024 he did not win a game and lost eleven. He goes into the play-offs as the staff's leading starter, with an earned run average of 2.58.

The manager, Fumiya Nishiguchi, took over after the 91 defeats. He was the team's best pitcher a generation ago.

There is a limit to the story. Seibu finished twelve games behind SoftBank, and never threatened them after midsummer.

That gap has a consequence under a rule new this year, described in the report beside this one.

SPORTS

The Ten-Game Rule Bites: SoftBank Will Start the Pacific Final Two Wins Up

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

Monday's edition explained a rule introduced this season and remarked that it would be applied only if a champion ran away with its league. One has.

Under the rule, a pennant winner that finishes ten or more games ahead of the team it meets in the final stage of the Climax Series is credited with two wins before the series starts. The usual allowance is one.

The Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks won the Pacific League with 91 wins, 49 defeats and 3 draws. Seibu, in second place, are twelve games behind. Nippon-Ham, in third, are further back.

Whichever of the two wins the first stage, SoftBank will therefore begin the final stage in Fukuoka two wins to the good.

The series is to be played over a maximum of seven games, Nikkan Sports reports, and is decided when one side reaches five wins including the allowance. SoftBank need three. Their opponents need five.

In the Central League the same rule was avoided by a single result. DeNA's extra-inning win over Hanshin on Sunday guaranteed that they would finish within ten games of the champions.

The rule was adopted after the Japan Series of 2024 was won by a team that had finished third in its league.

Its critics say it makes the final stage close to a formality. Its supporters reply that a lead of twelve games over 143 should count for something.

The first stages begin on Saturday: Seibu against Nippon-Ham at Tokorozawa, and the Giants against DeNA at Tokyo Dome.

The final stages follow in the middle of next week.

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SPORTS

SPORTS

Ninety-One Wins and a Two-Game Start: The Team Everyone in the Pacific League Is Chasing

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

Seibu's celebration of second place on Monday was sincere and came with a qualification. They finished twelve games behind the champions.

The Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks won 91 games, lost 49 and drew 3. Seibu, the next best in their league, won 78.

They are the richest club in Japanese baseball, owned by a technology and investment group, and have won the Japan Series more often this century than any other team. They beat Hanshin in last year's.

Their advantage is depth. The club runs four tiers of teams, more than any rival, and can replace an injured regular with a player who would start elsewhere.

Their manager, Hiroki Kokubo, took charge in 2024 and has now won the league in each of his three seasons.

Under the rule introduced this year, a champion that finishes ten or more games ahead of its opponent in the final stage of the Climax Series starts with two wins. SoftBank qualify against either Seibu or Nippon-Ham.

They will have had more than a week without a competitive game when the final stage begins, which is the one disadvantage of finishing first.

Seibu's pitchers held them reasonably well during the season. Their batters did not.

The final stage is played entirely at the champions' ground in Fukuoka.

A team that needs three wins from a possible seven games at home, with the best record in the country, is as close to a certainty as the sport allows. The 2024 Japan Series is the reminder that it is not one.

SPORTS

From Saturday: Who Plays Whom in the First Stage, and What They Are Playing For

By Kenta Sakamoto | Data & Visualization

With Seibu's win on Monday the line-up for the first stage of the Climax Series in both leagues is settled.

PACIFIC LEAGUE: Seibu, second, are at home to Nippon-Ham, third, at their domed stadium in Tokorozawa, north-west of Tokyo.

CENTRAL LEAGUE: the Yomiuri Giants, second, are at home to DeNA, third, at Tokyo Dome.

Each series is the best of three games, played on consecutive days from Saturday, October 10. All games are at the ground of the higher-placed team.

There are no extra innings beyond the twelfth. If a series finishes level because a game was drawn, the higher-placed team advances.

The winners go on to the final stage against their league's champions: SoftBank in Fukuoka and Hanshin at Koshien.

In the final stage the champions are given a start. In the Central League, Hanshin begin one win up. In the Pacific League, SoftBank begin two up, because they finished more than ten games clear.

The two final-stage winners meet in the Japan Series, the best of seven, later in the month.

The first stage falls on the three-day weekend. Both stadiums in question are roofed, so the two typhoons now in the Pacific can affect the journeys of spectators and not the games.

The first stages are over by Monday, the holiday, at the latest.

SPORTS

At 43, the Old Slugger Wins a Game by Not Swinging

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

The decisive act of Seibu's most important win in seven years was performed by a man who kept the bat on his shoulder.

Takeya Nakamura is 43 and has been with the club since 2002. He has led the Pacific League in home runs six times and has hit more grand slams than any player in the history of Japanese professional baseball.

He is known to supporters by a nickname that refers

to his appetite, and to pitchers as a batter who either misses or hits the ball a very long way. Few players have struck out more often.

On Monday night he was sent up as a pinch-hitter with the bases loaded, one out and the score level in the eighth. The situation called, on the evidence of his career, for a home run or a strikeout.

He took four balls. The run walked in, and Seibu led.

He plays rarely now, and bats mostly as a substitute.

His presence in the dugout is part of the club's continuity. He joined when the Lions were champions as a matter of course, stayed through the decline, and was on the roster for the 91 defeats of 2024.

The Lions will want him on Saturday. A pinch-hitter whom pitchers are afraid to throw strikes to has a use in a short series.

A walk with the bases loaded counts in the record book exactly as a single would: one run batted in.

The official scorer credited him with the game-winning run batted in.

SPORTS

At Ariake Today: The Japan Open Final, and Nishikori's Goodbye

By Oliver Brooks | Sports Desk Editor

The final of the Japan Open tennis championships is played today at the Ariake Colosseum in Tokyo, and will be followed by a ceremony for the best player the country has produced.

Kei Nishikori announced last week that he was retiring. He is 36.

He reached the final of the United States Open in 2014, the first Asian man to play in the final of one of the four major championships, and rose to fourth in the world rankings the following year.

He won the Japan Open twice, in 2012 and 2014, and an Olympic bronze medal in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

His career after that was a long negotiation with injury: the wrist, the elbow, the hip, the knee. He came back from each, a little lower in the rankings.

What distinguished him was his record in deciding sets. For much of his career no leading player won a higher proportion of matches that went the distance.

He left Japan for a tennis academy in Florida at 13, speaking no English, on a scholarship funded by a Japanese businessman. A generation of Japanese juniors has followed the same route.

The stadium at Ariake has a retractable roof, so the forecast of sunshine with some cloud is of interest only to those queuing outside.

The reports available do not name today's finalists.

The ceremony is to follow the singles final.

CULTURE

A Thousand Years of Reading Genji: An Exhibition Opens at the Kyoto National Museum

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

An exhibition devoted to The Tale of Genji has opened at the Kyoto National Museum and runs until November 29.

The notes available give the dates and no list of the works. What can be said is why the subject fills a museum.

The tale was written in the first years of the eleventh century by a lady of the imperial court known as Murasaki Shikibu. It follows the life and loves of a prince, and then, after his death, of the generation that succeeds him, across fifty-four chapters.

It is often called the world's first novel. Whatever is meant by that, nothing of comparable length and psychological subtlety survives from so early anywhere.

No manuscript in the author's hand exists. The text has come down through copies made by later generations of courtiers, and the comparison of those copies has occupied scholars for eight hundred years.

What a museum can show is the response. The story was being illustrated within a century of its writing. The earliest surviving picture scrolls, from the twelfth century, are among the most treasured objects in Japan.

From then on it supplied subjects for folding screens, fans, lacquer boxes, incense games, playing cards and kimono. Each chapter acquired an emblem, and a

pattern of five lines that still appears on sweets and wrapping paper.

The setting adds something. The tale takes place in Kyoto, in a palace and mansions whose sites lie within a short walk or bus ride of the museum.

Autumn is the season in which the museum mounts its largest exhibitions, timed to the crowds that come to the city for the colours of the leaves.

Visitors should expect queues at weekends, and should check the museum's notices, since fragile works are shown in rotation.

CULTURE

The Lady Who Wrote It: What Is Known, and Not Known, About Murasaki Shikibu

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

The author of the work now on show in Kyoto is one of the most famous writers in the world, and her name is not known.

Murasaki Shikibu is a nickname. Murasaki is the heroine of her tale. Shikibu refers to a government office in which her father served. Women of the court were not recorded by their personal names.

She was born in about 973 into a minor branch of the most powerful family in the country. Her father was a scholar of Chinese, and she wrote later that he lamented she had not been born a boy, having learned the classics by listening to her brother's lessons.

She married late, had a daughter and was widowed within three years. It is thought that she began the tale during her widowhood.

Its reputation brought her to court, where in about 1006 she entered the service of the young empress as a lady-in-waiting. Her patron was the empress's father, the regent, the most powerful man in Japan.

She kept a diary for about two years. It records the birth of a prince, the rivalries of the women around her and her own melancholy. It contains the first datable reference to the tale, in 1008, which is why the work's millennium was marked in 2008.

The date of her death is unknown. Estimates range from 1014 to after 1030.

She wrote in Japanese at a time when serious literature was composed by men in Chinese. The vernacular prose of the court was largely the creation of its women.

Her portrait appears on the reverse of the 2,000-yen banknote, issued in 2000 and now seldom seen.

A television drama of her life, broadcast across the whole of 2024, drew a new generation of visitors to the places in Kyoto associated with her.

CULTURE

Genji in English: Four Translators, Four Different Books

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

Foreign visitors to the exhibition in Kyoto who decide to read the tale face a choice among translations so unlike one another that they amount to different works.

The first complete English version was made by Arthur Waley, an Englishman who never visited Japan, and published in six volumes between 1925 and 1933. It made the book famous in the West.

Waley wrote beautiful Edwardian prose and took liberties. He cut passages he found tedious, expanded others and omitted one chapter. Readers who love it tend to admit that they love Waley.

Edward Seidensticker, an American scholar, published a complete translation in 1976. His sentences are short and brisk where the original's are long and winding, and he restored what Waley left out.

Royall Tyler's version of 2001 goes furthest in keeping the manner of the original. Characters are referred to by their shifting ranks and titles, as in the Japanese, and not by fixed names. It is the most faithful and asks most of the reader.

Dennis Washburn's, in 2015, takes a middle course and works explanatory detail into the text itself.

The difficulty all four faced is that the original is hard for Japanese readers too. Its language is a thousand years old. Subjects of sentences are omitted. Much is conveyed by allusion to poems the first readers knew by heart.

Most Japanese therefore read it in a modern version.

Several of the country's leading novelists have made one, and each of those is a distinct book as well.

The work is about 1,100 pages in English. All four versions are in print.

Those daunted by the length are often advised to begin with the first dozen chapters, which form a story in themselves.

CULTURE

The Banknote Nobody Uses: Genji on One Side, an Okinawan Gate on the Other

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

Two of this week's subjects, The Tale of Genji and Okinawa, share a piece of paper that most Japanese have not handled in years.

The 2,000-yen note was issued in July 2000. It was the first new denomination since 1958 and was created to mark the summit of the leading industrial nations held that month in Okinawa.

Its face carries no portrait, which is unusual. It shows the Shureimon, the ceremonial gate of the royal castle at Shuri, in Naha, the seat of the kings of the Ryukyu islands before they were absorbed into Japan.

The reverse shows a scene from a twelfth-century picture scroll of The Tale of Genji, with a passage of its text, and in the corner a small portrait of the author, Murasaki Shikibu.

The pairing was deliberate. One side honoured the host prefecture's distinct history. The other honoured the classic of the mainland court. The year 2000 supplied the denomination.

The note failed. Vending machines and automatic tellers were not adapted to take it, shops found it a nuisance, and the public never acquired the habit. The Bank of Japan stopped printing it within a few years.

It is still legal tender. Hundreds of millions remain in existence, most of them in the Bank's vaults.

The exception is Okinawa. There the note is dispensed by cash machines and circulates normally, out of local pride in the gate.

The gate itself survived the fire that destroyed the main hall of Shuri Castle in 2019. Reconstruction of the hall has been in progress since.

A visitor who wants one need only ask at a bank in Naha.

CULTURE

France's Leading Literary Prize Drops a Novel Suspected of Being Written by a Machine

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

A novel suspected of having been written with artificial intelligence has been removed from consideration for the Goncourt Prize, the most prestigious award in French literature, Sankei reports.

The summary available does not name the book or its author, or say how the suspicion arose.

The Goncourt has been awarded since 1903 by an academy of ten writers who meet over lunch in a private room at a restaurant in Paris. They announce a long list in September, reduce it in stages and name the winner in early November.

The prize itself is a cheque for ten euros. Its value lies in sales. A winning novel can expect to sell several hundred thousand copies.

The will of the founder requires that the prize go to the best imaginative work in prose of the year. It says nothing about how the work was produced, since the question could not have arisen.

It has arisen now in several countries. Japan's own Akutagawa Prize went in January 2024 to a novel whose author said afterwards that about five per cent of the text had been taken directly from a chatbot's output. The passages in question were the words of an artificial intelligence that appears in the story.

That disclosure caused debate and no penalty. The author had been open, and the use was part of the book's subject.

The French case, on the little that is known, is of a different kind: a suspicion, not an admission.

Proof is difficult. Software that claims to detect machine-written text is unreliable, and a human writer may revise a draft until its origin cannot be shown.

Literary juries have always judged the book and trusted the name on the cover. They are having to

CULTURE

decide whether that is still enough.

CULTURE

When the Films Learned to Talk, Japan's Narrators Fell Silent

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The arrival of sound in the cinema, which began ninety-nine years ago tonight in New York, was resisted in Japan longer than in any other film-making country. The reason was a profession that existed nowhere else on the same scale.

Silent films in Japan were never silent. Beside the screen stood a narrator, the benshi, who explained the story, spoke all the parts in different voices and commented on the action, accompanied by a small orchestra of Japanese and Western instruments.

The benshi were stars. Their names appeared on posters above those of the actors, audiences chose a cinema for its narrator, and the best were paid more than the directors.

The practice came from the storytelling traditions of the puppet theatre and the variety hall, where a narrator beside the stage had always been part of the performance.

It shaped the films. Japanese directors could assume that someone would explain what was happening, and so used fewer titles and longer takes than their Western contemporaries.

There were several thousand benshi at the end of the 1920s. Talking pictures made them unnecessary, and they knew it. They went on strike in Tokyo and other cities.

The first fully successful Japanese talking film was a domestic comedy released in 1931. Silent films continued to be made in quantity until the middle of the decade, later than anywhere in the West.

Among those put out of work was the elder brother of Akira Kurosawa, a celebrated narrator of foreign films, who took his own life in 1933. The future director was 23.

A handful of benshi still perform, at festivals and in the few cinemas that show silent films with live narration.

Their art has a descendant in the voices that narrate Japanese television, which explain a good deal more than their counterparts elsewhere.

CULTURE

The Laureate Who Still Sees Patients: Deisseroth, the Psychiatrist Who Wanted to Be a Writer

By Naomi Kato | Culture & Society Editor

The youngest of this year's Nobel laureates in medicine is unusual among winners of the prize in that he is a practising doctor.

Karl Deisseroth, who is 54, is a professor of bioengineering and of psychiatry at Stanford University. Alongside his laboratory he continues to treat patients, many of them with severe depression or autism that other treatments have not helped.

He has said that his first ambition was to write. He entered university intending to study creative writing and turned to medicine and the brain from an interest in how words produce feeling.

The clinic is where the science began. As a young psychiatrist he was struck by how little was known about what was actually wrong in the brains of the people he treated. The drugs worked, when they worked, for reasons nobody could state.

The tool he went on to develop was meant to answer that: a way of asking what a given set of cells contributes to behaviour.

He has also developed a method of making brain tissue transparent, so that its wiring can be seen intact under a microscope without slicing.

In 2021 he published a book for general readers built around the stories of his patients, in which each case leads to an account of what is known about the circuits involved. It was praised as much for its prose as for its science.

He is married to a neurologist and scientist at the same university.

He received the Kyoto Prize in 2018 and shared the Japan Prize in 2023.

Asked in the past whether the technique would one day treat psychiatric illness directly, he has tended to

answer that its real gift is understanding, and that treatments follow from that.

CULTURE

The Alga With an Eye: The Pond Organism That Gave Neuroscience Its Switch

By Maya Suzuki | Science & Innovation Desk

The organism at the origin of this year's Nobel Prize in medicine can be found in any puddle that has turned green.

Chlamydomonas is a single cell about a hundredth of a millimetre long. It lives in fresh water and damp soil all over the world and makes its living, like a plant, from sunlight.

It swims. Two whip-like threads at its front end beat in a breaststroke and pull it through the water.

And it sees, after a fashion. Near its equator is an orange speck called the eyespot. As the cell rotates while swimming, the eyespot is alternately lit and shaded, and from the rhythm of that signal the cell can tell where the light is coming from.

It steers towards light that is good for photosynthesis and away from light strong enough to damage it.

Biologists had known of this behaviour for more than a century. What they did not know was how a single cell with no nerves could turn light into a change of direction within a fraction of a second.

The answer, found by the two German laureates and their colleagues at the start of this century, was a protein in the membrane beside the eyespot that is both the sensor and the switch. Light opens it, charged particles flow in, and the electrical change alters the beating of the threads.

No one studying it was thinking of the human brain.

The alga has other claims on science. It is the standard organism for studying how the hair-like projections on cells are built, and defects in the same machinery cause inherited diseases in people.

It is also grown in tanks by engineers who hope to make it produce fuel.

CULTURE

Kyoto in October: A Vision Statement, an Exhibition, and Then a Procession and a Fire

By Grace Park | Food & Restaurants

Kyoto has had an unusual share of the week's news: a declaration by seventeen countries on science, and the opening of an exhibition on the country's greatest work of literature.

The city's own calendar for the month has two older fixtures, both on the 22nd.

The first is the Festival of the Ages. A procession of about two thousand people in costume walks from the old imperial palace to a shrine in the east of the city. It runs backwards through time, beginning with the soldiers of the 1860s and ending, two hours later, with courtiers of the eighth century.

The festival is not ancient. It was created in 1895 to raise the city's spirits after the emperor and the government had moved to Tokyo, and the date marks the day in 794 on which the capital was established at Kyoto.

The costumes are made by the city's traditional workshops with the dyes, weaves and metalwork of each period, and are an exhibition of those crafts in themselves.

The second begins at dusk the same day in a village in the hills to the north. At the fire festival of Kurama, children and then young men carry burning pine torches, some of them several metres long, up the single street to the shrine.

The village holds a few hundred people. The crowd that comes by a small mountain railway is many times that, and the police admit visitors in batches.

October is otherwise the month in which the city waits. The maples do not turn until the middle of November.

The weather this week is on the visitor's side: cloud with some sun today and a high of 26, and clearer, cooler days to follow.

The museum is at its least crowded on a weekday morning.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

Yana apologises and stays, Page 5.

American bombers leave England, Page 7.

CULTURE

The Air Show at the Bomber Base: Fairford's Other Life

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

To several generations of British families the air base in this week's news is not a place of secrecy. It is where they went as children to look at aeroplanes.

Every July the airfield at Fairford is opened for a long weekend to the Royal International Air Tattoo, one of the largest military air shows in the world. Aircraft from two or three dozen air forces are parked along the runway, and their crews stand beside them answering questions.

The flying goes on for eight hours a day. National display teams trail coloured smoke. Fighters stand on their tails. Bombers of the kind withdrawn last weekend make slow passes with their wings swept forward.

Attendance over the three days is well above a hundred thousand. The surrounding lanes are closed and the fields become car parks.

The show began in 1971 at another airfield and moved to Fairford in 1985. It is run by a charitable trust connected with the air force.

Japanese aircraft have taken part. The Air Self-Defense Force sent a transport aircraft to the show in 2018, the first time the service had displayed in Britain.

There is an oddity in a base that receives nuclear-capable bombers in wartime and schoolchildren in summer. The British do not seem to feel it. The show is treated as a local tradition, like a county fair.

The men arrested near the base last month were found on its outskirts, in the kind of lane that in July is full of people with folding chairs.

The lanes are quiet at this time of year.

Whether next summer's show is held in the usual way is a question for after the investigation.

CULTURE

Fairford's Other Treasure: The Windows That Survived Five Hundred Years

By Grace Park | Food & Restaurants

The small English town that has been in the news for its air base has an older claim to attention, a few hundred metres from the perimeter fence.

The parish church of St Mary at Fairford was rebuilt in the 1490s by a wool merchant, at a time when the Cotswold hills were made rich by sheep. He and his son filled its twenty-eight windows with stained glass made by the best workshop in the country, which served the king. The merchant's tomb is in the church he paid for.

The glass is still there. It is the only complete set of medieval windows in any parish church in England.

Almost everywhere else such glass was destroyed, first in the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century and then by soldiers in the civil war of the seventeenth. How Fairford's escaped is not certain. One tradition holds that the townspeople took it down and hid it.

The windows tell the Christian story in sequence around the church, from the Old Testament prophets to the Last Judgment in the great west window, where devils in red and blue wheel the damned away in barrows.

During the Second World War the glass was removed and stored. The airfield beside the town was then newly built, and a target.

Visitors come for the windows from all over the world, in numbers small enough that the church is usually quiet.

The town has about three thousand inhabitants, a market square and a river with trout in it. Its relations with the base have been those of neighbours for eighty years.

Bombers taking off pass within sight of the church tower.

The glass has survived the Reformation, the civil war and two world wars. The parish will be hoping the present excitement is a short one.

ELSEWHERE IN TODAY'S PAPER

A Nobel for switching nerve cells with light, Page 9.

Ransomware suspect handed to Germany, Page 10.

CULTURE

Sports Day: The Holiday at the End of This Week Remembers an Afternoon in 1964

By Hana Ito | Research & Archive

The public holiday next Monday, around which the forecasts for two typhoons are being anxiously read, commemorates a single afternoon.

On October 10, 1964, the Olympic Games opened in Tokyo. They were the first held in Asia, and for Japan they marked the country's return to the company of nations nineteen years after defeat.

The date is popularly said to have been chosen because records showed it to be one of the days of the year least likely to bring rain to Tokyo. It was fine.

Two years later the anniversary was made a national holiday under the name Health and Sports Day, dedicated by law to enjoying sport and cultivating a sound mind and body.

For more than thirty years it fell on the tenth. Schools and neighbourhoods held their athletics meetings on or near it, and the autumn sports day, with its relay races and tugs of war, became a fixture of Japanese childhood.

In 2000 it was moved to the second Monday of October, under a policy of creating three-day weekends to encourage travel and spending. The link with the anniversary was loosened.

In 2020 the name was shortened to Sports Day, and for the Tokyo Olympics of that year and the next it was moved temporarily to July.

The tradition of fine weather has held up less well than the holiday. Mid-October typhoons have disrupted it several times in recent years, most seriously in 2019.

Many schools now hold their sports days in May, to avoid both the storms and the lingering heat of September. Company athletics days, once as common as school ones, have largely disappeared.

This year the tenth falls on Saturday, and the holiday on Monday the twelfth. It is one of sixteen national holidays in the Japanese calendar.

CULTURE

Ariake: The Stadium on Reclaimed Land Where Japanese Tennis Says Its Goodbyes

By Kenji Fukuda | Real Estate & Urban Development

The arena in which Kei Nishikori takes his leave today stands on land that did not exist when Japanese tennis began.

The Ariake district is part of the chain of artificial islands built out into Tokyo Bay from the 1960s onward with spoil from the city's construction sites. For years it was a landscape of warehouses and empty lots.

The tennis park opened there in 1983 with several dozen courts. Its centre court, the Colosseum, followed in 1987, a circular concrete bowl seating about ten thousand.

In 1991 it was given a roof that slides open in two halves, one of the first on a tennis stadium anywhere. The Japan Open has been able to guarantee play in the rainy first week of October ever since. Such roofs have become standard at the sport's main venues.

The park was rebuilt for the Olympic Games held in 2021 and was the venue for the tennis.

Around it the district has changed beyond recognition. Towers of flats, a gymnastics arena, a concert hall and shopping centres have filled the empty lots, and tens of thousands of people now live where there was landfill.

The Japan Open is the oldest professional tournament in Asia, first played in 1972. Its list of champions includes most of the leading players of each generation.

Nishikori won it in 2012, the first Japanese man to do so, and again in 2014. The courts are hard, the surface on which he had most of his best results.

The retirement ceremonies of several Japanese players have been held on the same court.

Today's forecast is for sunshine with some cloud and a high of 28 degrees. The roof will probably stay open.

EDITORIAL & OPINION



Editorial cartoon by Taro Suzuki for The Japan Morning Post.

EDITORIAL

They Brought the Plot to England. Washington Moved First.

A threat on the ground has sent twelve American bombers home from a British base. The host country is missing from the cartoon, and every host of American forces should ask where it would have stood.

By Samantha Ortiz | Editorial Page Editor

Taro Suzuki's drawing today is of an airfield. A signboard across the top reads Strong indications. Under it a watchtower on timber legs flies the American flag. It is lettered US watch, and has an eye in its window, a radar screen below and a single word on the rail: Seen.

On the left three white vans are drawn up, marked The plot. In front of them a hooded figure with Iran written across his back hands a sheet of paper to three other hooded men. The sheet is headed Errand. The bubble over their heads says: Leave no name.

In the middle stands an American officer in a blue uniform. He has his back to the hooded men. His arm is stretched out the other way, down a long empty runway, towards a banner strung between two poles: Bombers home. Above the runway the sky is full of bombers, climbing away.

The caption has two sentences. They brought the plot to England. Washington moved first.

It is a picture of an event in Gloucestershire. We think it is also a picture of a question that every country with American forces on its soil will have to answer, and no country has more of them than this one.

What is known

The facts on the public record are few.

This year the United States has flown B-1 bombers from the Royal Air Force station at Fairford, in the south of England, against the missile sites from which Iran attacks shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

On September 27 the British police, following a report of a suspicious vehicle, arrested five British men near the base on suspicion of preparing an act of terrorism. On October 1 they arrested a sixth, a dual national of Britain and Iran, and later released him. The prime minister, Andy Burnham, spoke of strong indications that Iran was involved. Iran denies it.

Over the weekend all twelve bombers flew back to the United States. American newspapers, citing officials, reported that new intelligence about an Iranian-backed plan had hurried the departure. On

Monday President Trump said a threat had been detected, that it was connected with Iran and that those who created it had been identified.

Nobody has been charged. The nature of the plan has not been disclosed. What follows rests on those few facts and should be read with that in mind.

The errand

If the two governments are right, the left-hand side of the drawing is exact.

A state that wants to hurt an enemy inside a third country used to have two choices. It could send its own officers, who are capable and, if caught, a diplomatic disaster. Or it could use a movement that shares its cause, which is deniable only until the movement boasts.

European security services have described a third way for several years, and say Iran has taken it. The work is put out to hire. Local criminals are engaged through intermediaries and paid by the job. They may not know who the customer is. If they are caught, the trail ends at a go-between abroad.

That is why the paper in the drawing says Errand and not Orders. An errand is what one gives a man whose name one has no need to know, and who has no need to know one's own.

The men who take such work are not believers. They are paid, and they are cheap. Russia is accused of using the same kind of disposable recruit for arson and sabotage across Europe. The practice has spread because it works, and because the worst that can happen to the sponsor is that a stranger goes to prison.

The head of Britain's security service said two years ago that it had dealt with twenty such Iranian-backed plots in under three years. Their targets were people: exiles, broadcasters, critics of the government in Tehran.

An air base would be something new. The reasoning behind it would not be hard to follow. A bomber over the Gulf is beyond anything Iran can reach. The same bomber on a ramp in the English countryside is a

large, still, thin-skinned object beside a public road.

The arm that points the other way

Now look at the officer.

He is the only figure in the picture who is doing anything about the plot, and what he is doing is facing away from it. The eye in the tower is on the hooded men. His arm points down the runway.

That is a fair picture of the decision. The watchtower did its work. Whatever was being prepared was seen. And the response chosen in Washington was not to seize the vans. It was to move the aircraft.

There were other things an officer in his position might have ordered. The guard could have been doubled. The aircraft could have been scattered among several airfields, or put under cover. Each of those takes days or months. Flying home takes hours, and it was the one measure that depended on nobody else.

The caption gives this the credit of initiative, and some is due. If there was a plot, it failed. No aircraft was lost and nobody was hurt.

But to move first is still to move. We suspect the cartoonist intends both meanings. The banner says the bombers are home. It does not say they won.

What a van can do

The decision is easier to understand with one date in mind.

In June 2025 Ukraine's intelligence service smuggled small drones into Russia in the roofs of wooden cabins carried on lorries. The lorries were parked near air bases far from the front. On a signal the roofs opened, and within an hour a number of Russia's strategic bombers had been damaged or destroyed where they stood. The aircraft are no longer made and cannot be replaced. The drones cost a few hundred dollars each.

Every air force studied that afternoon. So did every government with a grudge against one.

The United States has fewer than fifty B-1s, and the production line closed nearly forty years ago. Twelve of them, a quarter of the fleet, stood in a row at Fairford. A commander told that there might be a second group at large, with means unknown, had to set a longer flight to the target against the loss of aircraft that cannot be bought again. He chose the

longer flight.

What the move costs

The choice has a price, and it should be stated.

For months Iran has been unable to stop American aircraft leaving England to strike its missile sites. It has no fighter that could catch them and no missile that could reach their base. Then, for whatever was paid to a few men now in custody, the base is empty.

The bombers can still reach Iran from the United States. They will fly fewer sorties, need more tankers and give more warning. That is a military result, and it was obtained without a shot being fired.

It falls on the crews as well. A mission to the Gulf from an American base and back lasts well over a day in a cockpit the size of a small van. Men can do that. They cannot do it as often.

It is also a lesson for others. An adversary watching has learned that a believable threat to aircraft on the ground in an allied country may be enough to send them away, and that the threat need not succeed.

The remedy cannot be that the aircraft stay away. It must be that the ground is made safe enough for them to come back, and that their return is announced as plainly as their departure was.

Strong indications

The words on the signboard are the British prime minister's.

They are the language of intelligence. They mean that the people who know are convinced and cannot yet show why. Governments speaking in this way are often right. Within living memory, and about the same part of the world, they have also been disastrously wrong.

Mr Trump says those responsible have been identified. Then the course is plain. Charge the men in custody, name whoever directed them, and put before a court what can be put.

There is a date to watch. British law allows a person arrested under its terrorism legislation to be held for up to fourteen days before he is charged or released. For the five men detained on September 27 that period runs out this weekend. It will then be clearer whether there is a case that can be shown.

It matters beyond Britain. To say that one state commissioned an attack on the forces of a second, on

EDITORIAL & OPINION

the soil of a third, is about as grave a charge as there is. It may be cited within weeks as part of the case for new strikes on Iran, which the president is reported to be considering for the period after next month's elections. Allies who will be asked to support that, or to bear its effect on the price of oil, are owed more than a remark on the White House lawn.

There is another reason for care. The first five men arrested are British citizens, and they are presumed innocent. The accusation of working for a foreign power is easy to make and hard to live down.

The country that is not in the picture

There is one more thing to notice about the drawing, and it is an absence.

The caption says England. The field is English. Yet nobody British appears. There is the state accused of sending the plot, the men hired to carry it, the American tower that saw it and the American officer who answered it. The host is not there.

We do not take that as a slight on Britain, whose police made the arrests. We take it as a description of where a host country stands at such a moment. The aircraft were American, and so was the decision to move them. Nothing made public suggests that London's consent was needed.

Yet the ground outside the fence was Britain's to keep safe, and the departure was a judgment on whether it could.

That is the uncomfortable rule the episode lays down. A host that cannot answer for the ground around a base has little say in what leaves it. Sovereignty over an airfield is exercised at its perimeter, by policemen, long before it is exercised in a cabinet room.

Every government that hosts American forces should look at that empty space in the middle distance and ask who would be standing in it if the airfield were its own.

The largest host of all

No government has more reason to ask than Japan's.

This country hosts more American military personnel than any other, about fifty thousand. It is home to the only American aircraft carrier based abroad, to the largest American air base in the western Pacific, and to the Marines who would move first in a crisis over Taiwan or Korea. B-1s of the kind that left Fairford have flown from Misawa, in Aomori Prefecture.

The targets are not only American. The Self-Defense Forces' own newest fighters, each costing something like fifteen billion yen, stand at Misawa, Komatsu and Nyutabaru beside towns, rice fields and public roads. The destroyers that carry the country's missile defence lie alongside piers that can be seen from a commuter train.

If the method described above would repay an adversary anywhere, it would repay him here. The adversaries in this region are not short of money, of intermediaries or of patience.

The question for Japan is therefore not what happened in Gloucestershire. It is whether the same thing could be prevented in Aomori, Yamaguchi, Kanagawa or Okinawa, and who would decide what to do if it could not.

What Japan has, and has not

The inventory is mixed.

On the credit side Japan has capable police, strict control of firearms and explosives, and a public that notices strangers. Flying a drone near a defence facility, American bases included, is prohibited. A law in force since 2022 lets the government examine who owns and uses land around bases. Since the first of this month the police and the Self-Defense Forces may disable servers used in cyber-attacks.

On the debit side there are three gaps.

The first is institutional. Britain found the men at Fairford because it has a security service whose whole business is to look for them. Japan divides that work among the police, an agency under the justice ministry and the defence establishment, none with comparable powers or numbers. The planned national intelligence bureau is an acknowledgment of the gap, not yet a remedy.

The second is legal. Japan has no general law against spying or against working covertly for a foreign state. A man paid by a foreign go-between to photograph a perimeter fence would be hard to charge until he did something more.

The third is physical. Aircraft in this country, Japanese and American, are mostly parked in the

open. The danger planners have had in mind is a missile from across the sea. A drone launched from a lorry two kilometres away arrives underneath every defence built against that.

There has been a warning. In 2024 a video taken from a small drone flying over the largest warship of the Maritime Self-Defense Force, at its berth in Yokosuka, appeared on a Chinese website. The Defense Ministry concluded that the footage was very probably genuine. Nobody at the base had noticed the drone.

China, meanwhile, has built hardened shelters for its own aircraft by the thousand. The number added at bases in Japan over the same years is small.

Not only airfields

Nor is this a matter for the armed forces alone.

The same method has been used in Europe against things that are not military. Undersea cables in the Baltic have been cut by ships dragging anchors. Parcels carrying incendiary devices have ignited in courier depots. Warehouses have been set alight by men recruited over messaging applications for a few hundred euros. Governments there blame a hostile state. Each time, the hands were local and cheap.

Japan offers such a planner a long list: the few beaches where its submarine cables come ashore, the terminals where its gas is landed, its nuclear plants, the substations that feed its capital. The launchers of its new long-range missile were shown to the public on Saturday in a camp in the middle of a city.

Somebody in government should be able to say which twenty places matter most, who answers for the ground around each, and when that ground was last looked at through the eyes of a man in a van.

The fence and the town

One more thing belongs here, this week of all weeks.

The plot at Fairford was found because somebody reported a vehicle. The best protection a base has is a neighbourhood that thinks the base worth protecting.

On Saturday a woman was killed in a hotel in Naha. On Sunday a Marine was arrested for it. On Monday the governor of Okinawa handed the American commander a protest and received an expression of concern.

These are not separate subjects. An alliance that asks a community to host its forces, and then gives that community cause to fear them, is spending what its own safety rests on. It is worth asking how many people living beside Futenma this morning would telephone the police about an unfamiliar van.

What should be done

For the United States and Britain the first duty is disclosure. If a state attempted an attack on a strategic base in a NATO country, that should be proved in public. Vagueness serves only the party that wished to leave no name.

The second is to make the withdrawal temporary. Ramps can be covered. Perimeters can be watched by machines as well as men. None of it is beyond the two countries concerned.

Money is not the obstacle. A shelter costs a fraction of the aircraft inside it, and the equipment to stop a small drone costs less still. What has been lacking is attention. Defence ministries buy what is impressive, and a concrete roof is not.

For Japan there are four tasks.

One is to review now, jointly with the Americans and with the prefectural police at the table, the ground security of every major base against the method seen at Fairford and in Russia.

Another is to close the legal gap with care. A law against covert work for a foreign power is overdue. It must be drawn so that it cannot be turned on journalists, scholars or residents of foreign origin.

A third is to give the planned intelligence bureau the job of looking for commissioned crime of this kind, and the standing to exchange what it finds with its counterparts abroad.

The fourth is to settle with Washington what happens if American aircraft are ever withdrawn from a Japanese base for such a reason. The effect on this country's defence would be immediate. Japan should know beforehand how the decision would be taken and should have a voice in it. An ally is consulted. A host is told afterwards.

Home is not a strategy

The single word on the watchtower is the best thing in the picture. To have seen is a real achievement, of the kind that is never celebrated because nothing happened.

But the banner is the last thing the eye reaches, and it is not a victory banner. The hooded men were seen and the bombers left anyway. What was lacking, between the tower and the runway, was confidence that the next group would be seen too.

That confidence is made in peacetime, from dull materials: laws, patrols, shelters, trust between a base and its neighbours, and services that tell each other what they know.

It is also made by habit. A country that reviews its bases once, after someone else's scare, has learned nothing. One that does so every year, as a matter of routine, will be ready on the day the scare is its own.

Japan should build it now, while the picture is of someone else's airfield and the lesson is to be had for nothing. When the cartoonist next draws such a scene the host ought to be in it, and the arm ought to be pointing at the vans.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: A Governor Tokyo Helped Elect Is Asking for What His Opponents Asked For

By Aiko Tanaka | Senior Japan Correspondent

The most significant thing about the protest delivered in Naha on Monday was who delivered it.

For twelve years the governors of Okinawa were opponents of the government's base policy. When they demanded that the Status of Forces Agreement be revised, ministers in Tokyo could treat the demand as part of a wider hostility and decline it politely.

Genta Koja was elected last month with the governing parties behind him. He is not an opponent of the alliance or of the relocation of Futenma. On Monday he asked for a review of the agreement in the same words his predecessors used.

That removes the government's usual answer. It cannot say that the request comes from people who want the bases gone.

It also shows something about Okinawan politics that Tokyo has been slow to grasp. The demand to revise the agreement is not a position of the left. It is the common ground of the prefecture, held by conservatives and by the business community as firmly as by anyone.

The prime minister has an interest in giving him something. If a governor she supported returns from Tokyo with nothing, the argument that co-operation with the centre pays, on which he was elected, is damaged in his first month.

What she can give is constrained by Washington, which has refused to reopen the text for sixty-six years.

There is room short of that. The two governments could agree that custody passes on request in the gravest cases without discretion. They could give the prefecture a seat when the joint committee discusses incidents. They could publish figures on breaches of the forces' own curfew.

None of these touches the treaty. Each would be new.

The governor will ask this week. The answer will show whether a change of governor in Naha has changed anything in Tokyo.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: The Bank Is Getting Ready to Tighten as the Prime Minister Gets Ready to Loosen

By Yuki Saito | Economics & Finance Correspondent

Two pieces of news on Monday belong together, though they were reported on different pages. The prime minister promised to cut the consumption tax. And the Bank of Japan was said to be close to concluding that underlying inflation has reached two per cent.

The first is a decision to put more money into households' pockets. The second is a step towards taking some of it out, through higher interest rates.

There is nothing improper in the two arms of policy pulling apart. It happens in every country, and central banks were made independent so that it could.

It is, however, expensive. A tax cut that adds to demand in an economy where inflation is already at

target gives the central bank a reason to raise rates sooner and further than it otherwise would. Higher rates raise the cost of the government's own debt. Part of the tax cut is thus handed back to bondholders.

The prime minister's defence would be that the cut is aimed at the cost of living and not at demand. Food is dearer, and taking tax off it lowers a price directly.

That is true in the month it happens. A cut in a tax lowers the price level once. It does not lower the rate at which prices go on rising afterwards, and it leaves households with more to spend on everything else.

The governor of the Bank speaks this afternoon. He will not mention the tax cut. He will describe the conditions under which rates should rise, and his listeners will hold them up against the speech of the day before.

The finance minister speaks thirty-five minutes earlier in the same hall, and is in the more awkward position. She must reassure the buyers of bonds without contradicting the prime minister.

The cleanest resolution is the one the head of the business federation asked for. A tax cut matched by a named saving elsewhere adds nothing to demand and gives the Bank nothing to lean against.

Until the saving is named, the two policies are on course to meet, and the bond market is where they will do it.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS: A Chatbot's Warning Is Evidence. It Is Not a Confession.

By Daisuke Ito | Investigations & Longform

The prosecutors who put a defendant's conversation with a chatbot before a court have found something genuinely useful, and the temptation will be to make too much of it.

The usefulness is plain. The hardest thing to prove in a smuggling case is what the accused believed. Here is a record, made at the time and in his own words, of his asking whether an errand was risky and being told that it was.

That is better evidence than a search history, as a professor of criminal law told Yomiuri. A search shows curiosity. A question shows doubt.

The difficulty lies in the next step. From the fact that a machine said the parcel probably contained drugs, the prosecution asks the court to infer that the defendant believed it.

People do not treat what these systems say as they treat a letter from the tax office. They ask the same question three ways and take the answer they prefer. They are told constantly, by the companies themselves, that the answers may be wrong.

The defendant's reply, that he did not think it was a hundred per cent right, is self-serving. It is also an accurate description of how most users regard the technology.

There is a further point that courts will have to face. A person who asks a chatbot whether something is illegal is, on one view, showing a guilty mind. On another he is doing what a careful citizen should. If the asking is held against him, the lesson people draw will be not to ask.

None of this means the evidence should be excluded. It means it should be weighed like any other warning the accused received: from a friend, a notice at the airport, his own common sense about a stranger offering half a million yen to sign for a box.

Taken with those, the conversation may complete the picture. Taken alone, it shows that he was told, and the law requires that he knew.

The six citizens on the bench are well placed to judge the difference. Most of them will have asked a machine a question that week and decided for themselves how far to trust the answer.

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EDITORIAL & OPINION

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

The Japan Morning Post corrects errors of fact as soon as they are identified. Correction requests may be sent to corrections@japanmorningpost.com, giving the date, page and headline of the article concerned.

Monday's edition said that the tropical depression near the Marshall Islands would, if it strengthened, be the year's twenty-eighth typhoon. It is the twenty-ninth. A hurricane crossed the International Date Line at the same hour on Monday morning and took the number 28.

The notes supplied for today's edition give the agriculture minister's name as Yanagi; he is Kazuo Yana. They describe the ransomware group as Kirin; its name is written Qilin. They say that a member of the group is to be extradited to Germany; he was handed over on Friday. They give the name of Typhoon No. 28 as Noro and translate it as slow; it is Nolo, a name from the central Pacific list. They gloss Koguma as a minor typhoon; the word means the Little Bear.

The same notes place Typhoon No. 28 near Midway. The Japan Meteorological Agency's bulletin, on which today's map is based, places it in the region of Wake Island, and that description is used. They give the first of the medicine laureates as Deisseros; he is Karl Deisseroth. The Seibu pitcher named as Kosei Takahashi is Kona Takahashi. The Japanese horse placed fourteenth in Paris is Meisho Tabaru.

The notes say that three typhoons have struck in October for the first time in five years. The reports on which they draw say that three typhoons exist at the same time in October for the first time in five years; none has struck Japan.

THE WEEK AHEAD

TUESDAY, OCT. 6: Ten-year government bond auction. Finance minister speaks at 3 p.m., Bank of Japan governor at 3:35. Typhoon No. 27 passes about 750 km east-south-east of Tokyo in the evening. Nobel Prize in Physics, about 6:45 p.m. World judo: women's 57 kg, men's 73 kg. Japan Open tennis final. WEDNESDAY, OCT. 7: Nobel Prize in Chemistry. THURSDAY, OCT. 8: Literature. China's markets reopen. Typhoon No. 28 near Minamitorishima. FRIDAY, OCT. 9: Peace.

SATURDAY, OCT. 10: Climax Series first stages begin: Seibu v Nippon-Ham, Yomiuri v DeNA. Anniversary of North Korea's ruling party. SUNDAY, OCT. 11: World judo ends. MONDAY, OCT. 12: Sports Day; Nobel prize in economic sciences. THIS WEEK: Okinawa's governor visits Tokyo; party leaders question the prime minister. OCT. 18: Yokohama mayoral election; Asian Para Games open. OCT. 19 to 29: Exercise Keen Sword. OCT. 29 and 30: Bank of Japan policy meeting.

TYPHOON AND MARINE ADVISORIES

6 a.m. Tuesday. No. 27 (Choi-wan): large, strong; 29.1 degrees north, 145.6 degrees east, about 400 km north-east of Chichijima; moving north at 20 km/h; 950 hPa; winds 40 m/s, gusts 60. Forecast: 960 hPa at 6 p.m.; 965 hPa at 6 a.m. Wednesday; extratropical, 970 hPa, at 3 a.m. Thursday. No. 28 (Nolo): very strong; 25.7 north, 173.9 east; moving west at 25 km/h; 960 hPa; winds 45 m/s, gusts 65. No. 29 (Koguma): tropical storm; 12.8 north, 167.4 east; moving north-north-west slowly; 1,000 hPa; winds 18 m/s, gusts 25.

Ogasawara Islands: high waves and strong winds continue. Pacific coasts of eastern and northern Japan: high waves from swell today and tomorrow. Chiba and Kanagawa: ground loose after Typhoon No. 25. No landfall in Japan is forecast for any of the three storms.

MARKET REFERENCE

Tokyo, Monday's close: Nikkei 225 at 69,946.86, up 1,637; intraday above 70,000. TOPIX 4,145.22, up 54.22. Prime market turnover about 7.75 trillion yen; about 56 per cent of issues higher. Yen: 157.66 to the dollar at 4 p.m. Bank of Japan policy rate: 1.25 per cent. Tokyo consumer prices, September: up 2.7 per cent on the year. United States payrolls, September: up 29,000. Markets in mainland China are closed until Wednesday.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS IN THIS EDITION

Front page: Prime Minister Takaichi at the rostrum of the House of Representatives, file (WPM Productions). Page 3: map of three typhoons supplied for this edition, from Japan Meteorological Agency bulletins issued between 6:45 and 7:15 a.m. on

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October 6. Politics: Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from the air, May 26, 2010 (Sonata, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0). International: a B-1B Lancer bomber, March 2003 (U.S. Air Force). Economy: the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TG2, CC). Weather: the Japan and United States maps supplied for this edition. Editorial page: cartoon by Taro Suzuki.

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THE RECORD BOOK

World judo championships, Baku, after two days: Japan three gold (Wakana Koga, Uta Abe, Hifumi Abe) and two bronze (Ryuju Nagayama, Takeshi Takeoka). Uta Abe: sixth world title; the record for a Japanese woman is seven. Hifumi Abe: fifth, the most by a Japanese man. Kirin Cup final: Japan 2, New Zealand 1. Pacific League: SoftBank 91 wins, 49 defeats, 3 draws, champions; Seibu 78-60-4, second. Nikkei average: first close above 69,000 since August 17. Typhoon No. 27: 925 hPa on Monday, 950 on Tuesday.

NOBEL WEEK

Monday, October 5: Physiology or Medicine, to Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann and Georg Nagel, for discoveries concerning light-gated ion channels and optogenetics. Tuesday: Physics, about 6:45 p.m. Japan time. Wednesday: Chemistry. Thursday: Literature. Friday: Peace, announced in Oslo. Monday, October 12: the prize in economic sciences. Each prize is worth 12 million Swedish kronor. The prizes are presented on December 10.

TYPHOON TERMS USED TODAY

Tropical storm: winds of 17 to 24 metres a second; in Japan this is the lowest class of typhoon. Severe tropical storm: 25 to 32. Strong typhoon: 33 to 43. Very strong: 44 to 53. Violent: 54 or more. Large: gales extending, on average, 500 to 800 kilometres from the centre. Hurricane: a tropical cyclone of the same kind east of the International Date Line. Border-crossing typhoon: one that entered the western Pacific from the east. Extratropical cyclone: a former typhoon that has lost its warm core. Forecast circle: the area in which the centre is expected to lie with a probability of 70 per cent.

THE SYMBOLS ON THE WEATHER MAP

A sun: sunny. A cloud: cloudy. A cloud with strokes beneath it: rain. Two symbols joined by an arrow: the first sky gives way to the second during the day. Two symbols separated by a slanting stroke: the first sky, with the second at times. The figure in red is the forecast high and the figure in blue the low observed

this morning, in degrees Celsius. On the United States map the figures are in degrees Fahrenheit.

UNITS AND CONVENTIONS

Wind speeds are given in metres a second; one metre a second is 3.6 kilometres an hour, or about 1.9 knots. Pressure is in hectopascals. Temperatures are in degrees Celsius except on the United States map. Times are Japan Standard Time unless another place is named; Japan is at present nine hours ahead of Greenwich, eight ahead of London, 13 ahead of New York, 16 ahead of Los Angeles and five ahead of Baku. Japanese names are given with the family name last. A person arrested is a suspect and is presumed innocent.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Police: 110. Fire and ambulance: 119. Coast guard, for emergencies at sea: 118. Disaster message dial: 171. Police consultation, not an emergency: #9110. Consumer hotline: 188. Anyone asked by a person known only online to invest, or to pay a fee to withdraw money, should call 188 or #9110 before sending anything. Typhoon bulletins are published by the Japan Meteorological Agency at www.jma.go.jp.

ABOUT THE OPINION PAGES

The editorial states the view of the newspaper's editorial page and is written by its editor; it takes its subject from the day's cartoon. Articles headed Analysis are the judgment of the writer whose name they carry. The news pages report; the opinion pages argue, and say that they are doing so. Letters in reply are welcome at letters@japanmorningpost.com.

SOURCES FOR THIS EDITION

Reports in this edition draw on the Tuesday morning papers and Monday night's wires: Asahi Shimbun, Yomiuri Shimbun, Mainichi Shimbun, Sankei News, Nihon Keizai Shimbun, Chunichi Shimbun, the Ryukyu Shimpo, the Okinawa Times, Kyodo News, Jiji Press, NHK, MBS and Okinawa Television; on the sports dailies and Pacific League records; on AFP and Reuters; on Weathernews, the Japan Weather Association and the Japan Meteorological Agency for weather; and on American newspapers as reported by Kyodo News and Nikkei. Where accounts differ the difference is stated.

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TOMORROW'S EDITION

Wednesday's edition carries the speeches of the finance minister and the governor of the Bank of Japan and the result of the bond auction; the Nobel Prize in Physics; the passage of Typhoon No. 27 east of Japan and the latest on Nos. 28 and 29; the third day of the world judo championships; and the Japan Open final and Kei Nishikori's farewell.

SOCIETY

Today's Cautions

By the Society Desk

Ogasawara: high waves, strong winds.

Pacific coasts: swell from the typhoon.

Chiba, Kanagawa: loose slopes.

Underpasses: never drive into standing water.

Messages from strangers about investment: fraud.

A platform that charges to release your money: fraud.

Parcels for a fee from abroad: refuse.

Tomorrow morning: several degrees cooler.

Niigata: rain this morning.

Mountain districts: bears are about.

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