

Advertisement

THE VOLVO **80**th anniversary SALES EVENT
2007 VOLVO S60\$ **329** per m
EA
LEA

NEWS | POLITICS | OPINIONS | SPORTS | ARTS & LIVING | DISCUSSIONS | PHOTOS & VIDEO | CITY GUIDE | CLASSIFIEDS | JOBS | CARS

SEARCH: Try Our New Search



washingtonpost.com



Results by Google™

[Search Archives](#)

washingtonpost.com > Print Edition > Editorial Pages

[Print This Article](#)
[E-Mail This Article](#)

EDITORIAL

Shinzo Abe's Double Talk

He's passionate about Japanese victims of North Korea -- and blind to Japan's own war crimes.

Saturday, March 24, 2007; Page A16

THE TOUGHEST player in the "six-party" talks on North Korea this week was not the Bush administration -- which was engaged in an unseemly scramble to deliver \$25 million in bank funds demanded by the regime of Kim Jong Il -- but Japan. Tokyo is insisting that North Korea supply information about 17 Japanese citizens allegedly kidnapped by the North decades ago, refusing to discuss any improvement in relations until it receives answers. This single-note policy is portrayed as a matter of high moral principle by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who has used Japan's victims -- including a girl said to have been abducted when she was 13 -- to rally his wilting domestic support.

Mr. Abe has a right to complain about Pyongyang's stonewalling. What's odd -- and offensive -- is his parallel campaign to roll back Japan's acceptance of responsibility for the abduction, rape and sexual enslavement of tens of thousands of women during World War II. Responding to a pending resolution in the U.S. Congress calling for an official apology, Mr. Abe has twice this month issued statements claiming there is no documentation proving that the Japanese military participated in abducting the women. A written statement endorsed by his cabinet last week weakened a 1993 government declaration that acknowledged Japan's brutal treatment of the so-called comfort women.

In fact the historical record on this issue is no less convincing than the evidence that North Korea kidnapped Japanese citizens, some of whom were used as teachers or translators. Historians say that up to 200,000 women from Korea, China, the Philippines and other Asian countries were enslaved and that Japanese soldiers participated in abductions.

OP-ED COLUMNISTS

[Columnist Biographies, Past Columns and RSS Feeds](#)[The Editorialist](#)**SAVE & SHARE ARTICLE** [What's This?](#)[Digg](#)[Google](#)[del.icio.us](#)[Yahoo!](#)[Reddit](#)[Facebook](#)

Advertisement

Advertisement

Play a free
world's fFree with qu
Programme
Subject to t

Rollover

STAR
THE AIRLINE

Advertisement




MOST VIEWED ARTICLES

[Print Edition](#) [On the Site](#)

Updated 9:45 a.m. ET

- [Nats Officials Confident About Stadium's Progress](#)
- [Intolerable Darfur](#)
- [With First YouTube Awards, A New Type of Star Is Born](#)
- [Balm, But No Cure, for Traffic](#)
- [School Work](#)

Many survivors of the system have described their horrifying experiences, including three who recently testified to Congress. That the Japanese government has never fully accepted responsibility for their suffering or paid compensation is bad enough; that Mr. Abe would retreat from previous statements is a disgrace for a leader of a major democracy.

welcome to
the human network.  CISCO.

Mr. Abe may imagine that denying direct participation by the Japanese government in abductions may strengthen its moral authority in demanding answers from North Korea. It does the opposite. If Mr. Abe seeks international support in learning the fate of Japan's kidnapped citizens, he should straightforwardly accept responsibility for Japan's own crimes -- and apologize to the victims he has slandered.

[Print This Article](#)

[E-Mail This Article](#)

More on washingtonpost.com

[Chinese Premier Wen to Visit Japan](#)

[Prime Minister Abe Offers Sex Slaves Apology](#)

[Bank Buyer Threatens N. Korea Cash Move](#)

» [Related Topics & Web Content](#)

powered by 

People who read this also read ...

[Hypocrisy on the Hill](#)

[Louisiana's Better Bet](#)

[E. J. Dionne Jr. - Inserting Politics Into Justice](#)

[Michael Fricklas - Our Case Against YouTube](#)

Post a Comment

[View all comments](#) that have been posted about this article.

Your washingtonpost.com User ID, hajime, will be displayed with your comment.

Comments: (Limit 5,000 characters)

Post

Comments that include profanity or personal attacks or other inappropriate comments or material will be removed from the site. Additionally, entries that are unsigned or contain "signatures" by someone other than the actual author will be removed. Finally, we will take steps to block users who violate any of our posting standards, terms of use or privacy policies or any other policies governing this site. Please review the [full rules](#) governing commentaries and discussions. You are fully responsible for the content that you post.

© 2007 The Washington Post Company

[Ads by Google](#)

[Fear No Man](#)

Discover What The Martial Artists And The Army Don't Want You To Know
www.TopSecretTraining.com

[Deal with a Bully](#)

Bully & violence prevention program for Schools, Camps, Organizations
www.respectu.com

[In denial of addiction?](#)

Try a different way - it works Brothers and sisters, it is time
MuslimBridges.org

SEARCH: Try Our New Search



washingtonpost.com

Web



NEWS | OPINIONS | SPORTS | ARTS & LIVING | Discussions | Photos & Video | City Guide | CLASSIFIEDS | JOBS | CARS |

washingtonpost.com: [Help](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertisers](#) | [Site Index](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Make Us Your Homepage](#) | [mywashingtonpost.com](#)
The Washington Post: [Subscribe](#) | [Subscriber Services](#) | [Advertisers](#) | [Electronic Edition](#) | [Online Photo Store](#) | [The Washington Post Store](#)
The Washington Post Company: [Information and Other Post Co. Websites](#)

© Copyright 1996- 2007 The Washington Post Company | [User Agreement and Privacy Policy](#) | [Rights and Permissions](#)