

The Asian Reporter

Pacific Northwest News □ Volume 26 Number 7 □ April 4, 2016 □ www.asianreporter.com



Film's vision of future HK unsettles Beijing

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Unique pieces at Art Basel Hong Kong fair

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Korean hitters try to succeed in MLB

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Message service Line entering carrier business in Japan



BOTTOM LINE. Popular characters of Line Corp. are seen during a press conference of Line Conference Tokyo 2016 in Urayasu, near Tokyo. Although social-media companies have struggled to gain revenue, Line, now used in 230 nations, including Asia, South America, and Africa, has succeeded in unusual ways, such as merchandising its mascot-like characters as dolls, which are sold in real stores. (AP Photo/Shizuo Kambayashi)

By Yuri Kageyama
AP Business Writer

URAYASU, Japan — Line Corp., which offers a popular mobile message and online voice-call service, is entering the mobile carrier business in Japan, promising to underprice competition as it grows its platform for news, music, games, live streaming, and online shopping.

Tokyo-based Line, founded five years ago, already has a billion global registered users, 215 million of them active each month on average. That makes it bigger on mobile than Facebook or Twitter in Japan.

Line executives outlined the company's future strategy at a suburban theater, and also highlighted some achievements, such as racking up 120.7 billion yen (\$1.1 billion) in sales last year.

Jun Masuda, chief strategy and mar-

keting officer, told reporters that the mobile-carrier service will be launched in a few months, starting at an affordable 500 yen (\$4.40) per month and offering reliable connectivity using the telecommunications infrastructure of major Japanese carrier NTT DoCoMo.

In Japan, many mobile users pay four times that much or more per month for data transmission and voice calls. Line

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