



Morning Alert - Wednesday, September 14, 2016

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK gave top play to a report on the disclosure that only gravel was placed beneath some of the buildings at the new fish market in Toyosu, instead of filling the foundation with a sufficient amount of clean soil. TBS and TV Asahi also led with follow-up reports on the soil issue in Toyosu. Other top news included a report that Kaori Icho will be given a People's Honor Award for becoming the first female wrestler to win four consecutive Olympic gold medals.

Top stories in national dailies included a plan by the GOJ to look into shutting down the Monju reactor (Asahi); attempts by importers and retailers to raise prices for imported rice (Mainichi); the presence of drivers aged 75 or older who may be suffering from dementia (Yomiuri); a plan by the BOJ to explore delving deeper into negative rates ([Nikkei](#)); and problems related to the planned relocation of the Tsukiji Fish Market (Sankei).

INTERNATIONAL

U.S. bombers fly over South Korea to demonstrate “nuclear umbrella” to North Korea

Tuesday evening's Asahi wrote that in response to North Korea's fifth nuclear test on Sept. 9, the U.S. Pacific Command on Tuesday sent B-1B strategic bombers, which are capable of carrying nuclear warheads, to South Korea. The paper speculated that the move is intended to send a warning to the DPRK by demonstrating “the U.S nuclear umbrella” and rein in discussions in South Korea on going nuclear. According to the USFK, the bombers took off from the Air Force base in Guam and flew over the Osan Air Base in South Korea. USFK Commander Brooks stated at a news conference on Tuesday that the United States provides extended deterrence to the ROK.

Wednesday morning's papers added that the ASDF announced on Tuesday that its F-2 fighters conducted joint training with the U.S. bombers.

ROK government refers to possibility of joint control of nukes in talks with U.S.

Asahi wrote that it learned from a source connected to U.S.-ROK relations that the South Korean government referred to the possibility of jointly controlling nuclear weapons with the U.S. during the regular U.S.-ROK defense talks held in Washington on May 9-10. The ROK is hoping that it will be able to rein in discussions in South Korea on the nation possessing nuclear weapons if it is able to jointly control U.S. nuclear arms deployed at U.S. bases in the ROK. However, the Obama administration rejected the idea out of concern that a "nuclear domino effect" could be triggered in East Asia.

North Korean tells Japanese lawmaker U.S. target of nuclear development

Nikkei and Sankei wrote that Upper House lawmaker Antonio Inoki, who visited Pyongyang starting on Sept. 9, said on Tuesday that Ri Su Yong, vice chairman of the Workers' Party of Korea, told him that North Korea is developing nuclear weapons in response to the U.S., not Japan. Ri also said that North Korea will not resort to first-strike use of nuclear weapons.

U.S., ROK discuss additional sanctions on North Korea

Tuesday evening's Nikkei and Yomiuri wrote from Seoul that Special Representative for North Korea Policy Sung Kim and his ROK counterpart Kim Hong Kyun discussed additional sanctions on North Korea and agreed to apply pressure on Pyongyang using all possible means. They also confirmed a plan to study unilateral sanctions by the U.S., the ROK, and Japan.

Treasury secretary comments on sanctions against North Korea

Tuesday evening's Yomiuri wrote that concerning additional sanctions on North Korea, Secretary of the Treasury Lew stated during a meeting of the Council on Foreign Relations on Sept. 12 that the U.S. government will continue to take the strictest possible financial measures in order to make Pyongyang alter its nuclear policy. Concerning the implementation of the UNSC sanctions on North Korea, the secretary said that China's participation is very important and that it is important for the international community to work together to make the sanctions as effective as possible.

Japanese, Canadian leaders confirm cooperation in dealing with DPRK

Asahi and Mainichi wrote that Prime Minister Abe and his Canadian counterpart Trudeau spoke by phone on Tuesday and agreed on the need for their nations to cooperate in responding to North Korea. Abe told Trudeau that the unprecedented threat level calls for an unprecedented response and it is necessary for the international community to deal with the situation firmly. Trudeau said that North Korea must take specific measures toward denuclearization and enter meaningful negotiations for a peaceful and political resolution.

Japan, China confirm cooperation in dealing with North Korea

Asahi and Mainichi wrote that MOFA Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Director General Kanasugi spoke by phone on Tuesday with China's Special Representative for Korean Peninsula Affairs Wu Dawei. According to MOFA, they confirmed cooperation between Japan and China toward adopting a resolution on new sanctions against North Korea. Kanasugi conveyed Japan's hope that China will deal with the issue proactively as a responsible member of the UN Security Council.

Pew survey: 86% of Japanese have negative views of China

Asahi wrote that according to a recent survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, 86% of the Japanese respondents expressed unfavorable opinions on China, up 15 points from a similar survey in 2006. Some 81% of the Chinese respondents, up 11 points from 2006, said they have unfavorable views of Japan. Concerning the territorial disputes over the Senkaku Islands and other regions, 80% of the Japanese respondents said they were very (35%) or somewhat (45%) concerned that the disputes could lead to a military conflict. The Chinese were somewhat less worried, with 59% saying they were very (18%) or somewhat (41%) concerned.

METI minister to visit Russia

Tuesday evening's Nikkei wrote that METI Minister Seko, who doubles as state minister in charge of economic cooperation with Russia, expressed his intention at a news conference on Tuesday to visit Moscow ahead of the APEC leaders' meeting to be held in Peru in November. Seko said he will make final arrangements with his Russian counterparts for a meeting between Prime Minister Abe and President Putin on the sidelines of the APEC summit.

Japan to provide medical assistance to Cuba

Nikkei wrote that during his trip to Cuba in late September, Prime Minister Abe will announce Japan's intention to provide medical equipment to the nation by using Japan's ODA grants worth probably around one billion yen.

MOFA sets up panel to discuss economic relations with U.S.

Nikkei wrote that in preparation for the launch of a new administration in the U.S. next year, Foreign Minister Kishida established on Tuesday a panel of experts to discuss how to strengthen Japan's economic relations with the U.S. The panel is expected to draw up its recommendations by November.

SECURITY

GSDF helicopters transport heavy machinery to Northern Training Area

Most papers wrote that the Ministry of Defense on Tuesday used two GSDF CH-47 helicopters to transport heavy machinery to a helipad construction site in the Northern Training Area. The papers wrote that it is very unusual for SDF helicopters to be used for construction work at a U.S. military

facility and there is growing opposition to the construction work there. Defense Minister Inada stated at a news conference that the GSDF helicopters were used to transport heavy machinery that could not be airlifted by private-sector helicopters. She added that the construction will contribute to reducing the base-hosting burden on Okinawa. However, Okinawa Governor Onaga told reporters: “The central government made the move without providing a sufficient explanation. This is unacceptable because the move undermines Okinawa’s relationship of trust with Tokyo.”

ECONOMY

U.S. to impose anti-dumping duty on steel from Japan, other countries

Mainichi ran a Kyodo story saying that the U.S. International Trade Commission said on Monday that it has officially decided to impose anti-dumping duties on steel sheets imported from Japan and six other nations as the overly cheap prices of the products affect U.S. manufacturers. It will levy a tariff of 7.51% on the products of JFE Steel Corp., 4.99% on those of Nippon Steel, and 5.58% on products of other Japanese manufacturers.

TEPCO begins removing cover from Fukushima reactor building

Asahi and Tokyo Shimbun wrote that TEPCO began on Tuesday removing the temporary cover from the building for Reactor No. 1 at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. This is part of the work to completely remove the cover that was installed in October 2011 to prevent radioactive material from flowing out of the building. The utility will begin removing debris after completely removing the cover of the building in preparation for moving a total of 392 nuclear fuel rods stored in the spent nuclear fuel pool in the building. According to the decommissioning schedule drawn up by the GOJ and TEPCO, the utility plans to begin removing the nuclear fuel from the pool by the end of fiscal 2020.