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HEADLINES

Morning news

All networks gave top play to Typhoon Malakas, which made landfall in Kagoshima early this morning, saying that the season's No. 16 typhoon is expected to continue approaching the Kanto region.

Main front-page items in national papers included the closing ceremony of the Rio Paralympics and the arrest of an Afghan-born American in connection with the recent bombings in Manhattan and New Jersey. Sankei wrote that the Obama administration is shocked by the latest "lone-wolf, homegrown terrorism," noting that it signifies that terrorism is becoming a norm in the "nation of immigrants."

SECURITY

Central government prevails in Henoko trial

All Saturday morning papers reported on Friday's ruling by the Naha Branch of the Fukuoka High Court rendering Governor Onaga's revocation of his predecessor's approval for landfill work at Henoko "illegal." The papers explained that the presiding judge categorically rejected Okinawa's assertions by saying: "The relocation will reduce the base-hosting burden on Okinawa. There was nothing wrong with the former governor's decision to grant approval....The danger posed by MCAS Futenma is serious and there is no option other than to relocate it. The only appropriate alternative site is Henoko.... The revocation would have the negative impact of undermining the relationship of trust between the U.S. and Japan." The Okinawa government is likely to file an appeal with the Supreme Court, which is expected to make a final decision by next March.

The papers wrote that the Abe administration was extremely pleased with the court's "wholehearted" approval of the central government's commitment to implementing the Futenma relocation plan, quoting Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga as saying: "We welcome the fact the court accepted our argument." The central government is confident that the Supreme Court will endorse the high court ruling and is hoping to resume landfill work next spring. Asahi said the administration will expedite the construction of helipads in the Northern Training Area in order to ensure the return of a sizable portion of the U.S. military facility based on the assessment that the governor will have no choice but to ease his opposition to the Henoko plan if the base-hosting burden is reduced substantially as a result of the land return.

On the other hand, Okinawa Governor Onaga voiced anger and disappointment by saying: "The ruling disregards local autonomy and tramples on the Okinawan people's feelings." Although the governor will have to accept the ruling if it is finalized by the top court, he is already looking into other ways to derail the Henoko plan, such as refusing to approve minor changes in the construction plans or methods. Yomiuri wrote that the governor may choose not to renew the permit for destroying rock reefs off Camp Schwab that expires in late March.

U.S. welcomes Henoko ruling

Saturday evening's Nikkei took up a comment made by an unnamed DOD official regarding the Henoko ruling, in which the official expressed hope for the early resumption of landfill work by saying: "The construction of the replacement facility is the only solution.... The U.S. and Japan are cooperating on the FRF project at Camp Schwab and adjacent coastal areas. We will continue to communicate closely with Japanese officials."

Supreme Court dismisses appeal for suspending U.S. military flights at Atsugi

Sunday papers wrote that the Supreme Court has decided to dismiss an appeal filed by residents near NAF Atsugi claiming that the Tokyo High Court was wrong when it ruled that the Japanese government has no authority to regulate U.S. military flights at the installation. Noting that the original ruling was issued in a trial about noise pollution at the U.S. base, the papers explained that the Supreme Court thus effectively upheld the lower court's decision that the GOJ cannot suspend U.S. military flights.

GOJ to make decision next month on new mission for troops bound for South Sudan

Monday's Nikkei wrote that the Abe administration will decide in October whether or not SDF personnel involved in peacekeeping operations in South Sudan will be assigned the additional mission of going to the defense of foreign troops in the event that they come under attack. The opposition parties do not support such a mission and plan to call for abolishing the comprehensive security laws that allow the mission in the upcoming Diet session.

Today's Mainichi claimed that the GOJ is likely to allow the mission for SDF troops bound for the African nation beginning in November, noting that the area for this possible operation will probably be limited strictly to within the capital city of Juba. The current GSDF unit is engaged in engineering operations in an area than extends beyond the capital.

U.S. sailor arrested for seriously wounding Yokohama citizen in traffic accident

Tokyo Shimbun wrote in its city news section that a U.S. sailor assigned to NAF Atsugi was arrested yesterday for critically wounding a 73-year-old man while driving his car in Yamato City, Kanagawa Prefecture. The suspect's vehicle allegedly hit the victim on a pedestrian crossing. The victim reportedly remains unconscious. The service member has admitted to the charge of professional negligence resulting in injury.

INTERNATIONAL

Top diplomats of U.S., Japan, ROK discuss North Korea

All Tuesday morning papers highlighted Sunday's foreign ministerial meeting in New York of the U.S., Japan, and South Korea, during which the participants agreed to apply stronger pressure on North Korea so as to dissuade the defiant regime from pursuing nuclear ambitions. They affirmed mutual coordination for the swift adoption of a sanctions resolution at the UN Security Council and enhancing unilateral punitive measures with the goal of limiting the Kim dynasty's revenue. The three nations will expand the scope of DPRK enterprises and individuals to be subject to asset freezes. Secretary Kerry reportedly emphasized the U.S.'s security commitment to its two key Asian allies through extended deterrence. In a separate one-on-one meeting with FM Kishida, the South Korean foreign minister endorsed the proposed signing of a bilateral general security of military information accord.

Abe to meet with Clinton

Most papers wrote today that PM Abe is expected to hold talks with Hillary Clinton shortly in New York, noting that the Democratic presidential candidate requested a meeting with the Japanese leader while he is in the U.S. for the UN General Assembly. The request apparently reflects the U.S. politician's attachment of importance to the bilateral alliance.

Latest DPRK missile launch points to rapid improvement in missile technology

Sunday's Asahi front-paged the disclosure by several military sources that two of the three ballistic missiles that North Korea launched almost simultaneously from mobile platforms on Sept. 5 landed in the same area within Japan's EEZ west of Hokkaido, while the other one landed about 10 km away. This shows that the DPRK may be rapidly acquiring technology to accurately guide ballistic missiles to preselected locations, which could render missile defense by the U.S., Japan, and South

Korea ineffective. The three projectiles, which flew almost 1,000 km, were apparently Scud-ER missiles rather than Rodong missiles as initially suspected.

China still cautious about imposing draconian sanctions on North Korea

Monday's Asahi reported from Seoul that although China is not necessarily against imposing additional sanctions on North Korea, it is still reluctant to make them too severe. The Chinese are reportedly calling for necessities for ordinary DPRK citizens to be exempted from sanctions and for the proposed sanctions resolution to be drafted in a manner that will not heighten the tension on the Korean Peninsula.

Korean university in Tokyo calls for students to "destroy U.S. and Japan"

This morning's Sankei front-paged a finding that the president of Korea University in Kodaira City, Tokyo, has instructed his students to conduct a campaign to "destroy the U.S. and Japan." The instructions were included in a letter sent to DPRK strongman Kim Jong Un. The GOJ is worried that the school will step up its anti-American and anti-Japanese education for the students.

Seoul calls for Abe to send letters to former comfort women

Asahi reported today from Seoul that in connection with the official launch of the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation last month, the Park administration has been asking PM Abe to send letters to the former comfort women. Seoul has reportedly requested "letters of apology" to ease opposition to the fund among some victims and their supporters. The Japanese side has yet to respond to the request.

Burma joins CTBT

Sunday's Asahi wrote that the Burmese government has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty thanks in part to Japan's intense lobbying, noting that the Southeast Asian country took the step to address any suspicion within the international community about its former military regime's desire to acquire nuclear weapons so as to attract greater foreign investment for economic development. Foreign Minister Kishida will make an announcement on the Burmese decision during a CTBT-related conference to be held in New York on Sept. 21.

Japan to export satellite to Vietnam

Saturday evening's Mainichi led with a basic accord reached between two Japanese companies and the Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology for the companies to sell a compact state-of-the-art observation satellite to Vietnam for disaster response. The GOJ is anxious to export Japan's domestic satellite technology to developing nations.

POLITICS

Former PM Noda appointed as DP secretary general

All Saturday morning papers reported that newly-elected Democratic Party President Renho appointed former PM Noda as the party's new secretary general. The papers noted that her decision displeased some party lawmakers given that the former premier is viewed within the party as "responsible for destroying the DPJ" by holding a snap election in November 2012 that caused the party to fall from power. Noting that ensuring party unity is one of goals that the DP will need to achieve to regain public support, the dailies expressed concern that the appointment of Noda will make this difficult.

Meanwhile, Renho decided to promote Policy Research Committee Deputy Chairman Ogushi to the post of top policy chief, noting that the junior politician is well versed in finance and tax affairs as he used to be a Finance Ministry bureaucrat. In a related development, Monday's Sankei published the results of a Kyodo public opinion poll that showed about 57% of the public had high expectations for Renho's leadership and about 67% did not see her dual citizenship as problematic.

Abe to dissolve Lower House for snap election in January?

Saturday morning's Nikkei reported on a rumor that PM Abe may dissolve the House of Representatives in January for a snap election in February order to seek a public mandate for his efforts to achieve a diplomatic breakthrough in the Northern Territories dispute with Russia. Since Russian President Putin will visit Abe's hometown in Yamaguchi Prefecture in December, the premier may present a "bold proposal" to seek Russian concessions. According to the rumor, the prime minister hopes to win big in the election to encourage the LDP to extend his term of office beyond September 2018.

GOJ decides not to submit conspiracy bill

All Saturday morning papers reported on the Abe administration's decision on Friday not to submit to the upcoming extraordinary Diet session legislation to make conspiracy a crime. Mainichi quoted a GOJ source as saying that the decision was made at "the last minute" after the Kantei had initially approved the submission. Abe and Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga decided to hold off on it in order to ensure the enactment of the TPP bill. Asahi quoted a Kantei source as saying: "The TPP bill will be given top priority. No other controversial legislation can be submitted." Yomiuri said junior ruling partner Komeito pressed the LDP not to submit the bill hastily amid opposition among Komeito supporters. The conspiracy bill will instead be submitted to the regular Diet session in January.

ECONOMY

President Obama anxious to pass TPP legislation

Saturday evening papers reported that President Obama met on Friday with Ohio Governor Kasich and U.S. business leaders at the White House to discuss how to promote TPP legislation. The participants shared the President's view that "China is trying to create its own trade rules in Asia that

are not favorable to U.S. companies,” and agreed to lobby Congress to approve the TPP legislation without fail.

In a related development, several papers wrote today that PM Abe delivered remarks to American businessmen in New York on Monday, in which he promised to enact the TPP-related bills in the upcoming Diet session. While explaining that the regional trade initiative will determine the future of global free trade and the strategic environment in the Asia-Pacific region, the prime minister called for additional U.S. efforts to obtain congressional endorsement.

AMBASSADOR

Ambassador Kennedy offers flowers at memorial to tsunami victims

Monday’s Sankei and Mainichi wrote briefly that Ambassador Kennedy offered flowers on Sunday at a primary school memorial built in honor of the 84 students and teachers who were killed in the 2011 tsunami in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture. The Ambassador toured Okawa elementary school for about 30 minutes while participating in the “Tour de Tohoku” cycling event.

