



Morning Alert - Wednesday, September 28, 2016

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HEADLINES

Morning news

All broadcasters continued to give top play to follow-up reports on the deaths of two patients at a Yokohama hospital after being given an IV solution containing a foreign substance.

Top items in national dailies included the first presidential debate between Clinton and Trump (Yomiuri, [Nikkei](#)); the likelihood of the Paris Agreement on climate change entering into force by the end of this year (Mainichi); a plan by a Tokyo Metropolitan Government taskforce to review the construction plans for facilities for the Tokyo Olympics (Asahi); and a plan by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to tighten supervision of the Tokyo Olympics Organizing Committee (Sankei).

INTERNATIONAL

Clinton, Trump discuss TPP, U.S.-Japan alliance at presidential election debate

Most papers front-paged reports on the first debate held on Monday between Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton and Republican candidate Donald Trump for the Nov. 8 presidential election. The papers highlighted their discussions on the TPP and the U.S. defense of Japan and other allies. Trump criticized Clinton for “changing her position” on the trade agreement. He reiterated his assertion that the U.S. should not defend Japan unless it pays additional costs for hosting U.S. forces. Clinton responded by reaffirming and expressing respect for the alliances with Japan, the ROK, and other nations with which the U.S. has defense cooperation agreements. Asahi wrote that it is unusual for the U.S.-Japan alliance to be discussed at a presidential election debate. Yomiuri and Nikkei wrote that the Japanese government is watching the discussions between the two candidates with great interest, with Nikkei saying Tokyo is alarmed by Trump’s repeated references to Japan.

Japanese, Chinese officials exchange views at private symposium

Tuesday evening's Asahi wrote that former Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan delivered a keynote speech at a symposium organized by nonprofit think tank Genron NPO in Tokyo on Tuesday where he stated that Japan and China should seek a win-win relationship by overcoming their differences as soon as possible and stabilize their relations ahead of the 45th anniversary next year of their diplomatic normalization. Foreign Minister Kishida said at the same forum that the planned trilateral summit between Japan, China, and South Korea, in which Chinese Premier Li is expected to participate, will provide a good opportunity to improve bilateral relations between Tokyo and Beijing and put them back on track.

However, this morning's Asahi wrote that the Japanese and Chinese participants in the event engaged in a heated debate over the South China Sea. Former Defense Minister Nakatani criticized China's reclamation work in the South China Sea by saying it is selfish and unacceptable to the international community. Former Chinese Ambassador to Japan Chen stated that China's security strategy is aimed at defending China against the U.S., not Japan. Mainichi wrote that former Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda urged the governments of Japan and China to swiftly implement their air and maritime communication mechanism.

Japan to relax visa requirements for Chinese visitors

Sankei wrote that Foreign Minister Kishida said at a private-sector symposium held in Tokyo on Tuesday that Japan will relax its visa requirements for Chinese visitors starting on Oct. 17. The move is intended to expand people-to-people exchanges between the two nations. Under the new rules, multiple-entry visas for short-term stays for business and for cultural or intellectual figures will be good for up to 10 years instead of the current period of five years. In addition, the application process for single-entry visas for students will be simplified.

ECONOMY

Abe expresses resolve to seek Diet approval of TPP

All papers reported on the question-and-answer session in the Diet on Tuesday, during which Secretary General Noda and other Democratic Party lawmakers criticized Prime Minister Abe for seeking to enact the TPP legislation in the current Diet session. DP policy chief Ogushi stated that Japan should not approve the TPP agreement before the U.S. position on the trade agreement is made clear because both the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates are against the TPP. Abe said in reply that Japan's ratification of the agreement will demonstrate its position of not renegotiating the agreement and provide momentum for the early effectuation of the accord. The premier added that it is necessary for Japan to move forward with domestic procedures in order to urge the U.S. to continue its efforts at home.

U.S., Japanese consortiums to work together in formulating international standards for IoT

NHK reported this morning that a Japanese consortium for promoting the Internet of Things (IoT) comprised of major Japanese firms such as Hitachi, NTT, and Panasonic is expected to sign a memorandum of understanding with an American consortium as early as next month to cooperate in creating international standards for the IoT. The network said Japan is also cooperating with Germany at the government level on formulating international standards, adding that by also cooperating with the American consortium, Japan is hoping to strengthen its involvement in creating international standards to improve the environment for Japanese firms to operate globally.

SECURITY

U.S., Japan to conduct missile interception drill

Asahi wrote that in response to North Korea's advancement in ballistic missile technology, the U.S. and Japan are planning to conduct a sea-based drill using their jointly developed interceptor missile in October. The SM-3 Block IIA, an upgraded version of the SM-3 Block IA employed by MSDF Aegis ships, will be launched from a U.S. Navy Aegis ship to intercept a mock missile to be launched from Kauai Island in Hawaii.

SCIENCE

GOJ to submit bill on Paris Agreement to current Diet session

Tuesday evening's Yomiuri wrote that the GOJ announced its plan to submit a bill to ratify the Paris Agreement on climate change to the current Diet session at a meeting of the LDP Foreign Affairs Division on Tuesday. The GOJ made the decision in view of the growing likelihood that the accord will enter into force by the end of this year.

