



Morning Alert - Thursday, September 29, 2016

The following information reflects the reporting of the cited news media and does not reflect the opinions of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Japan Media Highlights is intended for USG use only and should not be forwarded. Visit the website [here](#). For more information, contact [TokyoMATT@state.gov](mailto:TokyoMATT@state.gov).

## HEADLINES

### Morning news

NHK led with a report on the weather forecast for today, saying that heavy rain is expected mainly in western Japan. Most commercial networks and national papers gave prominent coverage to Tokyo Governor Koike's first policy speech at the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly on Wednesday, during which she vowed to thoroughly investigate the confusion over the new fish market in Toyosu and increase transparency.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Trump advisor to visit Japan

Nikkei claimed that Michael Flynn, a diplomatic advisor of Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and a former DOD official, will visit Japan in mid-October for talks with GOJ officials and ruling and opposition lawmakers. The Abe administration is anxious to exchange opinions with Flynn to ascertain Trump's approach to Japan since the candidate has been insisting that Tokyo should pay more to maintain U.S. troops in Japan. A GOJ source was quoted as saying that the Japanese government will explain to Flynn the severe security situation in East Asia. As the former Pentagon official is a staunch supporter of the U.S.-Japan alliance who is expected to have a considerable impact on the formulation of U.S. foreign policy if Trump is elected president, the GOJ is hoping that Trump will gain a better understanding of Japan and the region if Flynn is provided with up-to-date information.

### Abe's diplomatic stewardship to be tested in fall

Asahi reported on planned visits to Japan in the autumn by what it referred to as "magnetic" Asian leaders, including Philippine President Duterte, Burmese Foreign Minister Aung San Suu Kyi, and

Indian Prime Minister Modi, noting that PM Abe will be called upon to conduct summit diplomacy carefully with them. Duterte, for instance, already has uneasy relations with the U.S. due to various controversial statements he has made, including derogatory remarks about President Obama. Abe hopes to affirm closer coordination with Duterte in late October to address China's maritime advancement in the South China Sea. The premier also plans to invite the de facto leader of Burma to Kyoto in early November and give her the red carpet treatment with the goal of assisting Japanese business investment there. As for his summit with the Indian leader in mid-November, Abe needs to deliver progress on the agreed-upon conclusion of a bilateral civil nuclear cooperation treaty. New Delhi is negative about Tokyo's insistence on using strong language in the pact aimed at constraining India's nuclear weapons programs.

### **Japan, China discuss international terrorism**

Several papers reported that Japanese and Chinese diplomats held a meeting yesterday in Tokyo to discuss measures to combat international terrorism, noting that they agreed to share relevant information and enhance support for developing nations to help them develop antiterrorism capacities.

### **Japan, Singapore affirm early effectuation of TPP**

Several papers reported on Wednesday's summit in Tokyo between PM Abe and his Singaporean counterpart Lee, during which they confirmed enhanced mutual coordination for the early effectuation of the TPP accord. They also agreed to deepen cooperation to address China's militarization of the South China Sea and prevent North Korea from pursuing nuclear and missile development.

### **Washington representative of Okinawa government unable to obtain proper visa**

Sankei wrote that Hideo Henzan, the director of the Okinawa prefectural government's Washington office, complained to Governor Onaga late last year that he was having difficulty managing the office. Henzan has reportedly been unable to conduct effective lobbying toward the USG and Congress due to his continued failure to obtain a proper visa. In the autumn regular assembly session to be convened today, LDP prefectural assembly members plan to take issue with the fact that Henzan has not been able to serve his function even though about \$740,000 in local taxpayer money was allocated for the Washington office in FY2016.

## **POLITICS**

### **Komeito receptive to Abe's desire to hold snap election early next year?**

All papers focused on a speech delivered yesterday by Komeito Chief Representative Yamaguchi, who said PM Abe could dissolve the Lower House for a snap election "anytime." He disclosed that he has urged party lawmakers to continually prepare for a general election. His remarks were interpreted as meaning that the junior ruling partner may be willing to support a possible decision by

the premier to dissolve the House of Representatives in early January for a snap election. Komeito is reportedly inclined to accept a possible general election around February so as to jumpstart its voting machine for next summer's Tokyo metropolitan assembly election, to which it attaches great importance.

### **New opposition leader makes “bittersweet” parliamentary debut**

All papers wrote that new DP President Renho took up Abenomics and the Abe administration's other policies in her first appearance at the Diet yesterday. The papers noted that although she submitted a number of “counterproposals” with the goal of highlighting the DP's attempt to dispel the image of the party as the “party of criticism,” PM Abe dismissed almost all of them and leveled harsh criticism at the failed DPJ administrations of several years ago. Speaking during a plenary session of the House of Councilors, Renho used the word “proposal” 22 times in presenting alternative ideas to the Abe administration on such issues as public works and social welfare spending. However, as Renho failed to present concrete roadmaps for those proposals, the premier ridiculed her by saying: “The important thing is not to repeat the same word. A single result matters more than 100 words.”

### **Growing momentum for casino legislation**

Yomiuri wrote that within the GOJ expectations are growing for the enactment of a bill to allow casinos in Japan during the current Diet session given that the post of LDP secretary general is now occupied by Nikai, a strong proponent of the legislation. Since its submission to the parliament in April, 2015, the bill has been “shelved,” partially because former LDP Secretary General Tanigaki was extremely cautious about it. Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Hagiuda told the press yesterday that the “integrated resort bill will be extremely useful in attracting investment for sponsoring international business conferences across Japan.” The daily added that the administration needs to persuade junior ruling partner Komeito, which is opposed to legalizing gambling, to agree to enact the casino legislation.

## **ECONOMY**

### **JA to be bypassed in new raw milk market**

Nikkei reported on the planned launch on Oct. 1 of a new market to trade raw milk, noting that a Gunma-based milk distributor will open the market on the Internet to directly connect dairy farmers with milk manufacturers. Regarding raw milk trade, until now the agricultural cooperatives have acted as middlemen between farmers and manufacturers, which the daily said has caused various problems, such as a chronic shortage of butter. Although only a tiny portion of the annual 7.3 million tons of raw milk is expected to be traded on the new online market, the article underscored that the initiative will help accelerate discussions on the liberalization of raw milk trade.

---

