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# JAPAN MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Morning Alert - Friday, October 7, 2016

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## HEADLINES

### Morning news

NHK gave top play to updates on the Toyosu fish market issue. NTV and Fuji TV gave top play to reports that Japanese Olympic medalists will take part in a parade in Ginza today. Other top news included a report that the Japanese men's soccer team defeated Iraq in the World Cup final qualifying round on Thursday.

Major front-page stories in national papers included a GOJ plan to investigate real estate purchases by foreign investors; Seven & I Holdings' plan to increase business cooperation with a major Osaka-based retailer; and surging vegetable prices due to poor weather conditions across Japan in September.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Japan, DPRK held informal talks in China last month

Asahi claimed in a front-page story that Japanese diplomats held informal talks with their North Korean counterparts in Dalian, China, in early September with the goal of pressing Pyongyang to reopen the investigation into the fate of the Japanese abductees. According to a source involved in bilateral relations, a three-member Japanese team led by a deputy director general of MOFA's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau held dialogue with DPRK diplomats on Sept. 3-4. Another source said although the Kim regime does not intend to resume the investigation, it is still willing to hold communications with Tokyo. Noting that although North Korea conducted a nuclear test on Sept. 5 right after the session, the daily asserted the U.S. did not oppose Japan's expression of interest in holding communications with the DPRK to resolve the abduction issue.

In a separate piece, the paper said although the Abe administration has been carefully looking for opportunities to establish communications with the DPRK despite its escalated nuclear and missile provocations, the results of the alleged meeting in China were uncertain. The paper added that Kim Jong Un reportedly has little interest in Japan-DPRK relations.

### **North Korea releases statement saying U.S. will soon face “shuddering reality”**

NHK reported this morning that the North Korean Foreign Ministry released a statement aimed at the U.S. on Thursday evening, referring to President Obama by name and claiming that his “hostile policy and increased pressure using nuclear and military threats caused us to become a nuclear power.” The statement also criticized the U.S. for urging other nations to sever ties with North Korea and claimed that the U.S. “will sooner or later face a shuddering reality.” Noting that Oct. 10 marks the anniversary of the Korean Workers’ Party, the network said nations are increasing their vigilance against Pyongyang’s further provocations.

### **GOJ keen to sway Clinton, Trump**

Mainichi wrote that the Abe administration is stepping up its lobbying efforts toward both the Clinton and Trump campaigns in order to call their attention to the importance of the trans-Pacific alliance given that the two presidential candidates appear to be increasingly “inward-looking,” as evidenced by their repeated criticism of the TPP. According to the daily, the GOJ provided the Trump campaign with data on Japan’s host nation support for the U.S. military, and Trump expressed “surprise” at the high level of Tokyo’s monetary contributions. However, he called for higher expenditures by the Japanese government during his first presidential debate with Clinton in late September. Noting that the Democratic nominee has been steadfast in her opposition to the regional free trade accord, the daily quoted an unnamed high-ranking Japanese diplomat as saying that bilateral relations might become more complicated regardless of which candidate wins.

### **Clinton calls Abe’s rapprochement with Russia “strategic wisdom”**

Kyodo reported yesterday on a speech on Wednesday by former Assistant Secretary of State Campbell, during which he disclosed that when Hillary Clinton met with PM Abe in New York in September, she expressed understanding for the Japanese leader’s explanation of Japan’s overtures toward Russia to resolve the Northern Territories dispute. She reportedly called Abe’s diplomatic initiative “strategic wisdom.” Campbell, who sat in on the meeting, underscored that if Clinton is elected president, she will take an extremely tough approach toward North Korea.

### **Japan welcomes election of former Portuguese leader as UN chief**

All papers reported on the official election of former Portuguese Prime Minister Guterres as the next UN secretary general, with Yomiuri saying that the GOJ pins high hopes on his leadership in overhauling the Security Council on account of his strong bonds with Japan. Guterres has reportedly visited Japan almost every year in the past decade as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. While quoting Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga as telling the press yesterday that Guterres is a man of

“considerable potential and experience,” the daily claimed that the new UN chief is basically sympathetic to the idea of reforming the Security Council.

### **Taiwanese leader announces launch of maritime dialogue with Japan**

Yomiuri front-paged an interview with Taiwanese President Tsai in Taipei on Thursday, during which she said that bilateral “maritime cooperation dialogue” with Tokyo will be held later this month. She said the issue of Taiwanese fishermen’s access to the vicinity of Japan’s southernmost island of Okinotorishima will be taken up in the talks. Tsai also expressed hope for broader economic cooperation with Japan by saying that the Taiwanese economy has been “excessively dependent” on mainland China.

## **SECURITY**

### **U.S., Japan agree to narrow scope of “civilian component” base workers**

Tokyo Shimbun wrote that the governments of Japan and the U.S. have agreed to seal an accord that supplements the SOFA in order to narrow the scope of base workers covered under the civilian component. According to a diplomatic source involved in bilateral relations, Foreign Minister Kishida and Ambassador Kennedy are likely to sign later this year the supplementary pact that will exclude contract workers and others without professional expertise from the civilian component. Although the GOJ plans to highlight that the supplementary agreement will be legally binding and hence is better than improved SOFA administration, the article expressed skepticism about its effectiveness in discouraging misconduct by base employees.

### **Lt. Gen. Jerry Martinez assumes command of USFJ**

Tokyo Shimbun and Yomiuri reported briefly on a change of command ceremony held at Yokota AB yesterday, noting that Lt. Gen. Jerry Martinez assumed the top post of the U.S. forces in Japan. The new leader told the attendees, including PACOM Commander Harris and SDF generals, that he will make efforts to further advance the U.S.-Japan alliance which he said is the “strongest in the world.”

### **Cabinet minister mentions linkage between subsidies and elections**

Asahi took up remarks made on Thursday by Okinawa Affairs Minister Tsuruho during a fundraising party hosted by an Okinawa-elected LDP parliamentarian, in which the minister said: “LDP Diet members from Okinawa must prevail in the next general election. The election results will be linked to central government subsidies for the island economy.” The daily projected that Okinawa will react sharply to the comment.

### **Multinational group issues joint statement on rulemaking on drone exports**

Sankei printed a Kyodo piece from Washington on a joint statement issued on Wednesday by a group of 45 nations, including the U.S. and Japan, calling for the need to establish common rules on the export and use of armed UAVs, with the goal of increasing transparency of drone technology

transfer. A GOJ source said: “The proliferation of armed UAVs may make the international community unstable.” The article said China and Russia are not participating in the U.S-led efforts to build a drone nonproliferation regime.

## **SCIENCE**

### **GOJ, NGOs alarmed by delayed ratification of Paris accord on global warming**

All papers reported on the planned effectuation on Nov. 4 of the landmark Paris Agreement on climate change, emphasizing that Japanese and NGO officials are deeply troubled that Tokyo will not be able to participate in the rulemaking process due to its delayed ratification. One NGO representative called the delay a “debacle,” while an unnamed LDP lawmaker said Japan will perhaps be viewed as “environmentally unfriendly.”

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