



Morning Alert - Tuesday, October 11, 2016

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK and NTV gave top play to reports that the official campaign for Lower House by-elections in Tokyo constituency No. 10 and Fukuoka constituency No. 6 will begin today. Other top news included reports on the second presidential debate between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in St. Louis on Sunday.

There were no papers published this morning due to a press holiday.

INTERNATIONAL

Ambassador Power stresses need for new UN sanctions resolution on North Korea

Sunday's Asahi reported on its one-on-one interview with U.S. Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power in Tokyo on Saturday. The paper wrote that concerning the discussions at the UN Security Council on a new resolution on tougher sanctions against North Korea, Ambassador Power stated that some nations and organizations are abusing "exemptions" in the sanctions and that stricter and more comprehensive implementation of the sanctions will deal a stronger blow. The paper wrote that the Ambassador expressed hope to close the loopholes in the sanctions by narrowing the scope of the exemptions. Ambassador Power strongly criticized North Korea for using the profits from its mineral exports for nuclear and missile development and stressed the need to restrict Pyongyang's acquisition of foreign currency through North Korean workers in foreign nations. She also stated that the United States is working in concert with Japan and its other allies. Concerning South Sudan, Ambassador Power expressed concern over the security situation there. Asahi also published a profile of the Ambassador, saying she is a busy working mother in a high-profile post with two

children. Admitting that juggling work and family is difficult, the Ambassador advocated Japanese women's participation in society by saying that pursuing a professional career is worth the challenge.

Ambassador Power stresses need for swift adoption of sanctions resolution on North Korea

NHK aired on early Sunday morning its one-on-one interview with U.S. Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power in Tokyo on Saturday. The Ambassador stressed the need to swiftly adopt a new UN Security Council resolution on additional sanctions on North Korea. The network quoted the Ambassador as saying that it is necessary to act swiftly because a few weeks have already passed since the DPRK conducted a nuclear test last month and Pyongyang may take further actions. The Ambassador also expressed the view that it is necessary to strengthen the existing ban on North Korea's coal exports mainly to China because the exports have been a source of funding for its nuclear development.

Ambassador Power, CCS Suga confirm cooperation in adopting UN resolution against DPRK

Saturday morning's Nikkei reported on a meeting between U.S. Ambassador to the UN Power and Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga at the Kantei on Friday. The two officials confirmed close coordination between the U.S. and Japan in adopting a new UN Security Council resolution on additional sanctions on North Korea. The paper wrote that Ambassador Power told reporters after the meeting that closing the loopholes will serve the interests of the international community. Saturday's Sankei mentioned the meeting between Ambassador Power and CCS Suga in a front-page article on North Korea.

Ambassador Power visits Panmunjom

Monday's Nikkei reported on U.S. Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power's visit to Panmunjom on Sunday, speculating that the visit was intended to demonstrate the strong alliance between the U.S. and the ROK. Ahead of her trip to the DMZ, the Ambassador visited the Hanawon Center, a resettlement support facility for North Korean defectors, which is located south of Seoul. Ambassador Power stated that the United States and the United Nations will make utmost efforts to bring about change in the North Korean regime and improve the human rights situation in the DPRK. Sankei wrote that the Ambassador told the press on Sunday that the United States is ready to use every possible means to adopt a strong sanctions resolution at the UN Security Council on North Korea.

Inada observes security situation in South Sudan

All Sunday and Monday papers ran front- or inside-page reports on a visit by Defense Minister Inada on Saturday to South Sudan, where SDF troops are deployed on a UN peacekeeping operation. The visit was intended to observe firsthand the security situation there in preparation for entrusting the SDF with the new duty of rescuing UN staff and other civilians in the event they come under attack.

In her remarks to the SDF troops there, Inada said their efforts have contributed to peace and stability in South Sudan. Inada told reporters that she could see for herself that the security situation in the capital city of Juba is becoming more stable and that the GOJ will discuss whether to allow the SDF to carry out the new mission there. Asahi wrote that the GOJ has decided to allow the SDF to engage in the new mission only in areas near Juba. However, most papers wrote that concern remains over the safety of SDF personnel because there continue to be sporadic shootings in the nation.

GOJ to seek agreement with Russia on easing restrictions on travel to Northern Territories

Saturday morning's Yomiuri gave top play to a report saying that the GOJ has decided to seek an agreement at the planned meeting between Prime Minister Abe and President Putin in Japan in December to expand the existing framework under which Japanese citizens can visit the Northern Territories without passports or visas. The change would involve expanding entry and exit procedures, which are currently conducted only on Kunashiri Island, to other islands so that former residents of the islands will be able to travel there more freely. The GOJ hopes that the agreement will help facilitate future joint economic activities by Japan and Russia in the Northern Territories. Abe and Putin agreed in May to adopt a "new approach" to negotiations on a peace treaty that would not adhere to past ways of thinking. According to a source connected to the Japan-Russia talks, the two nations will set aside legal and historical issues in order to focus on economic cooperation and a peace treaty.

Japan to cooperate with UN Office on Drugs and Crime in combatting terrorism in Asia

Sunday's Mainichi gave top play to a report on an agreement reached on Friday between the GOJ and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on a new joint action plan to support Asian nations' efforts to strengthen their antiterrorism measures. Japan concluded the agreement in response to the growing threat of terrorism in Asia posed by Islamic extremists and the terrorist attack in Bangladesh in July in which 20 hostages, including seven Japanese nationals, were killed. Under the action plan, Japan will provide advanced technology for facial recognition and detecting explosives to identify terrorists at airports and other border control points.

SECURITY

Japan to seek return of Northern Training Area by year's end

All Sunday papers ran front or inside-page reports on a visit to Okinawa by Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga on Saturday. After viewing the helipad construction site at the Northern Training Area from a helicopter, Suga told the mayors of the villages of Kunigami and Higashi that the GOJ will negotiate with the U.S. to realize the return of the training area by the end of this year. The cabinet spokesman

also expressed a positive stance toward a local request for directly providing central government subsidies to the Takae district.

Asahi speculated that Suga's expression of the GOJ's determination to move forward with the helipad construction was intended to send a message to Governor Onaga, who is strongly opposed to the FRF construction at Henoko. The paper also conjectured that Tokyo plans to expedite the helipad construction in view of the change of government in the U.S. next January. Sankei expressed a similar view by saying that the GOJ will seek the return of the facility by the end of this year with Ambassador Kennedy's departure from Japan in mind. Mainichi wrote that the GOJ plan to seek the early return of the facility demonstrates the central government's efforts to reduce the base-hosting burden on Okinawa. Yomiuri wrote that the plan is intended to win local understanding for the FRF construction at Henoko by implementing a tangible reduction of the base-hosting burden on Okinawa.

Suga later told Governor Onaga about the GOJ plan to seek the return of Northern Training Area by the end of this year. Onaga told reporters after the meeting that he welcomes the plan despite problems associated with the project.

Harrier flights resume in Okinawa

Most Friday evening papers reported on the U.S. military's resumption on Friday of flights by AV-8 Harrier fighter jets in Okinawa. Okinawa Vice Governor Ageda said the resumption is regrettable and demonstrates that the U.S. military goes ahead and does whatever it decides to do regardless of whether it has obtained the consent of the people of Okinawa.

Nuclear fusion research facility in Toyama suffers cyberattack

Monday's Yomiuri gave top play to a report saying that a large volume of research and personnel data may have been stolen from the computer of a researcher at the Hydrogen Isotope Research Center of the University of Toyama. The facility is well known for its research on tritium, which can be used for nuclear fusion. The data may have leaked over the six-month period from a cyberattack against the facility in November 2015 through June. According to the results of the investigation, files that were apparently stolen in March included information on the removal of contaminated water at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

ECONOMY

U.S., Japanese finance ministers discuss domestic approval of TPP agreement

Sunday's Mainichi ran a Kyodo report on a meeting between Treasury Secretary Lew and Finance Minister Aso in Washington on Friday. Aso expressed the GOJ's resolve to pass the TPP legislation during the current Diet session and Lew expressed the Obama administration's intention to make efforts to win congressional approval of the TPP agreement.

Abe determined to ratify TPP agreement

Friday evening's Nikkei wrote that Prime Minister Abe stated at a meeting of relevant cabinet ministers on Friday that Japan will achieve parliamentary approval for the TPP agreement earlier than any other TPP member to boost momentum for its effectuation. The premier said he believes Japan has a responsibility to make such efforts because it has achieved economic development under the free trade system. In a related development, the paper wrote on Saturday that Abe called for the LDP to make additional efforts to approve the TPP legislation during the current Diet session at a meeting with LDP Secretary General Nikai on Friday.

SCIENCE

GOJ failed to grasp global trend toward Paris Agreement effectuation

Monday's Nikkei wrote that it has become difficult for Japan to ratify the Paris Agreement on climate change before it enters into effect on November 4 because the GOJ failed to grasp the growing trend in the U.S., China, and Europe toward ratifying the agreement. The paper wrote that the miscalculation on the part of the GOJ was due to a lack of sufficient interagency coordination between relevant ministries, including MOFA, METI, and the Environmental Ministry, and that MOFA was having difficulty setting priorities on such pressing issues as the Paris Agreement, the TPP, and the U.S.-Japan ACSA for Diet deliberations.

Scientists discuss pros and cons of involvement in military research

Saturday morning's Asahi wrote that members of the Science Council of Japan have been engaged in active discussions on whether to alter the organization's principle that scientists should not participate in military-related research. The Defense Ministry's public invitation last year for universities and other institutions to apply for research funding prompted the recent debate. The ministry offered the funding in response to the Abe administration's long-term policy of effective use of cooperation between the public sector and business and academic circles in national security. Scientists are divided in their opinions. The Defense Ministry is concerned that Japan will be left behind if it fails to utilize the wide range of technological development achieved by the private sector. The paper speculated that calls for reviewing the principle have emerged out of concern for dwindling funding for research institutions.

SOCIETY

Federation of Bar Associations vows to work to abolish death penalty

All Saturday morning papers wrote that the Japan Federation of Bar Associations adopted on Friday a proposal stating that it will work to abolish capital punishment by 2020 and introduce life imprisonment without parole instead. This is the first time for the federation to adopt such a statement. The proposal was supported by 546 of the 786 participants in the meeting. However,

some members opposed the proposal out of concern for the sentiments of the families of crime victims. The papers wrote that the proposal was made in response to problems such as false charges and the growing international trend to abolish the death penalty.

