



Morning Alert - Tuesday, November 1, 2016

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## HEADLINES

### Morning news

NHK and several commercial networks led with the arrest of a “personal advisor” to ROK President Park on suspicion of involvement in government affairs by receiving internal documents from Park. NTV’s top item was UNESCO’s plan to put 33 Japanese festivals on its Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Fuji TV gave top coverage to an update on a traffic accident in Yokohama in which a schoolchild was killed by a car driven by an 87-year-old man.

Top stories in national dailies included the likelihood of the Lower House passing the TPP legislation on Nov. 4 (Asahi); the Tokyo Metropolitan Government’s plan to construct five new facilities for the 2020 Olympics (Mainichi); the arrest of South Korean President Park’s personal advisor (Yomiuri); a 25% decline in profits of listed companies in the April-September period (Nikkei); and China’s construction of a new drilling platform for gas field development in the East China Sea (Sankei).

## INTERNATIONAL

### Scandal involving President Park may affect Japan’s relations with ROK

All papers ran extensive front- or inside-page reports on a scandal involving South Korean President Park and a close friend of hers who allegedly played a key role in important state affairs without holding any government position. Yomiuri speculated that the scandal may affect the Park administration’s implementation of foreign policy, including the deployment of the THAAD missile defense system and the comfort women agreement with Japan. Nikkei conjectured that trilateral

cooperation with the U.S. against North Korea could be undermined due to the scandal. The papers also wrote that under the circumstances it may become difficult for Park to visit Tokyo in December to hold a trilateral summit with Japan and China.

### **Japan, ROK to discuss GSOMIA**

Mainichi wrote that MOFA announced on Monday that Japan and South Korea will hold a working-level meeting in Tokyo on Tuesday to discuss a bilateral general security of military information agreement (GSOMIA) between the two nations. This will be the first time for Tokyo and Seoul to hold such a meeting in over four years. The two governments will aim to conclude the agreement by the end of this year.

### **Abe dismisses report on excluding Northern Territories from U.S.-Japan Security Treaty**

Asahi wrote that during a Lower House session of the special committee on the TPP on Monday, Prime Minister Abe dismissed a Japanese media report saying that the GOJ is considering excluding the Northern Territories from the scope of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty if they are returned to Japanese administration by saying it is not true. Abe made the statement in response to a question from a Democratic Party lawmaker.

### **Japan considering technical assistance for postal services in Russia**

Sankei wrote that the GOJ is making final arrangements for reaching an agreement with Russia on Japan's provision of technical assistance for postal services in Russia as part of Tokyo's economic assistance to Moscow that will be discussed during the Japan-Russia summit scheduled for December.

### **Japan, India to sign nuclear cooperation pact**

Asahi wrote that it has learned from a senior MOFA official that the governments of Japan and India have decided to sign an agreement on civil nuclear cooperation during their leaders' meeting that will be held when Prime Minister Modi visits Japan in mid-November.

### **Japan, Taiwan discuss maritime issues**

Nikkei wrote that during the first meeting of their maritime dialogue on Monday in Tokyo, Japan and Taiwan agreed to cooperate in developing fishery rules, search and rescue operations at sea, and marine research. Mainichi also reported on the meeting, saying that attention will be focused on whether Japan will approve Taiwanese ships' operations in Japan's EEZ around Okinotori Island.

### **Japanese journalist detained in Iraq**

Most papers wrote that the Japanese Embassy in Iraq announced on Monday that Japanese journalist Kosuke Tsuneoka, who is in Iraq covering the conflict in Mosul, has been detained by authorities of the Kurdish autonomous government. The reason for his detention is unknown and MOFA said there is no information suggesting that his life is under threat.

## ECONOMY

### Legislation on TPP likely to be passed at Lower House on Nov. 4

Asahi gave top play to a report on an apparent decision by the ruling coalition to put legislation on the ratification of the TPP agreement to a vote in a Lower House plenary session on Nov. 4. The GOJ and the ruling coalition have been seeking to pass the legislation in the Lower House before the U.S. presidential election on Nov. 8. If the bills are approved in the Lower House, they will be enacted after 30 days regardless of progress in Upper House deliberations based on a constitutional provision. The Upper House will likely approve the bills during the current Diet session, which will end on Nov. 30, but the ruling coalition will seek to extend the Diet session to enforce the 30-day provision if deliberations in the Upper House are prolonged. The ruling coalition originally sought to pass the legislation on Nov. 1, but it gave up on the idea due to opposition from the opposition bloc. By approving the trade agreement before Nov. 8, the GOJ plans to demonstrate to the next U.S. president Japan's intention not to accept renegotiations and support the Obama administration's efforts to ratify the pact during his remaining time in office. Most other papers ran similar inside-page reports.

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