



Morning Alert - Wednesday, November 30, 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.

Please fill out our short online [Readership Survey!](#)

HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK and all national dailies gave top play to reports on South Korean President Park's announcement on Tuesday that she is ready to step down before her term ends in February 2018. Most commercial networks led with reports on a meeting of the GOJ, the Tokyo government, the International Olympic Committee, and the Tokyo Olympic Committee on Tuesday, during which they agreed to build new facilities for the rowing/canoeing and swimming races in Tokyo as initially planned.

INTERNATIONAL

Park's announcement on readiness to resign to affect Japan-ROK relations

All papers gave top play to South Korean President Park's expression on Tuesday of her readiness to resign before her term ends if the National Assembly decides on a plan to ensure a smooth power transition. If Park steps down before her five-year term ends in February 2018, she will be the first South Korean president to do so since the nation achieved democratization in 1987.

The papers wrote that the announcement will likely have a significant impact on Japan's relations with the ROK. Although Foreign Minister Kishida told the press that Japan will continue its efforts to hold a trilateral summit with China and South Korea in Japan by the end of this year, it remains to be seen whether Park will be able to attend the envisaged summit. The papers also noted that it would

probably be difficult to produce substantial results at the summit even if Park came to the meeting because she is now a lame duck leader.

There is concern within the GOJ that the implementation of the Japan-ROK agreement on the comfort women will also be affected. Kishida reiterated the need for the two governments to implement the agreement in a sincere manner, but there is concern on the Japanese side that the comfort women issue will be returned to the drawing board if Park steps down.

On the security front, Tokyo is concerned that trilateral coordination with the U.S. and South Korea against North Korea will be undermined and that security cooperation between Tokyo and Seoul will not move forward despite their conclusion of a general security of military information agreement (GSOMIA) on Nov. 23.

U.S., Japan, to hold first joint ceremony at Pearl Harbor

Kyodo News reported that the Japanese Consulate General in Honolulu said on Monday that Japan and the United States will hold on Dec. 8 their first joint ceremony to remember those killed in the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. The joint ceremony will be held the day after the U.S. Navy and the U.S. National Park Service hold their traditional memorial ceremony attended by an estimated 4,000 people to mark the 75th anniversary of the attack. The subsequent Japan-U.S. joint ceremony, co-organized by the Japanese government and the U.S. Navy, is expected to be attended by about 80 people. Consul Yuri Higashi said that the joint ceremony will be held “to confirm the development of mutual reconciliation and understanding between Japan and the United States and renew our resolve to boost friendship as well as remember war victims on both sides.”

Senior Japanese, Chinese diplomats agree to improve ties

Nikkei wrote that Deputy Foreign Minister Akiba and Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Kong held talks in Beijing on Tuesday and agreed to move forward with improving bilateral relations between their nations. The two officials confirmed that their nations will discuss the early implementation of their air and sea communication mechanism in a forward-looking manner.

Asahi and Yomiuri wrote that Akiba told reporters that he also held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Tuesday and they agreed to work toward improving bilateral ties while appropriately addressing issues of concern between Tokyo and Beijing. Noting that the meeting with Wang was unscheduled, Akiba said that the talks demonstrated China’s positive attitude toward improving ties with Japan.

Abduction minister to visit U.S.

Nikkei wrote that Minister in charge of the Abduction Issue Kato will visit the U.S. from Nov. 30 through Dec. 3 and participate in a discussion at the UN headquarters about human rights violations by North Korea.

Iranian foreign minister to visit Japan

Yomiuri wrote that MOFA announced on Tuesday that Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif will visit Japan on Dec. 7-8. Zarif plans to hold talks with Foreign Minister Kishida to discuss the implementation of his nation's nuclear agreement with the U.S. and Europe and the strengthening of economic cooperation with Japan.

SECURITY

Defense Minister Inada postpones visit to Guam

Mainichi and Yomiuri wrote that Defense Minister Inada has decided to postpone her planned visit to Guam in mid-December on account of the extension of the current Diet session until Dec. 14. Inada will make plans to visit Guam early next year.

Anti-Henoko activists arrested for obstructing work in front of Schwab gate

Sankei and Tokyo Shimbun wrote that the Okinawa police arrested on Tuesday four people, including Okinawa Peace Movement Center leader Yamashiro, on suspicion of forcible obstruction of business by blocking the passage of vehicles used for construction work at the Camp Schwab gate from Jan. 28 to 30 by piling more than 1,400 concrete blocks there. The police searched several locations, including tents belonging to the anti-base group that have been set up in front of the Camp Schwab gate and their office in Naha. Yamashiro has been indicted for obstructing the helipad construction work at the Northern Training Area.

U.S. base worker in Aomori assaults Japanese woman

TV Asahi reported this morning that a U.S. base worker attached to Shariki Communication Site in Tsugaru, Aomori, was arrested on Tuesday for assaulting a Japanese woman. According to the network, the woman is in her 50s and works at Misawa AB. She reportedly suffered a 3-cm wound on her forehead. The networks said the base worker was detained by the U.S. military police. NTV carried a similar report this morning, saying that the man assaulted the woman with a knife at a lodging facility at Misawa AB. The network said the MOD called for the U.S. military "to respond in a sincere manner to the victim." Sankei ran a similar report.

Inada says no data stolen in reported cyberattack

Sankei wrote that Defense Minister Inada stated during a news conference on Tuesday on the recently reported cyberattack on the GSDF's communication network by saying that although the Defense Ministry and the SDF regularly receive a number of suspicious e-mails, no leakage of information has been confirmed. However, Inada added that the ministry will take measures to enhance cybersecurity.

