



Morning Alert - Thursday, March 30, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Morning News

All broadcasters continued to give top play to reports on the fatal accident in which a group of high school students were hit by an avalanche in Tochigi Prefecture, including a press conference held yesterday by the school.

Asahi gave top play to a report on Westinghouse's filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, while Mainichi, Yomiuri, and Nikkei led with reports on the UK's formal notification to the EU of its intention to withdraw from the organization. Sankei gave top coverage to Russia's building of military facilities on Kunashiri Island in the Northern Territories.

## ECONOMY

### Commerce secretary to participate in U.S.-Japan economic dialogue

Asahi wrote that the U.S. and Japanese governments are making arrangements to have a total of five cabinet ministers participate in the first round of the U.S.-Japan economic dialogue to be held in Tokyo in April. According to the paper, Secretary of Commerce Ross will join Vice President Pence from the U.S. side, and Foreign Minister Kishida and Trade Minister Seko will participate in the meeting along with Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aso from Japan. The paper speculated that in view of the participation of Secretary Ross, who will play a leading role in developing and implementing the trade policy of the Trump administration, trade issues may be high on the agenda at the upcoming dialogue and that Washington may make difficult requests of Japan. The paper added it may be difficult for Japan to narrow the gap between MOFA and METI over talks with the U.S. While the foreign ministry is seeking to discuss a wide range of economic issues, the trade ministry is hoping to focus mainly on investment in infrastructure and trade negotiations.

## **U.S., Japan to discuss Westinghouse bankruptcy at economic dialogue in April**

All papers front-paged reports on Toshiba's announcement that its U.S. nuclear unit Westinghouse Electric filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on Wednesday. The move is the first step in Toshiba's efforts to turn itself around. Sankei wrote that the U.S. and Japanese governments were engaged in heated debates on whether Westinghouse should file for Chapter 11 because there is strong concern in the U.S. that this could lead to the transfer of nuclear power generation technology to other countries as well as major layoffs, while Japan insisted that filing for bankruptcy protection was necessary for the reconstruction of Toshiba. The paper wrote that the issue may be discussed at the U.S.-Japan economic dialogue in April.

Nikkei wrote that the U.S. and Japanese governments are carefully watching the fate of Westinghouse and Toshiba because it is closely connected with U.S. energy policy. The paper wrote that the two governments will probably discuss the Toshiba-Westinghouse issue at the U.S.-Japan economic dialogue next month because Washington is interested in who will purchase Toshiba's memory unit in view of national security concerns. The GOJ is worried that Chinese or Taiwanese companies, as well as South Korean ones to a lesser extent, will try to acquire Toshiba's memory unit. Companies with production facilities in mainland China, such as Hon Hai, are viewed as posing a risk of transferring Toshiba's technology to Beijing. The GOJ plans to subject any proposed acquisitions by foreign buyers to advance review under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Control Law and recommend that Toshiba alter or reject potential deals if necessary.

## **SCIENCE**

### **President Trump signs executive order to review measures against climate change**

All papers reported on an executive order signed by President Trump on Tuesday to drastically review the measures against climate change that were established by former President Obama. Asahi wrote that although President Trump did not specify whether the U.S. will withdraw from the Paris Agreement, it will be almost impossible for the U.S. to achieve its emission reduction goal pledged under the agreement. Mainichi wrote that the United States' has virtually withdrawn from the Paris accord and that the agreement will be watered down by the policy change in the U.S. as the world's second largest emitter of greenhouse gases after China. The paper also wrote that the executive order made it clear that the Trump administration attaches importance to its "America First" policy over international cooperation. Asahi quoted Environment Minister Yamamoto as saying at a news conference on Wednesday that Japan should not be influenced by changes in U.S. policy.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

## **Izumi Nakamitsu appointed as new UN disarmament chief**

NHK reported this morning that the spokesperson for UN Secretary General Guterres announced on Wednesday that the secretary general will appoint Izumi Nakamitsu, currently assistant administrator for crisis response at the UN Development Program, as the new disarmament chief at the UN. The network said this is the first time for a Japanese woman to be assigned to a position with the rank of undersecretary general at the UN. The network said Nakamitsu, as the UN high representative for disarmament affairs, will also be deeply involved in global nuclear disarmament, adding that she will face difficult maneuvering the negotiations over the Nuclear Weapons Convention, where the nuclear and non-nuclear powers are in conflict.

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