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## HEADLINES

### Morning News

All national papers and most TV networks led with reports on Moon Jae-in's victory in the South Korean presidential election. TBS opened with its exclusive interview with former Moritomo Gakuen President Kagoike.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Moon's election triggers concerns about policies toward Japan, North Korea

All papers gave prominent front- and inside-page coverage to the election of Moon Jae-in as president of South Korea, voicing apprehension that the new ROK leader may take a critical approach toward Japan since he has been calling for the renegotiation of the 2015 comfort women accord and does not want the comfort woman statue removed from in front of the Japanese Consulate General in Busan. Moon is also reportedly opposed to the bilateral pact on safeguarding the integrity of shared military intelligence.

Prime Minister Abe on Tuesday night issued a statement congratulating Moon on his victory by saying: "Japan and South Korea are important neighbors that share strategic interests. Because the two countries can make further contributions to regional peace and prosperity starting by responding to the North Korean problem, I would like to join hands with you to develop a wide-ranging, future-oriented bilateral relationship." The premier is reportedly hoping to hold a teleconference with Moon as soon as possible to confirm strong mutual and trilateral coordination with the U.S. in order to deal with North Korea's continued provocations.

The GOJ is bracing for the possibility of the incoming South Korean leader calling for the renegotiation of the comfort women pact. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga underscored yesterday that Japan's position of asking Seoul to implement the comfort women agreement without fail will remain unchanged. He said: "The pact was well received by the international community. It is extremely important to implement it as is." Former Finance Minister Nukaga, who serves as the chairman of a bilateral parliamentary league, mentioned the possibility of diplomatic ties being severed if the new ROK leader insists on renegotiating the accord. Pessimism about the prospects for the bilateral ties is growing among GOJ officials. Asahi said Moon may choose to discontinue the bilateral GSOMIA, which is set to be renewed automatically every year unless one side calls for its termination. The chances are also high that the suspension of bilateral talks on a currency swap arrangement will continue.

While noting that the GOJ may aim to arrange a summit between Abe and Moon at an early date to confirm bilateral and trilateral cooperation with the U.S., Nikkei pointed out that there are no strong channels of communication between Japanese politicians and the Moon campaign team. The paper also said that although Moon's policy advisors have stated that in managing relations with Tokyo the president-elect will pursue a "two track" approach by keeping the comfort women dispute separate from security and economic cooperation, the Abe administration is negative about such an approach and will probably hesitate to promote economic coordination based on the judgment that the history dispute has already been settled "finally and irreversibly."

The papers also expressed concerns about ROK-U.S. relations under the Moon presidency on account of his conciliatory stance toward North Korea and China. Noting that the president-elect may cancel the deployment of a U.S. military THAAD platform in South Korea, the dailies projected that the U.S.-ROK alliance may be weakened and international pressure on North Korea may be eased as a result. Asahi added that since Washington has been acting as an honest broker between Tokyo and Seoul, weakened ties between the U.S. and South Korea could also impact Japan's noncombatant evacuation operations in the event of a contingency. Mainichi said the U.S. and Japan may be more cautious about sharing military intelligence with South Korea if the Moon administration takes a conciliatory line toward the DPRK.

## **POLITICS**

### **Abe to give priority to SDF clause in amending Constitution**

All papers reported heavily on Prime Minister Abe's remarks at an Upper House Budget Committee yesterday, in which he stressed that adding a new clause on the SDF should be given top priority when revising the nation's supreme law. The prime minister said: "What needs to be done right away concerns the SDF. It is the responsibility of our generation to alter the situation in which 70 to 80 percent of the nation's constitutional scholars regard the SDF as unconstitutional....The existence of

the SDF should be stipulated in the Constitution by adding a third paragraph to Article 9.” The prime minister said the first and second paragraphs of Article 9 should be left as is. Abe reiterated his resolve to amend the Constitution while he is in office.

The papers said the opposition bloc, except for Nippon Ishin (Japan Innovation Party), has reacted strongly to Abe’s renewed push for constitutional revision. Nikkei conjectured that Abe’s move is intended to widen the split between proponents and opponents within the Democratic Party. The largest opposition party plans to boycott debate on the Constitution scheduled for tomorrow at a special Lower House panel. Although the LDP leadership on Tuesday agreed to accelerate internal debate in order to achieve the prime minister’s goal of putting constitutional revision into effect in 2020, some ruling party lawmakers are skeptical of Abe’s idea to uphold Article 9 since it is not in line with the draft constitution that the LDP put together in 2012.

## **ECONOMY**

### **MOFA to launch new unit to handle investment protection agreements**

Yomiuri reported that MOFA plans next week to set up in its economic bureau a new office tasked with speeding up negotiations for concluding investment protection agreements with trading partners. Noting that Japan has thus far forged such pacts with 44 nations and regions, the daily said the 10-member “Office of Investment Policy” is expected to exercise leadership to forge similar deals with about 50 more countries by 2020.

### **Toshiba urges U.S. firm not to “sabotage” proposed sale of semiconductor operation**

Asahi and Nikkei wrote that Toshiba sent a letter to Western Digital insisting that the consent of the American computer data storage company is not necessary for Toshiba to sell its flash memory division. Western Digital has claimed that it can veto the proposed sale of the lucrative semiconductor business managed by Toshiba. Mainichi published a similar story, adding that Western Digital CEO Milligan is currently visiting Japan and is expected to meet with senior Toshiba and METI officials today.

## **SECURITY**

### **Train operators to suspend services if missile warning issued by government**

Tuesday evening’s Tokyo Shimbun led with a Kyodo article saying that 27 of the 31 train operators in urban areas across Japan have decided to automatically halt train services if the GOJ’s J-Alert emergency advisory system on missile launches is activated. Nine of the companies said they will suspend their services irrespective of the projected impact points of incoming projectiles. While

predicting that key transportation infrastructure in major cities could be temporarily disrupted by a warning advisory alone, the article expressed concern that the train operators may be overreacting.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Government to consider restricting number of college students in central Tokyo**

Tuesday evening's Yomiuri gave top play to a GOJ idea of not allowing universities in the 23 wards of Tokyo to increase the number of students they accept in an attempt to prevent the inflow of young people into Tokyo and to help revitalize rural communities. The central government may consider enacting legislation to limit the number of college students in the metropolitan area. At present, some 18.3% of the 2.87 million college students nationwide attend schools in the 23 wards, even though only 7.2% of the country's population lives in the region.

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