



Morning Alert - Thursday, May 11, 2017

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HEADLINES

Morning News

NHK, Fuji TV, and TV Asahi gave top play to reports on the inauguration of South Korean President Moon on Wednesday, saying that he nominated pro-Japan politician Lee Nak-yon as the new prime minister. NHK said while some within the GOJ are hopeful that Lee's appointment will facilitate obtaining South Korea's understanding for Japan's positions, others fear that Lee may take a hard line toward Japan as he is well-versed in Japanese affairs. The network said the GOJ is hoping to use Lee as a point of contact for building relations with the new ROK government.

Other top items in TV news included a report on a shooting incident in Matsudo, Chiba, on Wednesday evening.

Asahi gave top play to a report on the dismissal of FBI Director Comey, while most other papers led with reports on the inauguration of the new South Korean president, including his telephone conversation with President Trump. Mainichi gave top coverage to a report on a plan by the Tokyo metropolitan government to shoulder the entire cost for constructing temporary Olympic facilities.

INTERNATIONAL

Moon Jae-in sworn in as new ROK president

All papers reported extensively on the inauguration of Moon Jae-in as South Korea's president on Wednesday. Moon stated in a speech delivered in the parliament that he is willing to go anywhere to

achieve peace on the Korean Peninsula. The new ROK leader stated that he will fly to Washington, Beijing, or Tokyo if needed, and will go to Pyongyang if conditions permit. Nikkei wrote that Moon's conciliatory stance toward the DPRK may have an adverse effect on the U.S. and Japan's policy of applying pressure on Pyongyang.

Moon held a teleconference with President Trump later in the day. The two leaders agreed to closely cooperate in resolving the crisis on the Korean Peninsula resulting from Pyongyang's nuclear and missile development based on the U.S.-ROK alliance. President Trump invited Moon to visit the United States for bilateral talks. The papers wrote that Moon decided to give diplomatic priority to relations with the U.S. to address domestic concern over the security situation on the peninsula and stagnation in relations with Washington.

Prime Minister Abe is seeking to meet with Moon at an early date. Asahi speculated that the G20 summit to be held in Germany in July will be the earliest chance for a meeting. Yomiuri wrote that Tokyo is making arrangements for Abe to hold a teleconference with Moon today.

With regard to the lineup of the new government, Moon has nominated South Jeolla Province Governor Lee Nak-yeon to be the next prime minister. The papers wrote that Lee is known for his knowledge of Japan gained through working as a Tokyo correspondent for the Dong-A Ilbo newspaper and serving as deputy chair of the Korea-Japan parliamentary league.

State Department issues travel advisory for North Korea

Sankei wrote that on Tuesday the Department of State issued an advisory strongly warning U.S. citizens not to travel to North Korea. The paper speculated that the department made the move in response to the detention of two U.S. citizens in the DPRK on April 22 and May 6.

Germany to ban operations of North Korean facilities as part of sanctions

Mainichi and Sankei wrote that a German newspaper reported on Tuesday that the German government has decided to order the North Korean embassy in Berlin to close a hostel and conference center on its premises. The facilities were sources of foreign currency for the DPRK. The move is part of Germany's sanctions against the nation in response to its nuclear and missile development.

Japan to give equipment used by GSDF in South Sudan to UN

Asahi wrote that the GOJ has decided to hand over to the UN equipment worth a total of 2.7 billion yen that had been used by GSDF troops in South Sudan. The equipment includes heavy machinery, power generators, and container housing units. The GOJ made the decision at the request of the UN. The equipment will be used for operations of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan.

ECONOMY

Secretary Ross says U.S. will not oppose effectuation of TPP without U.S.

Asahi and Mainichi wrote that Secretary of Commerce Ross commented on recent discussions by Japan and other TPP member states on effectuating the TPP agreement without U.S. participation by saying in a speech on Tuesday in Washington that the U.S. will not oppose it. He reportedly added that bilateral negotiations with TPP nations will be faster and better than the TPP.

USG official says trade unlikely to be discussed at G7 finance ministers' meeting

Nikkei wrote that an unnamed senior official at the Department of the Treasury expressed the view that trade will not be a major topic of discussion at the G7 meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors to be held in Italy on May 11-13. The paper wrote that the participants held heated exchanges on trade issues at the G20 finance ministers' meeting in March. [Kyodo News](#) filed a similar report.

SECURITY

MSDF to conduct joint exercises with U.S. Navy in South China Sea

Yomiuri and Sankei wrote that the MSDF announced on Wednesday that its helicopter carrier Izumo and escort ship Sazanami held joint exercises with two U.S. Navy guided missile destroyers in the South China Sea for four days from May 7. Yomiuri wrote that the exercises were aimed at demonstrating to North Korea and China the strong U.S.-Japan security cooperation.

Okinawa governor calls for GOJ support for medical center on Futenma land

Mainichi wrote that during a meeting with Foreign Minister Kishida at MOFA on Wednesday, Okinawa Governor Onaga called on the GOJ to accelerate the development of the plan to establish an international medical center on the land formerly occupied by the U.S. military's Nishi Futenma housing area that was returned to Japan in 2015. Kishida reportedly told the governor that the GOJ will provide maximum support for the implementation of the plan. Onaga held a separate meeting with LDP Secretary General Nikai and called for the LDP's support for economic development in Okinawa.