



Morning Alert - Thursday, August 31, 2017

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK and TBS led with updates on North Korea's latest missile launch on Tuesday, including last night's teleconference between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe. Other broadcasters gave top coverage to the heavy rainfall in northern Tokyo yesterday.

Top stories in national dailies including the teleconference between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe (Yomiuri); North Korea's announcement of its launch of the "Mars-12" intermediate-range ballistic missile that flew over Japan on Tuesday (Sankei); a recap of Emperor Akihito's past activities, including his first visit to Okinawa in 1993 (Mainichi); a study of the treatment of Parkinson's disease using iPS stem cells (Asahi); and a GOJ plan to provide financial support for kindergartens to help them accept two-year-olds (Nikkei).

INTERNATIONAL

President Trump, PM Abe discuss DPRK over the phone a second time

All papers ran front- or inside-page reports on a teleconference held between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe for about 30 minutes in late Wednesday evening. The two leaders agreed to seek a UN Security Council resolution to impose further sanctions on North Korea. Following the conversation Abe told reporters: "I discussed with President Trump the situation in North Korea and our future response to the country. I can't tell you how we will respond, but we completely agreed on the need for the international community to step up the pressure on Pyongyang because the launch of a missile that flew over Japan was an extremely dangerous act. Japan will ratchet up the pressure on the DPRK in cooperation with the U.S., South Korea, and the rest of the global community." The papers wrote that it is unusual for the U.S. and Japanese leaders to speak over the phone for two days in a row. Abe also explained Japan's plans to provide tents and blankets to the victims of the

hurricane that struck Texas.

The papers wrote that Abe also agreed with the South Korean and Australian leaders to strengthen the pressure on the DPRK when he separately spoke with them by phone on Wednesday. The premier and British Prime Minister May also agreed on the need for additional pressure on Pyongyang at their talks in Kyoto on Wednesday evening.

Quoting President Trump as commenting in his Twitter account on Wednesday, "The U.S. has been talking to North Korea, and paying them extortion money, for 25 years. Talking is not the answer!," Asahi wrote that the President's stance on North Korea hardened following the latest missile launch. The paper also wrote that although the UN Security Council unanimously adopted on Tuesday a chairman's statement condemning the missile launch by the DPRK, the global community has achieved no breakthrough in the past 25 years despite its efforts at the UNSC and other venues, including the Six-Party Talks. Mainichi and Yomiuri wrote that it remains to be seen whether the UNSC will be able to agree on additional sanctions on North Korea, including an oil export ban, because China and Russia remain opposed to the idea.

SECURITY

Osprey still grounded in Oita

NHK reported this morning that the Futenma-based Osprey that made a precautionary landing at Oita Airport on Tuesday evening is still at the airport, explaining that local authorities were told by the Defense Ministry last night that one of its engines must be replaced before the aircraft can fly again. As a result, it is still unclear when the MV-22 will be able to take off. According to the network, although the tilt-rotor plane in question left Okinawa earlier this month to take part in a U.S.-Japan joint drill held in Hokkaido, it stayed at MCAS Iwakuni for a prolonged duration for unspecified reasons without flying to Hokkaido. It added that the same Osprey made a precautionary landing at Ie Jima Auxiliary Airfield in June in response to a warning signal on its instrumental panel.

U.S. to deploy two other Aegis ships to Yokosuka

Nikkei ran a Jiji story from Hawaii saying that PACOM Commander Harris told the wire service at Camp Smith on Monday that the U.S. will deploy two Aegis ships to Yokosuka next year or later to replace the two 7th Fleet vessels that need to be repaired after recent collisions with merchant ships. The report speculated that the U.S. plans to maintain its capability to defend Japan and South Korea by deploying the two Aegis ships amid the growing threat posed by North Korea. According to Jiji, Admiral Harris stated that the U.S. Navy has a sufficient number of Aegis ships to defend Japan and that it will deploy one vessel from San Diego next year and another from either San Diego or Hawaii.

U.S., Japan to cooperate in protecting Tokyo Olympics from cyberattacks

Yomiuri wrote from Washington that government-affiliated entities of the U.S. and Japan will work together to protect the 2020 Tokyo Olympics from cyberattacks through technical and personnel

exchanges. According to the paper, MITRE of the U.S. and the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT) of Japan signed a memorandum of understanding on Wednesday.

ECONOMY

11 TPP nations agree to freeze some rules, hold next session in September

All papers wrote that a three-day meeting of chief negotiators from the 11 TPP member states in Sydney ended on Wednesday. The participants agreed on a plan to freeze some of the rules agreed upon at past TPP negotiations in response to strong requests from the U.S., including the pharmaceutical data protection period, but failed to agree on which rules to freeze. They agreed to reconvene in late September in Tokyo. Noting that the negotiators requested the review of about 50 rules, Mainichi wrote that Japanese chief negotiator Umemoto told reporters after the meeting that the participants agreed to keep the number of rules to be suspended to a minimum. He also said that the 11 TPP partners agreed on the need to achieve good results by November and believed that it is possible to do so. Nikkei wrote that although the 11 nations basically agreed on the pharmaceutical data protection period and patent terms, differences remained over government procurement and copyright.

