



Morning Alert - Thursday, September 7, 2017

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK gave top play to a report that the U.S. presented a draft sanctions resolution to UN Security Council members on Wednesday, saying that it includes banning all exports of oil and natural gas to North Korea, freezing the overseas assets of Kim Jong Un, and prohibiting him from traveling overseas. The network said that while the U.S. is hoping to adopt the new resolution on Sept. 11, China and Russia remain reluctant. TBS, Fuji TV, and TV Asahi gave top play to reports of an alleged extramarital affair involving Democratic Party member Shiori Yamao. NTV led with a report that former Kobe City Assembly member Hashimoto has admitted that he falsified his expense claims.

Top stories in national dailies included an announcement by South Korea's Defense Ministry that four more launchers will be added to the THAAD missile defense system deployed in South Korea (Yomiuri); a teleconference between Secretary of Defense Mattis and South Korean Defense Minister Song (Sankei); a plan by the Chinese Communist Party to reform its leadership selection process with Xi's long-term rule in mind (Asahi); preliminary approval by the Nuclear Regulation Authority of the safety of the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant in Niigata for restarting two of its reactors (Mainichi); and a plan by the Health Ministry to reward care providers that help elderly care recipients become more self-sufficient (Nikkei).

INTERNATIONAL

[U.S., Japanese defense chiefs agree to put "visible" pressure on North Korea](#)

Asahi reported extensively on a teleconference held between Secretary of Defense Mattis and Defense Minister Onodera on Wednesday, during which the two officials confirmed that the U.S. and Japan will continue to apply “visible” pressure on North Korea. The paper speculated that Washington and Tokyo plan to display their military power by expanding joint drills while continuing to make diplomatic efforts at the UN Security Council and other venues. According to Onodera, Mattis expressed the United States’ strong commitment to defending Japan through extended deterrence and stated that Washington will actively cooperate with Japan’s plan to introduce the Aegis Ashore missile defense system. Quoting President Trump as saying on his Twitter account that he is allowing Japan and South Korea to buy a substantially increased amount of highly sophisticated military equipment from the United States, the paper conjectured that talks between Washington and Tokyo on Japan’s introduction of Aegis Ashore will be accelerated.

In a related development, the paper reported on Onodera’s separate meetings on Wednesday with visiting U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander Swift and Okinawa Area Coordinator Nicholson. The paper wrote that the U.S. and Japan are making preparations for expanding the scope of their joint exercises to put “visible” pressure on Pyongyang.

Pacific Fleet commander sends warning to North Korea

Nikkei reported on its interview on Wednesday in Tokyo with U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander Swift. The paper wrote that the admiral said that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is not listening to the U.S.’s messages if he thinks the U.S. will not take military action. Adm. Swift also stated that both Secretary of Defense Mattis and President Trump have made it clear that all options are on the table, adding that although it is desirable for the situation to be resolved through diplomacy, military action is part of the diplomatic approach. The Pacific Fleet commander went on to say that if Kim is trying to drive a wedge between the U.S., Japan, and South Korea, his actions are having the opposite effect because the trilateral relations have become closer.

U.S. pushes for the strongest possible sanctions on North Korea

Nikkei wrote that the draft sanctions resolution on North Korea that the U.S. is pushing to adopt at the UN Security Council includes a ban on the supply of oil to the Kim regime, a ban on the export of North Korean workers, and a ban on the import of the North’s textiles. The paper wrote that if implemented fully, the measures will deal a major blow to the DPRK, and that the U.S. will urge China, which continues to back North Korea in all three areas, to agree to the adoption of this resolution that imposes the “toughest sanctions.”

U.S., Japanese officials agree to cooperate in adopting UN sanctions resolution

Wednesday evening’s Nikkei wrote that MOFA Foreign Policy Bureau Director-General Suzuki held talks with Deputy Secretary of State Sullivan in Washington on Tuesday, saying that the two officials confirmed that the U.S. and Japan will seek to adopt a strong sanctions resolution at the UN Security Council and urge China and Russia to take action.

North Korea warns of “more gift packages” for U.S.

Wednesday evening's Yomiuri and Nikkei front-paged a report saying that Han Tae Song, North Korea's Ambassador to the UN in Geneva, stated at a disarmament conference held in Geneva on Tuesday that the U.S. will receive more “gift packages” from North Korea as long as it continues reckless provocations and futile attempts to apply pressure. Han added that the DPRK will never put its nuclear deterrence on the negotiating table.

U.S. Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament Robert Wood responded by saying that instead of spending inordinate amounts of money on nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, North Korea should give its people the “gift package” of peace with their neighbors and economic development.

In a related development, the papers wrote that Russian Ambassador to the UN Nebenzia told reporters on Tuesday in New York that it is still too early for the UN Security Council to vote on a new resolution on additional sanctions. The paper wrote that the Russia official expressed a negative view about U.S. Ambassador to the UN Haley's desire to adopt the resolution on Sept. 11.

Japan, Mongolia agree on cooperation over North Korea

All papers reported on a meeting held between Prime Minister Abe and Mongolian President Battulga on Wednesday in Vladivostok, during which the two leaders agreed to cooperate in dealing with North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and resolving the abduction issue.

Japan calls for Iran's cooperation in dealing with North Korea

All papers reported on Deputy LDP President Komura's meeting with Iranian President Rouhani in Tehran on Wednesday, during which the Japanese official called for Iran's cooperation in dealing with North Korea. While expressing support for international efforts to apply pressure on Pyongyang, the Iranian leader stressed the need for dialogue. Rouhani also stated that his nation does not want North Korea to become a nuclear power.

SECURITY

Ishiba says Japan should discuss possibility of accepting U.S. nuclear weapons

All papers wrote that former Defense Minister Ishiba expressed the view during a TV interview on Wednesday that it is necessary for Japan to discuss the possibility of reviewing its three non-nuclear principles of “not possessing, producing, and introducing nuclear weapons.” Ishiba stated: “I wonder whether it is right for us to insist that we don't want U.S. nuclear weapons inside our country while relying on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for protection. Allowing U.S. nuclear weapons to be brought into Japan is an ‘emotional’ issue that could spark a strong public reaction. But it is probably necessary for us to discuss whether the current policy is sufficient in view of deterrence.” However, Ishiba expressed opposition to the idea of Japan possessing nuclear weapons, saying: “If Japan, the only

country to have suffered atomic bombing, possesses nuclear weapons, it would undermine the NPT regime and prompt other nations in the world to think they could go nuclear.”

However, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told a news conference on Wednesday that the GOJ has not discussed the possibility of reviewing its non-nuclear principles and has no plan to review them in the future. Defense Minister Onodera also commented on Ishiba’s remarks by saying that the GOJ has consistently acted within the framework of the principles and that there has been no change in its policy on the matter.

