



Morning Alert - Monday, September 11, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Morning news

NHK gave top play to a report that North Korea's foreign ministry released a statement early this morning saying that it will make the U.S. "pay the price" and will not rule out the use of military force in response to the U.S. plan to adopt a new sanctions resolution at the UN Security Council today. TBS also reported on increasing tension over North Korea. NTV, Fuji TV, and TV Asahi led with reports that an Odakyu Line train caught fire near Sangubashi Station in Tokyo on Sunday, forcing about 300 passengers to evacuate on foot.

No papers were published this morning due to a press holiday.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Pyongyang marks anniversary amid global concern over additional provocations

All Sunday papers reported on the 69th anniversary of North's Korea's foundation on Sept. 9. Kim Jong Un sent a warning to the U.S. through North Korean state media by declaring that the DPRK has become an "invincible nuclear power." North Korea's official media reported that Kim received a congratulatory message from Russian President Putin, but there have been no reports of Kim receiving a message from Chinese President Xi. Nikkei speculated that Pyongyang kept quiet on the anniversary in order to gauge developments in the UN on a fresh sanctions resolution on the DPRK.

### U.S., Japan conduct air drill on North Korea's national foundation day

Sunday's Mainichi and Yomiuri wrote that the ASDF's two F-15 fighters and the United States' two B-1B bombers conducted a joint drill on Saturday in the skies over the East China Sea, apparently aiming at sending a warning to North Korea on its national foundation day. Defense Minister Onodera told reporters on Saturday that it is very important for the U.S. and Japan to demonstrate strong defense cooperation.

### **U.S., Japan to seek India's cooperation in dealing with North Korea**

Sunday's Yomiuri wrote that the U.S., Japan, and India are making arrangements to hold a foreign ministerial meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly to be held in mid-September. The paper speculated that the U.S. and Japan are hoping to seek India's cooperation in dealing with North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

### **Kono meets with Qatari counterpart**

Sunday's Asahi and Nikkei reported on Foreign Minister Kono's meeting with his Qatari counterpart on Saturday, during which the Japanese official welcomed the recent telephone conversation between the leaders of Qatar and Saudi Arabia over their diplomatic rift and expressed Tokyo's readiness to help resolve the issue. Concerning the thousands of North Koreans currently working in Qatar, Kono asked the Middle Eastern country to limit the number of North Korean laborers it accepts in line with UN sanctions resolutions. The Qatari official reportedly responded by saying that his nation is strictly implementing the UN resolutions. Kono told reporters after the meeting that he received a positive response from Qatar on the matter.

### **Japanese, French leaders agree to cooperate on UN sanctions resolution**

All Saturday morning papers reported on a teleconference held between Prime Minister Abe and French President Macron on Friday, during which they agreed to cooperate closely in adopting a new UN Security Council resolution on sanctions on North Korea. During the 20-minute conversation, Abe stressed the need for the international community to apply maximum pressure on Pyongyang, and Macron responded by saying that North Korea's nuclear test posed a threat to the entire world and must be dealt with in a resolute manner.

### **Veteran journalist advised Abe to visit North Korea**

Saturday morning's Mainichi wrote that freelance journalist Soichiro Tahara told a group of LDP lawmakers on Thursday that he suggested to Prime Minister Abe in July that he "stake his political career on an adventure." Tahara said that he recommended that Abe visit North Korea and directly propose to Kim Jong Un that the Six-Party Talks be resumed and persuade the U.S., China, and Russia to accept the idea. According to Tahara, Abe agreed with the idea, but the plan was aborted due to opposition from the U.S.

### **Mexico expels North Korean ambassador in response to nuclear test**

Saturday morning's Yomiuri, Mainichi, and Nikkei wrote that the Mexican government announced on Thursday that it has declared North Korea's ambassador to Mexico "persona non grata" and ordered

him to leave the country within 72 hours in response to Pyongyang's sixth nuclear test. The papers noted that Vice President Pence called on Chile, Mexico, Brazil, and Peru to break off their diplomatic ties with North Korea last month. Sunday's Yomiuri wrote that an increasing number of nations, including Spain and the Philippines, are taking action in response to Washington's call for severing diplomatic ties or reducing trade with North Korea.

### **Tensions around Senkakus continue on fifth anniversary of Japan's nationalization of islands**

Sunday's Asahi, Yomiuri, and Nikkei wrote that Sept. 11 marks the fifth anniversary of Japan's nationalization of the Senkaku Islands. The papers said that tensions between Japan and China continue over the disputed islets, as China continues to send government ships and fishing boats to the vicinity. Yomiuri wrote that as China's activities in the region are likely to increase, Japan plans to step up its vigilance and demonstrate its strong security alliance with the U.S. to counter Beijing's actions.

### **China celebrates 45th anniversary of diplomatic normalization with Japan**

Saturday morning's Yomiuri and Asahi wrote that China hosted a ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Friday to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic ties with Japan. Some 300 people, including Japanese lawmakers and business leaders, participated in the event. Former House Speaker Yohei Kono and other Japanese guests held talks with Yu Zhengsheng, the fourth-highest ranking leader of the Chinese Communist Party, ahead of the ceremony. Beijing cancelled its 40th anniversary ceremony in 2012 in protest of Japan's nationalization of the Senkaku Islands, so the reception was the first of its kind in ten years.

## **SECURITY**

### **Debate on U.S. "nuclear umbrella" growing in Japan**

Saturday morning's Nikkei wrote that in response to North Korea's accelerated nuclear and missile development, debate is growing in Japan about the U.S. "nuclear umbrella" out of concern over whether Washington will uphold its commitment to defend its allies with nuclear force as its own defense interests loom larger. The paper wrote that although both Japan and South Korea are discussing the possibility of allowing U.S. nuclear arms to be brought into their nations to enhance deterrence against North Korea, it would probably be difficult to obtain public understanding for the idea. The paper also wrote that it is unlikely that U.S. nuclear weapons will be permitted to be brought into Japan and South Korea because the governments of the U.S., Japan, and South Korea are negative about the idea.

Sunday's Yomiuri ran a similar story saying that concern is growing among South Koreans over whether the U.S. will defend their nation with its "nuclear umbrella." The results of an opinion poll conducted in South Korea last week showed that 60% of the respondents agreed with the idea of South Korea acquiring nuclear weapons.

## **U.S. mulls expanded arms sales to Japan, South Korea**

Saturday morning's Yomiuri front-paged a Washington-dated report saying that it has learned from an unnamed State Department official that the USG is studying the idea of expanding its sales of highly sophisticated weapons to Japan and South Korea in response to the growing nuclear and missile threat posed by North Korea. According to The Washington Times, the Trump administration is considering the possibility of selling Tomahawk cruise missiles to the nations. The DOS official reportedly told Yomiuri that the department is working with Japan and South Korea to identify what would best assist their defense needs in response to instructions from the President.

The paper wrote in a related inside-page report that although the GOJ is pleased that Washington is willing to sell its highly sophisticated weapons, the opposition parties will probably react strongly to the idea by insisting that the use of Tomahawks would run counter to Japan's "exclusively defensive" security policy. There is also concern within the Defense Ministry that there are limits to the defense budget and the Japanese defense industry's ability to develop defensive hardware would be weakened if Japan increased its imports from the U.S.

## **Japan, UK study possibility of concluding SOFA**

Sunday's Mainichi wrote that the governments of Japan and the UK are studying the possibility of concluding a status of forces agreement in preparation for increased joint exercises between the SDF and the British military. The two nations will discuss the issue at 2+2 meetings and other venues.

### **SOCIETY**

## **Court rejects American father's request to hand over son abducted by mother**

Saturday morning's Nikkei wrote that a Toyama family court has turned down an American father's claim that his son be returned to him since his Japanese ex-wife took the child away without his consent. The father disclosed the court decision at a press conference in Tokyo on Friday.

According to the father, the couple got married in 2003 and divorced in 2008, and the mother returned to Japan in 2010 with their six-year-old son after obtaining a passport for him by falsely claiming that his previous one had been lost. The court deemed that the child wishes to continue living in Japan, judging that he would be deprived of a peaceful life if he were turned over to the father and that would not be in his best interest. However, the court chastised the mother for cutting off the children's ties with his father and urged her to try to improve their relations. Sankei and Asahi ran similar reports, adding the court turned down separate requests from the father and mother to give them "custodial" status.

### **AMBASSADOR**

## **Ambassador Hagerty encourages Japanese students considering studying in U.S.**

NTV's "news every" reported on Saturday afternoon that Ambassador Hagerty attended the America EXPO 2017 study abroad fair to promote study in the U.S. The Ambassador offered words of

encouragement to students who are considering studying in the U.S. by saying: “It represents the broadest variety and diversity of colleges and universities of any country in the world.... Best of luck in your studying in the United States.... *Ganbatte kudasai.*” One of the students was quoted as saying: “I came to this event because I really want to study abroad but didn’t know what kind of universities were out there.” The network said a record number of 93 American universities participated in the event this year.

### **Ambassador Hagerty discusses North Korea with LDP’s Nikai**

Asahi posted on its website a Reuters story on Ambassador Hagerty’s meeting with LDP Secretary General Nikai at the LDP headquarters on Friday. The report said that according to a senior MOFA official who sat in the meeting, the Ambassador and the LDP official shared the view that North Korea is a common challenge for the U.S. and Japan and that Washington and Tokyo will work closely to call on China and Russia to cooperate in dealing with Pyongyang.

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