



Morning Alert - Thursday, September 21, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Morning news

NHK, Fuji TV, and TV Asahi gave top play to reports on Prime Minister Abe's speech at the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, during which he strongly criticized North Korea by calling it "the most single-minded destroyer in history." An NHK reporter said the premier devoted four-fifths of his speech to North Korea and stressed that past dialogue with North Korea did not lead to denuclearization and instead gave North Korea time to advance its nuclear and missile development. He added that the premier's call for nations to strengthen pressure on the North reflects Abe's strong sense of crisis.

TBS led with a report that Tokyo Governor Koike may be asked to lead a new party to be formed by her associates. NTV led with reports that singer Namie Amuro announced that she will retire from next September.

Mainichi, Yomiuri, and Nikkei gave top play to reports on Toshiba's decision to sell its chip unit to a Japan-U.S.-South Korea consortium, while Asahi led with Prime Minister Abe's plan to delay his fiscal rehabilitation goal. Sankei gave top coverage to the possibility of Tokyo Governor Koike leading a new political party ahead of a general election expected to be held on Oct. 22.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Close ties between President Trump, PM Abe displayed at UN

Mainichi, Yomiuri, and Sankei wrote that Prime Minister Abe demonstrated his close relationship with President Trump at a luncheon hosted by UN Secretary-General Guterres on Tuesday, where the U.S. and Japanese leaders were seated next to each other. Yomiuri wrote that the President and the prime minister discussed such issues as North Korea, the abductions, and the President's

planned visit to Japan in November. Sankei wrote that according to several GOJ sources, the President told Abe that it is necessary to use force to contain North Korea.

Sankei also wrote that GOJ officials were pleased with President Trump's apparent reference to the kidnapping of Megumi Yokota, saying she was abducted to train North Korean spies. The officials said the prime minister's repeated explanations to the President of the abduction issue resulted in the U.S. leader's reference to one of the abductees. Nikkei ran a similar story saying that the GOJ is emphasizing that Abe's close ties with President Trump led to this diplomatic achievement.

### **Ivanka Trump may visit Japan in early November**

Yomiuri wrote that it has learned from several unnamed GOJ sources that arrangements are being made for Assistant to the President Ivanka Trump to visit Japan in early November. According to the sources, she may arrive in Tokyo just ahead of the President to attend this year's World Assembly for Women in Tokyo (WAW!) conference on Nov. 3 as a special guest. The paper wrote that WAW!2017, which was originally scheduled for Nov. 1-2, will be extended by one day to host Assistant to the President Ivanka Trump.

## **POLITICS**

### **LDP may include constitutional revision in campaign platform**

All papers wrote that an LDP panel on constitutional revision decided on Wednesday to give the party leadership a free hand in deciding on whether to include in its campaign platform a proposal to amend the Constitution. The panel has studied Prime Minister Abe's proposal to make the existence of the SDF explicit in Article 9 of the Constitution. However, the LDP is unlikely to propose specific language for revising Article 9 in the campaign pledge because some party members are displeased that Abe's proposal differs from the revision suggested by the party in 2012.

### **With general election expected next month, all eyes are on Governor Koike**

Asahi wrote that attention is focused on whether Tokyo Governor Koike will run in the next general election expected to be held on Oct. 22 as the leader of a new party to be launched by her close associate independent lawmaker Wakasa. The new party may try to field candidates in all 25 single-seat constituencies in Tokyo and former Environment Minister Hosono, who recently left the Democratic Party, is rumored to be joining hands with Wakasa. The papers wrote that although Koike's participation would probably give a major boost to the new party, Tokyo assembly members close to Koike have been insisting that she should concentrate on her current duties as Tokyo governor at this stage. Yomiuri front-paged a report saying that candidates who plan to join the new party directly asked Koike on Wednesday to lead it.

### **Former LDP Secretary General Tanigaki not planning to run in next general election**

All papers wrote that former LDP Secretary General Tanigaki has decided not to run in the next general election expected to be held on Oct. 22 given that he has not yet fully recovered from an injury he sustained in a cycling accident in July 2016. Tanigaki conveyed his intention to retire to the LDP leadership on Wednesday. Tanigaki suffered a spinal cord injury after falling off his bicycle in July last year and has been hospitalized ever since. He is known as one of the few LDP leaders who did not serve as prime minister because he headed the party while it was on the opposition bench between 2009 and 2012.

## **ECONOMY**

### **Foreign visitors on pace to set new record this year**

Mainichi and Nikkei wrote that the Japan Tourism Agency said on Wednesday that the number of foreign visitors to Japan hit 20 million on Sept. 15, 45 days earlier than last year and marking the fastest pace ever. The largest number of visitors came from China, at 4,882,200, up 8.9%, followed by South Korea at 4,660,800, up 41.7%, and Taiwan at 3,112,400, up 7.8%. The sharp increase in the number of South Korean visitors was partly due to an increase in low-cost flights between the ROK and Japan.

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