



Morning Alert - Thursday, October 26, 2017

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK continued to report on the damage caused by Typhoon Lan and a new typhoon that is expected to approach Japan this weekend. TBS and TV Asahi led with reports on a meeting held by members of the Party of Hope on Wednesday, during which Koike said she would like to continue to lead the party. Other top news included a report that 15-year-old professional shogi player Sota Fujii has decided to enroll in high school instead of focusing on his shogi career.

All national dailies other than Mainichi gave top play to the launch on Wednesday of the Chinese Communist Party's new leadership lineup for President Xi Jinping's second term. Mainichi led with Tokyo Governor Koike's statement to members of the Party of Hope that she would like to continue to lead the party while concentrating on her duties as governor.

INTERNATIONAL

Secretary Tillerson confirms strengthened cooperation with India

Asahi wrote that Secretary of State Tillerson held talks with Indian External Affairs Minister Swaraj in New Delhi on Wednesday and vowed to cooperate with India in fighting terrorism. The paper wrote that the Secretary referred to the need to deepen relations with nations in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan.

Kono says Japan will propose strategic dialogue with U.S., India, and Australia

Nikkei front-paged its one-on-one interview with Foreign Minister Kono, during which he explained that Japan plans to seek a leader's level strategic dialogue with the U.S., India, and Australia to promote free trade and defense cooperation in the region stretching from the South China Sea all the way to Africa through the Indian Ocean. The paper speculated that the idea is aimed at

counteracting China's maritime advancement under its "One Belt, One Road" initiative. Kono revealed that he exchanged thoughts on the four-party dialogue with Secretary of State Tillerson and Australian Foreign Minister Bishop on the sidelines of a foreign ministerial meeting in Manila in August and also presented the idea to his British and French counterparts. Kono also said that Prime Minister Abe plans to propose the four-way strategic dialogue to President Trump at their bilateral talks on Nov. 6. "We are in an era when Japan has to exert itself diplomatically by drawing a big strategic picture," said the foreign minister.

Philippine leader to visit Japan next week

Asahi, Mainichi, Yomiuri, and Sankei wrote that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga announced at a news conference on Wednesday that Philippine President Duterte will visit Japan on Oct. 29-31 for talks with Prime Minister Abe. This will be the second visit to Japan by President Duterte and the fourth meeting between the Japanese and Philippine leaders. Suga told the press that Japan hopes that the visit by President Duterte will provide the two nations with a significant opportunity to discuss how they will respond to key issues.

In a related development, Nikkei and Sankei wrote that the Ministry of Defense announced on Wednesday that the MSDF will turn its two TC-90 aircraft, which are currently on loan to the Philippines, over to the nation in March 2018. The papers wrote that the arrangement is aimed at helping the Philippines enhance its coast guard capabilities and sending a warning to China over its construction of military bases in the South China Sea.

Abe asks Micronesian leader to thoroughly implement sanctions on North Korea

Asahi, Yomiuri, and Nikkei wrote that Prime Minister Abe called on President Christian of the Federated States of Micronesia to thoroughly implement sanctions on North Korean vessels based on the UN Security Council resolutions during their talks at the Kantei on Wednesday. The two leaders confirmed cooperation in ensuing maritime security. Abe told reporters after the meeting that it was significant that he and the Micronesian leader confirmed the importance of a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law.

SECURITY

Three U.S. aircraft carriers soon to be operating in region covered by 7th Fleet

Yomiuri wrote that the 7th Fleet disclosed on Wednesday that three aircraft carriers will soon be operating in the Western Pacific and the eastern part of the Indian Ocean. The USS Ronald Reagan has been operating in the region since mid-October, and the USS Theodore Roosevelt arrived in the region on Monday. In addition, a carrier strike group led by the USS Nimitz is now heading to the region. The paper speculated that the deployment of the three vessels is aimed at sending a message to North Korea and China ahead of President Trump's tour of Asia next month.

Tokyo police to deploy more than 10,000 officers for President's visit

NTV and TBS reported early this morning on a meeting held on Wednesday by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) on the upcoming visit by President Trump from Nov. 5 to 7. According to the networks, the MPD will deploy more than 10,000 police officers, the largest number in the past 20 years, during the visit. TBS said the Tokyo police are also considering deploying an emergency response team (ERT) to locations where the President is expected to stay or visit and set up checkpoints for large vehicles as a measure to thwart possible terrorist attacks. In addition, the network said a patrol unit consisting of several dozen mainly female police officers will be deployed for the first time to protect the President's daughter Ivanka Trump and other female VIPs.

Okinawa calls for suspension of helipad operations at Northern Training Area

Wednesday evening's Tokyo Shimbun wrote that in connection with the emergency landing by a CH-53E helicopter on privately-owned land in Higashi Village in Okinawa on Oct. 11, Director Jahana of the governor's office visited Camp Zukeran on Wednesday to lodge a protest against the incident and request that the U.S. military suspend its use of three of the six helipads in the region that are located closest to residential areas. According to Jahana, a Marine officer told him that investigations into the cause of the accident are still underway, but did not give him a clear answer to the request.

POLITICS

Koike expresses intention to continue to lead Party of Hope

All papers reported that Tokyo Governor Koike, who leads the Party of Hope, apologized to the members of the party on Wednesday for her responsibility for the party's poor performance in Sunday's general election. However, Koike expressed her intention to continue to head the party. Some party members, however, called for her to resign as party leader. The papers wrote that Koike's grip on power within her own party has clearly weakened because most of the elected party members are not her protégés but former Democratic Party members.

Okada, others to form group of independent lawmakers

All papers wrote that former Democratic Party President Katsuya Okada, who won a seat in the recent general election as an independent candidate, and nine of his fellow independent lawmakers who are still members of the Democratic Party, including former Prime Minister Noda and former Finance Minister Azumi, agreed on Wednesday to form a new group. Okada told reporters that his group will serve as a link between former DP members who now belong to the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan and the Party of Hope.

POTUS-VISIT ITEMS FROM AFTERNOON ALERT

- [Ivanka Trump to deliver speech at global conference on women in Japan](#) (NHK)
- [Trump's Japan trip to showcase warm ties with Abe](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Trump, Abe to focus on alliance, N. Korea, Indo-Pacific: U.S.](#) (Kyodo News)

- [Golf: Matsuyama calls golf with Abe, Trump 'once-in-a-lifetime' event](#) (Kyodo News)
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