



Morning Alert - Thursday, November 2, 2017

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK gave top play to a report on the launch of Prime Minister Abe's fourth cabinet on Wednesday. Commercial networks led with updates on the arrest of a man on suspicion of killing and dismembering nine people in his apartment in Zama, Kanagawa.

All national dailies other than Sankei gave top play to the reelection of Prime Minister Abe and the launch of his fourth cabinet with the same members as the previous cabinet. Abe held a news conference afterward expressing his willingness to deepen discussions on the possibility of amending the Constitution. Sankei led with a report on the alleged murder of nine people in Zama.

INTERNATIONAL

U.S., Japanese leaders to announce strategy on Indo-Pacific

Asahi wrote that it has learned from several GOJ sources that the governments of the U.S. and Japan are making final arrangements for President Trump and Prime Minister Abe to discuss the Abe administration's strategy of promoting a "free and open Indo-Pacific region" and announce the idea as a shared diplomatic strategy during their upcoming summit meeting. The paper speculated that the move is intended to send a message to China, which is expanding its interests in the South and East China Seas, by promoting cooperation based on the U.S.-Japan alliance with India and Australia, with which Washington and Tokyo share common values as market economies and democracies. The paper wrote that concern over President Xi's "One Belt, One Road" initiative is behind the move by the U.S. and Japan. The two nations are reportedly becoming increasingly concerned about China's attempts to expand its security influence in Asia, Europe, and Africa through massive investment. The paper conjectured that the U.S. and Japanese leaders will

demonstrate their leadership in establishing rules in the Asia-Pacific region and discuss specific steps in that endeavor, including a quadrilateral strategic dialogue with Australia and India.

Abe to host teppanyaki dinner for President Trump

Yomiuri wrote that it has learned from a GOJ source that Prime Minister Abe will host a teppanyaki dinner for President Trump at a steakhouse in Tokyo on Sunday evening. The paper wrote that Abe is hoping to further deepen his personal relationship with the President through the intimate gathering. The paper also wrote that it has learned the rough itinerary for President Trump's visit to Japan, which includes golf at the Kasumigaseki Country Club in Saitama Prefecture and dinner with Prime Minister Abe on Sunday. On Monday, the President will meet with the Emperor and the Empress at the Imperial Palace and hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Abe, meet with the families of the Japanese abductees, hold a joint press conference, and participate in a banquet to be hosted by Abe at the Akasaka Palace. The paper wrote that although the idea of the President visiting the MSDF's escort ship Izumo was discussed at one point, it is unlikely to happen for scheduling and security reasons.

The paper added that Advisor to the President Ivanka Trump will arrive in Tokyo ahead of her father and will participate in a meeting of the World Assembly for Women (WAW!) and have dinner with the prime minister on Friday. The paper added that she is mulling a visit to the Ginza shopping district on Saturday.

Golf diplomacy called into question

NHK commentator Masuda reported on President Trump's plan to play golf with Prime Minister Abe at the Kasumigaseki Country Club on Nov. 5, saying that this is the first time for an incumbent U.S. president to play golf in Japan. He said that while Abe is hoping to hold candid talks with the President and cement their friendship through their common hobby, the planned event has raised eyebrows in political circles on account of the situation in North Korea. Masuda explained that since Abe dissolved the Lower House in order to seek a breakthrough in the North Korean crisis, skeptics are questioning his decision to play golf with the President at this juncture. Some are also concerned about what might happen if North Korea fires a missile while they are playing golf. Masuda said Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga stressed the importance of the two leaders deepening their ties while exercising strict crisis control. The commentator expressed hope that the golf event will not just be an occasion for the two leaders to deepen their friendship, saying that the premier should seek to establish a relationship with the President in which he can clearly say "no" in regard to such issues as North Korea and a bilateral FTA if necessary.

Schedule for Ivanka Trump's visit to Japan shortened

Fuji TV reported this morning that Ivanka Trump will arrive in Japan today, saying that she is expected to attend an international forum on women and have dinner with Prime Minister Abe on Friday. The network said that although she was originally planning to stay in Japan until after Nov. 5

when President Trump arrives in Japan, USG and GOJ sources said she is making arrangements to shorten her stay and leave Japan on Nov. 4. A White House official reportedly explained that the President has ordered her to cancel her trip to South Korea and China, where she was planning to go after Japan, and return home in order to participate in an event to promote tax reform.

South Korean government congratulates Abe on reelection as prime minister

Nikkei wrote that the government of South Korea congratulated Prime Minister Abe on his reelection as prime minister by saying that it will continue to work with the Japanese government to make their relationship forward-looking and mature based on a correct perception of history.

Foreign Minister Kono to visit Russia later this month

NHK reported this morning that Foreign Minister Kono is making arrangements to visit Moscow from Nov. 23 to 26 if the Diet schedule permits, saying that this will be his first visit to Russia as foreign minister. The network said Kono will meet with his Russian counterpart Lavrov on Nov. 24, and convene a committee on Japan-Russia economic cooperation together with Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Shuvalov. During a meeting with the Russian foreign minister, Kono is planning to once again ask for Russia's cooperation in maximizing pressure against North Korea, and confirm cooperation toward strict implementation of the UNSC resolutions. Kono is also hoping to confirm that the two nations will further promote talks on joint economic activities on the Northern Territories.

Foreign Minister Kono stresses unity with U.S. in standing against terrorism

Wednesday evening's Tokyo Shimbun wrote that in response to the terrorist attack in New York on Tuesday in which 8 people were killed and 11 were injured, Foreign Minister Kono stated that the Japanese government will work with the U.S. to stand against terrorism.

SECURITY

Navy releases report on investigations into Aegis ship collisions

Nikkei ran a Kyodo article saying that the U.S. Navy released on Wednesday a report on the results of its probe into the recent collisions involving two Aegis ships. The USS Fitzgerald collided with a merchant ship off the Izu Peninsula on June 17 and the USS John S. McCain collided with a tanker in the Malacca Strait on August 21. The report said that both accidents were preventable.

ECONOMY

11 TPP nations make progress toward broad agreement

All paper wrote that chief negotiators of the 11 TPP member states made progress toward a rough agreement during their three-day meeting held in Japan until Wednesday. Japanese Chief Negotiator Umemoto told the press after the meeting that there is growing momentum to reach common ground ahead of the ministerial meeting to be held on Nov. 8-9 in Vietnam. Yomiuri and Nikkei wrote that the negotiators agreed to freeze about one-third of the 50 items that had been proposed for freezing, including the data protection period for biopharmaceuticals, and that New

Zealand expressed its intention to remain in the TPP. Nikkei wrote, however, that although progress was made in the negotiations this week, the TPP member states will continue to hold intensive discussions to settle the remaining issues before the ministerial meeting to be held next week.

POTUS-VISIT ITEMS FROM AFTERNOON ALERT

- [President Trump expresses hope to advance U.S. priorities in Asia](#) (NHK)
- [President Trump moved by story of Japanese abductees](#) (NHK)
- [Security tightened at Haneda Airport ahead of President Trump's visit](#)
- [Female police unit established ahead of First Lady's arrival in Japan](#) (Fuji TV, TV Asahi)
- [Traffic restrictions to be imposed on Metropolitan Expressway during U.S. presidential visit](#) (Sankei)
- [U.S. Meat Export Federation chief says no major progress expected on FTA](#) (Jiji)
- [Japan-U.S. FTA low priority for Trump during Japan visit: U.S. expert](#) (Asahi)

