



Morning Alert - Tuesday, April 10, 2018

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK gave top play to a report that the Ehime Prefectural Government had documents related to Kake Gakuen in its possession even though it told a civil group last July that such documents did not exist. All commercial networks led with reports that Japanese national soccer team coach Vahid Halilhodzic was replaced yesterday by former soccer player Akira Nishino only two months before the World Cup in Russia.

Top stories in national dailies included the discovery of documents related to Kake Gakuen (Asahi); the Finance Ministry's apology for its handling of the land deal with Moritomo Gakuen (Mainichi, Yomiuri, Sankei); and a GOJ plan to support infrastructure exports by power companies (Nikkei).

INTERNATIONAL

President Trump says he will meet with Kim Jong Un in May or early June

Yomiuri wrote that President Trump reportedly said at a cabinet meeting on Monday that he will meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in May or early June. The paper wrote that although the first-ever summit meeting between the leaders of the United States and North Korea was expected to take place by the end of May, the President indicated the possibility of a later meeting.

North Korea prepared to discuss denuclearization, but U.S., DPRK seek different paths

Asahi wrote that an unnamed White House official told the paper on Sunday that the United States has been in direct contact recently with the DPRK in preparation for a summit meeting between their leaders and that Pyongyang told Washington that it is prepared to discuss the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Yomiuri and Sankei ran similar reports. Nikkei wrote that although North

Korea has reportedly expressed its intention to discuss denuclearization in a summit with President Trump, the two nations still have very different ideas of how the process should look. The paper claimed that Washington has the “Libyan model” in mind, while Pyongyang is insisting on denuclearization “in stages.” Asahi expressed a similar view, saying that although the United States is seeking North Korea’s denuclearization in one fell swoop, the DPRK is hoping to work toward that goal in stages.

Japan, China to resume economic dialogue

Asahi and Mainichi wrote that the governments of Japan and China have decided to resume their high-level economic dialogue in Tokyo on April 16 after a hiatus of eight years. Asahi speculated that China’s need to attach importance to relations with Japan amid its “tit-for-tat” trade dispute with the United States may be behind Beijing’s decision to resume the dialogue with Tokyo.

Foreign Minister Kono meets with Cambodian prime minister

Asahi wrote that Foreign Minister Kono told Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Sunday in Phnom Penh that the general election to be held in Cambodia in July should reflect the will of the Cambodian people. PM Hun Sen reportedly said in reply that his nation will hold a free and fair election. Although Japan has pledged 800 million yen in assistance for the Cambodian election, the United States and the EU have decided to suspend their assistance to the nation. Mainichi ran a similar report.

PM Abe to add Israel, Palestinian Autonomous Areas to his Middle East itinerary

Yomiuri wrote that it has learned from multiple GOJ sources that arrangements are being made for Prime Minister Abe to visit the UAE, Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian Autonomous Areas during the Golden Week holidays starting in late April. Although the prime minister had originally planned to visit Saudi Arabia, this leg of the trip was cancelled due to a scheduling conflict. The paper speculated that although a visit to Iran had been under consideration, Abe is unlikely to visit that nation in light of the decision to skip Saudi Arabia. This will be the premier’s first visit to Israel and the Palestinian Autonomous Areas since January 2015. The paper conjectured that Abe will stress the need for peace talks in the region amid growing tension between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

U.S., Japan, India to jointly fund infrastructure development in Indo-Pacific

Nikkei wrote that the United States, Japan, and India agreed at their trilateral meeting of foreign ministry officials held in New Delhi on April 4 to study the idea of working together on infrastructure projects in the Indo-Pacific region. The paper wrote that the three nations are studying the idea so that they can respond more effectively to demand in Southwest and Southeast Asian countries, where China is making major investments.

SECURITY

GOJ starts new bank protection work at Henoko

Yomiuri wrote that the GOJ started new bank protection work at Henoko on Monday so that landfill work for the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility can begin in July. The GOJ is hoping to finish constructing seawalls at the site by June to enable the landfill work to begin the following month. But on Monday Okinawa Governor Onaga issued to the Defense Ministry's Okinawa Bureau administrative guidance calling for the suspension of the work in order to protect an endangered species of coral. Mainichi ran a similar report.

