



Morning Alert - Friday, May 11, 2018

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## HEADLINES

### Morning news

All networks and national dailies led with reports that President Trump announced on Twitter that the U.S.-DPRK summit will be held in Singapore on June 12.

## INTERNATIONAL

### President Trump to meet with Kim Jong Un in Singapore on June 12

All national papers gave top play to reports on President Trump's tweet on Thursday disclosing that his meeting with Kim Jong Un will take place in Singapore on June 12. Asahi wrote that although Kim has expressed his intention to denuclearize, attention will be focused on how denuclearization will be implemented. Yomiuri and Mainichi wrote that the focal point of the summit will be whether the two leaders are able to reach a concrete agreement on the "complete denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula. Nikkei analyzed that the upcoming U.S.-DPRK summit may become a critical turning point for the security of East Asia, including the Korean Peninsula, and will likely have a major impact on Japan's security and foreign policy strategies.

### Freed Americans return home from North Korea

All national dailies reported that the three Americans who had been detained in North Korea arrived in the United States early Thursday morning, a day after their release during Secretary Pompeo's visit to Pyongyang, and were greeted by President Trump at Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington.

In a related development, Yomiuri wrote that the families of Japanese nationals abducted by North Korea welcomed the return of the American detainees and expressed their hope that the move will

help resolve the issue of the Japanese abductees. Sakie Yokota, the mother of abductee Megumi Yokota, expressed her hope that the Japanese abductees will also return home safely.

### **President Trump, Prime Minister Abe speak by phone**

All national dailies reported on a teleconference held between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe on Thursday, during which Abe hailed the release of the three Americans detained by North Korea as a “big achievement.” The papers wrote that the President briefed Abe on Secretary of State Pompeo’s trip to Pyongyang on Wednesday, including his meeting with Kim Jong Un. The papers wrote that the President stressed the importance of the role Japan plays in dealing with North Korea by reportedly saying that Japan is a “big player.” Yomiuri, Mainichi, Nikkei, and Sankei claimed that the two leaders reconfirmed that they will cooperate in resolving the issue of the Japanese nationals abducted by North Korea.

### **Secretary Mattis says U.S. troop presence in ROK not on agenda of U.S.-DPRK summit**

Thursday evening’s Yomiuri highlighted remarks made during a Senate hearing on Wednesday by Secretary of Defense Mattis, who projected that the U.S. military presence in South Korea will not be discussed in the planned U.S.-DPRK summit. The Pentagon leader reportedly stressed that American troops are stationed on the Korean Peninsula to ensure stability. The daily added that the Secretary was apparently attempting to alleviate Japanese and South Korean concerns that at his upcoming summit with Kim Jong Un President Trump might raise the subject as a quid pro quo for denuclearization.

### **Abe welcomes “era of cooperation” between Japan and China**

Yomiuri reported on remarks made by Prime Minister Abe at a reception held in Tokyo on Thursday to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Japan-China Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Chinese Premier Li in attendance. Abe expressed Japan’s readiness to cooperate with China in infrastructure development in Asia by saying that the two nations have entered an era of cooperation.

In a related development, Asahi wrote that Japanese business leaders expressed positive views about the agreement reached between Abe and Li at their summit on Wednesday to strengthen economic cooperation between their nations. The paper wrote that Japanese firms are hoping that the strengthened economic cooperation will help boost their business in third countries under the “One Belt, One Road” initiative.

### **Treasury Secretary Mnuchin, Finance Minister Aso discuss U.S. sanctions on Iran**

Nikkei wrote that in response to President Trump’s announcement that the United States is withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal and will reinstate economic sanctions on Tehran, Finance Minister Aso spoke by phone with Secretary of the Treasury Mnuchin on Thursday. The paper conjectured that Aso probably requested that the U.S. move not have a negative impact on Japanese firms’ business activities in Iran.

## **FM Kono speaks by phone with Iranian counterpart**

Yomiuri, Mainichi, and Nikkei wrote that Foreign Minister Kono spoke by phone with his Iranian counterpart Zarif on Thursday. Concerning President Trump's announcement that the United States is pulling out of the Iran nuclear deal, Kono reportedly told the Iranian foreign minister that the Japanese government will continue to support the agreement and that it is important to continue to implement the accord.

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