



Morning Alert - Thursday, June 7, 2018

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK gave top play to a report that Prime Minister Abe has arrived in the U.S. for his summit with President Trump in Washington. All commercial networks led with reports on the arrest of a couple in Tokyo for abusing their 5-year-old daughter and causing her death.

Top stories in national dailies included a GOJ plan to begin full-scale landfill work at Henoko in mid-August (Yomiuri), a U.S. announcement that the U.S.-DPRK summit next week will take place on Sentosa Island in Singapore (Sankei), an analysis of President Trump's approach to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (Asahi), plans by local governments to increase subsidies for medical care for children (Nikkei), and fraudulent use of NPO designations (Mainichi).

INTERNATIONAL

North Korea trying to steadily gain fruit from its “dialogue approach”

Nikkei claimed that the international coalition against North Korea appears to be unraveling following President Trump's statement that he will no longer use the term “maximum pressure.” The daily argued that North Korea is trying to steadily gain fruit from its dialogue approach since China, South Korea, and Russia have already begun to look into the possibility of economic cooperation with the DPRK. The paper speculated that the coalition will likely weaken starting with private-sector exchanges and the lifting of these nations' unilateral sanctions.

Former deputy secretary of state comments on denuclearization

NHK reported this morning that visiting former Deputy Secretary of State Armitage expressed concern about the possible relaxation of pressure against North Korea ahead of its denuclearization. The network showed him saying in a speech in Tokyo on Wednesday: “North Koreans are masters

at baloney-slicing this situation, drawing things out, and extracting concessions. It was never possible to immediately have a CVID (complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization).” The network said Armitage added that South Korea and China may also call for easing of pressure, stressing the importance for the U.S. and Japan to work closely to maintain maximum pressure. He also added: “We should, as Prime Minister Abe and Mr. Trump agreed recently, maintain maximum pressure until CVID.” Armitage also reportedly pointed out that unless North Korea’s data on nuclear development is completely destroyed, it will be able to make nuclear weapons anytime.

B-52s fly over South China Sea

Asahi wrote that two nuclear-capable U.S. military B-52 strategic bombers flew over the South China Sea on Tuesday. The paper wrote that the flyover came after Secretary of Defense Mattis criticized China’s militarization of the South China Sea at the Shangri-La Dialogue on Saturday. According to the Department of Defense, the two B-52s deployed at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam conducted routine training on their way to a base on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told a regular press briefing on Wednesday that the United States should stop accusing China of militarizing the South China Sea.

Japan, China to cooperate on infrastructure development in third countries

Yomiuri wrote that the GOJ has decided to revise its basic strategy on infrastructure system exports to mention increased cooperation between Japanese and Chinese private companies on infrastructure development in third countries. The paper wrote that the GOJ plans to submit to a GOJ panel today its draft revision of the strategy to clearly express its intention to cooperate with China with regard to its “One Belt, One Road.”

Foreign Minister Kono has visited 39 nations since taking office

Sankei wrote that the number of countries and regions Foreign Minister Kono will have visited in his first year in office will likely exceed that of his predecessor Kishida in mid-August. The paper wrote that as of June 6, Kono had visited 39 nations and regions and plans to visit Thailand, Bhutan, Hungary, Poland, Morocco, Myanmar, Peru, and other nations before the end of August.

SECURITY

GOJ to launch full-scale landfill work at Henoko in mid-August

Yomiuri led with a report saying that the GOJ has decided to begin full-scale landfill work in mid-August or later for the relocation of the MCAS Futenma functions to Henoko by pouring earth and sand into the landfill area. The paper said that in accordance with a prefectural ordinance, the GOJ plans by the end of this week to inform the Okinawa Prefectural Government of the schedule for reclamation work. The paper wrote that since this will be the first time for the GOJ to pour earth and sand into the landfill area, it will mark a major turning point in the plan to complete the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility in fiscal 2022 or later.

ECONOMY

Impact of U.S. auto tariff on Japanese automakers could exceed 1 trillion yen

Sankei claimed that if the Trump administration imposes its proposed tariff on autos, it will deal a heavy blow to Japanese and European manufacturers, saying that uncertainty is spreading among Japanese manufacturers because the impact of the possible tariffs could amount to over 1 trillion yen.

In a related story, Nikkei wrote that Prime Minister Abe told reporters at the Kantei on Wednesday that tit-for-tat trade restrictions will benefit no country and that the G7, which has been responsible for the growth of the world economy, should play its role to maintain global economic stability.

