



Morning Alert - Friday, June 8, 2018

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## HEADLINES

### Morning news

NHK gave top play to the summit between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe at the White House on Thursday. NTV and TBS led with updates on the suspicious death of a real estate mogul in Wakayama. TV Asahi gave top play to a report on the upcoming U.S.-DPRK summit. Fuji TV led with a report saying that pop singer Keichiro Koyama will suspend his activities because he was caught drinking alcohol with a minor.

Top stories in national dailies included the likely agenda of the bilateral talks between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe to be held in Washington (Yomiuri, Sankei); Honda's announcement to jointly develop highly efficient EV batteries with GM (Nikkei); a GOJ view that there is no need to provide legislative redress to forced sterilization victims (Mainichi); and efforts being made by Alps Electric Co. to change its employees' work styles (Asahi).

## INTERNATIONAL

### President Trump says he will raise abduction issue at U.S.-DPRK summit

All networks reported this morning on the U.S.-Japan summit and the post-summit joint press conference held at the White House on Thursday. NHK said President Trump mentioned that although sanctions on North Korea will be maintained, he will no longer use the phrase "maximum pressure." The network showed the President saying at the press conference: "Maximum pressure is absolutely in effect. We don't use the term anymore." In addition, the network said the President announced that he will raise the issue of the abduction of Japanese nationals when he meets with Chairman Kim Jong Un. The President said: "We will continue to be in very close communication in the weeks ahead, including the issue of Japanese abductees, which I know is of great personal importance to Prime Minister Abe.... We will be discussing that with North Korea, absolutely." Meanwhile, the network quoted PM Abe as saying: "Japan and the United States are always

together. There is no change in our policy to call for complete implementation of the UNSC resolutions.... Japan and the United States are completely in sync.” The premier also reportedly said that the international community, including Japan, is hoping that the U.S.-DPRK summit will open the door to peace and stability in northeast Asia.

### **PM Abe eager to hold Japan-DPRK summit**

NHK reported this morning that Prime Minister Abe, during his joint press conference with President Trump, expressed eagerness to hold a summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. The premier reportedly said: “I devoted time at the summit to talking about our view [on the abduction issue] and obtained President Trump’ full understanding. The President promised to raise the issue at the U.S.-DPRK summit.” He added: “Resolving the abduction issue is a top priority for the Abe cabinet. I hope to hold a Japan-DPRK summit to that end. I am determined that the issue must be ultimately resolved between Chairman Kim Jong Un and me.” The network also quoted him as saying: “If North Korea chooses to take the right path, we can paint a bright future. Japan is ready to settle the unfortunate past, normalize diplomatic relations, and offer economic cooperation under the Pyongyang Declaration.”

### **Secretary Pompeo expresses hope for Kim Jong Un to make decision on denuclearization**

NHK reported this morning on its exclusive interview with Secretary of State Pompeo, saying that the Secretary expressed hope that Kim Jong Un will agree to denuclearization. The network showed him saying: “General Kim told me directly that he was prepared to sit with President Trump and talk about how that denuclearization would take place. The two of them will have the chance to have an extensive conversation surrounding that.... Chairman Kim has got to make a big, strategic decision.” On North Korea’s denuclearization, the Secretary said: “We believe it’s important to take down the threat from the world and completely denuclearize North Korea. In exchange for that, we’re prepared to do things that provide the security assurances that they need. We’re hoping to make just as much progress on that as we can during the summit.”

### **Fate of UN Command could affect multilateral cooperation, Japan’s security**

Nikkei wrote that the future of the United Nations Command may become an issue for discussion in the future following President Trump’s reported indication of the possibility of discussing an end to the Korean War at the U.S.-DPRK summit slated for June 12 in Singapore. Speculating that the UN Command may withdraw if a peace agreement is reached, the paper speculated that the withdrawal of the command would affect Japan’s security because the United Nations Command-Rear, a subordinate element of the UN Command, is located at Yokota AB. The paper wrote that although there is a general view within the GOJ that there will be no major impact from a withdrawal of the UN Command, it could affect multilateral cooperation because it might make it difficult for military planes and ships of nations other than the United States to use U.S. military bases in Japan.

### **38 North says DPRK apparently destroyed missile test facility**

Nikkei ran a Kyodo story saying that 38 North, a U.S.-based North Korea monitoring group, said on Wednesday that satellite images appear to show that North Korea had dismantled by mid-May a missile testing facility near the northwestern city of Kusong where the Pukguksong-2 medium-range ballistic missile was apparently developed and ICBM testing might have been conducted. 38 North said in a statement that it is unclear whether the destruction of the facility is an indication that the North has suspended this portion of its missile program or that Pyongyang plans to build other similar facilities in the future.

### **Japan, China to begin implementation of communication mechanism**

All national dailies wrote that the governments of Japan and China will begin today the implementation of their maritime and aerial communication mechanism aimed at averting unintended clashes. The papers quoted SDF Joint Chief of Staff Kawano as telling reporters that the implementation of the mechanism is very important for avoiding unintended clashes. However, Asahi wrote that despite the planned launch of the mechanism, there are still issues that need to be settled, such as the establishment of a hotline between defense officials of the two countries. Mainichi expressed a similar view, adding that ensuring the effectiveness of the mechanism will be a challenge.

## **SECURITY**

### **GOJ to begin pouring earth into landfill area at Henoko as early as mid-August**

Asahi wrote that the GOJ will begin pouring earth and sand into the landfill area at Henoko as early as mid-August, making the ongoing landfill work for Futenma relocation irreversible. The paper speculated that the GOJ is hoping to prevent Futenma relocation from becoming an issue in the gubernatorial election in the fall by making the ongoing FRF construction at Henoko a “fait accompli.” The paper conjectured that the move by the GOJ will put Governor Onaga in a difficult situation because he has consistently expressed strong opposition to the Henoko plan.

