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Contents in this Issue:

- I. Napsnet
  - 1. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks
  - 2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks
  - 3. DPRK Nuclear Program
  - 4. DPRK Leadership
  - 5. Inter-Korea Relations
  - 6. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation
  - 7. DPRK on ROK Rocket Launch
  - 8. Interception of DPRK Ships
  - 9. ROK Peacekeeping Operations
  - 10. ROK Influenza Outbreak
  - 11. ROK Climate Change
  - 12. UN on Climate Change
  - 13. Japan on Nuclear Weapons
  - 14. US-Japan Nuclear Agreement
  - 15. Japanese Nuclear Power
  - 16. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

- 17. Sino-Indian Territorial Dispute
- 18. Sino-Australian Relations
- 19. PRC Civic Unrest
- 20. PRC Ethnic Unrest
- 21. PRC Terrorist Attacks
- 22. PRC Pollution
- 23. PRC Plague Outbreak

- II. PRC Report
  - 24. PRC Energy Supply
  - 25. PRC Civil Society and Earthquake Reconstruction
  - 26. PRC Energy

Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Yonhap ("US URGES N. KOREA TO RETURN TO NUKE TALKS", Washington, 2009/08/08) reported that the U.S. State Department Friday called on the DPRK to return to the multinational nuclear talks. "Our policy remains the same with regard to North Korea," State Department spokesman Robert Wood said. "The ball is in the North's court. It needs to come back to the six-party framework, so that we can continue on the path toward a denuclearized Korean Peninsula."

Yonhap ("N.K. SHOULD RETURN TO 6-WAY TALKS FOR IMPROVED TIES: WHITE HOUSE", Washington, 2009/08/10) reported that the United States will deal with the DPRK through six-party talks despite Pyongyang's hope to improve ties with Washington through bilateral negotiations, National Security Adviser James Jones said Sunday. "The North Koreans have indicated they would like a new relationship, a better relationship with the United States," Jones said in an interview with "Fox News Sunday." "They've always advocated for bilateral engagement," he said. "We have put on the table in the context of the talks we would be happy to do that if, in fact, they would rejoin the talks."

(return to top)

2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "NO CONCRETE SIGNAL FOR TALKS WITH N. KOREA YET: SEOUL OFFICIAL", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that a breakthrough in the six-party talks on the DPRK's stance but there have been no clear signals from Pyongyang yet, a senior ROK government official said Monday. "I think we need to look at North Korea for a change in the situation (not the United States)," he said on the customary condition of anonymity. "The future situation is up to North Korea's stance."

(return to top)

3. DPRK Nuclear Program

Donga Ilbo ("EX-NK OFFICIAL: WORLD MUST IGNORE PYONGYANG'S PROVOCATIONS", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that Hwang Jang-yeop, former secretary of the DPRK Workers' Party, urged the international community to ignore the DPRK's continued provocations and isolate it from the world politically, ideologically and economically. Hwang said, "North Korean leader Kim Jong Il believes that the only way to boost his authority is to have his enemies pick a fight with the North by threatening the world with nuclear weapons." "The South Korean government should select 1,000 smart North Korean defectors. They should be trained and then sent to areas near the North Korean border to work on (for the North's democratization) through the United States, Japan and Europe."

(return to top)

4. DPRK Leadership

Korea Herald (Kim So-hyun, "'N. KOREAN AGENCY USES CLINTON'S VISIT TO PRAISE KIM JONG-UN'", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that Pyongyang's secret police agency propagandized the resolution of the U.S. journalists' case through Bill Clinton's visit as an achievement of Kim Jong-un, sources said. "Thanks to Commander Kim Jong-un's cleverness, former U.S. President Clinton crossed the Pacific Ocean to apologize to the General (Kim Jong-il)," the agency was quoted as saying by Yonhap News. "All of this came through with Commander Kim Jong-un's exceptional foresight and outstanding tactics."

VOA News ("U.S. OFFICIAL: KIM JONG-IL IN FULL CONTROL IN N.KOREA", Washington, 2009/08/10) reported that U.S. national security adviser Jim Jones says DPRK leader Kim Jong-il still appears to be in "full control" of his government. Jones based the assessment Sunday on reports from the recent trip of former U.S. President Bill Clinton to Pyongyang. He said Clinton's visit was first proposed by the DPRK in messages conveyed by the jailed journalists to their families.

(return to top)

5. Inter-Korea Relations

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "HYUNDAI CHIEF TO VISIT NKOREA TO DISCUSS DETAINEES", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that Hyun Jung-eun, chairwoman of the Hyundai Group, was to cross the DMZ on Monday afternoon for a three-day trip to Pyongyang to try to win the release of a detained employee and to discuss restarting joint projects in the DPRK . Kim Ha-young, a Hyundai Asan spokesman , said, "She'll make efforts to bring the detained worker home. The release of the detained worker is the most urgent issue."

Yonhap ("N.K.'S ANTI-LEE RHETORIC DROPS 40%", Seoul, 2009/08/07) reported that the number of DPRK media reports and commentaries critical of ROK President Lee Myung-bak amounted to 275 last month, down approximately 40 percent from 454 in June, according to the Unification Ministry. The number is also less than 333 in May, but slightly higher compared to the 207 in April. "The critical views toward the South were fewer compared to a temporary spike following the nuclear and other military provocations in May and June," an official said.

(return to top)

6. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREA PROFITING FROM VIRTUAL MONOPOLY ON SHIPPING ROUTE", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that the DPRK makes US$1,800 for every 40-foot container shipped on the Busan-Najin route, which is about 4.4 to 12 times more expensive than the charges on the Busan-Shanghai route, a similar distance. According to the Unification Ministry and other sources, the DPRK unilaterally raised the container shipping price from $1,500 to $1,800 in August last year. "North Korea notified us of the raise without prior negotiation, just as they did with the request to raise wages for North Korean workers at the Kaesong Industrial Complex," an ROK government official said. A DPRK ship which operates between Busan and Najin three to four times a month made $3 million last year, and $1.55 million in the first half of this year alone. Although the volume of inter-Korean trade in the first half declined by 26 percent from a year ago, the ship's profits did not fall thanks to its virtual monopoly on the route.

(return to top)

7. DPRK on ROK Rocket Launch

Yonhap ("N. KOREA WARNED OVER S.KOREA ROCKET LAUNCH", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that the DPRK warned Monday that it will "closely watch" how regional countries react to the ROK's imminent launch of a space rocket. "We will closely watch if the above-said parties will also refer South Korea's satellite launch to the UNSC," an unidentified spokesman for the DPRK foreign ministry said in a report carried by the Korean Central News Agency. "Their reaction and attitude towards South Korea's satellite launch will once again clearly prove whether the principle of equality exists or has collapsed," he said.

(return to top)

8. Interception of DPRK Ships

Associated Press ("INDIA FIRES ON NORTH SHIP BUT FINDS NO ILLICIT ARMS", New Delhi, 2009/08/10) reported that India’s coast guard detained a “suspicious” DPRK cargo ship after a six-hour chase off the country’s southeastern coast, a coast guard official said Saturday, but a preliminary search of the vessel revealed it was only carrying sugar. The MV Mu San was pursued by the Indian coast guard, which opened fire above the vessel after it attempted to flee from an island in the Andaman and Nicobar islands where it had dropped anchor without permission Wednesday, said Commander Vijay Singh, a spokesman for the Indian coast guard.

(return to top)

9. ROK Peacekeeping Operations

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "S. KOREAN MARINES TO JOIN PKO DRILLS IN MONGOLIA", Seoul, 2009/08/07) reported that the ROK will dispatch a platoon of Marines for the first time to a multinational peacekeeping exercise to be held in Mongolia later this month, government officials said Friday. The ROK has participated in the annual ``Khan Quest'' exercise since 2006 as an observer by sending working-level officers. About 450 troops from some 20 nations, including Germany, India, Bangladesh and Cambodia, are to take part in this year's exercise.

(return to top)

10. ROK Influenza Outbreak

Yonhap ("KOREA CONFIRMS 51 MORE CASES OF INFLUENZA A", Seoul, 2009/08/09) reported that ROK health authorities said Sunday they have confirmed an additional 51 cases of influenza A, raising the nation's total infections to 1,754. As of Friday, 333 people remained in isolation at their homes or state-designated hospitals. No deaths have been reported here in connection with the flu.

(return to top)

11. ROK Climate Change

Yonhap ("PRESIDENT LEE CALLS FOR 'GREEN WAY OF LIFE' TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak urged Korean citizens Monday to change their way of life into one that is more environmentally friendly. "There is something more important than green technology, and that is a green way of life," Lee said in his biweekly national radio address. "This is because it takes much time and money to develop green technology, but anyone can start leading a green life even today," the president said.

(return to top)

12. UN on Climate Change

Associated Press (Kelly Olsen, "UN CHIEF SAYS CLIMATE CHANGE BIGGEST CHALLENGE", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon said Monday that climate change is the greatest challenge facing a world beset by crises. Ban said the world has "less than 10 years to halt (the) global rise in greenhouse gas emissions if we are to avoid catastrophic consequences for people and the planet," in a keynote speech at a gathering in Seoul of the World Federation of U.N. Associations. Referring to a December meeting in Copenhagen , he said "we have a chance to put in place a climate change agreement that all nations can embrace, which will be equitable, balanced, comprehensible."

(return to top)

13. Japan on Nuclear Weapons

Associated Press (Jay Alabaster, "NAGASAKI MAYOR URGES WORLDWIDE NUCLEAR ARMS BAN", Nagasaki, 2009/08/09) reported that the mayor of Nagasaki, Tomihisa Taue, called for a global ban on nuclear arms at a ceremony marking the 64th anniversary of the U.S. attack on the Japanese city. Taue said said some progress had been made toward eliminating nuclear weaponry but more needed to be done. "We, as human beings, now have two paths before us. While one can lead us to a world without nuclear weapons , the other will carry us toward annihilation, bringing us to suffer once again the destruction experienced in Hiroshima and Nagasaki 64 years ago," he said.

(return to top)

14. US-Japan Nuclear Agreement

Yomiuri Shimbun ("FOREIGN MINISTRY 'CAN'T CONFIRM' SECRET U.S. N-DEAL EXISTS", Tokyo, 2009/08/08) reported that the Foreign Ministry is to claim it is unable to confirm the existence of a secret agreement allowing nuclear-armed U.S. ships to stop at Japanese ports, based on a thorough investigation in 1981 that failed to find documents substantiating claims of such a deal. The 1981 investigation was conducted after former U.S. Ambassador to Japan Edwin Reischauer revealed the existence of the secret agreement to Japanese media in May that year. Researchers later found content similar to Reischauer's remarks in a document titled "Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, Record of Discussion," which was signed by then Foreign Minister Aiichiro Fujiyama and then U.S Ambassador to Japan Douglas MacAurthur II. The document was disclosed in the United States.

(return to top)

15. Japanese Nuclear Power

Asahi Shimbun ("MONJU REACTOR SET FOR MARCH RESTART", Tokyo, 2009/08/10) reported that the Japan Atomic Energy Agency plans to restart by the end of March the prototype fast breeder reactor Monju, sources said. The agency plans to resume operations in February or March after carrying out safety inspections of the facilities and reinforcing the quake-resistance capabilities of the structures, the sources said.

(return to top)

16. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Yomiuri Shimbun (Kenichi Ogata, "RUSSIA TO HALT JAPANESE AID FOR DISPUTED NORTHERN ISLES", Moscow, 2009/08/08) reported that Russia's Foreign Ministry informed the Japanese Embassy in Moscow on Friday that Russia will no longer accept medical supplies and other forms of aid from Japan for the four Russian-held islands off Hokkaido, sources said. According to the sources, Russia's move means it has decided to limit the visa-free exchange program with Japan on the disputed islands, a framework Japan has used to provide humanitarian assistance to island residents. In a statement released Friday, the Russian Foreign Ministry said it explained to the embassy there would be no need in the future for humanitarian aid from Japan. The ministry also expressed gratitude for Japan's aid.

(return to top)

17. Sino-Indian Territorial Dispute

Times of India (Saibal Dasgupta, "NO PLAN TO GIVE UP ARUNACHAL CLAIM: CHINA", Beijing, 2009/08/08) reported that Ming Pao, a Chinese newspaper in Hong Kong, said that Beijing was prepared to give up its claims to Arunachal Pradesh provided it is allowed to maintain its control over Aksai Chin in the Western sector. Beijing also wants New Delhi to concede 2,000 sq kms of territory that it now holds in the middle part of the disputed zone, which the PRC regards as part of the Tibetan plateau. The report has been strongly refuted by the PRC foreign ministry, which described it as groundless. Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said the PRC is willing to make joint efforts with India in the spirit of mutual understanding and accommodation to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the issue.

(return to top)

18. Sino-Australian Relations

Associated Press ("CHINESE SECRETS AGENCY SAYS RIO SPIED FOR 6 YEARS", Beijing, 2009/08/09) reported that an article on Baomi.org __ , a Web site run by the PRC State Secrets Bureau and an affiliated publisher, said data obtained from Rio Tinto's computers showed the company "used all possible means" to obtain secret information, including bribery. "For six years, these economic spies have curried favor, bribed and spied for information," the article, dated Saturday, said. "The fact that it caused tremendous harm to the national economic security and interest is apparent."

(return to top)

19. PRC Civic Unrest

Donga Ilbo ("ONLINE POST URGING DEMOCRACY IN CHINA CAUSING FUROR", 2009/08/10) reported that a self-proclaimed “first-generation revolutionary” of the PRC has blasted the country’s one-party rule and urged democracy. In an Internet posting, the person, who is believed to be a former senior government leader, urged the adoption of a Western-style democracy, including the introduction of a multi-party system, universal suffrage, freedom of speech, tolerance of political dissent, and separation of the Communist Party and army. He also refuted the party’s official propaganda on its achievements made over the last 60 years, criticizing its rule for being tainted with the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution.

(return to top)

20. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Associated Press ("EXILED UIGHUR ACTIVIST SAYS SHE IS 'WOMAN OF PEACE'", Melbourne, 2009/08/08) reported that exiled Uighur activist Rebiya Kadeer said Saturday that she is a "woman of peace," as she attended an Australian film festival for the screening of a documentary about her life. Kadeer told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio through an interpreter. "I have always been peacefully struggling for the freedom and human rights of the Uighur people. I will continue to do so peacefully, until the day when my people become free."

(return to top)

21. PRC Terrorist Attacks

Associated Press (Gillian Wong and Amir Shah, "CHINA SAYS PLANE DIVERTED TO AFGHANISTAN BY THREAT", Beijing, 2009/08/10) reported that an Afghan plane bound for Xinjiang was sent back to Afghanistan after a bomb threat , PRC media said. Kam Air deputy chief Feda Mohammad Fedawi said that the plane, carrying 160 passengers, left Kabul and was crossing Kyrgyzstan on its way to the Xinjiang capital, Urumqi , when it was told to turn back Sunday. Xinhua News Agency said there had been a bomb threat and Urumqi airport authorities were told not to let the plane land . Krgyz authorities told the crew that PRC authorities would not allow them into their airspace, Fedawi said. The plane could not return to the Afghan capital because of windy weather and was diverted to the southern city of Kandahar , Fedawi said.

(return to top)

22. PRC Pollution

BBC News (Michael Bristow, "BEIJING AIR 'CLEANER' SINCE GAMES", Beijing, 2009/08/08) reported that Beijing is enjoying the best air quality this decade because of measures taken during last year's Olympic Games, PRC officials said. They say there were 171 days of low pollution in the first seven months of this year, 22 more than in 2008. "All the major measures taken by the city were expensive and not easily replicated elsewhere," said Yang Ailun, of Greenpeace in China.

(return to top)

23. PRC Plague Outbreak

Associated Press ("CHINA LIFTS BLOCKADE AROUND PLAGUE-STRICKEN TOWN", Beijing, 2009/08/09) reported that the blockade around Ziketan in an ethnically Tibetan area in Qinghai province was lifted after no new infections of pneumonic plague were reported, an official said Sunday. Police had set up checkpoints around the farming town of 10,000 people, sealing it off to prevent the spread of the disease. The official named Wang said nine patients were recovering and in stable condition though they were required to stay for five days in a hospital for observation. Another 332 people quarantined for having "direct or indirect contact" with the patients were released.

(return to top)

II. PRC Report

24. PRC Energy Supply

People’s Daily ("140 MILL TONS OF OIL FIELD FOUND IN INNER MONGOLIA", 2009/08/09) reported that an oil exploration company has found an oil field with reserves of 140 million tons and

worthy of exploitation in Inner Mongolia recently. The pre-exploration will be completed by the end of August and the formal exploration will be started after one year.

(return to top)

25. PRC Civil Society and Earthquake Reconstruction

Chengdu Business Daily ("30 NANJING SENIOR CITIZENS DONATE FOR SICHUAN RECONSTRUCTION",) reported that Chengdu Red Cross Branch has received a special donation of 15,000 RMB, which came from 30 Nanjing senior citizens. The oldest of these senior citizens is already 78 years' old. This time, they came to Sichuan for a tour and also hoped to contribute to Sichuan reconstruction.

(return to top)

26. PRC Energy

China News Net ("PRICE OF NATURAL GAS MAY RISE A LOT", 2009/08/07) reported that according to the National Information Center, reform on China's resource-based products will be accelerated recently, and the price of natural gas may be raised highly.

(return to top)

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