

NAPSNet Daily Report 14 December, 2010

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 14 December, 2010", NAPSNet Daily Report, December 14, 2010,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-14-december-2010/>

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1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREA SUSPECTS NORTH HAS MORE URANIUM SITES", 2010/12/14) reported that the ROK said on Tuesday it suspects the DPRK has been secretly enriching uranium at more locations besides its main nuclear site. ROK Foreign Minister Kim Sung-hwan said he could not confirm a media report that Pyongyang had three to four plants to enrich uranium but he suspected there were facilities in the DPRK in addition to the Yongbyon nuclear complex. "It is a report based on what is still intelligence and let me just say that we have been following this issue for some time," he told a press briefing.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6BD0CE20101214>

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2. PRC on Six Party Talks

Voice of America ("CHINA SAYS NORTH KOREA AGREES ON NEED TO EASE TENSIONS", 2010/12/14) reported that the PRC says a top diplomat forged an agreement with the DPRK on easing tensions on the Korean peninsula and restarting six-party nuclear disarmament talks. As tensions continue on the Korean peninsula, PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said Beijing and Pyongyang have agreed to show restraint. Jiang says the two sides agreed to avoid taking steps that would further escalate tensions, and will work to safeguard peace and stability on the peninsula. She said the two sides also agreed to push forward the six party talks aimed at ending the DPRK's nuclear arms programs. Jiang said the DPRK has what she called "a positive attitude" toward the PRC's proposal for emergency six-party consultations over the latest tensions. But she stopped short of saying Pyongyang would definitely send a representative if the talks happen.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/--111843184.html>

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3. Russia on Inter-Korean Relations

ABC News ("RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES ON HIGH ALERT OVER NORTH KOREA", 2010/12/14) reported that Russia announced Tuesday that its armed forces in the east are on high alert. This comes in light of what it calls an "inadequate situation" on the Korean peninsula as tensions have increased in recent weeks between the DPRK and ROK. The head of Russia's military said they continue to follow what is happening and have taken measures to raise the forces' combat readiness.

<http://www.670kboi.com/rssItem.asp?feedid=113&itemid=29609277>

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4. Japan Self-Defense Force

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPAN SHIFTS DEFENSE STRATEGY TO MEET NEW THREATS", 2010/12/14) reported that Japan has decided to shift its defense strategy for the first time in 40 years as it sees the main threat shifting from the former Soviet Union to the PRC and DPRK. Tokyo is going to reorganize its military into mobile units capable of engaging in operations in the Pacific Ocean and countering DPRK missile threats. The Diet is expected to pass the revisions this week. The most notable change is the transformation of the Self-Defense Forces from a static to a more mobile military. Now troops can be deployed in concentrated formations anywhere there is a threat against Japan. Ground forces will be downsized while naval power will be enhanced. The 600 tanks in service will be reduced to 390; 600 artillery pieces will shrink to around 400; and 1,000 troops will also be cut. The number of operable submarines will rise from 18 to 22. Around 2,000 troops will be deployed on the islands to the southwest. Japan will also speed up the deployment of its next-generation FX fighter jets and boost its three Patriot (PAC3) missile bases to six. It will equip all six of its Aegis destroyers with SM-3 missiles.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2010/12/14/2010121400836.html

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5. Japan-US Military Relations

Washington Post ("JAPAN TO CONTINUE PAYING \$2 BILLION FOR US TROOPS", 2010/12/14) reported that Japan's government agreed Tuesday to continue contributing \$2.2 billion a year toward the cost of stationing American troops in the country. Under the agreement with the United States, Japan's share will remain at the current 188 billion yen (\$2.2 billion) through March 2016. Japan had sought a cut in its payment during months of negotiations on the renewal because of economic woes. But officials agreed on no reduction after tensions on the Korean peninsula and worries over the PRC's growing military might highlighted the U.S. military's role as a deterrent for security threats. "As both Japan and the U.S. are in extremely tight fiscal conditions, we are striving to act under the spirit of our alliance," Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/14/AR2010121401711.html>

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