



NAPSNet Daily Report 19 July, 2010

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 19 July, 2010", NAPSNet Daily Report, July 19, 2010,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-19-july-2010-2/>

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Contents in this Issue:

1. [I. Napsnet](#)
2. [US on ROK Naval Ship Sinking](#)
3. [US-DPRK Relations](#)
4. [US-DPRK MIA Recovery Operations](#)
5. [ROK Energy Security](#)
6. [Japan-India Nuclear Cooperation](#)

1. I. Napsnet

[\(return to top\)](#)

2. US on ROK Naval Ship Sinking

Asahi Shimbun (Yoshihiro Makino, "U.S. BENDS, URGES RESTRAINT BY SEOUL OVER SINKING", Seoul, 2010/07/19) reported that according to sources, Washington has been quietly approached by Beijing to persuade Seoul to show restraint in its response toward Pyongyang over the sinking of the Cheonan, and to refrain from broadcasting military propaganda over loudspeakers near the fortified border and not to conduct provocative war games. Washington's sudden about-face is forcing Seoul

to tone down its retaliation plans against Pyongyang. Some within the Seoul government have acknowledged that the country may have lost a major diplomatic battle.

<http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201007180342.html>

[\(return to top\)](#)

3. US-DPRK Relations

JoongAng Ilbo ("OBAMA MAY SEND RICHARDSON ON NORTH KOREA TRIP", Washington, 2010/07/19) reported that U.S. President Barack Obama is considering allowing New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson to accept an invitation to visit Pyongyang, multiple diplomatic sources told the JoongAng Ilbo Sunday. The sources said Han Song-ryol, deputy DPRK ambassador to the United Nations, invited Richardson in May to visit to discuss various diplomatic issues. "I'm aware that the North Korean side told Richardson it is willing to consider expressing regrets or making an ameliorating statement about the Cheonan incident if he visits Pyongyang," a source said.

<http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2923376>

[\(return to top\)](#)

4. US-DPRK MIA Recovery Operations

Associated Press (Charles J. Hanley, "LOST KOREAN WAR BATTALION AWAITS US MIA DECISION", Seoul, 2010/07/18) reported that under pressure from MIA family groups, the US President Barack Obama administration is said to be moving slowly to reverse the Bush administration's suspension of the MIA joint recovery program in the DPRK. When then-Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld suspended the program in 2005, officials cited what they said were concerns about the security of American personnel working on the territory of a longtime U.S. adversary. Richard Lawless, the former Pentagon official who recommended the move, defends it today, telling The Associated Press it was a "prudent decision" because the U.S. field teams "were potential high-value hostages as the North Korean nuclear crisis deepened." The MIA support groups rejected that rationale, saying they suspected President George W. Bush's administration instead wanted to break the lone working link with the DPRK and pressure Pyongyang in the nuclear showdown. http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100718/ap_on_re_as/as_korea_the_missing

[\(return to top\)](#)

5. ROK Energy Security

Yonhap ("S. KOREA'S OIL RELIANCE TO FALL TO 30 PCT LEVEL IN 2012: REPORT", Seoul, 2010/07/19) reported that a report by the Korea Energy Economic Institute (KEEI) said the ROK's

dependence on oil will continue to fall in the next few years as Seoul switches to atomic energy and liquefied natural gas (LNG). Crude oil, which accounted for 53.2 percent of all energy requirements in 2000, fell to 48.9 percent in 2003 and 44.9 percent in 2006, before dipping to 41.8 percent in 2008. "At the present pace, crude oil will make up less than 40 percent of the country's energy demand," the institute predicted.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/business/2010/07/19/25/0501000000AEN20100719002500320F.HTML>

[\(return to top\)](#)

6. Japan-India Nuclear Cooperation

Asahi Shimbun (Yukifumi Takeuchi , "INDIA OPPOSES TEST CLAUSE IN NUCLEAR COOPERATION PACT", New Delhi, 2010/07/17) reported that India is resisting Japan's efforts to include a clause that opposes nuclear testing in a nuclear power cooperation agreement between the two countries. Japanese government officials have stressed the clause is necessary because India has not joined the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. But Gautam Bambawale, joint secretary for East Asia at the Indian External Affairs Ministry, told The Asahi Shimbun that India is voluntarily introducing a moratorium on nuclear tests, so the clause is unnecessary. <http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201007160465.html>

[\(return to top\)](#)

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