NAPSNet Daily Report 30 June, 2008

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 30 June, 2008", NAPSNet Daily Report, June 30, 2008, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-30-june-2008/

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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Associated Press (Matthew Lee, "NORTH KOREA SADDENED BY LOSS OF REACTOR TOWER", Seoul, 2008/06/29) reported that the US State Department's top Koreas expert, Sung Kim, said he believed the destruction of the Yongbyon cooling tower was an emotional loss for the DPRK. "I detected ... a sense of sadness when the tower came down," Kim said. "There is a significant degree of emotional attachment to the Yongbyon facilities," he told reporters. "(You could tell) just looking at the expression of the Yongbyon engineers who were on the site when this happened."

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. TO PAY FOR N. KOREA BLAST", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that Sung Kim, director of the Korean affairs desk at the U.S. State Department, on Saturday said the cost of demolition of the cooling tower at the Yongbyon nuclear reactor is part of the cost of the DPRK's disablement of its nuclear facilities, which will be borne by the U.S. “The arrangement we have with DPRK is that they carry out a disablement act, they give us an itemized bill, we review it. And once it’s confirmed, we make payment."

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

BBC (John Sudworth, "US DOUBTS OVER NK NUCLEAR PLANS", Seoul, 2008/06/28) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the DPRK's nuclear declaration, handed over earlier this week, left some questions unanswered. Rice said the documents do not confirm US suspicions about a separate uranium enrichment program, or the passing of nuclear technology to Syria. "I have said before and I will say again, that thus far we don't have the answers that we need about either. But I expect that the North will live up to its obligation that it's undertaken to take those concerns seriously and to address them," she said.

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3. Six-Party Talks

Korea Times (Na Jeong-ju, "SIX-PARTY NUCLEAR TALKS LIKELY TO RESUME NEXT WEEK", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that the six-party talks are expected to resume next week with the PRC holding last-ditch discussions with the other countries to fix the date, officials in Seoul said Monday. "The prospects for a new round of the talks are now brighter than ever as Pyongyang has reaffirmed its commitment to disclosing its nuclear activities,'' said a spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. ``China is currently talking with the United States and North Korea to set the timetable for the negotiations. It appears that the meeting will take place during the second week of July.''

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4. Japanese Abductees Issue

Yomiuri ("U.S. STANCE ON DPRK LIMITES JAPAN'S CHOICES", Tokyo, 2008/06/28) wrote that the Japanese government's options in regard to the DPRK have been narrowed by the United States' announcement it will take Pyongyang off its terrorism blacklist. In the 45-day period before the moves take effect, Tokyo plans to scrutinize the DPRK document and draw up a plan that could edge Pyongyang toward resolving the issue of the abduction of Japanese by DPRK agents in the 1970s and '80s. Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura indicated at a press conference Thursday evening that economic and energy assistance would grow in significance as diplomatic weapons for Japan. "North Korea needs Japanese capital and technology," he said.

Asahi Shimbun (Taro Karasaki, "RICE ASKED TO STAY FIRM ON ABDUCTIONS", Kyoto, 2008/06/28) reported that in talks Friday with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura pressed Washington not to let up on its tough stance on the DPRK's abductions of Japanese. Rice said that the abduction issue was "not just an issue for Japan." "It is an issue of serious concern for the United States," she added. Rice said Washington would "continue to monitor North Korea's seriousness" to resolve the matter.

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5. US Food Aid for DPRK

Associated Press (Burt Herman, "UN: US FOOD AID ARRIVES IN NORTH KOREA", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that a U.S. ship carrying thousands of tons of food aid has arrived in the DPRK, the U.N. World Food Program said Monday. The WFP said the American ship that arrived

Sunday carried 37,000 tons of wheat, the first installment of 500,000 tons in promised U.S. aid. Sunday's wheat shipment will be enough for the WFP to expand its operations to feed more than 5 million people, up from 1.2 million people now getting international aid.

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6. ROK Aid to DPRK

Yonhap ("SEOUL OFFERS CORN AID TO PYONGYANG", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that the ROK on Monday offered 50,000 tons of corn aid to the DPRK. "We will provide 50,000 tons of corn if North Korea give details as to when, where and how it wants to receive the aid," Kim Ho-nyoun, spokesman for the Unification Ministry, told reporters. "We're waiting for a positive response from the North."

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7. DPRK Economic Development

Korea Times ("PYONGYANG TO BECOME INTERNATIONAL CITY BY 2012", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that the DPRK is creating a commercial street in downtown Pyongyang as part of a large-scale project to turn the capital into an international city by 2012, according to Yonhap News. The DPRK broke ground in December to construct a 50-story twin tower hotel, a trade center, a modern department store and office buildings under the initiative of Jang Song-taek, brother-in-law of leader Kim Jong-il, Yonhap reported quoting informed sources. The creation of "Geumgang street" is part of the North's broader plan to rebuild its sagging economy by 2012, a year honoring the 100th birthday of its late leader Kim Il-sung, the sources said.

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8. Sino-DPRK Relations

Donga Ilbo ("CHINA-N.K. BORDER CITY CENTER FOR FOOD SMUGGLING", Dandong, 2008/06/30) reported that people in Dandong, a PRC city on the DPRK border, expressed mixed views about whether the destruction of the DPRK's cooling tower would make a breakthrough in the inter-Korean relationship. Mawin, 42, said, “I was impressed to see late night news about the destruction of the cooling tower. I hope that the strained inter-Korean relationship since the start of the new South Korean administration could get better.” He noted, “When Shinuiju said to be designated as a special development district, many South Koreans came to Dandong to invest. ”A man in his 50s who identified only his last name Wi said, “I hope that South Korean supporters can take the train in Seoul and pass Shinuiju and Dandong, and go to Beijing as they planned for the Beijing Olympics in August.”

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9. ROK Anti-Beef Demonstrations

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "SOUTH KOREA BANS RALLIES AGAINST US BEEF IMPORTS", Seoul, 2008/06/29) reported that the ROK police refused Sunday to allow more candlelight protests against the resumption of American beef imports. The government said it would not tolerate violent, illegal rallies. Authorities used police buses to encircle a plaza in front of Seoul City Hall — the main site for weeks of evening rallies — to prevent protesters from gathering. About 1,700 people marched into nearby downtown streets chanting slogans demanding the government of President Lee Myung-bak cancel its decision to lift a ban on U.S. beef. Thousands of riot police quickly chased them away. There were no immediate reports of serious injuries or clashes.

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "SKOREAN POLICE RAID CIVIC GROUPS", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that on Monday ROK police raided the offices of civic groups that have led protests against a government plan to resume U.S. beef imports. Authorities searched the Seoul offices of two civic groups and confiscated computers, documents and materials used during rallies. One senior civic group official was arrested on charges of instigating violent protests, police said. Police also arrested 18 labor activists who blocked U.S. meat from leaving a storehouse.

Chosun Ilbo ("MOST KOREANS WANT END TO STREET PROTESTS: SEOUL", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that 57.2 percent of ROK citizens want an end to street protests against U.S. beef imports, a Gallup poll for the Chosun Ilbo suggests. Only 37.9 percent supported the vigils in the telephone poll of 1,013 adult respondents across the country on Saturday. Regarding an additional Korea-U.S. beef agreement banning shipments of beef from cattle older than 30 months, 37.7 percent of respondents were satisfied, while 59 percent were not.

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10. US-ROK Relations

Associated Press (Matthew Lee, "BEEF TOPS BOMBS ON RICE VISIT TO SOUTH KOREA", Seoul, 2008/06/28) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice in Seoul on Saturday defended the safety of US beef. "I want to assure everyone that American beef is safe," she told a news conference with ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan. "We will continue to work with you to have consumer confidence in that matter. We want there to be consumer confidence in American beef." But Yu stated, "It will take time for that risk to be erased from the minds of the Korean public."

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11. ROK-Russian Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("RUSSIA EXPELS S. KOREAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that four ROK intelligence agents who had been gathering information on the DPRK in Moscow have been expelled by Russia, it emerged Sunday. ROK and Russian government officials said some ROK intelligence agents who had worked with diplomatic passports returned home between late last year and late June this year. However, they were not declared persona non grata by Russian authorities, and contrary to the principle of reciprocity, the ROK government has taken no similar action against Russian intelligence agents working in the ROK. Diplomatic sources say the expulsion was caused not by their personal mistake but by a bilateral disagreement on intelligence sharing or a mistake by ROK authorities

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12. ROK-Indonesian Military Relations

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "SEOUL, JAKARTA TO INK SUBS-FOR-AIRCRAFT DEAL", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that the ROK is nearing a $1-billion deal with Indonesia to trade two of its 1,300-ton attack submarines and related technology for eight Indonesian-built advanced maritime patrol aircraft, a military source said Monday. Arms procurement officials from the two nations, which forged a "strategic partnership'' in December 2006, will meet next week in Indonesia to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the proposed deal, the source said.

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13. Bird Flu in ROK

Associated Press ("SKOREA LIFTS BIRD FLU RESTRICTIONS", Seoul, 2008/06/30) reported that the ROK said Monday it has lifted all special restrictions imposed to prevent the spread of bird flu after a series of recent outbreaks. The Agriculture Ministry said in a statement it has slaughtered about 8.5 million birds to combat outbreaks of the disease that began in early April. However, the ministry said no new outbreak has been found since May 12, and that as of Sunday it has lifted all special quarantine measures, such as restrictions on the movement and sale of poultry.

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14. Japan-Taiwan Relations

Yomiuri (Toshinao Ishii, "TAIWAN STEPS BACK FROM JAPAN", Taipei, 2008/06/28) reported that Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou of the ruling Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or KMT), has shown signs of distancing Taiwan from Japan. According to sources involved in bilateral affairs, under the pro-Japan administration of Ma's predecessor, Chen Shui-bian, bilateral ties were at their warmest since Japan severed diplomatic ties with Taiwan in 1972. However, Taiwan's criticism of Japan has intensified since a Taiwan fishing boat sank in waters near the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea on June 10.

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15. US-PRC Relations

Associated Press (Matthew Lee, "CHINA LEADERS PRAISE US HELP ON QUAKE", Beijing, 2008/06/30) reported that top PRC leaders said they were thankful for U.S. help after Sichuan's devastating earthquake, with Premier Wen Jiabao saying Monday he was impressed that the first foreigners he saw providing help when he toured the province were Americans. "I would like to express our thanks to madam secretary and through you to the American people," Wen told visiting US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice. "I hereby would like to express our heartfelt thanks on behalf of the Chinese government and people to President Bush, the U.S. government and the American people," President Hu Jintao said.

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16. US on PRC Human Rights

Agence France Presse (Lachlan Carmichael, "RICE PRESSES CHINA ON HUMAN RIGHTS", Beijing, 2008/06/30) reported that in meetings with PRC President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao in Beijing on Monday, US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice said she raised the cases of several dissidents detained by the PRC as well as the ruling Communist Party's controls on the Internet. "The Internet is becoming so ubiquitous. It shouldn't be something used to constrain and limit political speech," Rice stated. Rice said the talks also covered the recent progress in ending the DPRK's nuclear weapons programmes, problems in the international economy and climate change. Rice told reporters the recent unrest in Tibet was also discussed, and she expressed cautious optimism over Beijing's decision to hold further talks with envoys of the Dalai Lama.

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17. Cross Strait Relations

BBC (Caroline Gluck, "TAIWAN EASES CHINA CURRENCY RULES", Taipei, 2008/06/30) reported that Taiwan has lifted some restrictions on PRC currency exchange. For the first time, Chinese bank notes will be officially available at authorised Taiwanese banks. They will also be available at foreign-currency trading counters at tourist hotels, airports and gift stores. The move is part of a number of financial liberalisation measures agreed by the government last week.

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18. Tibet Issue

Agence France Presse ("TIBET-CHINA TALKS TO RESUME IN EARLY JULY: STATE MEDIA", Beijing, 2008/06/29) reported that authorities will resume talks with representatives of the Dalai Lama in early July following a request from the exiled Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader, state press said Sunday. Our door is always open for the dialogue with the Dalai Lama," Xinhua news agency quoted a government spokesman as saying. "(We) hope that the Dalai Lama would treasure this opportunity and give positive response to the requirements of the central authorities."

Associated Press ("DALAI LAMA ENVOYS ARRIVE IN CHINA FOR TALKS", Dharamsala, 2008/06/30) reported that senior envoys of the Dalai Lama arrived in the PRC on Monday to meet the government over the issue of Tibet, the Tibetan government-in-exile said. "His Holiness the Dalai Lama has instructed the envoys to make every effort to bring about tangible progress to alleviate the difficult situation for Tibetans in their homeland," a statement from the government-in-exile said.

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19. Nuclear Energy Development

Kyodo ("G-8 EYES CIVIL NUCLEAR POWER TO CURB GLOBAL WARMING: DRAFT", Tokyo,

2008/06/30) reported that Group of Eight leaders will agree at their July 7-9 summit in Japan on a new initiative to expand the use of civil nuclear power to curb global warming with three principles of ensuring nonproliferation, safety and nuclear security, according to a draft of a post-summit statement. The G-8 leaders will also agree to set national goals and formulate action plans to improve energy efficiency and promote clean energy such as solar power, both followed by appropriate monitoring, says the draft statement.

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II. PRC Report

20. PRC Energy

Xinhua Net, www.xinhuanet.com ("CHINESE BIO-ENERGY INDUSTRY IS TAKING SHAPE", 2008/06/27) reported that Deputy Director of State Development and Reform Commission Wang Jinxiang recently said that the PRC's bio-energy is taking shape, such as the rapid industrialization of non-grain raw materials (cassava, sweet sorghum, etc.) producing fuel ethanol. A group of bio-diesel, straw power generation projects are under construction, with rapid growth of investment. Wang Jinxiang said that the PRC would increase the research into non-grain raw materials producing bio-energy, and set up a system for financial funds giving priority to purchasing bio-products of independent innovation and other support policies.

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21. PRC Environment

First Financial Daily ("EIGHT DEPARTMENTS FIRST JOINTLY TO LAUNCH SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN IN JULY", 2008/06/26)

reported that the PRC Department of Environmental Protection, State Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Supervision, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Construction, State Administration for Industry and Commerce, State Administration of work safety, and State Electricity Regulatory Commission jointly launched a special environmental protection campaign. According to this year's requirements of special action for environmental protection, the work will focus on the drinking water pollution problems of 113 key environmental protection cities. Follow-up supervision will be carried out to ensure that the main index of drinking water quality is 100% accurate.

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22. PRC Civil Society

China NPO Website, http://www.chinanpo.gov.cn/web/index.do ("SUZHOU: GOVERNMENT PURCHASES PUBLIC SERVICE TO ESTABLISH ANTI-DRUG SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS", 2008/06/26) reported that the Suzhou Government will set up anti-drug social organizations by way of purchasing public service. The organizations will take part in the anti-drug work, and accept the

supervision, guidance and assessment of the municipal Anti-Drug Office. County-level cities (districts) will set up social anti-drug branches. Towns and neighborhoods will set up anti-drug workstations according to the distribution of drug addicts. All levels of these organizations will work under the guide of corresponding anti-drug offices and carry out specific service and supervision with the help of volunteers.

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III. ROK Report

23. DPRK Internal Situation

Goodfriends ("SAVE THE STARVING KIDS", 2008/06/27) wrote that the ROK government should save the starving DPRK kids. Children should not be sacrificed by diplomacy between the two governments. While waiting for supervision from the U.S. and the PRC, more children would be sacrificed due to hunger. Both Korean governments should make agreement to help the starving kids as soon as possible.

The Peace Foundation (Baek Seung-joo, "HUMANITARIAN FOOD AID AND CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE", 2008/06/27) carried an article by a Korea Institute for Defense Analysis researcher who wrote that on June 18 Condoleezza Rice, the Secretary of State, said at the Heritage Foundation that food aid for starving people should not be exploited as policy making or diplomacy. Her speech was interpreted as a signal that U.S. policy toward the DPRK and the Korean Peninsula is flexible. On the other hand, the ROK government should keep consistency, with more focus on ‘constitutional principle’ than ‘policy toward the DPRK’ when regarding humanitarian food aid to the DPRK. Considering the strategic marginal utility, we do not need a ‘humanitarian aid race’ with the U.S.

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24. Inter-Korean Relations

Seoul Shinmun ("DO NOT HESISTATE TO CHANGE",) wrote that the ROK government was barely influential in DPRK nuclear negotiations and DPRK-US relations rehabilitation, and it seems the Lee administration is not prepared for the changing dynamics of Northeast Asia. Fortunately, now the government finally seems to recognize the urgency of the issue and it is reported to have planned to provide humanitarian aid to the DPRK by degrees. This is positive in that the government clarified when to enforce the policy toward the DPRK. Yet, it is not enough. The government should admit the meaning of the 6.15 joint declarations and 10.4 Summit declarations, and clarify its will to fulfill these declarations.

Hankyoreh ("EXPECT TO REHABILITATE RELATIONS WITH DPRK", 2008/06/30) wrote that enforcement of U.S. beef importation notification and the dismantlement of cooling towers of Yongbyon nuclear facility share one common thing: the absence of the ROK government. Absence of the role of the ROK government shows that the revitalization of the ROK-US alliance, which was greatly emphasized by the Lee administration, is not working properly. There were some voices at the Lee administration’s inauguration worried that the Lee administration might take the hard line

toward the DPRK. It turned out to be ‘no line’ and now the Lee administration is offering to provide corn to the DPRK, only to be ignored.

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org