NAPSNet Daily Report 30 November, 2007

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 30 November, 2007", NAPSNet Daily Report, November 30, 2007, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-30-november-2007/

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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse (Park Chan-Kyong, "NKOREA TO COME CLEAN ON SECRET NUCLEAR PROGRAMME: US ENVOY", Seoul, 2007/11/29) reported that work on shutting down the DPRK's declared nuclear plants is going well, with the state expected to come clean soon about a suspected secret programme, the chief US nuclear envoy said. Christopher Hill said the DPRK is expected to submit a list of its nuclear programmes within days so that international negotiators can discuss it at a fresh round of talks next week. Hill stressed the list should include all nuclear programmes, facilities and materials including a suspected programme based on highly enriched uranium (HEU). "We need a complete understanding of their uranium enrichment programme, or if it's not an active programme we need a complete understanding of its past programme," Hill said in a speech to US business chiefs.

Washington Times (Nicholas Kralev, "US TO HOLD N. KOREA TO NUCLEAR PROMISES", 2007/11/29) reported that Christopher Hill is going to Pyongyang on Monday due to concern that the DPRK might fail to provide a full declaration of its nuclear-related materials and activities by year's end. "The data declaration will be a critical test of the North's real willingness to give up its nuclear weapons," said Bruce Klingner, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation. Michael O'Hanlon, senior fellow in foreign policy studies at the Brookings Institution, stated, "If there is even the slightest doubt in the international community that a uranium-enrichment program exists, the North Koreans will play on that doubt. This will probably be a tactical negotiation, though they would be better off making a clean decision" to disclose everything they have.

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2. US on Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap (Byun Duk-kun, "HILL TELLS SEOUL TO MATCH INTER-KOREAN TIES TO DENUCLEARIZATION PROGRESS", Seoul, 2007/11/30) reported that Christopher Hill, assistant secretary of state for Asia-Pacific affairs, said Friday that he hoped that the ROK would keep pace with the DPRK's denuclearization in pursuing inter-Korean economic cooperation projects. "I sort of think that 2008 is about the time we should finish denuclearization, and I think once

denuclearization is done, we should be able to move on to economic issues and really accelerate the pace of things that you are doing, but we first have to deal with this issue," Hill said in a meeting with Unification Minister Lee Jae-joung. "I think we have always made it clear that we very much support this North-South Korea dialogue, but it's also important to have good communication (between the ROK and the United States) and good ability to compare notes," said Hill.

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3. Inter-Korean Military Relations

Joongang Ilbo (Brian Lee, "DEFENSE BOSSES DEFER DISCUSSION ON PEACE ZONE", 2007/11/29) reported that three days of high-level inter-Korean military talks resulted in security guarantees for economic cooperation projects but failed to substantially narrow differences over how to establish a joint fishing zone in the Yellow Sea. The two Koreas had to content themselves with simply deferring the fishing zone issue to another round of talks at the general officer level. No date was given for those talks. Military security arrangements for inter-Korean projects agreed at the October summit meeting were worked out, meaning that planned cross-border train service can proceed, according to ROK military officials.

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4. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap ("N. KOREAN OFFICIAL OVERSEEING INTER-KOREAN CONTACTS ARRIVES IN SEOUL FOR TALKS", Seoul, 2007/11/29) reported that a senior DPRK official in charge of inter-Korean relations started a three-day trip to the ROK to discuss implementation of rapprochement measures agreed upon at a recent summit of the two countries. Kim Yang-gon, 69, director of the United Front Department of the DPRK's ruling Workers' Party, is the second DPRK official overseeing Pyongyang's relations with the ROK to visit Seoul. He is scheduled to meet with Unification Minister Lee Jae-joung and Kim Man-bok, chief of the National Intelligence Service, the following day. Unification Minister Lee told reporters that the DPRK delegation "will meet with a wide range of South Korean high-level officials and those involved in economic cooperation to discuss implementing the summit declaration."

Yonhap (Yoo Cheong-mo, "ROH TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF SUMMIT ACCORD WITH SENIOR N. KOREAN OFFICIAL", Seoul, 2007/11/30) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun on Friday was to meet with Kim Yang-gon, director of the United Front Department of the DPRK's ruling Workers' Party, to discuss implementing rapprochement measures agreed on at last month's second inter-Korean summit. On Friday morning, the DPRK officials visited Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering's shipyard on Geoje Island off the southern coast. They also visited the Busan Customs Office and met with Busan Mayor Hur Nam-sik over lunch at "Nurimaru" APEC House in the Dongbaek Island, the venue of the APEC summit in 2005.

Korea Times (Yoon Won-sup, "KIM YOUNG-NAM TO VISIT SEOUL IN JAN.", Seoul, 2007/11/30) reported that the DPRK's No. 2 leader Kim Yong-nam will likely visit Seoul in January, according to ROK government officials. "The two Koreas are exchanging views regarding Kim Yong-nam's visit to Korea between the end of the presidential election and the inauguration of the next government on Feb. 25," an official said on the condition of anonymity. "January would seem to be the most

appropriate time."

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5. Inter-Korean Economic Relations

Korea Times ("SEOUL EYES SUPPORTING NK WITH MARKET ECONOMY EDUCATION", 2007/11/29) reported that the ROK is considering helping DPRK officials and economists familiarize themselves with the market economy starting next year, government officials said. According to sources from the Ministry of Finance and Economy, a tentative budget of 300 million won ($320,000) has been earmarked for a 2008 project named "pro-North market economy education." Programs of the project are likely to include cross-border information-sharing workshops and education programs on developing capabilities to sustain a market economy, they said.

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6. Iran-DPRK Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun (Takehito Kudo , "AHMEDINEJAD: NO MILITARY COOPERATION WITH DPRK", Tehran, 2007/11/30) reported that in an interview with Japanese media organizations, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Wednesday that there has been no military cooperation between his country and the DPRK in any way, including the development of ballistic missiles and other weapons. He also said, referring to his country's relations with Pyongyang, Iran is trying to "develop good relations with every country" except for Israel.

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7. ROK Space Program

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA'S 1ST ASTRONAUT TO LIFT OFF NEXT APRIL", 2007/11/29) reported that the time and date have been set for the ROK's first astronaut to travel into space. Ko San will depart Earth aboard a Russian Soyuz spacecraft at the Baikonur Space Center on April 8, 2008 at 8:00 p.m. Korean time. The Soyuz spacecraft will deliver Ko to the International Space Station 360 km above the ground. During his stay at the station, he will conduct 18 experiments to further understanding about what happens under zero gravity in space before returning to Earth on April 19.

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8. World War II Sexual Slavery

Korea Times ("'COMFORT WOMEN USED TO PREVENT MILITARY REVOLT DURING WAR'", Seoul, 2007/11/30) reported that Yoshiaki Yoshimi, a professor of modern Japanese history at Chuo University in Tokyo, claimed Friday that the Japanese military used sex slaves to satisfy disgruntled frontline soldiers during World War II and discourage military revolt. "They (the Japanese soldiers) were in a war of aggression with no promising future in sight. They never knew when they would return home. They were not taken care of well and their basic human rights were trampled on," he said. "The Japanese Imperial Army feared most that the simmering discontentment of the soldiers

could explode into a riot and revolt. That is why it provided women," he said.

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9. US-Japan Missile Defense Cooperation

Kyodo ("JAPAN AEGIS SHIP TO TEST-FIRE U.S. MISSILE INTERCEPTOR ON DEC. 17", Washington, 2007/11/29) reported that a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force Aegis-equipped ship will test-fire a U.S. missile interceptor for the first time off Hawaii on Dec. 17, Japanese officials said Wednesday. The move is part of Japan's efforts to accelerate the deployment of missile defense capabilities since the DPRK's test-firing of missiles in July last year. The MSDF has advanced the date for equipping the Kongou with SM-3 interceptors to by the end of calendar 2007 from by the end of fiscal 2007, which ends March 31 next year. By fiscal 2010, Japan plans to have a total of 30 PAC-3 launchers in 10 places and four SM-3-equipped Aegis ships.

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10. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

Kyodo ("GOV'T INTENT TO HAVE DIET PASS REFUELING BILL UNCHANGED: FUKUDA", Tokyo, 2007/11/29) reported that Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda said the government remains unchanged in seeking to have the Diet pass a bill during its ongoing session to allow Japan to resume refueling activities in the Indian Ocean in support of U.S.-led antiterrorism operations in and around Afghanistan.Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said separately that seeing through the passage of the bill in the current extraordinary parliamentary session is an ''absolute must'' for the Fukuda government.

Kyodo ("NUKUGA SUMMONING PLAN NIXED, REFUELING BILL DEBATE EYED FOR TUES.", Tokyo, 2007/11/30) reported that the Japanese ruling and opposition camps agreed Friday that a House of Councillors committee will start full debate Tuesday on a bill to resume Japan's antiterrorism mission, lawmakers said.

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11. US-Japan Security Alliance

Yomiuri Shimbun (Brian Chapman, "'U.S. OVERREACH COULD THREATEN JAPAN'", Tokyo, 2007/11/30) reported that Yale University Prof. Paul Kennedy said Thursday that the overreaching of the U.S. military as a result of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan could weaken Japan's security. "The United States is significantly overstretched militarily, and...this comes at a time of a weakening dollar, a slowing economy, a subprime mortgage crisis and enormous trade deficits and federal budget deficits. To the extent that Japan relies upon long-term American military support [for security], all these are not welcome signs," Kennedy said. He added, "[The United States] probably doesn't have the reserves to reinforce the Korean Peninsula, should North Korea become threatening, which is why we must hope for continued peaceful negotiations on Korean matters."

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12. PRC-Japan Environmental Cooperation

Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN, CHINA REACH DEAL ON ANTI-GLOBAL WARMING PROJECT", 2007/11/30) reported that the Japanese government reached basic agreement with the PRC on Thursday to offer technological assistance to help cut greenhouse gas emissions in the PRC under a so-called co-benefit project that will focus on efforts to ease pollution and curb global warming, a government official said. Environment Minister Ichiro Kamoshita and PRC State Environmental Protection Administration Minister Zhou Shengxian will formally sign the agreement in Beijing on Saturday.

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13. Sino-US Relations

The International Herald Tribune (David Lague, "CHINA BLAMES U.S. FOR DENIAL OF SHIP VISIT TO HONG KONG", Beijing, 2007/11/29) reported that the PRC blocked the visit of a US aircraft carrier battle group and other American warships to Hong Kong last week in retaliation for the Bush administration's proposed upgrading of Taiwan's Patriot antimissile batteries, the state media reported. Foreign Ministry spokesman, Liu Jianchao, said in Beijing on Thursday, that Bush's meeting with the Dalai Lama in October had damaged ties.

Washington Post (Ann Scott Tyson, "U.S. PROTEST CHINA'S DENIAL OF NAVY SHIP", Washington, 2007/11/29) reported that the Pentagon issued a formal protest to the PRC Wednesday over Beijing's refusal to allow the USS Kitty Hawk or its accompanying ships into Hong Kong last week. David Sedney, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia, summoned Maj. Gen. Zhao Ning, the Chinese defense attache in Washington, to the Pentagon for half an hour to make the complaint. "The denial of the USS Patriot and USS Guardian requests to refuel and avoid severe weather is contrary to commonly accepted international maritime safety protocols," the protest stated. "Such cancellations run counter to our joint interest in positively developing our military-to-military relations."

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14. Sino-US Trade Relations

Reuters (Doug Palmer, "CHINA TO DROP PROHIBITED SUBSIDIES, U.S. SAYS", Washington, 2007/11/29) reported that the PRC has agreed to eliminate a dozen industrial subsidy programs the US challenged as illegal this year under World Trade Organization rules, the top US trade official said. "This outcome represents a victory for U.S. manufacturers and their workers," U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab told reporters. "The agreement also demonstrates that two great trading nations can work together to settle disputes to their mutual benefit." The PRC's decision will eliminate subsidies across a spectrum of PRC industrial sectors, including steel, wood products, information technology, Schwab said.

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15. PRC Dissent

The Washington Post (Maureen Fan, "'STATE SECURITY' ARRESTS IN CHINA DOUBLED IN '06, GROUP REPORTS", Beijing, 2007/11/29) reported that the number of people arrested in the PRC for "endangering state security" more than doubled last year, showing that the government is cracking down on the political crime of dissent despite pressure to improve its human rights record before the 2008 Beijing Olympics, a human rights watchdog group based in the US said. National statistics released in the annual China Law Yearbook show that prosecutors approved the arrest and detention of 604 people on the state security charge in 2006, compared with 296 the year before. The numbers were the highest since 2002, according to the group, the San Francisco-based Dui Hua Foundation, which lobbies for the release of political prisoners.

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16. PRC Environment

Time (Austin Ramzy, "CHINA'S GREEN SPENDING FALLS SHORT", Beijing, 2007/11/29) reported that the good news out of the PRC is that the People's Republic will be spending $200 billion on cleaning up the air and water pollution that has marred its rapid economic growth. However, the amount may well be short of what it will need to turn things around, say Wang Canfa, who heads the Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims, a Beijing-based NGO. For the PRC to begin serious cleanup it needs to spend 2-3% of GDP on environmental protection, he says. Even the money the PRC now spends could be used more efficiently, argues Wen Bo, the China program manager for Pacific Environment, a San Francisco-based NGO. "In the past many such huge investments didn't result in real cleanups. They became a hotbed for corruption," he says.

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17. PRC AIDS Issue

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA SAYS ESTIMATED HIV/AIDS CASES RISE TO 700,000", Beijing, 2007/11/29) reported that the PRC is estimated to have about 700,000 HIV/AIDS cases, with tens of thousands of new infections each year, the government said, but activists warned the problem was far greater. "The result of estimates is that at the end of 2007, China will have about 700,000 HIV/AIDS cases, and 85,000 with AIDS," Health Minister Chen Zhu told a press conference in Beijing. "The upward trend of AIDS disease has slowed, but we should still strengthen our work," Chen said.

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18. SCO Summit

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization ("FIRST MEETING OF AGRICULTURAL OFFICIALS FROM SCO MEMBER STATES TAKES PLACE IN BEIJING", 2007/11/29) reported that under the initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China, the SCO Secretariat hosted the first meeting of senior officials from the ministries of agriculture of the SCO member states. The meeting was held in compliance with the agreement reached by the SCO Heads of Government Council

(Tashkent, 02 November 2007) as well as with the aim of establishing and developing contacts among the SCO member states in the field of agriculture. In the course of the meeting the parties informed each other on the state of agricultural development in their states. In a spirit of practical cooperation, equality and mutual benefit they considered proposals and initiatives concerning mechanisms, priority directions, forms and methods of future cooperation among the SCO member states in the field of agriculture, as well as the prospects for further development and deepening of cooperation in this area.

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