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Contents in this Issue:

- I. NAPSNet
  - 1. DPRK Uranium Enrichment
  - 2. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks
  - 3. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks
  - 4. Sino-DPRK Relations
  - 5. US on Sino-DPRK Relations
  - 6. Inter-Korean Relations
  - 7. Japan-DPRK Relations
  - 8. DPRK Oil Exploration
  - 9. DPRK Military
  - 10. ROK Military Exports
  - 11. US-ROK Trade Relations
  - 12. Japan Politics
  - 13. Japan Climate Change
  - 14. Japanese Whaling
  - 15. US and Cross Strait Relations
  - 16. PRC Tibet Issue

- 17. Sino-Indian Territorial Dispute
- 18. PRC Development
- 19. PRC Internet Control
- 20. PRC Environment
- 21. PRC Civil Society and Poverty Alleviation

- II. PRC Report
  - 22. PRC Environment
  - 23. PRC Energy Supply
  - 24. PRC Middle East Diplomacy

Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Uranium Enrichment

Yonhap (Byun Duk-kun, "FM SAYS N. KOREA'S URANIUM PROGRAM LIKELY BEGAN IN MID-1990S", Seoul, 2010/01/06) reported that the DPRK likely began its uranium-based nuclear weapons program soon after it signed the 1994 Agreed Framework, ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said Wednesday. Yu said little is still known about the program, including how much uranium they have produced or in what stage of development the program is. "There, of course, may have been times when North Korea used its nuclear issue as leverage for short-term economic gains, but there is a need to look at it as a more serious issue because, more fundamentally, the North Korea nuclear issue has to do with the North's regime," he said.

(return to top)

2. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Xinhua News ("WASHINGTON CALLS ON PYONGYANG TO RETURN TO SIX-PARTY TALKS", Washington, 2010/01/05) reported that the US called on Pyongyang to return to the six-party talks, as an important follow-up action of bilateral direct talks. "I don't have a specific reaction to that statement. But we hope that North Korea will agree to resuming the six-party talks," said State Department spokesman Ian Kelly. "We are hopeful that we'll get some actions toward that end and not just words. We are hopeful we can all sit down and reach our desired goal, which is the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a verifiable manner," said Kelly.

(return to top)

3. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press ("CHINA URGES U.S., NORTH KOREA TO RESUME TALKS", 2010/01/05) reported that the PRC is urging the US and DPRK to seize the moment and take positive steps so that six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear program can resume quickly. At a news conference Tuesday, Zhang said the most important thing now is for the key parties to "meet each other halfway so that ... the six-party talks will start as soon as possible."

(return to top)

4. Sino-DPRK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("SIGNS POINT TO KIM JONG-IL TRIP TO CHINA", 2010/01/05) reported that effective midnight, special security is being imposed in Dandong, on the PRC border with the DPRK, Free North Korea Radio reported. The security upgrade is seen as heralding a long-expected visit to the PRC by DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. Citing sources, Japan's Asahi Shimbun newspaper on Thursday said back-to-back visits to the PRC by key DPRK officials after PRC Premier Wen Jiabao's trip to the DPRK last October "appear related to steps to fine-tune the agenda ahead of Kim's visit." The daily added Kim is highly likely to visit the PRC at the end of this month.

(return to top)

5. US on Sino-DPRK Relations

Yonhap (Hwang Doo-hyong, "U.S. WELCOMES POSSIBLE BEIJING TRIP BY KIM JONG-IL", Washington, 2010/01/05) reported that the United States will welcome any trip to the PRC by DPRK leader Kim Jong-il to help reopen the six-party talks, a senior State Department official said Tuesday. "We have always welcomed interaction with North Korea by our partners in the six-party process, and we welcome that interaction if Kim Jong-il travels to Beijing," the official said. "China has had multiple trips to Pyongyang to make clear to Kim Jong-il what needs to be done now. If Kim Jong-il comes to Beijing and tells Chinese leaders that he is ready to return to the six-party process and move forward, we will welcome that news."

(return to top)

6. Inter-Korean Relations

Xinhua News ("S KOREA NOT TO SEEK INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT FOR SUMMIT'S SAKE: PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE", Seoul, 2010/01/05) reported that the ROK will not seek a summit with the DPRK if it is only to be a one-time event, and denuclearization of the DPRK would lay the basis of normalization of their ties, the presidential office Cheong Wa Dae said. "The basic principle on the summit is that we won't hold a meeting just for meeting's sake," a presidential spokeswoman, Kim Eun-hye said at a briefing. "The inter-Korean relations would ultimately have to be upgraded to the level where the two sides can always meet and discuss issues when necessary, but conditions for the normalization need to improve first while the principle of denuclearization remains firm," she said.

Xinhua News ("BUDGET FOR S KOREA'S UNIFICATION MINISTRY UP 27% THIS YEAR", Seoul, 2010/01/05) reported that the ROK's Ministry of Unification, a government arm in charge of dealing with issues regarding the DPRK, has seen about a 27 percent increase in its annual budget this year, the ministry said. The finalized budget for 2010 zoomed up by 26.9 percent to 154.2 billion won (134 million U.S. dollars), the ministry said. Local media have attributed the rise mainly to new projects designed to lay foundation on unification and increased defector-related program, while a slight decrease in humanitarian assistance is due to a tumble in rice and fertilizer prices.

(return to top)

7. Japan-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("JAPAN TO ALLOW NORTH KOREAN WOMEN'S TEAM VISAS", 2010/01/05) reported that Japan is to allow the DPRK women's soccer team to visit Tokyo for regional championships next month, a government spokesman said, despite sanctions in force against Pyongyang. "Basically we have decided to approve it, because it is for sport," Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano told a news conference. "But we will conduct the appropriate immigration inspections."

(return to top)

8. DPRK Oil Exploration

Aminex PLC ("NORTH KOREA: EAST SEA PERMIT WILL LIKELY MOVE FORWARD", 2010/01/04) reported that an Aminex PLC delegation to Pyongyang, DPRK at the end of November was warmly received and the Company has been assured that the stalled process of exploring the East Sea is likely to be permitted to restart, Aminex reported Monday.

(return to top)

9. DPRK Military

Xinhau News ("DPRK TOP LEADER INSPECTS TANK UNIT ", Pyongyang, 2010/01/05) reported that Kim Jong Il, the top leader of the DPRK, inspected a sub-unit of a tank division of the Korean People's Army (KPA), the official KCNA said. Kim was satisfied that "all tank men have grown to be fighters fully prepared to beat back any formidable enemy at one blow," the report said.

(return to top)

10. ROK Military Exports

Korea Times ("KOREA SETS GOAL OF $1.5 BIL. OF ARMS SALES THIS YEAR", 2010/01/04) reported that t he Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) has set a goal of achieving $1.5 billion in defense exports this year, up 28 percent from last year's 1.17 billion, the largest amount ever. "To this end, pan-government efforts to pioneer worldwide defense markets and come up with related measures will be implemented,'' a DAPA spokesman said. The spokesman said the T-50 Golden Eagle supersonic trainer jet was a key defense good for export next year. Potential consumers for the T-50 include the United States, Iraq, Israel and Poland.

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA EYES STRICTER CONTROL OF DEFENSE EXPORTS: OFFICIALS ", 2010/01/05) reported that the ROK may touch up its provisions on defense production, mainly to prevent its weapons and defense materials from finding their way into enemy states including the DPRK, officials at Seoul's weapons procurement agency said. "With so many companies selling items to so many different states, some products may end up in enemy states or be used to harm world peace," said Kim Suk-soon, head of the DAPA's exports bureau. "We cannot control all products, but plan to work on provisions so that firms dealing with sensitive products can be warned beforehand." Some military truck tires, made in the ROK, had been confirmed to have ended up in the DPRK a few years back, Kim explained.

(return to top)

11. US-ROK Trade Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. EXPERTS SEE NO HOPE FOR FTA WITH KOREA THIS YEAR", 2010/01/05) reported that nine out of 10 US experts on Korean affairs feel it is unlikely that the ROK-US free trade agreement will be ratified by the US Congress this year. The Chosun Ilbo asked 10 American experts about the Korea-U.S. FTA in late December. Most said there is a low chance of the FTA being ratified due to midterm elections in the US in November and the economic crisis. The straw poll shows that the situation has not changed although Seoul has tried to impress on both Congress and industries the importance of the FTA by all diplomatic means at its disposal since the trade pact was signed in 2007.

(return to top)

12. Japan Politics

Reuters ("EXHAUSTED JAPAN FINANCE MINISTER TO QUIT: REPORT", Tokyo, 2010/01/05) reported that Japan 's aged finance minister is to quit due to poor health after weeks of exhausting wrangling over the budget, the Nikkei news agency said, a fresh blow for Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama as he struggles with a frail economy and huge public debt. Hatoyama had said he wanted Hirohisa Fujii to stay on, but if he does go it could put the fiscal restraint championed by the 77-year-old lawmaker at risk and weigh on government bonds, though for now investors are reassured that bond issuance for the fiscal year from April is set.

(return to top)

13. Japan Climate Change

Japan for Sustainability ("THREE GOVERNMENT BODIES RELEASE JOINT REPORT ON JAPAN'S CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACT", 2010/01/05) reported that Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the Japan Meteorological Agency, and the Ministry of the Environment released on October 9, 2009, a comprehensive joint report on climate change in Japan and its impact on the country. The mean temperature in Japan has been rising at a pace of around 1.1 degrees Celsius per 100 years since 1898. Without additional global countermeasures, the temperature is expected to surpass the international average estimates by 0.3 to 0.6 degrees Celsius at the end of the 21st century. The total cost of damages due to global warming is estimated at 17 trillion yen (about US$189 billion at the current exchange rate) annually, based on damages from

floods, landslides, loss of beech forests and sandy shores, high tides in Western Japan and risk of mortality from heat stress.

(return to top)

14. Japanese Whaling

Associated Press (Rohan Sullivan, "BOATS COLLIDE IN ANTI-WHALING CLASH IN ANTARCTICA", Sydney, 2010/01/06) reported that the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society's boat had its bow sheared off and was taking on water Wednesday after it collided with a Japanese whaling ship in Antarctica , the group said. The boat's six crew members were safely rescued. The group accused the Japanese ship of deliberately ramming the Ady Gil. Japan's Fisheries Agency, which has no direct involvement in whaling but oversees all the country's fishing operations, said it was still checking details about the clash.

(return to top)

15. US and Cross Strait Relations

Xinhua News ("US ARMS SALE TO TAIWAN FUMES BEIJING", 2010/01/05) reported that the PRC has raised solemn representations to the US government and urged it to cancel and cease arms sales to Taiwan, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said Tuesday. Jiang made the remarks at a regular news briefing in response to a question on PRC-US relations in 2010. The PRC firmly opposed arms sales to Taiwan by the US and urged the US to cancel planned arms sales to avoid undermining PRC-US cooperation, Jiang said.

(return to top)

16. PRC Tibet Issue

Agence France-Presse ("US FILM FESTIVAL BOYCOTT OVER TIBET: STATE MEDIA", Beijing, 2010/01/06) reported that two PRC movies have been pulled out of the Palm Springs International Film Festival in the United States in protest at the inclusion of a film about Tibet, the Beijing Times reported Wednesday. The makers of the films were upset over the inclusion of "The Sun Behind the Clouds: Tibet's Struggle for Freedom," it said.

(return to top)

17. Sino-Indian Territorial Dispute

Central Chronicle ("BORDER ROW NO OBSTACLE IN INDIA, CHINA TIES", 2010/01/04) reported that the territorial dispute between the PRC and India was an "issue left over by history" and there was strong consensus between New Delhi and Beijing that it should not be an obstacle in improving bilateral relations, a senior PRC diplomat said. Asked if demarcating the Line of Actual Control was one of the solutions to deal with the dispute, Consulate General of China Wang Dong Hua told reporters, "territorial dispute should not prevent us from working together in terms of strengthening economic relations." He disagreed with the assessment that political tensions marked Indo-China

relations in 2009, saying the ties had instead improved steadily.

(return to top)

18. PRC Development

Bloomberg News ("CHINA TO 'ACTIVELY' JOIN GLOBAL RACE FOR RESOURCES", 2010/01/05) reported that the PRC, the world's second-biggest energy consumer, said it will "actively" participate in the global competition for oil, natural gas and mineral resources as domestic demand rises. The country will intensify the development of overseas resources to ensure "stable" energy supplies for economic growth, Zhang Xiaoqiang, vice chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission, said in a speech on foreign investment posted on the commission's Web site today.

(return to top)

19. PRC Internet Control

The Los Angeles Times ("BRIEF WEB ACCESS IN CHINA AS GREAT FIREWALL FALLS", 2010/01/05) reported that Web users reported an outage of the PRC's strict Internet controls, known as the Great Firewall, for several hours Monday morning, allowing them brief access to banned Web sites such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Cautious excitement spread on some social-networking platforms as hope flared that Internet freedoms suddenly were being expanded after months of intensifying scrutiny. "It's finally unblocked, reasons unknown," wrote a blogger using the name EFanZh. "I hope nothing gets blocked anymore. I can't take it any longer." By the time many woke up, however, strict restrictions had returned.

(return to top)

20. PRC Environment

BBC News ("CHINA WATER WARNING AS OIL SPILL HITS YELLOW RIVER", 2010/01/05) reported that pollution from a broken oil pipeline in northern PRC has now reached one of the country's major water sources - the Yellow River, state media say. Hundreds of workers had battled to contain the oil upstream, but officials discovered traces in the river itself. Three counties in neighbouring Shaanxi province have warned people not to take supplies from the river or drink river water.

(return to top)

21. PRC Civil Society and Poverty Alleviation

Global Times ("HARSH WINTER DAYS FOR BEIJING'S HOMELESS", 2010/01/04) reported that Beijing's coldest winter in 60 years is making serious trouble for the homeless. Charity activities conducted by volunteers are active this winter, but the actions have caused conflicts with civil affairs, urban management officials and even police. "We have to avoid being spotted by chengguan (urban management officials) when distributing goods to the homeless," said Liu Dejun, a volunteer who managed to collect more than 100 winter coats and quilts donated by friends or netizens. "If

those vagrants get money directly from donors, they would stay in the capital," said Liu a civil affairs official.

(return to top)

II. PRC Report

22. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net ("TIANJIN ECO-INDUSTRIAL PARK UNDER CONSTRUCTION", 2010/01/05) reported that the PRC & Singapore eco-industrial park started to be constructed recently in Tianjin. The area of the park is near 120 hectares and the total investment is 4 billion RMB. The project aims at building a sustainable development community and becoming a model PRC urban development and construction.

(return to top)

23. PRC Energy Supply

Guangzhou Daily ("WOODSIDE AND PETROCHINA LNG DEAL FAILS TO RESIGN", 2010/01/05) reported that Australia Woodside Petroleum Ltd announced yesterday that the liquefied natural gas (LNG) project deal, signed with PetroChina in 2007 with a potential sale of 2-3 million tonnes per year (mtpy), had expired and the two sides were not able to reach an agreement to extend the deal.

(return to top)

24. PRC Middle East Diplomacy

International online ("FIRST OVERSEAS CHINESE FEDERATION ESTABLISHED IN MIDDLE EAST", 2010/01/05) reported that the first overseas Chinese federation was found recently in the United Arab Emirates. With the rapid development of the PRC and the United Arab Emirates relationship in recent years, the cooperation between the two are closer. Now there are over 200,000 Chinese working or living in the United Arab Emirates.

(return to top)

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