



NAPSNet Daily Report 6 October, 2008

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 6 October, 2008", NAPSNet Daily Report, October 06, 2008,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-6-october-2008/>

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I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

BBC News ("N KOREA 'RESTORING NUCLEAR PLANT'", Washington, 2008/10/03) reported that the DPRK has continued to restore its disabled nuclear reactor, the US State Department said Friday. "North Koreans continue to take some steps to reverse disablement in some of the Yongbyon facilities," said the spokesman, Robert Wood. He said the US had very recent information that the DPRK was making moves to resume plutonium processing at Yongbyon. "In essence, the only details I can give you on that is some of the equipment that was moved to storage, we are now seeing put back in place," he said.

Yomiuri Shimbun (Satoshi Ogawa , "U.S. COMPROMISE COULD DELIST DPRK", Washington, 2008/10/04) reported that the United States would provisionally remove the DPRK from its list of terrorism-sponsoring nations under a proposal that emerged during talks between the countries in Pyongyang, U.S. government sources said Thursday. The proposal envisions a two-step verification package that differentiates between nuclear-related activities and facilities declared by the DPRK in June and those yet undeclared, the sources said.

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2. US, PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program

Associated Press (Henry Sanderson, "US NUCLEAR ENVOY HOLDS N. KOREA TALKS IN BEIJING", Beijing, 2008/10/04) reported that US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill held talks with his PRC counterpart Wu Dawei for about an hour in Beijing on Saturday, embassy spokesman Richard Buangan said. Speaking in Seoul on Friday, Hill described his talks in the DPRK as lengthy. "We had a lot of catching up to do and needless to say, there have been a lot of problems in the six-party process. So indeed, we did quite a substantial review of the activities in the last couple of months," Hill said.

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3. DPRK Leadership

Associated Press (Jean H. Lee, "REPORT: NORTH KOREA LEADER WATCHES SOCCER GAME", Seoul, 2008/10/05) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il watched a university soccer game, a state-run news agency said from Pyongyang on Saturday, reporting on the leader's first public appearance in nearly two months. Kim and other political leaders watched the game held to mark the 62nd anniversary of the founding of the university named after his late father, Kim Il Sung, the Korean Central News Agency report said. The university's 62nd anniversary was Oct. 1 but the report did not say when or where the game was held.

Donga Ilbo ("DOUBTS ARISE OVER N. KOREAN LEADER'S APPEARANCE", Seoul, 2008/10/06) reported that the validity of reports of Kim Jong-il's attendance at a soccer match remains questionable, as the game was not broadcast on TV and no video footage of Kim was released. Many experts in the ROK said the DPRK's failure to use the occasion to promote Kim's health could indicate how serious his condition is. Others predicted that DPRK media might not have closely followed Kim's visit since it was spontaneous. A researcher at a state-sponsored institution in Seoul said, "Kim might not have attended the game at all. Experts are waiting to see what kind of video footage or photos North Korea will provide to prove that Kim is healthy."

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4. DPRK Military Procurements

Yonhap (Shin Hae-in, "PYONGYANG BOUGHT \$65 MILLION IN WEAPONS UNDER SEOUL'S PREVIOUS GOV'T: REPORT", Seoul, 2008/10/06) reported that the DPRK has purchased US\$65 million worth of weapons from overseas suppliers over the past five years, a government report to a ruling party lawmaker showed Monday. Between 2003 and early-2008, Pyongyang spent an average of \$13 million each year in buying the latest arms from countries including the PRC, Russia, Germany and the Slovak Republic. The PRC has been providing DPRK with such items as used armored vehicles and military uniforms, the report showed. "The government believes North Korea has reinforced its armed forces by a notable extent during this period," said Rep. Kwon Young-se of the ruling Grand National Party.

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5. DPRK Arms Sales

Associated Press ("ISRAEL ACCUSES N. KOREA OF SELLING ARMS IN MIDEAST", Vienna, 2008/10/05) reported that Israel accused the DPRK on Saturday of covertly supplying at least half a dozen Middle East countries with nuclear technology or conventional arms. The allegation was made at an International Atomic Energy Agency meeting in Vienna. "The Middle East remains on the receiving end of the DPRK's reckless activities," Israeli delegate David Danieli said at the meeting.

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6. US Perceptions of DPRK

Korea Herald ("N. KOREA FIFTH GREATEST DANGER TO U.S.: PEW SURVEY", 2008/10/06) reported that only six percent of the 2,982 Americans surveyed by the Pew Research Center in early September said the DPRK represented the greatest danger to the U.S., a sharp decline from last year's 17 percent, according to the center's Web site on Sunday. The DPRK represented the fifth-greatest danger to the U.S., according to respondents, following Iran (21 percent), the PRC (16 percent), Russia (14 percent) and Iraq (13 percent). In a Pew survey conducted in February last year, Americans considered the DPRK the third-greatest threat.

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7. DPRK Defectors

Korea Times ("DEFECTOR-TURNED-PIANIST TO HOLD RECITAL AT STATE DEPT.", 2008/10/06) reported that a DPRK defector-turned-pianist will hold a recital at the U.S. State Department Monday as part of U.S. efforts to help promote freedom for North Koreans, Yohap News reported quoting the department. "Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula J. Dobriansky and Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor David J. Kramer will host a reception/recital for North Korean dissident and acclaimed pianist Kim Choel-woong Monday, October 6, at 12:15 p.m. in the Benjamin Franklin Room of the U.S. Department of State," the State Department said in a statement. "The event will underscore President George W. Bush's message of U.S. solidarity with the people of North Korea, and will highlight Mr. Kim's courageous pursuit of artistic and cultural freedom."

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8. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Korea Times ("GAESONG VISTORS TOP 100,000", Seoul, 2008/10/05) reported that the cumulative number of tourists that have visited the Gaeseong Industrial Complex in the DPRK is forecast to surpass the 100,000 mark this month. The tourism business at Gaeseong reportedly did not suffer significant downturns even after the shooting death last July of an ROK tourist at Mount Geumgang resort.

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9. Alleged DPRK Counterfeiting

Korea Times ("FAKE US DOLLARS TRADED AT MOUNTAIN RESORT IN NK", Seoul, 2008/10/05) reported that fake U.S. bills were traded at Mt. Kumgang resort, Rep. Lee Jeong-hyun of the ruling Grand National Party (GNP) said Sunday. A total of 62 counterfeit U.S. notes, including 61 \$100 bills, were discovered at the Mount Geumgang resort before 2007, Lee said. The lawmaker cited information obtained from Seoul's Unification Ministry and Hyundai Asan Corp., the resort's operator. The origin of the counterfeit notes is uncertain, but both Hyundai Asan and the ministry believe the bogus dollars were circulated by ROK tourists, the lawmaker said.

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10. ROK Military

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "S. KOREAN ARMY TO DEPLOY 2,000 WHEELED ARMORED VEHICLES FROM 2013", Seoul, 2008/10/05) reported that the ROK Army plans to deploy about 2,000 advanced wheeled armored vehicles beginning around 2013 to build rapid-response brigades modeled after U.S. Stryker combat brigades, a military source said Sunday. The plan is a core part of the Army's efforts to transform itself into a slimmer but more mobile, network-centric force with increased firepower under the Defense Reform 2020 initiative with its operational focus shifting from a DPRK invasion to a counteroffensive or other forms of offensive action into the DPRK, the source said.

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11. ROK Historical Disputes

Donga Ilbo ("13 HISTORY COMMISSIONS TO GET W206 BLN NEXT YEAR", Seoul, 2008/10/06) reported that the government will grant next year 206.2 billion won (168.5 million U.S. dollars) to 13 history review commissions. The figures were made public by lawmaker Shin Ji-ho of the ruling Grand National Party Sunday. "We strongly believed that the numerous history commissions would be merged or closed upon the launch of the Lee administration. What's more, they not only secured next year's budget but are also trying to extend their terms," Shin said.

Chosun Ilbo ("GOV'T TO ISSUE NEW 'BIAS-FREE' HISTORY TEXTBOOKS", Seoul, 2008/10/06) reported that the ROK Ministry of Education, Science and Technology will distribute materials for school teachers by next month to give a more balanced account of the ROK's recent history than the standard textbooks provide. This ministry says the reference material criticizes the current history textbooks for leftwing bias. The material is written based on work by a committee aiming is to give students "an ideal view of history," a ministry official said Sunday. "It will be distributed until November next year, and it is up to school principals to decide whether to use it or not."

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12. ROK, Japan, PRC Economic Cooperation

Joongang Ilbo (Seo Ji-eun , "KOREA, JAPAN AND CHINA TO HURRY IN \$80 BILLION FUND", Seoul, 2008/10/06) reported that the ROK, the PRC, Japan and 10 other Asian countries are set to expedite a previously established plan to form and administer an \$80 billion fund for use in any Asian financial emergency, the ROK Finance Ministry said Saturday. "As the global financial market turmoil stemming from the collapse of Lehman Brothers and market unrest in the United States have the potential to cause an economic slowdown, cooperation among the three countries is more necessary than at any other time in the past," said Deputy Finance Minister Shin Je-yoon in a press briefing. The deputy finance ministers from the three nations will meet this month at the annual meeting of the World Bank/International Monetary Fund to discuss detailed plans for the fund and measures to cooperatively boost the economy.

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13. Japanese Military Procurements

Yomiuri Shimbun ("NEW MINISTRY DIVISION TO HANDLE DEFENSE PROCUREMENT", Tokyo, 2008/10/06) reported that the Japanese Defense Ministry will establish a single division to oversee equipment procurement at all the ministry's bureaus and by the Self-Defense Forces in fiscal 2010, according to a reform blueprint for the ministry. Currently, the ministry bureaus and SDF staff offices have their own divisions responsible for equipment procurement. This sectionalism has sparked criticism that the system is inefficient. July's report by the Defense Ministry Reform Council said equipment could be most efficiently procured if these individual divisions were eliminated and a new entity created in their place.

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14. Japanese Politics

Agence France-Press (Shingo Ito, "STRUGGLING JAPAN PM SAYS NO SNAP ELECTIONS NOW", Tokyo, 2008/10/06) reported that Japan's new Prime Minister Taro Aso on Monday brushed aside talk of an immediate election. "Our priority is to let the supplementary budget pass. Therefore, I don't have dissolution (of parliament) in mind at this stage," Aso said. "I presume that what people are most concerned about right now are the prospects for the economy," he said.

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15. US Arms Sales for Taiwan

Associated Press (Debby Wu, "TAIWAN WELCOMES \$6.5 BILLION US ARMS PACKAGE", Taipei, 2008/10/04) reported that Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou on Saturday welcomed a U.S. decision to sell the island up to \$6.5 billion in advanced weaponry. The U.S. government announced the package, which includes Apache helicopters and Patriot III missiles, in a notification to Congress on Friday. PRC Assistant Foreign Minister He Yafei summoned U.S. diplomatic representatives to make a strong protest, according to a statement on the Foreign Ministry's Web site. "The Chinese government and the Chinese people strongly oppose and object to the U.S. government's actions, which harm Chinese interests and Sino-U.S. relations," Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said in the statement.

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16. PRC Food Safety

Agence France-Press (Marianne Barriaux, "CHINA DISPATCHES 5,000 INSPECTORS OVER MILK SCANDAL", Beijing, 2008/10/06) reported that the PRC has ordered more than 5,000 inspectors to be posted at its dairy factories, state media said Monday. The nation's food safety watchdog dispatched the round-the-clock inspectors to dairy factories across the country to make sure produce complied with food safety standards, the People's Daily reported.

Agence France-Press (Gillian Wong, "CHINA DETAINS 6 MORE PEOPLE IN MILK SCANDAL",

Beijing, 2008/10/06) reported that PRC authorities have detained six more people in the contaminated milk scandal, officials said Monday. The suspects were detained in Hohhot in northern PRC's Inner Mongolia region and accused of mixing melamine into raw milk, a city spokeswoman said. The official Xinhua News Agency said the detentions followed an investigation into two major Chinese milk companies based in Inner Mongolia. The move brings the number of people being held in connection with the tainting scandal to 32.

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II. ROK Report

17. ROK Views of DPRK

TongilNews (Han Choong-mok, "LIKELY TO ORGANIZE SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR UNIFICATION", 2008/10/06) reported that Han Choong-mok, co-head of the ROK Progressives Association, said that an anti-Lee Myung-bak Administration tendency is spreading among people who support the unification of the nation, as the government keeps denying the significance of the 6.15 and 10.4 declarations. Han praised the founding of the Citizen's Peace Forum, which was done last week, since they tried to seek ways for activating a campaign for unification. The association is also preparing to found an organization to confront the Lee administration's public peace oppression.

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18. Inter-Korea Relations

DongA Ilbo ("DPRK SHOULD RESUME DIALOGUE BEFORE ASKING FOR IMPLEMENTATION", 2008/10/06) reported that even though the DPRK keeps on insisting on the implementation of the 6.15 joint statement and 10.4 declaration, there is also much they still need to fulfill first. The Lee Myung-bak Administration has been having it rough from the beginning, due to the previous administration's ruinous DPRK policies, including their way of dealing with the nuclear problem. They also made it difficult to maintain inter-Korean economic cooperation. It is totally nonsensical for the DPRK to insist that we implement the 10.4 declaration without responding the ROK's suggestion for dialogue.

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19. DPRK Nuclear Program

Chosun Ilbo ("KIM JONG-IL'S RETURN AND RADICAL CHANGE IN NUCLEAR SITUATION", 2008/10/06) reported that the DPRK government suggested to Christopher Hill, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, that they would should verify nuclear disarmament in the ROK as a compensation of the verification of DPRK nuclear disarmament. They also suggested that they hold military talks with the U.S. to accomplish that. The two Koreas had previously agreed to send nuclear-inspections team to each other in 1991. There is no reason for the ROK deny DPRK's inspection if they accept core verification methods to inspect related facilities that they did not

officially declare yet. The DPRK's other hidden agenda for the DPRK-U.S. military talks could be to strengthen the relationship with the U.S., while staying away from the ROK. The government should devote more on enhancing the alliance with the U.S., while deepening the relationship with the PRC.

Kookmin Ilbo (Choi Kwang-Shik, "DPRK NUKE, SEVENTH SEAL", 2008/10/06) carried an article by a researcher at the Korean Institute of National Security (KINS), who wrote that the DPRK's unexpected nuclear test in 2006 astonished and shocked ROK citizens. However, the DPRK nuke problem started talking about the disablement right after the experiment. Concerning the verification issue, the DPRK keeps on procrastinating while trying to be acknowledged as a de facto nuclear power. The ROK should prepare for the successful six-party talks and the denuclearization of the peninsula from every different dimension. If the DPRK performs additional nuclear test that make the nuclear issue uncontrollable, it will be a disaster for both Koreas. Thus, the ROK should think of ways to preserve the security of the nation by ourselves.

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