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Contents in this Issue:

- I. Napsnet
  - 1. DPRK on Nuclear Talks
  - 2. ROK on Six-Party Talks
  - 3. DPRK Nuclear Program
  - 4. Sino-DPRK Relations
  - 5. ROK on Sino-DPRK Relations
  - 6. DPRK Military
  - 7. DPRK Biological Weapons
  - 8. DPRK Economy
  - 9. ROK Aid to the DPRK
  - 10. Japan Self Defense Forces
  - 11. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations
  - 12. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission
  - 13. Japan Politics
  - 14. Japan Economy
  - 15. Sino-Indian Relations
  - 16. PRC Tibet Issue

- 17. Cross Strait Relations
- 18. PRC Energy Supply

Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK on Nuclear Talks

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA CONSIDERS RETURN TO NUCLEAR TALKS", Pyongyang, 2009/11/06) reported that DPRK leader K im Jong Il is offering to return to the six-party talks, Xinhua News Agency reported Tuesday. Kim told PRC Premier Wen Jiabao on Monday that the DPRK "is willing to attend multilateral talks, including the six-party talks, depending on the progress in its talks with the United States." US State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said Washington was aware of the reports but said the United States had not gotten details of the meeting from the Chinese. "We've talked to our Chinese partners in the six-party talks and we're conducting close coordination with China and the other partners in the talks," Kelly said. "We, of course, encourage any kind of dialogue that would help us lead to our ultimate goal that's shared by all the partners in the six-party talks, which is the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula ."

(return to top)

2. ROK on Six-Party Talks

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "S. KOREA GUARDED ABOUT N. KOREA'S INTENTION ON NUCLEAR TALKS", Seoul, 2009/11/06) reported that ROK nuclear envoy Wi Sung-lac said Tuesday it is too early to judge the DPRK's real intentions in expressing its willingness to rejoin nuclear negotiations. Wi said Seoul needs to be debriefed by Beijing on the details of PRC Premier Wen Jiabao's meeting with Kim Jong-il and see how the DPRK behaves in the coming days.

(return to top)

3. DPRK Nuclear Program

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("DPRK SOUGHT N-TEST GEAR IN JAPAN", 2009/10/06) reported that a trading firm president who was convicted of violating the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law for attempting to export large tanker trucks and other items to the DPRK received an e-mail from overseas asking him to send to the DPRK in late April reagents used to examine effects of radiation on the human body, The Yomiuri Shimbun has learned. According to sources at the Hyogo prefectural police and other police sources, the sender of the e-mail in question is believed to be a trader in the DPRK.

Yonhap ("NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR FACILITIES NEARLY RESTORED", Seoul, 2009/10/06) reported that the DPRK is in the final stage of restoring its nuclear facilities, an unidentified ROK official said Tuesday. The official said that authorities in Seoul and Washington reached the conclusion after scrutinizing atomic facilities in the DPRK.

(return to top)

4. Sino-DPRK Relations

Reuters (Chris Buckley, "CHINA VOWS TO STAND BY ISOLATED NORTH KOREA", Beijing, 2009/10/05) reported that PRC pledged to strengthen bonds with isolated DPRK, nudging it to improve its economy, during a visit intended to bolster bilateral relations. Analysts said Wen's visit was unlikely to yield more than opaque promises from Pyongyang on the nuclear dispute. "I think the chances of real progress are small," said Zhang Liangui, an expert on DPRK at the Central Party School, an influential state institute in Beijing. "Through visits like this, DPRK is mostly trying to create the impression that other countries respect and heed it, that it's a world power. Of course, that's not true, but the impression helps its leader bolster his authority."

(return to top)

5. ROK on Sino-DPRK Relations

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "S. KOREA RAISES CONCERN OVER CHINA-N. KOREA ECONOMIC DEALS ", Seoul, 2009/10/06) reported that the ROK expressed concern Tuesday that a set of economic deals reached between the DPRK and the PRC during PRC Premier Wen Jiabao's trip to Pyongyang may affect the implementation of U.N. sanctions. "We need to check more details to see whether various economic aid plans that Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao promised during his visit to North Korea violate U.N. Security Council Resolution 1874," Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said. "The government views North Korea's denuclearization as a basis for establishing South and North Korean relations of coexistence and co-prosperity," Yu said. "North Korea's position that it will discuss the nuclear issue only with the U.S. and just economic cooperation with South Korea is not right."

(return to top)

6. DPRK Military

Yonhap ("N.K. GENERAL STAFF RUNS OWN SPECIAL FORCES", Seoul, 2009/10/05) reported that one third of the DPRK's 180,000-strong special forces operate under the direct command of the general staff or as snipers, and can readily be deployed to help achieve major strategic aims, ROK Rep. Hong Joon-pyo said Monday. Citing a report by the Ministry of National Defense, Hong said the Korean People's Army (KPA) General Staff operates its own brigade and battalion of special forces. "About 60,000 troops operate as strategic units" that can be dispatched freely to assist major military operations, Hong said.

(return to top)

7. DPRK Biological Weapons

Agence France-Presse ("N. KOREA SAID TO HAVE 13 TYPES OF BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS", Seoul, 2009/10/05) reported that the DPRK is thought to have 13 types of viruses and germs which can be used in biological weapons, as well as up to 5,000 tons of chemical weapons, the ROK defence ministry said Monday. The list of diseases that could be caused by the biological weapons includes cholera, yellow fever, smallpox, eruptive typhus, typhoid fever and dysentery, it said. The ministry estimated its neighbor's stockpile of chemical weapons at between 2,500 to 5,000 tons.

(return to top)

8. DPRK Economy

Yonhap (Kim Hyun, "FRAYED RELATIONS HALTING MINERAL DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH KOREA", Seoul, 2009/10/05) reported that DPRK owns vast mineral deposits worth trillions of dollars, but a development project of the resources with the ROK is now in limbo due to frayed political relations, opposition lawmakers said Monday, citing government reports. DPRK's mineral reserves are believed to be among the largest in the world, worth 6,984 trillion won (US$5.94 trillion), based on 2008 prices, according to the Unification Ministry reports submitted to Democratic Party lawmakers.

(return to top)

9. ROK Aid to the DPRK

Xinhua News ("S KOREA'S HUMANITARIAN MEDICAL AID TO DPRK SHARPLY DOWN IN H1 ", 2009/10/05) reported that the ROK's humanitarian medical aid to the DPRK was cut back in the first half of this year amid sore inter-Korean relations, a Seoul lawmaker said. According to Rep. Song Young-kil of the main opposition Democratic Party (DP), who cited data by the Ministry of Unification and the Korea National Red Cross, total medical support to the DPRK stood at 7.09 million U.S. dollars during the first six months of 2009, sharply down from 57.89 million U.S. dollars in 2008.

(return to top)

10. Japan Self Defense Forces

Kyodo ("DPJ WARY OF SDF MISSIONS OVERSEAS", 2009/10/05) reported that nearly three-quarters of Democratic Party of Japan lawmakers in the Lower House think overseas operations by the Self-Defense Forces should be limited to peacekeeping or humanitarian relief. A survey found that 73.3 percent of the DPJ lawmakers think Japan has to be cautious about dispatching the SDF, while 12.4 percent support sending them to provide assistance to multinational forces, including logistic support. Only 1.0 percent of the DPJ members oppose any overseas dispatch.

(return to top)

11. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

Xinhua ("JAPAN SENDS REPLACEMENT OF SURVEILLANCE AIRCRAFT ON ANTIPIRACY MISSION OFF SOMALIA ", Tokyo, 2009/10/05) reported that Japan sent off two Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) P-3C aircraft Monday on an antipiracy mission off Somalia to replace the two dispatched on May 28. The two maritime surveillance planes of the 5th Air Patrol Squadron took off Monday morning from the Naha base in Okinawa Prefecture and will arrive at Djibouti international airport where they are to be deployed in three or four days. The surveillance aircraft are expected to begin their patrol mission sometime in mid-October.

Journal of Commerce (Hisane Masaki, "JAPAN'S ANTI-PIRACY MISSION PROTECTED 150 SHIPS", 2009/10/05) reported that Japanese naval vessels escorted a total of 150 commercial ships in the waters of the Gulf of Aden off Somalia between July 28 and September 30 to protect them against pirate attacks under a law that took effect in late July, the Japanese government said. The Anti-Piracy Law, which was enacted in Japan's parliament in June and took effect on July 24, allows the SDF to escort foreign commercial ships and fire at pirate boats if they ignore warning signals and approach merchant ships.

(return to top)

12. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

Kyodo ("OKADA ADMITS POSSIBLE 'NEGATIVE' IMPACT OF ENDING REFUELING MISSION", Tokyo, 2009/10/05) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada admitted during a meeting with British business secretary Peter Mandelson on Monday that ending Japan's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean could have a negative impact on countries involved in U.S.-led antiterrorism operations in and around Afghanistan, Mandelson said. "He acknowledged that if Japan disengaged from the current refueling facility that it offers, then this might send a negative signal to other countries which are part of the coalition effort," Mandelson told reporters after talks with Okada in Tokyo.

Associated Press ("BRITAIN URGES JAPAN TO CONTINUE REFUELING ACTIVITIES IN INDIAN OCEAN", Tokyo, 2009/10/05) reported that Britain urged Japan on Monday to continue its refueling mission in the Indian Ocean in support of U.S.-led coalition forces, saying that a defeat in the fight against extremists in Afghanistan would be dangerous to all. British business secretary Peter Mandelson told reporters after meeting with Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama in Tokyo, "if we were to lose this fight, the strong view of the British government is that Islamic and other extremist groups could become intoxicated by their success, which would pose a huge danger to all of us."

(return to top)

13. Japan Politics

Agence France-Presse ("HATOYAMA SUPPORT AT MORE THAN 70 PERCENT: POLL", Tokyo, 2009/10/05) reported that the approval rating for Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's cabinet stands at 71 percent nearly three weeks after his government took power, a newspaper poll showed Monday. But the survey by the best-selling Yomiuri daily also showed that a political donations

scandal could present problems for the new premier, with voters not satisfied by Hatoyama's explanation of what happened. Hatoyama admitted in June to keeping sloppy accounts for his fund-raising body, which reported a donors' list including the names of dead people and those who had denied giving money.

Yomiuri Shimbun ("HATOYAMA HIT OVER FUND ACCOUNTABILITY / COMES UNDER FIRE FROM DPJ PARTY MEMBERS, 'DONORS' AS INVESTIGATION STEPS UP", 2009/10/05) reported that as prosecutors start questioning people in connection with the scandal over Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's political fund-management organization, unease is growing among the people who surround the nation's new top politician, a mere two weeks after he assumed office. Hatoyama admitted during a July press conference that the organization, Yuai Seikei Konwa-kai, had made false statements in its fund reports, by listing individual donations from people who had not actually donated money. Some people are still critical of the prime minister, saying he failed to fulfill his accountability.

(return to top)

14. Japan Economy

Reuters (Sumio Ito, Hideyuki Sano, "JAPAN PM SAYS ECONOMY HAS NOT YET TURNED AROUND", Tokyo, 2009/10/05) reported that Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama said he does not think the Japanese economy has turned around despite a fall in unemployment, suggesting he may consider measures to support the economy as Japan's jobless rate remains near a record high. More than 60 percent of lawmakers from Hatoyama's Democratic Party anticipate that additional stimulus measures will be required this autumn because domestic economic activity could stall, a Kyodo news survey showed, based on responses from 210 of the DPJ's 308 lower-house lawmakers.

(return to top)

15. Sino-Indian Relations

Economic Times ("INDIA, CHINA STAND-OFF OVER SEPARATE VISAS", 2009/10/05) reported that taking a serious view of the PRC's latest move to issue "separate" visas to Indian passport holders from Jammu and Kashmir, the government has told Beijing in no uncertain terms to put an immediate end to this practice or face a similar discrimination, besides fewer and tougher visas, for its own citizens seeking Indian visas. The ministry of external affairs took up the matter with the PRC embassy here and asked Beijing to stop discriminating against Indian nationals on the basis of their "ethnicity" and "domicile".

(return to top)

16. PRC Tibet Issue

Agence France-Presse ("NEW US TIBET COORDINATOR WILL MEET DALAI LAMA: OFFICIAL", Washington, 2009/10/05) reported that Maria Otero, the US government's new point person on Tibet, will meet the Dalai Lama after he arrives in Washington on Monday, State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said. "Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs, Maria Otero,

who is also the US government's special coordinator for Tibetan issues, will meet with the Dalai Lama upon his arrival to Washington DC this week," Kelly said.

(return to top)

17. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN MUSEUM TO HOLD FIRST JOINT EXHIBITION WITH CHINA", 2009/10/05) reported that Taiwan's National Palace Museum gave a sneak preview of a joint exhibition it will open next week in partnership with its Beijing counterpart, in a sign of improved ties between the two capitals. "Harmony and Integrity: Yongzheng Emperor and his Times" opens on October 7 and features 37 prized cultural artifacts from Beijing's palace museum, located in the Forbidden City. The exchange marks the first of its kind since China's civil war ended in 1949 with Nationalist armies carting off to Taiwan crates of some of the finest imperial treasures housed in the Forbidden City.

(return to top)

18. PRC Energy Supply

The Wall Street Journal ("CHINA'S CNOOC IN TALKS TO ENTER UGANDA'S $5B OIL PROJ-SOURCES", 2009/10/05) reported that PRC state-owned CNOOC Ltd. has become the latest company to enter talks with Uganda over a large Tullow Oil PLC-led project, people familiar with the matter said this week. CNOOC company representatives approached the Ugandan presidency in early September and held talks with officials at the state house, said an official in Uganda President Yoweri Museveni's office. The news follows confirmation by Nigerian government officials that CNOOC had sought to enter Nigerian oil blocks underused by major international oil companies.

(return to top)

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