

NAPSNet Daily Report 7 September, 2010

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 7 September, 2010", NAPSNet Daily Report, September 07, 2010,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-7-september-2010/>

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1. DPRK Leadership

Washington Post (Chico Harlan, "NORTH KOREA'S PARTY LEADERS GATHER IN PYONGYANG AS SPECULATION ABOUT KIM JONG IL'S SUCCESSOR INTENSIFIES", Seoul, 2010/09/06) reported that party officials are arriving in Pyongyang, the DPRK's state-run media said Monday, signaling an imminent meeting that outsiders describe as a critical step in leader Kim Jong Il's hereditary power transfer. The DPRK's newspaper, the Rodung Sinmun, said that the rare meeting of Workers' Party delegates would "mark a meaningful chapter in the history of our party." Photos from Pyongyang showed citizens staging a practice celebration. Troops have gathered in the city, ready for a military parade, according to the ROK government. Japan's Kyodo news agency reported that children have been marching the streets, singing "Footsteps," which hails Kim Jong Il's youngest son.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/05/AR2010090504023.html>

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2. ROK Aid to the DPRK

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA REQUESTS RICE, CEMENT, EQUIPMENT FROM S. KOREA", 2010/09/07) reported that the DPRK has requested rice, cement and heavy machinery from the ROK to help recover from its recent floods, government officials here said Tuesday, amid looming signs that the divided states are seeking to alleviate their tension. In response to the Aug. 31 message that contained an offer of 10 billion won (US\$8.5 million), the DPRK's Red Cross said it hopes to receive rice, cement and excavators rather than the initially proposed emergency food, basic necessities and medical aid, Chun Hae-sung, spokesman for the Unification Ministry, told reporters. A senior official, speaking to reporters on the condition of anonymity, said the ROK government expects to make a decision on the DPRK's request "in two to three days."

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2010/09/07/84/0401000000AEN20100907006800315F.HTML>

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3. Inter-Korea Relations

Christian Science Monitor ("NORTH KOREA RELEASES PRISONERS IN EXCHANGE FOR HUMANITARIAN AID", 2010/09/07) reported that the ROK on Tuesday recovered a fishing boat and its seven-man crew from the DPRK after agreeing to an exchange that analysts see as auguring well for inter-Korean reconciliation - though not for an end to the DPRK's nuclear program. The DPRK released the boat on "humanitarian grounds" after seizing it on Aug. 8 within what it claimed was its "exclusive economic zone". The DPRK, in response to a ROK offer to send food for people already suffering from terrible shortages, evidently asked for considerably more before agreeing to free the vessel. The sequence of the request for aid and the release of the boat added up to what Choi Jin-wook, DPRK analyst at the Korean Institute of National Unification, called "a kind of peace offensive" reflecting the strong influence of the PRC. Mr. Choi sees the DPRK's move toward reconciliation as a dividend of the recent visit of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il to northeastern PRC.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2010/0907/North-Korea-releases-prisoners-in-exchange-for-humanitarian-aid>

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4. Cross-Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN MISSILE DEFENCE SHIELD READY NEXT YEAR: REPORT", 2010/09/06) reported that Taiwan expects a much-anticipated missile defence shield to be ready next year after buying advanced weapons at a cost of about 300 billion Taiwan dollars (9.4 billion US), local media reported. Six batteries of Patriot III missiles forming the backbone of the system will account for roughly half the costs associated with the project, the China Times newspaper said. While the Patriot III and radars are US-made, the system will also include locally produced tactical ballistic missiles evolved from existing missiles known as "Tienkung", or Sky Bow, the paper said.

<http://news.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/Asia/Story/A1Story20100906-235807.html>

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5. Japanese Nuclear Technology Exports

Denki Shimbun ("SECURITY RELATED TECHNOLOGY TO PROMOTE NUCLEAR REACTOR EXPORTS", Tokyo, 2010/09/07) reported that Japan will propose bundling non-proliferation/security technology and human resource development as a set with nuclear power plants in order to win sales in the international competition for nuclear exports. Robust non-proliferation/security measures would have the foreign relations merit of easing tensions with surrounding countries for emerging nuclear countries. As there have been requests for human resource development, etc. in these fields from abroad, Japan believes that such a set proposal could be used to interest emerging countries.

http://www.shimbun.denki.or.jp/en/news/20100907_01.html

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