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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Time (Na Jeong-ju, "TALKS ON DISABLING NK NUKE PROGRAM PICK UP SPEED", Seoul, 2008/06/09) reported that Sung Kim, head of the office of Korean affairs at the U.S. State Department, will arrive in Pyongyang Tuesday via Seoul. He will meet with DPRK experts to discuss how to deal with unused fuel rods from the Yongbyon reactor and other measures to move forward the six-party talks on Pyongyang's nuclear programs, officials in Seoul said. "Last year, Seoul expressed hope that it will be able to buy used fuel rods from Pyongyang and use them at the nuclear power plants in the South for industrial purposes,'' an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said. "We expect the U.S. and the North to discuss the proposal during their meeting in Pyongyang this week.''

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2. UNDP in DPRK

New York Times (Colum Lynch, "REPORT ON U.N. PROGRAM ASSAILS WHISTLE-BLOWER", New York, 2008/06/08) reported that a panel appointed by the UNDP to probe alleged diversion of funds in the DPRK issued a report last week that attacked the credibility of Artjon "Tony" Shkurtaj, an Albanian national who served as the UNDP's operations manager in Pyongyang, saying he provided U.S. officials with documents that were exaggerated, misleading or false. But Mark D. Wallace, the U.S. diplomat briefed by Shkurtaj, stated, "The report reveals that UNDP made significant and previously undisclosed direct payments to Kim Jong Il's regime and numerous sensitive 'dual use' items that remain in North Korea in violation of U.S. law. Responsible governments should ensure that UNDP returns to helping the world's needy rather than inappropriate payments and unlawful technology transfers."

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3. PRC Food Exports to DPRK

Yonhap (Shim Sun-ah, "CHINA SOFTENS FOOD EXPORT BAN TO HELP ALLEVIATE N.K. SHORTAGE: AID GROUP", Beijing, 2008/06/09) reported that the PRC has recently increased its yearly quota for grain exports to the DPRK to 150,000 tons to help ease the food shortage aggravated by severe flooding last year, the Buddhist relief group Good Friends said Monday. The PRC has restricted food exports due to rising domestic demand and soaring global grain prices since the start of this year. It initially allowed only 50,000 tons of corn to be exported to the DPRK.

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4. ROK Abductees in DPRK

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "FISHERMAN ESCAPES FROM N. KOREA 33 YEARS AFTER ABDUCTION", Seoul, 2008/06/09) reported that Yoon Jong-su, a 66-year-old fisherman, escaped from the DPRK 33 years after being kidnapped and is currently under the protection of the ROK consulate in Shenyang, PRC the head of an abductee-related association said Monday. Choi Sung-yong, the leader of the ROK association of abductee family members, stated, "Yoon fled from the North early last month and entered the consulate on May 20.'' Yoon had worked in a farming machine workplace since 1976 and married Shin Su-hee, a Korean-Japanese woman there, Choi said.

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5. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "UNIFICATION MINISTER MAY ATTEND JUNE 15 EVENT", Seoul, 2008/06/09) reported that ROK Unification Minister Kim Ha-jung has expressed his willingness to participate in an event to mark the eighth anniversary of the June 15 Joint Declaration, the ministry said Monday. "The minister said he intends to attend the ceremony but hasn't decided yet whether or not to deliver a congratulatory speech during the event,'' ministry spokesman Kim Ho-nyeon told reporters. The Kim Dae-jung Peace Center will host the ceremony, with renowned scholars including Bruce Cumings of the Department of History at the University of Chicago invited.

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6. US Military in ROK

Joongang Ilbo ("SEOUL'S SHARE OF U.S. BASE MOVE COST BALLOONING", Seoul, 2008/06/09) reported that the ROK's share of a multibillion-dollar project to relocate U.S. bases in the country is likely to swell to nearly 9 trillion won ($8.9 billion), the Defense Ministry said Sunday. After finishing a two-month audit of its task force on the U.S. base relocation project, the ministry announced that the ROK's costs for the project will reach 8.95 trillion won, an increase from the initial estimate of 7.9 trillion won last year. The increase reflected soaring oil and material prices, according to the ministry.

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7. ROK Military Procurements

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "SEOUL OFFICIALS VISIT US FOR PROCUREMENT TALKS", Seoul, 2008/06/09) reported that a group of eight ROK defense procurement officials are attending an annual meeting with their U.S. counterparts on defense technological and industrial cooperation in Washington, D.C., the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) said Monday. The two sides will discuss ways to help facilitate Seoul's purchase of U.S. weapons systems in line with a U.S. plan to upgrade Seoul's foreign military sales (FMS) status, a DAPA spokesman said. "While meeting with key U.S. procurement officials, the commissioner will ask for their support in securing swift decisions on pending FMS deals,'' he said.

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8. US-ROK Trade Relations

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "SKOREA LAWMAKERS TO US FOR BEEF TALKS", Seoul, 2008/06/09) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak dispatched officials to Washington on Monday to try to calm weeks of public uproar over fears of mad cow disease. "It will not be easy, but make your best efforts to achieve what the people want," Lee told a delegation from the Agriculture Ministry and Foreign Ministry before they left for the United States. The president also said imports of beef from cattle older than 30 months should be prevented, according to presidential spokesman Lee Dong-kwan.

Korea Herald ("BY PHONE, BUSH REASSURES ON BEEF", Seoul, 2008/06/09) reported that US President George W. Bush pledged on Saturday to come up with measures to ensure that Koreans will not be eating beef from older U.S. cattle, the Blue House said over the weekend. The pledge came during a 20-minute phone conversation between Bush and President Lee Myung-bak beginning at 8:10 p.m. on Saturday. “The conversation between the two presidents was not the norm considering the diplomatic difficulties the nation faces,” said Cho Yoon-sun, the GNP spokeswoman. “But they agreed to move forward to relieve our people’s fear and nervousness.”

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9. ROK Politics

Korea Times (Kim Yon-se, "LEE PLANS CABINET RESHUFFLE", Seoul, 2008/06/09) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak admitted Monday his failure in selecting some aides and Cabinet ministers. "We neglected the people's expectations for ethical standards in selecting ministers and secretaries,'' Lee said in a luncheon meeting with Catholic leaders at Cheong Wa Dae. He said, "I hope the new National Assembly will open its inaugural session as early as possible. If we conduct a Cabinet reshuffle, parliamentary hearings on minister-nominees should follow right away.''

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10. ROK-PRC Trade Relations

Donga Ilbo ("KOREA COULD SUFFER CHRONIC TRADE DEFICIT WITH CHINA", Seoul, 2008/06/07 20:00:00 GMT+0) reported that according to the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP) the Korea Institute for Industrial Economics and Trade (KIET), and the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency, the ROK could see a trade deficit with the PRC in three or four years, a development which could last long term. According to the Korea International Trade Association, the ROK's trade deficit from January to April this year was 6.3 billion U.S. dollars, the first since 1997.

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11. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters (Ralph Jennings, "CHINA AND TAIWAN SET FOR LANDMARK TALKS ON FLIGHTS", Taipei, 2008/06/08) reported that Negotiators from the PRC and Taiwan meet this week for the first time in nine years. Taiwan's top China negotiator, P.K. Chiang, will lead a team to Beijing from June 11-14 to negotiate with his counterpart, Chen Yunlin. "It's taken them so many years to meet, so I think talks between the two sides won't fail," said Chao Chien-min, a political science professor at National Cheng Chi University in Taiwan. "China doesn't want to see them fail.

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12. Sino-Russian Relations

Sydney Morning Herald (John Garnaut, "RUSSIA ON EDGE AS CHINA GROWS", 2008/06/09) reported that Russia is erecting legal and illicit barriers to PRC trade in a climate of rising paranoia summed up in the *Pravda* headline: "Chinese immigrants to conquer Russia". Russia's anxiety trades partly on an old fear that the PRC wants to take back the resource-rich and under-populated regions of Siberia that Russia annexed from Qing Dynasty China. "The Russians are spooked by the idea you have 110 million people in just three northern Chinese provinces and 6 to 7 million people in the Russian Far East," says Bobo Lo, author of the forthcoming *Axis Of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing And The New Geopolitics* . "They feel no matter how sweet the political relationship, nature abhors a vacuum and therefore as soon as China feels brave or confident enough to move into the Far East, it will."

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13. Sino-Indian Relations

Associated Press (Gavin Rabinowitz, "INDIA, CHINA JOSTLE FOR INFLUENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN", Hambontota, Sri Lanka, 2008/06/07) reported that as India and the PRC gain economic heft, they are moving to expand their control of the Indian Ocean trading routes. The PRC has given massive aid to Indian Ocean nations, signing friendship pacts, building ports in Pakistan and Bangladesh as well as Sri Lanka, and reportedly setting up a listening post on one of Myanmar's islands near the strategic Strait of Malacca. India beat out the PRC for a port project in Myanmar, and is beefing up its military, with the expansion seemingly aimed at the PRC. Washington and, to a lesser extent, Tokyo are encouraging India's role as a counterweight to growing Chinese power.

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14. PRC Earthquake

Associated Press (Cara Anna, "CHINESE TROOPS BLAST DEBRIS TO DRAIN QUAKE LAKE", Qinglan, 2008/06/09) reported that an additional 120 PRC troops were sent Monday to help soldiers with explosives and anti-tank weapons blast rocks and mud slowing the drainage of a still-rising lake that threatened to flood more than 1 million people downstream. A magnitude 5.0 aftershock Sunday sent landslides down surrounding mountains and underscored the threat of flooding. Another aftershock of the same magnitude struck Monday afternoon, shaking the Sichuan provincial capital of Chengdu and the hard-hit city of Mianyang for about 10 seconds.

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II. PRC Report

15. PRC Civil Society and the 512 Earthquake

Xinhua Net (Cuijing, "CHINESE RED CROSS FOUNDATION ESTABLISHES THE FIRST POST-DISASTER AID PROJECTS", 2008/06/06) reported that on June 5, Chinese Red Cross Foundation signed a letter of intent in Sichaun and established the first batch of aid projects, including 39 primary and secondary Fraternity Schools, 119 Fraternity Hospital (stations) and 7 Fraternity Villages. Total budget of these aid projects is 217 million yuan. The Foundation will invite experts from Beijing Architectural Design and Research Institute to participate in architectural design of reconstruction projects.

Sina website, www.sina.com ("NGOS TO TRACK DONATION RELEASE", 2008/06/04) reported that an official of Disaster Relief Department of Ministry of Civil Affairs said that the Ministry of Civil Affairs had now established a relatively strict procedure for disaster relief donation. When foreign donations came into China, they will be registered immediately. Local places should also establish a strict registration procedure, which must be transparent, open, having a clear written record with signature and supervision, till the donation finally going to the hands of the victims. To all NGOs home and abroad as well as the mass donators who want to closely follow the release of the donation, the Ministry of Civil Affairs will provide active support.

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16. PRC Earthquake

Xinhua News Agency (An Bei, Zhang Yi, "TANGJIASHAN QUAKE LAKE MAY THREATEN OIL PIPELINE", 2008/06/06) reported that learned from China National Petroleum Corporation, the dangerous dam-break situation of Tangjiashan quake lake made Lan-Cheng-Yu Oil Pipeline face a threat of break. CNPC has formulated a contingency plan to ensure the quickest dredge once the danger occurred. Lan-Cheng-Yu Oil Pipeline starts from Lanzhou, passing Gansu, Shanxi, Lanzhou and Sihuan, and ends in Chongqing. It is the only product pipeline leading to the southeast areas in China. Its oil transportation capacity is more than 6 million tons per year, supplying 70% product oil of Sichuan and Chongqing areas.

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III. ROK Report

17. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

PRESSian (Kim Jun-Hyung, "INEFFICIENT, NON-SPECIALIST, AND INSINCERE DIPLOMACY OF LEE MYUNG-BAK", 2008/06/09) carried an article by a professor at Handong University, who wrote that the Denuclearization 3000 policy proves that the Bush administration has failed for six years since its inauguration. A pragmatic government should have understood that the DPRK nuclear issue is fundamentally a problem between the DPRK and US. It has failed to read the change in US-DPRK policies. Sung Kim, Director of the Korea Desk at the State Department, said that it is the current US government's goal to make sufficient progress during the term of office so that neither US nor DPRK would be able to change the results of the agreement. The DPRK also plans to conclude the matter before the John McCain administration takes power and the neocons come back. In the midst of this situation, only the ROK government is following the same path as US neocons do.

The Peace Foundation (Kim Hak-lin, "ROK GOVERNMENT'S FOOD AID TO DPRK SHOULD FOLLOW THE TIT FOR TAT STRATEGY AS A MODEL", 2008/06/09) carried an article by a research professor at Dankuk Center for Dispute Resolution, who wrote that in order to solve the dilemma the Lee Myung-bak administration is put into regarding food aid to the DPRK, it needs to follow the lesson suggested by a tit for tat strategy. Perhaps the issue of food aid to the DPRK will become the first meaningful measure to the DPRK for the Lee Myung-bak administration. The Lee Myung-bak administration, being about to give the food, has a strategic advantage over the DPRK on this issue. We hope that the issue of food aid to the DPRK will be re-organized in a long-term viewpoint on the basis of lessons that a tit for tat strategy suggests.

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