NAPSNet Daily Report 9 October, 2008

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 9 October, 2008", NAPSNet Daily Report, October 09, 2008, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-9-october-2008/

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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters (Mark Heinrich, "N.KOREA BARS IAEA FROM ALL OF ATOM COMPLEX: REUTERS", Vienna, 2008/10/09) reported that the DPRK Thursday barred U.N. monitoring throughout its Yongbyon nuclear complex, diplomats said. "The monitors were told that as of today, they are out, no more access permitted to any facilities in Yongbyon. But as of now they are still in their guesthouse on the premises," a senior diplomat close to the International Atomic Energy Agency said. "The monitors were there (at storage sites) but from here on they are out. So the IAEA won't know what the North Koreans are doing any more," said the diplomat. "This (shutdown of IAEA monitoring) was anticipated if things didn't move on the diplomatic front. Now we'll see if things move. Whether the monitors go back depends on someone else negotiating this thing; it's not the IAEA."

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2. US on DPRK Missile Test

Agence France-Presse ("US ADVISES NORTH KOREA AGAINST TEST-FIRING MISSILES ", Washington, 2008/10/07) reported that the US State Department on Wednesday advised the DPRK against test-firing short-range weapons, amid reports, which officials in Washington were unable to confirm, that Pyongyang had launched test missiles into the Yellow Sea. "Just as a general comment with respect to the firing of these kinds of missiles -- these short-range missiles -- we would advise against it," McCormack said. "It's not helpful in any way managing tensions within the region," he said.

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3. ROK on DPRK Missile Test

JoongAng Ilbo (Ser Myo-ja and Kim Min-seok, "MISSILE LAUNCH BY NORTH SEEN AS NEGOTIATION TACTIC", 2008/10/08) reported that Pyongyang's firing of short-range missiles can be interpreted as a signal to Washington that the DPRK has more cards to play. "Clearly, North Korea intends to pressure the United States," said Kim Yong-hyun, a professor of DPRK studies at Dongguk University. Pyongyang also sent a message to Seoul by timing the missile tests with a ROK naval event. By testing the air-to-ship missile, the DPRK made clear its message that its force could meet the ROK's.

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4. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("RICE INSISTS NKOREA MEET VERIFICATION STANDARDS", Washington, 2008/10/08) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice insisted Wednesday that the DPRK meet proper standards for verifying its nuclear disarmament as she pursued efforts to break a deadlock in negotiations. "We are continuing to work on it. This is an issue of whether the verification protocol meets our standards," Rice told reporters. "And so I will get back to you when we have something," Rice said.

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5. US-DPRK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("US PREPARED FOR ANYTHING FROM NORTH KOREA: COMMANDER ", Washington, 2008/10/08) reported that the US military is prepared for any contingency but has seen no unusual DPRK movements, the top US commander in Korea said. "We are prepared for any reaction up North, anything up North, and we have not seen anything out of the normal," said General Walter Sharp, commander of the 28,000 US troops in the ROK. "But I'm confident that, based upon what we see going on in the North, and all the contingencies that we need to be prepared for, we're prepared to react to those, us and the alliance," he said.

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6. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Program

Kyodo News ("SAIKI GETS DETAILS OF U.S.-N. KOREA TALKS FROM U.S. ENVOY KIM ", Tokyo, 2008/10/08) reported that top Japanese nuclear negotiator Akitaka Saiki and U.S. special envoy Sung Kim reaffirmed their continued cooperation in press ahead with trying to resolve the DPRK nuclear and abduction issues, as they met in Tokyo to discuss details of last week's U.S.-DPRK talks, Japanese Foreign Ministry officials said. Kim briefed Saiki on the details of a trip to Pyongyang last week by US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill, including negotiations on a concrete verification regime with Hill's DPRK counterpart Kim Kye Gwan, and updated him on the U.S. government's analysis of the results of the visit, the officials said.

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7. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap News (Byun Duk-kun, "N. KOREA UNLIKELY TO POSSESS NUCLEAR WEAPONS: MILITARY CHIEF", Seoul, 2008/10/08) reported that the DPRK may be working to develop a light-weight nuclear warhead that can be loaded onto a missile, but it is not clear whether the communist nation actually possesses warheads or has actually begun their development, the chairman of the ROK's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said. Gen. Kim Tae-young answered that the DPRK may well have the ability to launch a program to develop nuclear warheads, but reiterated nothing was known for certain. "Because we have seen North Korea engaged in experiments to manufacture nuclear devices and conduct high explosive tests, we believe they have the ability to initiate such a program," Kim said.

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8. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Herald (Jin Dae-woong , "GROUPS ASKED TO STOP ANTI-N.K. PROPAGANDA", 2008/10/08) reported that the Unification Ministry has asked ROK civic groups not to disseminate anti-DPRK propaganda pamphlets in the DPRK in a bid to allay the DPRK's complaints, the ministry's spokesman said. "Working-level officials of our ministry Tuesday asked for cooperation of the related organizations on the matter, and the organizations include more than one group which plan to spread such pamphlets in several days," Unification Ministry spokesperson Kim Ho-nyeon said in a daily press briefing.

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9. DPRK on US-ROK Security Alliance

Xinhua ("DPRK NEWSPAPER BLASTS U.S.- S KOREA DEFENSE BILL", Pyongyang, 2008/10/08) reported that the official Rodong Sinmun daily accused on Wednesday a U.S. bill of strengthening defence cooperation with ROK, saying it escalated military tensions on the Korean Peninsula. The "bill on closer U.S.-South Korea defense cooperation," passed by the Congress in September, "betrays a sinister intention to round off the preparations for the second Korean war and reinforces the military alliance between the U.S. and South Korea," the Rodong Sinmun said.

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10. US-ROK Security Alliance

Korea Herald (Kim Ji-hyun, "COSTS SEEN RISING FOR U.S. BASE RELOCATION", 2008/10/08) reported that the ROK government is expected to face spiraling problems involved with snowballing costs for relocating United States military bases, legislators said yesterday during a parliamentary audit of the Defense Ministry. Seoul was likely to see costs rise to over 13 trillion won ($10 billion) to surpass the originally estimated costs by around 3.5 trillion won, said Rep. Kim Jang-soo of the ruling Grand National Party. Of the total 13.3 trillion won, Seoul would be responsible for covering less than half the costs at about 5.8 trillion won.

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11. UN on DPRK Human Rights

Press Trust of India ("UN LAMBASTS NKOREA OVER FIALURE TO ADDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS", 2008/10/08) reported that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) new report highlights the DPRK's lack of "tangible progress" in addressing serious human rights concerns. In the new report, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said the DPRK has "not recognised the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly on the situation of human rights in the country." Ban also highlighted the "dire food shortages" and their impact on the economic, social and cultural rights of the population.

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12. ROK Electoral Rights

Joong An Daily (Park Sang-woo, "FOREIGNERS TO GET RIGHT TO VOTE", 2008/10/08) reported that the ROK government announced yesterday that foreign nationals who have lived in the ROK for more than three years will be granted resident voting rights, possibly beginning this December, if approved by the National Assembly. In a cabinet meeting yesterday, government officials announced that permanent residents over the age of 19 will be able to vote on measures related to issues in their neighborhoods. They won't, however, have the right to vote in presidential, general or local elections. In addition, 62,000 ROK nationals who are registered as residing abroad but have lived here for over 30 days will receive the same voting rights. Meanwhile, the legal voting age will be lowered to 19 from 20, where it has stood for the past 50 years.

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13. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("DPJ WON'T DELAY VOTE ON ANTITERRORISM BILL", 2008/10/08) reported that the Democratic Party of Japan said Wednesday it would not hold up a vote on the bill to revise the new Antiterrorism Law to extend the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, making it certain the bill will be passed into law during the current Diet session. Though the bill will be voted down at the opposition-controlled House of Councillors, it is expected

to become law when passed a second time at the House of Representatives by a majority of two-thirds or more of the members present. By doing so, the DPJ hopes to press Prime Minister Taro Aso--who strongly favors the bill--into dissolving the lower house quickly.

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14. Japan-Taiwan Relations

Kyodo News ("YONAGUNI LOOKS TO TAIWAN TO SURVIVE", Naha, 2008/10/07) reported that residents of Japan's westernmost island of Yonaguni are trying to find a way to counter its declining population by strengthening interactions with Taiwan. The remote island that is part of Okinawa is about 500 km from Naha and 2,000 km from Tokyo. As jobs are limited on Yonaguni, islanders are focusing on Taiwan as a means of survival and are trying to establish the island as a gateway to Asia. Mayor Shukichi Hokama said: "We are inclined to be self-confident in contributing to the maintenance of Japan's exclusive economic zone and becoming defenders of the border. The central government has no border policy at all. If the situation remains as is, remote border islands like Yonaguni will go into decline. The residents will disappear.

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15. Japan - Philippine Free Trade

Xinhua ("PHILIPPINE SENATE RATIFIED GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN", 2008/10/08) reported that The Philippine Senate on Wednesday night ratified an economic partnership agreement signed by the government with Japan two years ago. The agreement was ratified by a vote of 16-4, Philippine TV network GMA News reported. Under the agreement, 95 percent of Philippine exports to Japan will be entitled to zero duties. Ten years from its effectivity, tariffs will be removed on almost all industrial goods. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed the agreement with then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in September 2006 in Helsinki during the European leg of her four-nation trip.

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16. Russo-Japanese Relations

Bloomberg (Sebastian Alison, "RUSSIAN BOMBERS INTERCEPTED BY JAPANESE FIGHTER JETS", 2008/10/08) reported that Russian strategic bombers flying over the Sea of Japan were intercepted by Japanese fighter jets on two occasions today before returning to base. The two Tu-22M3 strategic bombers left an air base in Russia's Far East as part of a training exercise, Stability 2008, Russian Air Force spokesman Vladimir Drik said by telephone in Moscow. "The message of this is very clear: Russia's military can project its power worldwide,'' Jan Techau, a security affairs and European analyst at the German Council on Foreign Relations in Berlin, said in an interview. "It's part of a systematic plan to win back Russian military prestige.''

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17. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press (Peter Enav, "US-TAIWAN-CHINA RELATIONSHIP BACK IN BALANCE ", Taipei, 2008/10/08) reported that Taiwan's once-strained relations with the United States are back on track after the Bush administration approved a long-delayed $6.5 billion package of weapons to help the island defend itself against the PRC. Though the PRC reacted angrily, the deal is also a sign that the sometimes shaky three-way relationship between the PRC, Taiwan and the U.S. is moving back into balance. The PRC had profited from a rupture in U.S.-Taiwan military relations, but with the announcement of the deal, that rupture has now been repaired.

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18. Sino-Russian Energy Trade

Dow Jones ("RUSSIA TO DELAY WEST GAS PIPELINE PROJECT TO CHINA - XINHUA", Shanghai, 2008/10/08) reported that Russia will delay construction of a proposed gas pipeline project linking the country with the PRC due to competition from other gas sources in the PRC market, the official Xinhua news agency reported on Tuesday, citing Russian media. The gas pipeline project, which was designed to run through the western part of the Russian-PRC border, was excluded from Russia's recently released blueprint for gas industry development through 2030, the report said. The blueprint explains that pipeline gas from Russia will face intense competition in the PRC market from liquefied natural gas imports and pipeline gas from Turkmenistan.

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19. PRC on Nobel Peace Prize

Macau Daily Times ("CHINA CRITICIZES PAST NOBEL PEACE PICKS", 2008/10/08) reported that the PRC criticised the selection of some past Nobel Peace Prize winners yesterday, just days before this year's winner will be announced, with a prominent PRC dissident seen as a likely frontrunner. A spokesperson did not name any past winners, but the PRC has in the past expressed anger that the award was given to the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, who won it in 1989 despite its firm opposition. According to Stein Toennesson, director of Norway's Peace Research Institute, this year's prize will go to a PRC dissident, most likely civil and human rights campaigner Hu Jia.

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20. PRC Economy

Financial Times (Patti Waldmeir , "CRISIS TAKES TOLL ON CHINA'S RICH", Shanghai, 2008/10/08) reported that the PRC's top 50 richest people lost almost a third of their wealth in the past year, the first decline since 2002, according to Hurun’s 2008 China Rich List, published on Tuesday. Steep declines in PRC stock and property markets took their toll on the richest 50, and the average wealth of the country’s 800 richest people fell by 8%, according to Rupert Hoogewerf, compiler of the list. Last year’s richest person, Yang Huiyan, a real estate heiress, saw her wealth decline precipitately from $17.5bn last year to $4.9bn, largely because of the credit crunch, which has hit property developers. She remains the PRC's third richest person.

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21. PRC Public Health

Agence France-Presse (Peter Harmsen, "CHINA RELUCTANT TO REVEAL TAINTED MILK FIGURES", 2008/10/08) reported that the PRC insisted on Wednesday that it was being open about the impact of milk tainted with the toxic chemical melamine, but declined to make public the latest data on how many children had fallen ill. As the World Health Organisation issued a statement stressing the need to share health information in a timely manner, PRC health ministry spokesman Deng Haihua said the ministry was not yet ready to reveal any updated figures. He said the new figure would be made public "at an appropriate time."

New York Times (Edward Wong, "CHINA ANNOUNCES STRICTER TESTING BECAUSE OF MILK SCANDAL", Beijing,) reported that the PRC said Wednesday that it had strengthened dairy-product testing to reduce the allowable trace amounts of melamine, a toxic industrial chemical at the heart of one of this country's worst food contamination crises. The strengthened testing was the latest in a series of steps undertaken by the government to rebuild consumer confidence after the crisis began last month. The crisis has expanded into an international problem for the PRC because melamine has been showing up in a wide range of products that include PRC dairy ingredients. A growing number of countries have banned or limited suspect food imports from the PRC as a result.

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22. Shanghai Environmental Pollution

Oriental Morning Post (Wu Jiejin, "WATER HYACINTH THREATENS UPPER HUANGPU RIVER", Shanghai, 2008/10/08) reported that more than 40,000 sq. metres of water hyacinth, an invasive water plant from South America, is now threatening the Huangpu River in Songjiang, a suburb of Shanghai. The bloom of water hyacinth began during the National Day festival. Authorities are now using available resources to remove the invasive plant from the river, including tidal and wind direction. They have also removed more than 4,000 tons of the plant from the river at this juncture. The bloom of water hyacinth has increased in severity in recent years, with this year's bloom the worst in recorded history. This is because of warmer water conditions and a large amount of unnatural nutrients in the river stemming from industrial plants.

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23. PRC Education

China Youth Daily (Xie Yang Chunlin, "FROM 1978 TO 2008, MORE THAN 128 MILLION PEOPLE TOOK THE NATIONAL ENTRANCE EXAM", 2008/10/08) reported that in the thirty year period of reform from 1978 to 2008, more than 128 million PRC students took the National College Entrance Exam, simply known as "the test" to a generation of high school students. Of these 128 million, more than 53 million went to university. Government officials said that efforts were underway to increase the number of rural students who attend university, and also to balance the ratio of boys to girls attending university. The official said that the government had been successful in instituting reforms in the past, as girls now account for 47% of college students, and that students from the western region of the country has also significantly increased.

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24. Uighur Detainee Issue

Washington Post (Del Quentin Wilber, "CHINESE MUSLIMS ORDERED RELEASED FROM GUANTANAMO", 2008/10/08) reported that a federal judge yesterday ordered a small band of PRC Muslims being held at the Guantanamo Bay military prison released into the United States by Friday, rejecting the Bush administration's contention that it could detain them indefinitely without cause. Uighurs cannot be sent to their homeland because the PRC government considers them terrorists and might torture them.

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II. PRC Report

25. PRC Civil Society and Public Health

China News online (Zhao Xiaoguang, "JILIN PROVINCE: MEDICAL CHARITY PROJECT GETS FUND SUPPORT FROM MAINLAND FOUNDATION", 2008/10/07) reported that the Poor Children Congenital Heart Disease Relief Project was launched by Aiyou China Charity Foundation and Jilin Provincial Charity Federation in Changchun city of Jilin province on Oct.7. It is understood that since 2005, Jilin Provincial Charity Federation has successfully helped 900 poor children with congenital heart disease, by the operation of "Light of Life" medical help project. Since their mode of operation is quite similar with the China Charity Foundation’s relief project in the targeted area, the two sides decided to cooperate, in order to help more children with congenital heart disease.

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26. PRC Civil Society and AIDS

Xinhua News Agency (Hua Linyue, "NANJING NGOS TO PROMOTE AIDS PREVENTION IN HIGH-RISK GROUPS", 2008/10/08) reported that according to Jiangsu provincial Bureau of Health, 19 NGOs signed an agreement with “Chian and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation” AIDS project office, to participate in the project’s AIDS prevention work in Nanjing area. The main intervention targets of the NGOs are sex workers, gays, intravenous drug users, and other types of AIDS high-risk groups in Nanjing. They hope to reduce high-risk behavior and new infection of the AIDS high-risk groups.

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27. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net (Liu Jingyang, "100,000 PEOPLE TO MIGRATE FOR ECOLOGICAL RECOVERY", Haerbin, 2008/10/07) reported that Heilongjiang province, who has the PRC’s biggest forest area, recently decided to migrate 100,000 people in order to recover the ecological function of the forest area. The migrated people included 20,000 villagers and 80,000 forestry workers and their families.

After nearly 60 years' high-intensity development, the stemwood volumes of exploitable forests have dropped from the early 780,000,000 cubic meters to 66,000,000 cubic meters in 2007. The whole ecological function has a serious degradation.

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II. ROK Report

28. DPRK Missile Tests

Seoul Shinmun ("DPRK MISSILE FIRING, ROUTINE TRAINING?", 2008/10/09) wrote that it is wrong for the DPRK to think that they can gain advantages at the nuclear talks by threatening the U.S. through firing missiles. Concerning the verification issue, the DPRK should realize that the negotiation is in progress after Christopher Hill's visit to the DPRK, and stop provoking related nations.

Segye Ilbo ("DPRK SHOULD NOT MISCALCULATE EFFECT OF MISSILE FIRING", 2008/10/09) wrote that it is remarkable that the DPRK's firing occurred right after the inter-Korean military talks and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill's three-day visit to Pyongyang, and a few days before the 63 rd anniversary of Workers' Party's Foundation. It is hard to predict whether their action is aimed at showing signs of Kim Jong-il's return or at gaining advantages at the nuclear talks. Regardless of what their purpose is, it is apparent that their influence in the area is of great extent.

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29. DPRK Nuclear Program & Six-Party Talks

YonhapNews ("2 YEARS SINCE DPRK NUCLEAR TEST, WHERE WILL SIX-PARTY TALKS GO?", 2008/10/09) reported that concerning the DPRK nuclear problem, Christopher Hill, the U.S. head representative of six-party talks' visit to Pyongyang made the situation far better. However, the atmosphere at the six-party talks is likely to become worse unless they get agreements from related nations about the main issue. Specifically for the verification issue, experts analyze that not only the U.S. hardliners, but also the ROK and Japan, are possibly going to be disagreeable to Bush Administration's decision if they concede to the DPRK more than expected.

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30. DPRK-PRC Relations

Segye Ilbo (Kum Hee-yun, "POST KIM JONG-IL ERA, PRC'S CHOICE?", 2008/10/08) reported that Hwang Jang-yop, former Secretary of DPRK Workers' Party, said that the PRC has the key to solve all sorts of DPRK problems since it is highly likely that the PRC military is going to be deployed in the DPRK if anarchy follows in the DPRK. However, if the DPRK pursues U.S.-friendly capitalism due to a radical regime change and shows willingness to open the door, the PRC's intervention is going to be somewhat aggressive. It is still uncertain whether the PRC is going to preserve the DPRK's

current regime, or to manage them with other related nations. Thus, the ROK should actively take the advantage of the strategic partnership with the PRC which has been upgraded to develop the relationship with them far more.

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