

# **NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, April 10, 2006**

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## **I. NAPSNet**

### **1. DPRK on Six Party Talks**

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA SAYS IT WON'T RETURN TO NUCLEAR TALKS UNLESS U.S. LIFTS SANCTIONS ", 2006-04-10) reported that Japanese and ROK officials made no progress in their efforts to persuade the DPRK to resume six-nation talks on its nuclear program ahead of a Tokyo security conference starting Monday. The DPRK refuses to budge unless US financial restrictions imposed on DPRK companies over alleged illegal activities are lifted. However, Washington has said the restrictions will stay in place and are not related to the nuclear negotiations. "Is there anything to do if the United States doesn't change its position?" Song Il Hyuck, a member of the DPRK delegation said Sunday, blaming Washington for the nuclear deadlock.

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### **2. ROK on Six Party Talks**

Reuters ("S.KOREA WARNS AGAINST HOPE IN N.KOREA NUCLEAR ROW", 2006-04-09) reported that the ROK's chief delegate to stalled talks on ending the DPRK's nuclear arms programme warned on Sunday against optimism for a breakthrough soon, saying Pyongyang still had serious problems with returning to the table. "I have not seen a situation that would give much hope or expectation for a breakthrough," the ROK's top negotiator, Chun Yung-woo, told reporters after a session of a private forum where all the countries to the talks would be taking part. "North Korea seems to be doing a lot of hard thinking about returning to the six-way talks," he said. "Until those difficult issues are resolved, it would be difficult for the North and the United States to meet bilaterally."

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### **3. DPRK, US on Bilateral Meeting**

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. NUKE NEGOTIATOR HAS NOTHING TO SAY TO N.KOREA ", 2006-04-10) reported that the US representative in stalled six-way talks on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, Christopher Hill, on Monday reiterated he has no plans for a meeting with his DPRK counterpart, who is attending the same forum in Tokyo. He expressed doubt about the usefulness of further bilateral meetings, saying such discussions must have an objective. That suggests the US will not agree to any more bilateral meetings unless Pyongyang agrees to return to the six-nation talks. Earlier in the day, the DPRK's chief delegate Kim Kye-gwan appeared eager to meet with Hill. "This is a good opportunity that's been a long time coming. I hope that we can meet," Kim told reporters at the PRC Embassy in Tokyo prior to a meeting with his PRC counterpart Wu Dawei.

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## **4. DPRK-Japan Bilateral Meeting**

Kyodo News ("SASAE, KIM MEET AGAIN, NO BREAKTHROUGH ON 6-WAY TALKS, ABDUCTIONS", 2006-04-10) reported that the chief Japanese and DPRK delegates to the six-party nuclear talks met Monday in Tokyo for the second time in three days but failed to make a breakthrough on restarting the stalled multilateral negotiations. Japan's Kenichiro Sasae and the DPRK's Kim Kye Gwan also made no progress on the DPRK's abductions of Japanese nationals in their meeting at a Japanese Foreign Ministry guesthouse.

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## **5. DPRK on Pre-emptive Strike**

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA ISSUES YET ANOTHER WARNING ", 2006-04-08) reported that the DPRK's defense minister warned Saturday that a pre-emptive strike is not the monopoly of the US. "We will never sit with arms folded and watch until the U.S. attacks us," said Kim Il Chol, vice marshal of the DPRK's Korean People's Army, according to the KCNA. "A pre-emptive strike is not the monopoly of the U.S.," he said.

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## **6. Inter-Korean DMZ**

JoongAng Ilbo ("SEOUL, URI PLAN TO OPEN MORE LAND NEAR THE DMZ ", 2006-04-10) reported that the administration and the Uri Party are considering a plan to shrink the military security strip, called the civilian control zone, along the southern edge of the Demilitarized Zone that divides the ROK and the DPRK. An Uri Party official said the party is trying to put a draft bill together to reduce the control zone from 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) in width. The administration reportedly wants the zone reduced to 10 kilometers in width by next March. The plan would allow civilians to use about 22,500 hectares (55,550 acres) of land now in the no-trespassing zone. The change would allow the land, which is privately owned but essentially of no use now to its owners, to be developed.

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## **7. Inter-Korean Ministerial Talks**

Chosun Ilbo ("TWO KOREAS TO HOLD MINISTERIAL TALKS LATE APRIL ", 2006-04-07) reported that the ROK and the DPRK are set to resume ministerial talks later this month after the DPRK reportedly proposed on Thursday to hold the meetings in Pyongyang from April 21 to 24. A spokesman of the ROK's Unification Ministry says the government sent a telegram to the DPRK this morning agreeing to the proposal.

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## **8. Inter-Korean Agricultural Aid**

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL COMPLETES FERTILIZER SHIPMENT TO N. KOREA ", 2006-04-10) reported that Seoul has completed sending 150,000 tons of free fertilizer it had promised to the DPRK, to aid the country's spring planting season. In a telegram to the ROK Red Cross last Friday, the DPRK

thanked Seoul for the fertilizer. A Unification Ministry official said Pyongyang also asked Seoul for another 300,000 tons of fertilizer. The matter is expected to be discussed during inter-Korean ministerial talks next week in Pyongyang.

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## **9. DPRK-Myanmar Relations**

Reuters ("MYANMAR AGREES TO RESTORE TIES WITH NORTH KOREA - SOURCES", 2006-04-10) reported that Myanmar has agreed to restore diplomatic relations with the DPRK that Yangon cut off following the 1983 "Rangoon" bombing in which Pyongyang agents killed 17 ROK officials, diplomatic sources in Tokyo said on Tuesday. Asian diplomatic sources in Tokyo familiar with the two isolated countries said Myanmar had recently agreed to restore diplomatic relations with the DPRK. "After striking a basic accord with North Korea several months ago, Myanmar has recently agreed to fully recover diplomatic relations with North Korea," an Asian diplomatic source in Tokyo told Reuters.

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## **10. DPRK Economy**

Financial Times ("N KOREA SHUFFLES ALONG FREE MARKET PATH", 2006-04-07) reported that the DPRK is likely to embark on further economic reform, perhaps as soon as this month, as Kim Jong-il's regime follows a seemingly inevitable path towards opening its economy. Although Pyongyang's commitment to potentially destabilising economic change remains half-hearted, and it can hardly be said to be embracing capitalism, analysts and visitors to Pyongyang say there are increasing signs that the regime is resigned to further market liberalisation. "We can see through state publications that North Korea is [preparing] society for further changes in the economy, especially market changes," says Kevin Shepard, a researcher at the ROK's Institute for Far Eastern Studies.

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## **11. DPRK Health**

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA'S LIFE EXPECTANCY RISES TO 77 YEARS ", 2006-04-07) reported that according to a 2006 world report released by the WHO to mark World Health Day on Friday, the average life expectancy of RO Koreans was 77 years in 2004, the most recent reference year cited in the report. By contrast, the average life expectancy in the DPRK was 66 years.

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## **12. ROK-Russia Relations**

ITAR-TASS ("RUSSIA, S KOREA FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET IN MOSCOW ", 2006-04-10) reported that Russian and ROK foreign ministers, Sergei Lavrov and Ban Ki-moon, discussed at their meeting in Moscow the progress of accords that were reached at the November meeting of the Russian and ROK presidents in Pusan. Lavrov said he was going to discuss with his ROK counterpart "all questions that were reviewed at the Pusan summit in the context of elaboration of an energy programme".

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## **13. USFK Base Relocation**

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. BASE MUST MOVE ON SCHEDULE: DEFENSE CHIEF", 2006-04-10) reported that Defense Minister Yoon Kwang-ung on Monday warned of damage to ROK-US ties if the relocation of US forces headquarters here does not proceed on schedule. The long-planned move is encountering sedulous protests from locals and activists at the new site.

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## **14. Japan on Yasukuni Shrine Issue**

Agence France-Presse ("KOIZUMI REJECTS OPPOSITION CRITICISM ON WAR SHRINE ", 2006-0-10) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi rejected criticism by the new opposition leader of his visits to a war shrine at the center of tensions with the country's Asian neighbors. "I am not very clear on whether he is saying it is no good because China says so, or that is no good for me to express condolences to the war dead," Koizumi told reporters.

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## **15. PRC World War II Museum**

The New York Times ("WAR LIVES ON AT MUSEUM OF THE MACABRE", 2006-04-07) reported that more than 200,000 Chinese filed through the remains of Japan's notorious Unit 731 here last year, visiting the ghosts of World War II. In exhibits mounted throughout the bleak headquarters building, they saw wrenching descriptions of biological warfare experiments carried out on thousands of Chinese prisoners from 1939 to 1945. Authorities have drawn up plans for a \$62.5 million expansion of the museum, condemning a middle school and an apartment complex to make way for restoring the once top-secret facility. The aim, said curator Wang Peng, is to make the story of Japan's atrocities at Unit 731 known to an ever-wider audience.

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## **16. PRC on East Sea Gas Dispute**

Kyodo ("CHINA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY NOT INFORMED OF GAS OUTPUT IN E. CHINA SEA", 2006-04-10) reported that the PRC Foreign Ministry told Japan that it has not been informed of the start of production at a gas field in the East China Sea where the two countries are at odds over resource exploration rights, Vice Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Hideji Sugiyama said Monday. Japan has been trying to confirm a Dow Jones news report last week that a PRC consortium has been producing up to 300,000 cubic meters of natural gas a day from the Chunxiao field since Jan. 28.

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## **17. US on Japan-PRC Relations**

Kyodo ("BUSH TO URGE CHINESE LEADER TO IMPROVE TIES WITH JAPAN", 2006-04-10) reported that US President George W. Bush said Monday that he will encourage the PRC to pursue dialogue with Japan to improve ties when he meets with PRC President Hu Jintao on April 20 in

Washington. "It would be very helpful if the Japanese and Chinese had better ties so we're spending time on that issue as well to try...to encourage more dialogue," Bush said.

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## **18. US-PRC Trade Relations**

The Associated Press ("U.S. TO PRESS CHINA OVER SOARING TRADE GAP ", 2006-04-10) reported that the Bush administration said Monday that the PRC must do more to address long-standing trade frictions as a way of dealing with a US trade deficit that has hit an all-time high of \$202 billion with the Asian giant. Administration officials said a meeting of top economic policy-makers from the two countries on Tuesday is viewed as critical although they said the announcement of some of the PRC's trade concessions may be delayed until next week when President Hu Jintao will make an official visit to Washington.

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## **19. PRC-Latin American Trade Relations**

Agence France-Presse ("LATIN AMERICA FINDS RIVAL, INVESTOR IN MIGHTY CHINA ", 2006-0-09) reported that the PRC's market offers huge export opportunities for goods made in Latin America, but the Asian giant is also a fearsome rival for the region because of its ability to manufacture low-cost products, participants at an economic forum said this week.

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## **20. PRC Media**

Reuters ("CHINA CURBS ON FOREIGN MAGAZINES TAKE QUIET EFFECT ", 2006-04-07) reported that the PRC's publishing authority has quietly introduced new restrictions on foreign magazines issuing Chinese versions, but officials on Friday denied the rules had led to the closure of Rolling Stone magazine's Chinese edition. A General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP) official said the group created an "internal rule" last year that allows only foreign science and technology magazines to develop Chinese versions through tie-ups with approved local partners.

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## **21. PRC Space Program**

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA'S NEXT MANNED SPACE FLIGHT SCHEDULED FOR 2008: REPORT ", 2006-04-09) reported that the PRC's next manned space flight, the third in its ambitious program, is scheduled to take place in 2008, state media reported. The date is one year later than previous announcements of the launch schedule for the Shenzhou VII craft, but Beijing Times gave no explanation for the change.

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## **II. CanKor**

## 22. Report #244

CanKor ("CURRENT EVENTS", 2006-04-07) Top officials from the six nations engaged in nuclear disarmament talks converge on Tokyo for a "Track 2" academic conference, sponsored by the University of California's Institute of Global Conflict and Cooperation. With the top US and DPRK chief negotiators Chris Hill and Kim Kye Gwan both attending the meeting, officials on all sides are at pains to explain repeatedly that no bilateral contact is in the offing. In Pyongyang for talks with the DPRK military, PRC Defence Minister Cao Gangchuan, blames mistrust between the USA and the DPRK for the current stalemate in the Six-Party Talks. According to "credible" reports cited by a South Korean intelligence officer, DPRK officials have been spotted wearing lapel pins with a picture of Kim Jong Il's second son -- the clearest indication to date that Kim Jong Chol may be the most likely candidate to succeed his father.

[\(return to top\)](#) CanKor ("FOCUS", 2006-04-07) The greatest hurdle facing resumption of the Six Party Talks is Pyongyang's refusal to participate following the blacklisting of a bank in Macao, thereby restricting much of DPRK's business ventures. Although Washington argues that these measures are to be considered separate from the nuclear issue, some analysts agree that it is the most successful strategy for putting pressure on Pyongyang to date. This week's CanKor FOCUS brings us up-to-date with the latest news on US Treasury sanctions, speculates on what next steps might be, and presents the latest response to the issue by the DPRK. [\(return to top\)](#)

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