NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, June 04, 2007

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, June 04, 2007", NAPSNet Daily Report, June 04, 2007, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-monday-june-04-2007/

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I. NAPSNet

- 1. ROK, Japan, PRC on Six Party Talks
2. DPRK Yongbyon Nuclear Reactor
3. DPRK Strategy
4. ROK Aid to DPRK
5. DPRK Refugee-Defectors
6. USFK Base Realignment
7. US on ROK Role in Afghanistan
8. Japan, US, Australia Defense Talks
9. US on PRC Military
10. Sino-Japanese Military Exchanges
11. Sino-Indian Relations
12. PRC Africa Diplomacy
13. PRC Internet Monitoring
14. PRC Tiananmen Anniversary
15. PRC Climate Change Plan

Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. ROK, Japan, PRC on Six Party Talks

Wall Street Journal ("NORTH KOREA TALKS", 2007-06-04) reported that the ROK, PRC and Japan agreed to cooperate closely with their regional partners in implementing the stalled DPRK deal.

(return to top)

2. DPRK Yongbyon Nuclear Reactor

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA RESTARTS NUCLEAR REACTOR AFTER REPORTED TECHNICAL PROBLEM", 2007-06-03) reported that the DPRK recently restarted its sole nuclear reactor for making radioactive material for bombs after it was halted for more than a week, reportedly due to a technical problem. The DPRK was supposed to shut down the facility by mid-April, but has not done so because of a separate banking dispute with the United States.

(return to top)

3. DPRK Strategy

International Herald Tribune ("A SHIFT IN NORTH KOREA FROM BOMBS TO BASICS?", 2007-0--03) reported that ordinary DPRK people believe that having nuclear weapons means not only more than security for their country, it means more food on their plates. Kim Jong Il signaled a shift in priorities since its reported nuclear test in October. Early hints were seen in the official New Year's message, in which the ruling Workers' Party announced that it would devote proportionately less of the nation's scarce resources to the military and more to providing apartments, food and clothing for its 23 million long-suffering people. Observers are skeptical, seeing little evidence of strategies to bring these changes about.

(return to top)

4. ROK Aid to DPRK

Korea Information Service ("NO FOOD AID TO N. KOREA UNTIL ITS NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT: S. KOREAN MINISTER", 2007-06-04) reported that ROK Unification Minister Lee Jae-joung reiterated that the ROK would not resume food aid to the DPRK, unless it follows through on its promise to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. The ROK initially planned to begin sending 400,000 tons of rice to the DPRK in late May, but the promised shipments have never been sent, as the DPRK missed an April 14 deadline to close its nuclear plant in Yongbyon under a February disarmament accord.

(return to top)

5. DPRK Refugee-Defectors

RIA Novosti ("FOUR N. KOREAN REFUGEES COULD BE TURNED OVER TO S. KOREA - JAPANESE FM", 2007-06-04) reported that Japan is prepared to turn over four DPR Korean defector-refugees to the ROK. Seoul said it would be prepared to accept the family - a father, mother and two boys - who were spotted drifting in a small boat off the port city of Fukaura Saturday.

(return to top)

6. USFK Base Realignment

Yonhap ("SEOUL, WASHINGTON CONCLUDE NEGOTIATIONS ON RELOCATION OF NINE U.S. BASES", 2007-06-04) reported that the ROK has concluded its negotiations with the US on the relocation of nine US military bases in its country, the Foreign Ministry said. The bases to be relocated include Camp Edwards in Paju, just north of Seoul, Camp Sears and Camp Essayons, both also just north of the ROK capital, according to the ministry. Seoul estimates the relocation of the US bases to the southern city of Pyeongtaek would cost some 9 trillion won (US$9.7 billion), about half of which Seoul has promised to shoulder.

(return to top)

7. US on ROK Role in Afghanistan

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. WANTS KOREA TO STAY LONGER IN AFGHANISTAN", 2007-06-04) reported that US Defense Secretary Robert Gates has reportedly requested that ROK troops stay longer in Afghanistan. Two ROK detachments - the Dasan engineering unit and the Dong-eui medical unit - are scheduled to end their tours of duty in Afghanistan at the end of this year. In response, ROK Defense Minister Kim Jang-soo said, "The Dong-eui and Dasan detachments are scheduled to pull out this year according to the decision of the National Assembly." He added, "We are aware of the problem in Afghanistan and are considering various methods, including a PRT (provincial reconstruction team)."

(return to top)

8. Japan, US, Australia Defense Talks

Japan Today ("JAPAN, U.S., AUSTRALIA HOLD DEFENSE TALKS", 2007-06-04) reported that Japan, the US and Australia shared the view in their first trilateral defense ministerial talks that missile defense is targeting terror groups with nuclear weapons, not specific nations. Japanese Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Australian Defense Minister Brendan Nelson got together on the sidelines of the Asia Security Conference in Singapore being organized by a London-based think tank, Japanese officials said.

(return to top)

9. US on PRC Military

Agence France-Presse ("US, CHINA SMOOTH OVER MILITARY BUILD-UP DISPUTE", 2007-06-04) reported that the US and the PRC turned down the heat Saturday on a simmering dispute over Beijing's military build-up, with US Defence Secretary Robert Gates expressing optimism about future relations. Gates called for a more detailed military dialogue with the PRC to avoid future miscalculations, while a top PRC general said Beijing was prepared to open a "hotline" with Washington.

(return to top)

10. Sino-Japanese Military Exchanges

Xinhua ("CHINA "POSITIVE" TOWARDS DEFENSE EXCHANGES WITH JAPAN, MILITARY LEADER

SAYS", 2007-06-04) reported that Xu Caihou, vice-chairman of the PRC's Central Military Commission, said that the PRC holds a positive attitude towards defense exchanges with Japan, calling for more exchanges between young and middle-aged military officers of the two countries. He called for the two sides to take the occasion of the 35th anniversary of normalization of PRC-Japan diplomatic ties and push forward two-way defense exchanges, as well as bilateral ties.

(return to top)

11. Sino-Indian Relations

Xinhua ("INDIAN DEFENSE CHIEF SAYS INDIA-CHINA RELATIONS UNDERGO SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT", 2007-06-04) reported that India's defense Minister A.K. Antony said Saturday that India-PRC relations had undergone a significant improvement. "As we both expand and integrate with the global economy, new opportunities offer themselves to refashion our ties," Antony told the sixth Asia Security Summit, also known as the Shangri-La Dialogue. He added that "We are committed to settling bilateral issues in a fair and transparent manner."

(return to top)

12. PRC Africa Diplomacy

Reuters ("CHINA DEFENDS ITS ROLE IN AFRICA AHEAD OF G8", 2007-06-04) reported that the PRC sought to defend its role in Africa ahead of this week's G8 summit, saying its long friendship with the continent was a force for good and shrugging off the threat of criticism at the meeting in Germany. The PRC's increasing presence as a lender to Africa has troubled some G8 ministers, who are worried Beijing is too willing to lend money without strings to African countries where they have just written off billions of dollars of unpaid debts.

(return to top)

13. PRC Internet Monitoring

The Associated Press ("CHINA BARS NEW INTERNET CAFES", 2007-06-04) reported that the PRC will license no new Internet cafes this year while regulators carry out an industry-wide inspection, the government says, amid official concern that online material is harming young people. Investigators will look into whether Internet cafes are improperly renting out their licenses or failing to register their customers' identities, the State Administration for Industry and Commerce said on its Web site.

(return to top)

14. PRC Tiananmen Anniversary

Agence France-Presse ("CRITICS ROUNDED UP ON 18TH ANNIVERSARY OF TIANANMEN MASSACRE ", 2007-06-04) reported that PRC authorities maintained tight security on Monday's sensitive anniversary of the Tiananmen Square crackdown, with several dissidents detained or under house arrest, rights activists said. At least a half-dozen people have been rounded up in the past few days as security personnel carried out their annual clampdown ahead of the anniversary, Hu Jia, a leading PRC activist, told AFP.

(return to top)

15. PRC Climate Change Plan

BBC News ("CHINA UNVEILS CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN", 2007-06-04) reported that the 62-page report reiterated the PRC's aim to reduce energy use by a fifth before 2010 and increase the amount of renewable energy it produces. But it also repeated Beijing's view that responsibility for climate change rests with rich westernised countries. It also stressed that the country's first priority remained "sustainable development and poverty eradication".

(return to top)

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