NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, June 18, 2007

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, June 18, 2007", NAPSNet Daily Report, June 18, 2007, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-monday-june-18-2007/

NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, June 18, 2007

NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, June 18, 2007

I. NAPSNet

- 1. DPRK Nuclear Reactor Shutdown
2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Reactor Shutdown
3. US on DPRK Nuclear Reactor Shutdown
4. DPRK Funds Transfer
5. Inter-Korean Relations
6. ROK Aid to DPRK
7. DPRK Defectors
8. DPRK-Japan Relations
9. PRC Slave Scandal
10. PRC Rural Migrants
11. PRC Space Program
12. Sino-US Relations
13. ROK Elections
14. ROK-US Relations
15. ROK-Japan Relations

Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Reactor Shutdown

Reuters (" NORTH KOREA PLANS TO SHUT REACTOR IN JULY - REPORT ", 2007-06-18) reported that the DPRK plans to seal its nuclear reactor, the source of weapons-grade plutonium, in the second half of July, Russia's Interfax news agency reported, citing an unidentified DPR Korean diplomatic source. Despite more than two months of delay in beginning the dismantlement of the DPRK's atomic programme, it would still be possible to complete the nuclear disarmament of the communist state by the end of the year, the chief US nuclear envoy said. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog, said a senior delegation would visit the DPRK next week to agree on details for a return of its inspectors to monitor Pyongyang's promised nuclear shutdown. "So we are counting on sealing it in the second half of July, in accordance with the agreements reached at the six-party talks," the source said. "We plan to invite the experts of the IAEA a second time, when the reactor is fully sealed in order to convince them of that," the DPR Korean source was quoted as saying.

(return to top)

2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Reactor Shutdown

Reuters ("S.KOREA PM SEES MORE PROGRESS AFTER NORTH OFFER", 2007-06-18) reported that more progress over the DPRK's nuclear programme is possible after Pyongyang agreed to let in UN inspectors to monitor the shutdown of its nuclear reactor, RO Korean Prime Minister Han Duck-soo said. "We hope that from now on the speed will be more accelerated and we hope that the first phase of the measures that should be taken by North Korea should be done very quickly," Han said. He said the recent unblocking of millions of dollars in DPR Korean funds frozen in Macau at the request of the US appeared to have persuaded Pyongyang that it was in its interests to work with the international community. "Once this ... issue ended, right away, North Korea actually invited the IAEA surveillance team. So let's see," he said. "North Korea now knows that it can get real help from the six party talks. So I think the reaction will be promising." "It's a very big step in a way and they can boost the confidence in countries among the six-party talks," he said, adding that mutual suspicions between the participants was one of the biggest problems dogging the issue. "Now this kind of action taken by six party members and North Korea will enhance the credibility and standards of our six party talks," he said.

(return to top)

3. US on DPRK Nuclear Reactor Shutdown

New York Times ("ENVOY SEES NORTH KOREA PROGRESS ", 2007-06-18) reported that Christopher Hill, an assistant secretary of state, said stalled efforts to dismantle the DPRK's nuclear weapons program could move ahead after a pivotal weekend when Pyongyang invited inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to visit for talks on verifying and monitoring a shutdown. "This is an event we have been looking forward to for some time," Mr. Hill said following talks with his ChiPRCnese counterpart, Wu Dawei. Mr. Hill said he would hold further talks this week with disarmament negotiators from Russia, the ROK and Japan on steps to make up for some of the time lost while the financial transfer was being organized. These discussions would also involve setting a timetable for resumption of six-party talks.

(return to top)

4. DPRK Funds Transfer

Interfax ("NORTH KOREA'S MONEY TRANSFERRED TO RUSSIAN CENTRAL BANK - AMBASSADOR", 2007-06-18) reported that the money held at Pyongyang's previously frozen accounts at the Delta Asia bank in Macau has already been transferred to an account at the Russian Central Bank and will soon go to the Foreign Trade Bank of the DPRK, DPR Korean Ambassador to Russia Kim Yong Jae told Interfax. "The funds have already arrived at the Central Bank of the Russian Federation from the Delta Asia bank. They will soon be transferred to the Foreign Trade Bank of North Korea through one of the Russian banks in the Far East," he said. After all the money has been transferred, Pyongyang will be ready to mothball its Yongbyon reactor, the ambassador said. Russia agreed to help transfer North Korea's money after the US provided written guarantees that Russian banks would not fall under any US sanctions after the transaction, the diplomat said.

(return to top)

5. Inter-Korean Relations

United Press International ("S. KOREA HELPS NORTH CURB ANIMAL DISEASE", 2007-06-18) reported that ROK health experts have traveled to the DPRK to help the country curb an animal disease outbreak. A group of RO Korean experts led by Kim Chang-seob, chief veterinary officer at the Agriculture Ministry, arrived in Pyongyang Monday to meet their counterparts on dealing with a foot-and-mouth disease in the country, Seoul officials said. During the six-day visit, the 10-member group plans to support DPRK's efforts to cope with the highly contagious animal disease, providing technical assistance on how to operate equipment that can check for antigens and antibodies in animals.

(return to top) Yonhap News ("FRONT RUNNING GNP PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFUL SUGGESTS ANOTHER INTER-KOREAN INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX ", 2007-06-18) reported that Former Seoul Mayor Lee Myung-bak, the front-running opposition presidential aspirant in December's election, proposed Monday creating a "Manhattan-like" island near the border with the DPRK and building an inter-Korean industrial park there to ease military tension. Dubbed "Na-deul," which means a narrow waterway in Korean, the manmade island would be home to a 30- million-square-meter industrial park aimed at "combining North Korean labor and South Korean capital" and helping the DPRK open up, Lee told a news conference at his Seoul office. (return to top)

6. ROK Aid to DPRK

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA GIVES AID TO N. KOREA VIA INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES ", 2007-0--18) reported that the ROK has intensified efforts to provide aid to the DPRK via international agencies this year, officials said Monday, amid growing criticism of its direct aid to the DPRK. The Unification Ministry said the aid to the DPRK via international agencies the government has endorsed or plans to so far this year came to seven cases worth about US$40 million. This is a significant increase from last year, when the ROK's aid via international agencies stood at three cases worth about $12 million. In 2005, it totaled $2 million.

(return to top)

7. DPRK Defectors

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS ARRIVE IN SKOREA ", 2007-06-16) reported that

a DPR Korean family of four arrived in the ROK on Saturday after leaving Japan, where they landed two weeks ago after a rare boat voyage from the DPRK. The family - a couple and their two adult sons - arrived at the international airport in Incheon wearing hats and covering their faces with masks. ``Liberty, democracy, human rights!'' yelled one of the DPR Koreans at an airport gate, before airport security officials escorted the group away. The DPR Koreans had arrived in northern Japan two weeks ago after a six-day voyage in an open boat, making them the first defectors from the communist country to arrive in Japan by boat in two decades. They told investigators they had fled to escape extreme poverty, and asked for asylum in the ROK. Following an initial police investigation where their boat landed in Aomori, 360 miles northeast of Tokyo, the defectors had stayed at an immigration facility while Japanese authorities arranged with the ROK for their departure after Seoul agreed to accept them, officials said. The ROK's Foreign Ministry declined to comment on the report, citing its policy of not commenting on DPR Korean defectors due to concerns for their safety.

(return to top)

8. DPRK-Japan Relations

Bloomberg ("NORTH KOREA GROUP IN JAPAN IS ORDERED TO PAY LOANS ", 2007-06-18) reported that the de facto embassy of the DPRK in Japan may lose its headquarters after a Tokyo court ordered it to pay 62.7 billion yen ($508 million) to a government-run bad loan agency to cover unpaid debt. The Tokyo District Court today ruled the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan must repay the government-run Resolution and Collection Corp., which took over non-performing loans advanced by credit companies associated with the pro-Pyongyang group. The court ruled the RCC can seize the group's headquarters in central Tokyo in lieu of payment. "This is clearly a huge blow for the organization," Motoi Tamaki, chief director at Tokyo's Modern Korea Institute, said. "The group is one step away from complete dissolution." The association represents about 50,000 DPR Koreans who live in Japan and acts as a representative for the DPRK. The group has channeled funds to the reclusive regime in North Korea, according to members. "Public funds were pumped into the fallen credit unions. It is entirely reasonable for the RCC to try to collect the money," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said in a comment on today's court ruling.

(return to top)

9. PRC Slave Scandal

China Daily ("CHINA TO INVESTIGATE INTO 'SLAVE LABOR' INCIDENT", 2007-06-18) reported that PRC's central government will send a team of investigators to look into the use of "slave labor" at illegal brick kilns in central PRC, which has raised great concerns among the public. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MLSS), which will head the team, said preliminary investigations show the incident may involve abducted and forced labor. "The team will find out the truth as soon as possible, and we will go all out to rescue the workers who had been forced to work as slaves in the brick kilns," said Sun Baoshu, deputy minister of MLSS. "The criminal offenders will be dealt with to safeguard the legal interests of the workers," Sun pledged. To date 331 people, including nine children, were freed in Shanxi, bringing the total number of slave workers rescued in PRC to 548, including 217 freed in the neighboring Henan Province. Police in Henan and Shanxi have staged raids on coal mines, brick kilns, private contractors and small enterprises, as the crackdown continues. Police in Henan Province arrested 120 people in a four-day crackdown involving more than 35,000 police checking 7,500 kilns, while in Shanxi 38 people who were suspected of carrying out kidnapping and forced labor were detained.

(return to top)

10. PRC Rural Migrants

China Daily ("CHONGQING TO URBANIZE RURAL MIGRANTS", 2007-06-18) reported that After relocating 1 million residents in the Three Gorges area, Chongqing is set to urbanize some 10 million rural migrants over the next decade. The local government will invest 4 trillion yuan creating more job opportunities and boost urban infrastructure. The pilot programs target coordinated rural and urban development through reforms in all sectors. As the only municipality in PRC's hinterland, Chongqing has a large city proper and an even larger countryside. Among its 32 million population, over 20 million live in the rural areas. In Chongqing, the average annual income of an urban resident is 10 times that of a farmer in a remote rural area. Every year, some half million farmers will travel to the city in pursuit of a better life. "In 10 years, about 10 million farmers in Chongiqng will become urban dwellers, living and working in the city," Huang Qifan, vice-mayor of the fourth and the largest municipality in the PRC, said. "How to settle those farmers is the most important thing in the whole pilot reform." "We're thinking about releasing the land of the farmers who settle down in the city for other uses," the mayor said. "Of course we will pay them well and ask them to give us the land they don't need anymore."

(return to top)

11. PRC Space Program

Associated Press ("CHINA PLANS NEW GENERATION OF ROCKETS ", 2007-06-18) reported that PRC plans to develop a new generation of carrier rockets with a payload capacity large enough to launch a space station, state media reported Monday. The payload capacity of PRC's Long March series of carrier rockets will be more than doubled from 9.5 tons to 25 tons in order to advance the country's lunar exploration program, the official Xinhua News Agency reported, citing an official with the state-run China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp. The official did not say when the rockets would be ready for launch.

(return to top)

12. Sino-US Relations

China Daily ("FM: CHINA OBJECTS TO PLAYING UP 'CHINA THREAT'", 2007-06-16) reported that the PRC objects to a senior US Defense Department official's remarks playing up "China threat", said a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman, Qin Gang. Testifying before the US Congress, Lawless said the US hopes to hold a strategic dialogue with the PRC. Qin said the PRC has explained many times its policy of peaceful development, it defense policy which is defensive in nature and its stance on the Taiwan issue. He said the PRC is open and transparent on its military spending. "We hope the US side will strictly abides by its commitment to the one-China policy, which it reiterated on many occasions, observe the three Sino-US communiques, oppose 'Taiwan independence' and do not send wrong signals to Taiwan secessionists by selling weapons to Taiwan," said Qin. Qin added that the PRC is willing to strengthen dialogue and exchanges with the US on defense matters, in a bid to promote mutual understanding and trust.

(return to top)

13. ROK Elections

Korea Times ("RACE STARTS AT PRO-GOV'T CAMP", 2007-06-18) reported that potential presidential candidates of the pro-government camp are gearing up their preparations as they plan to announce their bids this week consecutively. They include former Gyeonggi Governor Sohn Hak-kyu, former prime ministers Lee Hae-chan and Han Myeong-sook and Chung Dong-young former chairman of the pro-government Uri Party.

(return to top)

14. ROK-US Relations

United Press International ("S. KOREA, US TO REVISE TRADE DEAL", 2007-06-17) reported that the ROK and the US are likely to meet this week to revise a free trade accord reflecting new US trade policy guidelines. A US delegation, led by assistant Trade representative Wendy Cutler, is scheduled to fly into Seoul on June 21 to discuss revising the free trade deal reached in April after 10 months of tough negotiations, Seoul officials said. The US delegation is expected to call for changes in the sectors of labor, environment, pharmaceuticals, national security, government procurement, harbor safety and investment, they said. The RO Korean government said it has not decided yet over how to respond to the US proposal. "The government will finalize its position after a close analysis of U.S. requests and their possible clash with domestic laws," the presidential office said.

(return to top)

15. ROK-Japan Relations

Bloomberg ("JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA TO SHARE EMERGENCY OIL SUPPLIES ", 2007-06-18) reported that Japan and the ROK, Asia's second- and fourth-largest oil consumers, agreed to share their emergency petroleum stockpiles in the event of supply disruptions. Korea National Oil Corp., the state-run oil explorer in Asia's third-largest economy, and Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corp., which maintains the country's stockpiles, signed the accord, ROK's Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy said in an e-mailed statement today.

(return to top)

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-monday-june-18-2007/

Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org