NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, June 25, 2007

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, June 25, 2007", NAPSNet Daily Report, June 25, 2007, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-monday-june-25-2007/

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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Nuclear Issue

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA SAYS HAS FUNDS, AWAITS U.N. TEAM", 2007-06-25) reported that the DPRK said it would start implementing a nuclear disarmament deal struck in February and awaits a visit by U.N. inspectors now that a dispute over its funds frozen at a Macau bank had been resolved. A team of International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors arrived in Beijing and is scheduled to go to Pyongyang on Tuesday to help lay the groundwork for shutting down the DPRK's reactor and source of bomb-grade plutonium.

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2. DPRK on Six Party Talks

Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA HOPES 6-PARTY MINISTERIAL TALKS IN AUGUST", 2007-06-25) reported that the DPRK said on June 23 that it is talking with the US to hold a six-party foreign ministers' meeting in early August. However, Christopher Hill, U.S. chief negotiator to the six-party talks, said to reporters immediately after arriving in Washington from Japan, "The appropriate timing for a six-party foreign ministers' meeting will be late July."

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap ("KOREAS TO HAGGLE OVER INTER-KOREAN RAILWAYS, DENUCLEARIZATION", 2007-06-25) reported that officials from the divided Koreas continued negotiations over the formal opening of cross-border railways and the expansion of economic cooperation on the third day of their high-level talks. During the session, the ROK proposed to formally open cross-border railways in a phased manner and urged the DPRK to implement a landmark February denuclearization accord. Unification Minister Lee Jae-joung also called on the DPRK to resume defense chiefs' talks as soon as possible to ease military tension, as well as resolve the humanitarian issue of prisoners of war (POWs) and abductees believed to be held by the DPRK.

(return to top) Arirang News ("INTER-KOREAN ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINE COMPLETED", 2007-06-25) reported that for the first time in nearly 60 years, a high-voltage power line opened between the two Koreas. The ROK's Commerce, Industry and Energy Ministry and the Korea Electric Power Corporation held a ceremony to mark the completion of an energy substation at the Kaesong Industrial Complex in the DPRK. The facility can generate 100,000 kilowatts and the power company will as much as double capacity based on operational needs at the factory complex. (return to top)

4. Russia on US DPRK Policy

Kyodo ("EX-RUSSIAN PM AIRS CONCERN ABOUT U.S. APPROACH TO N. KOREA", 2007-06-25) reported that visiting former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov expressed displeasure regarding top U.S. nuclear negotiator Christopher Hill's surprise visit to Pyongyang, saying Washington should have consulted other parties involved in multilateral talks on the DPRK's nuclear programs. "We have the functioning mechanism of the six-party talks. Members can take independent actions, but I doubt whether it is appropriate to do so without consultation with other parties," Primakov told a Russian investment forum.

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5. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Program

Kyodo ("ABE AGAIN URGES N. KOREA TO FULFILL DENUKE STEPS, SOLVE ABDUCTIONS ", 2007-06-25) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe again warned the DPRK it must carry out concrete steps toward its denuclearization pledge and resolve past abductions of Japanese nationals before Pyongyang will be accepted by the international community. The premier, known for his hawkish stance against the North, made the remarks after the DPRK said it is now ready to begin implementing a Feb. 13 six-nation agreement on its denuclearization.

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6. US-ROK Trade Relations

Korea Times ("KOREA, US TO HOLD TALKS ON FTA IN WASHINGTON", 2007-06-25) reported that the ROK and the US will hold talks on potential revisions of their free trade agreement (FTA) to reflect Washington's new trade policy guidelines, a senior negotiator said. Trade Minister Kim Hyun-chong was to visit Washington from Monday through Wednesday for the talks, Ambassador Kim Jong-hoon told lawmakers at a special parliamentary committee on the ROK-US FTA.

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7. ROK - Japan Joint History Textbook Project

Kyodo News ("HISTORY TALKS WITH SOUTH KOREA ENTER NEW PHASE", 2007-06-25) reported that Japanese and ROK historians began on Saturday a new phase of joint history studies to try to narrow differences in their countries' textbooks amid continuing disputes, such as the wartime sexual slavery issue. The two sides agreed to hold two more years of discussions and compile a report based on their talks, according to representatives from the two countries.

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8. Japan Elections

Agence France-Presse ("POLLS BATTER JAPAN'S PM AS ELECTION NEARS ", 2007-06-25) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is in a fight for his political life a month ahead of key elections, with half of voters hoping for his party's defeat following a barrage of scandals. The outspoken conservative was hailed when he took over nine months ago for his young image and foreign policy successes. But his popularity has since plummeted, with many voters now seeing him not as youthful, just inexperienced.

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9. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN LOOKS ASKANCE AT HONG KONG'S HANDOVER FORMULA", 2007-06-25) reported that a decade after Britain handed Hong Kong back to Beijing, most people in Taiwan are unimpressed. Scholars and island officials say that democratically self-ruled Taiwan would suffer more politically than it would gain economically if it was reunified with the PRC. "For the Taiwan public, there's no market for 'one country, two systems'," said Liu Te-shun, vice chairman of the government's Mainland Affairs Council.

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10. PRC Unrest

Agence France-Presse ("THOUSANDS CLASH WITH POLICE IN CHINA HOUSING DISPUTE ", 2007-06-25) reported that thousands of protesters clashed with police in eastern PRC last week after security teams moved in to forcefully relocate families involved in a housing dispute, a rights group said. Residents refusing to move out of their homes threw gas bombs at the security forces, igniting riots Wednesday in Shengzhou city, Zhejiang province, the Hong Kong-based Information Centre for Human Rights and Democracy said.

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II. CanKor

11. CanKor # 285

CanKor ("CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ", 2007-06-22) Subscribers consistently name stories about life inside the DPRK as their top interest when reading CanKor. Unfortunately, current events often sideline these stories in our Reports. Occasionally, we therefore publish a special edition of CanKor assembling such "Inside DPRK" stories. Not all these stories are current, and in some cases may already be outdated. Readers are therefore advised to note the date each story was first published. The stories included in this full-edition FOCUS, "Inside DPRK Part 2": "For Sale" signs in Pyongyang shop windows suggest a new eagerness for profit in this heretofore staunchly socialist country. The introduction of private restaurants in DPRK cities has improved the prospect of eating out -- not only for the elite. More than 70 percent of the goods available in DPR Korean markets are made in China. North Korea's wealthy class is on a shopping spree across the border in China ahead of UN sanctions on the sale of luxury goods to the DPRK. A lack of energy continues to darken the country as the nuclear crisis drags on. DPR Korea seeks compensation for major accidents from British and Russian reinsurance companies. The "Shock Brigade" of North Korean scientists and technicians is said to introduce significant technical inventions into DPRK production. One drug firm is marketing an "anti-smoking candy" internationally.

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