



NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, November 27, 2006

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, November 27, 2006", NAPSNet Daily Report, November 27, 2006, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-monday-november-27-2006/>

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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Reuters ("ENVOYS HEAD FOR CHINA TO SET UP NORTH KOREA TALKS", 2006-11-27) reported that US and RO Korean envoys are due in Beijing today to prepare for six-party talks which are expected to resume next month. The DPRK agreed to return to the talks after Washington said it was willing to address its concerns about financial restrictions, which were tightened in September last year when U.S. regulators named a Macau bank as a conduit for illicit DPR Korean cash from currency counterfeiting and drug trafficking. The PRC is urging DPR Korean envoy Kim Kye-gwan to come to Beijing on Tuesday, a Japanese government source said. Japan's top negotiator in the talks, Kenichiro Sasae, arrived in Beijing late on Sunday to meet PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei, China's official Xinhua news agency reported. US and RO Korean officials have said the new round of negotiations will have to produce substantive progress on implementing an agreement in principle reached last year or risk losing credibility. Customs data showed that PRC exports of crude oil to the DPRK resumed in October, after a September halt which raised questions about Beijing's relations with its neighbor. The PRC sent 58,685 metric tons of crude in October, 67.7 percent more than the same month of 2005 and the largest amount since April this year. But shipments of key refined oil products -- diesel, gasoline and kerosene -- were all down from a year earlier, figures from the General Administration of Customs showed.

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2. DPRK Aid

Chosun Ilbo ("RED CROSS SIGNS AID DEAL WITH N.KOREA", 2006-11-27) reported that the international Red Cross has signed an agreement with the DPRK to combat the country's chronic food shortages, and provide relief to victims of natural disasters. The three-year deal includes assisting with water supplies, disaster prevention and medicine from countries like Sweden, the UK and the Netherlands. More than 8 million residents of five provinces are expected to be covered by the agreement. The world's largest humanitarian organization warns large numbers of DPR Koreans suffer from famine and disease.

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3. DPRK Typhoon Damage

BBC ("DEATH TOLL IN NORTH KOREA TYPHOON QUESTIONED", 2006-11-24) reported that new satellite pictures released today reveal for the first time the full extent of the destruction in the DPRK caused by super typhoon Bilis in July this year. DPRK official fatality figures amount to 549 people, with a further 295 people reported as missing. However, analysis by Durham University's International Landslide Centre reveals that the death toll is likely to have been well over 10,000 people, and possibly even considerably more than this. Concerning reports from NGOs in ROK spoke of 57,000 fatalities. The before and after satellite images of Yangdok reveal clear evidence of devastating floods and landslides from 14 to 17 July 2006. Landslides occurred on many slopes, ripping through the communities in the valleys. In addition, the rivers overflowed their banks, sweeping away bridges and apartment blocks. In just one small community on the outskirts of Yangdok, at least 27 large apartment blocks were destroyed or seriously damaged.

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4. Chongryon - Japan Relations

Voice of America ("JAPANESE POLICE RAID NORTH KOREA-RELATED FACILITIES", 2006-11-27) reported that a special Japanese police unit has raided facilities connected to the DPRK, the latest of a series of efforts to limit illegal exports to the country. Police raided facilities in Tokyo and the city of Niigata affiliated with the association, known as Chosen Soren in Japanese and as Chongryon in Korean. Japanese police received a hostile reception and riot police were called in to clear the way. Police say they are investigating an unauthorized attempt to smuggle 60 bags of intravenous solutions to the DPRK six months ago. "Japanese media say that, but actually that is completely false," a spokesman for the group said. Several hundred thousand ethnic Koreans live in Japan, many of them descendants of workers brought to the country during Tokyo's colonial rule over Korea in the early 20th century. Thousands of them are sympathetic to the DPRK. Chongryon's offices have been regarded as de facto DPRK diplomatic facilities and considered off-limits to law enforcement. A Chongryon spokesman says official scrutiny of the group has risen since Shinzo Abe, seen as a hardliner toward Pyongyang, became prime minister in late September.

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5. US Film about DPRK Abductions

Washington Post ("N. KOREA'S OTHER AFFRONT", 2006-11-27) reported that a new documentary film "Abduction: The Megumi Yokota Story," opened in the US on Friday. The film recounts the 1977 kidnapping of a 13-year-old Japanese girl by the DPRK and its global ramifications. Husband-and-wife District-based filmmakers Chris Sheridan and Patty Kim let the key Japanese players tell the story without interference. The filmmakers, who freelance for CBS News and National Geographic, maxed out their savings and credit cards to provide the project's funding, which ultimately reached \$450,000. The documentary drew the attention of the BBC toward the end of the editing process, which "saved the day" by helping defray the film's costs. The couple received a creative assist from Oscar-winning filmmaker Jane Campion, a longtime friend of Kim's. The writer-director of 1993's "The Piano" served as the executive producer and helped the filmmakers winnow down their vision into a movie that didn't indulge in histrionics.

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6. Inter-Korean Cultural Relations

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA IN JOINT MARCH", 2006-11-23) reported that athletes from both Koreas will stage a joint march at the opening and closing ceremonies for the Doha Asian Games despite renewed tensions over the nuclear test. Yonhap News Agency quoted an unidentified unification ministry official as saying that the ROK had decided to accept the DPRK's proposal for a joint march at the Games.

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7. DPRK Avian Flu Outbreak

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA STEPS UP MEASURES AGAINST BIRD FLU AFTER SOUTH KOREA REPORTS OUTBREAK", 2006-11-27) reported that the DPRK has stepped up measures to prevent bird flu after the RO Korea reported an outbreak of the deadly H5N1 strain at a chicken farm last week. The DPRK has inoculated poultry against bird flu and is closely monitoring migratory

birds, the official Korean Central News Agency reported. Authorities have also ordered all local livestock to be locked up in an effort to protect them from any birds carrying the virus, KCNA said, citing a DPR Korean health official, Wu Sung Lim. Bird flu hit the DPRK early last year, prompting the slaughter of about 210,000 chickens and other poultry. No new cases of bird flu have since been reported.

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8. ROK Avian Flu Outbreak

Agence France-Presse ("NEW BIRD FLU OUTBREAK AS SOUTH KOREA SLAUGHTERS POULTRY", 2006-11-27) reported that authorities in the ROK have slaughtered tens of thousands of chickens in an effort to control an outbreak of deadly bird flu, even as a new case was reported elsewhere in the country. The agriculture ministry has already culled 81,000 poultry and other animals since a highly contagious strain of the H5N1 virus was detected Saturday near the southern city of Iksan. Meanwhile the ministry confirmed another outbreak at a farm in the city of Seosan, 120 kilometers southwest of Seoul, after a pair of chickens born from eggs originating at the Iksan poultry farm showed symptoms.

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9. US-Japan Missile Defense Cooperation

Agence France-Presse ("US TO DEPLOY MORE MISSILE-DEFENSE WARSHIPS IN YOKOSUKA: REPORT", 2006-11-27) reported that the US plans to deploy two additional Aegis warships with the ability to shoot down ballistic missiles at its naval base in the Japanese port of Yokosuka, a newspaper has reported. The system involves shooting Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) interceptors from Aegis warships to take out ballistic missiles launched by an enemy.

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10. Japan on Nuclear Armed Warships

United Press International ("JAPAN WOULD ALLOW U.S. NUKES ON VESSELS", 2006-11-27) reported that a nuclear-armed US warship would be allowed into Japanese territorial waters in an emergency, Japan's defense chief told lawmakers. Defense Agency Director Gen. Fumio Kyuma said Japan would let a US naval vessel pass through its waters without prior notification if the move was reported afterward, the Times said. The US has a policy of not stating whether nuclear weapons are being carried on warships.

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11. PRC on UN Peacekeeping

Washington Post ("CHINA FILLING VOID LEFT BY WEST IN U.N. PEACEKEEPING", 2006-11-27) reported that the PRC's emergence as an economic superpower has forced the government to rethink some of its foreign policy priorities, and it is quietly extending its influence on the world stage through the support of international peacekeeping operations. The PRC is now the 13th-largest contributor of U.N. peacekeepers, providing 1,648 troops, police and military observers to 10 nations, mostly in African countries, including Congo, Liberia and southern Sudan.

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12. Sino-Pakistani Relations

Agence France-Presse ("HU PROMISES NEW HEIGHTS FOR SINO-PAKISTAN TIES", 2006-11-27) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao has wrapped his landmark Pakistan visit during which the close allies signed a free trade deal, agreed to boost strategic partnership and enhance ties in defence and energy sectors. The PRC also pledged to play a constructive role in resolving disputes between Pakistan and India. A wide-ranging joint statement issued on Saturday hailed continued close ties in the fields of defence, energy, trade, agriculture, information technology, combatting terrorism, culture and tourism.

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13. Sino-Indian Joint Military Exercises

The Economic Times ("INDIA WARMS UP TO JOINT MILITARY DRILL WITH CHINA", 2006-11-27) reported that India would explore the possibility of holding a joint military exercise with the PRC, chief of Army staff, General JJ Singh said. During PRC President Hu Jintao's visit, the two sides had agreed on "instilling mutual trust and confidence through defence cooperation". The two countries would explore the possibility of joint training, apart from the joint adventure activities.

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14. PRC AIDS Activist Arrest

Reuters ("CHINA FREES AIDS ACTIVIST, FOUR OTHERS IN CUSTODY", 2006-11-27) reported that PRC police freed an AIDS activist after holding him for days and forcing him to scrap a planned conference, but four other people were still in custody, a non-governmental organisation said on its Web site. Wan Yanhai, director of Beijing Aizhixing Institute of Health Education, was released on his fourth day of detention and was forced to postpone the conference "Blood Safety, AIDS and Human Rights" originally scheduled to be held in Beijing from Nov. 25-30, the institute said.

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15. PRC Organ Transplant Regulations

The Associated Press ("CHINA TO TIGHTEN ORGAN TRANSPLANT RULES ", 2006-11-27) reported that the PRC will tighten its organ transplant rules to prevent unqualified doctors and profit-hungry hospitals from abusing patients, state media said, amid concerns that executed prisoners have had their organs harvested without consent. The draft regulation, which has been sent to the State Council for review, would require a new organization under the Ministry of Health to be in charge of registering and allocating all donated organs.

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16. PRC Dam Construction

The Associated Press ("CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON \$3.7B CHINA DAM ", 2006-11-27) reported that construction has begun on a \$3.7 billion dam in southwestern PRC that will displace from 88,000 to about 150,000 people, local media reported. The 6-gigawatt project Xiangjiaba dam on the

upper reaches of the Yangtze River and the nearby 12.6-gigawatt Xiluodu dam together are expected to match or exceed the capacity of the Three Gorges dam, which sits downstream on the Yangtze. Construction of the Xiangjiaba project formally began Sunday and due to be completed by 2015.

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17. Taiwan Leadership

The Washington Post ("TAIWAN LEADER SURVIVES IN VOTE", 2006-11-27) reported that President Chen Shui-bian easily survived an impeachment vote in Taiwan's legislature despite his wife's indictment on embezzlement charges and a prosecutor's statement that Chen could be indicted as well if he did not have presidential immunity. The vote signaled that Chen is likely to remain in office until the end of his second four-year term in 2008 unless new irregularities are brought to light or new charges are filed.

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