

NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, October 23, 2006

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1. US, PRC on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Agence France-Presse ("US, CHINA AT ODDS OVER HOW TO HANDLE NKOREA", 2006-10-22) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's visit to the PRC illustrated a fundamental gap in how the US and the PRC think the DPRK nuclear crisis can be resolved, observers say. While the US sees the PRC, the DPRK's oldest ally, as the key to unlocking the standoff sparked by the DPRK's October 9 nuclear test, the PRC thinks the US needs to soften its stance towards the DPRK.

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2. US Financial Pressure on the DPRK

The Associated Press ("U.S. ENVOY TO FOCUS ON N. KOREA ASSETS", 2006-10-22) reported that the top US nuclear negotiator arrived for talks on frozen DPRK bank accounts in neighboring Macau, according to a spokesman for the US Consulate General. The US banned transactions between Macau-based Banco Delta Asia and US financial institutions in September 2005, alleging that its clients were involved in smuggling and counterfeiting for the DPRK. The DPRK has made the lifting of the freeze a precondition for its return to the talks. The US has said the financial restrictions are unrelated to the nuclear talks.

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3. US, ROK on DPRK Sanctions

The Washington Post ("RICE PRESSES S. KOREA TO PURSUE FULL SANCTIONS; SEOUL RELUCTANT TO INTERRUPT TWO MAJOR PROJECTS IN NORTH ", 2006-10-19) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice pressed the ROK government on to fully implement U.N.-authorized sanctions against the DPRK for its nuclear test, but she encountered reluctance among officials in Seoul, who fear that tough action could lead to increased tensions and even war. ROK officials said they had deferred decisions on whether to suspend two cross-border business projects with the DPRK - the Mount Kumgang tourist resort and the Kaesong Industrial Park.

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4. DPRK on Nuclear Test

BBC News ("N KOREA LINKS TESTS TO 'PRESSURE'", 2006-10-23) reported that the DPRK will not carry out a second nuclear test unless "harassed" by the US, according to media reports in the ROK and Japan. Both reports said that Mr Kim told Mr Tang there were no plans to add to the nuclear test of 9 October but that the DPRK would respond to US pressure. The officials cited by Kyodo said Mr Kim told Mr Tang the US was trying to crush the DPRK through hostile policies, including tough financial sanctions.

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5. DPRK Food Aid

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA FACING WINTER WITH LESS AID ", 2006-10-23) reported that punitive sanctions and intensified scrutiny from the international community aren't the only problems the DPRK faces. The country is also expected to see less aid this winter. UN sanctions imposed on the DPRK do not include a stop to food and humanitarian supplies, but an official with the World Food Program says the DPRK's two biggest aid providers the ROK and the PRC have reduced aid since the DPRK's nuclear test on Oct. 9.

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6. Impact of Sanctions on the DPRK

Donga Ilbo ("BANK SEES NORTH PAIN IF SANCTIONS TAKE HOLD", 2006-10-23) reported that the Bank of Korea said yesterday, in a report prepared for a legislator, that international financial sanctions on the DPRK could deal a heavy blow to the DPRK's shaky economy. A halving of the DPRK's external trade, the paper said, would reduce economic growth by nearly 5.5 percentage points; a 70-percent falloff in trade would drop economic output by 8.25 points.

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7. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Kyodo ("CHINA NOT OPTIMISTIC TOWARD EARLY RESUMPTION OF 6-WAY TALKS ", 2006-10-23) reported that the PRC is not optimistic toward an early resumption of the six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear programs after the country's Oct. 9 nuclear test, a Japanese lawmaker who met with PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei said Monday. "Vice Foreign Minister Wu said that at this point, China can by no means be optimistic toward the resumption of the six-party talks or toward North Korea's nuclear abandonment," Aisawa said.

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8. US-ROK Security Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("SECURITY MEET HIGHLIGHTS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN U.S., KOREA", 2006-1-23) reported that the ROK-US Security Consultative Meeting on Friday stood out because of the frank way differences between the two allies were made explicit in the press conference. A senior US defense official squarely denied an announcement by a senior ROK military officer that a strategic order was given to specify that the US will provide a nuclear umbrella for the ROK in response to the DPRK's atomic weapons.

[\(return to top\)](#) Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA, U.S. COMPROMISE ON TROOP CONTROL HANDOVER", 2006-10-23) reported that in a compromise, the ROK and the US agreed to complete the handover of full wartime operational control of ROK troops to Seoul between Oct. 15, 2009 and March 15, 2012. The two sides agreed to complete a speedy handover of wartime operation control no later than March 15, 2012, but added the transfer will proceed according to a reasonable timetable agreed by both sides. [\(return to top\)](#)

9. US-ROK Trade Relations

JoongAng Ilbo ("FTA TEAMS HIT ROADBLOCK ON MANUFACTURES", 2006-10-23) reported that the fourth round of free trade negotiations with the US started off with friction inside and outside the meeting room on the southern resort island of Jeju. Inside, the US negotiators demanded sweeping revisions to the ROK's system for importing agricultural products; outside, anti-trade and anti-US demonstrators battled riot police on land and sea.

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10. USFJ Base Realignment

The Associated Press ("JAPAN, U.S. NEARS DEAL ON AIRSPACE PLAN ", 2006-10-23) reported that Japan and the US are nearing agreement on a plan for the partial return to Japan of airspace over a US air base in western Tokyo, a defense official said Monday. Returning the airspace over Yokota Airbase to Japanese control could shorten flight times and ease congestion in the skies over Japan.

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11. PRC Corruption Probe

Reuters ("CHINA PARTY CHIEF APPEALS FOR UNITY AFTER PURGE", 2006-10-23) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao appealed on Sunday to 70 million members of his ruling Communist Party to show solidarity, almost a month after ousting a political ally of predecessor Jiang Zemin. Hu made the call on Sunday in his first joint public appearance with Jiang since the September 24 dismissal of Chen Liangyu as party boss of Shanghai in a continuing crackdown on corruption.

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12. PRC Environment

The Associated Press ("PART OF CHINA'S YELLOW RIVER TURNS RED ", 2006-10-23) reported that a half-mile section of the PRC's Yellow River turned "red and smelly" after an unknown discharge was poured into it from a sewage pipe, state media said. The incident in Lanzhou, a city of 2 million people in western Gansu province, follows a string of industrial accidents that have poisoned major rivers in the PRC over the last year, forcing several cities to shut down their water systems.

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13. PRC Energy Supply

The Hindu ("CHINA DISCOVERS SECOND LARGEST NATURAL GAS RESERVES ", 2006-10-23) reported that energy-hungry the PRC has discovered its second biggest natural gas field with an estimated reserves of over 150 billion cubic meters in Baichengin northwest Xinjiang. The giant natural gas field was found after 10 years of labour, which is the second biggest of its kind in the PRC.

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14. PRC Internet Control

Reuters ("CHINA MOVES TOWARD 'REAL NAME SYSTEM' FOR BLOGS ", 2006-10-23) reported that the Internet Society of the PRC has recommended to the government that bloggers be required to use their real names when they register blogs, state media said, in the latest attempt to regulate free-wheeling Web content. The society, which is affiliated with the Ministry of Information Industry, said no decision had been made but that a 'real name system' was inevitable.

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