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I. NAPSNet

- 1. [DPRK Missile Test](#)
- 2. [Kim Jong-il Military Visits](#)
- 3. [Kim Dae-jung's DPRK Visit](#)
- 4. [ROK-Japan Trade Relations](#)
- 5. [Japan Iraq Withdrawal](#)
- 6. [Japan on Fissile Material Treaty](#)
- 7. [Taiwan Leadership](#)
- 8. [PRC-Angola Relations](#)
- 9. [US-PRC Military Relations](#)
- 10. [Shanghai Cooperation Organization](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Missile Test

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA MISSILE TEST NOT A SURE THING: SKOREA", 2006-0-

-20) reported that the ROK said there was no certainty the DPRK would test-fire a missile, amid mounting international concern over reports of launch preparations in the state. "The reports say it may be imminent that North Koreans may test-fire a long-range missile but it is not quite sure they have put fuel in the rocket," said Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon. "What seems sure is that they have assembled this missile on the launching pad," he said. A top ROK intelligence official said the DPRK appeared to be still fueling the missile, contrary to earlier reports.

[\(return to top\)](#) Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA INSISTS IT CAN TEST MISSILES ", 2006-06-20) reported that the DPRK declared Tuesday it is not bound by its own moratorium on long-range missile tests, a Japanese news report said, prompting Japan and the ROK to pledge to cooperate to stop Pyongyang's apparent plans for a launch. The Tokyo-Seoul agreement came during a 25-minute phone conversation late Tuesday between Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso and his counterpart, Ban Ki-moon, Japan's Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Aso told Ban that a missile test would be a threat to regional security, while Ban replied it was necessary to cooperate to get Pyongyang to call off the launch, according to the statement. [\(return to top\)](#) Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA'S MISSILE TEST TO DEEPEN ISOLATION: US AMBASSADOR", 2006-06-20) reported that US Ambassador to the ROK Alexander Vershbow said that the DPRK would face deeper isolation if it went ahead with a long-range missile test. Vershbow issued the warning after he met former ROK president Kim Dae-Jung, who plans to visit Pyongyang next week. "We both agreed carrying out the test at this time would further compound North Korea's isolation and put it more apart from the international community," Vershbow told journalists after the 80-minute-long meeting, Yonhap news agency reported. "I stressed that ... we would like to establish more normal relations with North Korea through the six-party process. The door is still open despite the North Korean boycott of the talks," he said. [\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("CLOUDY SKY CASTS SHROUD AROUND NORTH KOREA MISSILE PLAN", 2006-06-20) reported that clouds and storms closed in on Tuesday on a site where the DPRK may be preparing to test a long-range missile, potentially delaying a flight regional powers have warned the reclusive state not to launch. [\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap ("N. KOREA MENTIONS MISSILE PROGRAM FOR FIRST TIME SINCE CRISIS FLARES", 2006-06-20) reported that the DPRK mentioned its missile program Monday night for the first time since a flurry of foreign media reports said the country was preparing to fire a long-range missile capable of hitting the US. "The (North) Koreans, if necessary, have the due rights to possess missiles that can immediately obstruct the U.S. reckless aerial espionage activities," the (DPRK's) Korean Central TV Broadcasting Station said in its evening news. The television station, however, stopped short of saying the state actually has a plan to fire a missile sooner or later. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. Kim Jong-il Military Visits

JoongAng Ilbo ("NORTH'S LEADER STEPS UP VISITS TO MILITARY UNITS", 2006-06-20) reported that as tension remained high over a possible missile launch by the DPRK, its leader, Kim Jong-il, seems to have stepped up efforts to maintain his close ties with the military, intelligence sources say. So far in June, the reclusive leader has visited military units a total of nine times, while last month ? when signs of a possible missile launch were first detected ? he visited the military units eight times. So far this year, Mr. Kim has visited military units a total of 38 times, 19 more than the same period last year.

[\(return to top\)](#)

3. Kim Dae-jung's DPRK Visit

Korea Times ("N. KOREA VISIT MAY BE POSTPONED' ", 2006-06-19) reported that former President Kim Dae-jung's scheduled trip to Pyongyang later this month may be delayed due to

tensions over the DPRK's alleged move to test-fire a long-range missile and Pyongyang's lukewarm attitude toward the trip, according to some involved in preparations for the visit Monday. If the visit gets delayed again, it could be postponed until as late as autumn considering the 80-year-old's health condition and the weather in summer, sources said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

4. ROK-Japan Trade Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("JAPAN BLAMES SEOUL FOR IMPASSE", 2006-06-20) reported that negotiations on a free trade pact between the ROK and Japan remain at a stalemate because Seoul has demanded too many concessions in the agricultural sector from Tokyo, a top Japanese envoy said yesterday. Through a trade agreement with Seoul, Japanese Ambassador to the ROK Shotaro Oshima said, it would be possible to create a new economic bloc encompassing the two Asian economic powers and the US, with which Japan has an economic partnership agreement ? a broader free trade deal.

[\(return to top\)](#)

5. Japan Iraq Withdrawal

The Associated Press ("JAPAN PULLING ITS 600 TROOPS FROM IRAQ ", 2006-06-20) reported that Japan ordered the withdrawal of its ground troops from Iraq, declaring the humanitarian mission a success and ending a groundbreaking dispatch that tested the limits of its pacifist postwar constitution. Tokyo will now consider expanding air operations in Iraq to include transport of medical supplies and UN personnel, following a request from UN General-Secretary Kofi Annan.

[\(return to top\)](#)

6. Japan on Fissile Material Treaty

Kyodo ("JAPAN CALLS FOR START OF TALKS ON FISSILE MATERIAL CUT-OFF TREATY", 2006-0-20) reported that Japan called for a prompt launch of international negotiations Tuesday to conclude a fissile material cut-off treaty as early as possible so as to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation norms. The treaty is designed to add a binding international commitment to existing constraints on nuclear weapons-usable fissile material. The US proposal calls for halting any future production of the fissile material used to make nuclear weapons.

[\(return to top\)](#)

7. Taiwan Leadership

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT STANDS FIRM, SAYS WIFE INNOCENT ", 2006-0-20) reported that Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian, under pressure over scandals implicating his family, rejected opposition demands that he resign and insisted his wife was innocent of any wrongdoing. "The allegations are immoral and must not be used to play up against me," he said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

8. PRC-Angola Relations

Agence France-Presse ("ANGOLA GIVES CHINESE PM FULL BACKING FOR AFRICA POLICY ",

2006-06-20) reported that Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos endorsed the PRC's much-criticized economic policy in Africa, during a landmark visit by PRC Premier Wen Jiabao to the oil-rich country, Beijing's top fuel supplier. For his part Wen said Beijing would encourage more investment in Angola, the PRC's second largest trading partner on the continent.

[\(return to top\)](#)

9. US-PRC Military Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA SENDS DELEGATION TO OBSERVE WARGAMES ", 2006-06-20) reported that for the first time, PRC military officers are observing American war games in the Pacific, where the two countries have potential conflicts over Taiwan and Beijing's territorial claims. Beijing said Tuesday that it has sent a delegation to five-day exercises that began Monday at the US island territory of Guam, east of the Philippines. They involve 30 ships — including three aircraft carriers — 22,000 troops and 280 aircraft.

[\(return to top\)](#)

10. Shanghai Cooperation Organization

United Press International ("SHANGHAI PACT STRUTS WORLD STAGE", 2006-06-19) reported that leaders and senior representatives of more than half the world's population returned to Shanghai for the meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The SCO has already succeeded in bringing Russia and the PRC together in military coordination far closer than they ever were during the Cold War. Over the past year, the SCO has seen its most notable successes yet in rolling back US influence in Central Asia. The toppling of President Askar Askayev in Kyrgyzstan and major anti-government demonstrations in the Uzbek city of Andijan led to Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov expelling the US from its strategically vital air bases in the country.

[\(return to top\)](#)

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