NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, April 25, 2007

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, April 25, 2007", NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, 2007, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-wednesday-april-25-2007/

NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, April 25, 2007

NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, April 25, 2007

I. NAPSNet

- 1. DPRK Funds Transfer Issues
2. US-DPRK Talks on Six Party Agreement
3. DPRK Off US Arms Trade Blacklist
4. DPRK Military Celebration
5. DPRK Defector-Refugee Hunger Strike
6. ROK Trade
7. USFK Base Realignment
8. ROK-Japan Joint History Study Group
9. Japan Constitutional Revision
10. Sino-Japanese Trade Relations
11. Cross Strait Relations
12. Attack on PRC Oil Field
13. PRC Minorities and Development

Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Funds Transfer Issues

Agence France-Presse ("N KOREA CONFIRMS BANK TRANSFER PROBLEMS", 2007-04-25) reported that the DPRK has confirmed that problems in transferring its cash from a Macau bank are delaying progress on the nuclear disarmament deal. But the ROK says the row over the accounts is close to being settled. Analysts say that apart from just recovering the money from BDA, the DPRK wants to ensure that its access to the international financial system has been restored. Meanwhile, foreign banks are reluctant to accept the transferred cash because it is seen as tainted.

2. US-DPRK Talks on Six Party Agreement

Associated Press ("BUSH ADVISER URGES NORTH KOREANS TO ACT", 2007-04-25) reported that Victor Cha, President Bush's top adviser on the DPRK has personally delivered a pointed message to DPRK officials, urging them to act on a nuclear disarmament pledge as U.S. patience is limited. The DPRK officials said they would convey the message to Pyongyang. Cha traveled to New York with Sung Kim, the State Department's director of Korean affairs. The US State Department occasionally sends messages to Pyongyang through DPRK officials at the United Nations in New York, but it is unusual for a White House official to make the trip and indicates the importance the Bush administration attaches to making progress on the issue.

3. DPRK Off US Arms Trade Blacklist

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA OFF U.S. ARMS DEALERS BLACKLIST", 2007-04-25) Reported that Washington said last Monday that this year DPRK institutions are off its blacklist of suspected arms traders with rogue countries like Iran and Syria. While Washington did impose sanctions this year on 14 overseas individual corporate and government institutions, none have ties to the DPRK.

4. DPRK Military Celebration

Associated Press ("EMBATTLED NORTH KOREA CELEBRATES ITS MILITARY", 2007-04-25) reported that a military parade celebrating the 75th birthday of the DPRK People's Army was held in Pyongyang today. In the weeks leading up to the celebrations, the state-run media repeatedly said that the nuclear capability means that the DPRK can finally feel safe from foreign invaders. The credit, they say, is due to Kim's "songun," or "army-first," policy. Some analysts suggest that Kim's songun policy means that Washington and its allies will have to meet the DPRK's needs not just for massive economic aid but also for normalized ties and other security guarantees before Kim can tell his people that they can let go of the nuclear bomb.

"I do not believe that Kim Jong-il will trade off nuclear weapons for mere economic benefits," said Peter Hayes, director at the Nautilus Institute, a research institute based in San Francisco. "The main benefit from becoming a self-perceived 'dignified nuclear state' that was 5,000 years in the making is political, not economic."

5. DPRK Defector-Refugee Hunger Strike

Associated Press ("MORE THAN 400 NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS ON HUNGER STRIKE IN THAILAND, DEMAND PASSAGE TO SOUTH", 2007-04-25) reported that more than 400 DPR Korean defector-refugees held in a Thai immigration facility have launched a hunger strike, demanding they be sent to the ROK. The 100 men and 314 women have been staying in the cramped detention center for about three months and are waiting to leave for the ROK. DPR Koreans have been arriving in Thailand and usually staying for about three months before being allowed to fly to Seoul, but "the flow has stopped," leading to the hunger strike. Seoul has said it would accept any DPR Korean who wants to resettle in the South, but is concerned the rapid increase in arrivals could strain inter-Korean ties and complicate international efforts to resolve the DPRK's nuclear program. In 2004, the

ROK airlifted about 460 DPR Koreans out of Vietnam in the biggest mass defection ever, drawing rebukes from the DPRK and leading to a chill in inter-Korean relations.

6. ROK Trade

Joongang Ilbo ("EMBOLDENED SEOUL PLANS NINE NEW SETS OF FTA TALKS", 2007-04-25) reported that the ROK will soon decide whether or not to launch negotiations for free trade agreements with the PRC, Australia and select Gulf states, the nation's top economic policymaker said yesterday. The ROK government will likely also officially declare the launch of FTA talks with the European Union, the first round of which is expected to be held in Seoul May 7-10.

7. USFK Base Realignment

Chosun Ilbo ("USFK CHIEF HINTS AT REVIEW OF BASE RELOCATION PLAN", 2007-04-25) reported that the commander of the US Forces Korea Gen. Burwell Bell has hinted that a review of US base relocations in the ROK will be inevitable unless the ROK government shoulders a bigger share in the upkeep of US forces here. In a written statement to a Senate Armed Service Committee hearing on Monday, Gen. Burwell Bell said, "Without more equitable allied SMA funding, we may be forced to recommend a range of fiscal measures to the U.S. government, including a review of base relocation and consolidation plans."

8. ROK-Japan Joint History Study Group

Kyodo ("JAPAN, S. KOREA HEADS OF HISTORY STUDY GROUP SET TO MEET FRI.", 2007-04-25) reported that the leaders of the Japanese and ROK historians' groups are set to meet in Seoul on Friday to prepare for the second round of joint history study with a view to holding the first joint panel meeting soon, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said. The second round is expected to set up a subgroup to study history textbooks used in the two countries as well as three subgroups -- one on ancient history, the other on medieval history and another on modern and contemporary history.

9. Japan Constitutional Revision

Bloomberg ("JAPAN CREATES PANEL TO REVIEW COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE", 2007-04-25) reported that Japan's government set up a panel to study how the country may come to the aid of an ally that is attacked, which is prohibited under the country's pacifist constitution, the country's top spokesman said. The panel will look at what's referred to as collective self-defense and will consider the legal framework of Japan's right to national defense and how this relates to the international arena, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuhisa Shiozaki said.

10. Sino-Japanese Trade Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA BECOMES JAPAN'S TOP TRADE PARTNER", 2007-04-25) reported that Japan said Wednesday that the PRC became its top trading partner for the first time since World War II, unseating the US in the past fiscal year despite strained ties between the Asian giants. "This reflects the gradual shift of production by Japanese firms to China. I think the trend of growing trade with China will continue," said finance ministry official Koichi Nose. The US is still Japan's largest export destination but Japanese exports to the PRC have been growing in recent years, while imports are strong.

11. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN'S OPPOSITION EYES TRADE DEALS WITH CHINA", 2007-04-25) reported that Taiwan's main opposition party is eyeing closer trade ties with the PRC's Communists to boost the

island's economy and the party's chances in presidential elections in 2008. Arrangements were being made for PRC President Hu Jintao to meet Lien Chan during the Cross-Strait Economic and Trade Forum in the PRC capital this weekend, a spokesman for the PRC's policy-making Taiwan Affairs Office said.

12. Attack on PRC Oil Field

Agence France-Presse ("74 KILLED IN ATTACK ON CHINESE OIL VENTURE IN ETHIOPIA ", 2007-04-25) reported that scores of gunmen attacked a PRC-run oil field in a remote area of Ethiopia on Tuesday, killing nine Chinese and 65 Ethiopians, in a raid claimed by a separatist rebel group. Seven Chinese workers were also kidnapped in the dawn attack by the Ogaden National Liberation Front, which is fighting for the independence of ethnic Somalis in Ethiopia's eastern Ogaden region.

13. PRC Minorities and Development

BBC News ("CHINA BOOM 'THREATENS MINORITIES'", 2007-04-25) reported that some of the PRC's biggest minority groups are failing to benefit from the PRC's rapid economic development, a new report has found. The report also said greater contact with the rest of the PRC is threatening indigenous cultures and languages. The findings have been published by the Minority Rights Group International and Human Rights in China. They assessed the situation of three main ethnic minority groups, the Uighurs, Mongols and Tibetans.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

Other Nautilus Institute and related information services are available online at:

The East Asian Science and Security Network (EASSNet): https://nautilus.org/aesnet/index.html

The Austral Peace and Security Network (APSNet): http://nautilus.rmit.edu.au/

The Southeast Asia Peace and Security Network (SEAPSNet) from the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA)

http://www.siiaonline.org/seapsnet

NAPSNet is produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development affiliated with the University of San Francisco, Center for the Pacific Rim and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. If you have any questions about this report please e-mail: scott@nautilus.org

back to top

home | about us | site map | contact us | photogallery

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-wednesday-april-25-2007/

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