

NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, August 15, 2007

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I. NAPSNet

- 1. [Six Party Nuclear Working Group](#)
- 2. [KEEI on DPRK Energy](#)
- 3. [DPRK Floods](#)
- 4. [US on DPRK Flood Relief](#)
- 5. [Inter-Korean Summit](#)
- 6. [Inter-Korean Family Reunions](#)
- 7. [Japanese Abductee Investigations](#)
- 8. [ROK Hostages in Afghanistan](#)
- 9. [Japan on WWII Surrender Anniversary](#)
- 10. [Yasukuni Shrine Issue](#)
- 11. [US on PRC Military](#)
- 12. [US on PRC Military](#)
- 13. [PRC Media Control](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Nuclear Working Group

Associated Press ("DELEGATES UPBEAT AHEAD OF MEETING ON NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR PROGRAM", 2007-08-15) reported that envoys to six-party talks were upbeat Wednesday ahead of meetings in northeastern PRC to discuss technical and timing issues surrounding Pyongyang's full declaration of its nuclear facilities. Ri Gun, the DPRK delegate to the meetings appeared confident about the meetings. "I think the atmosphere at these talks will be good," he was quoted as saying by Japan's Kyodo News agency.

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

2. KEEI on DPRK Energy

Chosun Ilbo ("THINK TANKS SLAMS SOLUTIONS TO N.KOREA'S ENERGY CRISIS", 2007-08-15) reported that The Korea Energy Economics Institute (KEEI) says the construction of light-water reactors or coal power plants or the direct provision of electricity will not be enough to help the DPRK relieve its serious energy shortage. The institute offered the assessment in a report on energy aid to the North published late last year.

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

3. DPRK Floods

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREAN FLOODING WORST IN A DECADE -- RELIEF AGENCY", 2007-08-15) reported that Terje Lysholm, acting head of delegation for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), told Agence France-Presse that the current flooding in the DPRK is "definitely the worst flooding in a decade". Lysholm said six provinces had been flooded, with South Hamgyong on the east coast and Kangwon near the border with the ROK suffering the most damage. He said IFRC assessment teams were still gathering information from the affected areas, but at least 14,000 houses were confirmed to have been destroyed in the two worst-hit areas. Public buildings, such as hospitals and schools, in South Hamgyong and Kangwon had also been destroyed or damaged. Lysholm said he could not confirm a World Food Program assessment that up to 300,000 people may have been affected.

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

4. US on DPRK Flood Relief

Hankoryeh ("U.S. TO CONSIDER FLOOD AID TO NORTH KOREA", 2007-08-15) reported that the United States State Department said it would consider humanitarian aid to help DPRK recover from massive floods. The reports of extensive damage has "caught our attention," department spokesman Sean McCormack told reporters. Christopher Hill, the U.S. nuclear envoy currently traveling in PRC, talked to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice about helping Pyongyang, McCormack said.

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

5. Inter-Korean Summit

Hankoryeh ("TWO KOREAS AGREE ON ROH'S NORTH KOREA TRIP BY LAND", 2007-08-14) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun will make an overland trip to Pyongyang for a summit

with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il later this month. The Koreas met for preparatory meeting for the summit in Kaesong. The two Koreas agreed that Seoul will send a group of 202 people, including 150 officials and 50 journalists, to the summit, as it had hoped to organize a slightly bigger delegation than the 180-member group it had sent seven years ago, when then President Kim Dae-jung visited Pyongyang for the first-ever summit with Kim Jong Il.

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

6. Inter-Korean Family Reunions

Xinhua ("DPRK, SOUTH KOREA CONCLUDES SIXTH VIDEO MEETING OF SEPARATED RELATIVES", 2007-08-14) reported that the sixth inter-Koreas video meeting of separated families and relatives concluded on Tuesday. In total, 563 relatives of separated families from the DPRK and ROK participated in the two-day meeting at two video-chatting rooms in Pyongyang and Seoul. According to the agreement signed between the red-cross associations, the two sides are going to hold another video-meeting in this autumn.

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

7. Japanese Abductee Investigations

Yomiuri Shimbun ("VOICE PATTERNS MIGHT IDENTIFY 'ABDUCTEE'", 2007-08-15) reported that a private organization investigating missing Japanese who might have been abducted to the DPRK said it is examining the voice patterns of a DPRK radio announcer who went missing off Tottori Prefecture in 1988, after a report that a man in a photograph resembles the Japanese man. The Investigation Commission on Missing Japanese Probably Related to DPRK earlier consulted a professor of forensic anthropology at Tokyo Dental College, to examine photographs of the man. In a previous case, a man and woman in a photograph taken in the DPRK had a close resemblance to missing Japanese nationals but were eventually found out to be different people.

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

8. ROK Hostages in Afghanistan

Yonhap ("DIRECT TALKS WITH S. KOREA ON HOSTAGES TO RESUME THURSDAY: TALIBAN", 2007-08-15) reported that the Taliban militant group said that it is likely to hold direct talks with ROK officials on Thursday for the release of 19 ROK hostages in Afghanistan. "We are highly likely to hold direct negotiations with the South Korean side tomorrow," Qari Yousuf Ahmadi, a purported spokesman for the militant group, told Yonhap News.

[\(return to top\)](#) Joongang Ilbo ("TALIBAN MIGHT REDUCE DEMANDS FOR HOSTAGES", 2007-0-15) reported that the Taliban have been authorized to reduce the number of prisoners they want freed in exchange for the 19 ROK hostages still being held in Afghanistan. "If true, it is certainly a good sign," said a ROK government official who declined to be named. [\(return to top\)](#)

9. Japan on WWII Surrender Anniversary

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN EXPRESSES REMORSE ON WWII SURRENDER DAY ", 2007-08-15) reported that Japan expressed remorse for past atrocities on the anniversary of its World War II surrender. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pledged that his country would never return to war. Japan "caused tremendous damage and suffering to many countries, especially in Asian nations," the

leader said, using identical language to previous statements by Japanese leaders. "Representing the people of Japan, I with deep remorse offer my condolences to the people victimised," Abe said.

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

10. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo ("ONLY TAKAICHI IN CABINET VISITS YASUKUNI SHRINE ON WAR ANNIVERSARY", 2007-08-15) reported that state minister Sanae Takaichi visited the war-related Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo on Wednesday while Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his other Cabinet members did not do so on the day. Former Among other politicians who visited Yasukuni were Tokyo Gov. Shintaro Ishihara and a group of more than 90 lawmakers, including some vice ministers, who have called for legislators to visit the shrine.

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

11. US on PRC Military

Reuters ("CHINA MUST BE TRANSPARENT ON NAVAL BUILD-UP: U.S.", 2007-08-15) reported that the PRC must be more transparent about its military intentions and naval build-up in the Asia-Pacific to ease strategic concerns, US Navy Secretary Donald C. Winter said during a visit to Australia. "We continue to take a look at China and try to understand what the Chinese intent is," Winter told reporters. Winter said a new theatre defense missile under development by the US and Japan, and which could be deployed on a new fleet of Australian navy destroyers, would boost regional stability.

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

12. US on PRC Military

Agence France-Presse ("US MILITARY SEES LOOMING CHINA THREAT TO SATELLITES", 2007-0-15) reported that the PRC may be just three years away from being able to disrupt US military satellites in a regional conflict, a senior US military leader said, citing a recent anti-satellite test and other advances. "It is not inconceivable that within about three years we can be challenged at a near peer level in a region," said Lieutenant General Kevin Campbell, head of the US Army's Space and Missile Defense Command.

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

13. PRC Media Control

The New York Times ("CHINA ANNOUNCES MEDIA CRACKDOWN", 2007-08-15) reported that the PRC today disclosed a crackdown on "false news reports, unauthorized publications and bogus journalists," two months before the opening of the politically sensitive Communist Party congress. The crackdown, confirmed by the government's official web site, comes after a television journalist was given a one-year prison sentence and a \$130 fine for allegedly fabricating a story about Beijing dumpling makers that were said to use cardboard as filler. The Committee to Protect Journalists issued a statement today denouncing the prison sentence noting hints that the story may actually have been true, like an effort by police and propaganda officials to discourage further investigation of the original report.

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

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