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I. NAPSNet

- 1. Six Party Talks Diplomacy
  2. IAEA Visit to DPRK
  3. Vershbow on Korea Peace Mechanism
  4. PRC on DPRK Sanctions
  5. Japan on DPRK Threat
  6. DPRK Asylum Seekers in Vietnam
  7. Inside DPRK
  8. DPRK Requests Expired Medication
  9. DPRK on World Population Day
  10. US-ROK Security Alliance
  11. Japan on Afghan Anti-Terror Role
  12. Russian-ROK Oil Pipeline
  13. Japan Elections
  14. Cross Strait Relations
  15. PRC Foreign Diplomacy
  16. PRC Military
  17. PRC Media Control
  18. PRC SARS Outbreak

Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks Diplomacy

Bloomberg ("HILL SEEKS TO FIX DATE FOR NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR TALKS", 2007-07-11) reported that U.S. chief nuclear negotiator Christopher Hill will try to fix a date for resuming the six-nation forum when he visits northeast Asia this week. According to the State Department, Hill will visit Tokyo from July 13, Seoul from July 15 and arrive in Beijing on July 17. Yonhap News reported yesterday that six- nation talks will start on July 18. The PRC Foreign Ministry said it is still discussing a date with the five other nations.

(return to top)

2. IAEA Visit to DPRK

Reuters ("IAEA TEAM LIKELY TO ARRIVE IN NORTH KOREA JULY 14", 2007-07-11) reported that the IAEA nuclear inspectors are likely to arrive in the DPRK on Saturday to verify a promised shutdown of the country's nuclear reactor. "I think they will travel on the 14th, so hopefully they will arrive there on the 14th," IAEA director Mohamed ElBaradei said upon arriving in the ROK.

(return to top)

3. Vershbow on Korea Peace Mechanism

Hankoryeh ("U.S. PREPARED TO BEGIN TALKS WITH N. KOREA FOR PEACE REGIME WITHIN YEAR: VERSHBOW", 2007-07-11) reported that Alexander Vershbow said the United States is ready to begin negotiating with the DPRK before the end of this year to establish a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula if the nation makes a strategic decision to completely give up its nuclear ambition.

(return to top)

4. PRC on DPRK Sanctions

Associated Press ("CHINA SAYS LIFTING U.N. SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREA WOULD HELP FIND A LASTING SOLUTION TO ITS NUCLEAR DISPUTE", 2007-07-10) reported that the PRC's UN ambassador Wang Guangya said lifting U.N. sanctions against the DPRK would help find a lasting solution to the nuclear issue. But said it was up to the "main parties" that sponsored last October's sanctions resolution to call for it to be lifted.

(return to top)

5. Japan on DPRK Threat

Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN HAS 1 MINUTE FOR INTERCEPTION DECISION ", 2007-07-10) reported that anxiety has risen in Japan as a result of a simulated missile attack showing it would take a minimum of six minutes after a missile has been launched by the DPRK for it to be intercepted. It would take 10 minutes for a missile to hit the Tokyo metropolitan area. This gives the Japanese

military less than one minute to respond. This summer, the United States will deploy the Joint Tactical Ground Station (JTAGS), which receives missile launch information directly from an infrared surveillance satellite, at its Misawa Air Base in Aomori Prefecture.

(return to top)

6. DPRK Asylum Seekers in Vietnam

Mainichi Daily News ("4 NORTH KOREANS ENTER DANISH EMBASSY IN VIETNAM IN APPARENT ASYLUM BID", 2007-07-10) reported that four DPR Koreans have entered the Danish Embassy in Vietnam in an apparent bid for eventual asylum in the ROK. The Danish Embassy in Hanoi confirmed by telephone that a family of two adults and two children had entered the building, but gave no further information on how the case would be treated.

(return to top)

7. Inside DPRK

Reuters ("NATION BANS KARAOKE BARS, INTERNET CAFES?", 2007-07-11) reported that the DPRK's security agency has ordered the shutdown of karaoke bars and Internet cafes, saying they are a threat to society. According to an ROK newspaper, refugee-defectors from the reclusive state say such outlets are largely located in the northern region that borders the PRC and are frequented by merchants involved in cross-border business rather than ordinary citizens.

(return to top)

8. DPRK Requests Expired Medication

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA ASKS FOR OLD MEDICINE FROM SOUTH", 2007-07-11) reported that the DPRK has appealed to the ROK for donations of its medicines that have passed expiration dates, in a sign of desperate health conditions. Officials from the ROK-based Institute for Peace Affairs and Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association confirmed the letter. The DPRK also said it would assume responsibility in case of problems in using medicines that are up to a year past expiration.

(return to top)

9. DPRK on World Population Day

People's Daily ("DPRK PROMOTES WOMEN'S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING ON WORLD POPULATION DAY", 2007-07-11) reported that the DPRK held a series of activities to promote women's health and well-being on Wednesday, the World Population Day. Yang Song Il, chief of the External Exchange Section of the DPRK Population Center, told local media that the DPRK government has long pursued the policy of encouraging population growth and paid great attention to the health of women. Yang said the DPRK began cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) from 1986 and is now in the 4th phase of cooperation.

(return to top)

10. US-ROK Security Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("EIGHTH U.S. ARMY TO STAY", 2007-07-11) reported that the Eighth U.S. Army Command said the force will be reorganized but stay in the ROK as a deterrent. It was the first time the Eighth Army has broken its silence about its future amid feverish speculation that it could leave. The Eighth will probably be reshaped under a new worldwide US military plan into a "unit of employment", or UE for short, which is superior to an army corps. The Eighth will apparently take charge of the entire Asia-Pacific region alongside US Pacific Army Command in Hawaii.

(return to top)

11. Japan on Afghan Anti-Terror Role

Kyodo News ("KOIKE WANTS MSDF MISSION TO BACK AFGHAN ANTI TERROR CAMPAIGN EXTENDED", 2007-07-11) reported that Defense Minister Yuriko Koike expressed desire to extend the Maritime Self-Defense Force's mission to refuel US-led coalition forces in the Indian Ocean in support of the anti terrorism campaign in Afghanistan beyond the current expiration date of Nov. 1. "I believe the international community is also calling on Japan to continue activities that befit us," Koike said in a group interview.

(return to top)

12. Russian-ROK Oil Pipeline

Donga Ilbo ("RUSSIA EXPORTS NATURAL GAS DIRECTLY TO SOUTH KOREA", 2007-07-11) reported that Russia is planning to construct underwater gas pipes that will connect Siberia and the East Sea. Gazprom, the state-run energy corporation in Russia, has specified a plan to export natural gas from Sakhalin and Eastern Siberia to the East Sea via undersea gas pipes in its annual report released on June 29. In the report, an export channel stretching from East Siberia to the PRC's Dalian to the ROK's Pyeongtaek, considered to be the most feasible line, and the construction project for ground gas pipes in the DPRK, were excluded.

(return to top)

13. Japan Elections

Bloomberg ("ABE LOSS JULY 29 MAY RETURN JAPAN TO REVOLVING-DOOR GOVERNMENT", 2007-07-11) reported that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Liberal Democratic Party faces parliamentary upper- house elections on July 29 as his approval ratings slump. A defeat would likely force Abe, 52, to resign. His fall may mean a return to the revolving-door premierships of the 1990s, fueled by factional politics within the governing LDP, which predecessor Junichiro Koizumi temporarily quelled.

(return to top)

14. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA, TAIWAN IN BATTLE FOR LATIN AMERICAN SUPPORT", 2007-0--11) reported that the PRC and Taiwan continued to escalate their battle for support in Latin America, with officials from both criss-crossing the region. Latin America has become a major

battleground for the two rivals with each accusing the other of luring allies away with "checkbook diplomacy." Beijing on Tuesday canceled 15 million dollars of debt owed by Guyana. Meanwhile, Taiwan's vice president Annette Lu was in Guatemala Wednesday on the second day of a three-day visit.

(return to top) Kyodo News ("TAIWAN TO SEEK U.N. MEMBERSHIP, DPP SEEN STAYING ON IN POWER: CHEN", 2007-07-11) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian said that Taiwan's joining the United Nations is the wish of the island's people and expressed confidence his Democratic Progressive Party will continue on in power after presidential and legislative elections next year. Chen, whose second term as president will end in May 20 next year, reiterated his government's intention to apply for UN membership under the name "Taiwan," instead of its official name "Republic of China," under which Taipei held the PRC's U.N. seat until 1971. (return to top)

15. PRC Foreign Diplomacy

International Herald Tribune ("CHINA'S GIFT OF BUILDING TO EAST TIMOR TYPIFIES CHARM OFFENSIVE IN ASIA", 2007-07-11) reported that the future Foreign Ministry of East Timor is a gift from the PRC government. Together with a new presidential palace that is also being built by the PRC, it will be one of the most impressive buildings in this low-rise capital. The projects are the most visible sign of a growing PRC presence in this threadbare little country with few natural resources and only marginal geographical advantages to tempt a great power.

(return to top)

16. PRC Military

Donga-Ilbo ("PRESIDENT HU'S DOMINANCE OVER THE MILITARY ", 2007-07-11) reported that three years after PRC President Hu Jintao seized control of the armed forces, he now has complete dominance over it. Since President Hu was inaugurated as the president of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China in September 2004, he has replaced most of the major posts such as the commanders of the six major military districts out of all seven in the PRC. The media in Hong Kong has analyzed that, "the recent promotion of the three generals and the replacement of the commanders of the four military districts show that President Hu's dominance over the military has become complete."

(return to top)

17. PRC Media Control

Middle East Times ("CHINA SHUTS DOWN WEB SITE POPULAR WITH WESTERN NGOS", 2007-0--11) reported that the PRC police have shut down a Beijing-based Internet news site that counted the World Bank, UN agencies, and a host of foreign aid groups as clients, its British founder said. The China Development Brief was told to end its operations July 4 as it was in violation of laws regarding the carrying out of social surveys, founding editor Nick Young said. "I was formally told that I'm in breach of the law and that any further postings on the site would be in breach of the law," Young said. "I've been told clearly that almost any conversation I have with a Chinese person can be construed as conducting a survey, and any comment posted on the site could violate the law."

(return to top)

18. PRC SARS Outbreak

The Associated Press ("SARS DOCTOR CAN'T LEAVE CHINA", 2007-07-11) reported that a PRC military surgeon who broke government secrecy to reveal the true scale of Beijing's SARS outbreak in 2003 has been banned from leaving the PRC to accept a human rights award, a rights watchdog said. Jiang Yanyong, 76, was praised as an "honest doctor" by the PRC media after he wrote a letter to reporters saying that Beijing had more than 100 unreported SARS cases.

(return to top)

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