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I. NAPSNet

- 1. [DPRK Nuclear Program](#)
- 2. [DPRK on Six Party Talks](#)
- 3. [DPRK Missile Test](#)
- 4. [DPRK-Japan Relations](#)
- 5. [EU on DPRK Human Rights](#)
- 6. [DPRK Economic Reforms](#)
- 7. [US-ROK Trade Relations](#)
- 8. [Comfort Women Issue](#)
- 9. [PRC on US-Japan-Australia-India Relations](#)
- 10. [PRC on Political Reform](#)
- 11. [Hong Kong Political Reform](#)
- 12. [PRC Corruption](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters ("N.KOREA ALLOWS IAEA TEAM TO VISIT NUCLEAR REACTOR", 2007-06-27) reported that the DPRK will allow a team of U.N. nuclear watchdog officials to visit the Yongbyon reactor it

has agreed to shut down under a disarmament-for-aid deal, the International Atomic Energy Agency said. A diplomat close to the IAEA said that if Heinonen's team finalized terms for an inspector mission, the agency's 35-nation board of governors would hold a one-day special meeting -- probably on July 9 -- to ratify the deal. Inspectors would then be immediately deployed to the DPRK.

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

2. DPRK on Six Party Talks

Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA HOPES 6-PARTY MINISTERIAL TALKS IN AUGUST ", 2007-06-27) reported that the DPRK said on June 23 that it is talking with the US to hold a six-party foreign ministers' meeting in early August. A spokesperson for the DPRK Foreign Ministry said in an interview with the Korean Central News Agency, the country's official news agency, that, "The two sides (Pyongyang and Washington) agreed to check the possibility of holding a six-party foreign ministers' meeting on the sidelines of the ministerial meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum scheduled for early August in the Philippines, and to cooperate to successfully hold the meeting."

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

3. DPRK Missile Test

Korea Times ("N. KOREA FIRES SHORT-RANGE MISSILE FOR 3RD TIME THIS YEAR", 2007-06-27) reported that the DPRK is believed to have fired one surface-to-surface missile with a range of about 100 kilometers to the East Sea between the Korean Peninsula and Japan Wednesday. "We have detected signs that the North fired one missile toward the East Sea from the coast near Hamheung, South Hamgyeong Province, around 11:30 a.m. today," said a government official. "We have yet to identify what type of missile it is but it is presumed to be a surface-to-surface missile," he said.

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

4. DPRK-Japan Relations

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA ENVOY SAYS NO OUTLOOK FOR IMPROVED TIES UNDER JAPAN'S ABE ", 2007-06-27) reported that the DPRK's envoy for the country's relations with Japan expressed pessimism toward improving ties under the government of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, saying "there is no outlook" for better relations between the two nations. In separate interviews with Kyodo News, Song Il Ho, ambassador in charge of diplomatic normalization talks with Japan, and Ri Pyong Dok, researcher in charge of Japan at the DPRK Foreign Ministry, said they do not see the point of holding bilateral talks with Japan under the six-party framework until Tokyo changes its attitude over key disputes.

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

5. EU on DPRK Human Rights

Korea Times ("EU URGES NK TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS", 2007-06-27) reported that the DPRK is willing to discuss ways of improving human right conditions in the country with the international community, a member of the European Parliament, said. "We made it clear that human rights dialogue (between North Korea and the European Union) should start again," Hubert Pirker, head of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the Korean Peninsula, told reporters in Seoul. He said the DPRK was "never aggressive, accepting what we were urging and mentioning

they were ready to discuss it," Pirker said.

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

6. DPRK Economic Reforms

Kyodo ("N. KOREA BEGINS COLLECTING REAL ESTATE USAGE FEES", 2007-06-27) reported that the DPRK has begun collecting usage fees on real estate in some areas of the country, and is working on the details for implementing the system throughout the nation, senior officials of a DPRK think tank said. Yun Jae Chang and O Tae Ho, both professors at the Academy of Social Sciences, said that the collection of fees, believed to be the equivalent of a real estate tax. The system is believed to be part of economic reforms which began in July 2002 that have included salary hikes and price adjustments.

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

7. US-ROK Trade Relations

Yonhap ("SOUTH KOREA TO DECIDE ON CHANGES IN US FREE TRADE PACT ON THURSDAY", 2007-06-27) reported that the ROK will hold a meeting of economy-related ministers to decide whether to accept a US request to modify parts of a bilateral free trade agreement before the signing of the agreement this weekend, an official said. The ROK and the US must sign the agreement by the end of this month before US President George W. Bush's authority to "fast track" any such agreement expires.

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

8. Comfort Women Issue

The Asahi Shimbun ("U.S. PUSHES ON 'COMFORT WOMEN'", 2007-06-27) reported that Japan should apologize and accept responsibility for the sexual exploitation of thousands of "comfort women" during World War II, according to a resolution overwhelmingly adopted Tuesday by the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee. The resolution, known as House Resolution 121, was passed by a vote of 39-2.

[\(return to top\)](#) The New York Times ("ASKED FOR APOLOGY, JAPAN PLAYS FOR TIME IN SEX SLAVERY STANDOFF", 2007-06-27) reported that even before a US Congressional panel overwhelmingly passed a resolution urging Japan to apologize for its wartime sex slavery, the Japanese government said it would have no comment. Already Mr. Abe, who initially said Japan would not apologize even if the resolution passed, has quieted his defiance in a bid to minimize its impact. [\(return to top\)](#)

9. PRC on US-Japan-Australia-India Relations

Outlook India ("BE 'OPEN AND INCLUSIVE': CHINA TELLS INDIA, US, JAPAN, AUS", 2007-06-27) reported that the PRC has asked India, the US, Japan and Australia, who are trying to forge a quadripartite format not to go against the global trend and be "open and inclusive" while a PRC expert believes it would "divide" Asia. Commenting on the gathering of officials from the four nations, the Deputy Director of the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies under the PRC Academy of Social Sciences, Professor Sun Shihai said it was a bad move that would break unity among Asian countries.

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

10. PRC on Political Reform

Washington Post ("DESCRIBING VISION FOR CHINA, HU DEFENDS REFORMS, REJECTS CALLS FOR DEMOCRACY", 2007-06-27) reported that President Hu Jintao, in a solemn speech laying out his views, said that the PRC's swift economic reforms must continue but that the Communist Party should retain its monopoly on political power for the foreseeable future. "Reform and opening to the outside world are a requirement to liberate and develop socialist productive strength and create systems and mechanisms with vigor," he declared, using party jargon for the economic reforms set in motion by Deng Xiaoping. But he also made clear that now is not the time for the PRC to embrace democracy as commonly understood in the West.

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

11. Hong Kong Political Reform

Agence France-Presse ("DEMOCRAT URGES GREATER PRESSURE ON CHINA OVER HONG KONG ", 2007-06-27) reported that international pressure should be stepped up on the PRC in an attempt to win greater democracy for Hong Kong, according to a veteran pro-democracy campaigner and lawmaker in the Asian financial hub. Martin Lee said Hong Kong's leaders alone could not convince Beijing to speed up democratic reform in the former British colony which marks 10 years this weekend since the transfer of sovereignty to the PRC. Lee said foreign powers should also play a role in helping Hong Kong win political reforms, such as the holding of democratic elections, from the PRC.

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

12. PRC Corruption

The Associated Press ("CHINA AUDIT FINDS \$1.9B EMBEZZLEMENT ", 2007-06-27) reported that auditors have found PRC officials stole or misused \$1.9 billion in pension funds and other government money, a state news agency quoted the PRC's chief auditor as saying. The misused or stolen money included \$930 million in pension and social welfare funds, Xinhua cited Li as saying. It gave no details of who was accused of stealing money or whether it was recovered.

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

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