

NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, November 23, 2005

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, November 23, 2005", NAPSNet Daily Report, November 23, 2005, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-wednesday-november-23-2005/>

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I. NAPSNet

1. KEDO Project

The Associated Press ("U.S., PARTNERS END N. KOREA NUKE PROJECT", 2005-11-23) reported that the US and its partners in an energy consortium have terminated a project to build two light-

water atomic reactors for the DPRK, officials said. On Tuesday, the executive board of KEDO concluded a two-day private meeting without issuing a formal statement. However, US delegate, Ambassador Joseph DiTrani, said after the meeting that the board members had agreed on the "termination" of the light-water reactor project, KEDO spokesman Brian Kremer confirmed.

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2. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA SET TO IMPORT N. KOREAN GRAPHITE THIS YEAR", 2005-11-23) reported that the ROK may import DPRK graphite products this year in what could be a milestone for cross-border economic relations, the head of a state resource developer said on Wednesday. It will be the first time the ROK will bring in DPRK minerals or mineral-based products, said Park Yang-soo, head of the Korea Resources Corp.

[\(return to top\)](#) The Korea Times ("SEOUL SEEKS S-N ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BY 2020", 2005-11-23) reported that Unification Minister Chung Dong-young indicated on Wednesday that the government plans to form an inter-Korean economic community by 2020, describing peace and promotion of economic cooperation as two sides of the same coin to achieve the goal. Chung stressed that putting an end to the hostility between the US and the DPRK and the latter's gaining full membership in the international community hold key for the DPRK to survive and ensure peace on the Korean Peninsula. [\(return to top\)](#)

3. Inter-Korean Athletic Cooperation

Yonhap News ("FIRST INTER-KOREAN MARATHON TO BE HELD IN PYONGYANG", 2005-11-23) reported that a group of RO Koreans left for Pyongyang on Wednesday to take part in a marathon event there this week. The group of 150 ROK citizens is to travel directly to Pyongyang's Sunan airport via an inter-Korean air route, according to ROK organizers. They are to run in Thursday's half-marathon with 150 others from the DPRK.

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4. DPRK Leadership

The Korea Times ("KIM JONG-CHOL MAY BECOME NK'S NEXT LEADER: REPORT", 2005-11-22) reported that speculation is again running high following a report that an heir to DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has been named and the person is starting to make appearances at major public functions, such as a state dinner for the visiting PRC President late last month. Der Spiegel, a weekly magazine based in Germany, claimed on Monday that Kim's second son, Jong-chol, joined the dinner for PRC President Hu Jintao, who made a three-day trip to the DPRK in October. The report claimed Jong-chol's presence at the dinner "strongly suggested" that he has been named to succeed the DPRK leader, and that his presence followed a request by the PRC leader to meet the country's next head of state.

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5. Expert on DPRK Leadership

Donga Ilbo ("IS SOUTH KOREA READY FOR FALL OF NORTH?", 2005-11-23) reported that Francis Fukuyama, a professor at the Johns Hopkins University and author of "The End of History?" voiced

doubts about how the ROK would cope if a regime change occurred in the DPRK, or if Kim Jong-il died, was driven out, or murdered. He recently presented his views in an interview with "Zeitgeist," a Korean quarterly publication, in which he stated that the DPRK government continues to deny its responsibility to its citizens, and that a new regime in the country is needed if this issue is to be resolved. He predicted however that the PRC is not likely to coerce the DPRK regime to change. The professor says chances of the PRC voluntarily putting pressure on the DPRK are remote, and that the PRC has come to realize it does not have significant influence over the DPRK.

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6. DPRK Human Rights

The Associated Press ("N. KOREAN MAN TELLS PRISON HORROR STORY", 2005-11-22) reported that on Tuesday, a former DPRK political prisoner offered grim details of life in a prison camp, saying that he saw many inmates die from overwork and starvation. The ex-inmate, who survived the prison camp at Yodok, about 70 miles northwest of Pyongyang, said a former defector was beaten to death for having contacted Christian representatives in the PRC. He gave reporters a list of inmates including 34 DPR Koreans who had tried to defect and 82 others including former senior bureaucrats, security officials and a diplomat. The identities of the prisoners could not be independently confirmed, but Kim said he remembered their personal details because he was in charge of supervising fellow inmates.

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7. DPRK Refugees

The Korea Times ("NORTH KOREA DISCUSSES REFUGEE ISSUES WITH UN", 2005-11-23) reported that the DPRK hosted a seminar with UN legal experts on refugee issues with a great deal of enthusiasm and wanted further talks next year, a UN official who led the delegation said on Tuesday. "We were there as a legal delegation. We did not have the mandate," Palitha Kohona, chief of the treaty section's office of legal affairs, said when asked if the discussions dealt with refugees from the DPRK. Kohona led the UN delegation to the seminar conducted Wednesday to Saturday, the first time that legal experts from the global organization were invited to the DPRK. Roughly 30 DPRK officials participated in the seminar, of which half was devoted to refugee issues, according to Kohona.

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8. Food Aid to DPRK

The Globe and Mail ("FOOD AGENCY AIMS TO KEEP PRESENCE IN NORTH KOREA", 2005-11-22) reported that James Morris, the head of the World Food Program (WFP), said yesterday that the WFP is negotiating to maintain a presence in the DPRK. In an interview in Toronto, Morris said, "We have been negotiating with the North Koreans about whether we will stay and what our presence will look like." Morris said that despite better harvests, the DPRK is still unable to produce enough food to feed its people. The country has complained repeatedly about foreign-aid workers, but Morris insisted that the WFP agenda is strictly humanitarian and has no interest in political or military matters.

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