

NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, November 29, 2006

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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA SETS TERMS FOR NUCLEAR HALT", 2006-11-29) reported that the DPRK and the US, together with their Chinese host agreed after two days of meetings to push for an early resumption of stalled six-party talks, but still no date was set. The three sides also agreed to try to achieve positive progress during the informal discussions in Beijing, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said. The DPRK wants sanctions dropped and the United States to free its overseas bank accounts as preconditions for dismantling its nuclear programme, terms likely to become a sticking point in negotiations. U.S. officials have said they want the DPRK, without condition, to stand by last year's agreement in which it said it was committed "to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes". In return, the other nations held out economic, political and security incentives. Pyongyang agreed to return to the talks after Washington said it was willing to address the impoverished state's concerns about financial curbs, tightened in 2005 when U.S. regulators named a Macau bank, Banco Delta Asia, as a conduit for illicit cash from currency counterfeiting and drug trafficking. But the DPRK has also said it would be unthinkable for it to resume talks until Washington ended the financial restrictions.

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2. DPRK Sanctions

Associated Press ("U.S. TO NORTH KOREA: NO IPODS FOR YOU", 2006-11-29) reported that it has obtained a U.S. government list of proposed luxury sanctions. The list includes Plasma televisions, iPods, Segway electric scooters, cognac, Rolex watches, cigarettes, artwork, expensive cars, Harley Davidson motorcycles and personal watercraft, such as Jet Skis. Experts said the effort -- being coordinated under the United Nations -- would be the first ever to curtail a specific category of goods not associated with military buildups or weapons designs, especially one so tailored to annoy a foreign leader. Other countries are drafting their own lists. Japan included beef, caviar and fatty tuna, along with expensive cars, motorcycles, cameras and more. Many European nations are still working on their lists.

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3. IAEA in Japan

ZeeNews ("IAEA CHIEF IN JAPAN TO DISCUSS NORTH KOREA, IRAN", 2006-11-29) reported that UN atomic agency chief Mohamed Elbaradei started a visit to Japan for talks on Iran and nearby DPR Korea. He is expected to meet with Foreign Minister Taro Aso, officials said. "Elbaradei will exchange frank opinions with Japanese government leaders on such matters as the nuclear issues of North Korea and Iran and how the international nuclear non-proliferation regime should be maintained and strengthened," a Foreign Ministry statement said. Japan has championed a tough line against the DPRK and imposed a sweeping ban on all of its imports after the nuclear test on October 9. But Japan, which is nearly entirely dependent on foreign oil, has close commercial ties with Iran, which has defiantly refused to stop uranium enrichment.

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4. ROK Opposition on DPRK Nukes

The Age ("N KOREA 'MAY CONDUCT NEXT NUCLEAR TEST'", 2006-11-29) reported that ROK

opposition politician chung Hyung-keun said the DPRK could conduct an additional nuclear test next month or early next year unless the United States offers economic concessions such as lifting financial restrictions. "I believe that there are specific movements in North Korea to prepare for a second nuclear test," Chung said, citing intelligence obtained by state intelligence agencies, according to Chung's office. The National Intelligence Service (NIS), Seoul's main spy agency, declined to comment.

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5. US-ROK Trade Relations

Agence France-Presse ("SKOREA MOBILIZES 50,000 RIOT POLICE TO THWART BANNED PROTESTS", 2006-11-29) reported that more than 50,000 riot police mobilized across ROK to enforce a ban on mass protests against a proposed US free trade deal, after the government vowed zero tolerance for violent rallies. The Korean Alliance Against the Korea-US FTA, a coalition of civic groups, said more than 100,000 had tried to take part in street demonstrations.

[\(return to top\)](#) Joongang Ilbo ("RALLIES IN 8 CITIES GO OFF WITHOUT MAJOR VIOLENCE", 2006-11-29) reported that the Korean Alliance Against KorUs FTA tried hard to rally at Seoul Plaza and Seoul Station yesterday, but police thwarted those plans by blocking thoroughfares leading to those areas. No significant violence was reported; nine demonstrators were arrested after scuffles with police near Seoul Station; farmers in the group at Euljiro threw a truckload of cabbages on the street. Things were reportedly equally peaceful at rallies in seven other cities. [\(return to top\)](#)

6. ROK Historical Revisionism

Joongang Ilbo ("GROUP SEEKS TO REWRITE HISTORY", 2006-11-29) reported that a new ROK history book to be issued by a conservative civic group of scholars praises the economic success of the country's dictatorships and calls the 1961 military coup a "revolution," according to a draft made public yesterday. TextForum, a civic group under the New Right Union, was established early last year with the goal of changing what they called "left-leaning" middle and high school textbooks.

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7. ROK Bird Flu Outbreak

Chosun Ilbo ("SECOND BIRD FLU OUTBREAK ALSO OF VIRULENT STRAIN", 2006-11-29) reported that authorities have confirmed that another bird flu outbreak in Iksan reported is of a virulent strain. Tests by the National Veterinary Research and Quarantine Service confirmed that the additional case is of highly pathogenic strain of avian influenza. The ministry has decided to cull all chickens and ducks raised in a 500-m radius from the newly affected farm.

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8. USFJ Base Realignment

Kyodo ("OKINAWA GOVERNOR-ELECT REQUESTS U.S. BASE CLOSURE IN 3 YRS ", 2006-11-29) reported that Hirokazu Nakaima, who won the recent Okinawa gubernatorial election, asked the central government to close down the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station in Ginowan within the next three years to eliminate the risks involved in having the base next to a residential area. Defense Agency Director General Fumio Kyuma responded, "Both Japan and the United States as well as

Okinawa Prefecture must agree on terms" for taking such action, adding it would be difficult.

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9. Sino-Japanese Defense Relations

Kyodo ("JAPAN, CHINA HOLD 1ST DEFENSE TALKS IN 20 MONTHS", 2006-11-29) reported that Japan and the PRC held working-level talks on defense issues for the first time in about 20 months and engaged in dialogue which Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe described as "extremely meaningful." Japanese Defense Agency Vice Minister Takemasa Moriya and PRC People's Liberation Army Assistant to the Chief of General Staff Zhang Qinsheng were believed to have discussed the resumption of bilateral talks between the two nation's defense chiefs and reciprocal port calls by vessels of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force and the PRC Navy.

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10. PRC Space Program

SPACE.com ("CHINA MOON PROBE READIED FOR NEXT YEAR LIFTOFF ", 2006-11-29) reported that the PRC's unfolding space plans include that country's first foray into exploration of the Moon. A Chang'e I lunar orbiter is nearing final construction, being readied for rocketing to the Moon in 2007. Preparations to launch Chang'e I are to be completed by February for launch later next year, according to a November 29 report by the PRC's Xinhua news agency.

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