NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, September 19, 2007

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, September 19, 2007", NAPSNet Daily Report, September 19, 2007, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-wednesday-september-19-2007/

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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Kyodo ("N. KOREA OKS 6-WAY NUCLEAR TALKS NEXT WEEK: U.S. SPOKESMAN", 2007-09-19) reported that the DPRK has accepted the PRC's proposal to convene a plenary session of six-party talks on ending Pyongyang's nuclear programs next week, a State Department spokesman said. Tom Casey expressed the view to reporters, saying the PRC, the host of the six-way talks, sounded the DPRK out on the holding of a full session next week and received a positive response.

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2. Inter-Korean Summit

The Donga Ilbo ("ROK PRESIDENT TO WATCH DPRK MASS GAME", 2007-09-19) reported that the ROK government announced that delegates from the ROK are considering watching a 'mass game' during the inter-Korean summit meeting to be held in October in Pyongyang. However, it is predicted to be a controversial issue because the aim of the 'mass game' is to propagate justification of the DPRK's dictatorship and superiority of its political structure. Translated from Korean.

(return to top) Korea Times ("ROH MAY VISIT GAESEONG COMPLEX WITH NK LEADER", 2007-0--19) reported that the ROK is pushing for President Roh Moo-hyun's visit to the Gaeseong Industrial Complex with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il on his way back to Seoul Oct. 4, government officials said. If the North agrees to the South's proposal on Roh's visit to the Gaeseong complex, this will be another epoch-making event as the industrial park in the DPRK border city is a big symbol of inter-Korean economic cooperation. (return to top)

3. Northern Limit Line Issue

The Joongang Ilbo ("DEBATING THE NLL DISCUSSION", 2007-09-19) reported that Lee Jang-hee, vice-president of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, and Seo Jea-jin, head of the Center for North Korean Human Rights at the Korea Institute for National Unification, argued whether the NLL issue should be placed on the agenda at the inter-Korean summit meeting. Lee insisted that the two Koreas have to address the issue by creating a fishery cooperation area until peaceful unification. Seo, on the other hand, asserted that raising the issue will make problems in the summit, so it's better to discuss it at the talks between defense ministers of the two Koreas. Translated from Korean.

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4. GNP DPRK Policy

OhmyNews ("CONSERVATIVES TRIES TO MAKE A SCAR", 2007-09-19) argued that the conservative Grand National Party should set and declare their party platform for the DPRK promptly with the inter-Korean summit meeting ahead. The GNP used to oppose holding the inter-Korean summit meeting before the DPRK gives up nuclear weapons. However, it changed its position after US wanted ROK to get a concrete answer about the issue. While the issue should be treated at the six-party talks, not at the inter-Korean summit meeting, the GNP should not insist on

dealing with the nuclear issue at the inter-Korean summit meeting because it would obviously fail. The GNP's attempt is to make a scar on ruling party before the presidential election. Translated from Korean.

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5. ROK-EU Trade Relations

Korea Herald ("KOREA, EU SEE LITTLE PROGRESS IN FREE TRADE TALKS", 2007-09-19) reported that the ROK and the European Union made little progress in their free trade talks, and both sides should work more to resolve differences in some contentious issues, Seoul's chief negotiator said. "Overall, negotiations took place at a good pace, but both sides failed to narrow differences on tariff reductions," Deputy Trade Minister Kim Han-soo told reporters after wrapping up a second day of negotiations, the third round since May.

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6. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

Reuters ("U.N. BACKING COULD HELP JAPAN EXTEND AFGHAN MISSION", 2007-09-19) reported that Japanese officials hope a UN resolution to be adopted this month will clear the way to extend a naval mission aiding US-led Afghanistan military operations, pleasing the US and averting a bruising showdown in parliament as a new government kicks off. "If the resolution is adopted, then the DPJ (Democratic Party of Japan) will lose its largest grounds for opposing Japan's participation," Kyodo quoted Defense Minister Masahiko Komura as saying.

(return to top) Kyodo ("DPJ UNFAZED BY PLAN FOR U.N. RESOLUTION ON INDIAN OCEAN REFUELING", 2007-09-19) reported that Democratic Party of Japan lawmakers indicated that there is no change in the party's opposition to continuing Japanese refueling support in the Indian Ocean for US-led antiterrorism operations in Afghanistan despite a plan for the U.N. Security Council to adopt a resolution expressing appreciation for the mission. It is uncertain, however, whether the DPJ will be able to maintain firm opposition as adoption of the UN resolution could help to increase public support in Japan for the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission. (return to top)

7. Sino-Japanese Relations

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S OPPOSITION LEADER TO MEET WITH CHINESE PRESIDENT", 2007-09-19) reported that Japan's main opposition leader, whose bloc now controls one house of parliament, will head this year to the PRC and meet with President Hu Jintao, a party official said. The Asahi Shimbun daily reported the tour will take place between December 6 and 10.

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8. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("UN CHIEF: TAIWAN MEMBERSHIP NOT LEGAL", 2007-09-19) reported that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that Taiwan's application to join the United Nations wasn't accepted for legal reasons linked to the 1971 UN resolution that gave China's seat to the PRC. Nonetheless, he said, some of Taiwan's supporters have asked the U.N. General Assembly to consider Taiwan's membership, so the question will be discussed by the 192 member states.

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9. Sino-Indian Relations

Xinhua ("CHINA, INDIA TO HOLD MEETING ON BORDER ISSUE", 2007-09-19) reported that the PRC and India will hold the 11th meeting between the special representatives to discuss the border issue from Sept. 24 to 26 in Beijing, according to the PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson. "China will work with India, in accordance with the political guideline reached by the two countries, to find a reasonable, fair and all-accepted solution (on the border issue) through consultations," spokesperson Jiang Yu said. She said the PRC would like to make joint effort with India to push forward strategic and cooperative partnership.

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10. PRC Party Congress

The Associated Press ("CHINESE PRESIDENT ELEVATES AIDE IN SHOW OF STRENGTH AHEAD OF COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS", 2007-09-19) reported that PRC President and Communist Party chief Hu Jintao has elevated a key aide to a sensitive position in a show of influence ahead of a major Communist Party congress next month. In a one sentence report, the official Xinhua News Agency said Ling Jihua had been named head of the General Office of the party's Central Committee, the main executive body in charge of running the party.

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11. PRC Economy

The Financial Times ("CHINA FREEZES GOVERNMENT-SET PRICES", 2007-09-19) reported that the PRC has begun to enforce a freeze on all government-controlled prices in a sign of the central government's alarm about rising popular anger over inflation, now at the highest rate in over a decade. The order freezes a vast array of prices still under the control of governments in the PRC, ranging from oil, electricity and water, to the cost of parking and park entrance fees.

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12. PRC, Russia Espionage Activities

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA AND RUSSIA SPYING AT COLD WAR LEVELS: US SPY CHIEF", 2007-09-18) reported that PRC and Russian spies are stalking the US at levels close to those seen during the tense covert espionage duels of the Cold War, the top US intelligence officer warned. "China and Russia's foreign intelligence services are among the most aggressive in collecting against sensitive and protected US systems, facilities and developmental projects," Director of National Intelligence Michael McConnell told the House Judiciary Committee. In July, FBI Director Robert Mueller told Congress that the PRC's espionage operations were a "substantial concern" and Beijing was stealing US secrets to boost its fast developing military and economy.

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13. PRC AIDS Issue

The Washington Post ("PROVINCES UNDERMINE BEIJING'S GOALS ON AIDS", 2007-09-19)

reported that despite official pledges at the national level to care for people with the virus that causes AIDS, local hospital and government officials frequently express reluctance to do so. Some fear having to compensate people who contracted the virus through blood transfusions, a common method of HIV transmission in the PRC. Others fear that the publicity of AIDS cases will hamper local investment. Hospitals like the one here in Mianchi County not only fail to offer to test for HIV, they deliberately misdiagnose and cover up the problem, according to experts and Chinese who have contracted the virus.

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II. CanKor

14. Report #292

CanKor ("Current Events", 2007-09-19) The official DPR Korean news agency KCNA reports on Canadian ambassador Ted Lipman's Pyongyang visit to present his credentials, the DPRK Foreign Ministry's positive response to talks held in Geneva with US negotiators, and expressions of gratitude to the international community for emergency aid rendered after the summer floods. While the Six-Party process seems to be producing positive movement, allegations of a military -- possibly nuclear -- link between the DPRK and Syria have surfaced. Unnamed diplomats conclude that a DPRK-Syrian "joint economic committee" involves DPRK ballistic missiles, maintenance for the existing Syrian arsenal and Korean engineering expertise for building silos and bunkers against air attack.

(return to top) CanKor ("OPINION: KOREAN SUMMIT HIGH-RISK GAMBIT by Bruce Klingner", 2007-09-19) The inter-Korean summit provides an opportunity to further international goals of reducing North Korea's military threat and strengthening regional stability. If President Roh Moo-hyun presses North Korea for tangible progress toward denuclearization, then the summit would be a useful adjunct to the six-party talks. If not handled properly, however, the meeting could instead undermine multilateral efforts to pressure Pyongyang to divest itself of its nuclear weapons. (return to top) CanKor ("WHAT READERS SAY ABOUT THE CANKOR REPORT", 2007-09-19) "Thanks for keeping us informed via CanKor." Joan Barkman-Azar, Program Officer, Canadian Foodgrains Bank. (return to top)

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