

NAPSNet Daily Report 09 February, 2004

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 09 February, 2004", NAPSNet Daily Report, February 09, 2004,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-09-february-2004/>

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I. United States

1. US on DPRK Multilateral Talks

Agence France-Presse ("GOOD PROGRESS' WITH NORTH KOREA: BUSH," Washington, 02/08/04) reported that US President George W. Bush said that good progress is being made in diplomatic attempts to end the nuclear standoff with the DPRK. "On the Korean peninsula, now the US and China, along with South Korea and Japan and Russia, are sending a clear message to Kim Jong-Il, if you are interested in a different relationship, disclose and destroy your program in a transparent way," Bush told NBC television. "In North Korea ... the diplomacy is just beginning. We are making good progress in North Korea," Bush said. "The policy of this administration is to be clear and straightforward and to be realistic about the different threats that we face."

2. DPRK-Pakistan Nuclear Program Deal

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA LAUNCHED NUKE PROGRAM UNDER DEAL WITH PAKISTAN: REPORT," Tokyo, 02/08/04) reported that the DPRK launched a uranium-based nuclear weapons program in 1996 under a deal with Pakistan, a top defector said in an interview published on Sunday. The deal was concluded in Pakistan during a month-long visit by a DPRK envoy, Hwang

Jang-Yop, former secretary in charge of international affairs at Korea's all-powerful Workers Party, told the Tokyo Shimbun newspaper. The report comes after Pakistan's top nuclear scientist, Abdul Qadeer Khan, admitted leaking technology abroad after a probe into the sale of secrets to the DPRK, Libya and Iran. Hwang told the newspaper that Jon Pyon-Ho, then the party's secretary in charge of military industry, visited Pakistan for about a month in 1996 and signed the contract. Jon had previously consulted Hwang on the possibility of buying plutonium from Russia and other countries to "produce more nuclear weapons", Hwang said. He reportedly told Hwang after the trip to Pakistan: "We don't need plutonium from now on. We are set to make them with uranium-235 under an agreement with Pakistan." "The matter will become all clear if you check when he (Jon) travelled to Pakistan," said Hwang, 80, who in 1997 became the highest-ranking member of the DPRK regime to defect to the ROK.

3. DPRK-Myanmar Nuclear Links?

Agence France-Presse ("TOP SENATE AID RAISES ALARM OVER MYANMAR, NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR LINKS," Washington, 02/09/04) reported that a US senior aide to the chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations committee raised alarm over possible nuclear links between the DPRK and Myanmar. Keith Luse, a senior aide to Senator Richard Lugar, warned US policymakers must pay "special attention" to what he said was a growing relationship between the DPRK and the military government in Yangon. "What is the construction status of Burma's nuclear reactor?" asked Luse, in a list of seven key areas of concern to Lugar in Asia policy. Luse, part of a US congressional delegation which visited Pyongyang's Yongbyon nuclear plant last month, also asked "Is North Korea providing nuclear technology to the Burma military?" He also questioned whether the DPRK was selling Scud missiles to or through Myanmar, and asked whether the PRC, as it works to end the DPRK's nuclear program, is also working to deter nuclear development in Myanmar. Myanmar last year rejected a report that it was receiving missiles and nuclear technology from Pyongyang, saying it did not need such arms as it was "everybody's friend and nobody's all or enemy." The Far Eastern Economic Review had reported that diplomats believed the DPRK may be supplying or planning to supply Myanmar with new weapons, possibly in exchange for shipments of heroin. The report said Myanmar has also begun negotiating the purchase of surface-to-surface missiles and that DPRK technicians were working at a naval base near Yangon, possibly preparing to install the weapons on Myanmar warships.

4. Japan Economic Sanctions Law

The Associated Press (Natalie Obiko Pearson, "JAPAN PASSES LAW ON NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS," Tokyo, 02/09/04) reported that Japan passed a law Monday making it easier to impose economic sanctions on the DPRK, prompting the DPRK to demand that Japan be barred from future multilateral talks on its nuclear program. The law allows Japan to impose sanctions on countries without a U.N. resolution. It does not specifically mention the DPRK, but lawmakers have said it is aimed at the DPRK. Japan could use the law to take steps such as banning DPRK imports and freezing remittances from North Koreans living in Japan - all desperately needed to help the DPRK's economy. The upper house of Parliament approved the bill by a vote of 210-23 Monday after the lower house passed it last month. "This is meaningful in that it widens Japan's options," Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said after the vote. The DPRK said the move exacerbated regional tensions amid an ongoing standoff over the DPRK's suspected development of nuclear weapons.

5. Japan Iraq Troops

Agence France-Presse ("JAPANESE TROOPS ARRIVE AT IRAQ BASE ON HISTORIC COMBAT ZONE DEPLOYMENT," 02/09/04) reported that Japanese ground troops arrived at a Dutch military base in southern Iraq, at the start of an historic first deployment of the Self-Defence Forces to a combat zone since World War II. A 25-vehicle armored convoy with about 50 soldiers on board drove to the base, where the Japanese forces will be deployed and where it was greeted by Iraqi well-wishers. Unit commander Colonel Yasushi Kiyota told a news conference he was "happy" to assist with the reconstruction of war-torn Iraq, in comments delivered in Japanese, English and Arabic. A third contingent of Japanese troops are due to arrive Monday, senior Japanese military officials said. Kiyota early Sunday morning gave the marching orders for the convoy and some 50 soldiers to go through the desert gateway, known as Navistar and used by coalition forces to enter Iraq from Kuwait. "Let's do the work that makes history," he told the troops. "Do your work as usual." Armoured personnel carriers, large and small trucks all carrying stickers of the Japanese flag drove the 300 kilometres (180 miles) to their Samawa base. The Japanese are armed with pistols, 5.56 mm Japanese-made automatic rifles and heavy machine-guns, in addition to two types of anti-tank weapon, according to Lieutenant Colonel Shigeru Yamasaki, head of the Task Planning and Liaison Unit. Two US army vehicles mounted with machine-guns protected the convoy which was emblazoned with the words "Japan" in English and Arabic.

6. DPRK Humanitarian Crisis

Agence France-Presse ("WFP MAKES LAST DITCH APPEAL TO HELP STARVING MILLIONS IN NORTH KOREA," Beijing, 02/09/04) reported that the World Food Programme (WFP) made a last ditch appeal for help to feed millions starving in the DPRK, saying it was scraping the bottom of the barrel with cereal stocks virtually exhausted. Lack of international aid to the DPRK has left some elderly, women and children in a desperate situation during the harsh Korean winter, the United Nations agency said Monday. "We are scraping the bottom of the barrel," WFP representative for North Korea Masood Hyder said at a press conference in Beijing. "Over four million core beneficiaries, the most vulnerable elderly, women and children are now deprived of very vital rations. It is the middle of the harsh Korean winter and they need more food not less." The WFP has targeted 485,000 ton of commodities valued at 171 million dollars for 2004 but has so far only secured commitments for 140,000 tons and little of this has actually been delivered. The US, Australia, Canada and the European Union recently pledged 77,000 ton of aid but this will not arrive before April.

7. ROK 'Silmido' Film Box Office Records

Asia Pulse ("SILMIDO' SETS ROK BOX OFFICE RECORD," Seoul, 02/09/04) reported that "Silmido," an ROK film about an aborted government scheme to assassinate the DPRK's leader in the late 1960s, set a box-office record by attracting 9.01 million viewers as of Friday, its distributor said Saturday. The record was set 45 days after the movie opened on Dec. 24 at 280 theaters nationwide, the distributor said. The previous Korean box-office record of 8.18 million viewers was set in 2001 by "Friend," a Korean film based on a friendship between youths who grow up to be gangsters. Industry watchers and Cinema Service predict that the total audience for "Silmido" is likely to top 10 million by the middle of this month. The movie, named after a small island off the coast of Incheon, tells the story of 31 ROK commandos who spent months there training for a top-secret mission to assassinate then-DPRK leader Kim Il-sung. The 1968 mission was ordered by then-ROK President Park Chung-hee in retaliation for the DPRK's attempt to assassinate him earlier in the year. The North Koreans infiltrated the country and were only stopped several hundred meters from the presidential office in Seoul. Most of the ROK commandos chosen were ex-convicts released from prison with a promise to have their past records erased if they returned alive after killing Kim. The mission was called off,

however, at the last moment for unknown reasons. The commandos, who were to be executed in a cover-up of the planned assassination, revolted against their trainers on Aug. 23, 1971, killing most of them. They took a boat to Incheon and headed to Seoul to convey their grievances. After hijacking a bus, they were confronted by soldiers in southern Seoul, and all but three committed suicide by setting off grenades. The three captured were later executed. The true picture of the incident has yet to be known, because Park's regime tried to cover it up, and related documents are still unavailable.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of [other NAPSNet resources](#).

We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

Produced by [the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development](#) in partnership with:

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