

NAPSNet Daily Report 10 March, 2009

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 10 March, 2009", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 10, 2009,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-10-march-2009/>

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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Government

Swiss Info (Julia Slater, "NORTH KOREANS SEEK INSPIRATION IN SWITZERLAND", 2009/03/09) reported that Switzerland has hosted a semi-secret visit with three diplomats from DRPK spending ten days studying the federal system. The guests were looked after by Fribourg University's Federalism Institute. "They were certainly surprised by the complexity of the system. They realised everything was decentralised, but very efficient," Nicolas Schmitt, senior research fellow at the institute, who accompanied the delegation, told swissinfo. Former leader, Kim Il-sung spoke of uniting the Koreas through a federal system under which each would retain its own system, Schmitt explained. "Obviously they realised that the Swiss system could not be imported as it is to Korea, because the background of the two countries is so different. So what they were interested in was to note some ideas."

Associated Press ("KIM JONG IL'S SONS NOT ON NEW LIST OF NORTH KOREAN LAWMAKERS", Seoul, 2009/03/09) reported that Kim Jong Il was unanimously re-elected to DPRK's rubber-stamp parliament, state media said today. None of Kim's three sons was among the 686 other legislators announced by state media late Monday. There had been reports his youngest son, Kim Jong Un, was running for a seat in Sunday's uncontested election, which analysts said would have been a strong sign he was being prepped to inherit power.

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2. Inter-Korean Relations

Dong A Ilbo (Robert Evans, "570 S. KOREAN STAFF DETAINED IN BIZ COMPLEX IN NK", 2009/03/10) reported that DPRK's cutoff of an inter-Korean military hotline yesterday left some 570 ROK staff in the Gaesong Industrial Complex detained. A spokesman for the DPRK's Army issued a

statement around 3 a.m., saying, "We will put stricter military control on areas in the East and West Seas jointly controlled by the two Koreas that are open, while war exercises to invade us are conducted. We will cut off inter-Korean military communication." Pyongyang did not respond to Seoul's three attempts at contact via military communication in the morning.

Associated Press (Jean H. Lee, "NORTH KOREA REOPENS BORDER TO SOUTH KOREAN WORKERS", Seoul, 2009/03/10) reported that the DPRK allowed ROK citizens back across the border Tuesday. The Unification Ministry officials said some 240 people crossed the border after officials walked to the DPRK border office with a note requesting passage. More were expected to return from Kaesong later Tuesday evening.

United Press International ("BOSWORTH: N. KOREA MOVE REGRETTABLE", Seoul, 2009/03/09) reported that a DPRK decision to cut off a main military communications channel to Seoul is regrettable, a U.S. envoy said Monday. Stephen Bosworth told reporters in Seoul after a meeting with President Lee Myung-bak Pyongyang's move won't help to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula. "Obviously, this is something that we regret," Bosworth said. "We think that improved communications between South and North Korea must in the longer run be a key component of the six-party effort to reduce tension and to bring about the denuclearization of the peninsula."

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3. US on DPRK

Agence France Presse (Lachlan Carmichael, "NKOREA RHETORIC A THREAT, NOT US-SKOREA WARGAMES: US", Washington, 2009/03/09) reported that the US said Monday that northeast Asia is threatened by DPRK's "bellicose rhetoric" rather than the annual US-ROK military maneuvers. The exercises "are not a threat to the North," acting State Department spokesman Robert Wood said when asked if Washington might be misreading Pyongyang. "What is a threat to the region is this bellicose rhetoric coming out of the North," Wood said. The DPRK went on combat alert Monday as US and ROK troops began the 12-day exercise.

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4. Sino-DPRK Relations

Agence France Presse ("NKOREA'S KIM TO VISIT CHINA: STATE MEDIA", Seoul, 2009/03/09) reported that state media said Tuesday that DPRK Premier Kim Jong-il will visit the PRC as the two allies celebrate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations. "Kim Jong Il, premier of the Cabinet of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, will soon pay an official goodwill visit to the People's Republic of China at the invitation of Wen Jiabao," the statement said.

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5. ROK Missile Program

JoongAng Daily (Brian Lee, "SOUTH KOREA'S MISSILE SHORTAGE A CONCERN", 2009/03/10) reported that while DPRK has been in the international spotlight for weeks, and is trying to stay that

way with a calculated missile launch, some experts are saying that ROK's own missile capabilities fall short when compared with those of the DPRK. The argument has also been picked up by some military officers who say that the imbalance in the missile department needs to be addressed in light of recent developments. "After evaluating the missile firepower of both sides it has been concluded that there is a very serious disparity between South and North. The South's missile capability is thought to be roughly 10 percent of that of the North's," said a military official speaking on condition of anonymity.

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6. ROK Civil Unrest

Dong A Ilbo ("POLICE TO CRACK DOWN ON HABITUAL PROTESTERS", 2009/03/10) reported that in the wake of last week's assault on police officers by protesters in Seoul, Joo Sang-ryong, the new Seoul police chief yesterday announced a policy of zero tolerance on illegal protests. "Police plan to arrest all 200 protesters who stay on after dispersion of assemblies and continue to disrupt the city with illegal demonstrations," he told a news conference. "Assaults on police officers can never been tolerated in a country that respects rule of law. We will arrest the illegal protesters at whatever cost even if it proves detrimental our image." Joo added, "Until now, we've focused on defensive control where we send police officers with three times more shields than demonstrators. We are developing tactics centering on sending arrest squads if illegal activity is spotted."

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7. ROK Human Rights

Korea Times (Park Si-soo, "ANSAN INSTITUTIONALIZES HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER FOR FOREIGN RESIDENTS", 2009/03/09) reported that Ansan City has become the first region to implement guidelines designed to protect the human rights of foreign residents. The self-imposed decrees urge Koreans and employers not to discriminate against foreign nationals due to their nationality, race, skin color, language or culture. The city pledged to come up with measures to keep foreigners from being unfairly treated at work or in using public services. The guidelines have no legally binding force but are meant to encourage the central government to pay more attention to human rights of foreign residents and to enact legally binding rules. "In particular, lack of state attention has been blamed for hardship troubling migrant workers, mostly from Asian countries." Other cities are also working to declare similar guidelines.

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8. ROK-Japan Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA-JAPAN TALKS ON EEZ END WITHOUT DEAL", Seoul, 2009/03/09) reported that ROK and Japan held working-level talks in Seoul Monday on the vague demarcation of their maritime border, but produced no tangible deal, Seoul's foreign ministry said. The meeting, the 10th of its kind, was aimed at clarifying the boundary of their exclusive economic zones (EEZs) amid Tokyo's continued claim to sovereignty over Dokdo, a set of ROK-controlled rocky outcroppings in the East Sea.

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9. Japan Economy

Associated Press ("REPORT: JAPANESE WELFARE ROLLS HIT RECORD HIGH", Tokyo, 2009/03/08) reported that the number of Japanese households on welfare hit a record high in January amid mounting job losses and an ever-deepening recession. Almost 1.17 million households received welfare benefits during the month, with new applications for government assistance jumping 30 percent from December .

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10. Sino-Japan Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun ("HIGH-RANKING CHINESE OFFICIAL TO VISIT JAPAN", 2009/03/10) reported that Li Changchun, a fifth-ranked member of the Politburo Standing Committee of the Communist Party of PRC, is expected to visit Japan on March 29, government sources who handle Japan-PRC relations said. Li, who controls the party's public information department, will meet with Prime Minister Taro Aso and Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone. Li, who directs and promotes party policy and ideology via the mass media, is said to have engaged in anti-Japanese propaganda since the time of former PRC President Jiang Zemin's administration, known for its hard-line attitude toward Japan. He also is said to be a representative of an uncompromising anti-Japan faction.

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11. Japan-East Timor Relations

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN TO HELP TRAIN ETIMOR'S MILITARY PERSONNEL", Tokyo, 2009/03/09) reported that Japan agreed Monday to help train East Timor's military and lend support during natural disasters and epidemics. "Prime Minister Aso stated that Japan would continue to actively assist peace-building in East Timor for peace and stability in the country and in the Asia-Pacific region.". Aso told Gusmao that Japan was ready to receive military personnel to study at the National Defense Academy of Japan starting in April next year so that the East Timor armed forces can better work with UN peacekeeping troops there. Aso invited East Timor's President to Japan, while the two leaders agreed to work together to jointly tackle regional and global issues, including DPRK's missile threat.

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12. PRC Defense

Reuters (Emma Graham-Harrison, "CHINA SAYS NAVY EXPANSION "NO THREAT TO OTHERS"", Beijing, 2009/03/09) reported that PRC's plans to add aircraft carriers to its fleet and an historic long-distance mission by its navy are aimed only at protecting the country and its trade interests, senior officials were quoted as saying on Monday. A long coastline, and high dependence on seaborne trade, meant PRC needed to have a strong presence at sea, but its growing confidence should not be misread as a "China threat," the Navy's deputy chief of staff told the official China

Daily. "Even when the navy has its aircraft carriers one day, our national defence strategy will remain purely defensive," Major General Zhang Deshun told the paper in a story splashed across its front page.

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13. PRC Government

Bloomberg (Dune Lawrence, "CHINA WON'T FOLLOW WESTERN DEMOCRACY, NO. 2 PARTY OFFICIAL SAYS", Beijing, 2009/03/09) reported that PRC will "never" embrace Western-style democracy with a multiparty system and separation of powers, the country's No. 2 official in the Communist Party said today. "We must draw on the achievements of other cultures, including their political achievements," Wu Bangguo, Chairman of the National People's Congress, said in a speech to the annual legislative session. "But we will never simply copy the system of Western countries or introduce a system of multiple parties holding office in rotation."

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14. PRC Energy

United Press International ("NEA CHIEF: CHINA NEEDS RENEWABLES", Beijing, 2009/03/09) reported that the head of PRC's National Energy Administration called for more investment in renewable-energy research. The development of new energy forms could help to alleviate the country's energy shortages as well as address pollution and global climate change, Zhang Guobao said.

Bloomberg (Winnie Zhu, "CHINA STARTS WORK ON THIRD WEST-EAST GAS PIPELINE ", Beijing, 2009/03/09) reported that PRC, the world's second-biggest energy consumer, started initial construction of its third gas pipeline connecting the remote west to the country's eastern cities to meet future demand for the cleaner-burning fuel. The natural-gas link will have an annual capacity of between 20 billion and 30 billion cubic meters, Su said. "The pipeline will source gas from Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and transport the fuel via Xinjiang to cities in the east," Su said. "The final route hasn't been decided yet."

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15. PRC Mining Reform

Xinhua News Agency ("CHINA URGED TO REFORM MINERAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM", 2009/03/09) reported that a political advisor said Monday that PRC should reform its mineral resources management system. "The licenses only give licensees the rights to explore for mineral resources or develop mines, not the ownership of the resources. But the licensee are not paying for the resources they sell, which means the state's ownership of all mine assets is never realized," said Wei Xiaochun, a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Wei said this flaw in the design of the system is the reason behind high incidence of accidents in PRC mines. The mine owners have no motivations to invest in safety and environment, because their long-term interests is not well defined. Mining rights should be sold through open biddings and a secondary market should be established to facilitate transfer of such

mining rights, he said, adding that frequent private transactions have made effective management difficult.

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16. PRC-Tibet Climate Change

Reuters ("CHINA PLEDGES \$3 BILLION FOR TIBET ENVIRONMENT", 2009/03/06) reported that PRC has pledged to spend \$3.5 billion over two decades to protect the environment in Tibet, which is at serious risk from global warming, the China Daily has reported. The cash would fund projects to preserve grasslands, woods and wetland, protect endangered animals, grow "forest shelter belts" to protect against gales, and expand clean energy. It was not clear if the Ecological Protection Plan of Tibet covered a series of hydropower projects planned for the region's rivers. Scientists say the rivers are already at risk from climate change because warmer weather is shrinking the glaciers that feed them.

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17. PRC Tibet Issue

Reuters (Matthias Williams, "DALAI LAMA TO DEMAND TIBET AUTONOMY", Dharamsala, India , 2009/03/09) reported that the Dalai Lama is set to mark his 50 years in exile on Tuesday by demanding "meaningful autonomy" for his Tibetan homeland and saying that PRC rule there has at times been "hell on earth." "From time immemorial, the Tibetan and Chinese peoples have been neighbours," the Dalai Lama will say, according to a draft of his speech, shown to Reuters. "We Tibetans are looking for a legitimate and meaningful autonomy."

Agence France Presse (Dan Martin, "CHINA'S HU URGES STABILITY IN TIBET", Beijing, 2009/03/09) reported that PRC's President Hu Jintao ordered a "Great Wall" against Tibetan separatism on Monday, as extra soldiers were deployed to the Himalayan region on the 50th anniversary of a failed anti-PRC uprising. "We must build up a Great Wall in our fight against separatism and safeguard the unity of the motherland, and push Tibet's basic stability toward long-term security," state television quoted Hu as saying in a meeting with Tibetan leaders. "Tibet should fully implement the important tasks of development and stability and ensure that the economy develops rapidly and that state security and Tibetan society remain stable."

Associated Press (Audra Ang, "BLASTS ROCK TIBETAN AREA AS CHINA UPS SECURITY", Kanding, PRC, 2009/03/09) reported that homemade bombs damaged police vehicles in a Tibetan part of western PRC on Monday, and authorities expanded a security cordon across the restive region ahead of the 50th anniversary of a failed revolt that sent the Dalai Lama into exile. Armed police patrolled the streets outside Buddhist monasteries, which have been at the forefront of many protests. New checkpoints went up on previously open roads, the Internet and text messaging have been blocked, and the government ordered foreigners out of the mixed PRC-Tibetan city of Kangding.

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18. Sino-US Relations

Associated Press (Pauline Jelinek, "US PROTESTS 'HARASSMENT' BY CHINESE VESSELS", Washington, 2009/03/09) reported that the Obama administration vowed Monday to keep up military surveillance in waters off PRC and protested to PRC about what it called harassment of an American ship doing that work last week. The Pentagon charged that a PRC intelligence gathering vessel and four others "shadowed and maneuvered dangerously close" to the USNS Impeccable surveillance ship in the South China Sea on Sunday, then threw obstacles in the water as it tried to leave. The unarmed Impeccable, which is operated for the Navy by civilian mariners, turned fire hoses on one vessel that came within 50 feet of it. The PRC crew stripped to their underwear, then closed to within 25 feet.

Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINA SAYS ACTIVITY BY US SHIP ILLEGAL", Beijing, 2009/03/10) reported that the PRC Foreign Ministry said Tuesday that a U.S. Navy mapping ship confronted by PRC vessels in the South China Sea over the weekend was operating illegally. Responding to U.S. accusations that PRC boats operated recklessly and without cause, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxu said, "The U.S. claim is totally inaccurate and confuses right and wrong and is unacceptable to China." The USNS Impeccable, "broke international and Chinese laws in the South China Sea without China's permission," Ma said.

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19. Cross-Strait Relations

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN TO SCRAP CONSCRIPTION AS CHINA TIES IMPROVE", Taipei, 2009/03/09) reported that Taiwan will phase out its decades-old military conscription policy over the next five years, the defense minister said Monday, amid warming ties with PRC. Currently all men aged over 20 are required to do one year's military service. Defense minister Chen Chao-min said the structure of Taiwan's military manpower will undergo a dramatic change over the next few years. "From 2011, the number of conscripts will be reduced by at least 10% each year, to be replaced by professional soldiers," Chen said. "That is to say, eventually, conscript measures will come to an end by 2014."

Xinhua News Agency ("TAIWAN'S CHIEF NEGOTIATOR WANTS FURTHER TALKS ON CROSS-STRAITS EXCHANGES", Taipei, 2009/03/09) reported that Taiwan's chief negotiator on cross-Straits relations Monday said talks with the PRC mainland would be continued this year to help boost economic and trade ties between the two sides. Chiang Pin-kung, chairman of the island's Straits Exchange Foundation, said the next round of talks would focus on joint efforts on cracking down on crime, financial cooperation and regular cross-Straits flights.

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II. PRC Report

20. PRC Environment

Alax SEE Ecological Association website ("ALAX SEE ECOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION LAUNCHES CHINA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS CREATIVE COMPETITION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION", 2009/03/09) reported that China University Students Creative Competition for Environmental Protection was jointly launched by Alax SEE Ecological Association, Jixi Environmental Exchange Network, and Tencent Net. This competition collects environmental protection innovation from university students and inspires students to organize environmental protection action team, to spread environmental awareness to all fields of life. The outstanding innovation will be fully funded and members of the winning team will get chance to work in famous enterprises as interns.

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21. PRC Internet

Xinhua Net ("PURIFYING THE NETWORK ENVIRONMENT FOR TEENAGERS" LAUNCHED IN BEIJING", 2009/03/08) reported that a community activity focusing on purifying the network environment for teenagers was launched in Beijing on March 8th. This activity invites psychologists, youth education specialist, out-standing youth representatives to the community, to help teenagers prevent and get rid of net addiction and guide healthy development of relation between teenagers and their families. This activity was jointly launched by Ministry of Culture, China Teenager's Network Association, China Information Promoting Federation and so on.

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22. PRC Media

Hong Kong Wenhui News ("STUDENTS FROM 4 HONG KONG UNIVERSITIES INTERVIEW THE TWO CONFERENCES", 2009/03/08) reported that under the world financial crisis, National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference held at the beginning of this month becomes the focus of the world. News Education Foundation organized students majored in journalism from 4 Hong Kong Universities to interview representatives participated in the two conferences. The students personally went to Great Hall of the People, to learn the operation of the nation's highest authority and how to report such news.

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