

NAPSNet Daily Report 14 January, 2009

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 14 January, 2009", NAPSNet Daily Report, January 14, 2009,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-14-january-2009/>

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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Associated Press ("DPRK REFUSES TO GIVE UP NUCLEAR WEAPONS", Seoul, 2009/01/13) reported that DPRK said Tuesday it will hold onto its nuclear arsenal until it is satisfied the U.S. is not hiding atomic weapons in ROK and Washington establishes diplomatic relations with the regime. "We won't need atomic weapons when U.S. nuclear threats are removed, and the U.S. nuclear umbrella over South Korea is gone," the statement said. "It is necessary to simultaneously verify the whole Korean peninsula," the ministry statement said.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap News Service ("CLINTON PLEDGES TO MOVE QUICKLY TO ADDRESS DPRK NUKE PROLIFERATION ", Washington, 2009/01/13) reported that U.S. Secretary of State-designate Hillary Clinton said Tuesday she will act quickly to stem nuclear proliferation in DPRK and Iran using tough and smart diplomacy. "We will continue to work to prevent proliferation in North Korea and Iran; to secure loose nuclear weapons and materials and to shut down the market for selling them," Clinton said at a confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Chosun Ilbo ("OBAMA ADMINISTRATION 'PUTS LOW PRIORITY ON DPRK' ", 2009/01/13) reported that the new U.S. government under Barack Obama is expected to take a different approach to the DPRK nuclear problem from previous administrations. Obama could see it as part of the non-proliferation problem, one of his major areas of interest, rather than separately as a major threat to regional security. He and his diplomatic and security team believe that the six-party talks on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula launched in 2003 are under control. One official close to

the Obama camp said, "There is nearly zero possibility that the North Korean issue will make it to the top 20 in the priority agendas of the Obama administration this year."

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3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters (Jack Kim, "SEOUL TEAM TO MAKE RARE NUCLEAR VISIT TO DPRK", Seoul, 2009/01/13) reported that ROK officials will make a rare visit to DPRK on Thursday to check Pyongyang's progress in sticking to an international nuclear disarmament deal, officials in Seoul said. The ROK foreign ministry said on Tuesday, "Our team of inspectors aim to take part in the decision on the handling of unused fuel rods possessed by North Korea and will focus on technical and economic aspects in their work." The team will discuss the possible purchase of unused fuel rods, local media quoted an unnamed foreign ministry official as saying at a news briefing.

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4. Japan on DPRK Governance

Agence France Press ("TOKYO GOVERNOR SAYS DPRK BEST TAKEN OVER BY PRC", Tokyo, 2009/01/13) reported that Tokyo's outspoken governor Shintaro Ishihara said Tuesday that DPRK would be best taken over by PRC, allowing the DPRK to collapse peacefully. Ishihara said six-way talks had made little progress in ending DPRK's nuclear weapons drive or integrating it into the world. "I think China's integration of North Korea would be the easiest solution, even for the United States. I suspect an underlying motive along this line already exists," Ishihara told a news conference. "If South Korea agrees to the idea, I think that country (North Korea) would collapse naturally and it would bring back a civil society" instead of just dictatorship, he said.

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5. DPRK-Japan Relations

Bloomberg (Heejin Koo, "DPRK SAYS SUSPECTED JAPANESE DRUG SMUGGLER IS RELEASED ", Seoul, 2009/01/13) reported that DPRK released a Japanese man held in custody for five years for attempting to smuggle drugs, the nation's state-run Korea Central News Agency said. Yoshiaki Sawada, former department director of the Enterprise Co. of Japan, was detained in October 2003. He was sent home "thanks to a humanitarian measure," the news agency reported.

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6. US on Inter-Korean Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("S.KOREANS 'FEAR UNIFICATION'", 2009/01/13) reported that South Koreans are happy with the status quo and fear the instability of unification with the DPRK, American conservatives claim. According to a report titled "An American Strategy For Asia", the conservative American Enterprise Institute says, "From an American perspective, many South Koreans seem to harbor unrealistic hopes of achieving inter-Korean comity in the near term, yet remain reluctant to

take any steps toward unification for fear of triggering instability and creating a huge financial burden."

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7. ROK-US Military Cooperation

Yonhap News Service (Sam Kim, "US TO SUBSTITUTE MULTI-TASK FIGHTERS FOR TANK-HUNTING HELICOPTERS IN ROK", Seoul, 2009/01/13) reported that the United States said Tuesday it will replace half of its tank-fighting Apache helicopters in the ROK with F-16 multi-role fighters, expressing confidence that the jets will provide an equally strong war deterrent against the DPRK. "In consultation with the ROK government, the U.S. Department of Defense has decided to deploy F-16s instead of A-10s," Col. Mike Chandler, chief of staff at the U.S. 7th Air Force, said.

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8. ROK Energy

Arirang News ("LED TO REPLACE LIGHT BULBS IN 4 YEARS", 2009/01/13) reported that the Ministry of Knowledge Economy is pushing a "15-30" move aiming to replace 30 percent of lights in the country with more energy-efficient LED, or light-emitting diodes by the year 2015 as part of a move to go green. The government says ROK could become a leading nation in LED use and development, generating US\$4 billion in exports and 30,000 jobs using the country's strong semiconductor industry as a springboard.

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9. ROK Climate Change

Arirang News ("CULTURE MINISTRY HOSTS FORUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE", 2009/01/13) reported that the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism held its third forum on world climate change, poverty and tourism in Seoul on Monday. Promoting tourism was suggested as a key solution to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Tourism is also one of the most vulnerable industries to climate change. Therefore tackling global warming was suggested as a way to support the tourism industry and in turn reduce global poverty.

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10. ROK Government

Korea Times (Michael Ha, "STUDENTS REGARD OVERSEAS WORK PROGRAM AS 'FANTASY STORY'", 2009/01/12) reported that in efforts to ease the tight job market for young college graduates, President Lee Myung-bak has pledged to help jobseekers gain overseas work experience through an initiative called the "Nurturing 100,000 Young Global Leaders Plan." But interviews with ROK employees who had enrolled in the government's current program and found work with overseas companies is much harsher than what they had envisioned. Many said when they found jobs, they were treated as temporary workers with no significant responsibilities. Some encountered

discrimination in the workplace and were also first to be downsized during economic slowdowns.

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11. US-Japan Relations

Kyodo News ("CLINTON SEES JAPAN AS 'CORNERSTONE' OF U.S. ASIA POLICY ", Washington, 2009/01/13) reported that Secretary of State-designate Hillary Clinton said that she embraces the alliance with Japan as a "cornerstone" of U.S. policy in Asia as she articulated her vision on the future course of U.S. diplomacy. "Our alliance with Japan is a cornerstone of American policy in Asia, essential to maintaining peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region," she said.

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12. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

Kyodo News ("MSDF CAN PROTECT NON-JAPANESE SHIPS IF LOADED WITH JAPANESE CARGO", Tokyo, 2009/01/13) reported that Japanese-owned shipments can be grounds for Maritime Self-Defense Force protection of non-Japanese ships if MSDF ships are deployed on an antipiracy mission near Somalia under maritime policing rules, lawmakers of the ruling coalition said Tuesday. Such a legal interpretation could pave the way to expanding the target of MSDF protection to many more non-Japanese ships navigating the pirate-infested waters off the coast of Somalia.

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13. Sino-US Relations

Reuters ("PRC WOOS U.S. AHEAD OF OBAMA INAUGURATION", Beijing, 2009/01/13) reported that PRC and the United States must boost cooperation to overcome the global economic downturn, PRC Premier Wen Jiabao said Tuesday. "The current international political and economic situation is complex and changeable, and China-U.S. relations are at a crucial moment of drawing on the past to illuminate the way forward," Wen told former President Jimmy Carter, who was visiting Beijing. "In particular, in responding to the international financial and economic hardships, we must strengthen mutual trust and cooperation and pass through the difficulties together."

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14. Cross-Strait Relations

Xinhua News ("PRC RESTATES PROTECTION OFFER FOR TAIWAN SHIPS OFF SOMALIA", Beijing, 2009/01/13) reported that PRC on Tuesday restated its intention to use PRC naval vessels off Somalia in the Gulf of Aden to protect Taiwanese ships against pirate attacks. Asked to comment on the Taiwan authority's plan to send its own escort vessels to protect Taiwan ships in the Gulf, PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said, "The Chinese escort fleet also protects Taiwan ships, and that's what we are doing there."

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15. PRC Urban-Rural Disparity

Economic Observer Online (Liu Peng, "CHINA'S URBAN-RURAL INCOME GAP RECORD HIGH",) reported that the per capita income gap between PRC urban and rural residents has widened beyond 10,000 yuan as of the end of 2008, according to recently released government data. This is the first time since the emergence of modern PRC that the gap crossed the ten thousand bar. Official statistics revealed that last year, per capita income of PRC rural residents stood at 4,700 yuan, as opposed to over 15,000 yuan enjoyed by urban residents.

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16. PRC Unrest

The Washington Post (Ariana Eunjung Cha, "AS CHINA'S JOBLESS NUMBERS MOUNT, PROTESTS GROW BOLDER", 2009/01/13) reported that as a global recession takes hold and the PRC's economy continues to slow, growing legions of unemployed workers are becoming increasingly bold in expressing their unhappiness -- expanding a debate over how to protect the PRC economy into long-fought disputes over other issues such as freedom of expression and equality before the law. Although PRC authorities have been able to quickly disband the recent protests, there is concern that a single national-level event, if mishandled by authorities, could lead to a serious political crisis.

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17. PRC Civil Society

Bloomberg News ("CHINA'S ACTIVISTS CHALLENGE GOVERNMENT ON AIDS, PROPERTY RIGHTS ", 2009/01/13) reported that in one of Beijing's oldest neighborhoods, a citizen-activist group with five full-time employees is challenging the PRC's powerful Ministry of Foreign Affairs over its plans for a historic residence the government owns. The campaign demonstrates the increasing assertiveness of advocacy groups in pushing the PRC's government to follow its own rules and account to the public for its actions. Such confrontations may become more common as the PRC seeks to expand its cooperation with nongovernmental organizations in alleviating poverty, stemming the spread of AIDS and halting environmental degradation.

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18. PRC Environment

Reuters ("PRC APPROVES CONTROVERSIAL CHEMICAL PLANT IN NEW CITY", Beijing, 2009/01/13) reported that PRC's environment ministry has approved a petrochemical plant that drew fierce opposition over feared pollution in one eastern city, approving its construction several miles to the west. Plans to build the paraxylene plant in Xiamen, Fujian province, faltered in 2007 after residents there mobilized a rare mass campaign over fears of toxins from the petrochemicals, used to make polyester and fabrics. But now the Ministry of Environmental Protection had passed an environmental impact study to build the petrochemical complex in Zhangzhou, about 50 km (30 miles) west of Xiamen, the official PRC News Service reported on Tuesday.

Xinhua News ("PRC PLANS WATER CONSERVANCY, CONTROL PROJECTS ALONG YANGTZE RIVER ", Wuhan, PRC, 2009/01/13) reported that eight conservation and control projects will be started by 2011 along PRC's longest river, the Yangtze, to improve water use and protect the ecology, a conservancy official said here Tuesday. The initiatives include strengthening embankments on the middle and lower reaches, building flood control projects at major tributaries and lakes, and controlling minor rivers and mountain torrents that pose threats to life. Other planned projects include reservoir and flood-control facilities, hydropower plants, soil erosion prevention schemes, water-quality monitoring networks and environmental protection facilities.

Xinhua News ("DROUGHT LEAVES 160 BOATS STRANDED IN PRC RIVER", Guangzhou, PRC, 2009/01/13) reported that about 160 boats were stranded in a river in south PRC's Guangdong province after a drought lowered the water to a level where navigation was not possible. The 486-km-long river supplies water to millions of people and cities. Guangdong has had no rain since the end of 2008, causing sustained drought in eastern areas.

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19. PRC Censorship

Xinhua News ("PRC SEIZES ABOUT 84 MN ILLEGAL PUBLICATIONS IN 2008", Beijing, 2009/01/13) reported that PRC confiscated about 84 million pornographic, pirated and unauthorized publications in 2008, the national anti-pornography and anti-piracy office said in a press release Tuesday. Law enforcement departments investigated 25,384 cases involving the production, sale and distribution of illegal publications last year, including 328 criminal cases, according to the National Office for Cleaning Up Pornography and Fighting Illegal Publications.

Agence France Press ("AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SAYS WEB SITE BLOCKED IN PRC", London, 2009/01/12) reported that Amnesty International said Monday that their Web site had once again been blocked in PRC and urged Beijing to re-establish the site immediately. In the run-up to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, the London-based human rights group's Web site was unblocked by the PRC authorities.

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20. PRC Food Safety

Asian News International ("PRC SCREENS 22.4 MLN BABIES FED MELAMINE-TAINTED MILK", Beijing, 2009/01/12) reported that the PRC Ministry of Health said Monday that it had screened 22.4 million babies who were fed melamine-tainted formula milk, and that 296,000 babies were sickened by the tainted milk. The PRC Daily quoted ministry spokesman Mao Qun'an as saying that 52,898 sick babies had been treated in hospitals nationwide by the end of December, 52,582 of them were cured.

Associated Press ("PARENTS OF SICK KIDS TO REJECT PRC'S PAYOUT PLAN", 2009/01/13) reported that more than 200 PRC parents whose babies were sickened or killed by tainted milk plan to reject a government compensation scheme because it is limited and does not cover enough children, an organizer of the families said Tuesday. The government's plan calls for families whose

children died to receive 200,000 yuan (\$29,000), while others would receive 30,000 yuan (\$4,380) for serious cases of kidney stones and 2,000 yuan (\$290) for less severe cases.

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II. PRC Report

21. PRC Civil Society and Education

Changjiang Business News ("WUHAN ORPHANS AND CHILDREN IN POOR FAMILY CAN APPLY FOR "CHARITABLE CLASS", 2009/01/13) reported that all those orphans, children in poor family whose domicile are in Wuhan city, can apply for "Charitable Class" found by Wuhan Civil Affairs School. Students in "Charitable Class" should reach the admitting line of the school and then apply with relevant certification from civil administration department. From 2001, the class has admitted more than 800 students who are orphans or from poor families. The Civil Affairs Bureau of Wuhan allots 300 thousand RMB from welfare fund to cover students' expenses. It is reported that 94 students of this school have already found jobs before graduation, most of the jobs are from local communities, funeral homes and civil affairs departments.

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22. PRC Economy

Yangcheng Evening News (Yao Zhide, "ALLIANCE WAS FORMED BETWEEN TRADE ASSOCIATIONS FROM GUANGZHOU AND HONGKONG", 2009/01/13) reported that "Recognizing and facing the international financial crisis in a scientific and developing point of view" was held in Garden Hotel, Guangzhou, by Guangzhou Merchants Association and Hongkong Trade Development Bureau, which attracted more than 200 entrepreneurs from Guangzhou and Hongkong. On the conference, Han Guoqiang, executive officer of Guangzhou Merchants Association, with Zuo Danhong, Chair of Hongkong International Industrial and Commercial Association, Yue Yongling, Vice Chair of Hongkong International Investment Association signed a protocol of forming the alliance, Liu Jinxiang, former vice mayor of Guangzhou and vice chair of Guangzhou Merchants Association advocated in his speech that entrepreneurs from Guangzhou and Hongkong should work hand in hand with each other and together face the crisis calmly.

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