

NAPSNet Daily Report 19 March, 2004

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 19 March, 2004", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 19, 2004,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-19-march-2004/>

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I. **United States**

1. **ROK Presidential Impeachment**

JoongAng Ilbo (Min Seong-jae, "MASS RALLIES SLATED TO BACK ROH BY MIN DONG-KI," 3/19/2004) reported that mass anti-impeachment candlelight rallies will take place today throughout the nation, with an estimated 100,000 turnout expected in Seoul's Gwanghwamun, according to the organizers of the rallies and police. Police will be out in force to maintain order. The civic groups leading the demonstrations said yesterday the rallies will start at 6 p.m. in Gwanghwamun, Seomyeon area of Busan, Dongseongno area of Daegu and many other locations. Also, an anti-war rally on the first anniversary of the US attack on Iraq will take place today in Daehangno, Seoul. Around 5,000 are expected to join the rally that begins at 3 p.m., and the protesters will march to Gwanghwamun to join the anti-impeachment rally. The National Police Agency said it would deploy 10,000 riot police in Gwanghwamun.

2. Taiwan Presidential Assassination Attempt

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT SURVIVE APPARENT ASSASSINATION," 03/20/04) reported that Taiwan's president and vice president survived an apparent assassination attempt a day before the island was due to vote in an election and a landmark referendum on relations with the PRC. President Chen Shui-bian and Vice President Annette Lu suffered minor injuries after being shot as they paraded through Chen's southern stronghold of Tainan in an open-topped jeep, said Chen's spokesman Chiou I-jen. The pair were taken to the Chi Mei hospital in the town 300 kilometres (180 miles) south of Taipei but were later discharged and the presidential vote and referendum would go ahead on Saturday, Chiou told reporters. Chen suffered an 11-centimetre-long gash when a bullet gouged his abdomen. The wound was sealed with 14 stitches, said hospital director Jan Chi-hsien. He said Vice President Lu suffered a bullet graze on her right knee. In television broadcasts shown after they were flown back to the capital Taipei, Chen and Lu insisted they were both fine. In his first appearance since the shooting, Chen, wearing an open-neck shirt and sweater, looked drawn. "Because of the medical attention, A-bian is fine," he said, referring to himself by his nickname. "Taiwan's security is assured. Please be calm and relieved." Lu, sitting with her knee bandaged said that "luckily" they were both well and urged people to vote. "Tomorrow is the day for the presidential election and referendum. Please everybody practice your sacred rights." No arrests have been reported and nobody has claimed responsibility for the shooting.

3. Taiwan Presidential Election

Agence France-Presse ("FOCUS OF ELECTION BATTLE SHIFTS AFTER SHOOTING OF PRESIDENT," 03/20/04) reported that the shooting of President Chen Shui-bian has changed the complexion of Taiwan's close-run presidential election battle which until the eve of polls had focused on the island's fraught relations with the PRC. As a huge hunt began for the man who attacked Chen, the opposition was left condemning the shooting and claiming that it would not affect the result. However after weeks of allegations of influence-peddling, criticisms over Chen's handling of the economy and relations with the PRC, the shooting dominated the final hours before polls open at 8:00 am (midnight GMT) on Saturday. All campaigning activities were cancelled, including huge rallies that were planned by both sides for the island's two biggest cities, Taipei and Kaohsiung. However, aides said that Chen still planned to vote in the capital Taipei after being discharged from hospital and heading back to his official residence in the capital Taipei. Analysts said the attack could help swing the vote Chen's way but the opposition demanded that the huge police operation come up with early results to try to keep their campaign on track.

4. DPRK-Pakistan Nuclear Connection

Washington Post (Glenn Kessler, "MUSHARRAF CITES NUCLEAR DEALINGS; POWELL TOLD OF GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT," Islamabad, 03/19/04) reported that US Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said Thursday he had received new information from Pakistan's president about the Pakistani government's dealings with Abdul Qadeer Khan, who admitted last month he had sold nuclear designs and components to other countries. But Powell, who came here saying he would seek details on the links between Khan's technology smuggling ring and Pakistani officials, said he would wait to analyze the information in Washington before providing details. "What I want to do is reflect on what he said to me and discuss it with some of my other colleagues back in Washington before I comment on the specifics of it," Powell told reporters traveling with him.

5. DPRK 'Self-Defensive' Deterrent Force

Korean Central News Agency ("DPRK SAYS "SELF-DEFENSIVE DETERRENT FORCE" CAN HANDLE US ATTACK," Pyongyang, 03/19/04) reported that a spokesman for the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland issued a statement Friday denouncing the "reception, staging, onward movement and integration" (RSOI) and Foal Eagle joint military exercises the US and the ROK war hawks are going to stage from 22 March. It says: The DPRK has a self-defensive deterrent force powerful enough to cope with any US preemptive nuclear attack and wipe out aggressors to the last man. The US "policy of strength" is sure to prove ineffective in face of the great Songun politics and the deterrent force based on it and the provocateurs are bound to meet the fate of forlorn wandering spirit. The committee vehemently denounces the projected joint military exercises of the US and its followers as an intolerable military provocation against the DPRK and an outright challenge to the desire and wish of all the Koreans and world peace-loving people for detente and peace on the Korean Peninsula.

6. ROK Troops in Iraq Cancellation

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA SAYS US PUT PRESSURE ON ITS TROOPS TO JOIN OFFENSIVE," Seoul, 03/18/04) reported that the ROK has cancelled plans to send troops to the northern Iraqi city Kirkuk, citing US pressure to participate in "offensive operations" that are contrary to its mission of peaceful reconstruction, the Defence Ministry said Friday. The ministry said it is looking for a new location to send the 3,600 troops it has promised to send to Iraq to aid in rebuilding the country. "South Korea and the US share the understanding that it was inevitable to change the location of our troop dispatch because the security in Kirkuk, our original candidate area, has worsened," the ministry said in a statement. "The US cited inevitability for offensive operations to keep security in order in the Kirkuk area and proposed a certain number of US troops would remain in Kirkuk to continue to conduct stabilization operations under the tactical control of South Korea," the statement said.

7. Bush on Asia Anti-Terror Role

Agence France-Presse ("BUSH PAYS TRIBUTE TO ASIA'S CONTRIBUTION IN ANTI-TERROR FIGHT," 03/20/04) reported that US President George W. Bush hailed Asia's contribution to the US fight against terrorism as he marked the first year of the invasion of Iraq by paying tribute particularly to Japan and South Korea. Speaking to diplomats from 84 countries that backed the US-led campaign against terror, he said "our coalition is sending an unmistakable message to the terrorists: These killers will be tracked down and found, they will face their day of justice." He said many Asian states had "sacrificed" in both Iraq and Afghanistan as part of the effort to eliminate terrorism, but cited Japan and the ROK for their "historic commitments" of troops, particularly to rebuild Iraq from the ashes of the war. Japan has pledged five billion dollars to rebuild Iraq, the biggest donor after the US, and has passed a bill allowing the dispatch of troops there. The ROK has sent 400 non-combatants, including medics and engineers to the war-ravaged country. And the ROK had agreed last month to dispatch another 3,000-odd troops to northern Iraq in phases, starting from next month, but on Friday put the plan on hold due to deteriorating security.

8. DPRK on ROK-US Military Exercises

The Associated Press (Sang-hun Choe, "NORTH KOREA THREATENS TO INCREASE NUCLEAR DETERRENT IN 'QUALITY AND QUANTITY,'" Seoul, 03/19/04) reported that the DPRK on Friday

threatened to boost its nuclear arsenal in "quality and quantity" if the US continues its "increased military threat." A DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman said joint US-ROK military exercises scheduled to start Sunday show the US is preparing to attack the DPRK and is not serious about pursuing a peaceful solution to the nuclear standoff. "The increased military threat the US poses to (North Korea), whiling away time with lip-service to 'dialogue,' will only compel it to increase its nuclear deterrent force both in quality and quantity," North Korea's official KCNA news agency quoted the ministry spokesman as saying. "No one can take issue with this measure for self-defense," he said. The US and the ROK are scheduled to kick off annual joint military exercises on Sunday, despite political uncertainty in the ROK following last week's impeachment of President Roh Moo-hyun. "Such serious military moves of the US forces in South Korea suggest that the day of the outbreak of a war is drawing near hour by hour in Korea," KCNA said. The US and the ROK have said the annual drills are defense exercises.

9. DPRK-KEDO Relations

Yonhap ("KEDO TO SIGN MOU WITH N. KOREA ON SUSPENDED NUCLEAR PROJECT," Seoul, 03/19/04) reported are to sign a memorandum of understanding on immigration control procedures at a construction site in the DPRK, ROK officials said Friday. The accord mandates, among other things, officials of KEDO to inform the DPRK of their visit five days before their trips to the site in the Kumho area on the DPRK's northeastern coast. "The memorandum of understanding deals with immigration control and other overall procedures," Lee Joon-jae, a special adviser to KEDO's executive board chairman Chang Sun-sup, said. Both sides will sign the MOU and exchange documents, ROK officials said. The Kumho region was designated as a consular protection area under a 1996 bilateral accord between North Korea and KEDO.

10. ROK-US Relations

JoongAng Ilbo ("DICK CHENEY PLANS VISIT TO SOUTH KOREA," 03/19/04) reported that US Vice President Dick Cheney will visit Seoul on April 15 at the invitation of the ROK government, an official announced yesterday. Cheney will spend two days meeting with Prime Minister Goh Kun, the acting president, and Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon on bilateral issues, the official said. The US vice president will also visit Japan and the PRC, the official added.

11. DPRK-ROK Defections

Yonhap ("SOME 300 N. KOREANS DEFECT TO S. KOREA SO FAR THIS YEAR," Seoul, 03/19/04) reported that a total of 299 North Koreans have defected to the ROK so far this year and the number is expected to increase significantly by year's end, ROK officials said Friday. "Considering the trend that the number of defectors hikes up 10 to 15 percent year-on-year, some 1,500 North Koreans could arrive here by the end of this year," said Hong Jae-hyung, head of the Unification Ministry's Social and Cultural Exchanges Bureau.

12. PRC-US WTO Dispute

The Los Angeles Times (Eveyln Iritani, "US ACCUSES CHINA OF HAMPERING TRADE," 03/19/04) reported that under pressure to more aggressively address a growing trade imbalance and protect US chip makers, the Bush administration Thursday filed the first World Trade Organization complaint against the PRC. The complaint alleges that the PRC's tax policies violate global trade rules by penalizing foreign semiconductor producers. The PRC is "discriminating against key US

technology products," US Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick said. "It's wrong and it's time to pursue a remedy through the WTO." US exporters, organized labor and lawmakers have been pressing the Bush administration for new measures to stem a record trade deficit with the PRC that critics say is based in part on the PRC's unfair economic practices. Thursday's WTO filing - the first made by any nation against the PRC since it joined the Geneva-based trade group in 2001 - may prompt other countries to lodge similar complaints. But the filing risks an escalation of trade tensions with the PRC, which could retaliate with its own curbs on US products. Trade between the US and the PRC was \$180.8 billion in 2003, up from \$75.4 billion in 1997, and despite its allegedly discriminatory tax policies, the PRC is the fastest-growing market for US chips and other technology products.

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.

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