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# NAPSNet Daily Report 2 April, 2008

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Contents in this Issue:

- I. NAPSNet
  - [1. DPRK Nuclear Program](#)
  - [2. US-DPRK Relations](#)
  - [3. Alledged DPRK-Syrian Nuclear Cooperation](#)
  - [4. DPRK Counterfeiting](#)
  - [5. Inter-Korean Relations](#)
  - [6. Sino-DPRK Relations](#)
  - [7. DPRK-Japan Relations](#)
  - [8. US-ROK Trade Relations](#)
  - [9. US-Japan Security Alliance](#)
  - [10. Yasukuni Shine Issue](#)
  - [11. Sino-Japanese Relations](#)
  - [12. Tibet Unrest](#)
  - [13. Cross Strait Relations](#)
  - [14. US-PRC Relations](#)
  - [15. PRC Olympics](#)
  - [16. PRC Economy](#)

- II. ROK Report
  - [17. ROK Policy Toward DPRK](#)
  - [18. Inter-Korean Relations](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

## **I. NAPSNet**

### **1. DPRK Nuclear Program**

Korea Herald (Lee Joo-hee, "NUKE ENVOYS PRESS N. KOREA TO MAKE PROGRESS", 2008/04/01) reported that top nuclear negotiators of the ROK and the US in Seoul urged the DPRK to submit a complete list of its nuclear programs. "We shared the understanding that we have given North Korea enough time to submit an accurate and complete declaration list," the ROK's Chun Yung-woo said. Hill's visit to Seoul comes amid worsening relations between the two Koreas. Upon arriving at Incheon International Airport, Hill said the latest development would not affect the nuclear negotiations. "Obviously, we are getting to the point where we need to make some progress very quickly. But I don't have a specific deadline."

[\(return to top\)](#)

### **2. US-DPRK Relations**

Korea Times ("NK'S HARSH RHETORIC 'NOT HELPFUL': US", Washington, 2008/04/01) reported that the DPRK's harsh statements in recent days, although not directly related to denuclearization talks, are "not helpful," the U.S. State Department said. "I don't think that some of the rhetoric that we've seen is necessarily helpful," department spokesman Tom Casey told reporters. "Is it directly related to six-party talks and the six-party process? No," Casey said about the DPRK's statements. "But is it helpful? Certainly I don't think so."

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "US NUCLEAR ENVOY HAS NO PLAN TO VISIT NORTH KOREA", ) reported that the strained inter-Korean relations won't affect efforts to resume the six-way talks on Pyongyang's nuclear program, top U.S. nuclear negotiator Christopher Hill said. "I think we should probably not overreact to those comments," Hill told reporters. Hill has no plan to visit Pyongyang or Beijing, the U.S. Embassy in Seoul said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

### **3. Alleged DPRK-Syrian Nuclear Cooperation**

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. 'CALLED N.KOREA'S BLUFF OVER SYRIA'", 2008/04/01) reported that the US in recent bilateral talks reportedly gave Pyongyang a list of DPRK officials involved in the supply of nuclear technology to Syria, a suspicion the DPRK denies. A high-level diplomatic source said that the U.S. obtained the list of officials including nuclear engineers, who were involved in the supply of nuclear technology to Syria, through various intelligence networks. This persuaded the U.S. that the DPRK-Syrian nuclear connection did exist. According to the source, it was chief US nuclear negotiator Christopher Hill who gave the list to his DPRK counterpart Kim Kye-gwan during their latest nuclear talks. Kim denied knowing anything about it.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **4. DPRK Counterfeiting**

Yonhap ("N.K.'S COUNTERFEIT U.S. BILLS STILL SHOWING UP: TREASURY", Washington, 2008/04/01) reported that the DPRK's counterfeit American dollars continue to surface, and the U.S. Secret Service has an ongoing investigation into the case, the U.S. Treasury Undersecretary Stuart Levey said Tuesday. Testifying before the Senate Finance Committee, Levey said the Treasury is working closely with the Secret Service on the matter to counteract the DPRK.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **5. Inter-Korean Relations**

The Financial Times (Song Jung-a, "PYONGYANG LASHES OUT AT LEE FOR FIRST TIME", Seoul, 2008/04/01) reported that the DPRK lashed out at the ROK's new president, Lee Myung-bak, warning that his tougher stance against the DPRK would bring about "catastrophic consequences." The DPRK has yet to report Mr Lee's December election or his government's taking office in February. But on Tuesday it called Mr Lee a "political charlatan," an "absent minded traitor" and a "US sycophant", adding to a series of recent actions that have ratcheted up tension on the Korean peninsula. "Lee Myung-bak should not misjudge the patience and silence so far kept by [North Korea]," the Rodong Sinmun, the DPRK's daily, declared in an editorial.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **6. Sino-DPRK Relations**

Xinhua ("CPC OFFICIAL: CHINA-DPRK RELATIONS MORE SOLID, MATURE", Beijing, 2008/04/01) reported that relations between the PRC and DPRK have become even more solid and mature, a Communist Party of China (CPC) senior official said. Wang Gang, a Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee member, made the remark when meeting with a delegation from the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK). The DPRK delegation was headed by Paek Kye Ryong, secretary of the WPK committee of the Ministry of Forestry. Wang said in recent years, PRC-DPRK relations had become even more solid and mature, playing an important role in promoting development of the two countries and maintaining the peace and stability in the region. Wang said the PRC was ready to join efforts with the DPRK to continue to advance bilateral relations.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **7. DPRK-Japan Relations**

KCNA News ("KCNA BLASTS JAPAN'S FOOLISH WAY OF THINKING", Pyongyang, 2008/03/31) reported that Japan is now working hard to keep the U.S. from delisting the DPRK as "sponsor of terrorism" as if it has no more important political and diplomatic pending issue than this. Politicians of Japan still join the conservative forces in calling for prevention of delisting, pulling up the DPRK over the "abduction issue." The chief delegate of Japan to the six-party talks said in a talk with the US assistant secretary of State on March 17 that "the matter of delisting north Korea as sponsor of terrorism is a matter decisive of the Japan-U.S. alliance," calling for the "perfect bilateral relations of trust." Such action of the chief delegate of Japan fully reveals its ruling quarters' wrong stand and attitude toward the talks.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **8. US-ROK Trade Relations**

Joongang Ilbo (Jung Ha-won, "TIME RUNNING OUT ON FTA", 2008/04/01) reported that the ROK government made yet another plea to local assemblymen to pass the much-disputed free trade agreement with the US before the National Assembly session ends in May, calling the inability to ratify the pact in both countries "very regrettable." But the bill, signed on April 2 one year ago, faces diminishing hopes. Legislators in both countries are dragging their feet amid upcoming elections, rural American voters are demanding the resumption of U.S. beef imports to the ROK and the U.S. Congress is struggling with the ratification of other FTAs. Meanwhile, Lee Hye-min, deputy Foreign Minister for free trade agreements, said yesterday that the nation's prolonged negotiations to strike an FTA with the European Union may be wrapped up before ROK and the United States ratify their own trade deal.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **9. US-Japan Security Alliance**

Kyodo ("DPJ TO OPPOSE GOV'T PLAN TO CONTINUE PAYING FOR U.S. BASES IN JAPAN", Tokyo, 2008/04/01) reported that the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan decided to oppose a government move to extend a Japan-U.S. agreement obliging Japan to pay part of the costs to host US military bases in the country, DPJ lawmakers said. The lawmakers said the DPJ believes it will be difficult to win public support for having Japan pay personnel costs for entertainment facilities on US bases as stipulated in the agreement, which expired Monday midnight. The DPJ also said Japan is shouldering too heavy a burden at a time when the US bases in Japan are increasingly taking on the role of strategic bases for the U.S. military in Asia, not just in Japan. The expiry of the agreement has led the US to cover the expenses, including utilities and labor costs, until a new accord takes effect.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **10. Yasukuni Shine Issue**

Mainichi Shimbun ("5 CINEMAS SNUB CONTROVERSIAL CHINESE-MADE 'YASUKUNI'

DOCUMENTARY", 2008/04/01) reported that five movie theaters have cancelled planned screenings of a PRC director's award-winning documentary about Yasukuni Shrine, leaving the opening date in Japan up in the air. The five theaters had planned to begin screening "Yasukuni," by PRC filmmaker Li Ying, on April 12, but by Monday they had decided to scrap screenings, saying the film could cause a disturbance. The film had received a 7.5 million yen grant from the Japan Arts Council, which operates under the jurisdiction of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. On March 18, the Wald9 cinema in Shinjuku decided to cancel screenings. Later, Ginza Cinepatos, Shibuya Q-AX cinema, Cinemart Roppongi and Cinemart Shinsaibashi also decided to cancel screenings of the film.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **11. Sino-Japanese Relations**

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN, CHINA EYEING MAY 6 FOR HU'S VISIT", 2008/04/01) reported that the government has agreed with the PRC government in principle that PRC President Hu Jintao will begin a visit to Japan as a state guest on May 6, government sources said. The PRC president will visit Tokyo and Nara Prefecture. The two governments are discussing the length of Hu's stay, with six days seen as the most likely time frame. According to the sources, the Japanese and PRC governments are considering making official announcements regarding Hu's visit when PRC Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi visits Japan on April 17.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **12. Tibet Unrest**

Reuters (Chris Buckley, "CHINA LAYS OUT CONSPIRACY CLAIMS AGAINST DALAI LAMA ", Beijing, 2008/04/01) reported that the PRC accused Tibetan groups on Tuesday of planning suicide attacks following last month's riots and protests but did not answer key questions about its evidence for such allegations. A spokesman told a news conference in Beijing that police had seized guns, bullets and explosives in some Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and repeated the accusation that the Dalai Lama was linked to Tibetan groups that had organised the recent unrest. At the same time, the PRC's anti-riot force was issued a mobilization order to ensure a trouble-free Beijing Olympic Games in the wake of the anti-Chinese unrest across Tibetan areas.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **13. Cross Strait Relations**

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN'S PRESIDENT-ELECT WANTS TALKS WITH CHINA ON EQUAL FOOTING", Taipei, 2008/04/01) reported that Taiwan's president-elect Ma Ying-jeou on Tuesday set terms for reopening a dialogue with the PRC, saying talks must be held on an equal footing to protect the island's interests. Ma stressed that he backed a 1992 consensus between Beijing and Taipei, under which both accepted the 'one China' formula but agreed to interpret it in their own way. "In 2008 we will start negotiations on direct air links, tourism, economy and trade ... and we will test if the basis of (the consensus) is firm," Ma said. "We will not resume negotiations if Beijing would only talk about 'one China' without acknowledging that it is open to different interpretations," he said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **14. US-PRC Relations**

Agence France-Presse (P. Parameswaran, "US-CHINA TIES KEY FOR PACIFIC REGION SUCCESS: AUSTRALIAN PM ", Washington, 2008/04/01) reported that Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd called Monday for careful management of US-PRC relations, saying it was critical for the success of the "Pacific Century". "For Australia, the single core question of whether ours will be a Pacific century rests on the long-term management of this most critical relationship," he told a forum of the Washington-based Brookings Institution. Rudd, who arrived last Thursday in Washington on his first major overseas trip since becoming prime minister, said there should be "continued good management" of relations between Washington and Beijing.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **15. PRC Olympics**

The Financial Times (Roger Blitz, "IOC PRESSES BEIJING ON INTERNET FREEDOM ", 2008/04/01) reported that the International Olympic Committee will press Beijing to open internet access before and during the 2008 Olympics, after a warning from a senior IOC official that any censorship would reflect badly on the PRC. Concerns about the PRC blocking internet access were discussed by the IOC with the Beijing games organising committee on Tuesday. Kevan Gosper, vice-chairman of the IOC co-ordinating commission, on Tuesday said blocking the internet during the games "would reflect very poorly" on the host nation. Mr Gosper said the PRC had an obligation under the so-called host city agreement to open internet access to 30,000 accredited and non-accredited journalists expected in Beijing.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **16. PRC Economy**

Reuters (Alison Leung, "CHINA'S FROSTY NORTHEAST FINALLY HEATING UP?", Dalian, 2008/04/01) reported that the PRC's northeast, once the crown jewel of a centrally planned economy but now its rust belt, fell on hard times at the turn of the century as its monolithic state companies adapted slowly to a rapidly opening economy. Now, years of painful reforms and an industrial overhaul have allowed the region to regain some of its former glory. Unemployment has dipped to manageable levels. State firms like Bank of Dalian pursue stock listings. The region is vying with Shanghai to become a global shipbuilding nexus, led by the country's largest shipyard, Dalian Shipbuilding.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **II. ROK Report**

## 17. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Kukmin Ilbo ("THERE IS NO NEED FOR DISTURBANCE IN DPRK POLICIES", 2008/04/02) wrote that yesterday, Rodong Shinmun of the DPRK seriously criticized the DPRK policies of the new ROK administration. Although the article was in a form of author's opinion, there is no difficulty in interpreting it as the official position of the DPRK government. The ROK government's decision not to hastily respond to provocative behavior of DPRK was wisely made. Adhering to the principle of responding in the long-run, the ROK must allow the DPRK some time to familiarize itself with the new administration.

Saegae Newspaper ("THE HARSH WORDS IN RODONG NEWSPAPER THAT REFLECT DPRK PANIC", 2008/04/02) wrote that yesterday, the Rodong Shinmun of the DPRK bombarded the ROK government with "author's opinion." The tone of the argument was quite threatening. There needs to be caution. However, there still is no reason to seriously consider converting the political situation into a low-posture negotiation or backdoor diplomacy. In a situation like this, principle and standard are important. The ROK government should avoid both responding overly sensitively to DPRK's provocation and inciting the opponent beyond necessity.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## 18. Inter-Korean Relations

Hankuk Ilbo ("DPRK THAT SELF-DAMAGES INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS", 2008/04/02) wrote that the DPRK's drastic measure is an irresponsible behavior that harms inter-Korean relations and intensifies tension. They should first at least show some sincerity for the nuclear report issue that has become a very controversial issue, and then seek for re-establishment of a relationship with the ROK government. However, the ROK government, which has made unyielding comments without any countermeasures, is also responsible for the situation. The government should also reflect itself if it has made the mistake of providing the DPRK with excuses for postponement of the DPRK nuclear report.

[\(return to top\)](#)

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