

NAPSNet Daily Report 22 April, 2009

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 22 April, 2009", NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, 2009,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-22-april-2009/>

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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Terror List Status

Agence France-Presse ("US SENATOR: PUT NKOREA BACK ON TERROR BLACKLIST", Washington, 2009/04/21) reported that a US Senator said he would soon offer legislation aiming to return the DPRK to a list of state sponsors of terrorism and reimpose sanctions lifted under former president George W. Bush . "We should put them back on," Republican Senator Sam Brownback said as he spoke out against confirming veteran US diplomat and DPRK point person Christopher Hill as ambassador to Baghdad. Brownback's legislation would direct US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to list the DPRK "as a country that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism."

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

The Korea Times (Kang Hyun-kyung, "SEOUL VOWS TO FRUSTRATE N. KOREA'S AMBITION TO BE NUCLEAR POWER", 2009/04/21) reported that the ROK will launch an international campaign aimed at frustrating the DPRK's ambition to become a nuclear state, a government official said. The official also denied a report that Pyongyang was preparing for a second underground nuclear test, following the failure of a previous attempt carried out in October 2006 in an effort to be recognized as a nuclear state. The Seoul official said on condition of anonymity that "in the campaign, we will focus on raising awareness of why the North shouldn't be recognized as a nuclear state through multilateral conferences and bilateral talks as well."

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3. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young , "NK PRESSES SEOUL ON GAESEONG", 2009/04/21) reported that the DPRK urged the ROK to decide quickly on whether to close or normalize the joint Gaeseong Industrial Complex, sources said after the first high-level meeting between the two sides in more than a year ended after just 22 minutes, Tuesday. The sources, who were close to the talks said the DPRK informed the ROK that it was reconsidering the terms of a contract, signed in 2000 as part of inter-Korean cooperation projects, over the operation of the joint industrial zone, including salaries for DPRK workers.

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4. Inter-Korean Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("S.KOREA BRACES FOR MILITARY PROVOCATION BY N.KOREA ", 2009/04/21) reported that Seoul 's top defense official said that the ROK military is ready for provocation by the DPRK. Speaking at a parliamentary committee meeting, Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee pointed to the possibilities of limited or full-scale warfare on the Korean Peninsula, stressing his military can strike back with the US. On the issue of the ROK's full participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative, the minister said it does not raise the risk of war.

Agence France-Presse ("N.KOREA REFUSES TO LET S.KOREA SEE DETAINED WORKER", Seoul, 2009/04/21) reported that the DPRK refused to give Seoul officials access to a detained ROK worker when the two sides met for their first talks in over a year. The employee at the Kaesong joint industrial complex was detained on March 30 for allegedly criticising the DPRK's system and for trying to persuade a female DPRK worker to defect.

Agence France-Presse ("S KOREA JAILS PAIR FOR SPREADING N KOREAN PROPAGANDA", Seoul, 2009/04/21) reported that a ROK court Tuesday jailed two leaders of a left-wing group for spreading DPRK propaganda and engaging in activities sympathetic to the nation. Choi Han-Wook and Kang Jin-Goo, current and former leaders of the Solidarity for Practice of the South-North Joint Declaration, were given prison sentences of 24 months and 30 months respectively. The court convicted them of pledging allegiance to DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il and carrying out directives from the DPRK's agents.

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5. DPRK Economy

Xinhua News ("DPRK CABINET DISCUSSES ECONOMIC ISSUES", 2009/04/21) reported that the cabinet of the DPRK held an enlarged session recently to discuss economic issues, the official Minju Choson daily said. The session reviewed the production situation in the first quarter of the year, the report said. There were thousands of factories in the country that produced more than planned, especially in steel, machine tools and electromotors, the output of which substantially increased compared to the same period of last year.

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6. DPRK Military

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA'S ELITE COMBAT FORCES REVEALED", 2009/04/21) reported that the operational department of the Korean Workers Party is a special force of highly-trained secret agents. Consisting of some 2,000 highly trained individuals, it was established for the purpose of undermining the enemy's leadership in time of war. But they are said to be in disarray due to the economic crisis. Ordinary DPRK military units now find it difficult to supply the troops with two meals a day. Shoes and uniform supplies have been at best haphazard for a year. Special force members used to be guaranteed decent jobs upon discharge, but no longer, with the result that morale is said to be at a low ebb. This has apparently given rise to organized thefts and robberies.

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7. Japan Politics

The Asahi Shinbun ("CABINET APPROVAL RATE RISES TO 26%", 2009/04/21) reported that the support rate for the Taro Aso Cabinet continued to climb, reaching 26 percent, as the main opposition party struggled to shake off a scandal embroiling its leader, an Asahi Shimbun poll showed. The Cabinet's nonapproval rate fell from 64 percent in the March 28-29 survey to 57 percent in the latest poll, conducted over the weekend. The approval rate among supporters of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party rose to 65 percent from 56 percent in the March 28-29 poll.

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8. Japan Whaling Issue

Agence France-Presse ("NEW JAPAN MISSION TO HUNT 60 MINKE WHALES", Tokyo, 2009/04/21) reported that Japan was set to launch another whaling mission, aiming to catch up to 60 minke whales off its northeastern coast for what it calls research, the government said. Environmental group Greenpeace condemned the launch of the annual hunt, which follows a recent Antarctic expedition by Japan that netted 680 whales. "The purpose of the research is to collect basic data for resuming sustainable commercial whaling in the future," Hiroko Furukawa, an official at Japan's Fisheries Agency, told AFP.

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9. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PM SENDS OFFERING TO CONTROVERSIAL WAR SHRINE", Tokyo, 2009/04/21) reported that Japan's Prime Minister Taro Aso confirmed that he had sent an offering to a Tokyo war shrine seen by Asian neighbours as a symbol of the country's past militarism. "I expressed my appreciation and respect as a Japanese national to the people who sacrificed their precious lives for the country," he told reporters. Aso offered the Shinto shrine a potted sakaki plant, an evergreen also known as *Cleyera japonica*, to mark the start of Japan's three-day spring festival Tuesday, a shrine official told AFP.

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10. PRC on Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo News ("CHINA ASKS JAPAN TO DEAL 'PROPERLY' DEAL WITH YASUKUNI SHRINE ISSUE", Beijing, 2009/05/21) reported that the PRC has called on Japan to deal with the "politically sensitive" issue of Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine in a manner that will help promote the progress made in Sino-Japanese relations, a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said in Beijing. Spokeswoman Jiang Yu made the comment at a regular press briefing. "We hope the Japanese side will earnestly and scrupulously follow efforts on both sides to overcome political barriers between the two countries," Jiang said.

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11. ROK on Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo News ("S. KOREA VOICES 'DEEP REGRET' OVER ASO'S OFFERING TO YASUKUNI SHRINE", Seoul, 2009/04/21) reported that the ROK expressed "deep regrets" Tuesday at Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso's making an offering at Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine for its spring festival. "From the perspective of straightening recognition of history, We think it is a matter of deep regrets Prime Minister Aso has made an offering to Yasukuni Shrine that glorifies past war of invasion and enshrines war criminals, " the Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry said in a spokesman's statement. —

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12. PRC Military

The Associated Press ("CHINA TO SHOW NEW SUBS, SAYS NO THREAT TO REGION", Qingdao, 2009/04/21) reported that the PRC plans to show off its nuclear submarines at a major international naval gathering this week, state media reported, the first known public display of some of its most potent seaborne weaponry. Vice Adm. Ding Yiping, the navy's deputy commander, said the submarines would appear at Thursday's international fleet review in the northern port city of Qingdao, but did not specify the types of vessels.

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13. Sino-US Military Relations

The Wall Street Journal ("U.S. SEEKS TO IMPROVE LINKS WITH CHINA NAVY", 2009/04/21) reported that the US wants more discussions on naval safety and communications with the PRC, following a recent confrontation between an American surveillance ship and PRC vessels in the South China Sea, a senior US navy officer said. U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead, told reporters that interaction between ships of the two navies should "be professional and safe, and not jeopardize the well-being of our sailors." The navies must "operate in accordance with international law," added Adm. Roughead, the highest-ranking U.S. military official to visit the PRC this year.

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14. Sino-Russian Energy Trade

Agence France Press ("RUSSIA, CHINA FINALISE OIL PIPELINE DEAL", Beijing, 2009/04/21) reported that the PRC and Russia signed a multi-billion dollar deal Tuesday, bringing into play a series of agreements on constructing an oil pipeline and supplying fuel to PRC markets, state media reported. According to Russian news reports, the sides agreed to a 23-year deal to pump Russian oil to the energy hungry PRC market, in return for 25 billion dollars in loans from the PRC to Russian oil firms to finance a pipeline. Russia will supply China with 15 million tonnes of crude during the period of the deal, Interfax news agency said.

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15. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN TO MEET DIPLOMATIC ALLIES, TESTING CHINA", Taipei, 2009/04/21) reported that Taiwan will lead a summit this year with six diplomatic allies, officials said on Tuesday, a tough first for the normally PRC-friendly president as Beijing claims the island and opposes its reach overseas. President Ma Ying-jeou will head up the Taiwan-Pacific Allies Summit in the Solomon Islands on Oct. 20, Solomons ambassador Beraki Jino said. It would be his first substantive trip overseas to meet Taiwan's tiny but strategically important diplomatic partners.

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16. PRC Tibet Development

United Press International ("CHINA TO BUILD HIGHWAY TO ROADLESS COUNTY", Nyingchi, 2009/04/21) reported that the PRC began building a highway to the country's last roadless county in Tibet, officials said. The \$139 million road will connect the town of Medog in Tibet to the outside world, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The road will link Zhamog Township and Medog in 2011, said Wong Mengyong, deputy Transportation Minister. "We have no road, no postal services, and little communication with the outside world. Local residents rely on horse and mules for transportation," said Ngodrup Doje, Medog's county head. "Many people in the county haven't seen vehicles.

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17. PRC Security

The Associated Press ("TIBETAN LAMA ON TRIAL FOR WEAPONS CHARGE IN CHINA", Beijing, 2009/04/21) reported that a respected Tibetan lama went on trial on weapons charges as three people were sentenced to lengthy prison terms for deadly arson attacks during last year's rioting in the Tibetan capital. Phurbu Tsering Rinpoche, who headed a convent in Ganzi, a predominantly Tibetan prefecture in Sichuan province, is accused of illegally possessing weapons, his Beijing-based lawyer Li Fangping told The Associated Press. Li said the monk was forced into making a confession after a police interrogation that lasted four days and threats that his wife and son would

be detained if he did not comply.

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18. PRC Economy and the Environment

The New York Times (Jonathan Ansfield, "SLUMP TILTS PRIORITIES OF INDUSTRY IN CHINA", Duanjialing, 2009/04/21) reported that in the rush to invest \$585 billion in stimulus spending and revive flagging industrial production, the PRC has at least temporarily backpedaled on some environmental restraints imposed, though with limited impact, during the country's long boom. The Ministry of Environmental Protection, citing the urgency of fighting the downturn, adopted a new "green passage" policy that speeds approval of industrial projects. In one three-day stretch late last year, it gave the green light to 93 new investment plans valued at \$38 billion. Environmentalists say they worry that the government has squandered a chance to use the downturn to put the PRC on a cleaner growth path, and has instead laid the foundation for another toxic cycle of hypergrowth.

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19. PRC Energy and the Environment

The Associated Press ("CHINA TO BUILD 20 HYDRO DAMS ON YANGTZE RIVER", Beijing, 2009/04/21) reported that the PRC plans to build more than 20 dams along the country's longest river by 2020 as part of a plan to further develop the Yangtze River's hydropower, an official said. The river already has the world's largest hydroelectric project, the Three Gorges Dam. The PRC is looking to hydropower as an important alternative to help it move away from coal, which provides more than 70 percent of the country's energy supply. Hu Siyi, the vice minister of water resources, announced the plans during a forum in Shanghai that called for hydropower projects on the tributaries and upper reaches of the Yangtze, a notice on the Web site of the Ministry of Water Resources said.

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20. PRC Nuclear Safeguards

DPA ("NUCLEAR OVERSIGHT IN CHINA INADEQUATE, REGULATOR SAYS", Beijing, 2009/04/21) reported that the quick expansion of the PRC's nuclear energy production is far outpacing the regulation of its nuclear reactors, the country's top nuclear watchdog warned. Li Ganjie, director of the National Nuclear Safety Administration, also said in unusually strong terms that the PRC has insufficient capacity to handle nuclear waste. Li said the storage of past nuclear waste was "not entirely under control," the Communist Party newspaper Renmin Ribao reported. Nuclear safeguards in the PRC are weak and insufficient to keep up with the country's need to develop nuclear energy and technology, he added.

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21. PRC Food Security

The Financial Times (Javier Blas, "CHINA RULES OUT PURSUIT OF AFRICA FARMLAND", 2009/04/21) reported that the PRC has said it will not join the growing trend of outsourcing food production by investing in overseas farmland, particularly in Africa, expressing doubts that such deals could improve its food security. Niu Dun, the PRC's deputy agriculture minister, said yesterday that Beijing preferred to depend on its own land to maintain self-sufficiency in grain. "We cannot rely on [investments in] other countries for our own food security," Mr Niu told the Financial Times. "We have to depend on ourselves," he said in the first comments on the subject by a senior PRC policymaker.

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II. PRC Report

22. PRC Civil Society and Gender Equity

People's Daily Online (Liu Ge, Niu Ruifei, "INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENDER AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION UNVEILED IN BEIJING", 2009/04/21) reported that Chairwomen of China Women's Federation Chen Zhili said at the Conference yesterday that gender equality is a basic national policy of the PRC. The PRC government will pay close attention on women's special interests and enhance protection of women in many fields related with disaster risk reduction, such as poverty alleviation, environmental protection, community construction and so on.

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23. PRC Energy Demand

Shanghai Securities ("CHINA'S COAL DEMAND TO REACHE 3.4 BILLION TONS BY 2020", 2009/04/21) reported that Director of Coal Department of China National Energy Bureau Fang Junshi said yesterday that by 2020, China's coal demand will reach 3.4 billion tons. "Generally speaking, the renewable energy and clean energy will develop rapidly, but their increment is still difficult to meet the demand. So the coal demand will continue to grow", he said.

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24. PRC Civil Society

People's Daily online (Cao Lingjuan, "AGING ISSUE IN HARMONIOUS SOCIETY FORUM HELD IN SHANGHAI", 2009/04/21) reported that as of 2008, China's elder population over 60 years old has reached 159.89 million, accounting 12% of the whole population. The coming growth peak of elder population is already having a profound impact on China's social and economic development. The sponsors invite the world's top experts to the Forum, to explore the policy, government function, status, service assurance and other topics of aging issue.

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