NAPSNet Daily Report 22 April, 2010

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 22 April, 2010", NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, 2010, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-22-april-2010/

NAPSNet Daily Report 22 April, 2010

Contents in this Issue:

- I. NAPSNet
  - 1. DPRK Nuclear Program
  - 2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program
  - 3. DPRK Sanctions
  - 4. Inter-Korean Relations
  - 5. Inter-Korean Economic Relations
  - 6. DPRK Economy
  - 7. ROK Naval Ship Sinking
  - 8. ROK Military Capability
  - 9. ROK Military
  - 10. ROK-US Security Alliance
  - 11. ROK Anti-Piracy Operations
  - 12. Sino-ROK Relations
  - 13. US-Japan Missile Defense Cooperation
  - 14. USFJ Base Relocation
  - 15. Japan Whaling Issue
  - 16. Sino-Japanese Relations

- 17. Sino-Indian Relations
- 18. Sino-Saudi Arabian Energy Cooperation
- 19. PRC Tibet Issue
- 20. PRC Human Rights

Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Ria Novosti ("NORTH KOREA SAYS NO PLANS TO ABANDON NUCLEAR WEAPONS", 2010/04/21) reported that the DPRK said it would not abandon its nuclear weapons program, but was ready to take part in non-proliferation efforts together "with other nuclear weapons states," Yonhap news agency said on Wednesday. "We will produce as many nuclear weapons as we think necessary, but we will neither participate in the nuclear arms race nor produce them in excess," the agency quoted a memorandum issued by the DPRK foreign ministry as saying. The ministry said the DPRK was ready to "take part in international efforts on nuclear disarmament on an equal footing with other nuclear weapons states." "Assuming equal positions of all nuclear weapons states, we are ready to join forces with the international community in nuclear non-proliferation and safe storage of nuclear materials," the memorandum reads.

(return to top)

2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("US SAYS WON'T ACCEPT NUCLEAR N.KOREA", 2010/04/21) reported that the US ruled out recognizing the DPRK as a nuclear power after the state said it was willing to join global disarmament efforts if treated as an equal partner. "We will not accept North Korea as a nuclear-weapon state. Its current path is a dead end," State Department spokesman Philip Crowley told reporters. "If it comes constructively back to the six-party process, then there are opportunities available to North Korea for a different relationship with the United States," Crowley said.

(return to top)

3. DPRK Sanctions

Times of India ("ECONOMIC SANCTIONS STRENGTHEN NORTH KOREA'S DICTATORSHIP, SAYS GERMAN NGO", 2010/04/21) reported that e conomic sanctions by the US and other western countries is actually strengthening the Kim Jong-il's regime, a German social worker involved with

a non-government organization told reporters here this morning. Sanctions are also affecting life in other ways like the new-found emphasis on sustainable agriculture, she said. “The leaders are using the sanctions as a justification. People believe the country is in a bad condition because of outside forces,” Karin Janz, country director in the DPRK for the German NGO Welthungerhilfe, said while speaking at the Foreign Correspondents Club in Beijing.

(return to top)

4. Inter-Korean Relations

Agence France Presse ("N.KOREA IS WORLD'S 'MOST BELLIGERENT' STATE: SEOUL", 2010/04/21) reported that the sinking of a ROK warship near the border with the DPRK is a wake up call to the realities of living next door to the world's "most belligerent" state, the ROK’s president said on Wednesday. President Lee Myung-Bak said the ROK should turn the sinking into "a chance to realise that North Korea, the world's most belligerent force, is very near”. "Our people are oblivious to the fact that there are North Korean troops armed with long-range artillery just 40 miles away."

Chosun Ilbo ("LEE SLAMS N.KOREAN EXTRAVAGANCE ", 2010/04/21) reported that President Lee Myung-bak slammed the DPRK’s extravagant celebrations of nation founder Kim Il-sung's birthday at a time when the impoverished country seems headed for another famine. "My view is that North Korea needs to get sensible. When their people are suffering, the government spent W6 billion (US$1=W1,118) on fireworks to celebrate the birthday. How much corn could you have bought with that money?" Lee said in a meeting of 800 North American advisors to the National Unification Advisory Council.

(return to top)

5. Inter-Korean Economic Relations

Yonhap News ("NORTH KOREA MILITARY TO VISIT MOUNT KUMGANG RESORT TODAY", 2010/04/21) reported that a DPRK military delegation was to visit the Mt. Kumgang resort on Thursday, the government said. The DPRK notified Hyundai Asan Wednesday of the planned visit by a delegation from the National Defense Commission, the Unification Ministry said in a release. The DPRK “will visit the Mount Kumgang zone at 9 a.m. to check on the results of a real estate survey” that took place late last month, the release said.

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA FEARS SECURITY THREAT FROM KAESONG'S INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES", 2010/04/21) reported that the DPRK’s military has expressed fear that high-rise buildings built by the ROK at a joint factory park in the DPRK border town of Kaesong could pose security threats to the DPRK, according to a government official in Seoul Wednesday. The alleged concerns were disclosed during a visit by DPRK military officers to the Kaesong industrial park earlier this week, said the official. According to a Unification Ministry official who spoke on condition of anonymity, the DPRK officials went up to the top of a 15-story inter-Korean business support center in Kaesong and voiced concerns that their troops in nearby areas may be scouted from there.

(return to top)

6. DPRK Economy

American Broadcasting Company ("RARE VIDEO OF N. KOREA SHOWS MARKET GHOST TOWN", 2010/04/21) reported that a video of a DPRK market was shot in October and again last month with a hidden camera by two DPR Koreans who recently fled the country. The film shows a market in On-sung, Ham-Kyung Province, a small town at the northern tip of the DPRK. In the released video filmed in October before the currency change, the market in On-sung is thriving with vendors selling and customers buying cosmetics, tobacco, used clothes, seafood and oil. The hustle and bustle in these experimental markets has come to an end, which can be seen in the released video that filmed the same market last month. The market is a ghost town. Stalls are mostly empty while few are seen selling basic items such as corn.

Xinhua News ("DPRK TO PROMOTE PRODUCTION OF CONSUMER GOODS", 2010/04/21) reported that the DPRK has decided to promote the production of consumer goods in order to improve people's lives, the Rodong Sinmun newspaper reported. The major task was to continue exploiting the potential of the light industry, raising production, improving quality, promoting the modernization of enterprises and guaranteeing its operation at full capacity, a cabinet meeting has agreed. They also demanded sectors such as metal, electricity, coal and railway continue promoting production to create condition for the improvement of people's lives.

(return to top)

7. ROK Naval Ship Sinking

Agence France Presse ("N.KOREANS BELIEVE TORPEDO SANK WARSHIP: ACTIVIST", 2010/04/21) reported that DPRK soldiers believe a ROK warship that sank last month was hit in a premeditated military operation approved by leader Kim Jong-Il , a ROK activist said on Wednesday. Choi Sung-Yong , a campaigner for the return of ROK citizens abducted by Pyongyang, told AFP: "Despite Pyongyang 's denial, many North Korean soldiers believe a torpedo sank the ship." Choi said his claim was based on a telephone conversation with an unnamed DPRK army officer . ROK officials refused to comment.

Korea Herald ("WASHINGTON SUPPORTED U.S. ACTION ON SHIP SINKING IF PYONGYANG'S INVOLVEMENT IS CONFIRMED: STATE DEPT.", 2010/04/21) reported that the United States supported the idea of bringing to the U.N. Security Council the sinking of a ROK naval ship if the DPRK's involvement is confirmed, Yonhap news agency said today. "That is a right that every country has," State Department spokesman Philip Crowley was quoted by the news agency as saying, responding to the proposal by ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan. "From our standpoint, the investigation is ongoing and we continue to cooperate with South Korea in that investigation," Crowley said.

Yonhap ("MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IMMEDIATELY SUSPECTED N.KOREA IN SHIP SINKING: SOURCE", Seoul, 2010/04/22) reported that ROK military intelligence authorities immediately assumed it was the DPRK that sank an ROK naval ship last month, a senior military source said Thursday. That assessment was reported to the presidential office and the defense ministry right after the patrol ship Cheonan broke in half and sank, the source said on condition of anonymity. "Since February last year, North Korea has strengthened training that showed the possibility of it

launching a guerrilla warfare-style provocation, rather than a skirmish," the source said.

(return to top)

8. ROK Military Capability

Yonhap News ("FOREIGN MINISTER SAYS SEOUL HAS MEANS TO DEAL WITH NORTH KOREA", 2010/04/21) reported that the ROK has military capabilities to counter attacks by the DPRK, Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said. "I cannot publicly discuss such advanced tactics or related capabilities. I will only say we do have our own means to counter North Korea at an adequate level," the minister said at a breakfast meeting with officials at a private think tank, the Dosan Academy. In a separate forum with a presidential advisory council on unification, the minister said the government's "options" included referring the DPRK to the U.N. Security Council if Pyongyang is proved to be responsible or imposing sanctions through bilateral or multilateral efforts with other nations.

Korea Herald ("LEE: MILITARY LAPSED INTO COMPLACENCY", 2010/04/21) reported that President Lee Myung-bak yesterday said the ROK military became complacent over the years, possibly leading to the mysterious sinking of the 1,200-ton Cheonan and its slow response to the disaster. “It seems like the military may have fallen into complacency now that 60 years have passed since the (Koreas were) divided,” Lee said before presiding over a meeting of a presidential panel on regional development in Cheong Wa Dae. The president also noted that the Cheonan disaster could have served as an eye-opener for ROK citizens in terms of national security, reiterating the need to improve the national security system and take steps to tighten military discipline.

(return to top)

9. ROK Military

United Press International ("SOUTH KOREA GROUNDS HELICOPTER FLEET", 2010/04/21) reported that the ROK military said it grounded its fleet of anti-submarine helicopters after a pair of crashes during operations undergo formal investigation. ROK naval officials said pilot fatigue and engine problems were possible causes for the crashes, Defense News reports.

(return to top)

10. ROK-US Security Alliance

Korea Herald ("CHEONAN RAISES WAR CONTROL DEBATE", 2010/04/21) reported that the recent sinking of the Cheonan, a Navy corvette, has reignited concerns about the scheduled 2012 transfer of wartime operational control to Seoul from Washington. At the forefront were the nation’s veteran association, which held a special seminar where hundreds attended calling for the government to defer the transfer to a later date. The group also adopted a resolution on the issue. “The Cheonan incident proves that the Combined Forces Command must stand,” the veterans said. “If this incident is found to have been caused by North Korean provocations, the government must take all measures including military ones to retaliate.”

Donga Ilbo ("KOREA, US AGREE TO DELAY COMMAND TRANSFER ", 2010/04/21) reported that the ROK and the U.S. have agreed to delay Washington's transfer of wartime operational command to Seoul that had been scheduled for April 2012, a high-ranking ROK official said yesterday. The delay is likely to be announced at a strategic meeting of the foreign and defense ministers of the two countries as early as June in Seoul. "The White House finished its review of Korea's request for the delay and decided to accept. Under such an agreement, the two countries are discussing detailed follow-up measures," the official said. "I understand that unlike the White House, the U.S. Defense Department still opposes the delay."

(return to top)

11. ROK Anti-Piracy Operations

Yonhap News ("FRESH S. KOREAN NAVAL CONTINGENT BEGINS ANTI-PIRACY MISSION OFF SOMALIA", 2010/04/21) reported that a fresh ROK naval contingent began an anti-piracy mission in waters off Somalia on Wednesday, replacing its predecessor in the fourth troop rotation since the country dispatched troops to the pirate-infested waters, the military said. The new unit of some 300 troops arrived in the region aboard the 4,400-ton Gang Gam-chan stealth destroyer on Sunday and has since prepared to take over the mission to escort ROK commercial vessels and patrol the area, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

(return to top)

12. Sino-ROK Relations

Arirang News ("PRES. LEE CALLS FOR REVIEW OF KOREA-CHINA FTA", 2010/04/21) reported that President Lee Myung-bak has called on his officials to look into a free trade agreement with the PRC, the ROK's largest trading partner. Presiding over a weekly Cabinet meeting the President highlighted the importance of the PRC's rapid economic development and increased dominance over major global industries. A senior Choengwadae official explained that President Lee would like to speed things up for the bilateral pact as Japan seems less than enthusiastic about the prospect of a trilateral trade agreement with the ROK and the PRC. The official added a ROK-PRC accord will boost strategic ties between the two countries and could possibly have an effect on the DPRK.

(return to top)

13. US-Japan Missile Defense Cooperation

Reuters ("JAPAN STICKS TO KEY MISSILE-SHIELD DEAL: U.S. GENERAL", 2010/04/21) reported that Japan remains fully committed to building a linchpin multibillion-dollar missile interceptor with the United States, the head of the US Missile Defense Agency told Congress, even as US-Japanese ties adjust to a new era. Army Lieutenant General Patrick O'Reilly said he had held several high-level program reviews with Japanese government officials. "They have indicated that they are in full support and their commitments are solid," he told the Senate Appropriations Defense subcommittee , referring to a Standard Missile -3 upgrade program in its fifth year of development.

(return to top)

14. USFJ Base Relocation

Reuters ("JAPAN PM SAYS END-MAY REMAINS DEADLINE ON BASE FEUD", 2010/04/21) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama said on Wednesday he would stick to an end of May deadline to resolve a row over a U.S. airbase ahead of an election. "There is no change in my intention to resolve this by the end of May," Hatoyama said in parliament. "It is necessary to have the understanding of those in Okinawa as well as the people of Japan and the people (living) where the facility might be relocated. And naturally, the United States needs to understand as well," Hatoyama said in a debate with his main opposition rival.

Kyodo News ("U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS U.S. PREFERS EXISTING PLAN ON OKINAWA", 2010/04/21) reported that a senior U.S. defense official said Wednesday that the United States prefers the current plan already agreed to between Japan and the United States on the future of the U.S. Marine base in Okinawa. "We believe that the existing realignment plan still is the one that makes the most sense," U.S. Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Michele Flournoy said in response to a question at a news conference. Flournoy said the U.S. administration is "very sympathetic to the transition period that the Japanese government is going through."

Kyodo News ("HATOYAMA SAYS HE MAY BE 'FOOLISH' FOR BITING BULLET ON BASE ISSUE", 2010/04/21) reported that Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama surprised many in parliament on Wednesday by saying that a Washington Post columnist who described him as "loopy" may be right because of his decision to review a base relocation accord with the United States, despite knowing how difficult it would be. The rare comment came at the outset of a one-on-one debate in the Diet in the afternoon with main opposition Liberal Democratic Party leader Sadakazu Tanigaki. "As the Washington Post says, I may certainly be a foolish prime minister," Hatoyama said, suggesting that by seeking an alternative relocation site, he has taken a path far tougher than just endorsing an existing plan for the relocation of the U.S. Marines' Futemma Air Station in the city of Ginowan in Okinawa Prefecture.

Kyodo ("U.S. REJECTS IDEA OF RELOCATING MARINE BASE TO TOKUNOSHIMA", Seoul, 2010/04/22) reported that the United States has rejected the idea of relocating a U.S. Marine base in Okinawa to Tokunoshima Island, because the island is too far from other Okinawa-based Marine units, a government source said Thursday. Washington has conveyed to Japan that a helicopter unit of the U.S. Marines should not be farther than 65 nautical miles, or 120 kilometers, from the Marines on the ground in refusing the potential relocation to Tokunoshima, according to the government source.

(return to top)

15. Japan Whaling Issue

Associated Press ("JAPAN SAYS IT CAN COMPROMISE ON WHALE CATCH QUOTA", 2010/04/21) reported that Japan is willing to reduce its whale catch quota for the country's annual research hunts if it can resume commercial whaling along its coasts, a fisheries official said Wednesday. "A resumption of commercial whaling has been our long-cherished hope," Fisheries Agency official Toshinori Uoya said. "In order to achieve that goal, we are ready to compromise." Details of Japan's proposal to the IWC will be published Thursday, ahead of the body's annual assembly in June, said

Uoya, who attended a closed-door IWC meeting last week in Washington with representatives of 11 other countries, including Japan, the U.S. and Australia.

(return to top)

16. Sino-Japanese Relations

Kyodo News ("CHINESE NAVY CHOPPER APPROACHES JAPANESE DESTROYER NEAR OKINAWA", 2010/04/21) reported that the Japanese Defense Ministry announced Wednesday that a PRC navy helicopter flew close to a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyer on alert in southern waters off Okinawa Prefecture on Wednesday afternoon. "A Chinese carrier-borne helicopter approached the destroyer Asayuki on alert for Chinese vessels between around 3:37 p.m. and 3:40 p.m. around 500 kilometers south of the main Okinawa island, coming close to around 90 meters horizontally and around 50 meters vertically and flying in a circle twice," the ministry said in a statement. According to the Defense Ministry, it has confirmed that personnel aboard a PRC navy helicopter were taking photos of the MSDF Suzunami destroyer in the East China Sea in an earlier incident on April 8. But it remains unclear what the PRC side was trying to do in the latest case.

(return to top)

17. Sino-Indian Relations

Calcutta News ("INDIA CLOSELY WATCHING CHINA'S BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE: KRISHNA", 2010/04/21) reported that India is keeping a close watch on the PRC's military modernisation and infrastructure in the border regions in Tibet and has taken necessary measures to safeguard its security, External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna said. 'The government pays close attention to China's military modernisation programme, including the development of rail, road and airport facilities in the border regions opposite India in Tibet and Xinjiang Autonomous Border Regions,' Krishna told the house in response to a question. 'The government keeps a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it.'

(return to top)

18. Sino-Saudi Arabian Energy Cooperation

Bloomberg News ("CHINA AND SAUDI ARABIA FORM STRONGER TRADE TIES", 2010/04/21) reported that the PRC, one of the world’s largest oil consumers, and Saudi Arabia, holder of about a fifth of global crude reserves, are forging closer ties as the Gulf kingdom responds to a PRC drive to supply its rising energy needs. In November, the PRC overtook the United States as the main buyer of Saudi oil, and Saudi Arabian Oil and Saudi Basic Industries are investing in refinery and petrochemicals projects in the PRC. “China’s rise has provided Saudi Arabia with an excuse to knock on Washington’s door and to say, ‘You are not our only partner,”’ Ben Simpfendorfer, chief China economist in Hong Kong for Royal Bank of Scotland said.

(return to top)

19. PRC Tibet Issue

Associated Press ("TIBETAN MONKS ORDERED OUT OF CHINA'S QUAKE ZONE", 2010/04/21) reported that earthquake survivors say it was the Tibetan monks who helped first, bringing food, pitching tents and digging through rubble after disaster hit far western PRC a week ago, killing thousands. Now the Buddhist monks who responded first are being pushed out of the disaster area and off of state media — apparently sidelined by Beijing's unease with their heroism and influence. Monasteries were given verbal orders the last two days to recall their monks. Amid hours of coverage for the PRC's national day of mourning on Wednesday, no monks were visible in the official proceedings.

(return to top)

20. PRC Human Rights

Associated Press (Cara Anna, "2 CHINA LAWYERS WHO DEFENDED FALUN GONG FACE BAN", 2010/04/21) reported that two PRC lawyers who represented a Falun Gong practitioner face the permanent loss of their legal licenses — a new government tactic to tighten its grip on human rights defenders . Dozens of lawyers are expected to attend Thursday's hearing in support of Tang Jitian and Liu Wei, who are accused of "disrupting the order of the court" during an April 2009 trial in which they defended a follower of the banned spiritual group. An e-mail circulating among PRC lawyers Wednesday said Tang and Liu would be the first lawyers in Beijing , where most rights lawyers are based, to lose their licenses permanently without having a criminal conviction .

(return to top)

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-22-april-2010/

Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org