NAPSNet Daily Report 24 March, 2009

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 24 March, 2009", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 24, 2009, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-24-march-2009/

NAPSNet Daily Report 24 March, 2009

Contents in this Issue:

- I. Napsnet
  - 1. DPRK Missile Program
  - 2. US on DPRK Missile Program
  - 3. DPRK on Six Party Talks
  - 4. ROK on Japan Role in Six-Party Talks
  - 5. DPRK Detention of Journalists
  - 6. ROK Policy Toward DPRK
  - 7. ROK Aid for DPRK
  - 8. DPRK Government
  - 9. DPRK Leadership
  - 10. ROK Military
  - 11. ROK-EU Trade Relations
  - 12. Japan Missile Defense
  - 13. Japanese Politics
  - 14. Japanese Demographics
  - 15. Sino-US Relations
  - 16. Cross Strait Economic Relations

- 17. PRC Tibet Issue
- 18. PRC Unrest
- 19. PRC Climate Change
- 20. PRC Environment
- 21. PRC on Monetary Policy
- 22. PRC Public Health
- 23. PRC Internet

- II. PRC Report
  - 24. PRC Civil Society and the Environment
  - 25. PRC Climate Change
  - 26. PRC Civil Society

Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Missile Program

Agence France-Presse ("N. KOREA MISSILE LAUNCH WILL HELP DOMESTICALLY: JANE'S", 2009/03/24) reported that the DPRK's planned rocket launch next month may be beneficial domestically, Jane's Intelligence Review said Monday. "A successful launch of the Unha 2 (the name of the SLV) could prove beneficial for Pyongyang by stoking national pride following elections to the 12th Supreme People's Assembly on 8th Marth," the magazine said. "The 12th Supreme People's Assembly will sit for its first session on 9 April, immediately after the SLV launch. However, it (the launch) is also likely to lead to international sanctions and opprobrium."

(return to top)

2. US on DPRK Missile Program

Yonhap ("OBAMA URGED NOT TO OVERREACT TO N. KOREAN ROCKET, TO REVISE MISSILE TALKS", Washington, 2009/03/24) reported that Frank Jannuzi, professional staff member of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, urged the Barack Obama administration on Monday to refrain from trying to intercept a DPRK rocket launch. Jannuzi also recommended that the administration revive missile talks with the DPRK. "Overreaction would be shooting down the missile, taking out the missile from the launch pad, suspending and terminating the six party talks," Jannuzi told a seminar at the Heritage Foundation.

(return to top)

3. DPRK on Six Party Talks

Yonhap ("NK SAYS US SANCTIONS ON ROCKET LAUNCH WILL LEAD TO RUPTURE IN SIX PARTY TALKS", Seoul, 2009/03/24) reported that the DPRK warned Tuesday that the six-party nuclear talks will collapse if the United Nations imposes sanctions against its rocket launch. "If such a hostile activity is carried out under the name of the U.N. Security Council, that would be a breach of the Sept. 19 joint statement by the U.N. Security Council itself," the DPRK Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

(return to top)

4. ROK on Japan Role in Six-Party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPAN 'COULD BECOME KEY SEOUL ALLY IN N. KOREA ISSUES'", Seoul, 2009/03/24) reported that a senior ROK government official recently remarked that if the U.S. and the DPRK speed up too much in bilateral talks, Japan could play a role in "slamming on the brakes." "Japan was once considered a stumbling block to solving North Korean issues," another ROK official said. "But now has the most important role." The official added Seoul-Tokyo cooperation is important because "the U.S. has no choice but to listen first to its allies, Japan in particular, no matter how important it is to seek a solution to the North Korean nuclear issue." "As a member of the Security Council, Japan has many roles to play than South Korea," he said.

(return to top)

5. DPRK Detention of Journalists

Yonhap ("DIPLOMACY CONTINUES TO FREE AMERICAN JOURNALISTS DETAINED IN N.KOREA: STATE DEPT.", Washington, 2009/03/24) reported that U.S. State Department spokesman Robert Wood said Monday the United States is making diplomatic efforts to free two American journalists detained in the DPRK. "The North has confirmed that it's holding two American citizens, pending an investigation," Wood said. "We are working this diplomatically. And I think the less that I can say -- less I say from here, the better. And let me leave it at that."

JoongAng Ilbo ("SOURCE: U.S. JOURNALISTS IN PYONGYANG", Seoul, 2009/03/24) reported that the ROK has collected intelligence on how two American journalists were recently captured in the DPRK and has briefed United States intelligence officials on the details. An ROK source said that after the capture, U.S. intelligence officials asked the ROK for cooperation in gathering facts about the detention. The United States tried to no avail to negotiate with the DPRK before the incident leaked to the media. The source said the American government had very little information on the status of the two journalists and on the DPRK's follow-up actions. Other than contacting the Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang for communication, the U.S. took little action.

(return to top)

6. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Korea Herald (Kim Ji-hyun, "SEOUL NEEDS 'CONTINGENCIES' AGAINST NK", Seoul, 2009/03/24) reported that Chung Ok-nim, a Grand National Party legislator and security expert on inter-Korean relations, said Tuesday the ROK needs to develop more effective contingencies for Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions. "We need to map out contingency plans with the thought that given North Korea's desperate situation, the chances are pretty slim that it will completely give up its nuclear weapons," she said. She added that the DPRK was likely to go ahead with a rocket launch in early April, and that it may combine it with ground provocations on the ROK as the Defense Ministry has recently predicted.

(return to top)

7. ROK Aid for DPRK

Yonhap ("AID POSSIBLE BEFORE FULL DENUCLEARIZATION OF N. KOREA: OFFICIAL", Seoul, 2009/03/23) reported that Kim Tae-hyo, secretary for national security strategy, said the ROK will provide economic assistance to the DPRK even before it completely gives up its nuclear ambitions if it agrees in principle to give them up. "Currently, there are many misunderstandings about our North Korea policy," Kim said in a security forum hosted by the ruling Grand National Party. "We are saying we would like to begin with an agreement from North Korea that denuclearization is our final destination even though it will be difficult to resolve the issue right away," he said.

(return to top)

8. DPRK Government

Korea Herald (Kim So-hyun, "NORTH KOREA TO STRENGTHEN TOP DEFENSE COMMISSION", Seoul, 2009/03/24) reported that Lee Ki-dong, senior researcher with the Institute for National Security Strategy, said Tuesday that the DPRK is expected to revise the constitution next month to make the National Defense Commission its topmost government organ. "North Korea will shift to a new government system with a stronger National Defense Commission as it sees the need for a more institutionalized political system," Lee said. "Kim Ki-nam, secretary of the Worker's Party, could join the NDC to help straighten out the power succession system, but Chang Sung-taek, Kim Jong-il's brother-in-law and first vice director of the Workers' Party, is unlikely to, considering the party's possible intervention in the NDC."

(return to top)

9. DPRK Leadership

Yonhap ("N. KOREAN LEADER TRIPLES PUBLIC TOURS THIS YEAR AMID RENEWED HEALTH CONCERNS", Seoul, 2009/03/23) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has more than tripled his number of public activities this year, ROK Unification Ministry spokesperson Lee Jong-joo said Monday. Kim appeared to have lost a considerable amount weight in a photo taken during his visit to a new swimming pool released by the DPRK's state media on Friday. "Judging from the media reports alone, he appears to be keeping a very busy schedule," Lee said. The time span between

such tours has also shortened to three to four days. "This is a very unusual case, and our government is closely watching (Kim's) field guidance trips," Lee said, without elaborating.

Donga Ilbo ("'NK LEADER'S YOUNGER SISTER IN CRITICAL CONDITION'", Seoul, 2009/03/24) reported that Kim Kyong Hui, the younger sister of DPRK leader Kim Jong Il and wife of Workers` Party member Chang Sung Taek, is said to be in critical condition or almost in a coma. French neurosurgeon Francois-Xavier Roux, 65, who was recruited by the DPRK leader's eldest son Kim Jong Nam, is said to have treated Kim Kyong Hui, 63. A Korean-Japanese businessman who can freely enter Pyongyang via Beijing said Monday that her long addiction to alcohol caused severe brain damage.

(return to top)

10. ROK Military

Yonhap (Sam Kim, "DEFENSE MINISTRY JOINS GOVERNMENT-WIDE EFFORT TO KICK-START ECONOMY", Seoul, 2009/03/24) reported that the ROK defense ministry on Tuesday announced a 600-billion-won (US$430 million) extra budget to help jumpstart the economy by buying up real estate and hiring more soldiers. The budget, which would come on top of the ministry's 28-trillio--won (US$20 billion) regular budget approved last year, also reflects losses incurred in weapons trade due to fluctuations in the currency rate, the Ministry of National Defense said in a release.

(return to top)

11. ROK-EU Trade Relations

Agence France-Presse (Lim Chang-Won, "SKOREA, EU REACH TENTATIVE PACT ON TRADE", Seoul, 2009/03/24) reported that the ROK and the European Union have reached a tentative trade deal after almost two years of talks and will try to settle outstanding issues early next month, the two sides said Tuesday. They "reached provisional agreement on almost all pending issues" during negotiations which began Monday, Seoul 's foreign and trade ministry said in a statement.

(return to top)

12. Japan Missile Defense

Asahi Shimbun ("MINISTRY TO DEPLOY INTERCEPTOR MISSILES IN AKITA, IWATE", Tokyo, 2009/03/24) reported that the Japanese Defense Ministry will deploy surface-to-air interceptor missiles in Akita and Iwate prefectures in response to the DPRK's planned launch of a rocket. The Patriot Advanced Capability 3 (PAC-3) missiles will be transferred from the Air Self-Defense Force's Hamamatsu air base in Shizuoka Prefecture. Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone told reporters Tuesday that it would be "indeed difficult" for Japan's missile to intercept a DPRK rocket if it falls on Japan. However, Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada rebutted him saying, "I don't think so. We've been making efforts to be absolutely prepared."

(return to top)

13. Japanese Politics

Yomiuri Shimbun (Kohei Kobayashi, "DPJ SUPPORT GROWING FOR OZAWA TO REMAIN LEADER", Tokyo, 2009/03/24) reported that a growing number of senior Democratic Party of Japan members are leaning toward President Ichiro Ozawa staying on as party president. However, some DPJ member still believe Ozawa should step down as party leader over fears his staying in the post could adversely affect the party's prospects at the next House of Representatives election. Yukio Edano, former chairman of the DPJ's Policy Research Committee, stated, "If Mr. Ozawa intends to stay in his post, I don't think anything will change his mind. He won the leadership election uncontested last autumn, so it's not up to us to tell him to step down unless there is some particularly compelling information."

(return to top)

14. Japanese Demographics

Yomiuri Shimbun ("FEMALE POPULATION SEEN FALLING FOR 1ST TIME ON RECORD", Tokyo, 2009/03/24) reported that the number of women in Japan has decreased for the first time since 1950, when comparable records began, according to a population estimate published Monday by the Internal Affairs and Communications Ministry. The nation's total population, including both Japanese and non-Japanese residents, was 127.69 million as of Oct. 1, 2008, down 79,000 from a year earlier, the estimate showed. The population was estimated to have declined for the first time in three years. The number of births was 34,000 less than the number of deaths, the second decrease in as many years.

(return to top)

15. Sino-US Relations

Associated Press ("CHINESE OFFICIAL AFFIRMS CHINA-US TIES UNDER OBAMA", Beijing, 2009/03/23) reported that PRC Vice Foreign Minister He Yafe said on Monday that relations with the United States have gotten off to an excellent start under President Barack Obama. He said the two sides would discuss the global economic crisis, bilateral ties, and regional and global issues such as plans by the DPRK to launch a missile and Iran's nuclear program on the sidelines of an April 2 summit in London of members of the Group of 20.

(return to top)

16. Cross Strait Economic Relations

Los Angeles Times (Don Lee, "BENEFITS OF TAIWAN'S DOOR TO CHINA FADE", Taoyuan, 2009/03/23) reported that Taiwan's economy shrank a record 8.4% in the fourth quarter. Exports to the PRC, Taiwan's largest trading partner, plunged by about half in January and February compared with a year earlier, far more than the overall drop of 37%. As opportunities in the PRC have dried up, a growing number of Taiwanese have come home, some of them abandoning factories and mobs of unhappy Chinese laborers and suppliers. Taiwan's unemployment rate has jumped to 5.3%, prompting the government to extend jobless benefits and issue consumer vouchers to stimulate

spending.

(return to top)

17. PRC Tibet Issue

Associated Press (Anita Chang, "TROOPS PATROLLING TIBETAN TOWN IN NORTHWEST CHINA", Beijing, 2009/03/23) reported that armed police patrolled the streets of the Tibetan community in Ragya, a town in Qinghai province's Golog prefecture on Monday. "There are still police patrolling but everything is quiet and nothing is happening today," said a man who answered the phone at a private school in Ragya. "The monastery is quiet and there are no police stationed there," said a man who lives near the Ragya monastery. The resident, surnamed Huang, added that 400 to 500 troops began patrolling the city on Saturday after the attack.

Reuters ("DALAI LAMA REFUSED SOUTH AFRICAN VISA", 2009/03/24) reported that several Nobel peace prize laureates have threatened to boycott a conference in South Africa after Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, was denied a visa. He was to join Nobel Peace Prize winners Desmond Tutu, Martti Ahtisaari and FW de Klerk, as well as Norway's Nobel Peace Committee, at the conference scheduled for March 27th. "If the Dalai Lama doesn't come, I'm not going . . . I'm very disappointed," Tutu said.

(return to top)

18. PRC Unrest

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA MAKES DOOR-TO-DOOR HUNT FOR KILLER", Beijing, 2009/03/24) reported that police have launched a door-to-door search for a man who shot dead a teenage soldier on duty outside army barracks in southwest PRC, the China Daily reported Tuesday. The newspaper, quoting an unnamed police source, said that preliminary investigations suggested the killer might be Tibetan . "A number of Tibetan separatists had snuck into town from (nearby) Chengdu and were attempting to stage a bombing in downtown Chongqing," the source said.

Washington Post (Maureen Fan, "AN ANCIENT CULTURE, BULLDOZED AWAY", Kashgar, 2009/03/24) reported that for hundreds of years, Uighur shopkeepers have been selling bread and firewood along the edges of Kashgar's old town to families whose ancestors bought their traditional mud-brick homes with gold coin and handed them down through the generations. Now, this labyrinth of ancient courtyard homes and narrow, winding streets is endangered by the latest government plan to modernize a way of life that officials consider dangerous and backward. It is the most recent fault line to develop between Chinese rulers and Xinjiang province's majority ethnic Uighur population.

(return to top)

19. PRC Climate Change

Associated Press ("GREENPEACE: CHINA SHOULD ATTEND CLIMATE TALKS", Beijing, 2009/03/23) reported that Greenpeace China is calling on PRC President Hu Jintao to attend

December's climate change conference in Copenhagen . As the world's most populous developing nation and, by some estimates, its biggest producer of greenhouse gasses, the PRC is obliged to take a major role in the talks, said climate change specialist Li Yan of Greenpeace's Chinese branch. "Copenhagen is the best, maybe the last, chance to avoid catastrophe," Li said Monday.

(return to top)

20. PRC Environment

Agence France-Presse ("PROVINCE SUPPLYING BEIJING WATER DRYING UP: STATE", Beijing, 2009/03/22) reported that Li Qinglin, director of Hebei's water conservation department , said water shortages had become a big problem for the province's social and economic development, the Xinhua news agency reported late Saturday. " Water resources in Hebei have dwindled by nearly 50 percent in recent years," Li was quoted as saying. Hebei is one of the major suppliers of water to neighbouring Beijing and Tianjin. Li said that Hebei was consuming around 21 billion cubic metres (735 billion cubic feet) of water annually with only 17 billion cubic metres of surface water , leaving groundwater to supply the rest.

(return to top)

21. PRC on Monetary Policy

New York Times (David Barboza, "CHINA URGES NEW MONEY RESERVE TO REPLACE DOLLAR", Shanghai, 2009/03/24) reported that in a paper released Monday, Zhou Xiaochuan, governor of the People's Bank of China, called for the eventual creation of a new international currency reserve to replace the dollar. Zhou said a new currency reserve system controlled by the International Monetary Fund could prove more stable and economically viable. A new system is necessary, he said, because the global economic crisis has revealed the "inherent vulnerabilities and systemic risks in the existing international monetary system."

(return to top)

22. PRC Public Health

Associated Press ("2 CHINA OFFICIALS FIRED OVER DISEASE REPORTING", Beijing, 2009/03/23) reported that two PRC health officials have been fired for mismanagement in the reporting of hand, foot and mouth disease and investigators are looking into a possible cover-up, China Central Television said Monday. CCTV reported that the two officials in Minquan County lost their jobs following a preliminary investigation by the Health Ministry. It did not elaborate on how they mismanaged reporting of the data.

(return to top)

23. PRC Internet

China Digital Times ("'LEFT' AND 'RIGHT' IN CHINESE CYBER-POLITICS", 2009/03/22) wrote that PRC BBS sites and blogosphere are politically quite polarized, divided into "left" and "right" camps.

But these concepts are very different from ideas of “left” and “right” in Western politics. The leftist camp is essentially the nationalistic camp. Every leftist agrees with such a point of view: national interests precede all other things. The rightist camp is actually the individualistic camp. All rightists would stress that individual interests take precedence over national interests.

(return to top)

II. PRC Report

24. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

Green Peace website ("GREEN PEACE’S CREATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ON WORLD WATER DAY", 2009/03/23) reported that on 21st March 2009, a lot of pictures appeared on streets and lanes in Beijing, which inverted an image of a little girl drinking water in her hands. In fact, it was the poster of Green Peace on World Water Day, with the words: One fourth of the Chinese people are drinking unsafe water. The Green Peace Organization wants to show people that the PRC is facing serious water pollution. They announced that they will clean all these posters in a few days.

(return to top)

25. PRC Climate Change

Business Agency ("CHINA INTERNATIONAL ENERGY SAVING & EMISSION REDUCING AND NEW ENERGY BEIJING FAIR", 2009/03/23) reported that China International Energy Saving & Emission Reducing and New Energy Fair was held in Beijing. The fairs had an area for the government, an area for enterprises, an area for technology exchange and an area for the popularization of science. The fair will last for 5 days, and is co-hosted by the Department of Science and Technology, the Development and Reform Commission and 11 other departments.

(return to top)

26. PRC Civil Society

Jinghua Times ("5 LOVE UNIONS WILL BE ESTABLISHED BY NATIONAL CHARITY HELPING INFORMATION PLATFORM", 2009/03/23) reported that recently, hosted by the Department of Civil Affairs, a conference was held in Beijing with the topic of charities helping children. Wang Zhenyao, Director of Social Benefit and charity Promotion, Department of Civil Affairs, said that 5 Love Unions will be established by National Charity helping Information Platform. First, charity organization union; second, enterprise union; third, individual union; fourth, media union; fifth, medical union. Up till now, all hardware is ready and software is being developed.

(return to top)

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-24-march-2009/

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