NAPSNet Daily Report 26 January, 2009

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 26 January, 2009", NAPSNet Daily Report, January 26, 2009, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-26-january-2009/

NAPSNet Daily Report 26 January, 2009

Contents in this Issue:

- I. NAPSNet
  - 1. DPRK on Nuclear Program
  - 2. DPRK, PRC on Nuclear Program
  - 3. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue
  - 4. Inter-Korean Relations
  - 5. US, Japan on Abductee Issue
  - 6. DPRK Leadership
  - 7. DPRK Military
  - 8. UNDP Operations in the DPRK
  - 9. DPRK Economy
  - 10. ROK on DPRK Afghanistan Dispatch
  - 11. ROK Afghanistan Role
  - 12. ROK-Australia Security Relations
  - 13. ROK, Japan Anti-Piracy Cooperation
  - 14. Japan Whaling Issue
  - 15. Japan Maritime Security
  - 16. Japan Climate Change

- 17. Japan Nuclear Safety
- 18. Sino-US Trade Relations
- 19. Sino-Japanese Relations
- 20. Sino-Indian Trade Relations
- 21. Cross Strait Relations
- 22. PRC Bird Flu
- 23. Russo-Mongolian Relations

- II. PRC Report
  - 24. PRC Business Associations
  - 25. PRC Civil Society and Public Health
  - 26. PRC Environment

Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Nuclear Program

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA RENEWS CLAIM TO NUCLEAR STATUS", Seoul, 2009/01/23) reported that the DPRK 's state news agency said that the US military recognizes the DPRK as a nuclear state, renewing Pyongyang's claim to membership in the nuclear weapons club ahead of expected negotiations with Washington. The DPRK has insisted that it be recognized as a nuclear state following a nuclear weapons test in 2006. Regional powers, including the US and Russia, have so far denied Pyongyang's claims.

(return to top)

2. DPRK, PRC on Nuclear Program

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREAN LEADER SAYS COMMITTED TO DENUCLEARIZATION", 2009/01/24) reported that PRC state media say DPRK leader Kim Jong-il told a visiting envoy that he is committed to denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The official Xinhua news agency said Mr. Kim made the comment Friday during his first reported contact with a foreign official in more than six months. The report quoted Mr. Kim as saying the DPRK is willing to strengthen cooperation with the PRC to push international denuclearization talks forward.

(return to top)

3. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "OBAMA GOV'T REVIEWING OPTIONS TO DEAL WITH N. KOREAN NUKE: STATE DEPT.", Washington, 2009/01/23) reported that t he newly inaugurated Barack Obama administration, while committed to dealing with the DPRK's denuclearization through the six-party framework, is reviewing all options, the State Department said. "Secretary (Hilary) Clinton is very committed to trying to deal with this issue of North Korea's nuclear program," spokesman Robert Wood said in a daily news briefing. Wood stopped short of setting a timeline for the review process, saying it would "be a review of a wide range of things: documents, speaking with, you know, experts, speaking to previous administration officials. That's all part of a review, and I can't put a timeline on it."

(return to top)

4. Inter-Korean Relations

Joong-Ang Ilbo ("LEE TELLS THE MILITARY TO BE ON ITS TOES", 2009/01/24) reported that President Lee Myung-bak called on the military to be fully prepared to counter any provocation from the DPRK, while adding that the nation’s top priority is securing peace and reconciliation between the divided Koreas. The call comes less than a week after the DPRK’s Korean People’s Army said it would now take an “all-out confrontational posture” against the ROK. “It would be best if we are able to maintain peace between the South and the North and that the two reconcile with each other,” Lee said. “There should be no problems as long as our military maintains a perfect defense posture,” the president said.

Yonhap News ("SEOUL'S APPOINTMENT OF HAWKISH MINISTER 'OUTRIGHT CHALLENGE'; PYONGYANG", Seoul, 2009/01/23) reported that the DPRK criticized the ROK for appointing a hawkish scholar as the new unification minister in charge of relations with Pyongyang, calling the appointment an "outright challenge." Last week, ROK President Lee Myung-bak named Hyun In-taek, a political science professor at Korea University, as Seoul's new pointman on the DPRK in a partial Cabinet reshuffle. "Hyun's nomination as minister of unification is an open provocation as it is little short of a declaration that South Korea would continue to stand in confrontation with (Pyongyang)," the DPRK government newspaper Minju Joson said in a commentary.

(return to top)

5. US, Japan on Abductee Issue

Japan Times (Jun Hongo, "CLINTON TAKES UP ABDUCTEES WITH NAKASONE", 2009/01/24) reported that new U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton e xpressed sympathy Friday for relatives of Japanese abducted by the DPRK in her first phone conference with Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone. Clinton, who called Nakasone on her first day in office, reassured him that the U.S. relationship w ith Japan remains the foundation to Washington's diplomatic policies in Asia, and that the two sides can collaborate on global issues.

(return to top)

6. DPRK Leadership

Reuters ("KIM JONG-IL ALONE CAN DECIDE NORTH KOREA SUCCESSOR: SON", Seoul, 2009/01/24) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il 's eldest son, Kim Jong-nam , said his father is the only figure that can decide on his successor. "Nobody can assert anything... My father will only decide," Kim told reporters . "I can't speak about such a sensitive issue," the eldest son said, when asked about the health of the North Korean leader.

(return to top)

7. DPRK Military

United Press International ("N. KOREA DISPUTES MILITARY RECRUIT CLAIMS", Pyongyang, 2009/01/25) reported that the DPRK says US claims that many of its potential military recruits are unfit for service is a "cock-and-bull story." "They floated the cock-and-bull story," said an official statement broadcast by the official Korean Central News Agency. "It is an open secret that the ill-famed intelligence and plot-breeding institutions of the U.S., including the CIA , are hell-bent on releasing false reports about its hostile countries." The U.S. report, which claimed 17 percent to 29 percent of potential DPRK recruits will be unfit for service in the 2009-2013 period as a result of the last decade's famines, was denounced as hypocritical by the DPRK.

(return to top)

8. UNDP Operations in the DPRK

KBS News ("UNDP TO RESUME NK PROJECTS IN MARCH", 2009/01/23) reported that the U.N. Development Program (UNDP) will likely resume stalled operations in the DPRK in March. The executive board of the UNDP held its first regular session this year on Friday in which it approved the resumption of UNDP operations in the DPRK. The executive boards said the final approval came after Pyongyang successfully met the four preconditions for resumption set by the program, including third-party audits.

(return to top)

9. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("DPRK OUTLINES REGION-SPECIFIC ECONOMIC GROWTH PLANS", 2009/01/23) reported that customized economic tasks were presented for each of the DPRK's provinces, taking into account each region's particular industrial concentration or specialty. According to DPRK media reports on January 20, Pyongyang stressed reforms in steel, power, coal, railway, and other sectors it considers 'Priority Sectors of the People's Economy." It also presented tasks for the promotion of housing construction, refurbishment of pig farms, and the increase in production of farms and light industries providing daily necessities to the people of the DPRK.

Radio Free Asia ("NORTH KOREA'S BLACK-MARKET HOUSING", 2009/01/23) reported that

officials in cash-strapped DPRK are profiting from a thriving black market in real estate to boost their meager incomes and secure a comfortable retirement, DPRK and PRC sources say. “Most government officials build their residences in the North Korean equivalent of suburbs, in areas that are close to the city but still have a rural flavor,” the source, a PRC merchant who does business in the DPRK, said. “They sell them when they retire.” “If someone sells a 50-pyong (1,800-square foot) house in such an upscale neighborhood, he can then buy a house that is three or four times bigger in a different area,” the merchant said.

(return to top)

10. ROK on DPRK Afghanistan Dispatch

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young , "N. KOREAN ARMY ADVISED TO JOIN PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS", 2009/01/23) reported that the DPRK army should form part of peacekeeping forces to help reconstruct war-ravaged Afghanistan ? if Pyongyang normalizes relations with the US, an opposition lawmaker said. In his speech at the New York-based nonprofit organization Korea Society, Rep. Song Young-gil of the Democratic Party (DP) suggested that the US consider the idea as part of efforts to resolve pending issues.

(return to top)

11. ROK Afghanistan Role

Korea Times ("S. KOREA EYES EXPANDING RECONSTRUCTION TEAM IN AFGHANISTAN", 2009/01/24) reported that s enior official of Seoul's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has returned from a three-day on-site survey in Afghanistan on expanding Seoul's civilian reconstruction team there, the ministry said. The visit coincided with the inauguration of the Obama administration, which wants the ROK and other allies to share burdens on its anti-terrorism campaign worldwide. Reports have said the US asked the ROK to deploy troops to the war-torn nation again through unofficial diplomatic channels.

(return to top)

12. ROK-Australia Security Relations

Korea Herald ("S. KOREA, AUSTRALIA TO BOOST TIES IN SECURITY, DEFENSE FIELDS ", 2009/01/23) reported that the ROK and Australia agreed to expand "substantial cooperation" not only in economy and trade but also security and defense sectors, Seoul's foreign ministry said after talks between the two nations' top diplomats. Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan, on a trip to the Pacific nation, also called for Canberra's support for Seoul's efforts to secure a stable supply of natural resources in the meeting with his counterpart Stephen Smith, the ministry added.

(return to top)

13. ROK, Japan Anti-Piracy Cooperation

Kyodo News ("ASO, LEE HAVE PLAN TO COOPERATE ON ANTIPIRACY EFFORT OFF SOMALIA", 2009/01/23) reported that Prime Minister Taro Aso and ROK President Lee Myung Bak agreed during their talks in Seoul earlier this month on a plan to cooperate on antipiracy efforts off the coast of Somalia, Japanese sources said Sunday. Japan and the ROK, both planning to dispatch vessels to waters off Somalia as early as March, are considering cooperation in areas such as escorting each other's registered ships upon request, the sources said.

(return to top)

14. Japan Whaling Issue

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, U.S. IN TALKS TO ALLOW JAPAN TO ENGAGE IN 'COASTAL WHALING'", Washington, 2009/01/24) reported that Japan and the US are considering a proposal that would allow Japan to engage in "coastal whaling" off its own shores in exchange for a commitment to scale back on the country's controversial "research whaling" in Antarctic waters, the Washington Post reported. International Whaling Commission Chairman William Hogarth plans "to issue a public proposal on Feb. 2 that the commission members will openly debate a month later," the newspaper's website said.

(return to top)

15. Japan Maritime Security

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("GOVT TO MAKE GREATER USE OF REMOTE ISLES", 2009/01/25) reported that the government is expected to make greater efforts to preserve and more effectively use uninhabited islands in its control, including remote border islands, in an effort to strengthen Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around them, sources said. While there has been friction between Japan and neighboring countries over maritime interests, the government plans to enlist fishermen to protect the islands by sending them to patrol the areas, they said. The government also aims to use the islands as outposts for meteorological observatories, fisheries and the development of ocean energy and mineral resources, according to the sources.

(return to top)

16. Japan Climate Change

Mainichi Shimbun ("IBUKI GREENHOUSE GAS OBSERVATION SATELLITE ENTERS ORBIT", Kagoshima, 2009/01/25) reported that an environmental observation satellite launched into space on Japan's H2A rocket entered orbit as planned, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) said. Global warming predictions are based on observations at 283 locations across the world, but hardly any observations are taken in developing countries. With the emergence of the Ibuki, which will take readings at about 56,000 locations, both over land and sea, it will be possible to make accurate predictions on the future of global warming.

(return to top)

17. Japan Nuclear Safety

Bloomberg News ("TEPCO TO SEEK OK TO TEST RUN QUAKE-HIT REACTOR", 2009/01/24) reported that Tokyo Electric Power Co. will seek a ban on the operation of its quake-damaged nuclear plant lifted, paving the way for a test run when it completes repairs of one of the reactors next month. "We will ask the local fire department to check our facility," President Masataka Shimizu told reporters today. Tepco will fix a turbine in early February, the final repair on the No. 7 reactor at its Kashiwazaki Kariwa nuclear plant, he said. Six other reactors are still being worked on.

(return to top)

18. Sino-US Trade Relations

The New York Times ("CHINA REJECTS CURRENCY MANIPULATION CHARGE", Beijing, 2009/01/24) reported that the central bank of the PRC rejected an accusation by President Obama 's nominee for Treasury secretary that the PRC was manipulating its currency to give it an unfair advantage in exporting goods to the United States and other markets. The assertion was made by the nominee, Timothy F. Geithner , in written remarks to the Senate Finance Committee as part of his confirmation hearing. Su Ning, the deputy governor of the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, said that Mr. Geithner's accusation would sidetrack efforts to determine the real cause of the global financial crisis .

(return to top)

19. Sino-Japanese Relations

Xinhua News ("CHINA URGES JAPAN: FULFILL PLEDGE TO DESTROY ABANDONED WWII CHEMICAL ARMS", 2009/01/24) reported that the PRC urged Japan to abide by a commitment to destroy chemical weapons abandoned in the PRC during World War II. Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu made the remarks in a comment on a report by the Japanese newspaper Sankei Shimbun that Japan had decided to freeze its abandoned chemical arms destruction program in the Harbaling area of the PRC's Jilin Province and slash the associated spending. "China has demanded that the Japanese side clarify the report," Jiang said.

(return to top)

20. Sino-Indian Trade Relations

Reuters ("INDIA BANS TOY IMPORTS FROM CHINA, GIVES NO REASON ", New Delhi, 2009/01/23) reported that India banned imports of several types of toys from the PRC for six months without saying why, a move that pleased local manufacturers but shocked importers. A government statement issued late on Friday did not give details but industry officials said the order would ban imports of almost all toys from the PRC. The government said in a statement it had banned imports for six months with immediate effect in the public interest.

(return to top)

21. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN LEADER PLAYS DOWN CHINA'S PANDA POLITICS", Taipei, 2009/01/24) reported that Taiwan's president unveiled two giant pandas presented by the PRC, but played down the political implications of the gift. Some in Taiwan regard the gesture as a ploy by the PRC to advance its unification agenda with the island, which it regards as a renegade province. But President Ma Ying-jeou said at a ceremony attended by Taipei mayor's and some 500 poor or orphaned children: "We should be a bit more humanitarian and a little less political."

(return to top)

22. PRC Bird Flu

Xinhua News ("EAST CHINA PROVINCE ENDS EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO BIRD FLU ", Jinan, 2009/01/24) reported that East PRC's Shandong Province ended the emergency response to bird flu, a week after a woman died of the virus. Shandong is taking measures to prevent and control the virus. It has banned the raising of poultry in urban areas and protected water areas. Medical workers in the province have put more than 400,000 people under surveillance during the emergency response.

(return to top)

23. Russo-Mongolian Relations

Itar-Tass ("RUSSIA & MONGOLIA TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC TIES", Moscow, 2009/01/24) reported that the Mongolian Foreign Minister Nyamagiyn Enhobold will arrive in Moscow on Sunday for talks with Russian leadership. A meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is scheduled for January 26. According to diplomatic sources, the talks will focus on ways to strengthen mutually beneficial partnership between Russia and Mongolia, especially in economy and investments.

(return to top)

II. PRC Report

24. PRC Business Associations

Urumqi Online (Fan Xiaoxue, "40 ENTERPRISES AND ASSOCIATIONS IN URUMQI PROMISE TO REGULATE THE PRICE ON THEIR OWN WILL", 2009/01/22) reported that 40 enterprises and associations of Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, promised to strictly implement the obligation of open price and charge fees, to jointly maintain the stability of market

price during the festival. The price offense behavior will be punished of 20,000~200,000 yuan by related government sector.

(return to top)

25. PRC Civil Society and Public Health

Xinhua Net (Wang Yanming, "LANZHOU CHARITY FEDERATION PLUNGES INTO THE PLIGHT OF AID FATIGUE", 2009/01/22) reported that since the Major Disease Social Assistance System was carried out by Lanzhou Municipal Charity Federation from last year, many patients have received timely help. But affected by insufficient fund, the aid situation has appeared weak. The Federation is now in need of funds to help patients.

(return to top)

26. PRC Environment

Legal System Daily ("OVER 80% MARINE ECOSYSTEM OF CHINA IS UNHEALTHY", 2009/01/22) reported that according to the newly released *2008 China Marine Environmental Quality* by State Oceanic Bureau that the marine area which failed to reach the clean sea water quality in 2008 was about 137,000 square km, decreased by about 8,000 square km than in 2007. The emissions of about 88.4% sewage outfalls exceed standard. Over 80% marine ecosystem is unhealthy. The issue of sea level rise is also needed a concern.

(return to top)

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-26-january-2009/

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