



NAPSNet Daily Report 3 December, 2008

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 3 December, 2008", NAPSNet Daily Report, December 03, 2008,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-3-december-2008/>

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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA NEGOTIATOR SAYS TALKS WITH U.S. TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR 6-WAY MEETING", Singapore, 2008/12/02) reported that the DPRK's top nuclear negotiator Kim Kye Gwan said he plans to meet with his US counterpart in Singapore to lay the groundwork for the upcoming six-way talks over ways to end the DPRK's nuclear programs. Kim, the DPRK's vice foreign minister, made the comment to reporters upon arriving in Singapore from Beijing ahead of the talks with Christopher Hill, US assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, which are set for Thursday.

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2. DPRK Nuclear Program

Kyodo News, Associated Press ("SAIKI, HILL AGREE DPRK PLEDGE ON SAMPLING NEEDED IN 6-WAY PAPER", Tokyo, 2008/12/02) reported that the chief Japanese and U.S. nuclear negotiators said Tuesday they agreed that the six-party talks on denuclearizing DPRK should try to hammer out a document during the next round of discussions that commits Pyongyang to allowing inspectors to take samples from its nuclear facilities. "The six parties must reach a firm agreement on the framework and the methods of verifying" a declaration already submitted by DPRK on its nuclear programs, Saiki said after his meeting with Hill. "It is extremely important that the parties reach an agreement in writing that will exclude any room for misunderstanding or distortion on issues such as how to verify the declaration and the facilities and programs to be inspected," the Japanese diplomat added.

Reuters (Jon Herskovitz, "POWERS TO PRESS NORTH KOREA AT SWAN-SONG TALKS", Seoul, 2008/12/03) reported that the US, ROK, and Japan said on Wednesday they will use next week six-

party talks to press the DPRK to verify claims about its nuclear program. "We agreed that it should be made clear what is to be done, so there is no room for misunderstanding or misinterpretation among the six parties when the verification process starts," Japan's envoy Akitaka Saiki told reporters in Tokyo after meeting the U.S. and ROK envoys to the talks. "Further discussion on verification would only be possible after Obama takes office and sets it as a priority. Until then, the U.S. will likely remain in limbo on North Korean issues," said Kim Seung-hwan, with the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Seoul.

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3. DPRK Leadership

Associated Press (Kwang-tae Kim, "REPORT: NKOREAN LEADER VISITS PYONGYANG ZOO", Seoul, 2008/12/02) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il went to the Pyongyang zoo and visited the tigers, bears and aquarium, Korean Central News Agency said Tuesday. KCNA also released a photo showing Kim standing next to a pond, wearing a winter parka, thick gloves and sunglasses. The image shows Kim using his right hand to point to something, as a group of aides stand in a row behind him.

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4. Inter-Korean Relations

Agence France-Presse (Park Chan-Kyong, "HUNDREDS TO QUITE ESTATE AFTER NKOREA TIGHTENS BORDER CURBS", Seoul, 2008/12/02) reported that hundreds of ROK citizens working at the Kaesong Industrial Complex were to pull out Tuesday, officials said. "As of this morning, a total of 1,039 South Koreans are in Kaesong and 501 of them have no permission to stay," said ROK unification ministry spokesman Kim Ho-Nyoun. "We propose to the North that (we) open talks at any time, any place and at any level. We hope the North will respond positively," Unification Minister Kim Ha-Joong said in a speech at a forum.

Associated Press ("ACTIVISTS SCUFFLE OVER ANTI-DPRK LEAFLETS", Imjingak, ROK, 2008/12/02) reported that defectors from DPRK scuffled Tuesday with protesters trying to stop their campaign to send anti-DPRK leaflets condemning leader Kim Jong Il over the heavily militarized border. The two groups scuffled, spitting, hitting and kicking one another. Some 100 riot police were deployed to the area to break up the clash. The leafleters managed to send one balloon across the border filled with about 30,000 leaflets; some 70,000 other flyers ended up scattered along a bridge and other areas.

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5. DPRK-Singapore Trade Relations

Xinhua Net ("SINGAPORE, DPRK SIGN INVESTMENT GUARANTEE AGREEMENT", Singapore, 2008/12/02) reported that Singapore and the DPRK signed an Investment Guarantee Agreement. Singapore's Trade and Industry Ministry said in a statement that the agreement will help promote investment flow by protecting investors. Under the agreement, investors will be given non-discriminatory treatment. They will also receive free transfer of capital and returns from investment.

Furthermore, compensation will be accorded to investors if their investments are expropriated or nationalized.

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6. Sino-ROK Relations

Xinhua News Service ("PRC, ROK STRATEGIC DIALOGUE NEXT WEEK", 2008/12/02) reported that PRC and ROK will hold their first high-level strategic dialogue at diplomatic level next week, PRC foreign ministry said Tuesday. Spokesman Liu Jianchao told a regular press conference that the dialogue scheduled Dec 11 will be held by PRC vice foreign minister Wang Guangya and his ROK counterpart Kwon Jong-rak. The dialogue is aimed at resolving major issues of common concern of the two countries and strengthening bilateral relationship.

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7. ROK Environment

Dong-A Ilbo ("PRES. LEE ANNOUNCES RIVER CLEANUP PROJECT", 2008/12/02) reported that President Lee Myung-bak has said he will pursue a project to clean up four major rivers in the country. This is the first time for President Lee to publicly stress the significance of the river cleaning project. The main opposition party has criticized his administration's pursuit of the grand canal project for trying to disguise it under the slogan of "repairing and clearing the nation's four rivers."

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8. Japan Environment

Yomiuri Shimbun ("GOVT MULLING TAX CUTS ON ECO-CARS", 2008/12/02) reported that the government and ruling parties have begun examining the introduction of a new preferential tax system to reduce a weight-based automobile tax on fuel efficient and low-emission autos to encourage motorists to make new car purchases and boost the floundering motor industry, sources said. The preferential system, which would be part of planned tax system reform in fiscal 2009, would ease the tax levy on vehicles that meet fuel consumption and emission standards, according to the sources.

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9. Japan Climate Change

Bloomberg (Alex Morales and Katarzyna Klimasinska, "JAPAN PLANS NEW CLIMATE GOAL IN 2009, NOT AT UN TALKS ", 2008/12/02) reported that Japan will announce targets to reduce greenhouse gases blamed for global warming next year rather than accede to demands from developing countries to do so now at the United Nations climate change talks in Poland. "We have just set up a government committee to consider what range of emissions cuts as a national target for Japan would be appropriate," Japanese negotiator Kenichi Kobayashi said today in an interview in

Poznan. "We will announce it sometime next year. For now, we're not in a position to make announcements."

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10. Sino-Japan-US Relations

Bloomberg (Dune Lawrence and Toko Sekiguchi, "PRC, JAPAN WELCOME CLINTON AS CHOICE FOR TOP U.S. DIPLOMAT", 2008/12/02) reported that PRC's and Japan's foreign ministries welcomed the choice of Hillary Clinton as the top U.S. diplomat after President-elect Barack Obama yesterday picked his former rival as the next secretary of state. "Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi praised the important progress in Sino-U.S. relations in recent years and looks forward to working" with Clinton, the PRC Foreign Ministry said in a statement on its Web site. "The Japanese government firmly believes that Clinton will show leadership for both America and the world," Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura told reporters at press conference in Tokyo today. "We would like to continue our cooperation with the U.S. secretary of state and strengthen our alliance."

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11. PRC Climate Change

Associated Press (Arthur Max, "EX-BAD BOY PRC PRAISED AT CLIMATE TALKS", Poznan, Poland, 2008/12/02) reported that once global warming's bad boy, PRC is now winning praise for its upbeat role in climate talks, a turnaround perhaps brought on by the effects of carbon emissions on its choking cities, shrinking water resources and increasingly flooded lowlands. "Now there is a transformation in China that opens up possibilities," said Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, who is in line to become chairman of the powerful Foreign Relations Committee which closely monitors international climate issues.

Agence France-Presse ("PRC URGES DEVELOPED WORLD TO TAKE LEAD IN CLIMATE CHANGE FIGHT", Hong Kong, 2008/12/02) reported that PRC's foreign minister Yang Jiechi on Tuesday said rich countries should lead the fight against climate change and provide expertise to the developing world to help reduce emissions. "Yes, China has environmental protection challenges. Yes, we have considerable greenhouse gas emissions," Yang said, at a conference hosted by former US President Bill Clinton in Hong Kong. "But in terms of the per capita emission, China is way below the developed nations." "Having said that, we will not shirk our responsibility," he said, pledging that PRC would meet its target of cutting its discharge of major air pollutants by 10 percent between 2005 and 2010.

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12. PRC Food Security

Agence France-Presse ("HONG KONG FINDS MORE MELAMINE-TAINTED PRC EGGS", Hong Kong, 2008/12/02) reported that the Hong Kong government says it has found excessive amounts of the industrial chemical melamine in another batch of eggs from mainland PRC. A statement late Tuesday said the government found 4.7 parts per million of melamine in the eggs from the northeast PRC's Jilin province. Hong Kong's legal limit is 2.5 ppm.

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13. PRC Economy

Wall Street Journal (Shai Oster, "PRC FEARS RESTIVE MIGRANTS AS JOBS DISAPPEAR IN CITIES", Shuangfu Village, PRC, 2008/12/01) reported that PRC's roaring industrial economy has been abruptly quieted by the effects of the global financial crisis. Rural provinces that supplied much of PRC's factory manpower are watching the beginnings of a wave of reverse migration that has the potential to shake the stability of the world's most populous nation. Fast-rising unemployment has led to an unusual series of strikes and protests. Normally cautious government officials have offered quick concessions and talk openly of their worries about social unrest.

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14. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters (Ralph Jennings, "TAIWAN SAYS PRC 'BLOCKING' BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE", Taipei, 2008/12/02) reported that Taiwan's biggest ever box office hit, a love story involving former colonial power Japan, has been held up in PRC, possibly over its historical slant, the island's government and newspapers said on Tuesday. But the PRC denied there had been any delay.

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15. Taiwan Politics

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN'S AIR FORCE DENIES TRANSPORTING CASH FOR EX-PRESIDENT", Taipei, 2008/12/03) reported that Taiwan's air force on Wednesday denied allegations that it assisted former president Chen Shui-bian to smuggle 5.17 million US dollars in cash to the Pacific Ocean island of Palau during a state visit there in 2006. Kuomintang lawmaker Chiu Yi made the claim on Taiwanese television that the money was stashed aboard the presidential jet when it departed for the state trip.

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16. PRC Internet

The Christian Science Monitor (Peter Ford, "CHINA'S VIRTUAL VIGILANTES: CIVIC ACTION OR CYBER MOBS?", Beijing, 2008/12/02) reported that the peculiarly PRC Internet phenomenon known as the "human flesh search engine," a citizen-driven, blog-based hunt for alleged undesirables, claimed a fresh victim this month when a mid-ranking government official lost his job. Accused of accosting a young girl, Lin Jiaxiang found his name, address, phone number, and workplace plastered all over PRC cyberspace for 250 million Internet users to see, and his alleged crime the subject of hundreds of insulting blog postings. A poll published earlier this year in the China Youth Daily found that nearly 80 percent of respondents thought that human-flesh search engines should be regulated, and 65 percent thought they invaded people's privacy.

Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINA INTERNET CAFES SWITCHING TO CHINESE OS", Beijing, 2008/12/03) reported that Internet cafes in the southern PRC city of Nanchang as of Nov. 5 are required to install Chinese-developed operating systems to cracked down on the use of pirated software, said Hu Shenghua, a spokesman for the city's Culture Bureau. However, Radio Free Asia said cafes were being required to install Red Flag Linux even if they were using authorized copies of Windows. It quoted Xiao Qiang, director of the California-based China Internet Project, as saying the new rules would help authorities regulate Internet cafes that now operate on the margins of the law, and allow them to undertake heightened surveillance.

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II. PRC Report

17. PRC Civil Society and AIDS

Sichuan News Net ("SICHUAN LEGISLATES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL FORCES PARTICIPATING IN AIDS PREVENTION", 2008/12/01) reported that on December 1, Sichuan province will formally put the "Sichuan Measures of Promoting Social Forces Participating in AIDS Prevention" into practice. This is the nation's first local law to promote social force participating in AIDS prevention. Difficulty in registration, lack of recognition by society, and lack of funds and policy support, are all problems that many AIDS prevention organizations have faced for a long time that are to be first solved in Sichuan province.

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18. Sino-Japanese Environmental Cooperation

Kunming Daily ("ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FORUM HELD IN TOKYO, JAPANESE ENTERPRISES WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN DIANCHI LAKE GOVERNANCE", 2008/12/01) reported that the third Sino-Japan Energy-saving and Environmental Protection Forum was held in Tokyo recently. The forum was co-hosted by the PRC National Development and Reform Commission, the PRC Ministry of Commerce, the PRC Embassy in Japan, Japan Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and Sino-Japan Economic Association. The Kunming government representative presented the Dianchi Lake Governance issue to the forum, which aroused the attention of all sides. Japanese environmental protection enterprises and institutes have shown great interest in this issue.

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19. PRC Civil Society

Xinhua Net ("CHINA FIRST PRIVATE FOUNDATION DEVELOPMENT FORUM PROMOTES PUBLIC WELFARE", 2008/12/01) reported that the first Private Foundation Development Forum will be held in April, 2009 in Beijing. The Foundation Management Regulations that went into effect on June 1, 2006, divide the Foundations into two categories: public and private. Then the central and local governments issued a series of regulations that create a relaxed and favorable environment for the development of private foundations. As of now, the number of private foundations account for one

third of the total number of foundations, and the total of original funds are nearly 1.32 billion yuan.

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III. ROK Report

20. ROK Policy toward DPRK

PRESSian (Kim Keun-sik, "FATAL BLUNDER OF MB'S DPRK POLICY", 2008/12/03) said in a column that there are several reasons why Lee Myung-bak's DPRK policy is a failure. First, there is a very low possibility for the DPRK to surrender themselves and accept the change due to the breakoff of the inter-Korean relationship if the US implements a more active policy toward the DPRK that works against the Lee Administration's policy to isolate them. Second, the Lee Administration's policy would not succeed unless the DPRK is damaged seriously by the policy. Third, Lee's policy to isolate the DPRK does not have an effective method to change the DPRK.

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21. Korean Peninsula Peace Regime

TongilNews ("ROK MAY EXCLUDED FROM DECLARATION TO END WAR DUE TO TENSION ON KOREAN PENINSULA", 2008/12/03) reported that the declaration to end the Korean War can be done by the US, DPRK and PRC if the PRC asks to participate. However, there is a possibility for the ROK to be excluded from the declaration if the tension on the Korean Peninsula remains. The two Koreas may possibly hold a meeting after Barack Obama's inauguration ceremony if the US plays a role as a mediator. Experts analyzed that concerning his East Asia policy, Obama is planning to establish a group security regime through collaboration with the PRC.

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