

NAPSNet Daily Report 5 February, 2008

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 5 February, 2008", NAPSNet Daily Report, February 05, 2008,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-5-february-2008/>

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I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Herald (Lee Joo-hee, "U.S. OFFICIALS VISIT N.K. WITH FUNDING PLAN", 2008/02/04) reported that US Senate officials and nuclear experts will visit the DPRK on Feb. 12 to study the viability of applying the "Nunn-Lugar" initiative in tackling the DPRK's nuclear problem. Keith Luse, an aid to Senator Richard Lugar of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, will be traveling to the DPRK to survey the main nuclear facilities in Yongbyon. He will also sit with DPRK officials to discuss ways to provide alternative jobs for the DPRK's nuclear technicians as the main part of the program, the report said. The Nunn-Lugar program refers to the 1992 US law sponsored by senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar to help dismantlement of weapons of mass destruction by providing funds, technology, tools and human resources to former Soviet Union states.

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "WASHINGTON TO SHIP FUEL OIL TO NK THIS MONTH", Seoul, 2008/02/05) reported that Radio Free Asia (RFA) said Tuesday that the U.S. government is preparing to ship a second batch of 54,000 tons of fuel to the DPRK this month. The RFA quoted a U.S. Congress member as saying the fuel shipment plan would likely be endorsed without difficulty

because most Congress members want the six-party talks to make progress.

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2. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Program

Itar-Tass ("RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT NAMES REASONS FOR HALT IN SIX-SIDED N KOREA NUCLEAR TALKS", Tokyo, 2008/02/02) reported that a lack of information about the DPRK's nuclear programmes and the US' failure to perform its obligations to exclude the DPRK from the list of the countries that sponsor terrorism are the "main reason for a halt" in the six-sided talks on the Korean nuclear problem, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov said. As for a delay in the decommissioning of the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon, Losyukov believes that they are of "a technological nature".

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3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Kyodo ("N. KOREA 'PREPARING' FOR NUCLEAR DECLARATION, S. KOREA SAYS", Seoul, 2008/02/04) reported that the DPRK has begun preparations to declare its nuclear weapons program, the cause of a stall in the six-party process for denuclearizing the country, the ROK Foreign Ministry said. "It is my understanding that the North's side is preparing to declare (its nuclear weapons programs)," ministry spokesman Cho Hee Yong told a press briefing.

Yonhap (Yoo Cheong-mo, "LEE TO PRIORITIZE DENUCLEARIZATION IN NK POLICY", Seoul, 2008/02/05 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that President-elect Lee Myung-bak's transition team unveiled Tuesday a list of 21 strategic policy goals, saying his incoming administration will put top foreign and security policy priority on creating a new peace regime on the Korean Peninsula through its denuclearization. Lee, who will be sworn in on Feb. 25, will push to help the DPRK raise its per capita income to US\$3,000 in a decade and resolve pending inter-Korean humanitarian issues, following its denuclearization and market opening, the team said in its press release regarding his priority policy goals.

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4. Alledged DPRK-Syrian Nuclear Cooperation

The New Yorker (Seymour M. Hersh, "A STRIKE IN THE DARK", 2008/02/04) reported that sometime after midnight on September 6, 2007, at least four low-flying Israeli Air Force fighters crossed into Syrian airspace and carried out a secret bombing mission on the banks of the Euphrates River. However, in three months of reporting for this article, I was repeatedly told by current and former intelligence, diplomatic, and congressional officials that they were not aware of any solid evidence of ongoing nuclear-weapons programs in Syria. A similar message emerged at briefings given to select members of Congress within weeks of the attack. A legislator who took part in one such briefing said afterward, according to a member of his staff, that he had heard nothing that caused him "to have any doubts" about the DPRK negotiations—"nothing that should cause a

pause." Whatever was under construction, with DPRK help, it apparently had little to do with agriculture—or with nuclear reactors—but much to do with Syria's defense posture, and its military relationship with the DPRK. And that, perhaps, was enough to silence the Syrian government after the September 6th bombing.

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5. US-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("U.S. OFFICIAL HOLD "PRACTICAL" TALKS ON NUCLEAR ISSUE DURING VISIT TO N. KOREA: REPORT", Seoul, 2008/02/02) reported that a US official left the DPRK after discussing stalled six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear program in a "practical" atmosphere, the DPRK's media said Saturday. "The discussion took place in an earnest and practical atmosphere," the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency said, commenting on a three-day visit by Sung Kim, the US State Department's top Korean affairs expert. The agency's two-sentence report said the discussions covered "issues of concern in implementing the Oct. 3 agreement made at the six-party talks." It gave no other details, including who Kim met during the trip.

Yonhap ("US ALLOTS BUDGET FOR NK NEWS, ARMY STOCK", Washington, 2008/02/04) reported that the US budget for fiscal year 2009 announced Monday allots US\$699 million for international broadcasting into countries like the DPRK and adds \$88.8 million to an Army program that includes support of land combat power on the Korean Peninsula. The budget for the State Department requests \$699 million for the Broadcasting Board of Governors to "provide accurate and objective news and information about the United States." The broadcast will be made through television, radio and the Internet "throughout the Middle East and to people living under tyranny in North Korea, Burma, Iran and Cuba," according to the budget summary.

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6. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Donga Ilbo ("PYONGYANG SHOULD CONFORM TO ECONOMIC COOPERATION PRINCIPLES", 2008/02/04) reported that in an interview with major newspapers of the ROK, the US, and Japan, on Feb. 1, President-elect Lee Myung-bak declared the four principles which will serve as the basis for future economic cooperation with the DPRK. He also announced that he would classify what has been agreed between the current government and the DPRK into "priority," "non-priority" and "off-the-table" projects considering how much progress is made on denuclearization efforts, economic feasibility of each project, the administration's finances and the national consensus. These principles reflect Lee's idea that he will control the pace and substance of future inter-Korean economic cooperation considering various circumstances including how well the DPRK proceeds with its denuclearization efforts.

Yonhap (Shim Sun-ah, "KOREAS TO DISCUSS CREATING MOUNT GEUMGANG TOUR BODY", Seoul, 2008/02/04) reported that the two Koreas will hold a working-level meeting Tuesday to discuss establishing a joint committee overseeing tours of the DPRK's scenic Mount Geumgang, the Unification Ministry said. The one-day meeting in Kaesong, a DPRK city just north of the heavily armed inter-Korean border, will discuss creation of the Mount Geumgang Management Committee to help the tourism program run smoothly and develop further, the ministry said in a news release.

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7. Inter-Korean Resource Development

IFES NK Brief ("INTER-KOREAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT GROWING", 2008/02/01) reported that much time and energy has been devoted recently to the promotion of a scheme to further develop the DPRK's natural resources. A total of 17 agreements with the DPRK have been reached, through which target mines have been selected and inspection methods, time-frames, and other details have been worked out. Since last August, forty-seven experts in mining, infrastructure, and other areas have carried out general as well as detailed inspections of all aspects of the Kumduk Zinc Mine and Ryongyang and Daeheung magnesite mines, including infrastructure such as railway and road access, harbor facilities, and electrical capacity. The DPRK was convinced to allow photography and surveying of mining sites. Through these surveys, enough information was gathered to satisfy investors, and to publish three volumes worth of inspection reports and pictures.

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8. Korean Separated Families

Associated Press ("SEPARATED KOREANS EXCHANGE VIDEOS", Seoul, 2008/02/05) reported that dozens of separated family members from the two Koreas exchanged video messages with their kin Tuesday under a new program. Officials of the two Koreas exchanged videotapes and CDs containing messages from 40 families — 20 from each side — in a meeting at the border village of Panmunjom, said Wu Jung-ha, an official at the ROK Unification Ministry's separated family bureau. The families exchanging messages were those who have already met in person in reunions. "We have pushed to have those who have not so far been reunited exchange the video messages, but the North argued there are not many separated families in the North," Wu said.

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9. PRC Food Exports to the DPRK

Kyodo ("CHINA'S FOOD EXPORTS TO N. KOREA UP 27.5% IN 2007, JUMPS IN DEC.", Beijing, 2008/02/04) reported that the PRC, the DPRK's major food supplier, exported to its impoverished neighbor about 30 percent more food in 2007 than in 2006, PRC customs figures showed Monday. The PRC's exports of maize, rice and wheat flour to the country jumped particularly in December, prompting pundits to speculate that DPRK was trying to stock up before a tariff increase on the PRC grain exports took effect in January 2008. According to figures released by the General Administration of Customs, the PRC's exports of grain to the DPRK in 2007 totaled 264,211 tons, up 27.5 percent from a year earlier. The total, however, was still down by 40.1 percent from 2005.

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10. DPRK Trade with the PRC, Russia

World Tribune ("CHINA AND RUSSIA COMPETING FOR NORTH KOREAN FAVOR ALONG BORDERS", Seoul, 2008/02/04) reported that the bridge connecting Tumen, PRC and Namyang,

DPRK is less than 100 meters long, but travelers going either way must stop at the center of the bridge and change cars. No pedestrians have been allowed on this bridge, until now. However authorities have agreed to allow pedestrian tourism in both cities within the year, Yenben Broadcasting Station announced last week. Farther north along the DPRK border, the port city of Rajin will soon start receiving electricity it badly needs from the Inter RAO UES Company of Russia. "We have no idea what is going on higher up there," said a Korean-Chinese businessman from Yenben, "but it certainly looks like China and Russia are trying to win Pyongyang to their sides, like the old days."

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11. DPRK Missile Program

Reuters (Jon Herskovitz, "NORTH KOREA MISSILES GET BOOST FROM OUTSIDE: REPORT", Seoul, 2008/02/04) reported that the DPRK received a huge boost from Soviet technology to develop its ballistic missiles and still relies on foreign suppliers for key components, a report obtained on the weekend said. "The country is nearly self-sufficient in ballistic missile production, but still relies upon some advanced foreign technologies and components, particularly from overseas," said the report from Daniel Pinkston, an expert on the DPRK's missile programs. The impoverished state has set up front companies to buy sensitive missile components overseas such as guidance systems in order to avoid international trade restrictions, the report said. The DPRK has also received help from the PRC and former Soviet states.

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12. DPRK Defectors

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "N.KOREAN DEFECTOR SEEKS TO RUN LAWMAKER'S POST", Seoul, 2008/02/05) reported that Yoon Seung-gil, who defected from the DPRK eight years ago, has become the first DPRK defector registered as a candidate to run in the general elections in ROK history, the National Election Commission said Tuesday. Yoon said he wants to work as an Assemblyman to support other defectors by revising related laws. He added it is necessary to increase public awareness of the need to prepare for unification and defectors can play an important role in this.

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13. US-ROK Relations

Korea Times (Kang Hyun-kyung, "PRESIDENT-ELECT WANTS US-NK RELATIONS ON RIGHT TRACK", Seoul, 2008/02/05 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that President-elect Lee Myung-bak, in a meeting with 10 members of the New Beginnings group, a policy study group formed by the Korea Society in collaboration with the Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center at Stanford University, stressed the ratification of the ROK-U.S. free trade agreement would take the alliance to a new level. "Strengthened Seoul-Washington relations will not only help move inter-Korean relations forward, but also take Washington-Pyongyang relations to a higher level," he said.

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14. ROK-Japan Military Relations

Korea Herald ("BUILD KOREA, JAPAN MILITARY COOPERATION: REPORT", 2008/02/04) reported that fostering cooperation between the ROK and Japanese militaries may be useful if the US aims to build multilateral defense cooperation in East Asia, a congressional report pointed out, reported Yonhap News Agency. One option would be to revive what is known as the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) between Seoul, Washington and Tokyo, or draw in more countries interested in developing security ties with Japan, the report, dated Jan. 10, by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) said. Alexander Vershbow, US ambassador to Seoul, said that Washington would be "very interested" in reviving such efforts "whether it be in the defense field or in political consultations."

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15. Sino-Japanese East Sea Gas Dispute

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN, CHINA SAID TO SETTLE GAS ROW BY SPLITTING PROFIT", Tokyo, 2008/02/04) reported that Japan and the PRC are considering settling their long-standing dispute over gas fields by evenly splitting profits from joint development in the East China Sea, a Japanese newspaper said. A trade ministry official here denied the report, but both countries have said they want a breakthrough before a rare visit to Tokyo by PRC President Hu Jintao. In a proposal under discussion, Beijing and Tokyo would jointly develop the gas fields and set a formula for taking profits based on each country's investment and geographical proximity, the Nikkei business daily said. The overall goal would be for the two countries to split the profits evenly, said the newspaper, which did not identify its sources.

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16. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

Agence France-Presse ("AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTER IN JAPAN FOR RECONSTRUCTION TALKS", Tokyo, 2008/02/04) reported that Afghan Foreign Minister Dadfar Spanta was in Japan for talks ahead of an international meeting here to help the war-torn nation rebuild itself. Spanta will take part in a two-day meeting from Tuesday of the Afghanistan Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, an international committee that oversees implementation of reconstruction plans. Spanta is due to meet separately Monday with Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura, officials said.

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PLEDGES FRESH AFGHAN AID BUT WARNS ON SECURITY", Tokyo, 2008/02/05) reported that Japan on Tuesday pledged US\$110 million of fresh aid to Afghanistan but warned that the security situation was presenting serious challenges. Twenty-four nations and international organisations opened a two-day meeting in Tokyo of the Afghanistan Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board.

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17. Sino-Japanese Trade Relations

Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "JAPAN: FOOD POISONING MAY BE DELIBERATE", Tokyo, 2008/02/05) reported that Japanese Health Minister Yoichi Masuzoe said Tuesday that pesticide-laced PRC dumplings were probably poisoned deliberately. "Judging from the circumstantial evidence, we'd have to think that it's highly likely to be a crime," he said. "That means we must let police investigate, and I hope the case would be resolved through our cooperation with China." The PRC's product safety agency conducted tests on the ingredients of Tianyang dumplings from the same batch sent to Japan, but found none of the insecticide cited by Japanese authorities.

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18. Sino-Indian Relations

The Financial Times (Jo Johnson, "SINGH VISITS REMOTE STATE CONTESTED BY CHINA", New Delhi, 2008/02/04) reported that Manmohan Singh became the first Indian prime minister to visit Arunachal Pradesh in nearly a decade, reflecting concern in New Delhi at persistent PRC claims to the remote and sparsely-populated north-eastern state. Beijing claims 90,000 sq km of land in Arunachal Pradesh, which borders Tibet, Bhutan and Burma. New Delhi in turn says the PRC is occupying 38,000 sq km of Indian territory in Kashmir illegally ceded to it by Pakistan. During his two-day visit to a state whose development has lagged far behind that of Tibet, Mr Singh will inaugurate two hydroelectric plants and lay the foundation stone of a new parliament building in Itanagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh.

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19. PRC Peacekeepers in Africa

The Associated Press (Alfred De Montesquiou, "SUDAN WELCOMES CHINESE PEACEKEEPERS", Dureij, 2008/02/04) reported that their clocks are set on Beijing time, they use state-of-the-art equipment and — most of all — they are welcome by the Sudanese government. In just about everything, the PRC peacekeeping contingent in Darfur is strikingly different from the rest of the U.N. mission here. The 140 Chinese engineers and troops deployed in Darfur were among the first reinforcements sent by the United Nations, which took over peacekeeping in the western Sudanese region in January. The Sudanese government quickly approved the PRC contingent, even as it vetoed contributions from other countries because they were not African.

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20. PRC Weather

The Christian Science Monitor (Peter Ford, "CHINA'S RESPONSE TO SNOW CRISIS: GREATER OPENNESS, SUPPORT", Beijing, 2008/02/04) reported that as southern PRC enters its third week of freak snowstorms and plunging temperatures, government leaders have been falling over themselves to be seen on the front lines of disaster relief, consoling victims and encouraging repair men. "During SARS the government tried to hide and block all information about the crisis," recalls Yang Fengchun, a professor at Peking University's School of Politics and Public Administration. "This

time, right from the start, the government has published information in a very open way." "We will offer timely information so as to win public support for our efforts," the deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) Zhu Hongren pledged at a press conference.

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21. PRC Internet

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "GREAT FIREWALL OF CHINA FACES ONLINE REBELS", Wuhan, 2008/02/04) reported that in recent months, the PRC's censors have tightened controls over the Internet, often blacking out sites that had no discernible political content. In the process, they have fostered a backlash, as many people who previously had little interest in politics have become active in resisting the controls. This resistance is taking many forms, from lawsuits by Internet users against government-owned service providers, claiming that the blocking of sites is illegal, to a growing network of software writers who develop code aimed at overcoming the restrictions. An Internet-based word-of-mouth campaign has taken shape, in which bloggers and Web page owners post articles to spread awareness of the Great Firewall, or share links to programs that will help evade it.

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22. PRC Human Rights

Associated Press (Henry Sanderson, "CHINESE DISSIDENT WRITER SENTENCED", Beijing, 2008/02/05) reported that a PRC court Tuesday sentenced Lu Gengsong, a democracy activist who wrote about corruption, to four years in prison on subversion charges, his wife and lawyer said. Lu Gengsong was convicted of "inciting subversion of state power" by the Intermediate People's Court in Hangzhou.

Associated Press ("JAILED REPORT CHINA (sic) CHEONG RELEASED", Hong Kong, 2008/02/05) reported that Ching Cheong, a Hong Kong journalist charged with spying for Taiwan, has been released from a prison in the PRC where he was detained for almost two years, the government said Tuesday. Ching, a Hong Kong-based correspondent for Singapore's The Straits Times newspaper, was sentenced to five years' jail in August 2006 on charges of spying for Taiwan.

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II. ROK Report

23. US Military in ROK

Kookmin Ilbo ("WELCOMING THE HALTING OF US TROOP CUT PLAN", Seoul, 2008/02/05) said in an editorial that the US decision to halt troop reductions is welcome news considering that it not only corresponds to public opinion that a certain number of US troops in the ROK are necessary until the Korean Peninsula reunites but also can enforce the security in Korean Peninsula. However,

the ROK should not unconditionally accept the proposal by the US because it includes requiring the ROK to provide money and land for an extra 3500 people. The Ministry of National Defense hesitates to give a clear answer to the US for the same reason. Although we welcome the plan, the US and ROK governments must carefully deliberate on the basis of cost-benefit principles.

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24. Inter-Korean Civil Society Exchanges

Changbi weekly review (Hyung-gon Jung, "WHAT IS CIVIL MOVEMENT GOING TO DO? ROK-DPRK RELATION, STILL JUST OBSERVING? ", Seoul, 2008/02/04) carried an article by the Secretary-general of the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation, who said that the attitude of DPRK toward ROK-DPRK relations has shifted to "anxious observation." Although the DPRK had hoped to increase ROK-DPRK civil society exchanges, now that the administration is changing, there seems rather less feasibility. The DPRK definitely knows the weakened strength of civil society in both the ROK and DPRK. In promising to continue the Kaesong Industrial Zone and Mt. Kumgang tourism and proposing an economic cooperation road map following the resolution of the nuclear issue, Lee Myung-bak is taking a strategy to embrace the ROK conservatives while avoiding irritating the DPRK. Probably, both ROK and DPRK will not express their clear opinion until they are sure that their purpose has enough strength to move the whole. In the ROK, that would be the general election, while in DPRK that would be the nuclear program report issue. What is notable is that both the ROK and DPRK will take actions when they are able to appease their people. This is the moment the civil societies must do something.

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25. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Maeil Shinmun ("EFFECTIVENESS IS THE PRIORITY IN POLICY TOWARD DPRK", Seoul, 2008/02/05) said in an editorial that President-elect Lee Myung-bak seems to observe the problems economic cooperation and collaboration projects have with a relatively realistic vision. This can be called a timely change of direction in policies toward the DPRK. For the last 10 years, under the name of the Sunshine Policy, the ROK has pumped 10 trillion won and built a house without columns. What is urgent now is not some nominal moral obligation that the ROK and DPRK are the same, but promotion of an effective policy. The people demand comprehensive consultation and tangible outcomes that will help construct a trusting relation between the ROK and DPRK.

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26. Inter-Korean Rail Link

Yonhap ("HOPE FOR ROK-DPRK CHEERING SQUAD AND UNIFIED TEAM", Seoul, 2008/02/05) reported that the agreement on a joint Korean cheering squad for the Beijing Olympics marks the first specific agreement between the ROK and DPRK since the presidential election. It is noteworthy considering that the agreement was made in the midst of a possible deadlock of the six party talk and tense political situation because of the delay in nuclear reporting. In order to use Gyeongui rail

line, which was built in 1906, repair work on rails in the DPRK is urgent. If the repair work requires enormous amount of ROK taxes, a feasibility study is inevitable. The direct and indirect economic benefits the DPRK will gain through railroad repair is of tremendous degree. If so, it would be wiser for the DPRK to accept ROK's demand for a feasibility study.

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27. ROK-Japan Relations

Saegye Ilbo ("FUKUDA OR OJAWA? TURBULENCE IN POWER STRUCTURE ", Seoul, 2008/02/05) said in an analysis that the ROK, US, PRC, and Russia are all paying attention to developments in the political situation of this year's general election in Japan. Compared to Roh administration, the Lee Myung-bak regime has the potential to develop a very close relationship with Japan. Besides the DPRK nuclear problem, Japan expects mutual assistance in dealing with different pending problems in Northeast Asia. The DPRK is engrossed with the compensation problems and negotiation strategy with Japan following the conclusion of nuclear negotiation with US, because the DPRK needs economic aid from Japan. The PRC, on the other hand, hopes that the relatively appeasing and assimilating Prime Minister Fukuda would continue with his regime rather than opposition leader Ichiro Ozawa, who has a strong nationalistic disposition. However, for Russia which has territorial disputes with Japan, the Democratic Party which is more appeasing toward Russia is preferred. Japan's political direction is expected to considerably influence the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia political situation.

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28. US Broadcasts to DPRK

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "US ALLOTS BUDGET FOR NK NEWS", Seoul, 2008/02/05) reported that the U.S. budget for fiscal year 2009 announced Monday allots \$699 million for international broadcasting into countries like the DPRK, Yonhap News reported Tuesday.

The budget also adds \$88.8 million to an Army program that includes support of ground combat power on the Korean Peninsula, the report said.

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Nautilus Institute

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

nautilus@nautilus.org