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Contents in this Issue:

- I. NAPSNet
  - 1. DPRK Missile Program
  - 2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program
  - 3. US- DPRK Relations
  - 4. DPRK on U.S. Leadership
  - 5. PRC-DPRK Aid
  - 6. ROK Policy Toward the DPRK
  - 7. ROK Energy Aid to the DPRK
  - 8. Inter-Korean Relations
  - 9. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation
  - 10. Alleged DPRK-Syrian Nuclear Cooperation
  - 11. Japan Environment
  - 12. Japan Whaling Issue
  - 13. Japan Government Reform
  - 14. Cross Strait Relations
  - 15. Sino-Indian Relations
  - 16. US-PRC Relations

- 17. PRC-US Economic Cooperation
- 18. PRC Unemployment
- 19. PRC Unrest
- 20. PRC Energy Supply
- 21. PRC Climate Change

- II. PRC Report
  - 22. PRC Civil Society and the Environment
  - 23. PRC Environment

Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Missile Program

Agence France-Presse ("SEOUL SAYS NORTH'S MISSILE TEST TO VIOLATE UN RESOLUTIONS", Seoul, 2009/02/05) reported that the ROK warned the DPRK Thursday to scrap any plans to launch its longest-range missile. Foreign Ministry spokesman Moon Tae-Young noted that the UN Security Council in 2006 adopted resolutions "expressing serious concerns over the North's missile programme and delivering a firm message." "If the North lobs a missile, it would constitute a clear breach of the UN resolution," said Moon.

(return to top)

2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA MUST SEE COST OF NUCLEAR AMBITION: HILL", 2009/02/03) reported that the DPRK must "understand the true cost" of clinging to nuclear weapons ambitions, but not cut from talks, Washington's top nuclear negotiator with the country said. "Some people doubt the point of negotiating. They say, 'how can you talk to these terrible people?'" Christopher Hill said. "The format, we think, is working. The problem I think remaining is whether North Korea, taking the plutonium they've already produced, are really prepared to give up that plutonium."

(return to top)

3. US- DPRK Relations

Yonhap News (Kim Hyun, "N. KOREA LIKELY TO BACK DOWN FROM BELLICOSE CAMPAIGN: U.S. EXPERT", Seoul, 2009/02/04) reported that the DPRK will eventually back down from its bellicose tactics aimed at driving a wedge between the ROK and the United States, a U.S. expert said Wednesday, calling Seoul's wait-and-see approach "wise." Richard Bush, director of the U.S. Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, said the Barack Obama administration should also make clear that Pyongyang won't be rewarded by Washington for raising military tension. Bush is also reportedly on the shortlist of candidates for Obama's special envoy to Pyongyang.

(return to top)

4. DPRK on U.S. Leadership

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA LEADER TAKES WAIT-AND-SEE STANCE TOWARD U.S.: SOURCES", Beijing, 2009/02/04) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong Il told a PRC official who recently visited Pyongyang that he is waiting to see the policies of the new U.S. administration, in what was believed to be an indication his country will not make major moves until they become clear, diplomatic sources said Wednesday. According to the sources, Kim made the remarks when his conversation with Wang shifted to Obama's inauguration ceremony. The DPRK leader did not elaborate, they said.

(return to top)

5. PRC-DPRK Aid

Associated Press ("REPORT: CHINA OFFERS AID TO IMPOVERISHED NKOREA", Seoul, 2009/02/04) reported that the DPRK's state media said Wednesday that the PRC has offered Pyongyang aid, a deal that was likely reached at a recent meeting between reclusive leader Kim Jong Il and a senior PRC official. The Korean Central News Agency said in a brief dispatch that the aid will be "an encouragement" to DPRK citizens in their efforts to build "a great, prosperous, powerful nation." It did not say what kind or how much aid the PRC had offered. Paik Hak-soon, an analyst at the private Sejong Institute security think tank in the ROK , said during his trip Wang likely promised PRC support in helping the DPRK rebuild its dilapidated economy. Paik said the aid would likely include food, oil and raw materials .

(return to top)

6. ROK Policy Toward the DPRK

Korea Times (Michael Ha, "ORGANIZERS OF NK LEAFLET CAMPAIGN FACE INVESTIGATION", 2009/02/04) reported that t he Ministry of Unification announced that it would ask police to investigate anti-Pyongyang activist leaders if they press ahead with their plan to launch propaganda leaflets and DPRK banknotes across the border to the DPRK. The two activist leaders have confirmed their meeting to reporters, saying that they spoke with a ministry representative for about an hour. According to them, the official urged them to refrain from sending leaflets to the DPRK, saying "this is not the right time to launch propaganda materials to North Korea," alluding to the deterioration of inter-Korean relations in recent weeks.

(return to top)

7. ROK Energy Aid to the DPRK

Korea Herald ("S. KOREA IN DILEMMA OVER ENERGY ASSISTANCE FOR N. KOREA", 2009/02/04) reported that the ROK is struggling to determine when it should send 3,000 tons of steel plates to the DPRK, confronted with the DPRK's intensifying saber-rattling, government officials here were quoted as saying. The ROK initially planned to send the shipment, equivalent to 11,000 tons of heavy fuel oil, sometime this month, as part of its promised contribution to an aid-for-denuclearization deal signed in 2007. "It is hard to predict when we will send the steel plates. For now, we are not even seriously considering the timing," the official said. "North Korea should first change its attitude."

(return to top)

8. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Herald ("OPPOSITION PARTY CALLS FOR RESUMPTION OF AID TO N. KOREA", 2009/02/04) reported that the ROK's main opposition party urged its government to earmark at least 5 percent of its annual budget for aid to DPRK and take other reconciliatory measures to improve inter-Korean relations. In a parliamentary address, Rep. Won Hye-young, floor leader of the Democratic Party, said that closer cross-border economic cooperation is the only path to revitalizing the ROK economy. "Economic cooperation with North Korea is the most effective investment in our country's future and fate. In this sense, our party formally proposes (the ROK government) spend 5 percent of its budget on aid to North Korea," Won said.

Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREA THREATENS MILITARY ACTION AGAIN", 2009/02/02) reported that the DPRK issued yet another warning of military action against the ROK on Sunday. The official Rodong Shinmun newspaper in a commentary said war is a possible scenario if Seoul continues to ignore all the recent threats it has been making. About two weeks ago, the DPRK declared a state of heightened confrontation along the disputed border in the West Sea.

Xinkuai News ("S KOREAN GOV'T REJECTS NEWS EXCHANGE PROJECT WITH DPRK", Seoul, 2009/02/04) reported that the ROK government announced its decision of rejecting a ROK journalist organization's project to exchange news with the DPRK. "There are concerns that the exchange of news articles may undermine national security, public order and the interests of the general public," said ROK Unification Ministry Spokesman Kim Ho-nyoun. Meanwhile, another official of the Unification Ministry, speaking on condition of anonymity, told local media that the ROK government sees possibility that the exchange may serve as a mouthpiece for the DPRK to deliver its messages to the ROK.

(return to top)

9. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News ("HYUNDAI ASAN DESPERATE TO RESUME TOURS TO N. KOREA", Seoul, 2009/02/04) reported that a ROK company operating businesses in the DPRK said it is "desperate" to resume tours to a scenic mountain resort in the DPRK within two months, citing the firm's deteriorating finances. The chances, however, of resuming the tours to the DPRK's Mount Kumgang appear remote, as Pyongyang recently took a series of hostile actions that have inflamed tensions on

the Korean Peninsula. "We are now reaching a critical situation," Cho told reporters. "Unless the tours resume by April, it will be difficult for us to stay afloat."

(return to top)

10. Alleged DPRK-Syrian Nuclear Cooperation

Chosun Ilbo ("IAEA SAYS NO EVIDENCE FOUND IN SYRIA CONNECTION", 2009/02/04) reported that the chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency says if the IAEA has evidence to support Israel's suspicions that DPRK was assisting Syria in building a nuclear weapons facility, he would have taken swift action to stop it. Mohamed Elbaradei in an interview with Newsweek magazine also indicated Israel's "unilateral" military action on the alleged Syrian nuclear site two years ago was unjustifiable.

(return to top)

11. Japan Environment

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("MINISTRY GATHERING FEEDBACK FOR 'GREEN NEW DEAL'", 2009/02/05) reported that the Environment Ministry is to study the possible introduction of a Japanese version of the US Green New Deal, which concentrates on investing in a green economy and societal reforms, and has started consulting with various experts. "Up till now, there's always been conflict over whether to prioritize measures aimed at combating global warming or economic growth," a senior Environment Ministry official said. "The 'Green New Deal' is a strategy that will help both the environment and the economy by investing in measures to battle global warming. New concepts should be introduced to overcome the conflict."

(return to top)

12. Japan Whaling Issue

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Satoshi Koreeda, "IWC MULLS WHALING TRADE-OFF", Zurich, 2009/02/04) reported that the International Whaling Commission announced a draft proposal that would allow Japan to resume limited small-scale whaling in its coastal waters. The IWC will discuss the proposal to allow Japan to resume the practice of hunting for minke whales at a meeting in Rome from March 9 to 11. The proposal, however, comes with strict conditions. These include a requirement that meat from whales caught in the coastal water hunts must be consumed domestically, and Japan must report to the IWC annually on matters such as the number of whales it has caught and whaling conditions.

(return to top)

13. Japan Government Reform

The Asahi Shimbun ("ASO MOVES UP BAN ON 'AMAKUDARI' TALKS", 2009/02/04) reported that Prime Minister Taro Aso moved up the planned abolishment of mediations by ministries in finding cushy post-retirement jobs for bureaucrats. But he left intact a new personnel center that opposition

parties say will continue the harshly criticized practice of amakudari in a different form. Aso said he plans to issue an edict to ban, by the end of this year, ministries from setting up opportunities for amakudari, in which retired bureaucrats land jobs in industries once under their jurisdiction, and watari, the practice of retired officials hopping from one job to another in those industries. But mediations will continue to be carried out through a personnel interchange center. This means amakudari itself will not be abolished.

(return to top)

14. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN MULLING BUILDING BRIDGE LINKING WITH CHINA", Taipei, 2009/02/05) reported that President Ma Ying-jeou asked Taiwan's top economic planners to conduct a feasibility study on a bridge linking the Taiwan-controlled island of Kinmen with Xiamen, a city in the southeastern PRC province of Fujian , presidential office spokesman Wang Yu-chi told reporters. Wang denied reports that the president "ordered" construction of the proposed bridge, saying the final decision would depend on the results of the study. Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) spokesman Cheng Wen-tsang warned could be "endangering national security". "What Taiwan needs at the moment is ways to lift the deteriorating economy but not measures to step up links with China ."

(return to top)

15. Sino-Indian Relations

Rediff ("INDIA RUBBISHES REPORTS OF SUBMARINE FACE-OFF WITH CHINESE NAVY", 2009/02/04) reported that India, rubbished reports that PRC warships on anti-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden caught an Indian Navy submarine snooping on it in the international waters. Vehemently denying that two PRC Destroyers had "forced" an Indian submarine to surface, Navy officials in New Delhi said the vessel "was not Indian" at all. "None of our submarines surfaced in the Gulf of Aden region as reported in a section of the Chinese media," a Navy official said in New Delhi.

(return to top)

16. US-PRC Relations

Reuters (Liu Zhen and Nick Macfie, "BEIJING WANTS RETURN OF CHINESE HELD IN GUANTANAMO", Beijing, 2009/02/05) reported that the PRC said on Thursday it objected to any country accepting 17 Uighur terror suspects held at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay. PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said she hoped all sides would respect international law and principles. Canada on Wednesday denied a newspaper report that it was close to accepting three Uighurs who have been cleared for release.

(return to top)

17. PRC-US Economic Cooperation

Xinhua ("WEN: CHINA, U.S. SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO FIGHT FINANCIAL CRISIS", London, 2009/02/02) reported that PRC Premier Wen Jiabao on Sunday called for enhanced cooperation between the PRC and the United States in face of the worsening financial crisis. "The priority of the two countries under the current circumstances should be working together to fight the financial crisis and promote the constructive and cooperative bilateral relations, " Wen said in an interview with the Financial Times. Wen said the PRC wants to enhance cooperation with the U.S. to meet the financial crisis together as that represents the larger interest and serves the fundamental purposes of both countries. He also said the PRC government looks forward to early contacts with the new U.S. government. "We believe that to maintain cooperation between China and the United States serves world peace, stability and prosperity," the premier said.

(return to top)

18. PRC Unemployment

Reuters (James Pomfret, "WORKERS RETURN TO BLEAK FUTURE IN CHINA EXPORT HUB", Dongguan, 2009/02/04) reported that fixated on social stability, the PRC's ruling Communist Party is watching closely what happens in the Pearl River Delta, where thousands of factories have closed or slashed work forces because of a slump in export orders. The competition for once-plentiful factory jobs is heating up among migrant workers, raising the risk of social tensions as millions arrive from distant villages after the Lunar New Year break, despite bleak employment prospects. Yiping Huang, Citigroup's top Asia economist, said the number of migrant workers laid off could double to 30-40 million eventually, if government stimulus plans fail to offset dwindling western orders for PRC manufactured goods.

Bloomberg (Lee Spears, "CHINA LABOR MINISTRY URGES FREE JOB FAIRS FOR RURAL MIGRANTS", Beijing, 2009/02/04) reported that PRC’s labor ministry told local governments to hold free job fairs in rural areas to help laid- off migrant workers find new positions in cities. Jobless rural residents who have returned home for lack of work should be given priority in hiring for infrastructure projects being planned across the country, according to a statement by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security posted on the central government’s Web site. The PRC announced a 4 trillion-yuan ($585 billion) economic stimulus package in November to sustain growth amid the global slowdown. An estimated 20 million migrant workers, 15.3 percent of the total 130 million, lost their jobs before the Lunar New Year holiday, Chen Xiwen, a cabinet official, said this week.

(return to top)

19. PRC Unrest

The Times (Michael Sheridan, "VIOLENT UNREST ROCKS CHINA AS CRISIS HITS", Hong Kong, 2009/02/01) reported that bankruptcies, unemployment and social unrest are spreading more widely in the PRC than officially reported, according to independent research that paints an ominous picture for the world economy. The research was conducted for The Sunday Times over the last two months in three provinces vital to PRC trade – Guangdong, Zhejiang and Jiangsu. It found that the global economic crisis has scythed through exports and set off dozens of protests that are never mentioned by the state media.

(return to top)

20. PRC Energy Supply

Xinhua News ("WORLD FINANCIAL CRISIS DIM CHINA'S ENERGY INDUSTRY, MORE EFFORT NEEDED", Beijing, 2009/02/04) reported that the PRC's energy industry needs more reform to pull through the difficulties of the economic chill worldwide, said National Energy Administration (NEA) head Zhang Guobao. "World financial crisis has brought a negative impact to China's economy, and the country's energy sector is no exception, "Zhang said. Zhou Dadi, a researcher with the Energy Research Institute of National Development and Reform Commission echoed Zhang, saying slowed growth in energy-intensive industries, including steel and iron, would no doubt drag down energy consumption.

Caijing Magazine (Li Qiyan, "POWER: STYMIED COAL TALKS POINT TO POWER REFORM", 2009/02/04) reported that annual contract negotiations between state-owned power producers and coal suppliers have broken down, casting a long shadow over the PRC's power industry and focusing new attention on calls to eliminate price controls on electricity and dismantling employee-shareholding systems. Power companies say they've been backed into a corner by government price controls. Industry experts blame the impasse on a pricing system they say fails to properly reflect market supply and demand.

Bloomberg (Wang Ying, "CHINA TO SHUT 31 GIGAWATTS OF SMALL COAL-FIRED POWER PLANTS", Beijing, 2009/02/04) reported that the PRC, the world's second-biggest energy consumer, plans to shut 31 gigawatts of small coal-fired power plants over the next three years to cut pollution and boost efficiency, the nation's top energy policy maker said. The country aims to close 13 gigawatts of thermal generating units this year, 10 gigawatts in 2010 and 8 gigawatts in 2011, said Zhang Guobao, head of the National Energy Administration, according to the official China Central Television today. Zhang was speaking at the National Energy Working Conference in Beijing yesterday.

(return to top)

21. PRC Climate Change

Xinhua ("MELTING GLACIERS ON CHINA'S QINGHAI-TIBET PLATEAU WATER SOURCE "WORRISOME"", Xining, 2009/02/04) reported that PRC scientists said Wednesday glaciers that serve as water sources on the Qinghai-Tibet plateau are melting at a "worrisome speed," having receded 196 square km over the past nearly 40 years. Xin Yuanhong, senior engineer in charge of a three-year field study of glaciers in the region, said glaciers at the headwaters of the Yangtze cover 1,051 square km, down from 1,247 square km in 1971. Xin attributed the accelerated melting to global warming. Xin said that "Melting glacier water will replenish rivers in the short run, but as the resource diminishes, drought will dominate the river reaches in the long term."

(return to top)

II. PRC Report

22. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

Huangyan District Government website (Tao Lingjia, "ENGOS OF TAIZHOU CITY HOLD A FORUM IN HUANGYAN DISTRICT", 2009/02/03) reported that representatives of environmental protection organizations throughout the city came to Huangyan district, to participate an environmental forum recently. During the forum, representatives shared experiences of environmental protection campaigns and analyzed the weak points and difficulties in the work. Official of the municipal Bureau of Environment Protection said that ENGOs grow vigorously in recent years, and they have played a significant role in enhancing the environmental protection awareness of the citizens.

(return to top)

23. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net (Li Zhiyong, "OLYMPIC ELECTRIC BUSES RUN ON THE ORDINARY LINES", 2009/02/03) reported that 30 electric buses serving Olympic village during the Olympic Games started to run on the ordinary bus lines of Beijing, which showed that Beijing was trying to extend "Green Olympics" to "Green Beijing". During the Olympic Games, these electric buses were widely acclaimed by the public for the characteristics of zero emission, low noise and no pollution.

Oriental Morning News (Zhang Lei, "CHINA MAY TAKE THE LEAD IN PROMOTING SECOND-GENERATION BIOFUELS", 2009/02/04) reported that just at the biofuels are marked with a label of "robbing food from people" and going from bad to worse, the second-generation biofuels are coming in. Different from the first-generation biofuels which use corn as the main raw material, the second-generation biofuels use agricultural waste. Novozymes , Denmark, the world's largest producer of industrial enzymes, has signed a framework agreement on technical cooperation with the PRC. They think the labor costs of crop waste collection are tremendously competitive in the PRC. The second-generation biofuels also can help increase the income of farmers and rural economic development.

(return to top)

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