

NAPSNet Daily Report 8 March, 2010

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 8 March, 2010", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 08, 2010,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-8-march-2010/>

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Contents in this Issue:

- I. Napsnet
 - [1. DPRK on US, ROK Military Exercises](#)
 - [2. US-ROK Military Exercises](#)
 - [3. Sino-DPRK Relations](#)
 - [4. Inter Korean Relations](#)
 - [5. Inter-Korean Civic Exchanges](#)
 - [6. DPRK Leadership](#)
 - [7. DPRK Defectors](#)
 - [8. ROK Missile Defense](#)
 - [9. ROK-Japan Relations](#)
 - [10. USFJ Base Relocation](#)
 - [11. US-Japan Relations](#)
 - [12. Japanese Role in Afghanistan](#)
 - [13. Japanese Politics](#)
 - [14. Sino-US Relations](#)
 - [15. PRC Tibet Issue](#)
 - [16. PRC Ethnic Unrest](#)

- [17. PRC Democracy](#)
- [18. PRC Internet](#)
- II. PRC Report
 - [19. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction](#)
 - [20. PRC Environment](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK on US, ROK Military Exercises

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "NKOREA SAYS READY TO 'BLOW UP' SKOREA, US", Seoul, 2010/03/08) reported that the DPRK People's Army issued a statement Monday warning that joint US-ROK military drills created a tense situation and that its troops are "fully ready" to "blow up" the allies once the order is issued. The DPRK also put all its soldiers and reservists on high alert to "mercilessly crush the aggressors" should they encroach upon the DPRK's territory even slightly, said the statement carried by the Korean Central News Agency.

Korea Times (Lee Tae-hoon, "NK BLASTS KOREA-US JOINT DRILLS", Seoul, 2010/03/07) reported that the DPRK labeled the annual Key Resolve-Foal Eagle drills as military provocations, saying it would indefinitely suspend denuclearization talks and all military dialogue as long as the ``hostile war games" continue. The Korean Central Broadcasting Station said, "Considering that they are nuclear war drills against the North in their nature, it will be inevitable for Pyongyang to discontinue its denuclearization process and bolster its nuclear deterrent for self-defense."

[\(return to top\)](#)

2. US-ROK Military Exercises

Yonhap ("S. KOREA, US BEGIN JOINT MILITARY DRILL", Seoul, 2010/03/08) reported that the United States and the ROK began their annual joint military exercise on Monday. "We have not detected any unusual military movement from North Korea and view its verbal warning as something merely conventional," said Won Tae-jae, spokesman for Seoul's defense ministry . "North Korea knows well that we mean no harm (with the exercise)."

[\(return to top\)](#)

3. Sino-DPRK Relations

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "CHINA TO USE N. KOREA'S RAJIN PORT FOR 10 YEARS", Seoul, 2010/03/08) reported that the PRC's northeastern Jirin Province has acquired the right to use the DPRK's Rajin Port for 10 years, a news report said Monday. The report said an official of the province made public the agreement at the PRC's National People's Congress session Sunday. As a result, Yanji City will be able to export coal from Jirin to Japan and other nations via the East Sea from Rajin, the report quoted the official as saying.

[\(return to top\)](#)

4. Inter Korean Relations

Korea Times (Kang Hyun-kyung, "'N. KOREA TO USE DETAINEES AS BARGAINING CHIP'", Seoul, 2010/03/05) reported that the ROK government recently learned who the four ROK citizens detained by the DPRK were, but declined to make the information public. A government official made it clear that Seoul would not promise anything to Pyongyang for their release.

Korea Herald ("SEOUL UNEASY WITH N. KOREAN THREAT", Seoul, 2010/03/06) reported that ROK Unification Ministry spokesman Chun Hae-sung said in a press briefing Friday that the the DPRK's idea of unilaterally calling off contracts and freezing ROK property in the DPRK was "hard to understand." "The Mount Geumgang tour business is based on a contract between the North and Hyundai, agreements between the governments and also North Korean regulations on protection of invested assets," Chun said. "Unilateral abrogation of contracts or agreements on the tours would be against North Korean law as well."

[\(return to top\)](#)

5. Inter-Korean Civic Exchanges

Korea Herald ("INTER-KOREAN FORUM ON SEX SLAVERY IN APRIL", Seoul, 2010/03/08) reported that ROK and DPRK activists for women forced into sexual slavery by Japan's military during World War II will hold a joint conference next month, organizers said Sunday. The Seoul-based Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan said two DPRK groups have accepted its proposal made in December for the event.

[\(return to top\)](#)

6. DPRK Leadership

BBC News (Bethany Bell, "COLONEL TELLS OF LAVISH SHOPPING FOR N KOREA DICTATORS", Vienna, 2010/03/08) reported that former DPRK Colonel Kim Jong-ryul says he spent 20 years doing business in Europe for the DPRK regime. His story is the subject of a new book published in Austria, where the colonel says he has lived under cover since his defection in 1994. He says he bought everything from spy technology and weapons to luxury goods like carpets, sidestepping the trade embargoes.

Korea Times (Lee Tae-hoon, "KIM JONG-IL ATTENDS MASSIVE RALLY IN RARE MOVE", Seoul, 2010/03/07) reported that the DPRK leader Kim Jong-il attended a mass rally Saturday marking the reopening of a long-closed textile factory. Kim attended a 100,000-strong rally held in Hamhung to celebrate the re-launching of the Vinalon Complex, according to the Korean Central Broadcasting Station. He was accompanied by top aides, including the country's No. 2 leader, Kim Yong-nam.

[\(return to top\)](#)

7. DPRK Defectors

Joongang Ilbo (Kang Ki-heon, "GOV'T COMMISSION TO PROBE DEFECTORS", Seoul, 2010/03/08) reported that the National Human Rights Commission in Seoul confirmed Sunday that it is investigating the plight of DPRK refugees overseas for the first time. The commission has asked the Foreign Ministry for help. According to the commission, an official with a private North Korean human rights group in Seoul filed a petition last September asking permission to start exchanging letters with a DPRK refugee in the ROK embassy in the PRC.

[\(return to top\)](#)

8. ROK Missile Defense

Donga Ilbo ("US PROPOSES 'REGIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE' TO SEOUL", Seoul, 2010/03/08) reported that US Deputy Assistant Defense Secretary Michael Schiffer on Friday said Washington will invest in establishing a "regional missile defense" against the DRPK nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. An ROK government official said, "At the 2+2 meeting of director-generals, or Pol-Mil council between Korea and the U.S., held in Washington in December last year, Washington explained its plan to invest in the regional missile defense."

[\(return to top\)](#)

9. ROK-Japan Relations

Korea Herald (Kim Ji-hyun, "SEOUL LOOKING INTO HATOYAMA'S HINTS AT COMPENSATION", Seoul, 2010/03/08) reported that the ROK government said Monday it was looking into latest reports that Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has indicated his willingness to "phase in" compensation for victims of its past colonization. "We are examining and weighing the authenticity of the comments, as they were communicated through unofficial channels of dialogue," Foreign Ministry spokesman Kim Young-sun said. Hatoyama reportedly recently conveyed to a senior member of the U.S. Congress that he was willing to consider compensation for victims of the annexation of Korea.

[\(return to top\)](#)

10. USFJ Base Relocation

Yomiuri Shimbun (Satoshi Ogawa, "CAMPBELL SAYS AIRFIELD FEUD COULD AFFECT TIES", Washington, 2010/03/07) reported that Kurt Campbell, U.S. assistant secretary of state for East

Asian and Pacific affairs, held talks on the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station with Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers Katsuei Hirasawa, deputy chairman of the LDP General Council, and Ichita Yamamoto, a former senior vice foreign minister, at the U.S. State Department in Washington on Friday. Campbell told them that failure by Tokyo to settle on a new site for the Futenma facility by May would affect bilateral ties not only on security issues but also in other areas, Hirasawa and Yamamoto said at a press conference after the meeting.

[\(return to top\)](#)

11. US-Japan Relations

New York Times (Martin Fackler, "CHINA UNVEILS LESS AGGRESSIVE DEFENSE BUDGET", Tokyo, 2010/03/07) reported that according to Japanese and American officials, diplomats have been quietly negotiating a visit to Washington as early as next month by Ichiro Ozawa, the secretary general of the Democratic Party. The possible visit, which could include a meeting with President Obama, was first suggested to Ozawa in February by Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell during a visit to Tokyo. The officials said the informal invitation was a move by Washington to improve communications with the new Japanese leadership.

[\(return to top\)](#)

12. Japanese Role in Afghanistan

Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN, NATO TO SIGN INFO SECURITY PACT", Tokyo, 2010/03/07) reported that the Japanese government and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have agreed to sign an information security pact aimed at strengthening military cooperation between them, government sources said Saturday. By concluding the pact, Japan hopes to make it easier to obtain security information on Afghanistan, according to the sources.

[\(return to top\)](#)

13. Japanese Politics

Kyodo ("HATOYAMA CABINET APPROVAL RATING HITS LOWEST LEVEL SINCE INAUGURATION", Tokyo, 2010/03/07) reported that the approval rate for Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's Cabinet has fallen to 36.3 percent, the lowest level since the Cabinet was inaugurated last September, the latest nationwide telephone poll conducted by Kyodo News showed Sunday. 58.6 percent of respondents said they do not believe it would be desirable for the ruling Democratic Party of Japan to control the House of Councillors on its own in addition to holding a majority in the House of Representatives. The Cabinet approval rating was down 5.1 points from last month's poll, dipping below 40 percent for the first time. The disapproval rate was up 3.8 points to 48.9 percent, with the prime minister's lack of leadership ability cited most as the reason for dissatisfaction.

Yomiuri Shimbun ("57% OPPOSE DPJ MAJORITY IN UPPER HOUSE", Tokyo, 2010/03/08) reported that fifty-seven percent of respondents to the latest Yomiuri Shimbun survey do not want the Democratic Party of Japan to win a majority of seats in this summer's House of Councillors election, surpassing the 33 percent who said the party deserved to gain a majority. The survey also found the

approval rating for Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's Cabinet was 41 percent, down three percentage points from the previous poll conducted a month earlier. The Cabinet's disapproval rating increased by three percentage points to 50 percent.

[\(return to top\)](#)

14. Sino-US Relations

New York Times (Michael Wines, "CHINA BLAMES U.S. FOR STRAINED RELATIONS", Beijing, 2010/03/08) reported that the blame for friction in PRC-United States relations "does not lie with China," and it is up to the United States to take steps to repair the frayed ties, PRC foreign minister Yang Jiechi repeated Sunday. Yang said that the administration of President Obama had seriously disrupted the relationship by announcing the sale of weapons to Taiwan and holding a White House meeting with the Dalai Lama.

[\(return to top\)](#)

15. PRC Tibet Issue

Associated Press (David Wivell, "HEAVY SECURITY IS THE NEW NORMAL IN CHINA'S TIBET", Lhasa, 2010/03/07) reported that two years after Lhasa erupted in a riot that set off anti-government protests across Tibetan areas of the PRC, heavy security is the new normal. Helmeted paramilitary police stand guard behind spiked barriers at some street corners. Men on rooftops train binoculars on the square and streets in the Barkhor, the heart of the old city that surrounds a holy temple.

Associated Press (Gillian Wong, "CHINA SAYS MISSING PANCHEN LAMA IS LIVING IN TIBET", Beijing, 2010/03/07) reported that Gendun Choekyi Nyima, 20, who was named the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama in 1995 by the Dalai Lama is living with his family somewhere in Tibet, the region's governor Padma Choling said Sunday. "As far as I know, his family and he are now living a very good life in Tibet," Padma Choling said at a news conference on the sidelines of China's annual legislative session. "He and his family are reluctant to be disturbed, they want to live an ordinary life."

[\(return to top\)](#)

16. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Associated Press (Gillian Wong, "CHINA EXPECTS FURTHER XINJIANG SEPARATIST ATTACKS", Beijing, 2010/03/07) reported that the PRC says it expects new attacks by separatists seeking independence for Xinjiang. The region's governor, Nur Bekri, said Sunday, "They will not easily accept failure. They will step up their separate attempts and change their ways and means to make new trouble for us." Bekri repeated the PRC's claims that last July's riots in Urumqi were orchestrated by overseas Uighur activists.

[\(return to top\)](#)

17. PRC Democracy

Associated Press (Min Lee, "CHINA WARNS AGAIN AGAINST HONG KONG DEMOCRACY PUSH", Hong Kong, 2010/03/07) reported that the PRC warned that a plan by pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong to use a special election as a de facto referendum on democratic reform is a threat to stability. "There are political groups that have launched the so-called 'five district referendum campaign,' even proposing sensational and extreme slogans like 'civic uprising' and 'liberating Hong Kong,'" Peng Qinghua, the head of the PRC's liaison office in Hong Kong, said when he met with Hong Kong delegates on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the National People's Assembly in Beijing on Saturday. "This is a total violation of mainstream public opinion that wants stability, harmony and development," Peng said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

18. PRC Internet

Reuters (Ben Blanchard and Benjamin Kang Lim, "CHINA TO PUNISH HACKERS, SAYS NO GOOGLE COMPLAINT", Beijing, 2010/03/06) reported that Google never filed a report to the PRC Ministry of Industry and Information Technology over alleged cyber attacks or sought negotiations, Vice Minister Miao Wei was quoted as saying by Xinhua on Saturday. "If Google has had evidence that the attacks came from China, the Chinese government will welcome them to provide the information and will severely punish the offenders according to the law," Miao said. "We never support hacking attacks because China also falls victim to hacking attacks," he said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

II. PRC Report

19. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction

Jinghua Times ("OVER 70% SICHUAN RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS COMPLETED", 2010/03/05) reported that as at the end of January, 2010, 28186 Sichuan earthquake reconstruction projects has been started construction, among which 21944 have been completed, accounting for 73.88% of all reconstruction projects, said Hou Xiongfei, Vice Director of Sichuan Publicity Department yesterday.

[\(return to top\)](#)

20. PRC Environment

People's Daily online ("FORESTRY COVERAGE RATE REACHES 20.36% IN 2009", 2010/03/05) reported that the third session of the 11th National People's Congress was open this morning in Beijing. In the 2010 Government Work Report, Premier Wen said afforestation has completed 88.27 million ares in 2009, and the forest coverage rate has reached 20.36%.

Yangtze River Daily ("WUHAN TO CONSTRUCT 112 COLORFUL CYCLEWAYS", 2010/03/05) reported that Wuhan will invest over 50 million RMB to construct 112 colorful cycleways with a total length of 164.6 kilometers in the city this year, as one key link of Wuhan's green transportation system.

[\(return to top\)](#)

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