



NAPSNet Daily Report Thursday, March 24, 2005

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Thursday, March 24, 2005", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 24, 2005, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-thursday-march-24-2005/>

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I. United States

- 1. [PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 2. [Sino-DPRK Relations](#)
- 3. [DPRK Economic Reforms](#)
- 4. [US on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 5. [DPRK Nuclear Transfer Allegations](#)
- 6. [Hyundai and DPRK Nuclear Program](#)
- 7. [ROK on Inter-Korean Relations](#)
- 8. [Inter-Korean Cultural Exchange](#)
- 9. [Inter - Korean Economic Cooperation](#)
- 10. [EU on DPRK Human Rights](#)
- 11. [US on DPRK Freedom of Religion](#)
- 12. [DPRK Defectors in the PRC](#)
- 13. [DPRK World Cup Preparations](#)
- 14. [ROK on US-ROK Military Relations](#)
- 15. [ROK on ROK-Japanese Territorial Dispute](#)
- 16. [Japan on ROK-Japanese Territorial Dispute](#)
- 17. [Sino-Japanese Relations](#)
- 18. [PRC on Cross Strait Relations](#)
- 19. [Cross Strait Relations](#)
- 20. [Sino-Russian Joint Military Drills](#)
- 21. [PRC Web Censorship](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. United States

1. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Reuters ("CHINA SAYS NO BREAKTHROUGH ON NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR TALKS", 2005-03-24) reported that the PRC said on Thursday a visit by the DPRK's premier, Pak Pong-ju, had yielded no date for a return to the negotiating table. But Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao urged patience and flexibility, saying that the DPRK was still committed to the process, but that "deep distrust" between the DPRK and the US remained the key stumbling block. "We hope the two sides have patience, exercise restraint and do something constructive to reopen the process," Liu said of the US and DPRK.

[\(return to top\)](#) Chosun Ilbo ("HU JINTAO TO VISIT N.KOREA 'AT PROPER TIME'", 2005-03-24) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has officially invited PRC Premier Hu Jintao to visit the country, Beijing said Thursday. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said during a regular briefing on Wednesday that DPRK Prime Minister Park Bong-ju, who is on state visit to the PRC, conveyed his leader's invitation to Hu. Hu expressed gratitude and said that he would visit Pyongyang "at a proper time", the spokesman added. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. Sino-DPRK Relations

Xinhua ("GLASS FACTORY CONSTRUCTION -- TOKEN OF DPRK-CHINA FRIENDSHIP", 2005-0-24) reported that the construction of the Taean Friendship Glass Factory is progressing apace as a token of friendship between the peoples of the DPRK and PRC, Korean Central News Agency reports Monday. The construction is progressing as planned, though weather conditions are unfavourable, thanks to the efforts of servicepersons, builders and PRC technicians to further develop the friendly bond provided by Chairman of the National Defence Commission of the DPRK Kim Jong Il and President of the PRC Hu Jintao.

[\(return to top\)](#) Xinhua ("DPRK PREMIER VISITS SHANGHAI", 2005-03-24) reported that Pak Bong Ju, DPRK Premier, said here Thursday that Shanghai has great potential for economic achievement and a promising future of economic cooperation with his country. In meeting with Shanghai Mayor Han Zheng, Pak said remarkable changes have taken place in Shanghai. "The modernization of Shanghai proves the success of China's reform and opening-up policy," he said. [\(return to top\)](#)

3. DPRK Economic Reforms

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA'S PAK TURNS ATTENTION TO ECONOMICS", 2005-03-24) reported that DPRK Premier Pak Pong-ju turned his attention to economics on Thursday with a visit to Shanghai, the heartland of PRC capitalism. Pak is in charge of his country's fledgling market reforms, and the heavy economic focus of his trip to the PRC appeared to be a signal that the DPRK is serious about the changes. "It sends a message to the international community that the economy and the economic growth path are important to the DPRK," said a businessman who travels frequently to the country.

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

4. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Reuters ("BUSH SAYS KIM JONG-IL 'MUST LISTEN' ON NUCLEAR", 2005-03-24) reported that President Bush urged DPRK leader Kim Jong-il on Wednesday to return to stalled six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear program "for the sake of peace and tranquility and stability." Bush denied setting a June deadline for the DPRK to return to talks and said the five nations that have been negotiating with Pyongyang were united. "I'm a patient person. And so are a lot of people that are involved in this issue. But the leader of North Korea must understand that when we five nations speak, we mean what we say," Bush said.

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

5. DPRK Nuclear Transfer Allegations

The Los Angeles Times ("INTELLIGENCE FIASCO' STIRS UP THE KOREAN PENINSULA", 2005-0-24) reported that at a sensitive time when the US is trying to build a consensus on the DPRK, ROK citizens are in a furor over allegations that the US hyped intelligence about the DPRK's nuclear activities. The flap, which roughly parallels some of the disputes over Iraq, concerns a trip by National Security Council officials through Asia this year to present evidence to PRC, Japanese and ROK officials about the DPRK's alleged role in supplying Libya with uranium hexafluoride. In a Washington Post report Sunday, two US officials were quoted as saying the US had covered up a key role played by Pakistan as middleman to bolster the case against the DPRK as a dangerous proliferator of nuclear material.

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

6. Hyundai and DPRK Nuclear Program

Choson Ilbo ("HYUNDAI HELPED FUND N.K. URANIUM PROGRAM: EXPERT", 2005-03-24) reported that an US Asia expert says money Hyundai gave to the DPRK might have accelerated the DPRK's highly enriched uranium (HEU) weapons program. Larry A. Niksch of the Congressional Research Service said in his Feb. 22 report Hyundai funds went into accelerating the DPRK's secret HEU development program. But Niksch said the conclusion about the ultimate use of Hyundai's money was his own, based on strong circumstantial evidence. Hyundai is said to have paid the DPRK an estimated US\$600 million for its Geumgang Mountains tourism project and two other business projects in the DPRK, as well as US\$500 million in under-the-table remittances, between 1999 and 2003.

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

7. ROK on Inter-Korean Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("GNP'S REFORM PANEL IS OPEN TO NORTH", 2005-03-24) reported that in a comprehensive package of reform policy proposals released yesterday, a select committee of the Grand National Party said it would like to see barriers to contact with the DPRK relaxed. The proposals take the view the DPRK nuclear issue is separate from inter-Korean exchanges. The party's previous position was that inter-Korean contacts could only be encouraged if the nuclear standoff is resolved.

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

8. Inter-Korean Cultural Exchange

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH, SOUTH AGREE ON COPYRIGHT ISSUES", 2005-03-24) reported that in the future, ROK companies that want to broadcast or produce records of popular DPRK songs such as "A Whistle" will have to pay DPRK copyright fees. An official with the Inter-Korean Economic and Cultural Association said yesterday that in negotiations with the DPRK Copyrights Office, the association had gained exclusive rights to manage the copyrights on two DPRK folksongs and three DPRK publications. The association will receive copyright fees and transfer those profits to the DPRK.

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

9. Inter - Korean Economic Cooperation

Korea Times ("PHONE RATE SET FOR KAESONG", 2005-03-24) reported that the two Koreas on Thursday agreed to set the phone rate at 50 cents per minute for the inter-Korean industrial complex in Kaesong, DPRK, according to the ROK's fixed telephone operator KT. After a working-level meeting in Kaesong, a KT official said that construction of the cross-border communication network will likely begin next month. It is not known yet how the two sides will share the profits.

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

10. EU on DPRK Human Rights

Donga Ilbo ("EU RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA IS PUT TO UN VOTE", 2005-03-24) reported that in the 61st session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland, the DPRK harshly criticized the EU's move to draft a resolution on the human rights record of DPRK. However, the resolution first drafted in 2003 has stricter clauses as time passes, and there are increasingly more pros than cons in voting on it. The ROK government is likely to abstain from voting just like last year, which would revive controversy all over again.

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

11. US on DPRK Freedom of Religion

Reuters ("U.S. TEAM SAYS NORTH KOREA SUPPRESSES RELIGION", 2005-03-24) reported that the DPRK represses religion and has an official ideology that is a form of secular humanism, a US government agency said on Thursday. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) said interviews with DPRK refugees showed a pattern of arrest, imprisonment, torture and execution for public expressions of religion. "Any reappearance of Christianity, possibly permeating from northern China to where many thousands of North Koreans fled from famine in the 1990s, is rigorously repressed," USCIRF DPRK researcher David Hawk told a news conference.

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

12. DPRK Defectors in the PRC

The New York Times ("GLIMPSE OF WORLD SHATTERS NORTH KOREANS' ILLUSIONS", 2005-0-24) reported that sitting on a bare floor in a chilly one-room apartment, Lee Hae Jon and her younger sister, Hae Sun, struggled recently for words to describe their lives since they clandestinely

made their way here from the DPRK five years ago. But for five years, the teenage sisters have not dared to go outside in daylight for fear of being sent back to their country, or worse, trafficked as young brides or prostitutes in this booming PRC border city. "We have no friends, and no future, nothing at all, really," said the soft-spoken older sister, Hae Jon, 17. "But if we stay here, at least we have enough to eat. In our country, we could go for days without eating."

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

13. DPRK World Cup Preparations

The Daily Star ("N KOREA OPENS DOORS TO JOURNALISTS", 2005-03-24) reported that dozens of foreign journalists arrived in Pyongyang on Tuesday to report on the DPRK's World Cup football campaign, kicking off a rare major international media presence in the DPRK. Asian Football Confederation secretary general Peter Velappan said 51 foreign journalists had been accredited to cover two of DPRK's World Cup qualifying matches, against Bahrain on Friday and Iran five days later. He said between 200 and 300 more journalists were expected to be allowed into Pyongyang to report on the DPRK's clash with Japan on June 8.

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

14. ROK on US-ROK Military Relations

Korea Herald ("SEOUL PREPARING FOR WARTIME TROOP CONTROL", 2005-03-24) reported that the atmosphere for the ROK taking over command of operations in wartime from American troops is becoming ripe, despite worries of a security vacuum. Experts say it is inevitable that wartime control will return to the ROK because of changes in the defense situation between the two allies. "Our military will develop into an independent force that has autonomous operation command within the next 10 years. In preparation for the wartime operation command redemption, the military should secure its own operation planning capability," Roh said.

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

15. ROK on ROK-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Korea Herald ("ROH VOWS STERN RESPONSE TO JAPAN HISTORY DISTORTION", 2005-03-24) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun said yesterday the government has no other choice but to act sternly against any attempt by Japan to distort history. In a letter to the public posted on the Cheong Wa Dae Web site, Roh said, "We can no longer sit and watch Japan's intention to carry on with its domination by rationalizing its history of invasion and colonization." "The core of our diplomatic countermeasure is to flatly demand the Japanese government fix (the problem)," Roh said in his letter. "I have doubts whether the Japanese government would give a sincere response, but we must do what must be done with persistence."

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

16. Japan on ROK-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN HOPES FOR DIALOGUE AS SKOREA PREPARES FOR 'DIPLOMATIC WAR'", 2005-03-24) reported that Japan called for dialogue to ease mounting tension with ROK whose President Roh Moo-Hyun told the country to prepare for a "diplomatic war" with its neighbor. Anger has been growing in the ROK over Japan's claim to a small group of islands and its refusal to

respond to Roh's calls for an apology over colonial rule. "While thoroughly analyzing (Roh's statement), we must listen to the South Korean government's circumstances and argument," said Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda, the government spokesman. "We must exchange our views," he said.

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

17. Sino-Japanese Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, CHINA TO RESUME TALKS BETWEEN SENIOR OFFICIALS NEXT WEEK", 2005-03-24) reported that Japan and the PRC have agreed to resume talks between senior Foreign Ministry officials next week in Tokyo as part of efforts aimed at mending fences with each other, sources close to bilateral ties said Thursday. The two countries have also basically agreed to hold subcabinet-level talks next month in Beijing to lay the groundwork for a possible visit by Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura to the PRC later in April, the sources said. High on the agenda in the talks in Tokyo will be a bilateral dispute over the PRC's gas project in the East China Sea.

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

18. PRC on Cross Strait Relations

Washington Post ("CHINA'S LAW ON TAIWAN BACKFIRES", 2005-03-24) reported that the PRC has paid a price abroad for enacting its controversial anti-secession law, spoiling a strategy for relations with Taiwan, undercutting a drive to end Europe's arms embargo and reinforcing unease over the growth in the PRC military power. Although the law did little more than codify long-standing policy, Taiwan and countries around the world have focused on the vow to use "non-peaceful means" to prevent Taiwanese independence. In the 10 days since the legislation passed, this focus has emphasized the image of a PRC willing to risk war across the Taiwan Strait, frustrating PRC diplomatic efforts to depict the nation's rise as non-threatening.

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

19. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT TO JOIN MILLION-STRONG MARCH AGAINST CHINESE LAW", 2005-03-24) reported that President Chen Shui-bian said he would join a million-strong protest against a new PRC law threatening the island, describing the rally as a peaceful expression of Taiwanese democracy. Chen said Saturday's protest in the capital Taipei against the newly-enacted anti-secession law would send a powerful message to Beijing that the people of Taiwan did not want war. "One million Taiwanese people will voice their anger and discontent against the anti-secession law in a most rational, peaceful and humble way," said Chen.

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

20. Sino-Russian Joint Military Drills

Joongang Ilbo ("RUSSIAN, CHINESE FORCES REPORTEDLY TO DRILL JOINTLY", 2005-03-24) reported that Russian and PRC military forces are planning large-scale, joint exercises in the Yellow Sea region, PRC media have reported. A subsidiary of the PRC People's Daily published a report Wednesday that said PRC and Russia will conduct major military drills this fall near PRC's Laodong

Peninsula, across the Yellow Sea from the ROK.

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

21. PRC Web Censorship

Washington Post ("CHINESE CRACK DOWN ON STUDENT WEB SITES", 2005-03-24) reported that universities across the PRC are tightening controls on student-run Internet discussion forums as part of a Communist Party campaign to strengthen what it calls "ideological education" on campuses. In recent weeks, universities have started blocking off-campus users from participating, including alumni and students and faculty from other universities, according to students and college officials. They have also begun requiring students to register with their real names when going online, eliminating the anonymity that allowed participants to speak without fear of punishment by the authorities.

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

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