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I. United States

1. PRC-ROK DPRK Crisis

The Associated Press ("CHINA, SOUTH KOREA DISCUSS NORTH KOREA CRISIS," Seoul, 05/02/03) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao and ROK President Roh Moo-hyun agreed during a phone conversation on Friday to seek a peaceful solution to a nuclear standoff on the Korean Peninsula. Roh called Hu and thanked the PRC for its role in bringing together US and DPRK officials in Beijing last week for talks on the DPRK's suspected development of nuclear weapons, Roh's office said in a statement. Both Hu and Roh believed the Beijing talks were "useful," it said. "The two heads of state agreed to continue to cooperate for a peaceful solution to the DPRK nuclear issue, under the belief

that the Korean Peninsula should be nuclear-free," the statement said.

2. Rumsfeld DPRK Connection

Fortune Magazine (Richard Behar, "RUMMY'S NORTH KOREA CONNECTION," 04/28/03) carried an analytical article that opined Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld rarely keeps his opinions to himself. He tends not to compromise with his enemies. And he clearly disdains the DPRK. So it's surprising that there is no clear public record of his views on the controversial 1994 deal in which the U.S. agreed to provide the DPRK with two light-water nuclear reactors in exchange for Pyongyang ending its nuclear weapons program. What's even more surprising about Rumsfeld's silence is that he sat on the board of the company that won a $200 million contract to provide the design and key components for the reactors. The company is Zurich-based engineering giant ABB, which signed the contract in early 2000, well before Rumsfeld gave up his board seat and joined the Bush administration. Rumsfeld, the only American director on the ABB board from 1990 to early 2001, has never acknowledged that he knew the company was competing for the nuclear contract. In response to questions about his role in the reactor deal, the Defense Secretary's spokeswoman Victoria Clarke told Newsweek in February that "there was no vote on this" and that her boss "does not recall it being brought before the board at any time." But ABB spokesman Bjoern Edlund has stated that "board members were informed about this project." And other ABB officials say there is no way such a large and high-stakes project, involving complex questions of liability, would not have come to the attention of the board. "A written summary would probably have gone to the board before the deal was signed," says Robert Newman, a former president of ABB's U.S. nuclear division who spearheaded the project. "I'm sure they were aware." The full story can be found: http://www.fortune.com/fortune/articles/0,15114,447429-1,00.html

3. Japan-India DPRK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN SEEKS ALLY IN INDIA FOR ITS CAMPAIGN AGAINST NORTH KOREA," 05/02/03) reported that Japan, which slapped economic sanctions on India for its 1998 nuclear tests, is sending its defense minister to rope in New Delhi for a diplomatic offensive against the DPRK, diplomats said. Japanese Defence Agency Director General Shigeru Ishiba was to arrive Saturday for talks with his Indian counterpart George Fernandes on regional and international issues, they said. Ishaba's trip comes on the heels of a visit by French Defence Minister Michele Alliot-Marie, who spoke of the need for a "multipolar" world after the Iraq war, and coincides with a visit by top Vietnamese leader Nong Duc Manh. "China, Russia, South Korea and the US are the key players in the DPRK nuclear crisis but as Japan is directly threatened by any such weapons Pyongyang may possess, Tokyo would want to build a world opinion on the issue," said a senior diplomat who wished not to be named. "And thus Ishiba's visit to New Delhi has immense importance because India is a key part of this international community." Japan, India's largest donor of overseas aid, lifted the sanctions after the terror attacks on the US of September 11, 2001. Sources said the talks between Ishiba and Fernandes would "naturally" swing to Delhi's accusations that Pakistan swapped nuclear weapons for DPRK missile technology. "Japan is trying to establish the nexus and if the nexus is proven true then it will have serious repercussions for Japan's relations with Pakistan," an Indian source warned. Analysts say Japan, which has so far received no credible evidence from the US on the so-called nexus, is sending its defence minister in the hope India could be of help.

4. DPRK Drug Smuggling

Reuters ("AUSTRALIA WARNS NORTH KOREA OVER DRUG SMUGGLING," Sydney, Australia, 05/02/03) and BBC News ("NORTH KOREA ACCUSED OVER DRUGS HAUL," 05/02/03) reported that Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer has expressed concern over the DPRK's possible role in trafficking drugs to Australia. Downer's comments came after an official from the DPRK's ruling Worker's Party was found on board a state-owned ship accused of bringing A$80m (US$50m) worth of heroin into Australia. "Whilst we can't prove that the government made the decision to send this ship... we are concerned that instrumentalities of the government may have been involved in this," Downer said. "We are concerned because the ship is DPRK-owned and it's a totalitarian state, so in effect it is government-owned," he added. Downer said he had arranged a meeting with the DPRK ambassador to Australia, Chon Jae-hong, to discuss the issue. Australian intelligence services raided the Pong Su freighter last month, off the country's east coast. The Australian forces seized the heroin and arrested approximately 30 crew members, most of whom are now awaiting trial in Melbourne.

5. Japan DPRK Satellite Surveillance

The Japan Times ("FINN SNAPS SATELLITES SPYING ON NORTH KOREA," 05/02/03) reported that a Finnish astronomer has photographed Japanese satellites spying on the DPRK despite Japan's efforts to keep details about them secret, a group of amateur astronomers said Friday. Petteri Kankaro, 26, took photos that clearly show trails of the two satellites moving at high speed through the night sky, suggesting it would also be easy for the DPRK to determine their orbits, they said. Japan's first spy satellites were launched March 28 as part of efforts to keep tabs on the DPRK. According to Kankaro and his fellow astronomers, including 50-year-old Ted Molczan of Canada, the satellites follow nearly the same orbits and fly over Pyongyang twice a day, from 11:20 a.m. to 1:20 p.m., and from 10:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. They can be observed reflecting sunlight at night at this time of year from areas north of Hokkaido and the northern tip of the DPRK, they said. Molczan and other space enthusiasts from around the world are posting on the Internet estimated orbits of satellites from any country they observe. They said their information about the two spy satellites is accurate. An official of the Cabinet Satellite Intelligence Center in charge of the intelligence-gathering satellites declined comment on whether the information is accurate but said their identification of the orbits "goes against Japan's interests." The satellites' orbits were also released April 1 by the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration. It said the satellites, designated 03009A and 03009B, orbit the Earth 15 times a day at altitudes of 485 to 510 km.

6. Japan Role in Post-War Iraq

The Japan Times ("PRIME MINISTER REITERATES PLEDGE TO SUPPORT IRAQ," Athens, 05/02/03) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Friday followed the declaration by US President George W. Bush that the Iraq war is over by again pledging Japan's support for reconstruction efforts in the Middle east country. "Japan will proactively support the Iraqi people's ambition to rise to establish a country under a free environment," said Koizumi, who has given the US-led war his full backing. The prime minister was speaking with reporters in a hotel here on the final leg of an eight-day European trip that runs through Saturday. On the issue of Saddam Hussein's alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction -- an issue used by Bush to justify the war -- Koizumi said, "Now (people concerned) are searching for them. I believe they will discover some sooner or later." Koizumi added that the split between U.N. Security Council member states over the war is "a thing of the past" and that the international community now shares the view that the United Nations should play a key role in helping to rebuild Iraq.

7. PRC New SARS Cases

BBC News ("CHINA FEARS MANY NEW SARS CASES," 05/02/03) reported that Beijing is likely to continue seeing new cases of SARS at the current high rate of more than 100 a day, a city health chief has said. But officials believe the outbreak is nearing its peak and the rate of infection could start to slow within 10 days. The PRC remains the worst-hit country and 11 new deaths announced there have pushed the worldwide toll over 400. Friday's figures revealed 176 new cases across the PRC, 97 of them in Beijing. The deputy director of Beijing's health department, Liang Wannian, said similar numbers of new infections could be expected in the coming days. "The high pattern of the number of cases will continue for some time. I think it will take a long time for us to eliminate this disease," he said. The death toll in the PRC, where the pneumonia-like virus originated, has now hit 181, with 3,823 people infected. In Hong Kong, eight deaths were announced but just 11 new cases. Dr Liang said he believed Beijing would soon follow Hong Kong as he said the city had halted the rate of increase in the number of cases and predicted that it would eventually drop. "I believe the number of patients will drop in the future, but it is hard to say when because we don't know a lot about the disease," he said.

8. ROK Demography

BBC News (Caroline Gluck, "SOUTH KOREA'S DWINDLING POPULATION," Seoul, 05/02/03) reported that according to new figures, the ROK may have the lowest birth rate in the world. The average ROK woman has less than 1.2 children - well below the rate needed to keep the population at its current size. Experts say that if the trend continues, the ROK could face serious manpower shortages and lower growth. One rural community in central Chungcheong province has been hit by a rapidly dwindling population. Schooldays may be numbered for children in the village of Dongmyun, three hours from the capital. Their school is the last of four in the area. In the past 30 years, the number of pupils has fallen from more than 1,000 to just over 100. With fewer than 20 babies born last year, village head Hong Ui-jeong is doing what little he can to try to reverse the trend. "The population in Dongmyun is dropping by about 100 people every year. To stop that, to stop our village dying, I decided to offer $80 to couples if they had a baby," Hong said. One mother who has benefited from that offer is Kim Sun-deok, nursing her two-month-old son, Song-do. She said it was a welcome gift, but doubted that it would influence couples to have a baby. "I think it's better than nothing, but it's not enough to help bring up a child. Anyway, many of my friends tend to marry later in life, and by then it's too late to start a family," she said. Rural communities like Dongmyun are suffering the most. About half of the population here is over the age of 65, and only 10% of women are of child-bearing age. Younger couples are moving out of the countryside to cities in search of better jobs, and a better lifestyle. But the falling birth rate is evident across the country. More working couples are thinking twice before having a baby. They are put off by the high costs of raising children and the lack of adequate childcare and social welfare facilities. If the downward birth rate trend continues, officials fear that within a decade, the country will face a shrinking workforce on top of a rapidly growing population of elderly.

II. Japan

1. Defense Agency's Misuse of Personal Data

Mainichi Daily News ("330 MUNICIPALITIES GAVE PERSONAL INFO TO DEFENSE AGENCY," 04/23/03) reported that more than 330 municipalities across the country have provided personal and sensitive information to the Japanese Defense Agency on 18-year-old residents to help its

controversial soldier recruitment policy, the agency chief admitted. Defense Agency Director General Shigeru Ishiba announced the results of an in-house probe into the scandal at a House of Representatives special committee on a personal information protection bill on April 23. A total of 794 municipal governments in 28 prefectures passed information on 18-year-old registered residents to the agency, Ishiba told the panel. Of them, 332 in 20 prefectures provided the agency with highly private information -- in addition to potential applicants' names, addresses, birth dates and gender that anyone can legally access. The personal information included the potential recruits' health condition, licenses held, occupations and the names of the households they belong to and their phone numbers. Twenty-four prefectural governments and 128 municipal governments have compiled manuals on measures to help the agency recruit Self-Defense Force (SDF) soldiers, according to the results of the in-house probe. Moreover, 17 of the 50 SDF liaison offices throughout the country, which are responsible for recruiting soldiers, have stored personal information on potential applicants provided by local governments in their computer systems, the agency admitted. However, the agency denied the practice constitutes a violation of the law aimed at protecting personal information that government organizations store in their computer systems. Officials said the agency neither used personal information on 18-year-olds for unintended purposes nor leaked such information to outsiders, practices prohibited by the law. They also emphasized that they delete such personal information within one year in accordance with the law.

2. Japan's Role in Iraq Reconstruction

The Japan Times ("METI TO SEND OFFICIAL TO HELP ORHA," 04/26/03) reported that the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry will send an energy official to Iraq to join the US body administering postwar Iraq, METI chief Takeo Hiranuma said. Hisanori Nei, head of the Petroleum Refining and Reserve Division of the Natural Resources and Energy Agency, a unit of METI, is expected to participate in the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), Hiranuma said. "Division head Nei is an engineer and has experience in the Middle East, so he will be able to quickly adapt (to jobs at ORHA)," Hiranuma said. Nei will depart for Iraq as soon as METI receives approval from ORHA.

3. Japan's Diplomacy in the Middle East

Kyodo ("KAWAGUCHI PUSHES U.S. MIDEAST PLAN," Ramallah, West Bank, 05/01/03) reported that the Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi urged Palestinian leaders Tuesday to promote the peace process based on a plan to be presented by the US, and asked President Yasser Arafat to support Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas. Arafat, whom Kawaguchi met despite international pressure to refrain from doing so, promised his full support to the Abbas Cabinet, and in separate talks Abbas conveyed his commitment to reaching a final peace accord with Israel, a Japanese official told reporters. In her meeting with Abbas, Kawaguchi pledged some $22.25 million in aid to the Palestinians to support the renewed peace drive. It consists of $12.9 million in humanitarian aid, $7.85 million for reconstruction and $1.5 million for a joint Israeli-Palestinian project to improve waste-disposal facilities and other confidence-building plans. Kawaguchi also told Abbas that Japan considers it "important for both Israel and the Palestinians to work to implement" a peace "road map" presented by the US. Meanwhile, Kawaguchi told Arafat he "will discourage the international community if reforms fail due to insufficient support (from him)" to the Abbas Cabinet. Arafat said Abbas is his friend and pledged to provide full support, according to the official.

4. TEPCO Nuclear Reactor Reopen

Kyodo ("TEPCO GIVEN GREEN LIGHT TO RESTART NUCLEAR REACTOR," Niigata, 04/26/03) reported that the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency gave Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) the green light to restart a nuclear reactor in Niigata Prefecture. All of TEPCO's reactors were shut down earlier this year following a cover-up scandal involving defects at plants. Yoshihiko Sasaki, head of the agency, visited Niigata Gov. Ikuo Hirayama and informed him that inspections have been completed and operations can be resumed at the No. 6 reactor of TEPCO's Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant. Meanwhile, executives of the power company, including Teruaki Masumoto, its vice president, on April 23 visited the offices of the Niigata Prefectural Government, the city of Kashiwazaki and the village of Kariwa and asked for permission to resume operations at the reactor. Hirayama, Masazumi Saikawa, the mayor of Kashiwazaki, and Hiroo Shinada, the head of Kariwa, are expected to hold talks in the near future over the matter. TEPCO has said the reactors should be reactivated to avoid power shortages in the Kanto region this summer, when electricity consumption spikes.

5. US Bases in Okinawa

Kyodo ("OKINAWA MAYOR HITS U.S. FORCES' USE OF CIVILIAN AIRPORT," Hirara, Okinawa, 04/25/03) reported that the mayor of Hirara, Okinawa Prefecture, hit the streets, handing out a special edition of a city magazine to protest the US military's use of a civilian airport there. US Marines have asked the prefectural government to allow its aircraft to use Miyako airport on Miyakojima Island from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. on April 26 for refueling on their way to the Philippines. "I am indignant," Mayor Akira Ishimine was quoted in the magazine as saying. "I am afraid the flight of US military aircraft to our airport will become constant and I strongly oppose the forcible use of the airport by such aircraft using the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement." The city also called on the prefectural government to stop the US military from using the civilian airport and urged the Naha Regional Defense Facilities Administration Bureau to revise the agreement, which allows the US military to use the airport without permission of the municipal government. The US military has been ignoring the prefectural government's request to refrain from making landings at civilian airports and has used Shimojijima airport in the town of Irabu, on Irabujima Island near Miyakojima, the officials said.

6. Japan Constitution Revision

The Japan Times ("LDP WANTS TO LEGALIZE SDF BY AMENDING CONSTITUTION," 04/25/03) reported that the dominant Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) aims to amend the Japanese Constitution to state in explicit terms the legitimacy of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF), party lawmakers said. The party's Research Commission on the Constitution will formulate an outline for a draft amendment during the current Diet session, which is scheduled to end in June. The panel also envisages an outline enabling the SDF to take part in UN peacekeeping activities to do away with the ban on exercising its right to collective-self defense or fighting back against a foreign military attack on an ally of Japan, the sources said. An LDP member of the House of Representatives Research Commission on the Constitution, which was established in 2000, has asked political parties to propose their draft amendments so that the panel will discuss the matter based on the proposals. The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has worked out a draft and the Liberal Party, another opposition party, has released a policy statement saying it will seek revision of the Constitution. The LDP panel set up five task forces to study a revision -- one each for the emperor, security, fundamental human rights, the system of government and local autonomy. The task force on the emperor has agreed to retain the emperor as the "symbol of the state" as stated in the Constitution's Article 1, but some members said the Constitution should stipulate the emperor as head of state. On human rights, the LDP panel is studying having the Constitution provide a legal basis for restricting

the right to property in case of war, as the Diet is currently discussing a set of bills governing Japan's response to a military attack, the lawmakers said.

7. Japan Missile Defense Plan

The Japan Times ("MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM DEBATE HEATS UP," 04/26/03) reported that as concerns mount over the threat posed by the DPRK, the debate over Japan introducing missile defense systems is heating up. Japan has been conducting research with the US on such a system since 1999. The government has, however, also decided to study the introduction of the missile defense system based on the Aegis destroyer, separate from the joint research with the US. This research is going ahead because the US has decided to deploy Aegis-based missile defense starting in 2004. The Defense Agency is now studying the introduction of two types of system to knock down incoming ballistic missiles. One is a sea-based system and makes use of Aegis-equipped destroyers; the other is a ground-based PAC-3 system, an advanced version of the Patriot missile defense system. With the two proposals in mind, the agency is preparing its budget requests for fiscal 2004. But there are many hurdles -- both legal and budgetary -- that have to be cleared. The DPRK's actions with the conclusion of the war in Iraq are expected to have a major impact on public opinion regarding missile defense. There also is coordinating opinion within the government and ruling coalition parties on specific ways to introduce a missile defense system in Japan. Some people argue that Japan may have to revise its Basic Defense Program, suggesting the debate over missile defense will further intensify in the days to come.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of other NAPSNet resources.
We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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