NAPSNet Daily Report 05 May, 2003

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 05 May, 2003", NAPSNet Daily Report, May 05, 2003, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-05-may-2003/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. DPRK-US Relations
2. US DPRK Nuclear Policy Shift?
3. PRC Submarine Disaster
4. PRC SARS Status
5. DPRK SARS Response
6. PRC WHO SARS Mission
7. PRC SARS Riots
8. PRC Earthquake
9. Japan Broadband Internet
10. Japan Demography
11. Japan-Russia Kyoto Protocol Disagreement
12. Japan Domestic Economy

II. People's Republic of China 1. Inter-Korean Ministerial Talks
2. PRC-ROK Relations
3. PRC's Stance on DPRK Nuke Issue
4. PRC-Japan Ties
5. PRC's Security Policy
6. ROK Stance on DPRK Nuclear Issue
7. Japan's Missile Defense Debates
8. Japan-Russia Relations

I. United States

1. DPRK-US Relations

The Associated Press (Soo-Jeong Lee, "NORTH KOREA URGES US TO RESPOND TO PROPOSAL," Seoul, 05/05/03), Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA THREATENS TO SCUTTLE NUCLEAR

DIALOGUE WITH US," Seoul, 05/05/03) and BBC News ("NORTH KOREA DEMANDS US RESPONSE," 05/05/03) reported that the DPRK has asked the US to respond to what it described as the "bold proposal" it made in last month's talks in Beijing to help defuse the continuing nuclear standoff. The DPRK's Rodong Sinmun newspaper accused the US on Monday of ignoring the DPRK's proposal. It said that if the US did not make a "positive" response, it would be held accountable for "scuttling all efforts for dialogue and seriously straining the situation". On Sunday, US Secretary of State Colin Powell described the DPRK as "masters of ambiguity." Powell said the US would not be intimidated into giving the DPRK what it wanted. Powell said: "Their nuclear weapons are not going to purchase them any political standing that will cause us to be frightened or to think that somehow we now have to march to their tune." The US says the DPRK told US officials at the talks in Beijing that it had nuclear weapons. The DPRK has not made any such assertion in public. Separately, the DPRK warned Monday that the US' renewed labeling of the DPRK as a sponsor of terrorism will aggravate the nuclear standoff. The US last Wednesday named seven countries - Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, the DPRK, Syria and Sudan - as sponsors of terrorism during 2002. The same countries were listed last year. "The US smear campaign against the DPRK will only make the settlement of the nuclear issue between the DPRK and the US more complicated and aggravate the situation," said an unidentified spokesman at the DPRK's Foreign Ministry, according to the DPRK's KCNA news agency.

2. US DPRK Nuclear Policy Shift?

The New York Times (David E. Sanger, "BUSH SHIFTS FOCUS TO NUCLEAR SALES BY NORTH KOREA," Crawford, Texas, 05/05/03) reported that the Bush administration may now be tacitly acknowledging that the DPRK may not be deterred from producing plutonium for nuclear weapons and will try to marshal international support for preventing the country from exporting nuclear material, US and foreign officials say. Bush discussed the new approach on Saturday morning with Australia's prime minister, John Howard, after the two men were given a lengthy briefing at Bush's ranch by the chief US negotiator with DPRK, James A. Kelly, officials said. For a decade, the US' declared policy has been that the DPRK would be prevented, by any means necessary, from producing plutonium or highly enriched uranium. President Bill Clinton ordered the Pentagon to draw up plans for a military strike when the DPRK threatened to begin production in 1994, but a nuclear freeze agreement was reached later that year. Bush's new focus on blocking the sale of nuclear material to countries or terrorist groups reflects intelligence officials' conclusion that they cannot ascertain whether the DPRK was bluffing when it claimed last month that it had already reprocessed enough spent nuclear fuel to make many weapons. "The president said that the central worry is not what they've got, but where it goes," said an official familiar with the talks between Bush and Howard. "He's very pragmatic about it, and the reality is that we probably won't know the extent of what they are producing. So the whole focus is to keep the plutonium from going further." Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, in an appearance on the NBC News program "Meet the Press," insisted today that the administration's long-term goal was to force DPRK to dismantle all of its nuclear weapons programs. He vowed that it would get no international aid unless its government changed course. "Everybody has now made it clear to North Korea that they will not find any assistance coming to them from the region in terms of economic development," he said, "unless they abandon their nuclear weapons programs." Unlike the DPRK's missiles, which can be seen by satellites as they are loaded into ships and sent to Iran, Syria, Yemen and other nations, weapons-grade nuclear material is easily transportable. Experts say that material would be relatively easy to transport over the DPRK's long border with the PRC. "It's a fantasy to think you can put a hermetic seal around North Korea and keep them from getting a grapefruit-size piece of plutonium out of the country," said Ashton B. Carter, a Harvard professor who worked on Korea issues in the Clinton administration, said today. "To allow North Korea to go nuclear is a major defeat for US security."

Voice of America News, ("Powell Denies US Shift on North Korea Policy," 05/05/03) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell has denied the Bush administration is changing its policy on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, saying the focus remains the elimination of Pyongyang's weapons program. Powell's comments were prompted by a Monday New York Times report that says the US is shifting its DPRK policy away from blocking the production of nuclear materials to focusing on halting their export. Secretary Powell told reporters in Washington the US goal remains ending the DPRK's nuclear weapons program and other proliferation activities. He added that the US finds nuclear exports similarly unacceptable.

3. PRC Submarine Disaster

The New York Times (Erik Eckholm, "CHINA SAID TO TAKE 2 WEEKS TO DISCLOSE SUB DISASTER," Beijing, 05/05/03) reported that the PRC submarine accident that the government said killed 70 crew members occurred on April 16, 2003, more than two weeks before it was officially disclosed, a PRC naval officer has been reported as saying. The catastrophe may have resulted from a malfunction in the craft's diesel engines that sucked the oxygen from the interior during a descent, quickly killing those aboard, according to the officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The officer's comments, which could not be independently verified, were reported today by The Boston Globe. The disaster was first disclosed to the public by state news media on Friday night with a brief announcement that 70 crew members had died aboard submarine No. 361, a non-nuclear vessel, because of a "mechanical failure" while it was on a training mission in the Yellow Sea. That the accident was publicized at all by the PRC's military surprised foreign experts. Still, the official account did not describe the nature of the failure, when it happened or the submarine's home port. Political experts here and abroad speculated that the government felt enormous pressure to acknowledge the accident after the global furor over the PRC's denials that the country was facing a major epidemic of SARS, severe acute respiratory syndrome. In a country where computer and cellphone communications are developing fast, the government may also have decided that it would be difficult to conceal so many deaths. Saturday's newspapers and television broadcasts prominently featured the identical, incomplete official account of the disaster and reprinted the condolence message issued by Jiang Zemin, the former Communist Party chief and president who remains chairman of the military and retains great power as an elder statesman. "The officers and sailors of Submarine 361 have given their lives for the party and the people," Jiang said in the statement he issued to the relatives of the victims. "Their heroic deeds will always be remembered by the motherland." No. 361, Western defense experts said, was a Ming-class submarine, built by the PRC based on an obsolete Soviet model. Such submarines normally run their diesel engines only while on the surface, to charge the electrical batteries that run the ship undersea. Western naval experts said the scenario outlined by the anonymous PRC naval officer, with the engines or air-intake valves malfunctioning and using up the air inside the ship, was technically plausible, though they could not verify it without more information. The PRC officer reportedly said the disaster and deaths had not been discovered for 10 days because the submarine was on a silent, no-contact drill. He said the crew members' bodies had been found at their stations, indicating no period of panic or frantic efforts to make repairs. The official account said the ship had been towed back to its home base. This suggests that it had been found near the surface or in shallow waters, Western experts said.

4. PRC SARS Status

The Washington Post (John Pomfret, "BEIJING REPORTS DROP IN SARS MORE CASES SEEN IN THE PROVINCES," Beijing, 05/05/03) and CNN News ("CHINA HOSPITALS BATTLE SARS BURDEN," Beijing, 05/05/03) reported that hospital officials in Beijing say scores of medical workers are leaving their jobs as the number of cases of the deadly SARS virus continues to soar. Nurses and

doctors are struggling to operate at designated SARS hospitals where support staff have quit in droves, according to state media. The news comes as China reported 160 new cases of the virus and nine new deaths with no indication that the infection rate has peaked or under any kind of control. Of the latest new infections, 98 were reported in Beijing, with Shanxi Province registering the second highest number of infections. Figures in the past few days have indicated the disease is spreading in northern PRC, although at a slower rate than in Beijing. Beijing remains the most affected part of the country, with a total of 1,897 cases on record. At least 15,000 people have been quarantined in a number of locations around Beijing, including residential buildings and structures on college campuses.

5. DPRK SARS Response

The LA Times (Barbara Demick, "FEAR OF DISEASE PUTS NORTH KOREA IN NEAR-LOCKDOWN," Seoul, 05/05/03) reported that strict quarantines are imposed, flights and ferries are canceled, and aid is turned back. The DPRK is virtually sealing its borders in an effort to prevent the insidious SARS virus from seeping through and overwhelming a barely functioning health-care system. Government-run Air Koryo has told aid workers that it is suspending its twice-weekly flights between the capital, Pyongyang, and Beijing as of Tuesday. A strict quarantine has been imposed at land crossings with the PRC. And ferry service with Japan has been curtailed. Meanwhile, the cruise ship that carries tourists from the ROK to the resort of Mt. Kumgang in the DPRK has been docked, forcing more than 10,000 people to cancel their visits and setting back the estranged countries' reconciliation process. In the last few days, various foreign dignitaries, ranging from an Australian lawmaker to a prominent South Korean political broker, have been politely told: Don't come. Even outsiders bringing desperately needed humanitarian aid are being turned back. "They are pretty much closing off the country," said Gerald Bourke, a spokesman for the World Food Program's office in Beijing. He said he expects the DPRK to cancel all of its international flights - including those to Beijing, which are its main link with the outside world - except for weekly service through Vladivostok in the Russian Far East. The DPRK's new regulations are believed to be the toughest of any country in the world. The government is imposing a 10-day quarantine on visitors coming from any country that has had a single suspected case of severe acute respiratory syndrome. Diplomats and international employees are not exempt. U.N. employees who arrived Saturday from Beijing were expected to be sent to a government guest house in Anju, 60 miles north of Pyongyang, for 10 days before being allowed to resume their jobs. ROK officials who participated in ministerial-level talks last week in Pyongyang could not get off the airplane until they provided health certificates and had their temperatures taken. Once in Pyongyang, they were not permitted to leave their hotel. The DPRK has yet to report a single case of SARS, and health specialists say its isolation might be one reason.

6. PRC WHO SARS Mission

The New York Times (Joseph Kahn and Keith Bradsher, "CHINA ALLOWS UN AGENCY TO HELP FIGHT ILLNESS ON TAIWAN," Beijing, 05/05/03) reported that the PRC said today that it had approved a rare mission by the World Health Organization (WHO) to Taiwan, easing a diplomatic logjam that had hindered the disputed territory's access to medical assistance even as it fights a growing outbreak of SARS. Two medical experts from the health agency are expected to arrive in Taiwan on Sunday to help the island control the infection, which has spread quickly there over the past week, WHO officials said. The PRC's decision to approve the mission, announced in a brief dispatch by the official New China News Agency, is a reversal for the PRC government. The PRC has been reluctant to allow Taiwan to have any direct contact with the WHO, a United Nations agency. Taiwan was forced out of the health agency in 1972, a year after it lost their seat in the United

Nations to the PRC. "This is a special situation, a global emergency, and it is just something that had to be done," said Dick Thompson, a WHO spokesman based in Geneva. The PRC today continued to report the largest number of deaths and new infections from severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS. State news media said that nine more people, five of them in Beijing, had died of the disease.

7. PRC SARS Riots

Agence France-Presse ("SARS RIOTS HIT CHINA AS PROGRESS MADE IN HONG KONG, CANADA," Hong Kong, 05/05/03) and Agence France-Presse ("SARS RIOTS HIT CHINA," Beijing, 05/05/03) reported that farmers and villagers in remote areas of China rioted and destroyed SARS quarantine centers in at least two parts of the country in an effort to prevent the disease from spreading to their areas, local officials said. More than 100 farmers on Saturday and Sunday attacked a government office in Yuhuan county, in eastern Zhejiang province, and beat up officials, enraged that a SARS quarantine center would be set up in their community, a local police official named Weng told AFP. "Several people have been detained as a result of the incident," Weng said by telephone. In another incident, villagers rioted from April 25 to 28 in Linzhou city, central Henan province, ransacking a planned SARS quarantine center and other medical facilities, Zhou Dawei, a local Linzhou official told AFP. The Linzhou riot resulted in the May 2 sacking of the director of the city's health bureau Wang Songlin and the city's infectious diseases station Wang Yuxi, Zhou said. At least 13 people in Linzhou were arrested. Only three cases of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) have been reported in Zhejiang, while 14 cases have been reported in Henan, according to figures released by the health ministry. Social stability is starting to emerge as one of the casualties of the PRC's war on SARS, which has killed about 200 people and infected more than 4,000 in the world's most populous country. The riots also appear to reflect widespread concerns over the SARS epidemic spreading to the PRC's rural hinterlands and follow an April 27 incident in eastern Tianjin where some 2,000 villagers ransacked and torched a SARS quarantine facility in Chagugang village. Some 20 people were arrested in the Chagugang riots, villagers said.

8. PRC Earthquake

CNN News ("QUAKE ROCKS NORTHWEST CHINA," Beijing, 05/05/03) reported that an earthquake has rattled a remote area of northwestern PRC -- only six weeks after the same area was hit by a massive tremor, killing 268 people. The latest quake hit the Xinjiang region, about 3,000 kilometers northwest of Beijing. It measured a magnitude of 5.8 and caused approximately 20 homes to collapse. There have been no reports of any injuries. Some 19 earthquakes have hit the area since 1996. Xinjiang is one of the poorest regions in the PRC where many homes and buildings are not constructed to withstand the impact of a powerful quake. The PRC's most devastating earthquake in recent memory struck the northern city of Tangshan in 1976, killing more than 250,000 people Its worst-ever earthquake occurred in northern Shaanxi province in 1556, killing an estimated 830,000 people.

9. Japan Broadband Internet

The New York Times (Ken Belson, "JAPAN GOES HIGH SPEED: A TENFOLD INCREASE IN CONNECTIONS," Tokyo, 05/05/03) reported that while the ROK has rightfully been called a broadband paradise, Japan is fast turning into one. In just two years, the number of broadband, or high-speed, Internet connections has grown tenfold, to more than 10 million. The market was cracked open by small providers who pressured the local phone giant, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, a unit of the NTT Group, to enter the fray. Having watched Korea vault past Japan,

Japanese policy makers also assembled a national broadband strategy with initial targets that now look far too conservative. As in Korea, digital subscriber lines, or DSL's, are the predominant vehicle for going online. That is because in Japan's packed cities, like those in South Korea, most residents live close to local phone switching stations, where needed equipment is stored. Japanese consumers, who pay some of the highest local phone fees in the world, have also been attracted to the service because for as little as $22 a month, they can gain unlimited access to the Internet. More than a quarter of all homes with Internet connections in Japan now use broadband, a rate topped only by Korea and Canada. Broadband should reach about half of all homes by 2007, according to forecasts by Gartner Japan. Moreover, fiber optic lines, which run at speeds 10 times faster than DSL, are expected to gain market share as the price falls. Unlike in Korea, though, most Japanese providers have piggybacked on NTT's optical fiber network rather than build their own. That was made possible because of industry pressure on NTT to lower its fees for others to use its equipment. Once that happened in early 2001, prices to consumers fell by half and the number of subscribers soared.

10. Japan Demography

The Japan Times ("CHILDREN COMPRISE RECORD LOW 14.1% OF POPULATION," 05/05/03) reported that the population of children under age 15 in Japan declined for the 22nd straight year, it was learned Sunday. The figure stood at a little more than 18 million as of April 1, down 170,000 from last year. The percentage of children in the overall population was the lowest ever at 14.1 percent, dropping 0.2 percentage point from a year earlier, according to statistics released by the Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications Ministry. The ministry announced the figures ahead of Monday's Children's Day holiday. In all, 9.23 million boys and 8.78 million girls were counted. The largest group was the junior high school-age bracket, comprising 12- to 14-yea--olds, at 3.77 million. Newborns to 2-year-olds represented the smallest group, at 3.5 million. Each age bracket spanned three years. Japan is among the countries with the smallest percentage of children according to data recorded recently worldwide. The under-15 population of Italy was 14.4 percent, while Nigeria -- at 44.2 percent -- and the Philippines -- at 37 percent -- had the highest ratios. Children represented 21.2 percent of the population in the US, 18.9 percent in Britain and 20.9 percent in the ROK.

11. Japan-Russia Kyoto Protocol Disagreement

The Japan Times ("JAPAN, RUSSIA AT ODDS OVER PLAN TO REDUCE CO2," Moscow, 05/05/03) reported that Japan and Russia are at odds over a possible agreement related to swapping credits earned for reducing carbon dioxide emissions, it was learned Sunday. According to negotiators from both countries, the two are trying to work out an intergovernmental pact on the joint implementation of reductions as part of efforts to curb global warming. The talks ran into rough waters after Russia reversed its position on an earlier agreement. It is now refusing to allow Japan to take all the CO2 emission-reduction credits in the envisioned Japan-supported energy projects in Russia, according to negotiation sources. Japanese negotiators said they will continue attempts to reach an agreement, but Mukhamed Tsikanov, Russian deputy economic development and trade minister, said there is a possibility that Russia may give up on concluding the pact if differences remain. If concluded, the pact is expected to be the first full-fledged intergovernmental agreement on emissions reduction under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol aimed at curbing global warming. But negotiations will most likely continue for some time.

12. Japan Domestic Economy

The Japan Times (Midori Tani, "JAPANESE GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO PROMOTING FOREIGN INVESTMENT," 05/05/03) reported that on April 22nd, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) selected five regions in Japan that are making special efforts to attract foreign direct investment. As part of this effort, information on the investment conditions in these five areas will be publicized by the Japan External Trade Organization, better known as JETRO. This follows Prime Minister Koizumi's January 2003 speech where he outlined the government's determination to double the cumulative amount of foreign investment in Japan in five years. In March 2003, the Japan Investment Council, chaired by the prime minister, decided on specific measures to achieve this goal. "We are streamlining our administrative procedures for business, and will create a portal site for business startups, in which you can get help with many things you need, even advice on patent applications, for example." "We are also ready to offer incentives for investment," said an anonymous official from Osaka Prefecture, trying to convince METI that their local area is among the most active and best in attracting foreign investors. Osaka turned out to be one of the areas selected by METI, along with Northern Kyushu, Sendai, Hiroshima, and Kobe.

II. People's Republic of China

1. Inter-Korean Ministerial Talks

People's Daily (Xu Baokang, "ROK AND DPRK MINISTERIAL TALKS AGREEMENT ARRIVED", Seoul, 05/01/03, P3) reported that the 10th Inter-Korean Ministerial Meeting concluded in Pyongyang in the early hour of April 30 with a six-point statement. ROK and the DPRK pledged on April 30 to seek a peaceful solution of the DPRK's nuclear weapons program, according to a joint statement released by an inter-Korean meeting. "South Korea and the DPRK will discuss each other's position earnestly over the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula and continue to cooperate in resolving the nuclear standoff peacefully through a dialogue," the joint statement said. The two sides agreed to hold a unification festival around June 15 and to start building a reunion permanent center at an earlier date in Mount Geumgang according to the statement. Moreover the participation of a DPRK delegation and support group in the 2003 Summer Universiade, to be held in South Korean city of Daegu in August, will be further discussed in future, said the statement. The two sides agreed to press ahead with inter-Korean economic projects, and to hold the fifth round of the inter-Korean economic cooperation committee meetings on May 19-22 in Pyongyang to discuss inter-Korean reconciliation and economic cooperation projects. And next round of inter-Korean ministerial talks will be held on July 9-12 in Seoul. The 10th Inter-Korean Ministerial Meeting is a good beginning for the bilateral relations development since ROK President Roh Moo-hyun took office, as ROK sources said in the report.

China Daily ("ROK TOLD 'NO SAY' IN NUKE ISSUE", Seoul, 04/29/03, P12) reported that the DPRK on April 28 rejected the ROK's call for more information on its alleged admission that it has nuclear weapons. The DPRK instead urged national unity against US pressure at the three-day inter-Korean ministerial talks, which began in Pyongyang on April 27, according to state media. On the second day of negotiations, DPRK chief negotiator Kim Ryong-song was quoted by ROK pool reports as insisting that ROK have no say in the issue. "The nuclear issue is a matter to be discussed only between the DPRK and the US," Kim told his ROK counterpart Jeong Se-Hyun. Jeong hit back and said ROK was "entitled to raise the issue" as the DPRK's alleged nuclear arms would be violating a 1992 inter-Korean declaration for denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula. An unnamed Seoul delegate said the ROK's team was warning the DPRK that unless the nuclear issue is properly addressed in a statement at the end of talks, no accords will be made on other issues. The inter-Korean talks had already hit a snag with the ROK pressing in vain for details of the DPRK's alleged atomic bombs, the pool reports said.

2. PRC-ROK Relations

China Daily ("HU AND ROH HOLD PHONE DISCUSSION", 05/03-04/03, P1) reported that Chinese President Hu Jintao and ROK President Roh Moo-hyun discussed bilateral relations, and the nuclear issue of the DPRK in a phone conversation on April 30. Roh said that ROK is ready to make concerted efforts with Beijing to further enhance bilateral co-operation, according to PRC's foreign ministry. He expressed his appreciation of PRC's efforts to host the Beijing talks on the Korean nuclear issue late last month. Hu said that as PRC and the ROK are friendly neighbors, the new Chinese leadership attaches great importance to bilateral relations and is willing to push them forward. Hu reiterated PRC's stance on the Korean nuclear issue and stressed that PRC's starting point in handling the issue is the maintenance of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. The Chinese side appreciates ROK's consistent stand of adhering to dialogue and opposing the use of force, Hu said, adding that PRC welcomes ROK's active role in promoting a peaceful solution. Roh expressed full agreement with PRC's stance, saying he expected to visit PRC in the "near future" for a further exchange of views with Chinese leaders on issues of mutual interest, said the report.

3. PRC's Stance on DPRK Nuke Issue

China Daily (Shao Zongwei, "CHINA SEEKS PEACE ON PENINSULA: FM", 04/30/03, P2) reported that Chinese Foreign ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao on April 29 reaffirmed PRC's pledge to contribute to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, despite tensions over the nuclear issue. "China's goal is to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula," Liu told a regular media briefing in Beijing. The three sides agreed to keep in touch through diplomatic channels regarding the talks process. All the parties need time to study the others' positions on the issue, said Liu. However, he said that PRC has always kept in touch with DPRK and US over the nuclear issue. Liu on April 29 said that, as far as he knows, Pyongyang has never admitted to having nuclear weapons. PRC has stressed that the Korean Peninsula should be free from nuclear weapons and that DPRK's security concerns should also be taken into consideration, said the report.

4. PRC-Japan Ties

China Daily ("CHINA-JAPAN TIES", Beijing, 04/30/03, P2) reported that Chinese President Hu Jintao in Beijing on April 29 said that PRC and Japan should push forward their bilateral relations in a healthy and stable manner in the new century. Hu, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, made the comment in a meeting with Takako Doi, leader of the Social Democratic Party of Japan, at the Great Hall of the People.

5. PRC's Security Policy

China Daily ("NO WMD", Hague, 04/30/03, P2) reported that PRC has reiterated its opposition to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at the first review conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention being held in Hague. Addressing the conference on April 28, PRC's permanent representative to the Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons Zhu Zushou said that as a victim of chemical weapons in the past, PRC has always supported the objectives of the Convention. He also urged countries to co-operate more on the issue.

6. ROK Stance on DPRK Nuclear Issue

People's Daily (Xu Baokang, "ROH MOO-HYUN: SOLVE DPRK NUCLEAR ISSUE PEACEFULLY",

Seoul, 04/29/03, P3) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun said on April 28 he will hold serious discussions with other concerned countries on ways of resolving the DPRK nuclear issue in a peaceful manner. In a speech during a ceremony in Seoul to see off the Iraq-bound non-combat troops, he noted that dialogue is crucial to peaceful solution of the issue, reported national news agency Yonhap News.

7. Japan's Missile Defense Debates

China Daily ("JAPAN DEBATES MISSILE DEFENSE", Tokyo, 05/05/03, P12) reported that Japan's Defense Agency is to consider revising its plans and clear the way for a new missile defense system, as Japanese media reported on May 4. It reported that the nuclear issue of the DPRK has led officials to consider reworking the details of the plans. The agency aims to seek funds for a US-made missile defense system as part of its overall budget proposal for fiscal 2004, which starts next April. To do so, the agency hopes to revise its National Defense Program Outline as early as the end of this year, Kyodo quoted sources as saying. The defense agency officials quoted by Kyodo said the budget request would be for moves that could include upgrading Japan's four Aegis destroyers, equipped with high-tech missile detection systems, with a US-made missile defense system. Another option being considered is adoption of the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) missile system, an upgraded version of the PAC-2 system that Japan's air force currently possesses, said the report.

8. Japan-Russia Relations

China Daily ("CLEAN-UP AGREEMENT SIGNED", Tokyo, 05/05/03, P12) reported that the governments of Japan and Russia have agreed to start cleaning up 41 retired Russian nuclear submarines in the Russian far east this summer, a news report said on May 4. The two nations reached a basic agreement to begin dismantling nuclear elements from the subs, the Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper said. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Russian President Vladimir Putin are expected to announce their agreement at the G8 summit in Evian, France. The joint efforts of the two nations to clean up retired Russian nuclear submarines date back to 1993, when spent nuclear fuel leaked form a deteriorated Russian submarine in the Sea of Japan. Following the accident, the two nations set up a joint committee to cooperate on the dismantling of Russia's nuclear assets, including its retired submarines and decommissioned weapons, the Yomiuri said. But the committee had remained essentially inactive and has yet to work on any Russian submarine, the newspaper said, according to the report.

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.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

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