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I. **United States**

1. **DPRK-ROK Military Talks**

The Associated Press ("PYONGYANG AGREES ON MILITARY TALKS, LETS ROK AID CROSS BORDER," Seoul, 05/07/04) reported that the DPRK accepted truckloads of ROK aid through the border Friday and agreed to hold rare, high-level military talks with the ROK aimed at easing tensions. Earlier Friday, the ROK and DPRK had ended their three-day cabinet-level meetings in Pyongyang, without agreements on increasing economic exchanges or reducing military tensions along their border. But in a reversal after the meeting's closure, the DPRK's People's Army agreed to hold talks "soon" with the ROK military, said pool dispatches from ROK reporters in Pyongyang. ROK Unification Minister Jeong Se Hyun expected the meeting to take place in May, as his delegation has demanded. The countries made a similar agreement during their last cabinet-level talks in February, but no date was set and the DPRK later refused to meet.

2. **DPRK ROK Cross-Border Aid**

Agence France-Presse ("NKOREA OPENS TENSE BORDER TO RECEIVE AID FROM SOUTH," 05/07/05) reported that the DPRK opened its tense military border with the ROK to receive emergency relief goods for victims of last month's deadly train blast, officials said. Twenty ROK eight-ton trucks carrying school equipment rumbled along a dirt road into a heavily fortified buffer zone towards the DPRK in the first overland delivery aid for train disaster victims. The ROK trucks later reached Kaesong, just north of the inter-Korean border, to hand over 50 blackboards and 1,500 sets of desks and chairs destined for students in Ryongchon, Red Cross officials here said. "The Ryongchon accident will become a fresh turning point in cooperation between South and North Korea," the ROK's Red Cross chief Lee Yoon-Gu said. "It is so great to imagine that North Korean students will use those desks and chairs we donated today and study." The DPRK had previously rejected the ROK's proposed overland aid but last weekend backed down to open its border with the ROK to allow aid materials to be trucked, Red Cross officials said.

3. DPRK-US Relations

Korean Central News Agency ("KCNA ON EVER-INCREASING MILITARY THREAT FROM US," Pyongyang, 05/06/04) carried a story that said that US is reported to have planned to deploy two battalions of latest type Patriot interceptor missiles in the ROK this year. The ROK is expected to organize an anti-air defence brigade in 2006 with these two battalions as its backbone. The projected formation of the brigade is part of "arms buildup plan" announced by the US Defense Department last year. The plan envisages spending \$11 billion for the beef-up of its military capability in the ROK. The US claims that the deployment of missiles in the ROK is of defensive nature as it is aimed to cope with possible ballistic missile and air strikes from someone. But this is, in fact, just part of its aggressive and offensive military buildup plan for the invasion of the DPRK. The US designated the DPRK as a target of its "preemptive attack" and has massively shipped modern military hardware into the DOKR since its self-proclaimed end of the Iraqi war, thus converting the ROK into the biggest arsenal in the Far East and ceaselessly increasing its military threat to the DPRK.

4. Japan on DPRK Abduction Progress

The Japan Times (Kanakano Takahara, "KOIZUMI LAUDS ABDUCTIONS PROGRESS; SECOND PYONGYANG VISIT NOT RULED OUT," 05/07/04) reported that Japan Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Thursday that Japan and the DPRK have made progress in talks over the abduction issue, and indicated he might visit Pyongyang again to resolve the deadlock. He said that during bilateral talks earlier this week in Beijing, the two sides discussed how the DPRK would send to Japan the families of five Japanese nationals who were abducted to the DPRK in the late 1970s and allowed to return to Japan in October 2002. The two sides "talked in detail, including the issue" of allowing the family members of the five to come to Japan, Koizumi said after receiving reports from two senior officials of the Foreign Ministry who attended the talks. Asked if he planned to visit Pyongyang in order to collect the kin of the five repatriated abductees, he said, "I cannot say anything at this point because it concerns the entire issue" on DPRK. Koizumi said Japan will seek to normalize ties with the DPRK in line with the Pyongyang Declaration that he signed with Kim Jong Il during their 2002 summit. According to the declaration, Japan will normalize relations with the DPRK after issues of bilateral concern are resolved, including Pyongyang's nuclear arms and missile ambitions. Japan will provide economic assistance after diplomatic relations are normalized, it states. Masatoshi Abe, senior vice foreign minister, told a news conference that he would not rule out the possibility of Koizumi returning to Pyongyang. He said the government is not making any specific plans, however.

5. DPRK Ferry Japan Port Call

Kyodo ("N. KOREAN FERRY TO MAKE YEAR'S 3RD PORT CALL," Niigata, 05/07/04) reported that the DPRK ferry Mangyongbong-92, which provides the only passenger shuttle link between Japan and the DPRK, will make this year's third call to a Japanese port Friday morning. The 9,672-ton ship, which is carrying about 200 passengers and about 40 tons of goods, is likely to face protests at a pier by about 50 members of the Niigata chapter of the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by the DPRK.

6. PRC on Hong Kong Democratization

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA SAYS ANY MOVE BY HONG KONG LEGISLATORS TO CONDEMN BEIJING UNLAWFUL," 05/08/04) reported that any attempt by Hong Kong legislators to formally condemn Beijing's rejection of universal suffrage in the territory by 2007 would be unconstitutional, state press said. Xinhua news agency, quoting an unnamed "leading official" of Beijing's liaison office in Hong Kong, noted some legislators had tried to raise such motions but that they were, "against the Constitution and the Hong Kong Basic Law." Last week a couple of democratic members of LegCo, Hong Kong's Legislative Council, had put forward motions condemning the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee for ruling out early introduction of universal suffrage in the territory. The motions were blocked by the council's president. "They (the motions) do not accord with the LegCo's constitutional status as a local legislature and go beyond the limit of its duty and authority," Xinhua quoted the unnamed Chinese official as saying. He said the NPC panel's decision was "lawful, rational, reasonable and just." Xinhua noted that the NPC panel, "fully noticed the attention paid recently by the Hong Kong society to methods for selecting the Chief Executive in 2007 and for forming the Legislative Council in 2008, as well as opinions ... that both could be selected through universal suffrage." Currently Hong Kong's chief executive is picked by a Beijing-appointed body and only a section of LegCo is democratically elected.

7. US Response to PRC-Hong Kong Democratization

Agence France-Presse ("US EXPRESSES CONCERN TO CHINA OVER HONG KONG DEMOCRACY, POWELL TELLS," Washington, 05/07/04) reported that the United States has expressed concern to the PRC over the "suppressing" of democracy in Hong Kong, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said in an interview. "We have expressed to the Chinese some of our concerns with respect to the manner in which they are suppressing some of the democratic expressions that come out of Hong Kong," Powell said. The PRC has rejected demands for universal suffrage in 2007 and has not given a timetable as to when full democracy would be allowed, saying only that it should proceed in a "gradual and orderly" manner. Powell was asked about the PRC's relationship with Hong Kong and Taiwan and whether he wished to see Beijing adopting a less tough line with both of them. "With respect to Hong Kong, it's in a different status than Taiwan is," Powell pointed out. He said that following US concerns expressed to Beijing over restrictions to democracy in Hong Kong, the US would "stay in close touch" with the PRC government, as well as the authorities in the territory.

8. Japan Chief Cabinet Secretary Resignation

Agence France-Presse ("KOIZUMI ALLY RESIGNS OVER PENSION SCANDAL," 05/08/04) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's right hand man, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda, announced his resignation over a scandal involving non-payment of pensions by ministers. Analysts said Fukuda had sacrificed himself to prevent the resignation of all seven ministers involved

and thus avert a major crisis for Koizumi. Fukuda would likely be rewarded in a cabinet reshuffle after July's upper house elections. He is to be replaced by Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda, 60. "It was so unexpected. I am surprised," Hosoda told reporters, adding: "I have never missed payments of my pension premium." The seven cabinet ministers including Fukuda have admitted failing to pay pension contributions at a time when the government is trying to push pension reforms through parliament under which ordinary people have to pay more. "I regret that this has caused the public to lose their trust in politics and the pension system," Fukuda said at a daily briefing to reporters. "Now that we have... agreement for the pension reform legislation, I will step down as the chief cabinet secretary," he said.

9. US Nuclear Weapons Sites Security

The Los Angeles Times (Ralph Vartabedian, "US TO IMPROVE SECURITY AT NUCLEAR WEAPONS SITES," 05/07/04) reported that US Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham is expected to outline today a sweeping upgrade of security at the nation's nuclear weapons sites, a move that reflects concern over the facilities' vulnerability to terrorist attack. The planned actions include the shuttering of several nuclear facilities, an improvement in cyber-security for sensitive data and an overall strengthening of gates, guns and locks throughout the nuclear weapons complex, sources said. The nation's two major nuclear weapons labs -- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico -- each will get upgrades to its site security, sources said; but Abraham is expected to stop short of completely removing plutonium from Lawrence Livermore. A review of security at the nation's nuclear-weapons sites showed that highly trained teams of terrorists could puncture existing fences, walls and vaults with relative ease. Once inside, they could create improvised nuclear bombs that could destroy a lab and the surrounding cities. In a report last week, the General Accounting Office warned that the Energy Department had moved too slowly to upgrade security and that the current level of protection fell short of the terrorist threat. Sources said the Livermore lab would undergo several upgrades, including improvements to the firepower of its security staff and a consolidation of plutonium and highly enriched uranium at the site. Complete removal of the bomb-grade materials from the site is not part of the plan.

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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