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I. United States

1. DPRK Nuclear Bomb Admissions?

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA ADMITTED TO OWNING TWO NUCLEAR BOMBS," Tokyo, 05/09/03) reported that DPRK negotiator Li Gun admitted during three-way talks with the PRC and the US in Beijing last month that Pyongyang possessed two nuclear bombs, a Japanese newspaper reported, quoting unnamed US sources. "We already possess two nuclear bombs," Li was quoted

Friday by the Sankei Shimbun as telling US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly on April 23, the first day of the three-day talks. "In order to construct further nuclear weapons, we have already begun nuclear fuel reprocessing to acquire the necessary plutonium," Li was quoted as saying. "Our country will use any means to show our nuclear weapons capability." The US officials interpreted "any means" to include transferring the bombs to third parties who would use them for terrorist ends, the paper said. It was the first time the DPRK was quoted as having specified the precise number of its nuclear weapons, the paper said. US officials have said previously they had assumed for years North Korea owned "one or two" nuclear bombs. The report comes one day after the ROK confirmed new activity at the DPRK's nuclear fuel reprocessing facilities late last month. ROK Defence Minister Cho Young-Kil said Seoul's top priority should be "perfect combat-readiness" to handle any new provocations. On Wednesday The Washington Times reported that the DPRK had, during the talks in Beijing, threatened to export its nuclear weapons, make more of them, or conduct tests.

2. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Situation

Reuters ("CHINA WILLING TO HELP END NORTH KOREA NUKE CRISIS," Beijing, 05/09/03) reported that the PRC has urged further talks to help end the nuclear standoff between the US and the DPRK and Beijing is willing to work to settle the crisis, the official Xinhua news agency reported on Friday. "China is willing to promote the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue at an early date with joint efforts of all sides," Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxin was quoted as telling Secretary of States Colin Powell in a telephone call on Friday. Li said the meeting in Beijing last month between North Korea and the US was a good start and said "the process should continue," Xinhua said. The US was studying the results of the meeting and was willing to maintain contacts with the PRC and other related countries, it quoted Powell as telling Li. They also talked about the reconstruction of Iraq, on which the PRC stressed the key role of the United Nations, Xinhua said. "It was the common wish of the international community to bring the important role of the United Nations to full play on the post-war arrangements and reconstruction of Iraq and to maintain the credibility and authority of the UN Security Council," said Li. Powell, who initiated the conversation, talked about a draft resolution on Iraq which the US will submit to the Security Council on May 10. Washington hoped sanctions on Iraq would be lifted as soon as possible, Xinhua said.

3. PRC-US Double Agent Case

BBC News ("CHINESE 'DOUBLE AGENT' DEFENDED," 05/09/03) reported that the lawyers and family of a woman charged in the US with spying for the PRC have spoken out in her defence. Katrina Leung, a naturalised US citizen who is suspected of being a PRC double agent, has been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges that she illegally took, copied and kept secret documents. It is alleged that she got the documents from James Smith, a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agent who recruited her as a spy and became her lover. Leung's lawyer, Janet Levine, said her client was a loyal American who was being offered up as a "sacrificial lamb" by the FBI to cover its own failings. People need to know that this is no Chinese Mata Hari Katrina Leung's lawyer Standing outside Leung's home in the exclusive Los Angeles suburb of San Marino, Levine said the FBI had risked her client's life by continuing to employ her as an agent after her cover was blown. "For 20 years Katrina served her adopted country out of loyalty and because she was conned and used by the FBI," said Levine. "Now she has been stabbed in the back by the same bureaucrats... People need to know that this is no Chinese Mata Hari. This is an insulting and degrading sexist and racist slur planted and used by people who should be ashamed of themselves." Leung's husband, Kam, said that his wife was being treated more harshly by the FBI because she was foreign-born and a woman. He predicted that she would be found innocent. "I look forward to

the day I can welcome her back to this home free of the FBI's shackles," he said.

4. DPRK Asylum Seekers

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREAN ASYLUM SEEKERS ARRIVE IN SEOUL," Seoul, 05/09/03) reported that twelve DPRK who sought asylum at the ROK Embassy in Beijing arrived in Seoul on Friday, flying through Manila. The DPRK, all women aged 16 to 46, traveled through Xiamen, just opposite Taiwan on the PRC's southeastern coast, and made a brief stop in Manila before boarding a flight to the ROK. The defectors landed in Incheon airport just outside Seoul, all wearing masks to guard against SARS. They did not speak to journalists and were taken to a government facility for a debriefing. About 270 DPRK defected to the ROK in the first three months of the year, a 26 percent increase from the same period last year, according to South Korea. Most said they fled their communist homeland because of food shortages or political persecution.

5. PRC International Economy

Reuters (Jane Macartney, "CHINA SHOWS INTERESTS CONVERGING WITH RICH WORLD," Singapore, 05/09/03) reported that the PRC's economy is bigger than those of Canada and Russia combined. Now a country that has long claimed a role as leader of the Third World is about to take a step toward joining those members of the elite club of the Group of Eight rich nations at their annual summit. Motivating Beijing to attend -- even on the sidelines -- part of the G8 summit in June in France is not only a shift in foreign policy but reflects the desire of the Communist Party's new leader to assert himself on the world stage and to overcome the impact of the deadly SARS virus on the PRC's reputation. His attendance at a pre-summit meeting of specially invited developing world nations will mark Hu Jintao's first official appearance at a world forum. Although the Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday final details would be announced later. "China can always take the stand that it goes to the G8 as a representative of the developing world," said Chung Chien-Peng, assistant professor at Singapore's Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies. "It is definitely in their own interests to participate in G8 forums from now on because China does most of its business with G8 countries," said Chung. The G8 comprises the US, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia.

6. ROK-US Military Base Locations

Agence France-Presse ("SUMMIT TO ADDRESS US MILITARY RELOCATION IN SOUTH KOREA," Seoul, 05/09/03) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun and his US counterpart George W. Bush will address the sensitive issue of realigning US troops in the country at next week's summit, officials said. The ROK is home to 37,000 US troops, a crucial part of the 50-year-old military alliance, to deter DPRK military threats. Ban Ki-Moon, foreign policy aide for Roh, said Friday that the ROK sought an early relocation of the main Yongsan US army base in Seoul while opposing any sudden change to 15,000 US troops with the 2nd Infantry Division near the frontline. The US has reportedly been seeking to withdraw its 2nd Infantry troops to a position further south away from the border with North Korea. In an interview with Seoul-based MBC radio, Ban said he expected the upcoming summit to reflect Seoul's wish to "make a careful approach to the 2nd Infantry Division issue" through follow-up talks. Both countries have agreed to relocate the Yongsan US base which has irritated activists because of its location in the heart of the capital.

7. Japan Asteroid Probe

BBC News ("JAPAN LAUNCHES ASTEROID PROBE," 05/09/03) reported that a spacecraft has blasted off from Japan on an ambitious four-and-a-half-year journey to bring asteroid samples back to Earth for the first time. The Muses-C space probe is scheduled to visit the 1998 SF36 asteroid, 300 million kilometers (186 million miles) from Earth, and bring back rock samples. These samples should help scientists understand how the Solar System was formed. "Asteroids are known as the fossils of the Solar System," said mission leader Junichiro Kawaguchi, of Japan's Institute of Space and Astronautical Science. "By examining them, you can find out what substances made up the Solar System, including Earth, in the distant past." The probe was launched on Friday on top of a $60m (7bn yen) M-5 rocket from the Kagoshima Space Centre on the southern Japan island of Kyushu. Muses-C will spend about five months near the asteroid, one of the nearest to Earth, making observations of its surface and gathering samples. To collect samples, the probe will make three brief touch-and-go contacts with 1998 SF36, each time firing a small projectile into its crust. The probe will then scoop up the resulting rock fragments in a cone-shaped funnel. Even a tiny amount of matter from the asteroid, which is 500 meters long and shaped like a rugby ball, will be sufficient for research purposes. When the probe returns to Earth, which is expected to be in the summer of 2007, the sample container is designed to break away and parachute back to land in the Australian desert. If successful, Muses-C will be the first probe to make a two-way trip to an asteroid.

8. SARS Long Term Impact

The Washington Post (Rob Stein, "SARS NOT EVOLVING INTO LESS DEADLY VIRUS MUTATIONS ARE FEWER THAN EXPECTED," 05/09/03) and BBC News ("SARS 'HERE TO STAY,'" 05/09/03) reported that the SARS virus could pose a threat to humans for many years to come, research suggests. Scientists have compared samples of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome virus from Singapore with samples from other countries where it has struck. They have found that the main components of the virus have remained unchanged as infection has spread across different countries. Scientists say the finding suggests that it is well adapted to resisting attack by the human immune system - and so does not need to evolve rapidly. But the stability of the virus also means that any vaccine that is developed may remain effective against SARS for a long period. Scientists have identified the virus that causes SARS as a new member of the Corona family. It has been dubbed SARS-CoV. Usually human coronaviruses have a high rate of genetic mutation which can lead to new strains. Vaccine hopes? Researchers led by Dr Edison Liu, from Singapore's Genome Institute, studied the genetic make-up of cultured SARS viruses from five different sources. They found only a handful of mutation differences between the samples - and it was thought these probably resulted from the virus adapting to laboratory conditions. The findings were published in an on-line report from the Lancet medical journal. The World Health Organization (WHO) has welcomed the study, but says it is too early to tell whether significant mutations are occurring.

9. Japan SARS Experts to PRC

The Japan Times ("HEALTH EXPERTS TO GO TO SARS-HIT CHINA," 05/09/03) reported that Japan will send four health experts to China on Sunday and provide an additional 1.5 billion yen worth of medical supplies to help the country deal with its SARS epidemic. "The experts will give advice on treatment measures and those to prevent the disease from spreading," Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said Friday. The experts are two doctors from the International Medical Center of Japan, a Foreign Ministry official and an official of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. It is the first time the government has sent experts to the PRC over severe acute respiratory syndrome, although it dispatched doctors to Vietnam in March and April to advise on the disease. Kawaguchi said she has sent a letter to PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, noting that Japan will do whatever is necessary to deal with SARS. Separately, Chikara Sakaguchi, minister of health, labor and welfare,

said the 1.5 billion yen is in addition to the medical supplies Japan earlier decided to give the PRC. The earlier assistance, to be given through JICA, is worth 200 million yen and includes masks.

10. In Memoriam, Thomas McCarthy by Peter Hayes

Tom McCarthy died on May 8, 2003 of lung cancer. I knew Tom primarily in relation to his engagement in DPRK agriculture on the one hand, and his outrage at myopic US policy toward North Korea on the other. Tom applied his rigorous agricultural economics, his practical farming knowledge garnered from working for international agencies all over the world for decades, and his deep empathy for DPRK farmers, to bring about real change in agricultural practices and increases in food production in North Korea. He moved international agencies to innovate in North Korea. He held the DPRK strictly accountable for participating as agreed in the on-ground initiatives that he guided to fruition in more than a third of their farming cooperatives. And he challenged misguided US policies toward North Korea, often using humor to deflate idiotic bureaucracies on auto-pilot with regard to North Korea. As a result, he did more to feed hungry North Koreans than any other individual on the planet. He was an almost unknown voice in public, but to insiders, he was a powerful voice and force dedicated to building peace in North Korea, one person, one farm, one step at a time. He did so as an American; but his good will, his commitment to international standards, and his basic even-handedness led North Koreans to trust him in spite of the enmity between the US and North Korea. He will be missed greatly but also long remembered by everyone working for a peaceful resolution of the Korean conflict.

-- Peter Hayes, May 8, 2003

II. Republic of Korea

1. USFK Extension of Stay in Seoul

Joongang Ilbo ("MORE U.S. TROOPS STAY ON HERE INVOLUNTARILY," Seoul, 05/09/03) reported that US 8th Army has again extended the tours of duty of some soldiers in ROK, Major Holly Pierce of the Eighth US Army Public Affairs Office said Thursday. Under the order, more than 1,800 soldiers and one officer who were scheduled to leave ROK between June and August will be kept here for another three months. The first extension order was issued in February to 2,800 soldiers; those selected at that time will leave ROK this month. Because of contingencies around the world, including Iraq and Afghanistan, the troops who were supposed to come to Korea to replace the 1,800 departing soldiers are not able to come," Major Pierce said.

2. US Support of ROK's Policy toward DPRK

Joongang Ilbo ("U.S. TO ACCEPT POLICY ON NORTH," Seoul, 05/09/03) reported that a senior Blue House official said Thursday that US President Bush will support ROK's reconciliation policies toward DPRK. He asked not to be quoted by name. Speaking of the joint statement to be issued after next week's meeting with President Roh Moo-hyun, the official said, "U.S. support, in some form, for our government's North Korea policy, including reconciliation with the North, will be included." The two presidents will meet Wednesday at the White House in Washington. The official added, "The joint statement will address the maintenance of the South Korea-U.S. alliance, North Korea policy, including the nuclear issue, and bilateral economic ties."

3. ROK Response to DPRK Nuclear Movement

Joongang Ilbo (Choi Hoon, "TOO SOON TO READ SIGNS OF NORTH ACTIVITY," Seoul, 05/09/03) reported that ROK government first saw signs of increased movement at DPRK's Yeongbyeon nuclear complex at the end of April, but said that it has yet to see conclusive evidence that spent-fuel reprocessing has begun. Speaking in response to reports from the JoongAng Ilbo and The Washington Post, Yoon Tai-young, the Blue House spokesman said, "It is true that we have seen new movement, but there have been no signs of irregular activity." He added that ROK has been closely watching DPRK's nuclear plant, based on intelligence information shared with US. "The Yeongbyeon complex is known as a nuclear reprocessing facility, but there are other facilities there," said a senior Blue House official. Meanwhile, Cho Young-kil, the minister of national defense, reiterated ROK's stern message about North Korean nuclear weapons. "If North Korea's goal is to possess nuclear weapons, it faces limited scope for a diplomatic solution," the minister said in a letter sent yesterday to brigade commanders and upper-level brass of the three forces of the Korean military.

III. Japan

1. Japan's Role in Iraq War

Kyodo ("MSDF MAY HAVE VIOLATED REFUELING RULES DURING IRAQ WAR," Yokosuka, 05/07/03) reported that the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) indirectly fueled the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk during the Iraq war, a high-ranking US officer said Tuesday after the vessel returned here to its forward-deployed port. Rear Adm. Matthew Moffit, commander of the US Navy's Carrier Group 5, said the task force centered on the 83,960-ton Kitty Hawk received 3,000 kiloliters of fuel during its mission to the Persian Gulf during the war. If that is the case, the MSDF may have violated a law limiting refueling activities to vessels involved in the war against terrorism in the wake of the Sept. 11 attack on the US. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a regular afternoon news conference that the government would investigate whether the indirect fueling activities had indeed taken place, stating that there was a "strict promise with Japan" that naturally should have been kept. A senior Defense Agency official said, however, "Refueling operations are based on the antiterrorism law. We never provided fuel to ships participating in the war in Iraq."

The Japan Times (Junko Takahashi, "GOVERNMENT DENIES MSDF PROVIDED FUEL FOR KITTY HAWK," 05/08/03) reported that the Japanese government flatly denied Wednesday that the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) indirectly fueled the USS Kitty Hawk while the aircraft carrier was involved in the war in Iraq. The denial came after the commander of the US Navy's Carrier Group 5 reportedly expressed gratitude Tuesday for MSDF refueling activities. According to Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda, the Defense Agency contacted the US Navy and confirmed that fuel provided to US vessels under Japan's antiterrorism law was never used for purposes other than specific antiterrorism operations. Fukuda said the naval commander meant to express gratitude for the MSDF's refueling support for the antiterrorism operations.

2. Japan Personal Information Bill

The Japan Times (Reiji Yoshida, "LOWER HOUSE PASSES PERSONAL DATA BILLS," 05/07/03) reported that the House of Representatives on Tuesday passed a package of controversial bills to protect personal information, amid criticism that the legislation could seriously hamper the freedom of the press. The bills were immediately sent to the House of Councilors, where a special committee is expected to be formed to deliberate the legislation. An earlier version of the legislation met with

stiff opposition in the previous Diet session and was revised. The government-sponsored bills are designed to clamp down on the collection and use of private data held at government bodies and private-sector corporations. The restrictions would not apply to such entities as media companies in the "reporting" business, academic researchers, religious groups and political groups, as well as individual professional writers. But critics still argue that the government definition of "reporting" is vague and open for arbitrary interpretation, and that the legislation could discourage potential news sources and whistle-blowers from offering information.

3. Japan Left Extremist Return

Kyodo ("'70S-ERA TERRORIST WHO KILLED DOZENS WANTS TO COME HOME, GO TO COLLEGE," Beirut, 05/08/03) reported that Kozo Okamoto, one of three Japanese Red Army members who carried out a 1972 machinegun and grenade massacre at Tel Aviv's airport, has told Kyodo News that he now wants to return home from Lebanon, where he has asylum. "I want to return to Japan as soon as possible," the 55-year-old Okamoto said during interviews conducted in Beirut between March 21 and 23. "I want to know how my old friends are doing there and want to return to college again to study biology." The Japanese government continues to seek Okamoto's extradition. But Okamoto said, "I have finished my prison term in Israel, so it is not fair for the Japanese government to again put me on trial." Asked whether he regretted slaying innocent people, Okamoto said: "I had no option but to shoot for the sake of armed struggle. Now I can only pray for the victims." Okamoto said he went to Lebanon to join the Red Army's "armed struggle" at the behest of its founder, Fusako Shigenobu. The group advocated global revolution. Shigenobu was arrested Nov. 8, 2000, in Takatsuki, Osaka Prefecture, having slipped back into Japan after nearly 30 years on the run. Okamoto's four other members were forcibly taken to Japan, but the Lebanese government granted Okamoto political asylum, saying he had participated in resistance operations against Israel and had been tortured in Israeli jails.

4. Koizumi Middle East Tour

The Japan Times ("KOIZUMI PLANS EGYPT, SAUDI TRIP," 05/08/03) reported that the Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Wednesday he is planning to visit Egypt and Saudi Arabia later this month, after traveling to the US to meet with President George W. Bush. "Of course, we will discuss Iraqi reconstruction and bilateral relations," Koizumi told reporters when asked about the trip. "Diplomacy with the Arab world is important," he said, referring to Japan's efforts to re-establish friendly ties with Arab countries after expressing unequivocal support for the US invasion of Iraq.

5. Japan's Defense Agency Procurement Scandal

Mainichi Daily News ("EX-DEFENSE AGENCY BIGWIG GETS 4-YEAR TERM FOR TAKING BRIBES," 05/08/03) reported that a former high-ranking official of the Japanese Defense Agency was ordered Thursday to spend four years behind bars for breach of trust and accepting bribes in a procurement scandal that rocked the agency. The Tokyo District Court also ordered Kenichi Ueno, 63, former deputy director of the agency's Central Procurement Office, to pay a fine of 8.38 million yen, which corresponds with the amount of bribes he accepted. "The defendant drastically reduced the amount of money by which two contractors overcharged the agency for supplies and which the agency demanded the firms return to state coffers," Presiding Judge Nobuyuki Kinoshita said as he handed down the ruling. "His crime caused financial losses to the state and damaged the public's trust in the agency's procurement activities," Kinoshita said. Ueno conspired with Masuo Morodomi, 63, former

head of the Defense Facilities Administration Agency, to reduce the estimated amount -- by which two companies overcharged the agency for supplies -- by 3.5 billion yen in the mid 1990s, the court ruled. In 1994 and 1995, they demanded that Toyo Communication Equipment Co., a subsidiary of NEC Corp., and Nikoo Electronics Co. return the reduced amount to the agency, thereby causing losses totaling 3.5 billion yen to the government, the ruling said. In return, Ueno received 3 million yen in cash as a bribe from Toyo in September 1994. Moreover, the court recognized as bribes about 5.38 million yen he accepted from another NEC affiliate from July 1995 to December 1997 under the pretext of consultation fees. Ueno had pleaded not guilty to the charges pressed against him.

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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