NAPSNet Daily Report 18 May, 2009

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 18 May, 2009", NAPSNet Daily Report, May 18, 2009, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-18-may-2009/

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MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. US-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("N. KOREA URGES U.S. TO CHANGE POLICY", Seoul, 2009/05/17) reported that the Minju Joson said Sunday the DPRK will not come back to the negotiation table unless the United States and the ROK give up their "hostile policy". "No matter what nonsense the Lee group may say under the clutches of the U.S., the DPRK remains unchanged in its determination and declaration made to protect the dignity and sovereignty of the nation," it said in a commentary carried by the Korean Central News Agency. It also said the DPRK will never attend the six-party talks, and will strengthen its nuclear power no matter what other nations have agreed.

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2. Inter-Korean Relations

Associated Press ("SKOREA URGING NKOREA TO RETURN TO DIALOGUE", Seoul, 2009/05/18) reported that ROK Unification Minster Hyun In-taek Monday said the DPRK should reverse its move to cancel Kaesong contracts and comply with previous accords on the complex. "Now, the Kaesong complex is facing a crisis," Hyun told a forum in Seoul . "There should be a frank, sincere dialogue between South and North Korea ." "I'm not that pessimistic about the future of the Kaesong complex," Hyun said in response to a question over whether he expects the DPRK to eventually shut down the park.

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA 'STIRRING SEDITION IN THE SOUTH' ", Seoul, 2009/05/18) reported that the DPRK recently ordered officials and organizations dealing with the ROK to stir up conflict in the ROK over the June 15, 2000 Joint Declaration and the October 4, 2007 Summit Declaration, a well-connected diplomatic source in Beijing said Sunday. According to the source, a senior member of the DPRK Workers' Party who recently escaped said that he was told by the regime to give support to revolutionary groups in the ROK that support the joint declarations, so that improving inter-Korean relations becomes a common goal of the people in the ROK. The defector also told the source the regime urged him to help bring about government change in the ROK in 2012.

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL WORKS OUT CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR KAESONG CLOSURE", Seoul,

2009/05/18) reported that a senior ROK government official said the government has been working out measures in preparation for the possibility of the closure of the Kaesong Industrial Complex. "Since last Friday when the North declared all incumbent regulations and contracts regarding the Kaesong Industrial Complex null and void, we've been mapping out concrete measures in preparation for various scenarios concerning the North's possible close-down of the industrial park." The key point in the contingency plan is to ensure the safety of ROK staff at Kaesong, he added.

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3. Inter-Korea Economic Cooperation

Chosun Ilbo ("CLOSING KAESONG INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX WOULD HIT N.KOREA HARD", Seoul, 2009/05/18) reported that the DPRK earns some US$33.52 million a year from the Kaesong Industrial Complex. "Assuming each North Korean worker has about four family members, roughly 150,000 North Koreans are living off the industrial park. That figure isn't negligible," an ROK official said Sunday. Some DPRK refugees are saying there could be riots if the Kaesong industrial park is closed. Prof. Cho Dong-ho of Ewha Womans University said, "Currently, North Koreans seem to be in a panic and the authorities' orders are not heeded."

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4. DPRK Detention of Journalists

BBC ("ENVOY SEES AMERICANS IN N. KOREA", 2009/05/16) reported that Swedish ambassador to the DPRK Mats Foyer met two detained US journalists on 15 May, the US state department said. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the fact that DPRK had set a trial date was "a signal that there can be... a resolution".

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5. US-ROK Military Alliance

Yonhap ("U.S. TO SHARE TERRORISM INTEL WITH KOREAN TROOPS", Seoul, 2009/05/18) reported that ROK military officials are discussing ways to share information on terrorism put together by the U.S. National Geospatial Intelligence Agency and the CIA with Korean troops overseas. The source stressed the need for Korea to gain access to detailed data the U.S. is believed to have, saying ROK peacekeeping forces such as the Cheonghae unit in the Gulf of Aden are operating in dangerous environments.

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6. ROK Anti-Piracy Dispatch

Arirang News ("KOREAN NAVY WARDS OFF SOMALI PIRATES FOR FOURTH TIME", 2009/05/15) reported that an ROK naval unit scared off a pirate boat that was chasing an Egyptian ship on Wednesday. When the Cheonghae unit received a distress call from the vessel, it immediately dispatched a helicopter with a team of snipers aboard. The helicopter threatened to open fire on the

pirate's boat and shot flares to inform ships from other navies patrolling the area. It was soon joined by a United States naval helicopter and the Egyptian commercial ship was saved.

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7. Remains of ROK Soldiers from Korean War

Yonhap ("S. KOREA TO EXHUME WAR DEAD IN DMZ", Seoul, 2009/05/17) reported that the ROK will begin exhumation next year to find the remains of soldiers who died in the Korean War (1950-53) in the region that is now the demilitarized zone (DMZ), the government said Sunday. A source at the Ministry of National Defense said that preliminary background research that is currently underway should be completed by the end of the year. "Once basic checks on the possible location of remains are completed, actual work can begin in 2010, which will mark the 60th anniversary of the start of the Korean conflict," the official said.

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8. ROK Climate Change

Korea Times (Park Si-soo, "SEOUL WARMING THREE TIMES FASTER THAN GLOBAL AVERAGE", Seoul, 2009/05/18) reported that Seoul has seen its average temperature increase three times faster than that of the global average over the past century, according to a report by the Korea Meteorological Administration (KMA), Monday. The administration said the pace is also 1.4 times faster than that of the Korean peninsula as a whole, citing fast urbanization as a major factor behind the warming. The KMA also found that Seoul's winters in recent years are a month shorter than a century ago.

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9. ROK Nuclear Energy

Korea Herald ("KOREAN LAB WINS DEAL TO TREAT FUSION REACTOR WASTE", Seoul, 2009/05/18) reported that Korea Power Engineering Co. and Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute laboratories have secured a deal to draw up plans for optimal radioactive treatment and waste storage for an experimental fusion reactor being built in France, the government said Monday. The 274,500 euro ($368,800) technical consultation contract calls for detailed studies to be conducted on how best to collect and assort waste and determine the safest way to move such waste from the reactor to special holding areas, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology said.

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10. ROK Swine Flu

Korea Herald (Song Sang-ho, "RESEARCHER DEVELOPS WORLD'S FIRST SWINE FLUE VACCINE", Seoul, 2009/05/18) reported that researchers from the college of veterinary medicine at Chungnam National University said Monday it succeeded in developing a human vaccine against Influenza A(H1N1). help contain the spread of the disease. The team, led by professor Seo Sang-heui, said it

developed the vaccine that is "not toxic and can be mass-produced."

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11. Sino-ROK Environmental Cooperation

Yonhap ("AID AGENCY WANTS PEACE PARK IN CHINA'S DESERT REGION", Seoul, 2009/05/17) reported that Park Dae-won, president of the Korea International Cooperation Agency, said Sunday he hopes to construct an ecological park in a desert region of China. "I have an idea for an ecological park in the deserts of northern China, along with the current tree-planting campaign," Park said. "I conceived the plan while visiting regions where South Korea and China are conducting a joint afforestation project to plant trees and slow down the expansion of desert in the Nei Menggu area." "Preventing desertification not only concerns China, but all nations. It is also attributable to global warming," Park said. "We may be able to persuade other nations and organizations to join the project."

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12. Japan Pandemic Response

Asahi Shimbun ("NATION BRACED FOR SPREAD OF SWINE FLU", Tokyo, 2009/05/18) reported that the Japanese Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry announced Sunday that 34 people, mainly high school students, were confirmed infected with swine flu. Additional cases of infection were later confirmed in Hyogo Prefecture, bringing total confirmed cases to 46.

New York Times (Donald G. McNeil Jr., "W.H.O. MAY RAISE ALERT LEVEL AS SWINE FLU CASES LEAP IN JAPAN ", Tokyo, 2009/05/17) reported that the increase in swine flu cases in Japan raises the likelihood that the World Health Organization will soon have to raise its pandemic alert level to 6, the highest level. If the World Health Organization finds sustained community transmission — that is, infections between people with no connections to travel from North America — it will presumably raise its pandemic alert level to 6, because Japan is outside the W.H.O. Americas region. The alerts, by definition, measure a new virus’s spread, not its lethality.

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13. Japanese Politics

Asahi Shimbun ("HATOYAMA ELECTED MINSHUTO PRESIDENT", Tokyo, 2009/05/16) reported that Yukio Hatoyama was elected president of Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan) on Saturday. In the election among party lawmakers, Hatoyama, received 124 votes in besting his sole opponent, Vice President Katsuya Okada, who received 95 votes.

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14. Sino-US Military Relations

New York Times (Edward Wong, "CHINA: MARITIME TALKS WITH U.S", 2009/05/15) reported that

Adm. Gary Roughead, the United States chief of naval operations, and Adm. Wu Shengli, the PRC naval chief, met in Qingdao last month to resolve maritime disputes, China Daily reported Friday. The newspaper, citing an unidentified official, said that the two militaries still disagreed on how to interpret international maritime law, but that the sides “have expressed their views candidly in the latest round of military exchange.”

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15. Sino-US Relations

Los Angeles Times (Richard Simon, "OBAMA PICKS GNP'S JON HUNTSMAN AS AMBASSADOR TO CHINA", Washington, 2009/05/17) reported that US President Barack Obama on Saturday tapped Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr. to be ambassador to the PRC. "Given the breadth of issues at stake in our relationship with China, this ambassadorship is as important as any in the world," Obama stated. Huntsman has served as an ambassador to Singapore, speaks fluent Mandarin and has an adopted Chinese daughter.

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16. Cross-Strait Relations

Associated Press (Annie Huang, "TAIWAN PROTEST TARGETS LEADER'S PRO-CHINA POLICIES", Taipei, 2009/05/17) reported that tens of thousands of anti-government demonstrators marched through downtown Taipei on Sunday to protest against President Ma Ying-jeou's policy of greater engagement with the PRC. "We are Taiwanese, not Chinese," the protesters chanted. "Under his pro-China policy, Ma Ying-jeou is placing Taiwan's destiny and future in the hands of the Chinese, and we will by no means accept this," Demoractic Progressive Party Chairwoman Tsai Ing-wen told the protesters.

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II. PRC Report

17. Cross Strait Relations

Lianhezaobao.com (Ye Pengfei, " OFFICES TO OPEN ACROSS THE STRAITS", 2009/05/15) reported that a proposal to set up offices on the mainland and in Taiwan for organizations involved in cross-Straits talks is gaining support. “Once both sides agree that the conditions are in place, the mainland is willing to talk about this issue,” Yang Yi, spokesman for the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, said Wednesday. The idea to have the mainland’s Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits and Taiwan’s Straits Exchange Foundation exchange offices was proposed by the island’s “president” Ma Ying-jeou last Friday. Yang said the mainland considers it “very necessary”.

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18. PRC Economy

Dagong Net ("ENTREPRENEURS' DAY TO BE HELD IN KUNMING", 2009/05/15) reported that the 2009 China Entrepreneurs' Day will be held in Kunming city, Yunnan province on May 17-18. The conference is co-sponsored by the China Enterprise Confederation and China Entrepreneurs Association and the Yunnan provincial government. The focus of the conference will be “confidence, mission, responsibility” -- to reflect the changes that Chinese businesses are facing in the global financial crisis. Participants will analyze and discuss topics such as macroeconomic trends and the impacts of the financial crisis on businesses.

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