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I. United States

1. DPRK Uranium Processing

CNN ("N. KOREA 'GAVE LIBYA URANIUM,'" Washington, 05/24/04) reported that the DPRK is widely believed to have processed enough nuclear fuel to manufacture several nuclear weapons. US officials say international inspectors have uncovered evidence the DPRK may have supplied Libya with a key ingredient used in making nuclear weapons. However, the officials stressed the evidence is not conclusive and the matter is still under investigation. The ingredient in question is uranium hexafluoride, which can be used to produce enriched uranium for nuclear weapons. If proved, this would be the first indication that the DPRK is a possible supplier in the clandestine nuclear network, and is generating concern other nations such as Iran might be in cohorts with Pyongyang. Inspectors looking into Libya's now-abandoned nuclear program had been working on the theory that the material may have been supplied by Pakistan. The South Asian nation has already been implicated in a worldwide nuclear ! black market, with the father of its nuclear program, Abdul Qadeer Khan, admitting earlier this year that he sold secrets to a number of nations, including Libya, the DPRK and Iran. US officials have said previously that the DPRK sold Scud missiles to Libya, using the proceeds to develop its own nuclear weapons. Earlier this month, the Libyan government announced it would halt military trade with the DPRK. The report said Pyongyang provided Libya with nearly

two tons of uranium in early 2001. The White House could not confirm the report but was aware of it, said spokesman Trent Duffy. "That is why it is important we continue with our policy of making sure North Korea disarms in a complete, irreversible and verifiable fashion," Duffy said, adding coalition partners needed to work together to stop illicit trading of weapons of mass destruction.

New York Times (David Sanger, "THE DPRK URANIUM CHALLENGE," Washington, 05/23/04) reported that the discovery that the DPRK have supplied uranium to Libya poses an immediate challenge to the White House: while President Bush is preoccupied on the other side of the world, an economically desperate nation may be engaging in exactly the kind of nuclear proliferation that the president says he went to war in Iraq to halt. Yet to listen to many in the White House, concern about the DPRK's nuclear program brings little of the urgency that surrounded the decision 14 months ago to oust Saddam Hussein. When Bush has been asked about the DPRK in recent months, he has emphasized his patience. He does not refer to the intelligence estimates that the DPRK has at least two nuclear weapons, or to the debate within the US intelligence community about whether the DPRK has spent the past 18 months building more. Instead, he lauds the progress he says the US has made in organizing the PRC, Ru! ssia, Japan and the ROK to negotiate as one with the North Koreans - though those talks have resulted in no progress so far in ending either of the DPRK's two major nuclear programs. The reports of likely uranium sales to Libya have created the chilling possibility that the the DPRK has now found a new and profitable product - and that Libya may not have been the only customer. "Many predicted that sooner or later we would have to worry about the North Koreans not only as users but as exporters of nuclear technology," said Daniel Poneman, a former national security official. If the DPRK's sales to Libya are confirmed, the nightmare that Bush discussed so often last year - the sale of "the world's worst weapons to the world's most dangerous dictators" - may be happening at the other end of the axis. Iraq, it turns out, had little or nothing to sell.

2. Japan-DPRK Visit

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PM WINS RELEASE OF KIDNAP VICTIMS' CHILDREN AT NKOREA SUMMIT," 05/23/04) reported that Japan's prime minister won the release of the children of two Japanese couples kidnapped by the DPRK in the 1970s, after promising generous food and medical aid for the impoverished country. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi secured the release in his second meeting with the reclusive DPRK leader, Kim Jong-Il, who also said he was ready to solve a standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear program through six-way talks. The leaders last met in September 2002 when Koizumi persuaded Kim to return five Japanese -- including two couples -- who were among several people the DPRK admitted to abducting during the Cold War era to train its spies in Japanese language and culture. The five children of the couples followed Koizumi back to Japan after he ended his one-day visit to the DPRK. After meeting Kim for just 90 minutes, Koizumi announced that Japan would give the DPRK 250,0! 00 tons of rice and 10 million dollars worth of medical supplies "as humanitarian aid."

Agence France-Presse ("MORE THAN 60 PERCENT OF JAPANESE APPROVE KOIZUMI VISIT TO NKOREA: POLLS," 05/24/04) reported that more than 60 percent of Japanese voters said they supported Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's talks with DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il, according to three polls. In a survey taken by the top-selling Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper, 63 percent of respondents said they supported Koizumi's Saturday meeting with Kim. Sixty-seven percent of those polled by the Asahi Shimbun approved the summit talks, while the Mainichi Shimbun poll showed 62 percent support. However, immediately after the latest talks, the Japanese media accused Koizumi of being too soft on Pyongyang. Families of Japanese abductees also criticised Koizumi for failing to gain a major compromise from Kim on 10 other Japanese. But the latest surveys showed that the general public was positive towards Koizumi's visit, the three major papers said. A majority of those

surveyed by the three papers, however, dis! agreed with Koizumi's decision to give aid to the DPRK and other details of the summit. Fifty-six percent of respondents in the Yomiuri poll said they did not approve of Koizumi's pledge to provide the DPRK with 250,000 tons of food and 10 million dollars worth of medical supplies in aid, while 38 percent did.

New York Times (James Brooke, "KOIZUMI'S TRIP GETS LUKEWARM REVIEWS," Tokyo, 05/24/04) reported that from television talk programs to mass circulation newspapers, Japanese reacted skeptically on Sunday to their prime minister's trip to the DPRK. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's summit meeting with Kim Jong Il, on Saturday "made no headway in resolving the abduction, nuclear, missile or any other issues related to Northeast Asia's peace and security," the conservative Yomiuri Shimbun said in its editorial. "Japan must be ready to put punitive measures into action at any moment" to win compromises from the DPRK In his 10-hour visit to Pyongyang, Koizumi promised large amounts of food and medical aid. He was allowed to fly home with five children of two Japanese couples who returned to Japan in October 2002. Many news organizations complained that Koizumi had promised not to use sanctions against the DPRK and had settled for vague promises from its mercurial leader about his! nuclear bomb program as well as the investigation into dozens of other Japanese kidnapping cases. "He was unable to get a clear pledge from General Secretary Kim to dismantle his nuclear program," the mainstream newspaper Mainichi Shimbun said. "Our trump card - another visit by the prime minister - was played and this is all we got."

3. ROK on Japan-DPRK Summit

Asia Pulse ("S. KOREA HAILS JAPAN-N. KOREA SUMMIT," Seoul, 05/24/04) reported that the ROK welcomed the outcome of a Japan-DPRK summit Saturday, predicting that it would help improve inter-Korean relations. In the 90-minute summit earlier in the day, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and DPRK leader Kim Jong-il agreed on the return of five family members of Japanese citizens kidnapped by DPRK agents decades ago. The two leaders also agreed to reopen talks on the normalization of bilateral relations, while Japan pledged to offer grain and medicines to the impoverished country. "We hail the results of the Japan-North Korea summit," Foreign Ministry spokesman Shin Bong-kil said. "It has paved the way for bettering bilateral relations." Other government officials forecast that the summit is expected to foster conditions for an improvement of inter-Korean relations. "The outcome of the summit is unlikely to have a direct impact on inter-Korean relations, but it will help ! improve the circumstances surrounding the Korean Peninsula," a government official said on condition of anonymity.

4. DPRK Multilateral Talks

Agence France-Presse ("KIM JONG-IL READY TO SOLVE NUCLEAR CRISIS THROUGH SIX-WAY TALKS," 05/23/04) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il said he was willing to solve the international standoff over the DPRK's nuclear program through six-way talks, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said after a summit meeting with Kim. "Chairman Kim Jong-Il said he aimed to de-nuclearise the Korean Peninsula. He said he wanted to make efforts towards a peaceful solution by utilising the six-way talks," Koizumi said at a press conference following a 90-minute summit with Kim.

5. Cross-Straits Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA WARNS CHEN SHUI-BIAN OF WALKING 'DANGEROUS ROAD,'" 05/24/04) reported that the PRC turned the screws on Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian, warning he

was walking a "dangerous road." The PRC turned the screws on Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian, warning he was walking a "dangerous road" as it again threatened to "completely crush" moves towards independence. "This is a very dangerous road. If he doesn't chose to rein in his horses then our only choice is to pay whatever price is necessary to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Taiwan Affairs Office spokesman Zhang Mingqing said at a briefing. "Taiwan independence is not peace and it is not stability." In his office's first reaction since Chen was sworn in for another four years last week, Zhang repeatedly stressed that "our basic policy has not changed." "Chen Shui-bian must accept the one China principal," he said. "As it says in the statement, we will completely crush the in! dependence movement."

6. Japan-ROK Relations

Kyodo ("KAWAGUCHI TO VISIT SOUTH KOREA," Tokyo, 05/25/04) reported that Japan Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi will make a one-day trip to the ROK on Saturday to brief ROK officials on the summit meeting between Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and DPRK leader Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang, diplomatic sources said Monday. She is also expected to exchange views on the six-way talks involving the PRC, Japan, the ROK and DPRK, Russia and the US over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions with ROK officials, they said.

7. DPRK Missiles on Japan?

The Australian ("N KOREA MISSILES 'NOT TARGETING JAPAN,'" Tokyo, 05/25/04) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong Il said his country's missiles were not targeting Japan, a Japanese news agency reported today. "Our missiles are not aimed at Japan. They are not there for attacking Japan," Kyodo News agency quoted Kim as saying to Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi at a summit in the DPRK capital of Pyongyang on Saturday. The report cited unidentified government sources, who said they believed Kim was repeating the North's long-held position that its weapons were meant to deter possible aggressors. Officials in Tokyo refused to confirm 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.

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