NAPSNet Daily Report 26 May, 2000

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 26 May, 2000", NAPSNet Daily Report, May 26, 2000, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-26-may-2000/

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I. United States

1. Light-Water Reactor Project

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREA ACCUSES US OF DELAYING NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT," Seoul, 5/26/00) and the Associated Press (Jae-Suk Yoo, "N. KOREA REACTORS MAY BE

DELAYED," Seoul, 5/26/00) reported that the DPRK accused the US on Friday of delaying construction of two nuclear power reactors, causing huge economic losses. Rodong Sinmun, the DPRK's Workers Party newspaper, said, "the DPRK has suffered heavy economic losses due to its measure of freezing nuclear facilities. They (losses) are increasing due to the delayed construction of the light water reactors." Rodong blamed the US for holding the construction back, saying they would not meet the initial 2003 deadline. The ROK Yonhap News Agency reported that DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-Kwan said in the Rome meeting with the US, "I told (the US negotiators) to make up for electric-power losses stemming from the delayed construction of light-water nuclear reactors. They said they would study (the demand) and then suggest a plan." The ROK's Korea Trade and Investment Promotion Agency said in a report on the DPRK's trade Friday that it imported US$141 million worth of oil last year, replacing food as the top import item.

2. DPRK Famine

Agence France Presse ("FAMINE-HIT N KOREA SEEKS 250 MILLION DOLLARS TO PRODUCE FOOD: WFP," Geneva, 5/26/00) reported that a World Food Program (WFP) official said Friday that DPRK officials will ask donor countries at a meeting in Switzerland next month for about US$250 million in a bid to achieve basic food self- sufficiency by 2002. David Morton, the UN humanitarian coordinator for the DPRK, said that senior government officials from the DPRK will present the request at a roundtable to be held in Geneva on June 20. He said, "with that funding they expect to achieve a basic level of food self-sufficiency by 2002, that would amount to about five and a half million tons of food." Morton said that the US$250 million dollars would help pay for agricultural inputs and environmental protection, principally the reforestation of mountain areas which had been hit by deforestation over the last winter. He added that, "by no means is the crisis over, there are still areas that are very much short of food and groups of people who are still very, very short of food. I cannot say we are satisfied with our ability to monitor the aid that goes in, but there have been improvements and we continue to work on that. The conditions are such that we cannot be 100 percent sure, but we're reasonably sure that the aid is going to the people it's supposed to be going to." He also added that the WFP has not found any "any systematic diversion of aid" to the army as some reports suggested.

3. ROK Anti-US Protests

The Washington Times ("U.S. TROOP PRESENCE IN KOREA PROTESTED," Seoul, 5/26/00) reported that ROK autoworkers and students joined forces on May 25 to protest the presence of US troops in the ROK and a possible takeover of ailing Daewoo Motor Company by a US car-maker. Some 250 students chanted, "Withdraw American troops," while about 150 workers of Daewoo Motor carried a banner that read: "GM Ford No! We oppose U.S. invasion in Korean auto market." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 26, 2000.]

4. Korean War Massacre

The New York Times (Felicity Barringer, "EX-G.I. IN A.P. ACCOUNT CONCEDES HE DIDN'T SEE KOREA MASSACRE," 5/26/00) reported that the Associated Press (AP) said on May 25 that Edward L. Daily, the Korean War veteran and key witness in AP's No Gun Ri Massacre story, admitted that he lied about the story. Presented with records that showed that Daily was not at the site of the massacre or even with the same company, Daily told the AP: "I have to agree with your records. I can't dispute them." Jonathan Wolman, the AP's executive editor, said in a statement on May 25, "while we remain confident of the central findings of our coverage, A.P. is dismayed that Ed Daily

cannot authenticate his account of the events at No Gun Ri. Mr. Daily is obviously haunted by his service in the Korean War even as he struggles to understand and explain the version of events he provided to A.P., to the Army and to other news organizations." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 26, 2000.]

5. Cross-Straits Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN SEES SIGNS OF EASING TENSION WITH CHINA," Taipei, 5/26/00) reported that Taiwan Premier Tang Fei said that cross-strait tensions have begun to ease following Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian's inaugural speech on May 20. Tang said, "President Chen's inaugural speech on cross-strait relations was highly praised by the international community, and the Chinese Communists did not lash out with harsh criticism. There are signs that relations are easing on both sides of the strait." One of Taiwan's chief negotiators with the PRC, Shi Hwei-yow, vice chairman of Taiwan's semi-official Straits Exchange Foundation, said on Friday that the PRC was likely to let its top envoy on Taiwan affairs, Wang Daohan, to visit the island after an annual gathering by the PRC's top officials at the summer retreat of Beidaihe in August.

6. PRC Military Exercises

The Associated Press ("CHINA BEGINS TAIWAN EXERCISES," Taipei, 5/26/00) reported that Taiwanese Defense Ministry spokesman Kung Fan-ding said on Friday that the PRC has begun live-fire artillery week-long exercises in Fujian Province's Quanzhou Bay and Shenlu Bay in southeast PRC that are not a threat to Taiwan. The drills have been held annually since 1996. Taiwan Premier Tang Fei told reporters that there has been a less threatening atmosphere because the PRC did not react strongly to Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian's inaugural speech last weekend. Tang said that the US House of Representative's vote this week to approve a bill to normalize trade with the PRC should further boost peace in the region.

7. PRC Military Development

The Baltimore Sun (Tom Bowman and David Folkenflik, "CONSERVATIVES SAY CHINA TRADE BILL COULD BOOST MILITARY THREAT TO U.S.," Washington, 5/26/00) reported that after the US House of Representatives voted on May 25 to grant the PRC permanent normal trading privileges, Representative Duncan Hunter led a band of conservatives who warned that the vote would help the PRC rebuild its military to threaten the US. Hunter said, "whichever side of this debate one is on, everyone here has to concede American dollars are arming Communist China today. If the cemeteries of this country one day hold the bodies of Americans in uniform killed with weapons purchased by American trade dollars - that will be the greatest tragedy of this new 21st century." Ronald N. Montaperto, a senior research professor at National Defense University, said that he doubts that the PRC would risk becoming a political pariah or gamble on the might of the US military by starting a war with the US or its allies. Richard Fisher, a senior analyst at the Jamestown Foundation, a conservative think tank, said that one of the PRC's missiles, the DF-31, unveiled last year, can hit the Western US and by the middle of the decade, a DF-41 will be deployed that can strike the Eastern US. Fisher added that once Taiwan reunified with the PRC, their nuclear capability could be employed to make the PRC the pre-eminent power in Asia, disabling US alliances with political and military pressure from Japan to the Indian Ocean and into the Persian Gulf. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 26, 2000.]

8. US Security Policy toward Asia

The Washington Post (Thomas E. Ricks, "FOR PENTAGON, ASIA MOVING TO FOREFRONT," 5/26/00) reported that US Department of Defense officials will release the core planning document of the Joint Chiefs of Staff titled "Joint Vision 2020" next week. After much debate, the document will not explicitly point at the PRC, but will warn of the possible rise of an unidentified "peer competitor." Some specialists warn that as the US thinks about a rising PRC, it ought to remember the mistakes Britain made in dealing with Germany in the years before World War I. Retired Army General Robert W. RisCassi, a former US commander in the ROK, said that new US military interest in Asia also reverses a Cold War trend under which the US Defense Department once planned by the year 2000 to have just "a minimal military presence" in Japan. According to one US Defense Department official, US Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen's first question to policy officials when he became defense secretary in 1997 was: How can we change the assumption that US troops will be withdrawn after peace comes to the Korean peninsula? In the longer run, many US policymakers expect the PRC to emerge sooner or later as a great power with significant influence over the rest of Asia. Dov S. Zakheim, a former US Defense Department official who is an adviser on defense policy to Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush, said, "China is the new Beltway buzzword." Andrew Krepinevich, director of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, said, "the focus of great power competition is likely to shift from Europe to Asia." James Bodner, the principal deputy undersecretary of defense for policy, added, "the center of gravity of the world economy has shifted to Asia, and U.S. interests flow with that." An Air Force strategist said that because of the sensitivity of talking about fighting the PRC, "what everybody's trying to do is come up with games that are kind of China, but not China by name." Princeton political scientist Aaron L. Friedberg said, "I think that, however reluctantly, we are beginning to face up to the fact that we are likely over the next few years to be engaged in an ongoing military competition with China. Indeed, in certain respects, we already are." US Defense Departments experts on Japan and the ROK said that they expect that "status of forces agreements" gradually will be diluted, so that local authorities will gain more jurisdiction over US military personnel in criminal cases. In addition, they predict that US bases in Japan and the ROK will be jointly operated in the future by US and local forces, perhaps even with a local officer in command. Regarding Japan, US Defense Department officials disclosed in a recent classified national intelligence estimate that concluded that Japan has several strategic options available, among them seeking a separate accommodation with the PRC. One official said that in the long term, the key goal of US politico-military policy is to ensure that when Japan reemerges as a great power, it behaves itself in Asia. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 26, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-US Talks

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "N.K., U.S. DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF GENEVA NUCLEAR AGREEMENT," Seoul, 05/26/00) reported that ROK officials said that the US and the DPRK discussed the implementation of the 1994 Agreed Framework when they resumed their talks in Rome on Wednesday. US State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said in a press briefing in Washington that the US was using the Rome meeting to begin talks on putting the Agreed Framework into action. The US delegation is led by Charles Kartman, US special envoy on Korean affairs. Kim Gye-gwan, a vice foreign minister, heads the DPRK side. Reeker also said that the US was attempting to set the stage for a "fundamental change" in the two nations' relations during the Rome meeting. Diplomatic observers said that the two sides would also try to finalize a high-level DPRK official's visit to Washington in the Rome meeting.

2. Inter-Korean Talks

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Yong-jong, "HISTORICAL MEETINGS VS. SUMMIT IN PYONGYANG," Seoul, 05/25/00) reported that the DPRK has requested that the "historic meeting" and the "summit" be separated during the June ROK- DPRK talks to be held in Pyongyang. This change is based on special ceremonial formalities used in the DPRK. Representatives from the ROK and the DPRK decided to make the separation during a May 18 meeting at Panmunjom. Regarding this, concerns have been raised that Kim Jong-il, the general secretary, will be participating in the "historic meeting," while a third person, such as Kim Yong-nam, the chairman of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly, would host the summit. A source from the preparatory teams for the summit said on May 24, "North Korea requested a separation of the 'historic meeting' and the 'summit,' in consideration of the fact that the summit would be held in Pyongyang." He continued, "We were nervous about any hidden intentions; however, we decided to accept the request after North Korea explained the reason." The misunderstanding regarding separate hosts for the historical meeting and summit was created because the ROK was not accustomed to the ceremonial formalities of Pyongyang. This is especially important because the expression "historic meeting" has only been used for certain important leaders, including Jiang Zemin.

3. Effects of Inter-Korean Summit

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT TO BOOST FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN N.K.," Seoul, 05/26/00) and The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "SEOUL EYES 'FLEXIBLE RECIPROCITY' IN S-N COOPERATION," Seoul, 05/25/00) reported that the upcoming summit between the top leaders of the two Koreas is expected to result in a sharp increase in foreign investment in the DPRK by defusing tensions on the peninsula, ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Lee Joung-binn said on Wednesday. "We anticipate that the atmosphere in North Korea will improve, as the summit talks will lead to inter-Korean discussions on the establishment of a legal and institutional framework for foreign investment, including an accord on investment protection," Lee said. In addition, he said, the June 12-14 summit in Pyongyang is expected to increase the number of foreign companies wishing to invest in the DPRK in collaboration with ROK firms that have the know-how to do business there. But the government will proceed with the summit talks in a cool, cautious manner, rather than rushing to produce quick results, and will do its utmost to ensure that the meeting is a success, Lee said. "Decades of mistrust and confrontation between the two Koreas cannot be dispelled all at once. The government will therefore focus on reaching agreements on issues that can be practically promoted," he added. In particular, he said, the government will encourage inter-Korean economic cooperation while maintaining the principle of "flexible" reciprocity in consideration of the DPRK's situation.

4. DPRK-Japan Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("MORI TO SEND MESSAGE TO NK VIA PRESIDENT KIM," Seoul, 05/25/00) reported that Japan's Mainichi Shimbun reported on May 24 that Japanese Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro planned to deliver a message to DPRK General Secretary Kim Jong-il expressing his wish to advance the normalization of diplomatic relations between the DPRK and Japan through President Kim Dae-jung. The Japanese prime minister announced on May 23, "There is no Japanese politician who could directly deliver the message about the intentions of Japan to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. Therefore, I plan to deliver my message through President Kim of South Korea."

5. ROK-DPRK Cultural Exchange

Joongang Ilbo (Yi Young-gi, "NORTH KOREAN MONSTER MOVIE OPENING IN JULY," Seoul, 05/25/00) reported that a DPRK movie is about to be released in the nation's theaters, a first for the peninsula divided for the past 50 years. Pan Dae-gyu, head of Korea Film Productions responsible for bringing the film into the ROK marketplace, said that they applied for government approval to import "Pulkasari", a monster movie based on an old Korean legend. With discussions successfully completed with concerned government bodies like the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Pan said, "we plan to release the movie this coming July."

III. Japan

1. Japan's Rice Shipment to DPRK

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN BEGAN RICE SHIPMENT TO DPRK," 05/25/2000) reported that it was revealed on May 24 that Japan began rice shipments to the DPRK, although the normalization talks between the two countries have still been postponed. The report said that the first rice shipment was made from Otaru, Hokkaido to the DPRK on May 23. The second shipment will made from Nagoya in early June, said that report. The report also said that the shipment of the total of 100,000 tons of rice would be completed in July. The report pointed out that the shipment indicates Japan's will to improve relations with the DPRK.

2. Japanese View on DPRK Regime

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("DEFENSE WHITE PAPER DRAFT SEES DPRK REGIME AS STABLE," 05/24/2000) reported that it was revealed on May 23 that the draft of 2000 Defense White Paper sees the DPRK regime as stable. According to the report, the draft says, "While the DPRK regime is still struggling periodic economic difficulties, energy, and food shortages, the regime's new policy, including active diplomatic activities, is beginning to show some stabilizing effects." The report pointed out that although the past defense white papers tended to emphasize instability of the DPRK regime partly due to the Japanese Defense Agency's (JDA) tendency to adjust to US views, the draft indicates that JDA now sees that the Kim Jong-il regime would continue.

3. Japanese-ROK Defense Talks

The Asahi Shimbun ("MORI MEETS WITH CHONG: MORI GIVES CREDIT TO KIM DAE-JUNG'S SUNSHINE POLICY," 05/23/2000) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori met with ROK Defense Minister Chong Sun-dae at the prime ministerial residence in Tokyo on May 23 and discussed DPRK issues. The report quoted Mori as stating, "(The upcoming inter-Korean summit talks are) because of President Kim Dae-jung's patient sunshine policy.... I expect that talks on the missile and nuclear issues will also be promoted. These issues are significant to Japan, the US, and the ROK." The report also quoted Chong as stating regarding Japanese-ROK defense exchanges, "Cooperation in the defense area between the two countries is making smooth progress." Mori said in response, "For the sake of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific, it is important to strengthen friendly ties and to promote defense dialogue and exchange between Japan and the ROK. I want to facilitate our cooperation in the future."

4. Japan's Role at NPT Review Conference

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN PLAYED ROLE OF MEDIATOR AT NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE,"

05/22/2000) reported that Japan played the role of mediator between nuclear weapons states and a new agenda coalition (NAC) of 7 developing countries calling for total elimination of nuclear weapons at the recently-held review conference on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). The report said that there was a conflict between the two groups of the participants over whether a statement "that states should facilitate negotiations for nuclear disarmament by 2005" should be included in the final statement of the conference. Japan persuaded both sides to mutually compromise and help avoid a major deadlock. The report pointed out that Japan's positions as a major country and as the only victim county of nuclear bombs worked for Japan's diplomacy at the conference.

5. Tokyo Governor's Statement on PRC

The Daily Yomiuri ("ISHIHARA WARNS JIANG," Taipei, 05/22/2000) reported that Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara, who was visiting Taiwan for Taiwan's new President Chen Sui-bian's inauguration ceremony, said to reporters, "Hitler annexed Austria and Liechtenstein by force. If Jiang Zemin were to annex Taiwan by force, he would become the equivalent of the Hitler of China." The report added that Ishihara also reportedly said that the PRC would eventually become a dismembered state.

The Daily Yomiuri ("KONO SLAMS ISHIHARA FOR HITLER GAFFE," 05/23/2000) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono criticized Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara at a press conference on May 24. Kono stated, "Ishihara's remark was an impolite reference to another country's leader. The remark was inappropriate for a person in public office."

6. PRC Intelligence-Gathering Ship

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("PRC INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING SHIP PASSES TUGARU STRAIT," 05/25/2000) reported that the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) spotted the passage of a PRC intelligence-gathering ship through the Tsugaru Strait for the very first time. The report said that the ship was recognized by JMSDF escort ship Sawayuki and a P3C as a Yangbing Class intelligence-gathering ship. The report quoted a Japanese Defense Agency official as saying, "The passage seems to aim to demonstrate that the PRC Navy is becoming a blue water navy from a brown water one." The report added that although the Tsugaru Strait is designated by United Nations Law of the Seas as an international strait, through which any foreign ships can pass, JMSDF has confirmed the passage of 64 PRC ships in seas surrounding Japan since April.

7. Prime Minister's Controversial Statement

The Daily Yomiuri ("MORI HOPES TO END CONTROVERSY," 05/26/2000) reported that the Japanese Prime Minister decided to publicly explain his controversial statement that "Japan is a divine nation" to alleviate fears among government officials that the remark could adversely affect the ruling parties in the upcoming general elections. The report pointed out, however, that although Mori reportedly hopes to put an end to the ongoing controversy so he can concentrate on preparing the ruling bloc for the House of Representatives election, he could end up adding fuel to the fire if he fails to adequately answer reporters' questions about the remark. The report also pointed out that members of the Mori faction within the Liberal Democratic Party think that instead of providing such public explanations, Mori should take a more aggressive attitude toward the opposition camp by outlining new policies, including economic proposals, which would leave opposition parties scrambling to decide if they were for or against such measures.

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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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