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I. United States

1. US Congressmen DPRK Visit

BBC News ("US CONGRESSMEN VISIT NORTH KOREA," 05/30/03) reported that six US congressmen have begun a visit to North Korea, hoping to ease tensions in the crisis over the

DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons programs. They are the first US officials to be invited to the DPRK since the nuclear crisis erupted in October, but they have made clear they are not traveling as envoys of the US Government. The congressmen describe their visit as a "fact finding mission". They have asked for a tour of the controversial nuclear complex at Yongbyon which has been at the center of the nuclear stand-off, but it is not clear whether this will take place. The DPRK authorities announced that they were reactivating the plant following a US decision to suspend oil shipments to the country over suspicions that a secret uranium enrichment program was underway. The congressmen are expected to meet the chairman of the DPRK parliament, Kim Yong Nam, and visit various institutions including a school, a factory and a church. Territorial waters dispute The delegation leader, Curt Weldon, said they would be making clear that the world was ready to help economically and provide humanitarian help, but only if the DPRK was prepared to completely close down their nuclear program.

2. US on DPRK Official Defector

The Associated Press ("US WOULD PROTECT NORTH KOREA DEFECTOR," Washington, 05/30/03) reported that the US State Department would be willing to provide security arrangements for a US visit of a former DPRK official who defected seven years ago, a department official said Friday. The department also said it was prepared to undertake a threat assessment in advance of any visit, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity. Hwang Jang yop, a one-time close aide to the DPRK leader Kim Jong Il, defected to South Korea in 1996 and has lived there under the protection of the NIS, the South Korean equivalent of the CIA. Hwang is best known for his role in providing ideological orientation for the DPRK regime. The official said the State Department would coordinate security measures for Hwang with local and federal law enforcement authorities. The department made a similar commitment last year when the possibility of Hwang visit to the United States arose. Hwang has been invited by the Defense Forum Foundation, a Washington-based conservative group, to speak on Capitol Hill on June 20. "We remain hopeful and optimistic about our invitation to Hwang Jang yop to come to the United States," said Suzanne Scholte, president of the foundation. According to reports from South Korea, officials there are reluctant to allow him to go ahead with the visit because of concerns about his security

3. ROK-Japan Wartime Laborers

BBC News ("JAPAN COURT REJECTS KOREAN CLAIM," 05/30/03)

A Japanese high court has rejected a demand for compensation from 80 South Korean wartime laborers and their relatives in connection with an accident at the end of World War II. The former laborers were being transported back to Korea in 1945 on the Japanese-owned ship Ukishima Maru, when the vessel exploded and sank, leading to the deaths of more than 500 people. Friday's decision overturns a 2001 ruling by a Kyoto court, in which the Japanese Government was ordered to pay almost $400,000 to 15 Koreans who were on board the ship. But the laborers and their relatives had asked for $25m, as well as an apology from the Japanese Government, and both they and the government appealed against the Kyoto court's decision. Now the high court in Osaka has sided with the government, rejecting the Koreans' claim that the authorities failed to ensure the safety of the ship's passengers. Given the chaotic situation in the immediate aftermath of the war, it was unavoidable that risks would be present during the voyage, presiding judge Takaaki Okabe told the court, according to the French news agency AFP. Chong Sung-ryol, whose father was killed in the incident, said he could never accept the ruling. "I will pass on my father's grudge (from generation to generation) for a millennium," he said. He added that the Japanese judicial system did not treat Koreans fairly.

4. Japan-Russia Relations

The Japan Times ("KOIZUMI EYES MORE ISLAND TALKS," St. Petersburg, Russia, 05/30/03) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi voiced hope Friday that stalled territorial negotiations with Russia can be revived, according to Japanese officials. Tokyo views this process as a key step toward finally concluding a bilateral peace treaty for World War II. During talks with President Vladimir Putin in the ancient city of St. Petersburg, Koizumi asked the Russian leader to visit Japan in October, sometime before or after a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the officials said. The bilateral territorial dispute centers on four islands off Hokkaido. Referring to an oil pipeline project in Eastern Siberia, Putin was quoted as saying it is "extremely important to achieve the project." The Sakhalin-2 project is led by Sakhalin Energy Investment Co., a joint venture involving Mitsubishi Corp., Mitsui & Co. and the Royal Dutch/Shell Group. Japan has been lobbying Russia to build a pipeline from the Siberian city of Angarsk to Nakhodka, a port city on the Sea of Japan coast. A planned pipeline to China would run from Angarsk to Daqing, an inland city in China's Heilongjiang Province. The two leaders held their summit at a sports academy. They discussed a range of bilateral and other issues, believed to include the DPRK. This marks the first leg of a seven-day trip to Europe by Koizumi that started Thursday.

5. PRC Presidential World Tour

Reuters (Jeremy Page, "CHINA'S HU ON CHARM OFFENSIVE WITH WORLD LEADERS," St. Petersburg, Russia, 05/30/03) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao meets leaders of Canada, Poland and Greece on Friday on a diplomatic charm offensive designed to raise his profile and convince the world China can control SARS. On his first overseas trip as president, Hu will also meet the Indian and Japanese prime ministers on Saturday during celebrations marking the 300th anniversary of St Petersburg, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said. The flurry of talks, covering SARS, trade and trouble spots from Iraq to North Korea, will be a serious diplomatic test for the man who took over as head of the Chinese Communist Party in November and as state president in March. He was due to meet Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski on Friday before joining an anniversary dinner with dozens of other world leaders, the spokesman said. On Saturday, he holds bilateral talks with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. Hu met Russian President Vladimir Putin and Central Asian leaders this week and pledged that the PRC could maintain the pace of economic growth despite the spread of SARS, which has killed nearly 750 people worldwide, including 328 in the PRC.

6. Japan US Marines Relocation

The Washington Post (Doug Struck and Akiko Yamamoto, "MARINES ON OKINAWA UNDER REVIEW FOR RELOCATION," Tokyo, 05/30/03) reported that local officials on Okinawa welcomed a report today that the US Marines stationed there are included in a Pentagon review of force deployment in Asia. Such a move would be a dramatic turn in a long and often bitter dispute over the US presence in Japan. The Pentagon review already has provoked a major reaction in the ROK, where the United States plans to move 38,000 troops away from the Demilitarized Zone bordering the DPRK. "This would be good for both the Marines and for Okinawa," said Yoichi Iha, the mayor of Okinawa's Ginowan City. The large bases on the island's limited available land and occasional crimes by US servicemen -- most sensationally a 1995 rape of a 12-year-old girl by three servicemen -- have turned many Okinawans against the American presence. Undersecretary of Defense Douglas J. Feith was cited in today's Los Angeles Times as saying the troop deployment studies would mean "everything is going to move everywhere. There is not going to be a place in the world where it's

going to be the same as it used to be. . . . We're going to rationalize our posture everywhere -- in Korea, in Japan, everywhere." The report said that as many as 15,000 of the 25,000 troops on Okinawa would be moved to Australia. But US officials here said that decision has not been made, and Australia said it is not a destination for the Marines. "

The Washington Post ("US SAYS NOT MOVING MARINES FROM OKINAWA," Singapore, 05/30/03) reported that US Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said on Friday speculation the United States is considering moving troops from the Japanese island of Okinawa to Australia is wrong, but the US is looking at how its forces are positioned in the region. "There are things in that story, including the speculation that we might take our Marines out of Okinawa and move them into Australia, that simply has no foundation," he told reporters on the sidelines of a security conference in Singapore. He said the US administration was in the process of taking a fundamental look at its military posture worldwide.

7. Russia 300th Anniversary Celebration

The LA Times (David Holley, "RUSSIA'S 'WINDOW ON EUROPE' SHINES FOR FETE," St. Petersburg, Russia, 05/30/03) reported that more than 40 world leaders, including Bush, are helping celebrate St. Petersburg's 300th anniversary amid parties and summits. Few cities have ever seen a birthday bash like the 300th anniversary celebration unfolding in this former imperial capital, founded by Peter the Great as Russia's "Window on Europe." Most amazing is the guest list: heads of state or government from more than 40 countries, including President Bush, coming both to party and for a series of multilateral and bilateral summits that begin today. The high-profile events aim to promote Russia's deepening ties with Western Europe and the United States as well as to boost President Vladimir V. Putin's already considerable popularity and power. "There is no question that St. Petersburg is the symbol of the Westernized part of Russia's mentality," explained Yulia Demidenko, deputy director of the city's history museum. "Russia is looking for its own values that would be akin to European democracies', and St. Petersburg is the easiest place to demonstrate these political beliefs." The festivities themselves reflect an open spirit. The 10-day celebration, which runs through Sunday, has had lots of the offerings one might expect: outdoor evening concerts and ballet performances, with the sun up until nearly 11 p.m.; water shows on the Neva River featuring sailing ships, fireworks and laser displays; day-and-night hours at the famed Hermitage Museum in the former Winter Palace.

8. ROK Presidential Crisis?

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "CRITICISM TAKES TOLL ON SOUTH KOREAN LEADER," Seoul, 05/30/03) reported that barely three months into his five-year term, President Roh Moo Hyun is fighting for his political life. He spent the better part of an hour in a hastily organized nationally televised news conference here on Wednesday night fending off accusations of corruption involving real estate and using political influence in business. Roh said he had committed no illegal acts and later in the news conference he made an extraordinary plea for the public's trust. "I will accept any reprimand for any wrongdoing, but I earnestly appeal to you to not exhaust us anymore with wasteful debate," he said. Judging from the recent weeks of almost unrelenting bad news for Roh, however, the prospects of a swift end to the debate seem slight. News media coverage today was strongly skeptical, with the headline of one typical editorial, in The JoongAng Ilbo, saying, "The questions not answered." Roh recently expressed misgivings about the presidency itself and wondered, but only rhetorically, his aides insist, whether he would be able to continue in the job. "Recently, the problems I've been facing are too difficult," Roh was widely reported to have said last week at a meeting. "The nation's functions have become paralyzed, because everyone is trying to

resolve things with their strength. A president cannot concede to everything. With all this strain, I am beginning to think I can no longer be the president."

9. Japan Domestic Economy

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S ECONOMIC GLOOM CONTINUES WITH NEAR RECORD UNEMPLOYMENT RATE," Tokyo, 05/30/03) reported that Japan's economic woes were highlighted again in the release of new economic data showing the latest jobless rate staying near record high levels and lingering deflation. Japan's jobless rate in April was 5.4 percent, unchanged from March, though the number of unemployed workers rose 100,000 from the previous year to 3.85 million people, the government said Friday. The unemployment rate's historic high is 5.5 percent. "The continued high level of unemployment demonstrates that overall labor conditions remained challenging," a ministry official said.

10. PRC SARS Cover-up Denial

The Associated Press (Audra Ang, "CHINA DENIES SARS COVER UP IN BEIJING," Beijing, 05/30/03) reported that a top PRC health official denied claims that Beijing tried to hide the seriousness of the SARS virus, saying Friday that the government warned about SARS as early as February and early efforts to fight it were slowed by poor information. Gao Qiang, the executive deputy health minister, waved a copy of the Communist Party newspaper People's Daily, which reported about an atypical pneumonia Feb. 12 that had killed five people in Guangdong province and infected 305. The symptoms were similar to what now is known as severe acute respiratory syndrome, including fever, dry cough and chills, Gao said. The World Health Organization believes that SARS originated in Guangdong. "Infectious diseases are impossible to cover up," Gao said. "You may be able to cover up figures, but you can never cover up viruses." Gao's comments were the highest-level response yet to accusations that communist officials tried to cover up the extent of the illness. Gao repeated official explanations that an inadequate PRC public health network was to blame for earlier underreporting of the true scale of China's outbreak. "The Chinese government did not conceal the truth," Gao said.

11. SARS Development

CNN News ("SARS: TAIWAN CASES STILL RISING," 05/30/03) reported that following a spike in the numbers a day earlier, Taiwan's Center for Disease Control has announced seven new probable cases of SARS, bringing the cumulative total to 667. Thursday saw a dramatic rise of 50 as health officials shifted a significant number of suspected SARS cases into the probable category. The death toll from the illness on the island held steady at 81 for a second day. Taiwan is currently the most active region in the world for SARS, lagging only behind the PRC and Hong Kong in total cases.

The New York Times (Keith Bradsher, "FALLOUT FROM HONG KONG SARS WILL HIT FAR AND WIDE," Hong Kong, 05/30/03) reported that while SARS infections have ebbed across east Asia, the economic consequences will continue to be felt for months to come, business executives and economists predict. Tourism has proved very slow to recover across the region. Retail sales have only begun to rebound, leaving stores still stuck with huge inventories of goods that went unsold at the height of fears over SARS, and reluctant to order more from factories. Electronics companies complain that the development of new consumer products has been badly delayed because companies, afraid of SARS, barred engineers from traveling to the US, Taiwan and the PRC. Stores around the world will have fewer innovative computer printers, scanners and wireless network

devices on the shelves next Christmas, said Frank Huang, the chairman of the Taipei Computer Association. "There will be, because of SARS, a reduced number of products on the market, that is sure," during the crucial Christmas selling season, said Huang, who is also the chairman of Power Chip, one of Taiwan's largest makers of computer chips.

Reuters (Carrie Lee, "SARS VIRUS CAN LIVE FOR THREE DAYS ON PLASTIC - HK STUDY," Hong Kong, 05/30/03) reported that the SARS virus can survive for as long as three days on plastered walls, glass, plastic and other surfaces, Hong Kong researchers said on Friday. The findings, in a study from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, are based on samples taken from a hospital with SARS patients. The university, in a statement, said the virus that causes Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome could survive for 72 hours on surfaces such as stainless steel, plastered walls, glass, plastic and formica in a hospital setting. The findings come as Hong Kong said SARS had infected four more people in the city. The victims were believed to have caught the disease from SARS patients in the same hospitals. SARS has killed 274 people in Hong Kong since the epidemic began in March and infected 1,736. The virus surfaced in southern China late last year and has been spread around the world by air travelers. Asked about the study's findings, WHO spokesman Iain Simpson said in Geneva: "It is very difficult to give it a specific length of time because it varies from surface to surface and even place to place. "It is, I think, slightly longer than we have seen before but it is not particularly surprising." Doctors worry that the long life of the virus outside a host would make infections easier. Many of those who recently caught the disease in the city are believed to have picked it up from other hospital patients before the latter showed obvious SARS symptoms. "Preventive precautions are adequate in SARS wards. The worry is other wards with no suspected cases, or so called 'invisible cases'," Sydney Chung, Dean of the university's Faculty of Medicine, told a news conference. "The elderly people sometimes can have SARS and show no typical symptoms, not even fever. Those are dangerous situations," he said, urging hospital workers in all wards to take full precautions. The latest findings come after the World Health Organisation said earlier this month the SARS virus could live for days in the stool and urine of patients.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-DPRK Summit by Money

Joongang Ilbo (Jeon Jing-bae, Kang In-sik, "CASH-SUMMIT SNARES KIM'S AIDE," Seoul, 05/30/03) reported that the cash-for-summit scandal has officially touched the Kim Dae-jung Blue House for the first time with the arrest of a former senior secretary for economic affairs, Lee Ki-ho, just before midnight Wednesday. Friday, the independent counsel investigating the case will question the chairman of Hyundai Asan Corp., Chung Mong-hun; the firm's chief executive, Kim Yoon-kyu and the head of Hyundai Group's restructuring office, Kim Jae-soo. The three-year statute of limitations on several of the alleged crimes that are part of the scandal will run out in just over a week. Mr. Lee was arrested after prosecutors had questioned him at length about allegations that he had pressured the government-run Korea Development Bank to extend loans to Hyundai affiliates that exceeded the firms' credit limits. At least some funds from the loans eventually made their way to North Korean bank accounts in Macao with the help of the National Intelligence Service. Mr. Lee has denied any knowledge of the ultimate destination of the money, saying his arm-twisting was made in an effort to keep Hyundai affiliates afloat. The independent counsel plans to request a warrant Friday to detain Mr. Lee pending his formal indictment. The counsel's office said it is working under a June 9 deadline to complete its investigations and file charges. That is the date the Korea Exchange Bank wired funds to the North Korean accounts three years ago, immediately before former President Kim Dae-jung met North Korean leader Kim Jong-il in Pyeongyang. The three-year limit applies to violations of ROK's laws on DPRK-ROK cooperation and the Foreign Exchange Control Act.

2. Geumgang Tourism Restart

Joongang Ilbo ("GEUMGANG TOURISM MAY RESUME IN JUNE," Seoul, 05/30/03) reported that the Mount Geumgang tours in DPRK may be resumed early next month. The Asia-Pacific Peace Committee, the North Korean partner in the Mount Geumgang tour project, announced Thursday that it has asked North Korean health authorities, who halted the tours to keep the SARS virus out of DPRK, to relent. "Even though the threat of SARS has not completely disappeared, we considered the repeated requests of Hyundai Asan to continue the tours," the committee said. It wants to reopen the sea tours in June and the overland link to the resort in July. Those overland tours were halted in early March, almost immediately after they had begun. On April 26, the North Korean authorities halted visits by the cruise ship Hyundai Asan was using for the sea route to the resort.

3. US Fighter Jet Crash

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Young-sae, "US FIGHTER JET CRASHES IN OSAN," Seoul, 05/30/03) reported that the 7th U.S. Air Force has confirmed that a fighter jet crashed immediately after takeoff from Osan Air Base at about 8 p.m. Thursday. The pilot of the F-16 jet was injured, Air Force spokesman Staff Sergeant Andrew Leonhard said, and is now hospitalized. The pilot reportedly ejected from his craft before it crashed. The cause of the accident is under investigation. Other reports said one Korean civilian was also injured, but that has not yet been confirmed. The plane crashed inside the US base. US military authorities are asking any witnesses to contact the public affairs office at Osan Air Base.

4. US Lawmakers Visiting DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Chong-hyuk, "TRYING TO WORK OUT A DEAL, US LEGISLATORS HEAD NORTH," Washington) reported that six US lawmakers, all with the House of Representatives, will travel to DPRK for a three-day visit beginning Friday. One of the six lawmakers, Representative Curt Weldon, a Republican from Pennsylvania, held a news conference Wednesday before leaving, saying that the delegation will tell North Korean officials that economic aid and trade lie ahead if DPRK abandons its nuclear program and improves relations with US. He added that he would tell North Korean officials about opportunities for energy projects and humanitarian assistance. But he said, "There is a line drawn in the sand; your nuclear program must end unequivocally." However, the legislators stressed that they were not special envoys for the Bush administration, a claim backed up by Richard Boucher, spokesman for the U.S. State Department. Their visit marks the first visit by US legislators to DPRK since the North Korean nuclear crisis was triggered last October, and watchers are speculating that DPRK may send a message through the legislators to the Bush administration. The delegation will visit Seoul on Sunday to go over details of the visit, which includes a tour to DPRK's main nuclear complex at Yeongbyeon. The other delegates attending are Democratic Representatives Eliot Engel, Silvestre Reyes and Solomon Ortiz, and Republican Representatives Joe Wilson and Jeff Miller.

5. Hwang Jang-yop's Visit to Japan

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Young-jong, "NORTH DEFECTOR INVITED TO SPEAK AT JAPAN FIRM," Seoul, 05/30/03) reported that Hwang Jang-yop, a senior North Korean official who defected to ROK in 1997, has been invited to speak at a research institute in Japan, a former North Korean agent who defected to Japan said Thursday. Genki Aoyama, who is 62 and was a former North Korean intelligence agent before he defected to Japan in 1995, was in Seoul and personally met with Mr.

Hwang to hand him the invitation. Mr. Aoyama told the JoongAng Ilbo that Mr. Hwang has accepted. The invitation was from the Asia Pacific Research Center, a think tank affiliated with the Japanese business association, Keizai Doyukai, or Japan Association of Corporate Executives. Mr. Hwang is asked to visit Japan in mid-June and to speak to North Korean defectors and refugees who are trying to get legal status in Japan. Mr. Aoyama was a Korean American and a former member of the pro-DPRK General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, or Chongryon, before he was sent to DPRK to study and work in the intelligence division of the Workers' Party. An official with the National Intelligence Service said authorization for Mr. Hwang's trip would have to be preceded by an official confirmation of security guarantee by the inviting country.

III. Japan

1. Japan's Role in Iraq Reconstruction

Kyodo ("JAPAN, SAUDI ARABIA EYE COOPERATION," Riyadh, 05/27/03) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah agreed Sunday to cooperate in assisting in the postwar reconstruction of Iraq as well as enhancing dialogue both bilaterally and between Japan and the entire Arab world. Koizumi expressed his condolences over the suicide bombing attacks earlier this month in the Saudi capital. On Iraq and other Middle East issues, including the conflict between Israel and Palestinians, Koizumi told the prince that although Japan's influence is limited compared with the US, there are things it can do to help resolve the situations. Crown Prince Abdullah was quoted by the official as responding, "We completely trust Japan and will cooperate with anything it sets out to do" in terms of helping to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East and the world.

Kyodo ("KOIZUMI STILL UNDECIDED ON SDF DISPATCH TO IRAQ," Tokyo, 05/27/03) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Tuesday he is still undecided on whether to create a new law to send the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to Iraq, while he referred to the need to keep discussing the issue and watching the situation in Iraq. "I'll thoroughly consult (with people in the ruling coalition). I'll do it if (I find it) necessary," Koizumi told reporters at his office. Meanwhile, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a regular news conference, "We haven't decided whether to make a new law" on dispatching the SDF to Iraq to help with international reconstruction projects. Fukuda also denied recent media reports that the government will send a team to Iraq soon to research what kind of missions SDF personnel could be involved in to help Iraqis in light of Japan's war-renouncing Constitution, which largely restricts its overseas activities.

The Asahi Shimbun ("TALKS ON SDF-IRAQ LEGISLATION DELAYED," 05/29/03) reported that a decision on when to start debating whether to dispatch the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to Iraq has been postponed until after early June, government officials said Wednesday. The secretaries-general of the three ruling coalition parties agreed Wednesday to delay the decision on whether to submit a bill on the dispatch to the current Diet session. They said discussions on the SDF dispatch to help rebuild Iraq should not interfere with the ongoing debate in the Upper House on a package of bills to prepare the country for military emergencies.

The Asahi Shimbun ("NEW IRAQ DISPATCH PLAN: SDF ONLY TO 'SAFE AREAS'," 05/30/03) reported that the Japanese government and the ruling coalition are considering a compromise -- sending the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) only to "safe areas" in Iraq for logistical support to US and British forces, sources said Wednesday. The "safe-area" concept would allow the SDF to take part in the reconstruction of Iraq without the Diet having to relax restrictions on weapons use by SDF soldiers. Sources said bills to dispatch the troops to Iraq would have a much easier time of it in the

Diet if changes in weapons policy are not included. This would allow the government and the ruling parties to submit the bills to the current Diet session due to end June 18. However, other sources in the ruling parties said that even the "safe areas" bills would require a substantial extension of the Diet session. With Iraq almost universally dangerous, "safe areas" might be limited to airports, the sources said. Within these locations, SDF members could handle supplies for US and British forces engaged in keeping the peace, they said.

2. Japan Military Emergency Legislation

The Japan Times (Nao Shimoyachi, "DPJ POLITICIAN SEEKS MORE EFFECTIVE WAR CONTINGENCY PLAN," 05/29/03) reported that Japan needs to do more than simply adopt war contingency legislation in order to counter an imminent threat of a ballistic missile attack, a top Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) security expert said Wednesday. "Whether the nation is able to properly react when a missile is about to fly into our territory is another subject that needs to be discussed now," said Lower House opposition politician Seiji Maehara. Maehara's negotiations with his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) counterpart, Fumio Kyuma, paved the way for the DPJ to jointly amend and support the government-sponsored legislation with the LDP-led ruling camp. The bills, which define Japan's response to foreign military attacks, are now before the Upper House. Maehara and Kyuma, who described each other as "best negotiation partners," were appearing together before reporters at the Foreign Corespondents' Club of Japan in Tokyo. They both emphasized that enactment of war contingency legislation does not mean changes in Japan's postwar security policy of limiting any actions to self-defense. However, Maehara underlined that self-defense should not mean simply sitting back and waiting to be attacked. "Using offensive weapons for defensive purposes does not pose a threat to the Constitution," he said, referring to the question of compatibility with Japan's war-renouncing Constitution. Maehara hinted that acquisition of Tomahawk missiles is one of the options being considered, saying that he felt during a recent trip to the US that the US government favors Japan possessing the weapons. Maehara and Kyuma agreed that possession of intercontinental ballistic missiles goes beyond the scope of self-defense, and flatly denied suggestions that Japan would adopt nuclear weapons. They said Japan would rely on the US for offense capabilities of that type. The two also agreed on the need to revise the Constitution, saying the current geopolitical situation in northeast Asia is markedly different from when it was drawn up more of than half a century ago.

3. Japan-US Joint Military Drill

Mainichi Daily News ("JAPANESE FIGHTER JETS HEAD TO ALASKA FOR EXERCISES," Chitose, Hokkaido, 05/28/03) reported that six Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) F-15 fighters left their base in Chitose on Wednesday to take part in US-led multilateral exercises called "Cope Thunder" in Alaska, officials said. The ASDF has sent its planes to the Cope Thunder exercise six times in the past, but this is the first time that Japan's fighter jets have joined the 16-day drill that kicks off on June 5. During the 7-hour trip to Alaska, US Air Force planes will provide aerial refueling services to the jets, the officials said. Before the fighters' departure, the ASDF carried out air-to-air refueling service training in the sky over Kyushu, western Japan, in April by using a tanker plane on loan from the US Air Force. Only two weeks earlier, the ASDF and US forces in Japan conducted the same refueling training near the US Air Base in Misawa, Aomori Prefecture. The Defense Agency plans to deploy its first tanker plane designed for aerial refueling in fiscal 2006, the officials added. Japan's Asian neighbors are monitoring the development closely because they argue that tanker planes that allow fighters to travel longer distance are not necessary for the defense-oriented Japanese forces.

4. Japanese Photographer Bomb Explosion

Mainichi Daily News ("JORDAN TO RULE ON JAPANESE JOURNALIST BOMB BLAST," Amman, 05/28/03) reported that the Jordanian state security court will hand down a ruling on a Mainichi newspaper's photographer Hiroki Gomi on Sunday over the fatal bomb blast at an airport on May 1, local sources said Wednesday. During the final hearing of the case involving Gomi, 36, a lawyer representing him insisted that he could not be charged with illegal possession of a bomb because he didn't know the bomb he had picked up in Iraq could explode. Prosecutors told the court in the hearing on May 27 that Gomi had to be found guilty because they said he knew the object was an explosive.

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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