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I. United States

1. Reported Kim Jong-il Visit to PRC

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREAN LEADER RETURNS HOME AFTER CHINA VISIT," Beijing, 5/31/00) reported that according to the ROK's Joongang Ilbo daily, DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il has reportedly made a secret visit to the PRC for talks with PRC leaders ahead of the June inter-Korean summit. Both the ROK and the PRC refused to confirm the report, but ROK diplomats in the PRC admitted that they were taking it seriously. A PRC railway official at Shenyang, the last major city before the DPRK border, said that a special train was due to pass through on Wednesday afternoon en route for Pyongyang. The official would not say whether Kim would be aboard. The daily quoted

diplomatic sources in Beijing who said that Kim arrived by train on May 29 and held talks with PRC President Jiang Zemin on May 30. The paper said that the two leaders discussed bilateral issues, with Kim asking for the PRC's position on the June 12-14 summit between the DPRK and ROK. The PRC foreign ministry has repeatedly refused to confirm Kim's visit over the past two days, but spokesman Sun Yuxi said on Wednesday, "we can neither confirm it nor deny, but keep your eyes and ears open." The Associated Press (Christopher Torchia, "SPECULATION ON WHERE IS KIM JONG IL," Seoul, 5/31/00) reported that the location of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il was a matter of speculation Wednesday among analysts, diplomats and government officials because of published reports that he was secretly in the PRC. Yasuhiko Yoshida, a DPRK expert at Japan's Saitama University said, "It's quite possible. It's his style. He does everything incognito." The debate focused new attention on the DPRK's efforts to resuscitate an alliance with the PRC that has cooled in the past decade. Hwang Jang-yop, a high-level DPRK government official who defected in 1997, said that Kim likes to work alone, faxing late-night instructions to subordinates. Lee Jong-seok, an analyst at the Sejong Institute, a private research center in the ROK, said, "if Kim Jong Il is indeed in China, it is a good sign for the summit."

2. DPRK Refugees in PRC

The New York Times (Elisabeth Rosenthal, "BEIJING STEPS UP EFFORT TO EXPEL ILLEGAL NORTH KOREAN IMMIGRANTS," Yanji, 5/31/00) reported that PRC police in recent months have sharply increased their efforts to expel DPRK Nationals living undercover in the PRC, creating a climate of fear along the border and fueling a potentially explosive international refugee crisis. Aid groups on the border say that the number of "food migrants" sent back has at least doubled this year, to as many as 2,000 a month. The office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said that the problem was that a number of the people whom the PRC government call "food migrants" probably meet the criteria for protected political refugee status, which would make their return illegal under international law, but the PRC government is not allowing UN workers to travel to the border to make that determination, even though it has signed related treaties. It is unclear exactly why the PRC is now making greater efforts to enforce its long-standing policy that the Koreans are economic migrants who must go home, but experts point out that the PRC government are hoping for a visit this year from DPRK leader, Kim Jong-il, and are also fearful that their own resources will be overwhelmed by the growing stream of DPRK arrivals. The UN refugee agency has quietly expressed concern to the PRC about its poor access. A Western scholar who studies Korea said, "if these people were from Cuba, or Vietnamese boat people, they would absolutely be considered political refugees. But this is very delicate." [Ed. note: This article was included as a Top Story in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 31, 2000.]

3. Inspection of DPRK Underground Site

The Associated Press ("US INSPECTS NORTH KOREAN MILITARY SITE," Washington, 5/31/00) reported that US State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said on Wednesday that a second visit by a US technical team to a suspected nuclear site in the DRPK yielded no evidence of disturbing activities. Reeker said, "the team found conditions unchanged since the first visit a year ago in May 1999. It remains an unfinished site, the underground portion of which is an extensive, empty tunnel complex." He said that the team reported that the DPRK officials cooperated fully and provided unhampered access for the visit. Reeker said that the DPRK officials have said that the site was intended for unspecified national security purposes but that the government is willing to consider other uses for it, including commercial uses. He also said that bilateral talks with the DRPK last week in Rome were "conducted in a serious and constructive manner, and we made progress." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May

31, 2000.]

4. Construction of Light-Water Reactor

The Los Angeles Times carried an opinion article by Jim Mann, ("'BRIBERY' BECOMES A KEY COMPONENT IN US-NORTH KOREA ARRANGEMENT," Washington, 5/31/00) reported that about 100 DPRK Nationals have walked off the job at the construction site where the ROK, US, and Japanese allies are building two nuclear reactors for the DPRK. The DPRK workers reportedly want higher wages from their foreign employers. The workers have been paid US$110 a month since 1997 but are now said to want a raise to US$600. Mann noted that if the strike represented the introduction of labor freedom in DPRK, it would be a welcome development, but "Such ideas are preposterous. North Korea's 'strike' isn't independent and isn't for the benefit of the workers. It's yet another organized attempt by the North Korean regime to hustle a bit more money from the outside world. Increasingly, the North Korean economy runs on the money--bribes might be a more accurate word--that it can persuade or threaten other countries to give it." Nicholas Eberstadt, a DPRK expert at the American Enterprise Institute said, "Trade dropped by more than 30 percent in 1997-98 and has continued to plummet ever since. Aid extraction has become critical to state survival in North Korea." Wu Xinbo, a scholar speaking at the Woodrow Wilson International Center earlier this month, said that the US and the PRC have been working together on the "three no's" for North Korea:" no war, no nuclear weapons and no collapse." Mann wrote that the first two goals are unchallengeable, "but you might wonder why the Clinton administration should want to prevent the collapse of North Korea, a regime it often denounces as a 'rogue state.' Could it be that keeping North Korea alive serves hidden US government interests? No one wants to answer hard questions about the future of America and Asia after North Korea collapses. And so, absurd as Pyongyang's monetary demands may be, the administration finds it easier just to pay up and shut up." [Ed. note: This opinion article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 31, 2000.]

5. ROK-DPRK Summit

Agence France Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN TEAM ARRIVES IN PYONGYANG TO PREPARE FOR SUMMIT," Panmunjom, 5/31/00) reported that a 30-member ROK advance team crossed into the DPRK on Wednesday to put the final touches to preparations for June's inter-Korean summit. The team was led by ROK assistant unification minister Sohn In-Kyo who said the trip was aimed at finalizing technical details, including communications and security, for the summit. ROK officials said that hours after he arrived in the DPRK, Sohn reopened inter-Korean telephone hotlines that have remained idle since September 1992. The ROK's Yonhap news agency said that the DPRK had informed the PRC of its decision to close their border from June 1-25 for security purposes ahead of the inter-Korean summit.

6. Foreign Visits to DPRK

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA LIMITS ENTRY UNTIL JULY," Beijing, 5/31/00) reported that DPRK officials and aid workers said that the DPRK is limiting visitors to bolster security for June's inter-Korean summit. Foreign-aid groups, tourists and even the Australian ambassador have in recent days been refused permission to visit the DPRK in June. While the DPRK government has given various explanations, one aid worker said the DPRK was banning visitors for the month "to ensure security for the summit." When asked if it was possible to visit the DPRK next month, a consular officer at the DPRK Embassy in the PRC said, "It's impossible," refusing to elaborate. An aid

official said that the Red Cross has been told it may not send new representatives into the DPRK in June. An official for another international relief agency said that the ban did not cover aid workers already based in the DPRK, who may enter and leave the country, but whose travel inside the DPRK will be restricted to Pyongyang and Nampo, the port that handles most aid shipments. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 31, 2000.]

7. ROK-Japan-US Relations

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN DENIES PLAN FOR SUMMIT WITH SOUTH KOREA, US," Tokyo, 5/31/00) reported that Japan denied a report by the Kyodo News agency on Wednesday that it was considering a summit with US and ROK leaders on the sidelines of former prime minister Keizo Obuchi's memorial service next week. Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Mikio Aoki said, "At this moment we are not considering it. As the schedule is very tight I think it is probably impossible." A foreign ministry spokesman said that no three-way meeting was planned but "we cannot deny the possibility of a bilateral meeting between Japan and the United States or between the United States and South Korea."

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Leader's Reported Visit to PRC

The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "KIM JONG-IL RUMORED TO BE VISITING BEIJING," Seoul, 05/30/00) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is rumored to be secretly visiting the PRC prior to the inter-Korean summit. PRC officials did not confirm the rumor, saying that they are not in a position to comment on the trip, fanning speculation that Kim may be in Beijing. As it was the case with the late DPRK leader Kim Il-sung's trips to Beijing which became known to the outside world belatedly, it is highly likely that the truth of the rumor might become known after the rumored trip is wrapped up. Officials said that the sources of the rumor are witnesses who allegedly spotted Kim Jong-il or a few luxurious cars attached to a Pyongyang-Beijing train, used exclusively by top DPRK officials. However, they did not rule out the possibility that a senior DPRK official, instead of Kim, might be visiting Beijing for consultations over the unprecedented summit. An ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Ministry official said, "At present, we are making all-out efforts to figure out the allegations related to Kim Jong-il's visit to China." If Kim or a senior DPRK official really visited the PRC at this time, ROK officials believe the trip was aimed at wooing support on the DPRK's positions prior to the summit.

2. Sealing of DPRK Nuclear Fuel Rods

Joongang Ilbo (Jung Sun-gu, "U.S. FINISHS SEALING USED NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR FUEL RODS," Seoul, 05/30/00) reported that the Washington Post said on May 29 that the US has finished sealing 8,000 used nuclear fuel rods that were taken from the Yongbyon nuclear plant in the DPRK. The report was based on source inside the US government. The Post also said that the work was managed by a company from Atlanta, Georgia that had completed the sealing of an estimated 8000 rods over the last two months under tight surveillance. Among these rods, about 10 were lost during transportation, but it was reported that this is not enough to manufacture a bomb.

III. People's Republic of China

1. DPRK Agriculture

People's Daily (Zhang Xinghua, "DPRK MAKES EFFORTS TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION," Pyongyang, 5/30/00, P7) reported that the DPRK is implementing a series of policies and measures to improve agricultural production. Those measures included leveling land, building water conservancy projects, and applying science and technology to agriculture production. The DPRK also encouraged people to develop forestry and livestock breeding. The author believed that under the leadership of the DPRK Party and Government, DPRK people would find a path of developing agriculture with the DPRK's own characteristics, although increasing agricultural production was a difficult task due to the many years of economic difficulties in the DPRK.

2. ROK-DPRK Cultural Exchange

Jie Fang Daily ("PYONGYANG CHILDREN PERFORMERS MAKE A SENSATION IN SEOUL," Seoul, 5/27/00, P7) reported that the first performance given by a DPRK student art ensemble on May 26 was well received by more than 2000 ROK spectators. This was the first visit of DPRK artist to the ROK since the separation of the Korean Peninsula. Those DPRK students would hold four more performances in the ROK.

3. ROK-Japanese Summit

People's Daily (Wang Linchang, "ROK, JAPAN LEADERS HOLD TALKS," Seoul, 5/30/00, P6) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori held talks in Seoul on May 29. The two sides expressed satisfactions with the governmental cooperation and unofficial exchanges with each other and said that they would further develop good- neighborly and friendly relationship geared to the 21st century. During the meeting, Kim briefed Mori on the ROK's preparation work for the forthcoming summit between the two Koreas. He said that the improvement of relations between Japan and DPRK was conducive to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and that the ROK government would provide assistance on the matter. Mori told Kim that his government comprehensively supported the summit and that Japan had a strong willingness to realize the normalization of its relationship with the DPRK. The two sides agreed to closely cooperate on their policies towards the DPRK and to promote the development of ROK-DPRK and Japanese- DPRK relations.

4. PRC-US Relations

China Daily ("PRESIDENTS ENGAGE IN PHONE TALK," 5/29/00, P1) reported that PRC President Jiang Zemin and US President Bill Clinton had a phone conversation regarding Sino-US relations on the evening of May 28. Jiang said that bilateral ties have been steadily improving. Facts have proven that the choice that the two countries have made is correct, and complies with the common interests of the people of both countries and the trend of times, he said. Jiang said that the key for achieving the smooth and stable development of Sino-US relations in the new century is to properly handle the Taiwan issue. Clinton said that the US will continue to steadfastly stick to the one-China policy. Jiang also expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by US people from all walks of life, and especially Clinton, in realizing permanent normal trade relations with the PRC.

China Daily (Shao Zongwei, "BILL'S PASSAGE SEEN AS 'WISE'," 5/26/00, P1) reported that PRC

officials said on May 25 that the US House of Representatives' passage of a bill granting the PRC permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) status was "wise," but that certain provisions within the measure are not. PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said that the provisions, in effect, interfere in the PRC's internal affairs under the guise of human rights.

5. PRC-Japanese Relations

People's Daily (Wu Yimin, "JIANG MEETS JAPANESE OFFICIALS," 5/31/00, P1) reported that Hiromu Nonaka, secretary-general of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party, said on May 30 that the Japanese cabinet led by Yoshiro Mori will continue late Prime Minister Obuchi's policy of advancing good- neighbor relations with the PRC. During a meeting with the secretaries- general of three Japanese Government coalition parties, PRC President Jiang Zemin expressed the hope that the PRC and Japan would develop relations with a view toward the younger generations and peace among all people. Nonaka, Tetsuzo Fuyushiba of the New Tomeito Party, and Takeshi Noda of the New Conservative Party went to the PRC on May 29 for a two- day good-will visit at the invitation of the PRC government. Nonaka gave Jiang a letter from Yoshiro Mori, who said that Jiang and Obuchi's exchange of visits in 1998 and 1999 helped set the course for developing two-way ties. Jiang said that the PRC and Japan are important neighbors and influential countries in the Asia-Pacific region as well as in the world. He said that leaders of the two countries should see bilateral relations from a long-term strategic point of view.

China Daily (Sun Shangwu, "COMING VISIT SHOULD HELP CHINA-JAPAN TIES," 5/30/00, P1) reported that PRC Premier Zhu Rongji will visit Japan in October to help foster friendship between the two countries. Zhu's announcement came as Hiromu Nonaka of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party, Tetsuzo Fuyushiba of the New Komeito Party, and Takeshi Noda of the New Conservative Party arrived in Beijing on May 29 for a two-day good-will visit on behalf of Prime Minister of Yoshiro Mori. During the meeting, Zhu said that Sino-Japanese relations are improving on the whole, with a series of agreements by PRC President Jiang Zemin and the late Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi being carried out. Zhu hoped that Mori's cabinet will continue to promote the development of bilateral relations. Japanese leaders should stick to the one-China principle with respect to Taiwan and help the friendship by drawing on lessons from Japan's early 20th-century occupation of China, the premier emphasized. Nonaka gave Zhu a letter from Mori and said that the visit to the PRC shows that Mori's cabinet values good-neighbor relations. On the question of Taiwan, Nonaka said that the Japanese government would observe and not sway from principles in the Sino-Japanese Joint Statement, which backs up the Japanese government's one-China stance. He said that Japan hopes that Taiwan and the PRC may settle disputes as an internal issue through direct negotiations.

6. PRC-Indian Relations

People's Daily (Che Yuming, "PRESIDENT JIANG HOLDS TALKS WITH NARAYANAN," Beijing, 5/30/00, P1) reported that PRC President Jiang Zemin and his visiting Indian counterpart Kocheril Raman Narayanan exchanged their views on bilateral relations and issues of common interest in Beijing on May 29. During the meeting, Jiang put forward four points of opinions for the future development of PRC-Indian relations. The four points were: to increase personnel exchanges that would enhance mutual trust, to develop economic and trade cooperation, to strengthen cooperation in international affairs, to promote a new world political and economic order to safeguard the rights of developing countries and to promote world peace and stability, and to properly handle the questions left over by history. Jiang said that the PRC has always taken a positive attitude towards the resolution of the border issue, but that it would take time and patience. He hopes that with the

spirit of mutual understanding and accommodation, the two countries would seek fair and equitable resolution through negotiations. The two leaders agreed to work towards a settlement of the border issue. They also stressed the importance of maintaining peace along the border before final settlement of the issue.

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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