NAPSNet Daily Report 5 May, 2008

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 5 May, 2008", NAPSNet Daily Report, May 05, 2008, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-5-may-2008/

NAPSNet Daily Report 5 May, 2008

NAPSNet Daily Report 5 May, 2008

Contents in this Issue:

- I. Napsnet
  - 1. DPRK Nuclear Program
  - 2. ROK Role in Afghanistan
  - 3. ROK Peacekeeping Operations
  - 4. ROK Energy Procurement
  - 5. Bird Flu in ROK
  - 6. US-ROK Trade Relations
  - 7. ROK-Japan Relations
  - 8. Japanese Constitutional Revision
  - 9. Sino-Japanese Relations
  - 10. Sino-Japanese Territorial Dispute
  - 11. PRC Navy
  - 12. Tibet Unrest
  - 13. PRC Viral Outbreak
  - 14. Cross Strait Relations

- 15. Cross Strait Relations
- 16. Taiwan Diplomacy

Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Herald (Lee Joo-hee, "U.S. TEAM TO RETURN TO N.K. THIS WEEK", Seoul, 2008/05/05) reported that the U.S. team of working-level experts led by U.S. State Department director Sung Kim will revisit Pyongyang this week to fine-tune the plutonium records to be included in the DPRK nuclear declaration, sources said on the condition of anonymity Monday. The U.S. State Department was yet to confirm the exact itinerary for the U.S. team.

Donga Ilbo ("NUCLEAR WARHEADS LIKELY TO BE LEFT OUT OF N. KOREA'S REPORT", Seoul, 2008/05/03) reported that the report that the DPRK is expected to submit includes records of plutonium-producing Yongbyon reactor, the total amount of plutonium has extracted, as well as nuclear-related records, including the daily log of a 5 MW nuclear reactor, a source said. A government official said on Friday that, “At the current stage, it is too early to include nuclear warheads in the North Korean report. Given the state-of-the-art nuclear-related technology we have today, it is no longer hard to figure out exactly how much plutonium has been extracted if we obtain certain amounts of samples and the dates of operation of the nuclear reactor.”

(return to top)

2. ROK Role in Afghanistan

Korea Times (Kim Se-jeong, "AFGHANISTAN EXPECTS BIGGER KOREAN ROLE", Seoul, 2008/05/05) reported that Afghanistan Ambassador to the ROK Mohammad Karim Rahimi expressed appreciation for the ROK's assistance in reconstruction projects in his country. "We believe Korea can play a bigger role in promoting peace, stability and reconstruction of Afghanistan. And it's a suitable time for Korea as an economic power which traveled a long distance in a short period of time with good development plans," Rahimi said in an interview with The Korea Times.

(return to top)

3. ROK Peacekeeping Operations

Seoul (Lee Joo-hee, "SEOUL REVIEWS SENDING PKO TROOPS TO DARFUR", Seoul, 2008/05/05) reported that the ROK government will closely review the possibility of joining the peace keeping

operation in Darfur, Sudan, sources said Monday. "A team of working-level officials from the Foreign Ministry, the Defense Ministry and the Joint Chiefs of Staff visited the site last month for three to four days," a source said on condition of anonymity. "We have decided to cautiously consider sending troops after thoroughly reviewing the situation in (Darfur) by sending one or two more teams to the site," the source said. "The final decision will be made after taking into consideration not only the situation in (Darfur) but also the public sentiment here," the source said.

(return to top)

4. ROK Energy Procurement

Korea Herald ("WHAT HINDERS ENERGY DIPLOMACY?", Seoul, 2008/05/05) reported that Prime Minister Han Seung-soo is embarking on a trip to Central Asia this week as part of a new drive to expand energy diplomacy. However, critics have slammed President Lee Myung-bak's approach as inadequate "megaphone diplomacy." In a meeting with reporters, Ha Chan-ho, ambassador to Iraq, said it was important for energy diplomacy to be implemented "substantially and quietly." "There are side effects such as giving the upper hand (to the counterpart country) by excessively emphasizing (energy diplomacy)," Ha said.

(return to top)

5. Bird Flu in ROK

Yonhap (Lee Joon-seung, "GOV'T TAKES DRASTIC ACTION TO CHECK BIRD FLU SPREAD", Seoul, 2008/05/05) reported that the ROK government said Monday that it will kill and bury 400,000 birds in Anseong after a poultry farm reported a suspected avian influenza outbreak over the weekend. The measure that affects 12 poultry farms in the city 77 kilometers south of Seoul is being taken despite the lack of definitive test results indicating why several thousand birds died suddenly, the Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries said.

(return to top)

6. US-ROK Trade Relations

Korea Herald ("SEOUL GOES AHEAD WITH BEEF IMPORT PLANS", Seoul, 2008/05/05) reported that the ROK said Monday it will go ahead with resuming U.S. beef imports later this month. The government earlier indicated that the latest deal is expected to take effect around May 15, enabling Seoul to restart quarantine inspections of U.S. beef and subsequently hand them over to importers for sale. The Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries ruled out the possibility of delaying the regulatory process, despite opposition from politicians and the public.

(return to top)

7. ROK-Japan Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun (Yasuhiro Maeda, "S. KOREAN CITY SAVES JAPANESE QUARTER", Naju, 2008/05/05) reported that the municipal government of Naju, South Jeolla Province has set about

preserving and reproducing a quarter comprising Japanese-style houses that were built during Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945. Though the project could trigger controversy over historical issues, the city government was upbeat, saying the plan could deepen ties with Japan.

(return to top)

8. Japanese Constitutional Revision

Associated Press ("THOUSANDS RALLY FOR JAPAN CONSTITUTION", Tokyo, 2008/05/04) reported that thousands of activists, artists and scholars gathered Sunday for the "Global Article 9 Conference to Abolish War" outside Tokyo, vowing to promote the Japanese Constitution's war-renouncing Article 9 as a global standard and prevent the clause from being weakened. "We believe that Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution constitutes a world-class model for peace and should be protected as a global treasure for future generations," the event's organizers said in a statement.

Asahi Shimbun ("POLL: 66% WANT ARTICLE 9 TO STAY AS IS", Tokyo, 2008/04/05) reported that Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution should not be revised, said 66 percent of voters in a recent Asahi Shimbun survey. That figure is a sharp increase from 49 percent in a similar survey last year. In the nationwide poll to mark Constitution Day, only 23 percent of respondents said they believed the article should be revised, down from 33 percent a year ago. While 56 percent of voters said the Constitution should be amended, 54 percent of those in favor of amendment said Article 9 should remain intact, compared with 37 percent who said the article should be revised.

(return to top)

9. Sino-Japanese Relations

Agence France-Presse ("MAJORITY OF JAPANESE WANT HARDER LINE ON CHINA: POLL", Tokyo, 2008/05/05) reported that 51 percent of Japanese believe their country should take a tougher stance on the PRC, according to a new poll Monday in the Mainichi Shimbun. The ratio was twice as large as the 26 percent who wanted Japan to be "more friendly" towards China, according to the May 1-2 telephone poll of 1,042 adults nationwide.

Kyodo ("JAPAN TRIP BY CHINA'S HU EYES OVERALL TIES, TO LOOK PAST ROWS", Beijing, 2008/05/05) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao is set for a trip to Japan this week that is expected to focus on improving overall relations rather than lingering on bilateral disputes and differences over Tibet. ''I am confident that through joint efforts by both sides, this visit will be able to achieve the expected results,'' Hu told a group of Japanese reporters Sunday. ''The Chinese side expects some kind of nice statements from the Japanese prime minister'' on the history issue, said Joseph Cheng, a professor at City University of Hong Kong. ''But it is a very soft demand, and should be quite easy to meet.''

Yomiuri Shimbun ("FUKUDA, HU EXPECTED TO OK REGULAR VISITS", Tokyo, 2008/05/05) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and PRC President Hu Jintao are likely to agree during their talks scheduled for Wednesday on building a framework for alternating annual visits by leaders of the two countries, Japanese and Chinese government sources said. The

agreement is expected to be incorporated in political documents that Fukuda and Hu are scheduled to announce after the talks Wednesday, the sources said.

(return to top)

10. Sino-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Kyodo ("JAPAN, CHINA TO FORGO AGREEMENT OVER GAS EXPLORATION DISPUTE", Tokyo, 2008/05/05) reported that Japan and the PRC are expected to forgo striking an agreement over a bilateral dispute over gas exploration rights in the East China Sea in a meeting between Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and President Hu Jintao slated for Wednesday in Japan, sources close to Japan-China relations said Sunday. The two sides apparently could not close gaps on their positions concerning the area where joint gas development should take place, the sources said. The two countries could still agree on such issues as setting a target date for reaching an agreement, they said.

(return to top)

11. PRC Navy

Wall Street Journal Asia (Richard D. Fisher, Jr., "CHINA'S NAVAL SECRETS", 2008/05/05) carried an opinion article by a senior fellow at the International Assessment and Strategy Center, who wrote that the PRC's new naval base near Sanya, a city on the southern tip of Hainan Island, could allow the PRC to assert its longstanding and expansive territorial claims in the South China Sea, and this plan could raise tensions well beyond the region. Sanya features much larger piers for hosting a large fleet of surface warships, a new underground base for submarines and comfortable facilities that would attract technically proficient soldiers and sailors.

(return to top)

12. Tibet Unrest

Agence France-Presse (Robert J. Saiget, "CHINA ACCUSES DALAI LAMA OF 'MONSTROUS CRIMES', DESPITE TALKS", Beijing, 2008/05/05) reported that PRC officials and two envoys of the Dalai Lama met in southern China on Sunday for their first talks in over a year. The highly secretive talks in an undisclosed location in Shenzhen ended with an agreement to meet again, although no date was set and no other major breakthrough was reported, according to Xinhua news agency. "The fact we are once again in contact is very vital for a solution to the Tibetan issue," Thubten Samphel, spokesman of the northern India-based Tibetan government-in-exile, told AFP by phone. PRC President Hu Jintao on Sunday voiced hope that progress would be made in the talks and that he wanted future channels of negotiation to remain open.

(return to top)

13. PRC Viral Outbreak

Associated Press (Charles Hutzler, "CHINA ORDERS HEIGHTENED EFFORTS TO STOP DEADLY

VIRUS", Beijing, 2008/05/04) reported that the PRC on Sunday raised the death toll to 24 following the outbreak of a virus in another province a day after the Health Ministry ordered heightened efforts to stem the spread of infectious diseases. Stepped up vigilance by health bureaus and hospitals to prevent the spread of infectious diseases was necessary "to guarantee the smooth staging of the Beijing Olympics and Paralympics and to ... preserve social stability," said the order posted on the ministry's Web site. As of early Saturday, 3,736 cases of EV-71 were reported in Fuyang's mainly rural outskirts, a rise of 415 in about 24 hours, health officials said. Besides the 22 deaths, 1,115 people remain hospitalized, 42 of them in serious or critical condition, said the health department of Anhui Province, where Fuyang is located.

(return to top)

14. Cross Strait Relations

Los Angeles Times (Mark Magnier, "TAIWAN BUSINESSMEN CAUGHT UP IN CHINA SPY CASES", Taipei, 2008/05/03) reported that by some accounts, 800 Taiwanese are in PRC jails, many allegedly on trumped-up charges of espionage. Experts, some of whom declined to be identified given their work and the topic's sensitivity, say the Taiwanese intelligence community has been hurt by high turnover and bureaucratic muddle, prompting it to rely increasingly on businessmen and students, with serious consequences for the quality of information. "The intelligence community in Taiwan is in very bad shape," said Wu Yu-shan, an analyst with the Academia Sinica think tank in Taipei.

(return to top)

15. Cross Strait Relations

New York Times (Jonathan Adams, "AWAITING TOURISM DEAL, TAIWAN IS PRIMED FOR MORE MAINLAND CHINESE VISITORS", Taipei, 2008/05/05) reported that Taiwan President-elect Ma Ying-jeou, hopes to triple the cap on PRC tourists to 3,000 a day, or more than one million per year. Last year 320,169 mainlanders visited Taiwan, but only 81,900 came officially as tourists, according to Mainland Affairs Council of Taiwan. The rest were listed as business travelers or “others.”

(return to top)

16. Taiwan Diplomacy

Associated Press ("TAIWAN SCANDAL OVER MISSING FUND EXPANDS", Taipei, 2008/05/04) reported that Vice Minister of Defense Ko Cheng-heng was questioned Saturday night over the loss of $29.8 million that the government had set aside for establishing diplomatic ties with Papua New Guinea, the Defense Ministry said in a statement. The scandal broke last week after a newspaper reported authorities were suing a Taiwanese man identified as Ching Chi-ju in an attempt to recover the missing money. Ching has disappeared. Ching allegedly acted as an intermediary in a later-abandoned attempt by Taiwan to secure ties with Papua New Guinea. The funds were intended for economic aid to the Pacific nation once diplomatic relations were established.

(return to top)

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-5-may-2008/

Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org