

# **NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, April 18, 2005**

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## I. United States

- 1. [US on DPRK Reactor Shutdown](#)
- 2. [ROK on DPRK Reactor Shutdown](#)
- 3. [ROK on US-ROK OPLAN 5029](#)
- 4. [DPRK on US-ROK OPLAN 5029](#)
- 5. [DPRK on Military Policy](#)
- 6. [Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 7. [KEDO LWR Project](#)
- 8. [DPRK on Nuclear Export Allegations](#)
- 9. [Inter-Korean Relations](#)
- 10. [Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation](#)
- 11. [Inter-Korean Infrastructure](#)
- 12. [ROK Aid to the DPRK](#)
- 13. [Abductee Issue](#)
- 14. [Japan-DPRK Archeology Project](#)
- 15. [DPRK on ROK Maritime Border Violation](#)
- 16. [DPRK Returns Fisherman to the ROK](#)
- 17. [Woman in Japan Returns to DPRK](#)
- 18. [DPRK Day of the Sun Holiday](#)
- 19. [ROK on US-ROK Relations](#)
- 20. [US on ROK Balancer Doctrine](#)
- 21. [Japan Textbook Issue](#)
- 22. [Sino-Japanese Relations](#)

23. [US on Sino-Japanese Relations](#)
24. [EU on PRC Arms Ban](#)
25. [Cross Strait Relations](#)
26. [Sino-Australian Trade Relations](#)
27. [PRC Space Program](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

## **I. United States**

### **1. US on DPRK Reactor Shutdown**

The New York Times ("STEPS AT REACTOR IN NORTH KOREA WORRY THE U.S.", 2005-04-18) reported that the suspected shutdown of a reactor at the DPRK's main nuclear weapons complex has raised concern at the White House that the country could be preparing to make good on its recent threat to harvest a new load of nuclear fuel, potentially increasing the size of its nuclear arsenal. An American scholar with unusual access to the DPRK's leaders, Selig S. Harrison, a longtime specialist on DPRK at the Center for International Policy, said after visiting the country two weeks ago that he was told by a very senior DPRKorean that there were plans "to unload the reactor to create a situation" to force President Bush to negotiate on terms more favorable to the DPRK. That focused new attention on spy satellite photographs of the reactor, which has been watched intensively in recent months. While American officials would not discuss what the spy satellites had seen, commercial satellite photographs of the plant, taken by DigitalGlobe and interpreted by the Institute for Science and International Security in Washington, show that the plant was apparently shut down or shifted to a very low power level at least 10 days ago, around the time of Mr. Harrison's visit.

[\(return to top\)](#) The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA NUKE SHUTDOWN RAISES CONCERNS", 2005-04-18) reported that the apparent shutdown of a nuclear reactor in the DPRK is raising concerns among Bush administration officials that Pyongyang has completed the task of producing spent fuel rods laced with weapons-grade plutonium. But a US official familiar with the situation said there could be at least two other possibilities, neither of which is troubling: that the reactor has run into mechanical trouble or that the DPRK is bluffing in order to raise anxieties. [\(return to top\)](#)

### **2. ROK on DPRK Reactor Shutdown**

Chosun Ilbo ("N.K. HAS SHUT DOWN REACTOR, SEOUL CONFIRMS", 2005-04-18) reported that Seoul has had confirmation "through several channels" that the DPRK has shut down a 5MW nuclear reactor in Yongbyon, an official said. "Only if you shut down the reactor can you extract the nuclear fuel rods, and if you remove the fuel rods, you can turn them into nuclear weapons through reprocessing," an official said. "That the reactor's operation has been suspended probably means that the North has started making nuclear weapons."

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap news ("SEOUL BELIEVES NORTH KOREA SUSPENDED REACTOR 'TEMPORARILY'", 2005-04-18) reported that the ROK believes the DPRK suspended a key nuclear reactor "temporarily for technical reasons," a senior government official said Monday, rejecting reports that the move may be tied with efforts to remove spent fuel rods from the reactor. "For now, the suspension isn't seen as aimed at the removing of spent fuel rods," he said on condition of

anonymity. "But, this is just the current situation. As intelligence assessments can change, we're closely monitoring (the situation)." [\(return to top\)](#)

### **3. ROK on US-ROK OPLAN 5029**

Choson Ilbo ("SEOUL SHELVES COMBINED FORCES N.K. CONTINGENCY PLAN", 2005-04-15) reported that Seoul has slammed the brakes on a fresh operational plan by ROK and US military for five contingencies in the DPRK, including civil disorder and massive natural disaster, it emerged. The ROK National Security Council (NSC) in January asked for suspension of the plan it says could infringe the country's sovereignty. The NSC said in a press release it was told by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in December that Combined Forces Command was promoting OPLAN 5029, "and after consultations with relevant bureaus, it concluded it was necessary to suspend the promotion of the operational plan."

[\(return to top\)](#)

### **4. DPRK on US-ROK OPLAN 5029**

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREA LASHES OUT AT US-SOUTH KOREAN 'WAR PLAN'", 2005-04-18) reported that the DPRK lashed out at a US-ROK military plan, which Seoul said it had vetoed, for armed intervention in the event of instability in the DPRK. A spokesman for the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland warned it had already built an "invincible deterrent" to frustrate the plan, the Korean Central News Agency said. The spokesman denounced the contingency plan, codenamed OPLAN 5029-05, as showing the US was intent on toppling the DPRK despite denials of any intention to attack the DPRK.

[\(return to top\)](#)

### **5. DPRK on Military Policy**

Yonhap ("N. KOREA NOT AFRAID OF U.S. INVASION: REPORT", 2005-04-17) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il said his country does not fear a US invasion as it puts priority on its military-first policy, the DPRK's state-run media reported Sunday. "Our country will remain unstirred as long as I put importance on guns and maintain Songun policy," Kim was quoted as saying by the North's Central Broadcasting Station.

[\(return to top\)](#)

### **6. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue**

Interfax ("STATE DUMA DELEGATION TO DISCUSS COOPERATION, NUCLEAR PROBLEM IN PYONGYANG", 2005-04-18) reported that a delegation of the State Duma International Committee led by Committee Chairman Konstantin Kosachyov will visit Pyongyang on May 5-7 at the request of DPRK parliamentarians. Kosachyov told Interfax that the delegation would first visit Vladivostok and Nakhodka to consider trans-border cooperation projects, which might be of interest for the DPRK. He said they would try "to encourage the resumption of six-nation negotiations on the nuclear problem."

[\(return to top\)](#)

## 7. KEDO LWR Project

Yonhap news ("N. KOREA, KEDO CONSORTIUM TO DISCUSS LIGHT WATER REACTORS 19 APRIL", 2005-04-18) reported that the DPRK and a US-led international consortium are scheduled to hold talks in the DPRK this week over a suspended project to build two nuclear reactors in the energy-starved DPRK, officials said Monday. During the 19-20 April talks in Hyangsan, North Pyongan Province, the two sides are likely to discuss honoring a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the safety of workers, and preservation and maintenance of the reactor site in the DPRK's remote northeastern coastal village of Kumho, as well as the DPRK's demands, officials said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## 8. DPRK on Nuclear Export Allegations

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA ACCUSES WASHINGTON OF FABRICATING NUCLEAR INFORMATION", 2005-04-18) reported that the DPRK accused the US of fabricating information, citing a US news report which said the US government wrongly claimed the DPRK had exported nuclear material to Libya. The DPRK was reacting to a Washington Post report last month that said the Bush administration told its Asian allies earlier this year that the DPRK had sold nuclear material to Libya, when the shipment in fact went first to Pakistan.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## 9. Inter-Korean Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("KIM JONG-IL 'SENDS MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT ROH'", 2005-04-18) reported that it was learned Sunday that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has given former Indonesian president Megawati Sukarnoputri a message to pass on to ROK President Roh Moo-hyun. Prof. Kim Su-il of Pusan University of Foreign Studies, who accompanied Megawati when she called on Roh ahead of her visit to Pyongyang, said he was told this by the former Indonesian leader, who returned to Beijing from Pyongyang on Friday. Attention is focusing on the message as it appears it will deal with either an intra-Korean summit or the Kaesong Industrial Complex.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## 10. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Chosun Ilbo ("INTER-KOREAN PROJECT FUNDING RISES", 2005-04-18) reported that despite a two-and-a-half-year standoff over the DPRK's nuclear pursuits, findings show that support for inter-Korean projects has increased consistently. Figures by the Export-Import Bank of Korea reveal the amount of funds used to support economic projects in the DPRK grew from W2.2 billion, or almost US\$2.2 million in 1991 to more than W500 billion in 2001.

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("S.KOREA SEEKS TO ALLOW OVERSEAS BORROWING ON NORTH", 2005-04-18) reported that the ROK plans to revise laws so it can borrow overseas to fund greater economic cooperation with the DPRK after the crisis over the DPRK's nuclear ambitions is resolved, the Unification Ministry said on Monday. ROK President Roh Moo-hyun said in Germany last week the country was willing to begin paying the costs of unification with the impoverished DPRK even before it occurred, but there would be no major aid until the nuclear crisis was over. [\(return to top\)](#)

## **11. Inter-Korean Infrastructure**

Joongang Ilbo ("SOUTH TO GIVE NORTH MORE RAILROAD AID ", 2005-04-18) reported that the ROK agreed yesterday to provide 26 billion won (\$25.8 million) in material and equipment to be used to rebuild and improve rail facilities in the DPRK. The spending is designed to reconnect severed rail lines between the two Koreas. The supplies will be used to plan and build six stations in the DPRK, the government said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **12. ROK Aid to the DPRK**

Choson Ilbo ("CARITAS CALLS FOR EMERGENCY AID TO N. KOREA", 2005-04-18) reported that an international Catholic relief organization, Caritas says the DPRK still needs a great deal of humanitarian aid. In its latest online newsletter, the organization urged other global relief groups to provide emergency humanitarian aid to the poverty-stricken DPRK, saying the isolated country is still desperately in need of food and medical supplies. The report comes after members of Caritas visited the DPRK in February and realized again that the people there are experiencing hardship.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **13. Abductee Issue**

Kyodo News ("JAPAN SEEKS TO RESUME ABDUCTION TALKS WITH N. KOREA", 2005-04-18) reported that Japan wants to break the current impasse and resume bilateral talks with the DPRK to resolve Pyongyang's abductions of Japanese nationals, top government spokesman Hiroyuki Hosoda said. "Japan continues to hope to put utmost efforts to resolve the abduction issue by strongly urging North Korea to resume talks, but the other side shows no sign of moving at the moment," Hosoda, the chief Cabinet secretary, said in a press conference.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **14. Japan-DPRK Archeology Project**

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, N. KOREA EXPERTS TO RESEARCH ANCIENT TOMBS IN N. KOREA", 2005-04-16) reported that Japanese experts and DPRK officials have agreed to carry out joint research into ancient tombs on the outskirts of Pyongyang, a goodwill ambassador for the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization said Saturday. Ikuo Hirayama, who is also a renowned Japanese artist, told reporters after a five-day visit to the DPRK that experts from the two countries plan to work together to find out about the tombs dating back to the Rakrang Kingdom, which was established in 108 B.C. Much still remains a mystery regarding the tombs, a significant number of which is believed to exist in areas surrounding Pyongyang, Hirayama said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **15. DPRK on ROK Maritime Border Violation**

Yonhap news ("N. KOREA ACCUSES SOUTH OF VIOLATING MARITIME BORDER", 2005-04-18) reported that the DPRK accused the ROK of sending a warship into its territorial waters off the west coast on Monday. The DPRK's Navy Command claimed that a ROK warship violated its western

maritime border from 11:35 a.m. until 12:05 p.m. It also accused the ROK of committing similar maritime-border violations on Friday and Saturday.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **16. DPRK Returns Fisherman to the ROK**

Joongang Ilbo ("FISHERMAN TO RETURN TO SOUTH ", 2005-04-18) reported that the DPRK officials said that Hwang Hong-ryeon, a 57-year-old ROK fisherman who guided his boat toward the DPRK Wednesday after a round of drinking, will be returned today along with his boat. The homecoming comes five days after Mr. Hwang crossed the Northern Limit Line ? an invisible sea border dividing waters between the Koreas ? after warning shots by the Coast Guard. Officials said Mr. Hwang will be returned by sea, across the Northern Limit Line. Since the summit meeting between the two countries in 2000, the DPRK has returned most ROK defectors who wanted to come back.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **17. Woman in Japan Returns to DPRK**

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA ANNOUNCES RETURN OF WOMAN WHO WAS SMUGGLED OUT OF THE NORTH IN 2003", 2005-04-18) reported that the DPRK launched a new propaganda offensive against Japan on Monday, announcing the return of a Japanese-born woman who said she was tricked into being smuggled out of the DPRK in 2003 after living there for four decades. Choking back tears, Ahn Pil Hwa appeared at a 10-minute news conference at the DPRK Embassy in Beijing and said she was going back to the DPRK after two years in Japan because she missed her two sons and grandchildren there. Ahn said she was tricked into leaving the DPRK, though her account suggested she went willingly.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **18. DPRK Day of the Sun Holiday**

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA FETES BIRTHDAY OF LATE GREAT LEADER KIM", 2005-04-18) reported that excitement and joy reigned in the DPRK, official media reported, as the DPRK celebrated the 93rd anniversary of the birth of Kim Il-sung, its founder and eternal president. Pyongyang was pulling out all the festive stops for Kim's birthday, which it calls "the Day of the Sun." Floral tributes were placed beneath Kim's statues across the country, DPRK media said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **19. ROK on US-ROK Relations**

Choson Ilbo ("ROH TRIES TO CALM FEARS OF RIFT WITH U.S.", 2005-04-18) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun attempted to calm fears of a rift between the ROK and the US, telling Korean residents in this Turkish economic center the allies' relationship was changing "little by little" and the ROK was making its voice heard more. "Somewhat embarrassing remarks are sometimes exchanged between working-level officials" from the US and ROK, Roh said. "Whereas politicians and senior leaders accommodate world trends and make political judgments, working-level officials are apt to regard the flow and changes of the times as inconveniences." Roh added there was nothing abnormal about the ROK-US alliance, which he reiterated was being "managed



satisfactorily."

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("ROH HITS OUT AT STAUNCH SUPPORT FOR US", 2005-04-18) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun said Sunday he has been suffering setbacks due to stalwart conservatives stubbornly backing the US. Roh expressed concern over the Korean people who speak in support of the US more proactively than US citizens. "They act in a way more like Americans than Americans," he said. The need has been growing to appropriately coordinate the differing opinions between the ROK and the US with regard to the changing order in East Asia, he said. [\(return to top\)](#)

## 20. US on ROK Balancer Doctrine

Korea Times ("US ACCEPTS SEOUL'S ROLE OF 'BALANCER'", 2005-04-18) reported that the US fully accepted the ROK's strategic initiative to play a balancing role in Northeast Asia, although there are still some private sector experts who worry about the negative impact it might have on the two nations' alliance, a high-ranking diplomat said. Kim Sook, director general of the North American Affairs Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, said after returning from a trip to Washington that the governments of the allied powers came to a definite understanding about the controversial "balancer" strategy.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## 21. Japan Textbook Issue

The New York Times ("IN JAPAN'S NEW TEXTS, LESSONS IN RISING NATIONALISM", 2005-04-18) reported that in a region where history remains unresolved, the fight over the past is often a fight over the future. Oddly, to Westerners at least, the focus of PRC fury was Japan's approval of junior high school history textbooks that critics say whitewash Japanese aggression in Asia. This wasn't the only textbook tempest, and it may not be the last. Japan objected that the PRC's patriotic education breeds anti-Japanese sentiments, and the ROK castigated the Japanese textbooks for allegedly trying to justify a colonialist past. "In all three countries, there is a tendency to propagandize history," said Jee Soo Gol, a professor of history education at Kongju National University in the ROK.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## 22. Sino-Japanese Relations

Washington Post ("JAPAN-CHINA TALKS FAIL TO EASE TENSIONS", 2005-04-18) reported that the foreign ministers of the PRC and Japan met for urgently arranged talks Sunday as anti-Japanese protests continued in several PRC cities. The two sides later reported little progress in resolving the political and territorial disputes that have plunged relations between the Asian powers to their lowest point in decades. "The Chinese government has never done anything for which it has to apologize to the Japanese people," Li said without smiling or shaking hands with Machimura in front of reporters. "The main problem now is that the Japanese government has done a series of things that have hurt the feelings of the Chinese people."

[\(return to top\)](#) The New York Times ("NO APOLOGY FROM CHINA FOR JAPAN PROTESTS", 2005-04-18) reported that the PRC's top diplomat said Sunday that he saw no need to apologize for a wave of violent protests against Japan, as a seething dispute over history and territory between Asia's two leading powers showed few signs of easing. Raucous protests against Japan broke out in several PRC cities, including Shenyang, in the northeast, and the thriving economic zone of Shenzhen in the south, though there seemed less damage to property than during a spree of vandalism in Shanghai

on Saturday. [\(return to top\)](#)

## **23. US on Sino-Japanese Relations**

Reuters ("U.S. TOKYO ENVOY CONCERNED ABOUT JAPAN-CHINA DISPUTE", 2005-04-18) reported that the US is concerned about recent tensions between Japan and the PRC but does not think the dispute will affect six-way talks on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, Washington's new ambassador to Japan said Monday. "We are concerned about the tension that has existed here recently," Thomas Schieffer told reporters at his inaugural news conference. Asked if the tension would affect the six-way talks, he said: "I don't think it will."

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **24. EU on PRC Arms Ban**

The New York Times ("EUROPE URGES LINKING LIFTING OF CHINESE ARMS BAN TO RIGHTS", 2005-04-18) reported that Europe seemed farther away than ever from lifting its 16-year-old arms embargo on the PRC on Thursday, after statements by the German foreign minister and a vote in the European Parliament, both of which urged linking the embargo question to human rights. "We want to reach a consensus, but this requires that everyone in the European Union votes in favor," Joschka Fischer, the German foreign minister, said in a parliamentary debate on the embargo question. "For this, it is necessary for China also to move." Mr. Fischer called on the PRC to "ease administrative detentions and above all move toward a peaceful settlement of the disputes across the Taiwan Strait."

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **25. Cross Strait Relations**

Agence France Presse ("CHINESE PRESIDENT INVITES TAIWAN OPPOSITION LEADER SOONG TO MAINLAND", 2005-04-18) reported that the PRC President Hu Jintao invited Taiwan opposition leader James Soong to visit the mainland, just weeks after Beijing feted a high-level Kuomintang party (KMT) delegation. Soong's People First Party, in alliance with the KMT, forms the main opposition to Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party, led by independence-leaning President Chen Shui-bian. Xinhua news agency said Hu invited Soong to "head a People First Party delegation to tour and visit the mainland," citing Taiwan Affairs Office director Chen Yunlin.

[\(return to top\)](#)

## **26. Sino-Australian Trade Relations**

The Associated Press ("CHINA, AUSTRALIA AGREE TO FREE TRADE TALKS ", 2005-04-18) reported that the PRC and Australia on Monday agreed to start talks on a free trade pact. PRC Commerce Minister Bo Xilai and Alan Thomas, Australia's ambassador to the PRC, signed a memorandum of understanding that opens the way for a formal free trade agreement between the two countries. No other details were released.

[\(return to top\)](#)



## 27. PRC Space Program

The Associated Press ("CHINA BUILDING BASE TO BOOST SPACEFLIGHT", 2005-04-18) reported that the PRC is building a new space center in Shanghai to boost its manned spaceflight and satellite launching programs, an official newspaper said Monday. The new about 200-acre base will consolidate and expand operations of the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology, the China Daily said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

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