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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("KIM JONG-IL TELLS U.S. TO LIFT SANCTIONS ", 2006-05-08) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has told a visiting PRC official that Pyongyang will return to the multilateral dialogue table only if Washington lifts financial sanctions against the DPRK, Japan's Kyodo News Agency reported. PRC State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan reportedly made a secret visit to the state in late April as a special envoy of PRC President Hu Jintao. He is said to have urged the DPRK to return to the dialogue process soon, saying it is in its best interest to do so.

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2. DPRK Defectors

KBS News ("MORE N.K. DEFECTORS SEEKING ASYLUM IN U.S.", 2006-05-08) reported that another group of DPRK defectors is seeking asylum in the US following the recent arrival of six compatriots there. A ROK civic organization on Monday declined to give details but said their arrival in the US will likely come this month. An organization source said special US special envoy for DPRK human rights Jay Lefkowitz is involved in the matter, hinting at US assistance for the latest group of defectors.

[\(return to top\)](#) Dong-a Ilbo ("UN TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR DEFECTORS ", 2006-05-08) reported that on May 5, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said that it will step up efforts to protect and support DPRK defectors in the PRC and Mongolia this year. At a press conference held at the Washington National Press Club on that day, the UNHCR announced its 2006 work plan. In particular, the UNHCR urged the PRC government to prepare a proper law covering the refugee issue and strengthen its legal protection and aid for DPRK defectors applying for asylum. [\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("ASYLUM FOR DEFECTORS", 2006-05-08) reported that the US' recognition of refugee status for six DPRK defectors last week is drawing keen attention from diplomatic watchers here. In the past, Washington only allowed politically important figures, such as Pyongyang's ambassadors abroad, to take refuge in the US. So, the "ordinary" defectors' arrival in the US Friday appears to be a turning point in US policy. [\(return to top\)](#)

3. Inter-Korean Cultural Cooperation

Korea Times ("TREASURES FROM NK SEE SUNLIGHT IN THE SOUTH", 2006-05-08) reported that a total of 90 significant cultural treasures owned by the DPRK arrived in Seoul on May 4 for a special exhibition in June. The exhibition will run from June 12 to Aug. 16, offering for the first time a chance for people in the ROK to see cultural properties from the DPRK.

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4. Inter-Korean Flood Incident

JoongAng Ilbo ("FLOOD HITS IMJIN RIVER, NORTH KOREA BLAMED", 2006-05-08) reported that residents of northern Gyeonggi province, along the Imjin River, are calling it an "attack" by the DPRK. A sudden surge of floodwater hit the area Saturday; residents and officials said the only explanation was that the DPRK had opened the floodgates of its April 5th Dam on the river without prior notification.

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5. Kim Dae-jung's DPRK Visit

Korea Times ("DJ WILL DISCUSS NK LEADER'S RECIPROCAL VISIT", 2006-05-08) reported that a senior presidential aide said Monday former President Kim Dae-jung will likely discuss a possible visit by DPRK leader Kim Jong-il to the ROK when they meet next month in Pyongyang. ``That (Kim Jong-il's reciprocal visit to the South) is an agreement already made between the two during the summit on June 15, 2000," Seo Joo-seok, senior presidential secretary for unification, foreign and security policy, said in a radio interview. ``The process of reaffirming the agreement could lead to discussion on ways to realize it in a natural manner."

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6. Kaesong Industrial Complex

Yonhap ("UNIFICATION MINISTER TO VISIT KAESONG AMID U.S. CRITICISM", 2006-05-08) reported that the ROK's point man on DPRK affairs is to visit the DPRK's border city of Kaesong this week amid US criticism of an industrial park there for ROK companies employing thousands of DPRK workers. Unification Minister Lee Jong-seok is to visit the joint industrial complex on Tuesday with a group of ROK reporters covering his ministry, ministry officials said Monday.

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7. ROK on DPRK Human Rights

KBS News ("PRESSURE NOT TO IMPROVE N.K.'S HUMAN RIGHTS", 2006-05-04) reported that Vice Unification Minister Shin Un-sang says political reform and economic progress, not external pressure, will improve the human rights situation in the DPRK. In an international forum in Seoul Thursday, Shin said pressing the DPRK over its human rights and suspending exchanges or food aid would only hurt the DPR Korean people.

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8. UN-DPRK Food Aid

Kyodo News ("WFP OFFICIAL TO VISIT N. KOREA TO DISCUSS FUTURE OPERATIONS", 2006-0-08) reported that a senior official of the World Food Program will visit the DPRK from Tuesday for negotiations over the UN body's conditions for resuming operations in the country, the WFP said Monday. Tony Banbury, the WFP's regional director for Asia, will meet with DPRK government officials during his two-day visit, the agency said in a statement.

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9. DPRK-PRC Trade

Associated Press ("TRADE BETWEEN NORTH KOREA, CHINA SURGES", 2006-05--08) reported that trade between the DPRK and the PRC rose to a record last year as the DPRK becomes increasingly dependent on its No. 1 trade partner for food and energy, a ROK trade agency said Monday. The volume of trade between the two countries rose 14 percent in 2005 from the year before to a record \$1.58 billion, according to the ROK's state-run Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency, or KOTRA.

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10. US-Japan Security Alliance

Kyodo ("KOIZUMI EYES DISCUSSING FUTURE JAPAN-U.S. ALLIANCE WITH BUSH", 2006-05-08) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi indicated Monday he is considering discussing with US President George W. Bush the future of the bilateral alliance in talks expected to take place in June. Referring to Defense Agency chief Fukushima Nukaga's recent proposal that Tokyo and Washington map out new documents for the evolving security alliance, Koizumi said, "I would like to deliver my ideas (to Bush)...based on all aspects of future Japan-U.S. relations."

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11. USFJ Troop Realignment

Kyodo ("DEFENSE CHIEF NUKAGA DEFENDS REALIGNMENT PACT WITH U.S.", 2006-05-08) reported that Defense Agency Director General Fukushima Nukaga on Sunday defended a recent Japan-US accord on the realignment of US forces in Japan, saying it is part of the bilateral alliance which has maintained peace here for the last 60 years. Nukaga said the agreement helps ensure Japan's security, challenging critics who fear greater defense consolidation with the US may draw Tokyo into unwanted military conflicts.

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12. US-Japan Base Security Cooperation

Agence France-Presse ("NET LEAK REVEALS US TRAINING TO JAPAN IN RIOT CONTROL", 2006-05-08) reported that US Marines have taught Japanese troops how to suppress potential riots near US bases, in training that came to light after Japanese defense files were accidentally leaked over the Internet. The training took place last year on the southern island chain of Okinawa, which hosts most US military facilities in Japan and has seen frequent friction between troops and residents.

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13. US-Japan Aerospace Cooperation

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN, US PLAN TO DEVELOP SUPERSONIC JET ", 2006-05-07) reported that Japanese and US aerospace agencies and companies plan to develop a low-noise, fuel-efficient supersonic jet to take off where the Anglo-French Concorde ended, a press report said. The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and its giant US counterpart NASA will work out the details of the joint programme in June.

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14. Japan-PRC Relations

Kyodo ("JAPAN, CHINA HOLD 2ND DAY OF WORKING-LEVEL TALKS", 2006-05-08) reported that Japan and the PRC held the second day of their three-day senior working-level talks Monday, an official at the Japanese Embassy in Beijing said while declining comment on the discussions themselves.

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15. US-Taiwan Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN LEADER'S US STOPOVER SNUB WON'T HURT TIES: ANALYSTS", 2006-05-06) reported that Taiwan and the US should be able to maintain their strong ties despite President Chen Shui-bian being denied a high-profile US visit en route to Latin America, analysts say. "The downgraded transit arrangement is aimed at Chen personally, and his rejection to the offer would make his future dealings with the US more difficult. However, it should not affect the overall Taiwan-US relations," said Emile Sheng, a political science professor at Soochow University.

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16. PRC Three Gorges Project

The Associated Press ("REPORT: CHINA TO EVACUATE 80,000 PEOPLE", 2006-05-08) reported that the PRC will move another 80,000 people this year from areas to be flooded by rising waters behind the colossal Three Gorges Dam, the official Xinhua News Agency said Monday. The evacuees are among the roughly 1.3 million being moved to make way for the \$22 billion dam on the Yangtze River in central PRC, the world's biggest hydroelectric project.

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17. PRC Bishop

The Associated Press ("CHINA'S OFFICIAL CHURCH NAMES NEW BISHOP", 2006-05-08) reported that the PRC's official Roman Catholic church named a new bishop Sunday — reportedly with papal approval — as Beijing rejected Vatican criticism of the unauthorized ordination of two other bishops. The Rev. Paolo Pei Junmin was named assistant bishop of Shenyang, the biggest city in the PRC's northeast, said Liu Bainian, deputy chairman of the official church, the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, which has no ties to Rome.

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18. PRC Land Rights

The Los Angeles Times ("ENTERING SPLITSVILLE, CHINA", 2006-05-08) reported that an astounding 98% of Renhe's married couples officially parted, according to the local government. The couples believed they were taking advantage of a legal loophole that allowed them to get an extra apartment. In a country where the government has seized farm after farm to feed a building boom, the villagers figured that if they were going to lose the land that had supported them for generations, they should at least try to get a better deal.

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19. Japan-Mongolia Relations

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("GOVT TO PROVIDE 300,000 DOLLARS FOR MONGOLIA PROJECT", 2006-05-08) reported that the Japanese government has decided to contribute 300,000 dollars to the Mongolian government over three years starting this fiscal year to help broaden the Asian nation's "One Village, One Product" program, government officials said Saturday. The campaign is to

revitalize local villages and towns by promoting one special product from each area to make a name for themselves and boost rural economies.

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20. ROK-Mongolia Relations

United Press International ("S.KOREA, MONGOLIA TO DEVELOP RESOURCES", 2006-05-08) reported that the presidents of the ROK and Mongolia agreed Monday in Ulaanbaatar to jointly develop Mongolia's natural resources including copper, oil and coal. ROK President Roh Moo-hyun, in Mongolia for a three-day visit, signed a declaration with his counterpart Nambaryn Enkhbayar to bolster mutually beneficial ties, the Korea Herald reported.

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