



NAPSNet Daily Report Thursday, April 07, 2005

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Thursday, April 07, 2005", NAPSNet Daily Report, April 07, 2005, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-thursday-april-07-2005/>

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I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Reuters ("NO SIGN N.KOREA RETURNING TO NUKE TALKS: OFFICIAL", 2005-04-07) reported that the US has no indication the DPRK is ready to return to six-country nuclear talks, despite a Japanese newspaper report that it had agreed to do so, the State Department said. "Not to our knowledge. We have no indication that North Korea has yet agreed to return to the table," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters. He said the US remained ready to hold talks without preconditions and urged the DPRK to return to the table for "serious discussions."

[\(return to top\)](#) Yomiuri Shimbun ("6-WAY TALKS MAY RESUME IN MID-MAY; N. KOREA WILL RETURN TO TABLE IF HU PAYS VISIT", 2005-04-07) reported that six-nation talks aimed at getting the DPRK to abandon its nuclear programs may resume as early as mid-May as there are definite signs that the DPRK will return to the negotiating table in return for PRC President Hu Jintao agreeing to visit the reclusive nation, a senior US official said. Hu's visit to Pyongyang was reportedly decided upon during talks between DPRK First Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok Ju, who visited the PRC through Tuesday, and a senior PRC official, the US official said. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. US, Japan on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Choson Ilbo ("U.S., JAPAN 'MULLING JUNE DEADLINE FOR NUKE TALKS'", 2005-04-07) reported that Japan's Nihon Keizai Shimbun on Thursday said the US and Japan were considering a June deadline for the DPRK to return to six-party talks. The paper said the hardline position was borne of suspicions that by hinting off and on it may return to the talks, Pyongyang is trying to buy time to become a nuclear power in fact as well as in name. US President George W. Bush has so far said he will not set a deadline for restarting the stalled talks, but a source in the Republican Party told the Nihon Keizai a full-scale review was underway below the surface whether to continue with the six-party talks.

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3. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Joongang Ilbo ("REPORT: CHINESE ENVOY FORESEES TALKS RESUMING", 2005-04-07) reported that the PRC's envoy to the UN was quoted Wednesday as saying that the DPRK could return to the six-party talks on its nuclear arms programs as early as June. "I think it will be a couple months. Everyone is talking about June," the Bloomberg news service quoted Wang Guangya as saying. The remark came soon after a visit to the PRC by Kang Sok-ju, the DPRK's first vice minister of foreign affairs, to discuss the six-party talks.

[\(return to top\)](#) Kyodo News ("CHINA SEES NO NEED TO CHANGE 6-WAY FRAMEWORK FOR N. KOREA", 2005-04-07) reported that the PRC sees no need to change the framework of the six-way talks on the DPRK's nuclear programs, a senior PRC diplomat said, in comments believed to signal the PRC's reluctance to agree to a recent call by the DPRK to change it into disarmament negotiations. "The intention, task and format of the six-way talks were decided on by six parties through discussions," Cui Tiankai, director general of the PRC Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Department, told a group of Japanese reporters. "There is no need to change it," Cui said. [\(return to top\)](#)

4. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Donga Ilbo ("CHINA'S PUSH FOR NORTH KOREAN PARTICIPATION IN SIX-PARTY TALKS", 2005-04-07) reported that Vice Unification Minister Rhee Bong-jo currently visiting the US, said on April 6, "It would be hard for North Korea to avoid the six-party talks when Chinese leaders are persuading it to come to the fore," adding, "Although it is hard to predict specific timing, eventually, North Korea is likely to come to the table." Vice Minister Rhee said this at the press conference with ROK correspondents during his visit to the US to explain the ROK's unification policy to the US Congress and government officials.

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5. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap news ("SOUTH KOREAN RULING PARTY SUGGESTS SPECIAL ENVOY TO NORTH OVER NUCLEAR ISSUE", 2005-04-07) reported that the ruling Uri Party's floor leader said that his party will advise President Roh Moo-hyun to dispatch a special envoy to the DPRK to find solutions to an ongoing stalemate in six-party talks over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. "To find a breakthrough in North-South Korean relations, (the party) will make a suggestion to the president for the dispatch of a special envoy to North Korea," the floor leader, Representative Chung Sye-kyun, said in a speech before the National Assembly.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap ("ROH TO FOCUS ON SUPPORT FOR N.K. NUKE, ENHANCING ECONOMIC TIES", 2005-04-07) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun will seek support for the ROK's effort to resolve the DPRK nuclear issue peacefully and enhance bilateral trade and investment during upcoming visits to Germany and Turkey next week, an aide to Roh said. Roh, however, will not likely put forth any new proposals to persuade the DPRK to return to the six-party talks, Roh's chief foreign policy adviser, Chung Woo-sung, told reporters in a briefing. [\(return to top\)](#)

6. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap news ("N. KOREA CONDUCTED 140 NUCLEAR DETONATION TESTS: EXPERT", 2005-0-07) reported that the DPRK has successfully completed testing a triggering device for an atomic bomb, a DPRK expert here said Thursday. According to Chun Sung-hoon, a researcher at the state-run Korea Institute for National Unification, the DPRK has secured between 24.5 kilograms to 39.5 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium as of July 2003.

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7. US on DPRK Nuclear Export

The Associated Press ("U.S. OFFICIAL: N. KOREA, LIBYA NUCLEAR CONNECTION PROVEN",

2005-04-07) reported that US intelligence has proof that DPRK nuclear materials ended up in Libya, the top US envoy on the standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear program said. Christopher Hill, outgoing US ambassador to the ROK, said there was "physical evidence that the material that arrived in Libya had started its journey" in the DPRK. But he wouldn't go so far as to say US intelligence had proof of direct contact or payments between Libya and the DPRK.

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8. US Expert Meets DPRK Officials

Agence France Presse ("US EXPERT MEETS SENIOR NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS: REPORT", 2005-04-07) reported that a US expert on the DPRK visited Pyongyang for talks with senior DPRK officials, state media said. Selig Harrison, a senior researcher at the Washington-based Center for International Policy, met with the DPRK's No. 2 leader Kim Yong-Nam, Pyongyang's official KCNA said. Kim Yong-Nam, accompanied by Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-Gwan, had a talk with Harrison at the Mansudae Assembly Hall, it said. It gave no details on the talks or Harrison's itinerary.

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9. DPRK Military Manual

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH MANUAL SAYS U.S. AIMS AT LEADERS", 2005-04-07) reported that in an apparently authentic military manual on political thought, the DPRK warns that if the US strikes the DPRK, Washington's war planners will put a higher priority on targeting the DPRK's military leadership than on destroying its nuclear facilities. The booklet says "the heart of the revolution" is the prime target, in clear reference to the DPRK's leader, Kim Jong-il.

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10. ROK on DPRK Human Rights

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL TO ABSTAIN AGAIN ON N.K. HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION", 2005-04-07) reported that the government has decided to abstain from voting on a UN Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) resolution condemning violations of human rights in the DPRK, it was learned from government sources. The resolution expresses concern about human rights abuses in the DPRK such as concentration camps for political prisoners. It calls on Pyongyang to ratify the Convention Against Torture and guarantee that the UN special rapporteur on human rights in the DPRK is allowed to operate freely.

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11. DPRK Tourism

Agence France Presse ("WESTERN TOURISTS ON REVOLUTIONARY MARCH IN NORTH KOREA", 2005-04-07) reported that Englishman Martin Boyle is not a defector, an aid worker, a diplomat or an undercover journalist. Just what is he doing, then, in the DPRK, one of the world's most isolated and maligned nations? Boyle is one of a tiny number of Western tourists who venture to the DPRK each year and. Fewer than 2,000 Western tourists visit the DPRK annually, according to Beijing-based Nick Bonner, the director of Koryo Tours who has been taking foreigners into the land of the mostly unknown for the past 11 years.

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12. DPRK Forest Fires

Yonhap news ("N. KOREAN FOREST FIRES BURNING FOR THREE DAYS STRAIGHT: RESEARCH CENTER", 2005-04-07) reported that forest fires that broke out in the DPRK on Monday have been burning for three days straight, a local weather research center said. The ROK-PRC Center for Atmospheric Research said satellite photos showed at least 10 regions on fire in the DPRK, down from 40 that were spotted in the eastern part of the country earlier in the week. "Fires raging in South Hamgyong Province on the east coast are so severe that the smoke is covering parts of the East Sea," said Chung Yong-seung, the director for the center.

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13. DPRK Solar Houses

Korea Times ("PYONGYANG BUILDS SOLAR HOUSES", 2005-04-07) reported that the DPRK will have solar-heated houses sometime soon on a major street in Pyongyang, a pro-DPRK newspaper in Japan reported. A solar-heated five-story apartment building is under construction on the Kwangbok Street at Mankyongdae District in the DPRK's capital, the Chosun Shinbo said. The Internet news story did not clarify how many buildings are currently under construction. It only said each building is capable of accommodating 50 families.

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14. DPRK Maritime Accident

Xinhua ("DOZEN DPRK SAILORS RESCUED FROM SUBMERGED VESSEL IN NORTHERN YELLOW SEA", 2005-04-07) reported that a dozen sailors from the DPRK were rescued Thursday by PRC border guards after their boat sank in the Yellow Sea. The cargo vessel carrying more than 8,000 tons of pyrite sank after running into a reef 40 nautical miles from Dandong, a port city on Sino-DPRK border, about 10 p.m. Wednesday.

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15. US on NPT Review Conference

The Associated Press ("FORMER OFFICIALS ASK ADMINISTRATION TO STRENGTHEN TREATY TO STOP SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS", 2005-04-07) reported that former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and ex-Defense Secretaries Robert S. McNamara and William J. Perry are calling on the Bush administration and other governments to strengthen a pivotal treaty [The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)] designed to stem the spread of nuclear weapons. They urged next month's review conference to adopt tighter rules to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons as well as more effective regional arrangements.

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16. ROK-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Joongang Ilbo ("SEOUL, TOKYO AIDES FACE OFF OVER DOKDO ", 2005-04-07) reported that the foreign ministers from ROK and Japan met yesterday for the first time since the Dokdo islands

dispute hit a crescendo and newly authorized Japanese textbooks added to an intense diplomatic furor between the two countries. Ban Ki-moon of the ROK and Nobutaka Machimura of Japan both acknowledged that ties between the two countries have cooled considerably. Mr. Ban flatly accused Tokyo of being responsible for the current strains in the relationship. In response, Mr. Machimura was brief. "I too think that ties between the two countries are not good. Nevertheless, such a situation should not continue. It has to be improved."

[\(return to top\)](#) Agence France Presse ("JAPAN'S KOIZUMI WANTS JUNE SUMMIT IN S KOREA AS PLANNED AMID ROW", 2005-04-07) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said today he hopes to go to the ROK as previously planned for a summit with President Roh Moo-Hyun amid rising tensions between the neighbors. 'I plan to visit South Korea to hold talks around June,' Koizumi told reporters in Tokyo. 'I think we had better go ahead with it as scheduled because the talks are designed to expand friendship between Japan and South Korea and discuss (relations) in a future-oriented manner,' Koizumi said. [\(return to top\)](#)

17. ROK Military Strategy

Korea Times ("DEFENSE MINISTER STRESSES `POWER BALANCING' ROLE", 2005-04-07) reported that Defense Minister Yoon Kwang-ung reiterated the importance of the country's possible role as a "power balancer" in Northeast Asia. In a speech at the inauguration of Gen. Lee Sang-hee as new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JSC), Yoon said the JSC should take a leading role in boosting the country's defense capabilities to cope with the "fast-changing security environment" in the region. To meet the changing regional security environment, he said, "The military should take the initiative in bolstering a `cooperative self-defense' system based on the functional and balanced development of the Army, Navy and Air Force."

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18. PRC on ROK Defense Strategy

Choson Ilbo ("CHINESE AMBASSADOR BACKS ROH'S NE ASIA DOCTRINE", 2005-04-07) reported that the PRC Ambassador to the ROK Li Bin said the PRC would give "unreserved" support to the ROK if it chose to play the role of a stabilizer for peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia, as envisioned by President Roh Moo-hyun. But Li told the English-language Korea Times on Thursday it was "not clear, so far, as to how the 'balancer' role will go in the future."

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19. ROK Troop Levels in Iraq

Yonhap ("SOUTH KOREA TO REDUCE TROOP NUMBERS IN IRAQ", 2005-04-07) reported that the ROK will withdraw 270 soldiers from its military contingent in Iraq, setting its troop level in the war-torn Arab country at 3,270, an official said Thursday. The troop reduction came as the ROK cancelled its plan to station troops in two separate locations in Iraq, an official at the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, requesting anonymity.

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20. Japanese Space Program

The Associated Press ("JAPAN UNVEILS PLAN FOR FLIGHT TO THE MOON", 2005-04-07) reported

that Japan's space agency mapped out an ambitious plan for manned flights to the moon by 2025 as a first step toward exploring the solar system, but decisions about going it alone or collaborating with other nations won't be made for another decade. The proposal unveiled by Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, or JAXA, marks the agency's first attempt in years to rethink its missions and rejuvenate a space program that has been hobbled by recent launchpad and space probe failures.

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21. PRC on UNSC Reform

The New York Times ("CHINA REJECTS PLANS TO EXPAND SECURITY COUNCIL", 2005-04-07) reported that the PRC signaled on Wednesday that it would resist plans to enlarge the Security Council this year, a proposal that is the centerpiece of Secretary General Kofi Annan's broad package of changes for the United Nations to be taken up at a meeting of heads of state in September. The PRC's ambassador, Wang Guangya, told the General Assembly on Wednesday that while the PRC shared Mr. Annan's concern that the current makeup was outdated, it could not endorse either of the formulas for change and would in any case block quick action.

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22. PRC Energy Supply

The Associated Press ("OFFICIAL: CHINA PLANS 40 NUKE POWER PLANTS", 2005-04-07) reported that the PRC plans to build 40 nuclear power plants over the next 15 years, making them the main power source for its booming east coast, a government official said in remarks reported Thursday. The PRC is expected to be the world's biggest developer of nuclear power stations in coming decades as the government tries to meet soaring demands for electricity while reducing pollution from coal-fired power plants.

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23. US on Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("U.S. SAYS UP TO CHINA TO IMPROVE TIES WITH TAIWAN", 2005-04-07) reported that the US put the responsibility on the PRC for improving the atmosphere with Taiwan after Beijing escalated tensions by adopting an anti-secession law. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Randall Shriver said Beijing was beginning to realize passage of the law codifying its intent to use military force to keep Taiwan from declaring independence was a "big mistake."

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24. Vatican and Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN'S CHEN HEADS FOR POPE'S FUNERAL AS CHINA FUMES", 2005-04-07) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian left for an unprecedented visit to the Vatican to attend the funeral of Pope John Paul, undermining chances of the Holy See switching ties from Taipei to Beijing. The Pope's death last Saturday offered an opportunity for detente between Beijing and the Vatican, but the PRC said it was dismayed Chen, president of an island Beijing considers part of its own territory, had been granted a visa and that the PRC would not send an envoy to the funeral.

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II. CanKor

25. CanKor # 201

CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("DPRK FOREIGN MINISTRY ON DENUCLEARIZATION OF KOREA", 2005-04-07) DPRK Foreign Ministry issues another Statement via the KCNA in what is beginning to look like an attempt to negotiate via the media. It argues that given the fact that the USA has nuclear weapons that can reach the North Korea, and given that the DPRK has become a full-fledged nuclear weapons state, the six-party talks should be transformed into disarmament talks aimed at the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. www.cankor.ca

[\(return to top\)](#) CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("USA MISLED ALLIES ABOUT DPRK NUCLEAR EXPORT", 2005-04-07) CanKor readers will have to use their own judgement about a nuclear intelligence mystery. We reproduce a shortened version of an article in the Washington Post claiming that the USA misled allies about DPRK's nuclear export, and the White House Press Secretary's letter of denial. www.cankor.ca [\(return to top\)](#) CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("FIFA TO INVESTIGATE AFTER VIOLENCE MARS DPRK DEFEAT", 2005-04-07) Violent scenes erupt during the final round of Asian 2006 World Cup Group B qualifiers held in Pyongyang. The DPRK Football Association was already preparing to complain about unfair refereeing during its 2-1 loss to Bahrain, when Iran beat North Korea 2-0. The match officials were unable to leave the pitch for 20 minutes after the game, as furious North Korea fans hurled bottles, rocks and chairs in frustration. North Korean soldiers and riot police were forced to step in to restore order in and outside Kim Il-Sung Stadium. www.cankor.ca [\(return to top\)](#)

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