

# **NAPSNet Daily Report Thursday, May 19, 2005**

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# I. United States

## 1. Inter-Korean Dialogue on Nuclear Talks

Reuters ("S.KOREA GIVES NORTH FARM HELP, NO NUCLEAR ACCORD", None) reported that the ROK failed to persuade the DPRK to resume negotiations on its nuclear weapons program during rare bilateral talks that ended on Thursday. At the end of four days of talks, the ROK agreed to ship 200,000 tonnes of fertilizer to the DPRK after requests to ease food shortages that aid officials said could worsen. In a joint statement issued in the DPRK city of Kaesong following the talks, there was no mention of the nuclear crisis. US officials met DPRK Korean officials in New York last Friday, a US embassy spokesman in Tokyo said. "As before, the channel is used to convey messages about U.S. policy, not to negotiate," the spokesman said by telephone.

[\(return to top\)](#) Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA RAISES NORTH'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM AS RIVAL KOREAS MEET AGAIN", None) reported that ROK Vice Unification Minister Rhee Bong-jo, head of the ROK delegation to the inter-Korean talks said he did bring up the DPRK nuclear issue Thursday. The ROK is trying to salvage some goodwill, saying that normalizing strained relations with the DPRK was the top priority. "We repeatedly emphasized that North Korea return to the peaceful resolution of North Korean nuclear issue and the fourth round of six-party talks," Rhee told reporters. "We explained again our position and urged a positive response from the North side."

[\(return to top\)](#) Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA AGREES TO RESUME HIGH-LEVEL TALKS WITH SOUTH KOREA", None) reported that the Koreas will resume high-level reconciliation talks next month, according to a joint statement by the two countries which made no mention of the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. The two Koreas agreed to hold cabinet-level talks on June 21-24 in Seoul the statement said Thursday, concluding the first inter-Korean talks in 10 months. [\(return to top\)](#)

## 2. ROK on Inter-Korean Dialogue on Nuclear Talks

Yonhap News ("INTER-KOREAN TALKS WILL HELP BREAK NUCLEAR IMPASSE: MINISTER", None) reported that the ROK's point man on the DPRK hailed the joint statement produced at inter-Korean talks Thursday and said the agreement will contribute to a peaceful resolution of tension over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. "Inter-Korean talks, which have been suspended for 10 months, have been normalized. They will also help a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue," Unification Minister Chung Dong-young said while visiting the ROK Office of the South-North Dialogue.

[\(return to top\)](#) The Korea Times ("CHUNG WANTS TO MEET NK LEADER", None) reported that ROK Unification Minister Chung Dong-young will make his first visit to Pyongyang in mid-June, with hopes that he will meet with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il in person in a bid to find a breakthrough in the nuclear standoff. The envisioned trip by Chung draws special attention as he would deliver a letter from ROK President Roh Moo-hyun to Kim. [\(return to top\)](#)

## 3. US Recognition of DPRK Sovereignty

Donga Ilbo ("IN MESSAGE TO NORTH KOREAN UN MISSION, U.S. RECOGNIZES NORTH KOREA AS SOVEREIGN STATE", None) reported that the US government officially sent a message to the DPRK for the first time recognizing it as a sovereign state, according to a report by the Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun. US Special Envoy for the DPRK, Joseph DeTrani, reportedly visited the

DPRK Mission at the United Nations on May 13 to explain the US government's position to Ambassador Park Gil Yon and Vice Ambassador Han Song Ryol. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has mentioned several times in her speeches that the DPRK is a sovereign state, but has never delivered that message directly to the DPRK.

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## **4. ROK on Six-Party Talks**

The Korea Times ("SEOUL WANTS INCREASED BILATERAL CONTACT AT SIX-WAY TALKS", None) reported that the ROK is pushing for a change in the format of the six-party nuclear talks to increase direct contact between DPRK and US negotiators. Cho Tae-young, the ROK's deputy delegate to the stalled nuclear talks, proposed the revision in the structure of the talks at a seminar in Washington on Wednesday. "The six-party talks have contributed to stabilizing the situation (surrounding North Korea) but the multilateral framework has also given the participating nations room for complacency," said Cho. When and if the talks resume, subcommittees should be formed to tackle various aspects of the dispute and work out details for a possible denuclearization deal, he said.

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## **5. US on Six-Party Talks**

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. WANTS TO WIDEN SCOPE OF SIX-PARTY TALKS", None) reported that US Envoy for the DPRK, Joseph DiTrani, rehearsed a US threat of "other options" if the DPRK keeps boycotting the six-party talks but repeated the US has no set deadline. In a session on the second day of "Prospects for U.S. Policy toward the Korean Peninsula - in the Second Bush Administration", a seminar jointly sponsored by the Chosun Ilbo and the U.S. Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), DiTrani said the US now wants to include a whole basket of issues in the discussions if it is to normalize relations with the DPRK. These issues include human rights, drug trafficking, counterfeiting and missiles. However, he said his government did not expect these matters to be completely resolved as a precondition for talks.

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## **6. ROK on US-DPRK Relations**

Yonhap News ("EX-MINISTER URGES WASHINGTON NOT TO PROVOKE PYONGYANG", None) reported that a former ROK unification minister said Thursday that officials of the George W. Bush administration should refrain from using provocative words toward the DPRK if they want to coax the DPRK back to the bargaining table on its nuclear ambitions. In a lecture to a group of graduate students at Yonsei University in Seoul, Jeong Se-hyun said Washington should stop such verbal attacks, citing ranking US officials' remarks about the communist regime such as "axis of evil" and "outpost of tyranny" as well as "pygmy" in reference to the DPRK's leader Kim Jong-il.

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## **7. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue**

Yonhap News ("ROH URGES GLOBAL COMMUNITY TO PREVENT WAR AT ANY COST", None) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun on Thursday urged the international community to strive to head off war amid escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula following reports that the US is

considering a preemptive attack on the DPRK if the DPRK conducts a nuclear test. Speaking at an annual garden party with foreign envoys here at the presidential office complex, Roh said, "I would like to make a very simple but difficult suggestion, which is that we should prevent war at any cost and realize global peace."

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## **8. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Test**

Kyodo News ("JAPAN WARNS N.KOREA AGAINST CONDUCTING NUKE TEST AT NPT MEETING", None) reported that Japan warned the DPRK on Thursday against conducting a nuclear test. Japan made the call as international concerns over the DPRK have increased due to its announcement that it has extracted 8,000 spent fuel rods from a nuclear reactor to boost its nuclear arsenal. Pyongyang is also reportedly trying to conduct an underground nuclear test.

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## **9. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Threat**

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPAN PREPARES FOR N.KOREAN MISSILE THREAT", None) reported that Tokyo is thinking of stationing Patriot-3 missiles at its Fuchu Air Base to intercept any DPRK ballistic missiles, according to Japan's Sankei Shimbun. The paper said the proposed measure was aimed at defending Tokyo against any attack since the PAC3's maximum intercept range and altitude is 30 km, giving it no more than a few seconds to intercept ballistic missiles descending vertically on their targets. It is therefore advisable for a PAC3 unit to be stationed at the base just outside the capital.

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## **10. ROK Minister to Visit Japan**

The Korea Times ("UNIFICATION MINISTER TO VISIT JAPAN", None) reported that ROK Unification Minister Chung Dong-young will visit Japan on Wednesday to deliver a speech on the ROK's DPRK policy. Chung will address a Nikkei Forum conference on "South Korea's choice for peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia," ministry officials said. The ROK's top official on inter-Korean affairs is expected to urge the DPRK to resume talks over its nuclear weapons programs while outlining the ROK's policy of engagement toward the DPRK.

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## **11. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Program**

Kyodo News ("RUSSIA WON'T SUPPORT NUCLEAR NORTH KOREA, SAYS RUSSIAN ENVOY TO CHINA", None) reported that Russia would not support a nuclear DPRK and none of Pyongyang's neighbors will, according to Russian Ambassador to the PRC Igor Rogachev. Asked whether Russia would be able to live with a nuclear DPRK, Rogachev said, "No, never." Neither Russia nor the PRC, nor "any other neighboring country" wants to see a nuclear DPRK, the ambassador said.

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## **12. Landmine Explosion Near DMZ**

Associated Press ("TWO SOUTH KOREANS INJURED BY LAND MINE EXPLOSION NEAR BORDER WITH NORTH KOREA", None) reported that two ROK civilians were injured by a land mine explosion Thursday in a town near the DMZ. The two men, who were conducting renovation work at a military base in Chorwon, accidentally stepped into a field filled with land mines, police said. One man had his right ankle blown off; the other suffered minor scratches on his legs. The border that separates the two Koreas is strewn with land mines as the two countries remain technically at war since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a cease-fire.

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## **13. DPR Korean Ferry Leaves Japan**

Kyodo News ("NORTH KOREAN FERRY LEAVES NIIGATA PORT ", None) reported that the DPRK ferry Mangyongbong-92 left Niigata port for Wonsan in the DPRK on Thursday after a one-day stay. The ferry departed with about 200 passengers, including students at a Korean school in Japan who are visiting the DPRK for an excursion, and some 100 tons of cargo. It arrived in Niigata on Wednesday for its first call at a Japanese port in five months, after meeting insurance requirements under a new Japanese law to guard against oil spills.

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## **14. ROK Aid to DPRK**

Yonhap News ("S.KOREA TO SEND 200,000 TONS OF FERTILIZER TO N.K. BY MID-JUNE", None) reported that as part of its implementation of an agreement with the DPRK Thursday, the ROK plans to complete the shipment of fertilizer aid to the DPRK by mid-June in consideration of the imminent rice-planting season. The ROK pledged to give 200,000 tons of fertilizer aid to the DPRK, although Pyongyang earlier requested 500,000 tons. "Given that the North's rice-planting season ends in mid-June, we'll do our best to deliver the fertilizer in time," ROK officials said.

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## **15. Inter-Korean Trade**

Yonhap News ("INTER-KOREAN TRADE FALLS 28 PCT IN APRIL", None) reported that inter-Korean trade fell 28 percent from a year earlier to US\$52.83 million in April due to a decrease in economic aid to the DPRK as a result of diplomatic tension over its nuclear weapon program, a local trade agency said Thursday. The Korea International Trade Association said the ROK's exports to the DPRK dropped 44 percent to \$29.49 million, while imports were up 13.4 percent at \$23.34 million.

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## **16. Inter-Korean Summit Anniversary**

Yonhap News ("SEOUL TO SEND OVER 30 OFFICIALS TO PYONGYANG FOR JOINT EVENT", None) reported that the annual civilian-led joint celebration of the inter-Korean summit will be upgraded to an even larger event this year, including government delegations. Representatives of the two sides at vice-ministerial talks in the DPRK city of Kaesong agreed Thursday to send Cabinet-level

delegations to joint ceremonies in Pyongyang in June to mark the fifth anniversary of the summit on June 15, 2000.

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