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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("HILL IN KOREA AFTER FRUITLESS CHINA VISIT", 2006-05-25) reported that the US representative at six-way talks on the DPRK's nuclear program, Christopher Hill, arrived in Seoul on Thursday. Hill is meeting with his ROK counterpart Chun Young-woo to discuss ways to revive the stalled talks. The assistant secretary of state arrived from the PRC, where he met with the county's chief delegate Wu Dawei but reportedly achieved little.

[\(return to top\)](#) Agence France-Presse ("US SAYS NO COMPROMISES ON NORTH KOREA", 2006-05-25) reported that the US will not offer concessions to lure the DPRK back to the nuclear negotiating table, the US envoy to six-nation talks on the issue said after meeting PRC officials. US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill insisted the DPRK should stick to an agreement made in the six-party talks in September last year, and that the US was not prepared to back down in any way. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. DPRK Defectors

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. TO GRANT ASYLUM TO SHENYANG FOUR ", 2006-05-25) reported that the PRC and the US have reportedly agreed that four DPRK defectors who barged into the US Consulate in Shenyang after making their way into the ROK legation will be permitted to leave the country. It is understood that the US has decided to give them asylum.

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3. Inter-Korean Economic Talks

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA AGREES TO NEW ECONOMIC TALKS WITH SOUTH; NO DATE SET", 2006-05-25) reported that the DPRK agreed Thursday to a new round of economic talks with the ROK, but declined to set a date for the negotiations, the ROK's Unification Ministry said.

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4. Think Tank on DPRK Missile Tests

Yonhap ("MISSILE ACTIVITY SEEN AS PRESSURE TACTIC BY N. KOREA: BRITISH THINK TANK", 2006-05-25) reported that signs that the DPRK may be preparing to field a long-range ballistic missile could be little more than an advertisement of strength by the state amid ongoing diplomatic conflict, a British think tank said Thursday. "Reported activity at a test site for the long-range Taepodong missile may be North Korea's way of sending a reminder that it has its own ways to increase pressure," the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies said in a report.

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5. UN on DPRK Food Aid

Yonhap ("WFP CHIEF SAYS AID MONITOR IN N.K. IS ADEQUATE, ASKS U.S. TO HELP", 2006-0-

-25) reported that the UN's chief food aid coordinator said Thursday he is confident the assistance going into the DPRK is reaching the truly needy and urged the US to continue its donation. James T. Morris, executive director of the World Food Program (WFP), said the reduction in monitors in the DPRK is a challenge.

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6. DPRK-Russia Relations

BBC News ("NORTH KOREA, RUSSIA SIGN AGREEMENT ON JUDICIAL COOPERATION", 2006-0-25) reported that an agreement on cooperation between the Central Court of the DPRK and the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation was signed in Moscow on 23 May. Present at the signing ceremony from the DPRK side were members of the delegation of the Central Court of the DPRK led by President Kim Pyong-ryul on a visit to Russia and Pak Ui-chun, DPRK ambassador to Russia, and from the Russian side were Vyacheslav Lebedev, president of the Supreme Court of Russia, and officials concerned.

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7. DPRK Technology

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA SLOWLY GOING DIGITAL", 2006-05-25) reported that the DPRK is embracing the digital age, encouraging its citizens to go online. In video footage taken by AP Television News in Pyongyang, students were seen clicking away on computers while viewing sleek flat-screen displays at a new electronic library at Kim Chaek University of Technology. The library, which opened last month, has 10 million titles on its local intranet, the university spokeswoman said. Still, DPR Koreans aren't quite jumping on the information superhighway. The books available online at the university are approved by authorities in the DPRK, where all media is state-run, and are mostly technical or scientific.

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8. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo ("COURT REJECTS DEMAND TO STOP ENSHRINING KOREANS AT YASUKUNI", 2006-0-25) reported that the Tokyo District Court rejected demands by former Korean soldiers who served in the Japanese military and bereaved families of such soldiers that the state stop enshrining Korean war dead at Yasukuni Shrine and pay damages. The ruling was handed down on a total of 414 plaintiffs who filed lawsuits in 2001 and 2003, seeking 4.4 billion yen in damages.

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9. Japan-India Military Relations

Agence France-Presse ("INDIA AND JAPAN PLEDGE TO BOOST MILITARY TIES", 2006-05-25) reported that India and Japan pledged to step up military cooperation, as Tokyo tries to move closer to the South Asian nation which is seeking to modernize its armed forces. Indian Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Japanese Defense Agency Director-General Fukushima Nukaga signed an agreement to "promote wide-range cooperation in the defense and security field" including in technical areas and training.

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10. PRC on Military

The Associated Press ("CHINA: MILITARY BUILDUP IS DEFENSIVE ", 2006-05-25) reported that the PRC on Thursday angrily rejected a US Defense Department report that says Beijing is a potential military threat, insisting that its multibillion-dollar buildup is defensive. Beijing is "strongly resentful of and firmly opposed to" the comments in an annual Pentagon report on PRC military power, state media quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao as saying.

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11. US-Taiwan Trade Talks

Agence France-Presse ("US AND TAIPEI LAUNCH INTO TRADE TALKS ", 2006-05-25) reported that Taiwan and the US kicked off a two-day trade meeting, with the US delegation led by Deputy US Trade Representative Karan Bhatia, officials said. Discussions will cover issues including agriculture, intellectual property rights, pharmaceuticals and telecommunications policy, according to a statement released by Bhatia's office via the American Institute in Taiwan.

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12. PRC Protest

Reuters ("WARNINGS, JAILINGS REPORTED IN CHINA PROTEST DEATHS", 2006-05-25) reported that PRC city officials have received "serious warnings" and six villagers were jailed after police shot and killed people protesting against the building of a wind farm in southern Guangdong province in December, media reports said on Wednesday.

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13. PRC-Kazakh Oil Pipeline

Agence France-Presse ("KAZAKH PIPELINE BEGINS DELIVERING OIL TO CHINA", 2006-05-25) reported that a pipeline from Kazakhstan capable of supplying the PRC with nearly a sixth of its current annual oil imports began its first deliveries, the official Xinhua news agency reported. The 1,000-kilometre (620-mile) pipeline linking Atasu in the central Asian state of Kazakhstan to northwestern PRC's Xinjiang region began operations early Thursday morning, Xinhua said.

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14. Japan Defense Ministry Bill

The Japan Times ("COALITION TO MOVE AHEAD ON 'DEFENSE MINISTRY' BILL", 2006-05-21) reported that the Japanese government is expected to submit a bill to the Diet this legislative session on upgrading the Defense Agency to ministry status.

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15. Japan on Iraq Mission

The Japan Times ("NEW GOVERNMENT MAY SPUR IRAQ GSDF PULLOUT", 2006-05-23) reported that now that Iraq has finally established a permanent government, senior government officials in Tokyo indicated Monday they are considering pulling the Ground Self-Defense Force troops out of southern Iraq. Some factors still don't allow for optimism," said Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe, adding that one Iraqi minister is filling two posts because the minister in charge of security still hasn't been named, underscoring the shakiness of the new government.

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16. Japan Education Bill

The Associated Press ("EDUCATION BILL WON'T PROMOTE MILITARISM: KOIZUMI", 2006-05-25) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Wednesday denied criticism that the bill for revising the education law to teach "love of the nation" and other patriotic themes will promote militarism. Meanwhile, the Hinomaru flag and "Kimigayo," the anthem to the Emperor, were approved as Japan's official symbols in 1998 despite protests over their association with wartime militarism.

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