

NAPSNet Daily Report Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Tuesday, May 1, 2007", NAPSNet Daily Report, May 01, 2007,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-tuesday-may-1-2007/>

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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK-US Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("U.S. KEEPS NORTH ON TERRORISM LIST FOR NOW, AT LEAST", 2007-05-02) reported that while Washington left the DPRK on its list of state sponsors of terrorism in its latest report, released Monday, it noted that the process of removing the reclusive nation from the list has started. Government officials said that the report won't cast a negative light on current nuclear talks with Pyongyang.

2. Six Party Deadline Pressure

U.S. News ("BUSH PRESSURED TO MOVE ON NORTH KOREA DISARMAMENT", 2007-04-27) reported that pressure is building on the Bush administration—and other countries in the six-nation Korean nuclear talks—either to prod the DPRK into getting on with the process of disarmament or to reassess the deal. U.S. critics of Bush's new DPRK strategy see the delays as validating their doubts about doing deals with the DPRK. Bush suggested Friday that time is limited before turning to new pressures.

3. Japan-US Talks on DPRK

Associated Press ("JAPANESE AND U.S. MINISTERS DISCUSS U.S. TROOP RELOCATION AND NORTH KOREA", 2007-05-02) reported that Japan's foreign and defense ministers meet their U.S. counterparts Tuesday to discuss an ambitious relocation of U.S. forces in Japan, DPRK nuclear disarmament efforts and the development of a joint missile defense system. On Monday, after meeting with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso said the world should begin thinking about tough action if the DPRK does not begin making progress on obligations made in a February nuclear disarmament agreement.

4. Inter-Korean Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("JOONGANG ILBO: MORE INTER-KOREAN TALKS SET TODAY", 2007-05-02) reported that the Koreans are scheduled to talk about swapping raw materials and natural resources this week. The Unification Ministry announced that the ROK agreed last month to provide raw materials to the DPRK to help it produce clothing, footwear and soap in June in return for natural resources. To work out details for the project, the two sides will hold working-level negotiations in the border city of Kaesong for two days starting today.

5. US-ROK Trade Relations

Donga Ilbo ("GDP COULD INCREASE TO 80 TRILLION WON; 340,000 NEW JOBS COULD BE ADDED", 2007-05-01) reported that when the ROK-US Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) takes off, it is estimated that the ROK's gross domestic product (GDP) will increase by as much as 80 trillion won and that 340,000 jobs will be created. Productivity in the agricultural sector, however, will shrink by 670 billion won annually.

6. EU-ROK Trade Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("EU FREE TRADE PARLAY SET FOR MAY 7", 2007-05-01) reported that long-expected free trade talks between the ROK and the European Union will officially begin on Monday, May 7, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said yesterday after the government approved the agenda. The two sides will formally launch the talks this Sunday in Seoul when EU Commissioner Peter Mandelson visits Seoul. Automobiles, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and intellectual property are expected to be on the table during the coming talks.

7. US-ROK Security Alliance

Yonhap ("TOP U.S. ARMY GENERAL VISITS SEOUL", 2007-05-01) reported that US Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey met with the ROK's Army Chief of Staff Park Heung-ryul to discuss pending bilateral issues, according to the officials. Gen. Casey's visit to the ROK is the first since his inauguration last month.

8. US-Japan Military Cooperation

Kyodo ("JAPAN, U.S. AGREE TO EXPAND SHARING BMD DATA, PROTECT MILITARY INFO", 2007-

05-01) reported that Japan and the US agreed Tuesday to draw up a road map to expand the scope for sharing ballistic missile defense and other military data, and agreed to conclude a treaty to more comprehensively protect military information, taking symbolic moves to further raise interoperability between the two security allies. In a joint statement on the transformation of the alliance issued after the "two-plus-two" top security talks, the ministers also agreed that the alliance is "complementary" to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in contributing to world peace and stability, and that Japan will engage in more extensive cooperation with NATO.

9. Japan Middle-East Diplomacy

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S ABE IN DOHA ON FINAL LEG OF ENERGY SECURITY TOUR ", 2007-05-01) reported that Japan and Qatar stressed their solid energy partnership and agreed to launch initial negotiations on moves to stimulate Japanese investment in the Gulf state. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was in the Qatari capital on the final leg of a Gulf tour, which has also covered Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). "Both sides reaffirmed to develop the relations between the two countries in the field of production and transport of oil and LNG," the statement said.

10. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA RAGES AT ST. LUCIA OVER TAIWAN TIE", 2007-05-01) reported that the PRC lashed out at the tiny Caribbean nation of St. Lucia for restoring diplomatic relations with Taiwan. The resumption of ties with Taiwan was an "open violation" of a 1997 agreement that established diplomatic relations between St. Lucia and Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said in a statement carried by the official Xinhua News Agency. This "is brutal interference in China's internal affairs," Liu said. "We express indignation and opposition."

IOL.CO.ZA ("ACCESS DENIED FOR CHINESE STUDENTS", 2007-05-01) reported that Taiwan on Monday indirectly rejected an offer by the PRC to allow PRC students to study on the island, a day after Beijing extended an olive branch to Taipei during a forum to improve cross-strait ties. "For Chinese students to study in Taiwan, it is a complicated issue," said Chen Ming-tong, chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), Taiwan's top PRC policy-planning body. He said without proper planning, allowing PRC students into Taiwan would only exploit the educational resources meant for local students.

11. PRC Military

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA'S MILITARY SEEKS BEST AND BRIGHTEST ", 2007-05-01) reported that recruiting "high-caliber" people is key to a new technology-heavy training plan adopted by the PRC's military as it seeks to cope with the challenges of the future, state media said Tuesday. The plan would ensure that the men and women commanding tomorrow's army were "brighter tacticians, better educated and adept at commanding the highest-tech weaponry," the China Daily said, citing the defence ministry.

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NAPSNet is produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development affiliated with the University of San Francisco, Center for the Pacific Rim and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. If you have any questions about this report please e-mail: scott@nautilus.org

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