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# NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, May 11, 2005

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# I. United States

## 1. US on Bilateral Talks with the DPRK

JoongAng Ilbo ("NORTH'S OVERTURE GETS RAPID RICE RESPONSE", None) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice repeated yesterday that Washington regards the DPRK as a sovereign state and that bilateral talks within the framework of six-party negotiations are possible. "I'll just restate that the United States, of course, recognizes that North Korea is sovereign."

[\(return to top\)](#) Kyodo News ("US SLAMS N.KOREA FOR 'PROVOCATIVE' ACT BUT STILL COMMITTED", None) reported that the US slammed the DPRK for taking another "provocative" action but said it remains committed to diplomatically solving the issue of the DPRK nuclear programs through six-party talks. "The provocative statements and actions by North Korea only further isolate it from the international community," White House spokesman Scott McClellan told reporters, referring to reports of the DPRK's extracting spent fuel rods from a nuclear reactor. [\(return to top\)](#)

## 2. US on New York Channel for Bilateral Talks

The Korea Times ("NEW YORK CHANNEL' EMERGES FOR 6-PARTY NUKE TALKS", None) reported that the "New York channel" between the US and the DPRK is emerging as a possible method to jump-start the stalled talks. But officials in Seoul and Washington said yesterday that the informal contact in New York will not likely take place right away. They also made it clear that the channel, even if utilized in the future, will not be a venue for full-scale bilateral negotiations.

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## 3. PRC on US-DPRK Bilateral Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("CHINA URGES DIRECT TALKS BETWEEN US AND N.KOREA", None) reported that the PRC is urging any form of direct contact between the US and the DPRK whether it be within the 6-party framework or not. Beijing highlighted the need to maintain a non-hostile environment, saying that any concerned party should refrain from words and actions that may hinder the six-party talks. The PRC also ruled out the possibility of imposing sanctions on the DPRK to force it back to the disarmament talks suggesting that the PRC is reluctant to adopt a tougher stance against the DPRK.

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## 4. PRC on DPRK Sanctions

The Los Angeles Times ("CHINA IS UNWILLING TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS ON NORTH KOREANS", None) reported that the PRC said Tuesday that it was not willing to impose economic sanctions on the DPRK, a move that was strongly favored by Washington as a way to pressure the DPRK back to six-nation talks. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said that normal diplomatic relations between the PRC and the DPRK should not be linked to nuclear issues and that politics and economics should be kept separate. "We stand for resolving the issue through dialogue. We are not in favor of exerting pressure or imposing sanctions," Liu said. "We believe such measures are not necessarily effective."

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## **5. DPRK on Six-party Talks**

Reuters ("DETAIL NEEDED ON N.KOREA ATOM TALKS HINT: OFFICIALS", None) reported that the DPRK's hint this week that it might return to talks on its nuclear plans is an intriguing development but so far close ally, the PRC, has not provided any more details, an ROK government official said on Wednesday. The official also told Reuters that meetings earlier this week in Moscow between leaders of the five countries trying to end the DPRK's atomic ambitions could help the PRC to coax the DPRK back to the table.

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## **6. US, PRC on Six-party Talks**

Agence France-Presse ("US STEPS UP PRESSURE ON CHINA OVER NORTH KOREA", None) reported that the US has pressed the PRC to use all of its "tools in the box" to bring the DPRK back to negotiations on its nuclear arms program, a State Department official said. But the official stopped short of confirming reports that top US envoy Christopher Hill asked Beijing to cut off fuel to the DPRK but was rebuffed by the PRC. Washington has made no secret that it was counting largely on the PRC to woo Pyongyang back to the stalled six-party nuclear talks.

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## **7. US, ROK on Six-party Talks**

Associated Press ("TOP US ENVOY ON NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR DISPUTE TO VISIT SOUTH KOREA", None) reported that The top US negotiator on the DPRK nuclear dispute will visit the ROK this week as part of efforts to lure Pyongyang back to the negotiating table, an official said Wednesday. Washington and its allies have stepped up diplomatic efforts to restart stalled nuclear disarmament talks amid fears that Pyongyang might be preparing to carry out its first nuclear test. During a four-day visit starting Friday, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill will meet Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon and his ROK counterpart, Song Min-soon, to discuss the nuclear dispute, an official said.

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## **8. PRC-DPRK on Six-party Talks**

Yonhap News ("CHINA LOOKING FOR 'CONVENIENT TIME' FOR HU'S TRIP TO N.KOREA", None) reported that the PRC is seeking a "convenient time" for President Hu Jintao to visit the DPRK for a trip closely related to the six-party talks, a senior PRC diplomatic source said. "North Korea invited and President Hu accepted," the source said. "What matters now is timing. Both sides are looking for a convenient time...the atmosphere is important." Beijing is setting up Hu's the visit with a belief that the trip should produce "something encouraging" regarding the six-party talks, the source said.

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## **9. DPRK on Spent Fuel Rods**

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA FINISHES REMOVING SPENT FUEL RODS FROM

NUCLEAR REACTOR", None) reported that the DPRK claims to have completed the removal of spent fuel rods from a nuclear reactor in a key step towards the manufacture of more nuclear weapons. Some 8,000 spent fuel rods had been removed from a five megawatt nuclear reactor at the DPRK's Yongbyon nuclear complex. The move sparked speculation that the DPRK was pushing ahead with its nuclear weapons program using plutonium. Experts say the DPRK can acquire enough plutonium to make several nuclear bombs.

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## **10. Japan on DPRK Spent Fuel Rods**

Kyodo News ("KOIZUMI DOWNPLAYS N.KOREA'S CLAIM IT REMOVED NUKE FUEL RODS", None) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi played down the DPRK statement that it has completed the removal of 8,000 spent fuel rods from a nuclear reactor. "The point is we will have to get through to North Korea that returning quickly to the six-party talks and scrapping the nuclear program will best serve its interests," he said.

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## **11. US on DPRK Nuclear Test**

Kyodo News ("US AMBASSADOR SEES SIGNS OF N.KOREA PREPARING FOR NUCLEAR TEST", None) reported that US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer told New Komeito party leader Takenori Kanzaki that there are several signs that the DPRK is preparing to conduct a nuclear test, New Komeito officials said. The ambassador was quoted as saying the US government cannot say anything definite at this point but there are several signs concerning the preparations.

[\(return to top\)](#) JoongAng Ilbo ("U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS NORTH WANTS TO BE A 'PAKISTAN' ", None) reported that a Bush administration expert on the DPRK says that Pyongyang wants to become what he called "the Pakistan of Northeast Asia" and that Washington is expecting the DPRK to conduct a nuclear weapons test. In an interview with the Joong-Ang Ilbo, the Washington official who covers Korean Peninsula affairs said that the DPRK openly mentioned Pakistan's nuclear arms status during the six-party talks last year. The US official said the DPRK had expressed an intention to become a nuclear-armed state, calculating that, like Pakistan, it could do so without being confronted with sanctions. [\(return to top\)](#)

## **12. DPRK-US Relations**

Korea Times ("NK URGES US TO SCRAP ARMS BUILDUP PROGRAM", None) reported that according to the KCNA, the DPRK is urging the US to stop its multi-billion-dollar arms buildup in the ROK, calling it a plot to invade. The US buildup program "is clear evidence that the US's preparations for a preemptive attack against us has crossed a 'dangerous line,' and the danger of an outbreak of war is being realized," the paper said in a commentary.

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

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA HAS TAKEN PREPARATORY STEPS TOWARDS N-TEST", None) reported that the US ambassador to Japan has said that he believed the DPRK had taken preparatory steps towards a nuclear test and said such a move would be a "serious blow" to the

dialogue process. Media reports have mentioned the possibility of a nuclear test but have cited unnamed officials. The ROK has been skeptical about the reports.

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## **14. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Test**

Kyodo News ("CHINA SAYS N.KOREA AWARE OF NUKE TEST CONSEQUENCES", None) reported that a senior PRC official said that the DPRK is aware of the grave consequences that a nuclear weapons test would entail, according to Japanese Senior Vice Foreign Minister Ichiro Aisawa. Aisawa told a press conference that the PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei made the comment in a meeting in Beijing. Wu's remark is the first by a PRC official regarding recent reports of a possibly impending the DPRK nuclear weapons test.

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## **15. ROK-US Relations**

Yonhap News ("S.KOREA UNDER U.S. NUCLEAR UMBRELLA: SEOUL DEFENSE CHIEF", None) reported that the ROK remains under the US nuclear umbrella, Seoul's defense chief said Wednesday, as he tried to dispel concerns over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. The remarks came amid reports that the DPRK is preparing for a nuclear test.

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## **16. DPRK on ROK Opposition Human Rights Bill**

Yonhap News ("N.KOREA BLASTS SOUTH'S OPPOSITION CAMP ON BILL ON HUMAN RIGHTS", None) reported that the DPRK denounced the ROK's main opposition Grand National Party for its ongoing initiative to introduce a bill to help improve human rights conditions in the DPRK, saying such a move is an "intolerable act of defiance." The GNP is to hold a forum in the parliament Thursday over its proposed legislation calling for the ROK government to draw up measures to improve the human rights conditions of people in the DPRK.

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## **17. Divided Families**

The Korean Times ("S-N FAMILIES TO GET VIDEO MESSAGES", None) reported that the emotional messages and life stories of thousands of elderly South Koreans who were separated from relatives in the DPRK by the Korean War will be recorded on film, the Unification Ministry said Wednesday. "We plan to record short documentaries for 4,000 South Korean separated family members this year and put them on an internet database," Jung Seung-hun, director of the ministry's separated family division told reporters. "Hopefully we can reach an arrangement to have their North Korean kin view the videos once inter-Korean talks resume."

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## **18. Inter-Korean Maritime Relations**

The Korea Times ("GNP PROPOSES JOINT FISHING ZONE IN WEST SEA", None) reported that the

main ROK opposition Grand National Party proposed that the government designate a joint fishing zone around the sea border that divides the two Koreas. The area surrounding the ROK's Yonpyong Island, which is 180 meters south of the Northern Limit Line, the de facto maritime border, has been congested with PRC fishing boats at the peak of crab catching season. The GNP will also urge the government to crack down on PRC vessels when they enter the ROK's exclusive economic zone.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap News ("N.KOREAN NAVY BLAMES SOUTH FOR INTRUSIONS IN WEST SEA", None) reported that the DPRK Navy repeated claims Wednesday that ROK military vessels are making frequent intrusions into its territorial waters in the Yellow Sea, and warned of possible bloody clashes such as that which have occurred years ago. The KCNA quoted a report by the DPRK's naval command as saying "the South Korean military command, even in May, is illegally infiltrating military vessels five or six times a day into our territorial waters." The ROK Navy denied the claim and said its vessels were under normal patrol activities. [\(return to top\)](#)

## 19. Inter-Korean Cultural Relations

The Korean Times ("S.KOREAN PUBLISHER TO PAY \$150,000 FOR NK NOVEL", None) reported that an ROK publishing firm said it will pay \$150,000 in copyright royalties to a DPRK writer, marking the first such deal since Seoul vowed to honor the copyright of DPRK publications in April. Sakyajul Publishing Inc. said it has already paid \$50,000 to Hong Sok-jung, who, as grandson of author Hong Myong-hui of the Rim Kkok-jong novels, is the copyright holder of the texts.

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## 20. Japan-DPRK Relations

Yonhap News ("N.KOREAN SHIP TO MAKE PORT CALL IN JAPANESE PORT NEXT WEEK", None) reported that a DPRK passenger ship is scheduled to make a port call at the Japanese city of Niigata next week, the first of its kind this year, officials in Niigata prefecture said. The visit is to come two months after Japan implemented a new law banning ships of a displacement greater than 100 tons from entering its ports unless the ships are covered by recognized accident insurance.

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## 21. DPRK on FIFA Ruling

Yonhap News ("N.KOREA WILL NOT BOYCOTT NEXT WORLD CUP QUALIFIER: JAPANESE MEDIA", None) reported that the DPRK has already talked with football's world governing body, FIFA, about the level of punishment for mob violence at its previous World Cup qualifier, and will not reject FIFA's final decision, according to Japanese media, quoting the head of Japanese football body. The comments from Japanese officials imply the DPRK football team will not lodge an appeal and accept FIFA's ruling.

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