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I. NAPSNet

1. Inter-Korean Military Talks

Yonhap ("N. KOREA CALLS FOR GENERAL-LEVEL MILITARY TALKS", 2007-05-02) reported that the DPRK answered the ROK's earlier proposal for working-level military talks to tackle test runs of the inter-Korean railway. The DPRK proposed holding the military talks next week at Tongilgak, a pavilion on the northern side of Panmunjom. The meeting would be the first inter-Korean discussion

to involve the generals in a year.

2. DPRK-Canada Relations

Associated Press ("FOREIGN MINISTER PETER MACKAY PROMISES AID TO NORTH KOREA IF IT DISARMS", 2007-05-02) reported that Canada is prepared to resume aid to the DPRK if Pyongyang honours its nuclear disarmament deal.

3. ROK Malaria Aid to DPRK

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA TO SHIP ANTI-MALARIA AID TO NORTH", 2007-05-02) reported that the ROK was to ship medical and other supplies worth 1.41 million dollars to help the DPRK fight malaria. A freighter carrying supplies including anti-malaria medicines, insecticide, test kits and mosquito nets will leave Incheon port for the western port of Nampo. The DPRK-run Korea Centre for Disease Control and Prevention said the aid would help some five million residents in three provinces near the inter-Korean border.

4. US-ROK Trade Relations

Donga Ilbo ("U.S. CONGRESSMEN UNDECIDED OVER FTA", 2007-05-02) reported that it has been a month since the ROK-US free trade agreement (FTA) was concluded. Over the past two weeks, Dong A-Ilbo conducted a telephone survey of 21 congressmen of the US Senate Finance Committee and 15 congressmen of the House Subcommittee on trade on their opinions of the ROK-US FTA. The survey results can be summarized into two main points. One is that a majority of them do not yet have a clear position and the other is that the opening of the ROK's beef market will be the most crucial element in making their position.

5. Canada-ROK Trade Relations

Korea Times ("'S. KOREA, CANADA TO CONCLUDE FTA SOON'", 2007-05-02) reported that a top Canadian diplomat said that negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) between the ROK and Canada are in the final stages. "We are extremely close to reaching an agreement," Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay said during a press conference at a Seoul hotel. "I don't see any stumbling block."

6. ROK Collaborator Issue

The Associated Press ("SKOREA TO SEIZE ASSETS OF COLLABORATORS", 2007-05-02) reported that the ROK government announced its first-ever plan to seize assets gained by alleged ROK collaborators during Japanese colonial rule as part of efforts to reconcile with its past more than 60 years after the end of the peninsula's occupation. The ROK will confiscate $3.9 million worth of land from the descendants of nine alleged collaborators who worked for Japan during its 1910-45 colonial occupation of the Korean peninsula, a presidential committee said in a statement.

7. Japan Constitutional Revision

Kyodo ("NEW KOMEITO PARTY OPPOSED TO USE OF COLLECTIVE DEFENSE RIGHT", 2007-0--02) reported that the leader of the New Komeito party in Japan's ruling coalition on Wednesday expressed opposition to the country's possible use of the right of collective self-defense, a contentious issue to be discussed in a governmental panel later this month. Hiroaki Ota said in a speech in Tokyo, "We don't oppose individual research on matters in the gray area" -- a reference to Article 9 of the Constitution. "However, we are firmly uphold the first and second clauses of Article 9 and do not recognize the use of the right of collective self-defense."

Kyodo ("JAPAN FACING GENUINE PROSPECT OF CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION 60 YEARS ON", 2007-05-02) reported that Japan will mark the 60th anniversary of the enforcement of the postwar Constitution with the nation embracing the genuine possibility of constitutional revision for the first time and the prime minister, who is aiming for an amendment, set to make the divisive issue the focus of a national election this summer. The House of Councillors is currently deliberating a bill that would set procedures for a referendum to ask citizens if they want a revision of the country's highest statute and it is set to be enacted into law by the end of this month.

8. Taipei Elections

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN OPPOSITION NOMINATES MA FOR PRESIDENTIAL RACE", 2007-05-02) reported that Taiwan's opposition leader Ma Ying-jeou was nominated by his Kuomintang party to run for the 2008 presidential election and pledged to improve economic ties with the PRC. Ma vowed to make up ground on the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, which leans towards independence for Taiwan from the PRC. Moves to allow PRC tourists to visit Taiwan would be accelerated to boost Taiwan's economy, he said.

9. PRC on Climate Change

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA, INDIA, BRAZIL HOLD UP CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS", 2007-05-02) reported that a demand by the PRC, India and Brazil that rich nations accept they are mainly responsible for global warming has held up progress at a key UN climate change conference here, delegates said. The three nations' insistence since the talks started on Monday that the developed world recognise their dominant role in climate change has stolen precious time meant for debate on how best to tackle global warming, they said.

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