

# **NAPSNet Daily Report Wednesday, May 30, 2007**

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# I. NAPSNet

## 1. US-PRC on Six Party Talks

Associated Press ("U.S. NUCLEAR ENVOY IN BEIJING, MEETS WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS ON NORTH KOREA", 2007-05-30) reported that US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill said he and PRC nuclear envoy Wu Dawei agreed that the DPRK appeared ready to follow through on a February agreement committing it to shutting down its main Yongbyon nuclear reactor in exchange for energy aid.

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## 2. Russian Sanctions on DPRK

RIA Novosti ("RUSSIA MAKES U-TURN, JOINS UN SANCTIONS AGAINST N.KOREA", 2007-05-30) reported that Russia has agreed to impose UN sanctions on the DPRK following its nuclear bomb test last October. President Vladimir Putin signed a decree Sunday prohibiting Russian state and government agencies, industrial, commercial, financial and transport companies, and enterprises, firms and banks from exporting or transiting military hardware, equipment, materials, or know-how which could be used in the DPRK's nuclear or non-nuclear weapons programs. It also prohibits any financial operations with legal entities or individuals who have been identified by the UN as being directly or indirectly involved in the nuclear arms program.

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## 3. DMZ Fences

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA TEARS DOWN FENCES", 2007-05-30) reported that the ROK will tear down hundreds of miles of barbed-wire fences erected at beaches and riverside areas originally designed to prevent infiltration from the DPRK. There are a total of 644km of such fences along coastlines and rivers but they are unsightly and a nuisance for both tourists and residents. Some 97km of fencing will be torn down this year, including those on 54 beaches in the eastern province of Gangweon. An additional 41km of barbed wire will be removed by the end of 2009 and the rest in phases after that. The fences will be replaced by modern surveillance equipment.

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## 4. Inter-Korean Relations

Voice of America ("NORTH KOREA STAYS MUM ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS AS TALKS OPEN WITH SOUTH", 2007-05-30) reported that the Koreans have formally opened high-level talks in Seoul, but delegates from the DPRK are remaining silent so far about Pyongyang's commitment to dismantle its nuclear programs. The ROK said the two countries' relationship depends on Pyongyang implementing a promise it made in February to begin shutting down its nuclear weapons program.

[\(return to top\)](#) RIA Novosti ("SOUTH KOREA PROPOSES REGULAR RAIL LINK TO NORTH", 2007-05-30) reported that the ROK proposed starting regular rail journeys across the inter-Korean border. Two trains traveled each way across the border on May 17 for the first time since the 1951-1953

Korean War. Seoul said at bilateral talks on a ministerial level that it views the historic link-up as the first step toward regular rail transport across peninsula, and hopes this will grant ROK tourists direct access to alpine resorts in the north. Regular rail communication would make it easier for DPR Korean workers to reach the industrial zone in Kaesong, near the border with the South, and to facilitate the delivery of raw materials for the North's light industry. [\(return to top\)](#)

## **5. ROK-US FTA negotiations**

Yonhap News ("POLITICAL PARTIES OPPOSE RENEGOTIATION OF S. KOREA-US FTA", 2007-0-30) reported that the ROK's political parties said that renegotiating a recent trade deal with the US is unacceptable. In a debate hosted by the nation's top election watchdog, political party floor leaders said they will oppose the renegotiation of a free trade agreement (FTA) between the ROK and the US. The floor leaders of the six main political parties participated in the National Election Commission's first televised policy debate running up to December's election.

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## **6. ROK-Indian Military Relations**

Korea Herald ("S. KOREA, INDIA DISCUSS JOINT NAVAL DRILLS, DEFENSE EXCHANGES", 2007-05-30) reported that the ROK and India yesterday in first-ever talks between defense ministers discussed a range of military cooperation projects, including joint naval drills and exchange visits by high-level officials. The ROK proposed a joint rescue and operation exercise between the two navies and asked India to dispatch a military attache to Seoul. The ROK also proposed the establishment of regular military consultation bodies, ROK Defense Ministry officials said.

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## **7. ROK-ASEAN Trade Relations**

JoongAng Ilbo ("KOREA-ASEAN PACT TO TAKE EFFECT JUNE 1", 2007-05-30) reported that a merchandise free trade agreement between the ROK and five member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations will take effect tomorrow, officials said. The ROK and nine out of the 10 member states of Asean, except Thailand, reached the agreement last year, aimed at liberalizing merchandise trade by 2010. Under the agreement, the ROK and Asean will liberalize merchandise trade by 2010.

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## **8. Japan-Australian Defense Cooperation**

Kyodo ("JAPAN, AUSTRALIA DEFENSE CHIEFS TO DISCUSS N. KOREA, TERRORISM JUNE 5", 2007-05-30) reported that Japan and Australia agreed to hold talks between their defense ministers in Tokyo on June 5 to discuss the DPRK nuclear and missile development issues as well as antiterrorism measures and collaboration in disaster relief, a Japanese government source said. Japanese Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma and his Australian counterpart Brendan Nelson are also expected to exchange views on a missile defense shield, the source said.

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## 9. Japan Political Scandal

New York Times ("SUICIDE POSES OLD THREAT TO JAPAN'S NEW LEADER", 2007-05-30) reported that the suicide of the agricultural minister this week threatens Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's administration with one of the oldest problems in Japanese politics: money scandals. Administration officials tried to play down the political significance of the hanging death of the agricultural minister, Toshikatsu Matsuoka, who faced twin scandals involving political donations and questionable political expenses. But then the former executive director of a government agency at the center of one of the scandals apparently committed suicide. Analysts say the suicides and scandals have spurred new voter distrust about corruption in the Liberal Democratic Party, Mr. Abe's base. With upper house elections in July, analysts say Mr. Abe's political survival may be at stake, especially if he fails to lead the party to a convincing victory.

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## 10. Cross Strait Relations

Kyodo News ("EX-TAIWAN PRESIDENT LEE ARRIVES IN JAPAN, EYES VISIT TO YASAKUNI SHRINE", 2007-05-30) reported that the former Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui arrived in Japan for an 11-day stay with an itinerary that he said he hopes will include a visit to the war-linked Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo where his elder brother is enshrined. Lee, 84, came to Tokyo after arriving at Narita International Airport on his first visit to the Japanese capital in 22 years. Beijing criticized the Japanese government for allowing the former Taiwan leader to make the visit.

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## 11. PRC Rural Unrest

The Associated Press ("RURAL CHINESE RIOT OVER ONE-CHILD POLICY", 2007-05-30) reported that protesters broke into government offices, destroying furniture and setting vehicles ablaze in the second known outbreak of violence this month over the PRC's strict family planning policies, local officials and state media said. The latest riots erupted in rural parts of the southern region of Guangxi, apparently in the mistaken belief that the government was reducing its fines for violating family size limits, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

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## 12. PRC Corruption Prosecution

The Los Angeles Times ("CHINA'S FOOD AND DRUG CRACKDOWN", 2007-05-30) reported that by the standards of PRC corruption cases, the \$832,000 that the former head of the State Food and Drug Administration was charged with skimming over a seven-year period was not huge. But the death sentence given in the bribery case reflected the growing pressure under which Beijing finds itself in the wake of medical and food scandals that have rattled the nation and spread anxiety abroad.

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## II. CanKor

## 13. Report #282

CanKor ("Current Events", 2007-05-29) For the first time in 56 years, trains carrying both North and South Korean passengers cross Korea's demilitarized zone on two re-linked railway tracks on the eastern and western sides of the peninsula. In a celebratory mood that include fireworks and marching bands, both countries emphasize the symbolic value of this one-time test run as a key step toward reconciliation. Hundreds of face-to-face family reunions take place in early May at the DPR Korean Kumgang Mountain resort, the first such reunions since the nuclear test. ROK presidential hopeful Sohn Hak-kyu returns from Pyongyang saying that the DPRK is hopeful that the BDA banking issue that is holding up progress in the February nuclear deal will soon be resolved. Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is told during a summit visit to Washington that the abduction issue will not stand in the way of dropping the DPRK from the US list of states sponsoring terrorism as part of a nuclear deal. At a dinner celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Korea Society in New York, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expresses optimism that the Korean people's dream of a reunified peninsula will come true and pledges UN assistance in meeting humanitarian needs and political support in a transition towards a permanent peace regimen. The WFP meanwhile suspends food aid to 400,000 DPR Korean beneficiaries because of insufficient donations. Changes are announced in the top-level DPRK leadership, as Transport Minister Kim Yong Il becomes the country's Prime Minister, replacing Pak Pong Ju, who -- according to Japanese sources -- was fired for promoting an incentive-based capitalistic wage system. Veteran diplomat Pak Ui Chun takes the post of foreign minister, left vacant by the death of Paek Nam Sun at the beginning of the year.

[\(return to top\)](#) CanKor ("OPINION", 2007-05-29) The OPINION section of this week's CanKor Report features a summary of papers presented at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research by Robert Joseph, Sang-Chul Kim, Bruce E. Bechtol and Nicholas Eberstadt on the topic "Who's afraid of North Korean regime collapse?" At another event hosted by the Heritage Foundation, North Korean human rights envoy Jay Lefkowitz says that the USA is considering starting people-to-people exchange programmes with the DPRK, possibly involving athletes, musicians, artists and even government officials. [\(return to top\)](#) CanKor ("RESOURCES", 2007-0-29) Our RESOURCES section takes a look at "Welcome to Pyongyang", a newly published book of photography by British photographer Charlie Crane, and "The Schoolgirl's Diary", the first DPRK feature film ever to be offered to buyers at the Cannes Film Festival. [\(return to top\)](#) CanKor ("WHAT READERS SAY ABOUT THE CANKOR REPORT", 2007-05-29) "I was delighted to receive the discussion between Erich Weingartner and Victor Hsu. Of all the reviews over the past year, yours is perhaps the most gratifying because it clearly shows how you both heard the deepest chords the book was meant to strike. The timing, moreover, turned out to be perfect. Your review appeared the same day as a Korea Society panel on the book in New York, and it was cited several times during the discussion. Please accept my sincere thanks for your thoughtful treatment of the book, and my best wishes for your own good work." James Church, Author of "A Corpse in the Koryo" [\(return to top\)](#)

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