

# NAPSNET Week in Review 25 April, 2003

---

## Recommended Citation

"NAPSNET Week in Review 25 April, 2003", NAPSNet Weekly Report, April 25, 2003,  
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-week-in-review-25-april-2003/>

---

## United States

---

### 1. US Domestic Politics on DPRK

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld circulated to key members of the administration a Pentagon memorandum proposing a radically different approach: the US, the memo argued, should team up with the PRC to press for the ouster of the DPRK's leadership. Rumsfeld's team, administration officials said, was urging diplomatic pressure for changing the government, not a military solution. But the classified memo, drafted by officials who are deeply opposed to opening talks that could eventually end up benefiting the DPRK economically, shows how the handling of the crisis has become the newest subject of internal struggle over how to pursue Bush's determination to stop the spread of nuclear arms and other unconventional weapons. Officials on all sides of the arguments say that, with the fall of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, the internal battles that once surrounded the policy on Iraq are re-emerging over the DPRK. White House officials say a change of government in the DPRK is not official administration policy and some suggest that the secret memorandum was circulated for discussion among high-level officials, including Vice President Dick Cheney, and may not represent Rumsfeld's view.

"US Domestic Politics on DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

"US Internal Conflict in Dealing with DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, ROK)

---

### 2. US DPRK Strike?

The Pentagon has produced detailed plans to bomb the DPRK's nuclear plant at Yongbyon if the DPRK goes ahead with reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel rods, an Australian report said. Citing "well-informed sources close to US thinking", The Australian newspaper said the plan also included a US strike against DPRK heavy artillery in the hills above the border with the ROK. The artillery directly threatens Seoul as well as US troops stationed south of the Demilitarised Zone. The Pentagon hardliners said to be behind the plan reportedly believe the precision strikes envisaged in it would not lead to the DPRK initiating a general war it would be certain to lose. This is because Washington would inform the DPRK that the bombing was not aimed at destroying the regime of Kim Jong-il, but merely at destroying its nuclear weapons capacity.

"US DPRK Strike?" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

"US Dovish Perspective on DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 24, ROK)

---

---

## Republic of Korea

---

### 1. DPRK-US-PRC Multilateral Talks

Nuclear talks in Beijing ended Friday after US officials said the DPRK claimed to have nuclear weapons and might test, export or use them. The DPRK said it presented a new proposal to resolve the dispute, but it was ignored. US officials have said they are seeking the "verifiable and irreversible" elimination of the North's nuclear weapons program. Despite the apparent impasse, both sides agreed to meet again, according to the PRC's Foreign Ministry, which hosted the meeting. "Both of them expressed that the issue should be resolved in a peaceful way," the PRC's foreign minister Li Zhaoxing told reporters while accompanying the visiting French prime minister. ROK officials said they were looking into the alleged DPRK claims about its nuclear capability. Some analysts suggested that the DPRK was bluffing. DPRK delegate Ri Gun told US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly that North Korea had reprocessed all 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods in its possession, a senior US official in Washington said on condition of anonymity. The official said Ri made the comments about the fuel rods at a plenary session while the other comments on its nuclear activities were made at a social gathering Wednesday after formal discussions.

"DPRK-US Multilateral Talks Collapse" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

"Trilateral Talks with US, DPRK and PRC" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 24, ROK)

"DPRK Nuclear Armed" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 24, US)

"DPRK-US-PRC Multilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, US)

"US on DPRK Multilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

"DPRK-US Multilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

"DPRK-US-PRC Multilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

"DPRK Nuclear Issue Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, PRC)

---

### 2. DPRK on DPRK-US-PRC Multilateral Talks

The DPRK says it put forward a "bold proposal" at talks on its nuclear program, but heard nothing new from the US. The foreign ministry in Pyongyang accused the US of avoiding essential issues - but gave no details of its own offer. The talks in Beijing ended amid mutual recriminations on Friday, after US officials said Pyongyang had admitted having nuclear weapons. President George W Bush earlier accused the DPRK of using "blackmail," after the new claims about its nuclear program emerged in Washington. US Secretary of State Colin Powell said "strong views" were expressed. A DPRK foreign ministry spokesman said the US had "repeated its old assertion that the DPRK (North Korea) should 'scrap its nuclear program before dialogue,' without advancing any new proposal". The DPRK set out a new proposal for the settlement of the nuclear issue, proceeding from its stand to avert a war on the Korean peninsula. The spokesman added that US officials had "persistently avoided the discussion on the essential issues to be discussed between both sides". DPRK did not comment on the alleged admission that it possesses nuclear weapons.

"DPRK on DPRK-US-PRC Multilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

---

### **3. US on DPRK-US-PRC Multilateral Talks**

Secretary of State Colin Powell said in a speech April 24 that the US stressed three points at the recently concluded US-PRC-DPRK talks held in Beijing: that Pyongyang's possible possession of nuclear weapons is a multinational problem; that the country should not fear denuclearization; and that threatening behavior will not be rewarded by the international community. Despite how the DPRK government would like to portray the situation, Powell said, the confrontation concerning its acquisition of nuclear weapons "is not a US-DPRK problem." "The one thing that is absolutely clear as a result of this meeting, once again, is that there is unity within the community that we must not allow the (Korean) peninsula to become nuclear," Powell said to members of the US Asia Pacific Council Symposium in Washington, DC. Powell also stressed that the DPRK "should not leave this series of discussions that have been held in Beijing with the slightest impression that the US and its partners, and the nations in the region will be intimidated by bellicose statements, or by threats or actions they think might get them more attention, or might force us to make a concession that we would not otherwise make. They would be very ill-advised to move in that direction," he said.

For the full transcript:

"US on DPRK-US-PRC Multilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

---

### **4. DPRK-ROK Talks**

The DPRK and the ROK agreed Monday to hold Cabinet-level talks next week, as confusion continued over whether the DPRK has begun reprocessing its spent nuclear fuel for possible atomic weapons. On Monday, ROK Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun sent a telephone message to Pyongyang accepting the DPRK offer to hold Cabinet-level negotiations in Pyongyang April 27-29, his office said Monday. The agreement came days before the US, the DPRK, and the PRC were expected to meet in separate talks in Beijing to discuss the DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons programs. The Beijing talks could take place as early as this week. "DPRK-ROK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, PRC)

"DPRK-ROK Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---

### **5. DPRK Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing**

The DPRK issued a revised version of an official statement which had originally indicated the Stalinist state was reprocessing spent nuclear fuel rods. A new version of Friday's statement was posted on the website of Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (

"DPRK's Remarks on Nuclear Reprocessing" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, ROK)

"DPRK Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

"DPRK's Nuclear Power" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, PRC)

---

---

## **6. ROK-US Diplomatic Relations**

The last time a ROK president traveled to Washington, President Bush had just been inaugurated and this country's leader, Kim Dae Jung, was an elder statesman with a Nobel Peace Prize who thought he could secure US support for his policy of engaging the DPRK. What Kim got instead was a lecture about how untrustworthy the DPRK leader, Kim Jong Il, was, and a deeply bruised ego. As a result, the two men never established much of a connection, and relations between the nations, longtime allies, have only grown worse. Next month, a new ROK president, Roh Moo Hyun, will travel to Washington. He will be preceded, though, by a new ambassador, Han Sung Joo. Experts on the ROK both here and in the US say the choice of Han reflects a determination to avoid a diplomatic train wreck.

"ROK-US Diplomatic Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---

## **7. ROK-US Military Consultation**

Defense officials from ROK and US will meet May 6 and 7 in Hawaii to continue consultations on the future of the two countries' military alliance, the ROK Defense Ministry said Monday. The talks will also coordinate topics that the two countries' presidents will discuss during their meeting the following week, when President Roh Moo-hyun visits US. ROK's assistant minister of defense for policy, Cha Young-koo, and US deputy assistant secretary of defense, Richard Lawless, will try to set up a framework for the two national leaders to discuss, the defense officials here said.

"ROK-US Military Consultation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, ROK)

---

## **8. DPRK-PRC-ROK Diplomacy**

The DPRK's new willingness to participate in multilateral discussions seems to indicate that the PRC has quietly done something in the past couple weeks. But the PRC must be careful how it helps. First and foremost, one can still doubt that the administration of US President George W Bush is really interested in resolving conflicts through dialogue, because recently it has shown more interest in resolving them with action in the form of smart weapons. Therefore, the problem of the US-DPRK standoff may not be a lack of solution; rather, the problem may be that Washington does not want a solution other than a complete capitulation or implosion of DPRK. Unless Washington can change its hard-nosed realist mindset, the world should not expect a breakthrough between Washington and Pyongyang.

"DPRK-PRC-ROK Diplomacy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---

## **9. ROK against UN Vote on DPRK**

Ra Jong-yil, the senior Blue House adviser for national security, said Wednesday that he worked last year to keep the United Nations Commission on Human Rights from putting the DPRK human rights issues on its agenda. Ra was ROK's ambassador to the United Kingdom in the Kim Dae-jung administration at the time. He told the National Assembly's Intelligence Committee, "At that time, our priority was to create an environment for improving rights there in the future, not demanding immediate changes. We believed that if DPRK human rights issues were dealt with publicly, it would lead to a worsening of human rights and a security crisis," he said. The administration has been criticized for ducking a vote on a resolution critical of DPRK's human rights regime that the UN body adopted recently.

"ROK against UN Vote on DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 24, ROK)

---

## **10. ROK on DPRK-US Multilateral Talks**

The exclusion of the ROK from talks later this week on the DPRK nuclear problem has caused an uproar in Seoul, with much of the criticism directed at the newly inaugurated president, Roh Moo Hyun, who had promised that his government would not take a back seat on key issues of the Korean Peninsula. News that the US, the DPRK, and the PRC would meet alone in Beijing on Wednesday brought protests from editorial writers and a wide spectrum of politicians. Critics say the ROK is being relegated to its traditional role of subservience to the US. Roh acknowledged that the ROK's absence, a condition imposed by the DPRK, brought "disappointment and wounded pride" to his citizenry. But he argued that the outcome of the talks was more important than the form. Politicians within Roh's ruling party also were critical of the format. "For national interest, we must swallow it, but emotionally, this is humiliating," said Cho Soon Sung, chairman of the party's special committee on the DPRK nuclear issue.

"ROK's Role in Talks on DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, ROK)

"ROK on DPRK-US Multilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

---

## **11. DPRK Domestic Economy**

The DPRK's economy has been in the doldrums for more than a decade. Perhaps as many as a million people perished in a famine during the 1990s, and the food situation inside the country remains precarious today. There are two hypotheses about why a country facing such problems has pursued nuclear weapons. The first is that its nuclear program is merely a bargaining chip to be traded away to extract political and economic concessions from the US - a kind of atomic "trick or treat". The other possibility, of course, is that the DPRK's regard nuclear weapons as an end in themselves - a military deterrent and the ultimate guarantor of the regime's survival. The DPRK's foreign ministry said as much on April 18, 2003. It declared: "The Iraqi war teaches a lesson that in order to prevent war and defend the security of a country and the sovereignty of a nation, it is necessary to have a powerful deterrent force only." Yet even from this perspective, there is an intriguing economic angle. If a nuclear DPRK were to foreswear aggression toward the ROK, then its huge conventional forces would be redundant. Its million-man army, an albatross around the economy's neck, could be demobilised. In fact, before the nuclear crisis erupted last October, the DPRK floated trial balloons regarding the possibility of such a demobilisation. In all likelihood, the Beijing talks will merely be the first step in a protracted, difficult process. But if the DPRK's army is to be demobilised, those troops have to have jobs to go to.

"DPRK Domestic Economy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

---

## **12. DPRK Jet Fighter Counter-Surveillance**

A squadron of DPRK jet fighters launched rare long-distance flights to counter US and Russian surveillance flights over the Sea of Japan, officials and reports said Wednesday. ROK Defense Minister Cho Young-Kil said the DPRK mobilized 10 fighter jets for long-duration flights Sunday and Monday, an unusual move because the country's energy crisis had sharply limited such flights in the past. A ministry spokesman quoted Cho as telling a National Assembly committee Tuesday: "Ten DPRK MiG-21s and MiG-23s launched long-distance navigation flight training Sunday and Monday." The JoongAng Daily, a major newspaper in Seoul, said the DPRK air force was training to counter US and Russian surveillance flights over the Sea of Japan (East Sea). An unidentified military official told JoongAng that DPRK fighters had flown hundreds of kilometers, staying in the air for up to 90 minutes.

"DPRK Jet Fighter Counter-Surveillance" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, US)

---

---

### **13. DPRK Nuclear Scientists Defections**

The US and at least 10 other countries helped arrange the defections of up to 20 top DPRK officials, including key nuclear scientists, in an operation that began in October, according to an Australian newspaper. The Weekend Australian reported that a man it identified as the "father" of the DPRK nuclear program, Kyong Won Ha, was among the defectors and is providing intelligence information to Western officials. Kyong and the other officials had escaped to the PRC and went on to other countries with the help of consulates and embassies, the newspaper reported. The US helped set up -- and pay for -- an embassy in Beijing for the tiny Pacific Island of Nauru specifically to help move the defectors, though none went to the embassy, the Australian said. The newspaper said it had uncovered the network "through confidential documents and interviews with key players in Washington, the Pacific and North Asia." It said Australia was not involved and that the operation "has now been wound up."

"DPRK Nuclear Scientists Defections" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---

### **14. DPRK Missile Test Site Explosion**

A US spy satellite monitored a strong explosion that rocked the DPRK's test site for ballistic missiles in November last year, ROK reports said. Washington has passed information concerning the explosion to ROK military authorities, according to Yonhap news agency. The blast occurred during a missile engine test and crippled operations and facilities at the DPRK's missile launch site at Musudan-ri, Hwadae county, northeast of Pyongyang, Seoul's Chosun Ilbo newspaper said. The launch site in North Hamgyong province has been closely monitored by US spy satellites since Pyongyang sent shockwaves around the world by test-firing a Taepodong long-range ballistic missile that flew over Japan and into the Pacific in 1998. The explosion caused extensive damage and has been delaying the development and test launch of North Korea's Taepodong missiles, Chosun said, adding fragments and debris flew several hundred meters (yards) across the launch site. ROK military officials declined to confirm the reports.

"DPRK Missile Test Site Explosion" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---

## **People's Republic of China**

---

## **1. PRC and DPRK Nuclear Brinksmanship**

The PRC sought today to put a positive face on the talks it arranged between the US and the DPRK, but diplomats and analysts argued that DPRK had alienated the PRC, its only significant ally, by declaring that it had already become a nuclear power. The talks formally ended this morning, hours earlier than expected, after Li Zhaoxing, PRC's foreign minister, huddled with James A. Kelly, assistant secretary of State, and Li Gun, a DPRK deputy foreign minister, and extracted a promise that they would keep diplomatic channels open. Even Li, however, did not seek to disguise the fact that the talks had broken down after Li Gun asserted, apparently during a lunch break on Thursday, that the DPRK already had nuclear weapons and that the only issue at stake was whether it would begin testing or exporting them. "While discussing such an important issue, it is not strange for differences to emerge," the OPRC foreign minister said in a statement held at a state guest house in Beijing. "While paying attention to the words and statements of the other side, we must emphasize even more their deeds."

"PRC and DPRK Nuclear Brinksmanship" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

"PRC's Attitude towards Trilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, PRC)

"Nations' Response to Trilateral Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, PRC)

---

## **2. PRC-US Espionage**

The family of a Californian woman accused of having worked as a double agent for the PRC government says she is being prosecuted to cover up for mistakes made by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The statement, published in the Washington Post newspaper, said Katrina Leung had been a loyal informant for the FBI, but had been exploited by two of the bureau's agents who had had long term sexual relations with her. Leung is being held on charges of illegally obtaining secret documents for the PRC while working for the FBI. She denies this, saying the FBI knew about all the documents she passed on.

"PRC-US Espionage" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---

## **3. PRC International Economy**

The PRC has consolidated its position as one of the world's great trading nations, vaulting past the U.K. into fifth spot. New figures from the World Trade Organization (WTO) show the PRC's merchandise exports jumped 22 percent last year to \$325.6 billion, while imports rose an equally impressive 21 percent to \$295.2 billion. No other trading nation in the top 10 came even close to that level of growth. The world leader, the US, saw its exports fall 5 percent in 2002 from the previous year. Exports by third-ranked Japan rose 3 percent, while second-ranked Germany posted a 7 percent rise.

"PRC International Economy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

---

---

#### **4. Taiwan Domestic Politics**

The leaders of Taiwan's two main opposition parties, which together have outpolled the current party in power in recent elections, have agreed to run together on a single ticket in next year's presidential election. The agreement, between Lien Chan of the Nationalist Party and James Soong of the People First Party, comes after years of personal rivalry. The decision by Soong to seek the vice presidency as Lien's running mate, instead of running again for the presidency, gives the two men a strong chance of beating President Chen Shui-bian when he seeks re-election in March, political analysts here said. Polls by Taiwanese newspapers over the last three days have shown Lien and Soong ahead of President Chen by 17 to 25 percentage points.

"Taiwan Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

---

#### **5. PRC SARS Virus**

Beijing has sealed off another hospital and ordered 4,000 people to stay at home to prevent the spread of the pneumonia-like SARS virus. It also announced it would spend more than \$400m on a nationwide health network to tackle the virus, as the PRC's death toll rose to 115. Asian health officials meeting in Malaysia have proposed strict pre-travel screening at borders, and travel bans on suspected SARS sufferers. More than 260 people have died from the virus worldwide, with Hong Kong's death toll also rising to 115 on Friday. All migrant workers and students have been ordered to remain in Beijing, but train stations remained packed on Friday with people trying to leave. Beijing authorities have denied rumors they were planning to introduce martial law. Vice Premier Wu Yi said China would spend 3.5 billion yuan (\$420m) setting up a nationwide health network to fight SARS and other medical emergencies. Another 2 billion yuan (\$240m) would be earmarked to pay for emergency care for SARS patients who could not afford to pay for treatment, said Wu.

"PRC SARS Virus" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

"PRC WHO SARS Quarantine" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 24, US)

"SARS WHO Travel Alerts" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, US)

"Hong Kong Financial Response to SARS" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, US)

"PRC SARS Uprising" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, US)

"PRC SARS Status" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

"PRC SARS Tourism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

"PRC SARS Death Toll" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---

#### **6. SARS and PRC Domestic Politics**

In the most significant political shake-up in more than a decade, the mayor of Beijing and the minister of health were removed from their Communist Party posts today for failing to deal with the spread of SARS in the PRC. Health officials also conceded they had mismanaged the outbreak, an unprecedented admission by the Communist Party. The government increased the number of confirmed SARS cases in the capital from 37 to 346, a tacit acknowledgement that it had previously lied about the toll. The government also canceled the annual one-week vacation that begins May 1. The Ministry of Education, meanwhile, effectively confined hundreds of thousands of students in the capital to their campuses to limit the infection rate.

"SARS and PRC Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---



---

## **7. PRC-Japan Relations**

Hu Jintao, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), on April 16 met with a delegation from the Democratic Party of Japan headed by its leader Kan Naoto. Hu said Sino-Japanese relations, cultivated by previous generations on both sides, constitute a hard-won achievement that should be valued by both nations. He stressed that both sides should, with a responsible attitude, learn from history, look ahead to the future and adhere to the principles enshrined in the bilateral documents. Kan said the Democratic Party attaches great importance to its relations with the CPC, pointing to the frequent bilateral contacts, especially high-level exchanges. These contacts have played an important role in furthering good relations between the two parties and promoting friendly cooperation between the two countries.

"PRC-Japan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, PRC)

---

## **8. PRC G8 Invitation**

France has invited PRC President Hu Jintao to join the world's seven most industrialized countries and Russia at a summit in France in June. The invitation came during a visit to Beijing by French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin - the first Western leader to visit the PRC since the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic. Russia has participated in summits of the Group of Seven (G7) in recent years - a move motivated more by political than economic factors, correspondents say. But Raffarin said the June 1-3, 2003 summit in the French spa town of Evian would focus on development issues, "therefore we have expressed a wish that China be present."

"PRC G8 Invitation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

---

## **Japan**

---

### **1. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Claim**

ROK and Japanese nuclear experts expressed doubt Friday over the DPRK's claims about its nuclear capability, saying they could be a ruse to force concessions from the US. Kang Jungmin, a nuclear analyst, questioned the DPRK's claim that it has reprocessed all its 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods, a key step in the production of atomic bombs. That would put it much closer to building six to eight additional weapons beyond the one or two it was believed to have. "It's a sheer lie. There is no sign whatsoever that North Korea has restarted its reprocessing facility," Kang said. "Even if it has restarted its facility, it would take them four or five months to complete the reprocessing." Ko Yoo-hwan, a DPRK expert at Seoul's Dongkuk University, said Pyongyang may have acquired weapons materials or bombs during the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Another possibility: the DPRK has built a few crude nuclear devices and is trying to use them as a bargaining chip, he said. "If the North admitted that it was armed with nuclear weapons, it means it is using its last card," Ko said. "It's going for its last, big deal with the US." In Japan, Toshimitsu Shigemura, professor of international relations at Takushoku University and expert on the DPRK, said he thinks the DPRK doesn't have nuclear weapons. "North Korea believes the US was able to invade Iraq because Iraq didn't have nuclear weapons, so it is saying it has nuclear weapons," he said.

"ROK and Japan on DPRK Nuclear Claim" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

---

---

## **2. Japan-DPRK Relations**

Japan, expressing hopes for a peaceful resolution to tensions with the DPRK said on Friday it would be willing to provide the DPRK with aid for its struggling economy if it scrapped its nuclear arms program. "We want a peaceful solution," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told private broadcaster Fuji Television in pre-recorded program to be broadcast on Sunday. "We want North Korea to become a country that does not think of having nuclear weapons or the intention to possess them or possess unfriendly weapons such as missiles," Fukuda said. "If that happens, our government is willing to give our full support on matters such as rebuilding the economy," he added. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi told reporters that Japan, the only country to have suffered a nuclear attack, wanted talks to continue. "What is important is to continue discussions," he said.

"Japan-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

---

## **3. DPRK-Japan Relations**

The DPRK must explain what happened to Japanese nationals kidnapped by DPRK agents if relations are to be normalized, a Japanese foreign ministry official told AFP. "If North Korea wishes to progress in normalisation negotiations, there needs to be clear cooperation and a clear resolution of this question," said foreign ministry official Akitaka Saiki. While the DPRK maintains that only five abductees have survived, Japan remains convinced that more of the kidnapped are alive. "The information provided by the DPRK authorities was insufficient and inaccurate," said Saiki. After talking to the victims' families, the Japanese authorities came up with 155 questions for Pyongyang concerning the abductees' fate. These questions were passed to the DPRK authorities, Saiki said, and despite several informal meetings between the two nations, "there is not a single answer to these questions". "Unless this question is resolved, there will be not a single yen, not a single grain of rice extended" to North Korea, Shoichi Nakagawa said.

"DPRK-Japan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, US)

---

## **4. Japan's Role in Iraq Reconstruction**

The Japanese government unveiled an aid package for postwar Iraq on Monday, featuring a plan to study the possibility of dispatching Self-Defense Forces (SDF) personnel. Announced by Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda and endorsed by the ruling coalition parties, the package calls for cooperation between different aid organizations and the US civil administration overseeing Iraq's reconstruction in the effort to provide humanitarian assistance. According to the measures contained in the package, Japan will help preserve Iraq's cultural assets in cooperation with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and reopen its embassy in Iraq as soon as possible. The package also calls for Japan to transport materials and goods for humanitarian aid to war-affected people in Iraq and the vicinity using SDF aircraft. In an indication of its willingness to consider the dispatch of SDF and civilian personnel, the government is prepared to draw up new legislation, if necessary, the package says.

"Japan Role in Post-War Iraq Reconstruction" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 22, US)

"Japan's Role in Iraq Reconstruction" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, JAPAN)

---

---

## **5. Japan Domestic Politics**

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will mark the start of his third year in office on Saturday with little fanfare and with his pet slogan of "structural reform" widely dismissed as a joke. His lack of initiative has been blamed by politicians and businesses for the huge sell-off in share prices that saw the key Nikkei 225 benchmark index plunge some 45 percent in his two years at the helm to 20-year lows of around 7,800 points. The economic malaise threatens to overshadow his bid for re-election in September as president of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a post which traditionally carries with it the premiership due to the party's long dominance in parliament. "Some people want me to quit soon as they say two years are too long. But it takes some time to deliver on reform," Koizumi said in a campaign speech ahead of parliamentary by-elections on Sunday. "The reforms have been steadily progressing."  
"Japan Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 24, US)

---

## **6. Japan Domestic Economy**

Japan's jobless rate edged closer to a record high in March due to restructuring at companies struggling to weather the global economic downturn, the government and analysts said. The jobless rate rose to 5.4 percent, just below an historic 5.5 percent high, the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications said. The rate rose from 5.2 percent in February. For the full year to March, Japan's average jobless rate climbed to 5.4 percent, the highest for any financial year, the ministry said.  
"Japan Domestic Economy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

---

## **2. Japan Military Emergency Legislation**

The Japanese Diet began discussions Friday on a bill to protect residents of Japan during a foreign attack, as the government presented an outline of steps to be taken under it. The outline describes restrictions on people's rights -- such as prefectural governments using private property against the owner's will -- and defines the national government's role in halting nuclear power plant operations and removing contamination if Japan is attacked with weapons of mass destruction.

"Japan Military Emergency Legislation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, JAPAN)

---

## **7. Japan-US Joint Military Drill**

The Japanese Defense Agency on Monday began a series of refueling drills involving four Japanese F-15 fighters of the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) and a US KC-135 tanker over western Kyushu and Shikoku. This first ever midair refueling exercise by the ASDF, which is expected to continue through May 2, is to help establish operating procedures for the aerial tanker ASDF plans to introduce around 2006.

"Japan-US Joint Military Drill" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 21, JAPAN)

---

## **8. Koizumi European Tour**

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will leave Japan on Saturday for a European tour in which his diplomatic clout will be tested by trying to help rapprochement between regional countries that supported and opposed the US-led war on Iraq. During his trip to Britain, Spain, France, Germany and Greece, Koizumi is expected to urge them to pursue international cooperation again as nearly 80% of Japanese say assistance for postwar Iraq should be led by the UN and not the US. After paying visits to the four European states, Koizumi also plans to meet with Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis on May 2 in Athens, the fifth and last leg, and to meet leaders of the European Union (EU) there.

"Koizumi European Tour" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 24, JAPAN)

---

## **9. Japan Middle East Visit**

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will visit Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other countries in June to discuss reconstruction of Iraq and the Middle East peace process. Koizumi will meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and other leaders to seek their understanding on his decision to support Washington in the Iraq war, the Sankei Shimbun newspaper said, without citing sources. The visit is also aimed at promoting Japan's presence in the reconstruction process of Iraq, it said. A spokesman for the prime minister, Yu Kameoka denied the report, however, saying nothing has been decided.

"Japan Middle East Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, US)

---

## **10. Japan Red Army Radical Hijacker Return to Japan**

The sister of a Japan Red Army radical accused of hijacking a commercial airliner to the DPRK in 1970 returned to Tokyo and was immediately arrested on charges of visiting the DPRK without approval from the Japanese government. Michiko Akagi, 49, went to Pyongyang to stay with her brother, Shiro Akagi, in 1983. Shiro Akagi, 55, and other Red Army members accused of forcing a Japan Airlines plane to fly to DPRK have lived in that nation's capital since the hijacking.

"Japan Red Army Radical Hijacker Return to Japan" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, US)

---

## **11. Japan Aum Cult Death Sentence Demand**

After more than 250 hearings over seven years, Japanese prosecutors are set to demand the death penalty on the Aum Supreme Truth doomsday cult guru as they sum up their case.

"There can be nothing but the death penalty" that the prosecution will demand, said Hiroshi Itakura, a law professor at Nihon University ahead of the milestone in the marathon trial.

Since the prosecution is due Thursday to read out a summary of its case in respect of 13 charges reportedly running to 300 pages, the formal demand on punishment is expected to come late in the day. Shoko Asahara, 48, whose real name is Chizuo Matsumoto, has been on trial at the Tokyo District Court since April 1996 for murder and various other charges including attempted murder, illegally disposing of three bodies and illegal production of arms.

"Japan Aum Cult Death Sentence Demand" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 24, US)

---

## **Russia Federation**

---

---

## 1. Russia on DPRK-US Multilateral Discussion

Russia's envoy to the DPRK called on the DPRK and the US to continue the search for a peaceful settlement over non-proliferation and said that guarantees of the DPRK's security were the key to a solution. "We hope North Korea and the US will patiently continue the search for a negotiated settlement that will bring North Korea back into line with the non-proliferation regime while ensuring its sovereignty and economic development interest," Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov said. Losyukov, who holds the Asian affairs brief at the foreign ministry, noted that "throughout the entire course of the DPRK crisis, (Russia) has warned of the dangers of uncontrolled escalation." Russia "believes Pyongyang must abandon its nuclear option, and this can be achieved by giving (North Korea) reliable guarantees of security and non-interference, including possibly on a multilateral basis," he said.

"Russia on DPRK-US Multilateral Discussion" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 25, US)

---

## 2. Russia on Catastrophic DPRK Event

A top Russian foreign ministry official was quoted as saying in Tokyo that a "catastrophic" development of events in the US-DPRK nuclear standoff was imminent. "It is probable that, as early as tomorrow, there will be a catastrophic development of events," ITAR-TASS quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov as saying. He added that the standoff had "reached an extreme stage" but did not give a more detailed explanation about his warning. Losyukov holds the Asian affairs brief in the ministry. Losyukov said that Russia would welcome progress in Kelly's negotiations with Li Gun, the DPRK foreign ministry's deputy director for US affairs and a former senior member of his country's delegation to the United Nations. "If the danger is defused, we would only welcome this," Losyukov said.

"Russia on Catastrophic DPRK Event" (NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, US)

[\(return to top\)](#)

---

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-week-in-review-25-april-2003/>

Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

[nautilus@nautilus.org](mailto:nautilus@nautilus.org)