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United States

1. US on PRC Military Threat

US Deputy Defense Secretary Fred Wulfovitz said Wednesday it is unclear whether an increasingly strong PRC will emerge as a force for peace in East Asia or as a "threatening power." "China's future is very much to be shaped," said Wulfovitz, speaking to reporters in advance of a trip to Singapore and the Philippines. At present, he said, the PRC cannot be categorized. "You can't put it in a box." He said it was extremely important for "China and into-Chinese" to ensure that the PRC evolves as a force for peace. "It seems almost certain that China is going to be more powerful. That's certainly the trajectory that it's on," Wulfovitz said.

"US on PRC Military Threat" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 30, US)

2. US Response to DPRK Refugees

The US State Department explained its stance Thursday, in refusing asylum requests from DPRK refugees who had entered foreign consulates in PRC, with Spokesman Richard Boucher saying in a briefing that the related US law limits entry only to applicants who are on US territory and its borders, but not those in US diplomatic missions or those belonging to other countries. Boucher noted that US might allow refugee status as long as the UN asked on behalf of refugees in another country, but that this was a different procedure.

"US Response to North Korean Refugees" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, ROK)

Korean Peninsula

1. DPRK-US Relations

Visiting US congressmen said Wednesday they want to open up a new, "non-threatening" channel for stalled contacts with the DPRK if the DPRK will allow them to visit. The DPRK has not issued visas to the delegation, which includes 11 members of Congress, spouses and aides. Representative Curt Weldon, the delegation leader, said they are exploring various channels to try to get the DPRK to invite them. He said UN Secretary General Kofi Annan promised to raise the issue with the DPRK's ambassador to the United Nations. The congressmen want to engage the DPRK leaders "in a very non-threatening and a very peaceful way to simply open the door for discussions," Weldon said at a news conference in Beijing.

"PRC-RF Military Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 30, US)

2. DPRK Human Rights Situation

Female DPRK refugees in the PRC were repeatedly raped and forced into prostitution over the last year, according to Amnesty International's annual human rights report Tuesday. The report also said that there had been no tangible improvements in human rights in the DPRK. The DPRK persistently has refused access to independent human rights observers, the report said. "Information reaching Amnesty International suggested that almost three quarters of DPRK refugees in PRC are women. There were reports that many were targeted by organized gangs, repeatedly raped and forced into prostitution."

"DPRK Human Rights Situation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 30, ROK)

3. DPRK Asylum Seekers in PRC

A former officer in the DPRK army has entered the ROK consulate in Beijing, diplomatic sources said. But the diplomats warned he and the three other DPRK asylum-seekers will have more difficulties gaining passage to the ROK than previous asylum seekers. The army officer - a former head of a platoon in the Korean People's Army - entered the consulate Monday while lining up for a visa, said an Asian diplomat, who requested anonymity. The man, identified as Sok Chol-bo, 36, entered with a PRC ID card. Sok had stuck into the PRC from the DPRK in 1996 and had been living there since then. Prior to that, he was once one of the many personal guards of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il, the diplomat said.

"DPRK Asylum-Seekers in PRC" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 29, US)

"DPRK Asylum-Seekers in PRC" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 29, US)

"DPRK Asylum-Seekers in PRC" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 29, ROK)

The ROK might consider a PRC request to hand over four DPRK asylum seekers if the PRC promises to let them leave the PRC, an ROK official said Wednesday. The three men and one woman are held up in the consular office of ROK embassy in Beijing, where they sought refuge over the past week. "Under Chinese law and international law, embassies and consulates in China have no right to grant asylum to citizens of third countries," said PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Kong Qian. An ROK official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said his government could consider the request only if the PRC guarantees that the DPRK asylum-seekers' wishes will be respected.

"ROK on PRC DPRK Asylum-Seeker Request" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 29, US)

5. ROK-DPRK Relations

The ROK government has decided to skip the publication this year of an annual defense ministry report, whose description of the DPRK as its main enemy has annoyed the DPRK. "We have decided not to publish this year's defense White Paper," a spokesman of the defense ministry stated. "The ministry will not issue the White Paper any more under the current government," he said. Instead of the annual report, the defense ministry will publish a comprehensive report wrapping up policies implemented under Kim Dae-jung, the spokesman said. The opposition Grand National Party accused the government of following a policy of appeasement toward the DPRK. The party urged the government to publish this year's White Paper retaining intact the phrase labeling the DPRK as the main enemy.

"ROK-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 28, US)

6. Perspectives of ROK-Japan Relations

A joint survey conducted by the student newspapers of Seoul National University and Tokyo University has highlighted differences in historical perspective. The newspapers polled 560 university students; 73 percent of the ROK students polled said that the two countries must resolve issues related to their shared history before bilateral relations can improve. Less than half the Tokyo University students agreed. Slightly more ROK students criticized Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine for Japan's war dead; only 19 percent of the Japanese respondents agreed. Forty percent of Tokyo University students said ROK was interfering in its internal affairs by criticizing Japan's history textbooks.

"Perspectives of ROK-Japan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 28, ROK)

7. ROK F-X Project

Following ROK President Kim Dae-jung signing off on the deal with Boeing to purchase 40 F-15Ks between 2005 and 2009, the Ministry of National Defense officially confirmed the final contract, Tuesday. The contract is worth US\$4.228 billion with offset trade valued at US\$1.561.

"ROK F-X Project" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 28, US)

8. ROK-Japan Relations

ROK President Kim Dae-jung held talks with a cousin of the Japanese emperor on Thursday in a symbolic move to improve relations between Japan and the ROK. Prince Takahano's trip to attend Friday's World Cup opening ceremony in Seoul was the first official visit to the ROK by a member of the Japanese Imperial family since World War Two. The prince arrived in Seoul on Wednesday afternoon with his wife, Princess Hisako, and was scheduled to see two World Cup matches over the weekend.

"ROK-Japan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, US)

9. ROK-US Military Relations

The ROK has rejected US calls for combat troops in Afghanistan, citing anti-American sentiment and security precautions for the football World Cup, military authorities said. The unofficial US requests have been delivered through ROK liaison officers stationed in Florida to support the US Central Command, a defense ministry official said Tuesday. "We told them that dispatching military troops overseas is not appropriate at this point of time," he said. "This is a very sensitive issue," he said, referring to fears that South Korea could be the target of terrorist attacks due to its traditional alliance with the United States.

"ROK-US Military Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 28, US)

10. UN Aid to DPRK

A UN relief agency reported that it has accumulated US\$120 million, or 51 percent, of its goal for aid to DPRK this year. The report was made Wednesday after the agency, the Office for the Cooperation of Humanitarian Activities, completed an evaluation of its humanitarian activities in DPRK. The agency said that aid to Afghanistan was limiting its ability to reach its funding for DPRK. The agency said it had reached only 39 percent of its total budgetary requirements for 2002. In spite of 8 years of humanitarian intervention in DPRK, international aid organizations still held hope that relief supplies were helping that nation, the agency said.

"UN Aid to DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, ROK)

11. Prevention against Terrorism in World Cup

The ROK has banned more than 15,200 suspected terrorists and soccer hooligans from entering the nation to ensure the safety of the World Cup soccer finals, officials said Wednesday. The ROK government has also designated areas surrounding stadiums, players' training camps and other key installations special security zones, they said. To cope with possible biological attacks, the government has kept in stock vaccines and other materials to prevent and treat contagious diseases such as anthrax. Health and Welfare Minister Lee The-bok said. The military will deploy F-15 fighter jets, anti-aircraft missiles and anti-terror units around World Cup venues, while US and ROK vehicles for detecting biochemical agents will be positioned around stadiums, he said.

"Prevention against Terrorism in World Cup" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, ROK)

People's Republic of China

1. PRC-ROK DPRK Asylum Seekers

The PRC said Thursday that ROK diplomats have asked for guidance on how to deal with the four DPRK asylum-seekers who have taken refuge in the ROK's embassy in Beijing. In a statement, the Foreign Ministry reiterated the PRC's demand that the three men and one woman be handed over to PRC authorities "to be handled." An ROK official said the embassy wants further talks with the PRC on the matter, but declined to comment on any negotiations that might be underway.

"PRC-ROK DPRK Asylum Seekers" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 30, US)

2. Russia-PRC Military Relations

Russia's defense minister met with PRC President Jiang Zemin on Friday for talks on building military ties between the two former rivals and allaying suspicions about Russia's closer links with NATO. Both Jiang and Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov gave an upbeat assessment of the talks, saying the two sides agreed on the need for a strategic partnership. "The development of military relations between Russia and China not only benefits both nations, but also helps promote regional and world peace and stability," Ivanov was quoted as saying. The two sides also discussed measures to fight international terrorism. Jiang will visit the Russian city of St. Petersburg in June for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a group originally founded in the PRC to combat Muslim extremists. The organization is made up of Russia, the PRC and four central Asian republics.

"Russia-PRC Military Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, US)

"PRC-RF Military Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, US)

3. PRC-Japanese Relations

PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Qian said on May 23 that it is within the PRC's sovereignty to decide how to handle the five people who broke into the Japanese consulate General in Shenyang two weeks ago. "China does not need to consult with any other country on this," Kong said. "No other country has the right to interfere." He was responding to Japan's contention that more discussions are needed on the dispute over territorial claims.

"PRC-Japanese Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, PRC)

4. PRC on Chen Shui-bian

The PRC gave Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian low marks for his performance as leader of the island over the past two years, saying it had been disappointed by his words and deeds. But the cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office said Wednesday that members of Chen's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) could visit the PRC as long as they did not do so in their capacity as DPP politicians. "Two years ago, after he assumed office, we said we would listen to his words and watch his behavior," Zhang Mingping, spokesman of the office, said. "Over the past two years, he has not accepted the one-China principle... he even hasn't acknowledged that he himself is Chinese," Zhang said. "Not only does he not accept this, he has also incessantly engaged in 'gradual independence' for Taiwan," he said.

"Cross-Strait Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 29, US)

5. Cross-Strait Direct Links

The PRC and Taiwan may appear a step closer to ending a decades-old ban on direct air and shipping links following a Chinese invitation last week to two Taiwan tycoons to conduct talks. But the thousands of business executives who have to travel and ship goods via a third port, usually Hong Kong, can expect several more rounds of negotiations before talks on opening direct links can begin, analysts said in Monday.

"Cross-Strait Direct Links" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 28, US)

6. Cross-Strait Relations

Taiwan investigations sifted through wreckage of a China Airlines jet Monday to try to find out why it fell apart at over 30,000 feet, but the military dismissed speculation it may have been hit by a PRC missile. Taiwan military spokesman dismissed speculation that a PRC missile may have hit the aircraft. "Commentary China has denied it. We think its denial is highly credible," the spokesman said by telephone, responding to a report on cable news network FoxNews TV which quoted an unidentified military analyst as saying a PRC missile may be to blame. "Based on our own judgment, we can also say it's absolutely impossible," the spokesman said, adding that Taiwan's military was not conducting any exercises or missile-testing in the area at the time of the crash.

"Cross-Strait Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 28, US)

7. Across Taiwan Strait Relations

The PRC on May 29 reproached Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian for going against the common aspiration of all PRC people for national reunification in order to promote creating independence in his first two years in office. Zhang Mingping, spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council of the PRC, said the PRC would continue its policy of "listening to Chen's words and watching his deeds" over the next two years until his term ends in 2008. Since taking office, the report said, Chen has conducted a string of de-Sinification moves, aimed at creating a "Republic of Taiwan."

"Across Taiwan Strait Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, PRC)

8. PRC Nuclear Industry

The first two generators at the Lingao Nuclear Power Plant in Shenzhen, south Guangdong Province began commercial operations on May 29 after passing a series of official tests. It said, the commercial operation was 49 days ahead of the original plan. It will be helpful to mitigate the short supply of electricity for Guangdong Province, especially the city of Shenzhen, said the report.

"PRC Nuclear Industry" (NAPSNet Daily Report, May 31, PRC)

9. PRC Crackdown on 'E-Trash'

The PRC will crack down on illegal imports of junked computers and other high-tech trash following reports of health and environmental damage caused by unsafe recycling, the official Xinhua News Agency said Thursday. PRC environmental officials will also shut down factories where toxic chemicals are being released by the improper recycling of e-trash - mostly printers, computer screens and circuit boards from countries like the United States, the report said.
"PRC Crackdown on 'E-Trash'" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 31, US)

10. Hong Kong Domestic Politics

Hong Kong legislators gave strong support on Thursday to a plan for government changes that will concentrate power in the hands of PRC-backed leader Tung Chee-hwa. The plan allows Tung to put his most trusted lieutenants in 14 key new political positions to run the civil service - a move observers say will only tighten his grip on the city. It will be the most dramatic shift in governance since Hong Kong was returned to the PRC in 1997. Critics expect Tung to field in yes-men and his hold on power will ultimately mean more control for the PRC over Hong Kong.
"Hong Kong Domestic Politics" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 30, US)

11. Taiwan Security Committee

Taiwan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Espino Chien confirmed yesterday that his ministry has launched a special committee to engage in dialogue with the Ministry of National Defense on arms sales and security-related issues. Chien said that hopefully in the near future, the committee set up under the Research and Planning Board will function as a mechanism to conduct dialogue with the US, Japan and other countries in the region on security issues.
"Taiwan Security Committee" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 29, US)

Japan

1. Japan Nuclear Policy

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Friday said that Japan stands by its longstanding policy of not building or possessing nuclear weapons, despite reports in Tokyo that two senior members of his administration indicated otherwise. Koizumi, in Seoul to attend the opening of the World Cup, was responding to a report that his top government spokesman said Friday he sees no problem with the nation possessing nuclear weapons. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told reporters in Tokyo that Japan's Constitution should not prevent it from having nuclear arms for self-defense. Kyodo News reported. "According to my personal way of thinking, we should be able to have (nuclear weapons)," Fukuda was quoted as saying.
"Japan Nuclear Policy" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 31, US)

2. PRC-Japanese Relations

PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Qian said on May 23 that it is within the PRC's sovereignty to decide how to handle the five people who broke into the Japanese consulate-General in Shenyang two weeks ago. "China does not need to consult with any other country on this," Kong said. "No other country has the right to interfere." He was responding to Japan's contention that more discussions are needed on the dispute over international law, the report said.
"PRC-Japanese Relations" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 31, PRC)

3. Japan-US Relations

Legislators from Japan's Okinawa-ken and leaders from the cities and villages under the jurisdiction of Okinawa-ken held a mass rally on May 27 near the US air-force base in Okinawa to protest the harms caused by US planes to local people. The participants of the rally strongly criticized that the US forces stationed in the island was indifferent to the harms they brought to local people. The rally passed a resolution requiring banning the taking-off and landing of US planes during 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. of the next day. The resolution also said that the US side should quickly inform local governments the messages related to the taking-off and landing of the planes, according to the report.
"Japan-US Relations" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 31, PRC)

4. Japan-US Relations

Strong US Japan security ties are necessary to deter military threats from the DPRK which could potentially threaten the Asia-Pacific region, top US military official in Japan and commander of US Forces in Japan, Lieutenant General Thomas Waskow, said on Wednesday. "Currently, (North Korea) is relatively stable," Lieutenant General Thomas Waskow stated. "But if there were some factors that were introduced that could create instability, then the situation would become very questionable... It could potentially become one (threat) to the region." Waskow said he welcomed the current debate in Japan's Parliament on legislation aimed at beefing up the ability of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to respond to attacks. "I think it's a good thing and it's a decision that Japan must make as the relationship between the United States and Japan continues to grow," said Waskow in the interview, his first with the public media since taking the post last November.
"Japan-US Relations" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 30, US)

5. Japanese Armed Attack Situations Bill

A majority of prefectural governors have not decided yet if they support three bills that would govern Japan's response to a military attack, according to a Kyodo News survey. Eight of the governors said they support passage of the bills and two said they are opposed. Thirty-four governors, however, said they have not yet reached a decision, and one governor responded only to survey questions and did not state his position on the three bills, which are now being debated in the Diet. Many of the governors expressed a need for cautious discussion on the matter, particularly on the bills do not clearly define the roles of the national and municipal governments in case of an attack.
"Japanese Armed Attack Situations Bill" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 30, ROK)

6. Japan-ROK Extradition Treaty

The Japanese Diet on Wednesday approved an extradition treaty with the ROK (as part of security-related preparations for co-hosting the World Cup soccer finals. The upper Diet unanimously voted in favor of the treaty - only the second extradition treaty Japan has ever agreed to, said parliamentary official Hidehara Mori. Japan's first such pact was signed with the US in 1978. The treaty, which passed Japan's lower Diet on May 7, calls for each country to hand over the other's nationals suspected or convicted of crimes that carry a prison term of longer than one year. Both sides can also ask help in pursuing politicians accused of wrongdoing or fugitives who have fled the country. The extradition pact, signed by Japanese and ROK justice ministers last month, requires ratification by both countries' legislatures. The pact is expected to go into effect 15 days after the two sides exchange signed documents, a Justice Ministry official said on condition of anonymity.
"Japan-ROK Extradition Treaty" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 29, US)

7. Japan on India-Pakistan Conflict

Japan urged Pakistan to exercise restraint after Islamabad conducted two nuclear-capable missile tests over the weekend, heightening tensions with nuclear rival India. "We have called (on Islamabad) to exercise self-restraint. We will continue to do so in the future," Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi told reporters.
"Japan on India-Pakistan Conflict" (NAFSNet Daily Report, May 28, US)

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