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MUST READS

1. [China says looking forward to cyber talks with US](#)

-AP, 05/31

BLUF: China is looking forward to "even-tempered talks" on cybersecurity when a Chinese military delegation meets with U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel over the weekend, the Foreign Ministry said Friday, as Washington continues to press Beijing over the issue ahead of a summit next week.

- Ministry spokesman Hong Lei repeated Beijing's hopes for longer-term cooperation over hacking threats that have increasingly dominated discussions over what many see as a bilateral relationship adrift.
- Cyberspying is expected to feature high on the agenda at the June 7-8 meeting at a California retreat between President Barack Obama and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping.
- China has consistently denied involvement in hacking and says it is itself a major victim of cyber intrusions.

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2. [China corrects Japan on treaty's Diaoyu implications](#)

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: China has urged Japan to squarely face the history and respect the fact following a Japanese official's justifying Japan's claims to the Diaoyu Islands based on the so-called San Francisco Peace Treaty.

- Foreign Ministry Spokesman Hong Lei said at a regular press conference on Thursday that the Chinese government regards the so-called San Francisco Peace Treaty as illegal and invalid and therefore will definitely not recognize it.
- Hong made the remark after Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga Yoshihide on Wednesday said the Diaoyu Islands had been Japanese territories even before the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 and before the release of the Potsdam Proclamation at the end of the World War II. He claimed that Japan's territories are legally defined by the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which served to officially end World War II upon its signing in 1952.
- Hong, however, said historical records on the issue of the Diaoyu Islands are clear. In 1895, Japan took advantage of the foreseeable defeat of the Qing court in the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) to covertly include the Diaoyu Islands in its territories.
- "This is an illegal act of theft," he said.

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3. [Tiananmen group condemns Chinese leader Xi Jinping](#)

-BBC, 05/31

BLUF: Relatives of victims of the 1989 Tiananmen killings have criticised Chinese President Xi Jinping for failing to initiate political reform.

- The open letter, from the Tiananmen Mothers group, came ahead of the 4 June anniversary of the crackdown.
- It also came as Mr Xi departed for a tour of Latin America and the Caribbean that will culminate in a summit with US President Barack Obama.
- The group accused Mr Xi of "giant steps backwards towards Maoist orthodoxy".
- Mr Xi was named Communist Party leader in November 2012 and president in March 2013, replacing Hu Jintao.

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CHINA

4. [China: Baby formula safety affects nation's future](#)

-AP, 05/31

BLUF: Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has vowed to tighten the monitoring of production of milk powder for babies and crack down on safety violators, saying the quality of infant formula affects the nation's future.

- Li's comments appeared aimed at trying to restore public confidence in China's dairy industry, which has been mired in product safety and image problems.
- Li told a meeting of Cabinet officials Friday that the quality of infant formula should be tested with the same standards used for medicines and that each step of the production process must be monitored.
- Li said the safety of infant formula "concerned the healthy growth of the next generation and concerned the happiness of millions of families and the country's future," according to a statement posted on the central government's website.

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5. [China's entrepreneurs expand global presence](#)

-AP, 05/31

BLUF: The force behind China's biggest takeover of an American company is a 71-year-old meat-packing entrepreneur dubbed "China's Chief Butcher" by the press who built an empire on his country's voracious appetite for pork.

- "The \$4.7 billion bid for Smithfield Foods by Wan Long, chairman of Shuanghui International, is another big step up for Chinese entrepreneurs who are emerging from the shadow of state-owned corporate giants and expanding on the global stage
- Under pressure to keep economic growth strong, the new government of President Xi Jinping has promised a bigger role and lighter regulatory burden to entrepreneurs who generate China's jobs and wealth.
- Still, it is unclear how far the ruling Communist Party is willing to go in making crucial changes including curbing the dominance of state industry.

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6. [2,290 punished in CPC bureaucracy, formalism fight](#)

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: A total of 2,290 people have been punished for violating a rule that the Communist Party of China (CPC) introduced just under six months ago to fight bureaucracy and formalism, an official with the CPC disciplinary arm said on Friday.

- Xu Chuanzhi, head of a department responsible for supervision of Party officials' work style under the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), made the remarks during a televised interview aired by the CPC official website.

- At a meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee on Dec. 4 last year, an eight-point rule was introduced for fighting bureaucracy and formalism and rejecting extravagance among party members.
- To urge CPC and government organs to fully implement the regulations, disciplinary and supervision authorities nationwide have explored inspection and supervision methods to spot violations, Xu said.

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7. [Sr. officials' meeting of China-Arab Cooperation Forum concludes](#)

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: A spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry on Friday spoke positively of the tenth senior officials' meeting of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum.

- Foreign ministry staff from 21 Arab countries, senior officials of the secretariat of the League of Arab States and foreign diplomats in China participated in the meeting held in Beijing from May 29 to 30.
- Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with the head of the delegations of Arab countries and the League of Arab States. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Zhai Jun addressed the opening ceremony of the meeting, spokesman Hong Lei said at a regular press briefing.
- Hong said the meeting reviewed the progress made by the forum since its fifth ministerial meeting in May 2012, reached consensus on the steps for creating an action plan for the forum from 2012 to 2014 and inked a document on the results of the meeting.

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8. [Chinese president leaves for three-nation visit, Obama meeting](#)

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: President Xi Jinping left Friday morning for state visits to Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica and Mexico, as well as a meeting with U.S. President Barack Obama.

- Xi is making the visits at the invitation of President of Trinidad and Tobago Anthony Carmona, President of Costa Rica Laura Chinchilla, Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto and U.S. President Barack Obama.
- Xi's entourage includes his wife Peng Liyuan, member of the Political Bureau and director of the Policy Research Office of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee Wang Huning, member of the Political Bureau and Secretariat and Director of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee Li Zhanshu and State Councilor Yang Jiechi.

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JAPAN

9. Japan Output Gains as Tokyo Prices End Four-Year Slide: Economy

-Bloomberg, 05/31

BLUF: Japan's industrial production rose 1.7 percent in April from March, exceeding the highest estimate in a Bloomberg News survey and helping Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's economic revival campaign.

- The pace quickened from 0.9 percent the previous month, a Trade Ministry report showed in Tokyo today.
- National consumer prices fell for a sixth month in April, separate data showed. At the same time, a price gauge for the city of Tokyo rose in May for the first time in four years, a gain that may point to a shift in the next national reading, according to SMBC Nikko Securities Inc.

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10. Japan, African leaders to discuss U.N. Security Council reform

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will host the first meeting between leaders of Africa and Japan to address U.N. Security Council reform on Monday in Yokohama, on the sidelines of a fifth international meeting on African development, local media quoted the government as saying on Thursday.

- Invited are Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma as the coordinator of the "Committee of 10" African countries, other leaders from the group and Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, chairwoman of the African Union Commission, according to the Kyodo News Agency.
- African leaders will gather in Japan to attend the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, a summit meeting on African development held every five years, to be held from Saturday to Monday in Yokohama, southwest of Tokyo.
- With the summit meeting, Japan aims to enhance dialogue and cooperation with African countries for an early realization of the stalled reform, given the significance they play on the matter, according to the media report.

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11. Japanese soldiers debut in live firing exercise in Australia

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: Soldiers from the Japanese Self- Defense Force have attended their first live firing exercise in Australia, the local newspaper The Australian reported Thursday.

- According to the report, the Japanese soldiers joined the exercise in the Puckapunyal army base located in the southern state of Victoria, together with their counterparts from the United States and Australia.
- Fourteen soldiers from each country took part in the exercise code-named "Southern Jackaroo" from May 18 to 26, which aimed to test advanced marksmanship skills in urban terrain, said the Australian Defense Force (ADF) in a statement.
- "Exercise Southern Jackaroo reflects the shared commitments of Australia, Japan and the U.S. to strengthening defense and security cooperation, and working closely together to promote regional stability, peace and prosperity," the ADF was quoted as saying, adding three countries share "several common security interests."

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SOUTH KOREA

12. Activists criticize reported NKorean repatriation

-AP, 05/31

BLUF: Human rights groups have demanded that North Korea guarantee the safety of nine of its citizens who reportedly fled to Laos, only to be apprehended and sent back home.

- Seven males and two females were flown home Tuesday via China despite a request from South Korea that Beijing not repatriate them, the Chosun Ilbo daily newspaper in Seoul reported Thursday, citing unidentified South Korean government officials. The Yonhap news agency cited a Foreign Ministry official in Seoul in its report that said the nine are aged 15 to 23.
- South Korea's Foreign Ministry has declined to confirm the reports.
- The Geneva-based U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said Thursday in a statement that it is trying to locate the defectors and expressed concern that they did not receive a chance to have their asylum claims assessed.

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13. S.Korea to raise 120 bln USD to fulfill presidential pledge

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: South Korea has planned to raise 134.8 trillion won (120 billion U.S. dollars) over the next five years to fulfill campaign pledges of President Park Geun-hye and enforce major policy agendas, the finance ministry said Friday.

- The so-called "campaign pledge accounting book" will be raised through additional tax revenue worth 50.7 trillion won and a cut in fiscal expenditure worth 84.1 trillion won, according to the Ministry of Strategy and Finance.

- The ministry said there would no direct tax hike to minimize any tax burden for people, noting that the money needed will be raised through overhaul of tax benefits, restrictions on underground economy such as tax evasion and cutting down government expenditure.
- The money to be raised will be spent on fulfilling the presidential campaigns, the 140-point policy agenda of the Park Geun-hye administration and campaign pledges of last year's general election of the ruling Saenuri Party, the ministry said.

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NORTH KOREA

14. US concern over N Korea refugees 'returned by Laos'

-BBC, 05/31

BLUF: The US says it is concerned by reports that China has repatriated nine North Korean refugees deported by Laos.

- South Korea's Yonhap news agency, citing unnamed Foreign Ministry officials, says the group were flown back to Pyongyang on Tuesday.
- It said the group were detained in Laos earlier this month and handed over to China, despite Seoul's appeals.
- China traditionally repatriates North Korean refugees, ruling them economic migrants.

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15. NKorean farmers planting rice with bonuses in mind

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: North Korean farmers knee deep in muddy paddies across the country have a new incentive during this year's crucial rice planting season: possible bonuses that are part of an economic shift echoing ally China's steps three decades ago toward embracing capitalism.

- Details about the changes are emerging nearly two months after the regime unveiled dual goals of building the economy and nuclear weapons in the first concrete economic policy laid out by leader Kim Jong Un since he took power in December 2011.
- Farmers say they have begun working under the new policies, which are designed to boost production by giving managers and workers financial incentives.
- Foreign analysts say the moves to spur North Korea's moribund economy suggest Pyongyang is taking cues from Beijing on how to incorporate free market ideas within its rigid socialist system.

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MONGOLIA

16. [Mongolia moves to curb smoking with heavier penalties](#)

-Xinhua, 05/31

BLUF: Mongolia is marking "World No Tobacco Day" on Friday by tightening measures to curb smoking, including heavier penalties.

- To restrain the rising smoking population, the government clearly defined responsibilities and obligations at all levels of government and law enforcement, tobacco operators as well as ordinary citizens in a modified Tobacco Control Act.
- Under the new law, which began to take effect on March 1, tobacco sales through the Internet are banned, sales outlets of tobacco companies less than 500 meters away from schools are forbidden, and selling cigarettes to citizens under the age of 21 is prohibited.
- Tobacco companies and shareholders owning more than 20 percent of shares should unveil to the public their names, addresses, businesses and other information related to tobacco production on the Internet. All forms of cigarette advertising are prohibited.

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