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I. United States

1. DPRK on Uranium Bomb Program Accusations

The Associated Press("NORTH KOREA ACCUSES US OF CONCOCTING URANIUM BOMB PROGRAM AS PRETEXT FOR WAR," Seoul, 06/01/04) reported that the DPRK on Monday accused

the US administration of making up reports about the DPRK's nuclear weapons program as a pretext for war, saying it echoed similar allegations the US made about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq before the US-led invasion. The published commentary came as regional powers are trying to arrange a third round of talks on defusing the standoff over the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. On Monday, the DPRK accused the US of fabricating the uranium program as a way of fanning concern about weapons of mass destruction and winning public support for an invasion. "The Bush war forces are going to apply what it used in Iraq to the DPRK," said the DPRK's official KCNA news agency. "Having worked out a plan to launch a new war on the Korean peninsula in the wake of that in Iraq, the US is building up in advance public opinion about fictitious development of 'enriched uranium' in the DPRK."

2. DPRK Nuclear Freeze Request

Donga (Won-Jae Park, "NORTH KOREA, REQUESTING TWO REACTORS IN EXCHANGE FOR NUCLEAR FREEZE," 06/01/04) reported that quoting a foreign source in Washington, the Sankei Shimbun reported on June 1 that the DPRK requested a supply of two thermoelectric power plants, which uses natural gas as fuel, during a working group meeting for the six-way talks on the DPRK nuclear arms issue held in Beijing last month,. The newspaper added that although the US declined this request, Korea, Russia, and Japan showed a positive response. During the working group meeting, the DPRK requested the supply of a thermoelectric power plant in addition to resuming construction of a light-water reactor as the next step of their intention to freeze the nuclear facilities in Youngbyun if the US guarantees system security. Regarding this matter, the US has been reported to adhere to their stance of a "complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of nuclear programs (CVID)" up to now and rejected the DPRK proposal.

3. DPRK Nodong Missile Range

Bloomberrh ("N. KOREA'S NODONG MISSILE COULD REACH ALL OF JAPAN, NIKKEI SAYS," 06/02/04) reported that the DPRK's Nodong ballistic missiles could reach all of Japan, the Nihon Keizai newspaper said, citing ROK government officials. The missiles have an estimated range of 1,500 kilometers (930 miles), 200 km more than previously thought. Japanese and ROK officials had estimated the missiles were capable of hitting Japan's Honshu and Kyushu islands, as well as about half of Hokkaido, the report said. The ROK official told the newspaper that the missiles can strike anywhere in Japan, including the southernmost island chain of Okinawa, where about 70 percent of US troops are based, the paper said.

4. Iran on DPRK-Iran Nuclear Relations Allegations

The Associated Press ("IRAN NEVER HAD 'NUCLEAR RELATIONS' WITH NORTH KOREA, FOREIGN MINISTER SAYS," Seoul, 06/01/04) reported that Iran said Tuesday it has never received nuclear technology from the DPRK. "We never had nuclear relations with North Korea," Iran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said at a press conference in Seoul. Kharrazi said Iran's nuclear technology is self-developed, and the international community doesn't need to worry about his country's nuclear capabilities, according to the ROK's Yonhap news agency. Iran Embassy officials in the ROK were not immediately available for comment. Earlier this month, diplomats told The Associated Press that evidence gathered by the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency suggests the DPRK was the source of nearly two tons of uranium hexafluoride delivered to Libya as part of attempts by Moammar Gadhaffi to build nuclear warheads. The investigation was incomplete, but the evidence highlights concern that the DPRK could be running a uranium-based nuclear weapons

program, or supplying other nations the know-how to build atomic arms.

5. US Kerry on Nuclear Non-Proliferation

The Associated Press (Darlene Superville, "KERRY OUTLINES WAY TO LIMIT NUKE THREAT," West Palm Beach, Florida, 06/01/04) reported that Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry, outlining a plan to reduce the potential for a nuclear attack by terrorists, promised on Tuesday to safeguard all the nuclear weapons and materials that exist around the world by the end of his first term if elected. Kerry, speaking at a container port in the politically important state of Florida, also pledged to reduce existing nuclear weapons stockpiles, halt production of the materials used to make them and end nuclear weapons programs in nations like the DPRK and Iran. The Massachusetts senator promised to boost international efforts to stop the trafficking of nuclear materials and said he would name a national coordinator for nuclear terrorism and counterproliferation, a Cabinet-level post, to focus on the issue full time. "Today, I am proposing a new initiative to prevent the world's deadliest weapons from falling into the world's most dangerous hands," the presidential candidate said at the Port of Palm Beach, the 18th busiest container port in the country. "If we secure all bomb-making materials, ensure that no new materials are produced for nuclear weapons, and end nuclear weapons programs in hostile states like North Korea and Iran, we will dramatically reduce the possibility of nuclear terrorism," he said. Kerry and senior foreign policy advisers said President Bush has not given the issue the serious treatment it deserves.

6. PRC Taiwan Straits Military Exercises Agence France-Presse ("PRC ARMY PREPARING LARGE-SCALE MILITARY EXERCISES AIMED AT TAIWAN," 06/01/04) reported that the PRC is gearing-up for large-scale military wargames aimed at "taking control of the Taiwan Strait", with 18,000 troops and the amphibious landing of a tank brigade. The exercises were to take place in June and July on Dongshan Island in southeastern Fujian province just 150 nautical miles west of Taiwan's Penghu Island, the New Express Daily said, citing a pro-Beijing Hong Kong newspaper. The PRC has become increasingly agitated with independence-leaning Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian, and the report referred to the exercises as the first-ever aimed at "striving to control the Taiwan Strait." The 18,000 soldiers will be deployed from the land, navy and air force of the Nanjing Military Region, where some 500 short-range ballistic missiles are pointed at Taiwan. "Sukoi Su-27 fighter jets will be outfitted with KN59M guided air-to-surface missiles in an effort to maintain control over the Taiwan Strait and ensure that tank brigades can make a landing and engage in warfare," the report said. Submarines, war ships and a guided missile brigade would also be involved in the exercises that were to be led by Lieutenant General Huang Jiang, it said. Soldiers were deployed on Dongshan Island in mid-May where tanks and armoured personnel carriers had been practicing amphibious landings daily on Jinluan beach, it said. It was not clear if the exercises had already begun.

7. ROK-US Talks on US Troop Reduction

Agence France-Presse ("US, SKOREA TO HOLD FIRST TALKS NEXT WEEK ON US TROOP CUTS," 05/31/04) reported that the US and ROK will next week hold their first talks on cutting the number of US troops stationed on the Korean peninsula to deter the DPRK, officials said. The talks will take place June 7-8 on the sidelines of a regular conference the two countries have held for two years to rewrite their security pact. Previous talks have focused on the closure of US camps near the inter-Korean border and in Seoul. "We have agreed through diplomatic channels to start talks on the scale of the US troop presence," Kim Sook, head of the foreign ministry's North American Affairs Bureau, told reporters Monday. Kim will lead the ROK delegation while Assistant Secretary of Defense

Richard Lawless will head the US side. Local media reports say that the US wants to cut down nearly one third of its 37,000 troops stationed in the ROK.

8. ROK Troops to Iraq

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA SENDS MILITARY TEAM TO IRAQ," 05/28/04) reported that the ROK will send a military mission to northern Iraq on Sunday to finalize plans for the deployment of thousands of troops there, the Defense Ministry says. Seoul has elected to deploy the troops to Arbil, in the Kurdish autonomous region of northern Iraq, where the 3,600 troops will carry out relief and rehabilitation work. The 12-member delegation will meet with Kurdish and US military officials during a nine-day mission to discuss details of the troop deployment, ministry spokesman Nam Dae-Yeon told reporters here. ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon said last week that the long-delayed troop deployment would take place "one or two months" after the delegation returned to Seoul.

9. ROK Security Chief US Visit

United Press International ("SOUTH KOREA SECURITY CHIEF VISITS US," Seoul, 06/01/04) reported that ROK National Security Advisor Kwon Chin-ho left Tuesday for the US to discuss the two countries' security alliance and the DPRK. While staying in Washington until Thursday, Kwon will meet with his US counterpart Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and other Bush administration officials and congressmen. The agenda will focus on a US plan to relocate thousands of US troops from the ROK to Iraq, the ROK's plan to send troops to Iraq, and the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, officials said.

10. PRC on DPRK Refugee Flow

Donga (Soon-Taek Kwon, "US GOVERNMENT: CHINA READIES ITSELF TO STEM REFUGEE FLOWS FROM NORTH KOREA," 06/01/04) reported that the PRC's People Liberation Army's takeover of the responsibility of border control with the DPRK from the police in September of last year was a political hedge against uncertainty in the DPRK, the US government analyzed. In "The Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," a Congressional report which was posted on its Web site, the US Department of Defense said, "The PLA assumed responsibility for border security along the frontier in fall 2003, strengthening China's ability to stem refugee flows or to respond to a breakdown of the DPRK regime." Commenting on its deployment of regular armies along the border with the DPRK last year, the PRC government said, "It is a general measure which had been planned for years under the new border security regulations." However, analysts came up with a number of analyses, claiming it as a measure to pressure the DPRK to open up to the rest of the world or a long-term contingency measure against a failed negotiation over the DPRK nuclear crisis. "China's leaders maintain that the situation along China's periphery is basically peaceful and stable," the report said, "However, factors of instability still exist in the region, including the potential crisis of conflict on the Korean peninsula." The report also said, "Beijing is concerned that the DPRK nuclear impasse could lead to a crisis or instability on the Korean peninsula."

11. UK on EU PRC Arms Ban

Agence France-Presse ("BRITAIN BACKING PLANS TO END EU'S CHINA ARMS BAN: REPORT," 06/01/04) reported that Britain is likely to back anticipated moves by some European Union nations to end a 15-year-long ban on arms sales to the PRC, a report said. Britain is expected to line up

alongside France and Germany in arguing that the restrictions, imposed after the 1989 massacre of pro-democracy protestors in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, should be ended, The Times said. However any moves would most likely come to nothing as the US would oppose the move and could even block European nations which sell arms to the PRC from having access to US military technology, the newspaper said in its Tuesday edition. London understood this position but was still keen to make the move as ministers believe a new EU code of conduct on arms sales would stop weapons being used by the PRC for "external aggression or internal repression", it added. In return, Britain is pushing for the PRC to sign up to an international agreement guaranteeing human rights, the paper said, citing unnamed senior British officials.

12. PRC on Military Build-Up

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA DEFENDS MILITARY BUILD-UP, BLAMES US FOR WORSENING TAIWAN TIES," 05/31/04) reported that the PRC defended its aggressive military build-up to prevent Taiwan seeking independence and blamed the US for the deteriorating state of cross-Strait ties. A commentary Monday by the official Xinhua news agency lashed out at the US for criticizing the PRC for developing a variety of "credible military options" to prevent Taiwan from achieving independence. The US Department of Defense had also warned in a new report that the PRC was finding ways to discourage the US from coming to the island's aid in event of a conflict with the mainland. "Just because a handful of people inside and outside the island are still seeking 'Taiwan independence,' the PRC cannot make a commitment to renouncing the use of force for realizing national reunification and has had to make necessary and limited military deployment," the Xinhua commentary said. The PRC is also investing in new military aircraft, said the report, which was an annual assessment of the PRC's capabilities. Xinhua said, "If the US really wants to help maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits, it should not have made irresponsible remarks on China's military deployment and used it as an excuse to keep selling advanced weapons to Taiwan."

13. Japan on DPRK Ship Ban

Agence France-Presse ("JAPANESE PARLIAMENT SET TO PASS BILL BANNING DPRK SHIPS," 06/01/04) reported that Japan's lower house of parliament is set to pass a bill later this week enabling Japan to ban DPRK ships from calling at Japanese ports after the ruling coalition and main opposition agreed on the new tool to pressure Pyongyang. The Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition partner New Komei party agreed with the Democratic Party at a lower-house panel meeting Tuesday to submit the bill jointly to the House of Representatives, officials said. Lawmakers are to vote on the bill on Thursday. The bill is virtually assured of clearing the all-important lower house given the cross-party support. Japanese media said the bill was set to become law with upper house final approval before the end of the current parliament session on June 16. The bill would allow the cabinet to "decide to ban designated ships from entering Japanese ports for a certain period when it is deemed necessary to maintain Japan's peace and safety." Although the bill makes no explicit reference to the DPRK, politicians have openly said it was targeted at DPRK ships such as the cargo-passenger ferry Man Gyong Bong-92, which regularly calls at the port of Niigata. The ship is often used for visits to North Korea by ethnic Koreans in Japan and to carry food, electronic products and other daily necessities between the two countries. But Japan recently tightened inspections of the boat after it was accused of being used for smuggling and spy activities.

14. Japan Response to Saudi Attacks

Agence France-Presse ("TOKYO DENIES MILITANT CLAIM OF JAPANESE VICTIMS IN SAUDI

ATTACKS," 05/31/04) reported that Japan's foreign ministry said there were no Japanese victims in weekend attacks in Saudi Arabia, despite a claim by a militant group that it had killed a Japanese. "The Japanese embassy in Riyadh has confirmed that there was no Japanese casualty" in the attacks in which 22 people were killed, a foreign ministry official in Japan stated. "We are aware of the statement made by a group that might be associated with the attack. So we are double checking the facts of the matter. So far, we have no report of a Japanese person killed or injured in the incident," he added. A statement claiming to speak for the Al-Qaeda terror network said it was responsible for the weekend attacks during which 22 people were killed in the Saudi oil city of Al-Khobar. The statement, posted on the Internet, claimed that a Japanese was among those hostages whose throats were slit. The authenticity of the statement could not be verified.

II. Japan

1. Japan-DPRK Abduction Cases

The Asahi Shimbun ("SOGA FAMILY REUNION FACES MORE DELAYS," 05/25/04) reported that arrangements for the long-awaited family reunion of repatriated abductee Hitomi Soga threatened to be bogged down as politicians disagreed on the site of the meeting. The DPRK leader Kim Jong Il suggested Beijing as the possible venue for the reunion during his meeting with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. However, voices of concern arose in Tokyo that Beijing may be "too close to Pyongyang for comfort." Some politicians said the family members would not be allowed to exchange their opinions freely. "I think (the reunion) should not take place in Beijing," said Takeo Hiranuma, a former trade minister who heads a parliamentarians' group dealing with the abduction issue. Other Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers and activists also want to block Kim's plan. "Beijing has direct train routes running to Pyongyang," one of them said. "What if the family of four goes back to the North together?" Some LDP lawmakers are pushing for Switzerland -- a permanently neutral country -- as the site of the reunion.

The Asahi Shimbun ("RULING COALITION BASKS IN GLOW OF PUBLIC PRAISE FOR KOIZUMI'S TRIP," 05/25/04) reported that senior members of the ruling coalition sighed in relief after an Asahi Shimbun poll showed a majority -- 67 percent -- of citizens reacted positively to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's second visit to Pyongyang. "The public has given a calm evaluation of the visit," said Shinzo Abe, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's secretary-general. Takenori Kanzaki, leader of coalition partner New Komeito, said, "The public justly gave high marks for the prime minister who made the decision regardless of the risks he was taking." Hidenao Nakagawa, in charge of Diet affairs for the LDP, boasted, "The public wants action rather than talk." Some, however, were not so sure. "The public probably will make another evaluation after waiting to see what's in store for (returned abductee) Hitomi Soga and her family still left behind in the North, and what becomes of the 10 still missing," cautioned Mitsuo Horiuchi, chairman of the LDP General Council. Ichiro Ozawa, a senior lawmaker of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), told reporters that Koizumi made a deal with terrorists. "The abductions were state-sponsored terrorism. The very person who said he would not cave in to terror paid a ransom to bring the five children (of the repatriated abductees)."

The Japan Times (Kanakano Takahara, "HARASSMENT ISSUE UNTOUCHED," 05/25/04) reported that few news stories covered the issue of the harassment of ethnic Koreans in Japan, which was also referred to during Koizumi's summit with the DPRK leader Kim Jong Il. A Japanese official said Koizumi told Kim that the government will deal with the issue of harassment and discrimination "in an amicable way." But as of the evening of May 24, the pro-DPRK General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryun) had received dozens of threatening calls, mirroring the situation following Koizumi's first visit to the DPRK in September 2002, Chongryun spokesman So Chung On

said. So said pro-DPRK Koreans in Japan have encountered various forms of abuse, especially since Kim admitted during the first summit that the DPRK abducted 13 Japanese nationals. But although Koizumi has promised action, officials say there is little that can be done at the national government level. The most the government can do, according to a senior Foreign Ministry official, is continue calling on the public to stop harassing ethnic Koreans while getting police to step up measures to crack down on unlawful activities against them.

2. Bashing Against Released Japanese Hostages

The Asahi Shimbun (Shoko Egawa, "HOSTAGE-BASHING WON'T HELP US IN THE LONG RUN," 05/21/04) reported an analytical article by Shoko Egawa, a freelance journalist, on the bashing against Japanese hostages released in Iraq. Following is an excerpt: "Controversy has erupted over the so-called 'self-responsibility' of the victims in the recent Japanese hostage-taking incidents in Iraq. [...] I find dismal, however, the tendency toward grossly unbalanced and emotional bashing of these kidnapping victims. Some critics have heaped abusive language on the ex-hostages that is tantamount to blaming a mugging victim for walking home alone on a dark street. [...] Speaking of accountability, the media must shoulder some of the blame for disseminating a negative image of the families. The media filmed and repeatedly broadcast only scenes of the family's frantic and sometimes angry appeals to the government and other targets. The most critical course of action now, with the hostages safe and sound, is certainly not any further bashing. Rather, we need to learn lessons from these incidents to prevent recurrence. And in the unfortunate event that similar calamities do transpire, we need to have some sort of crisis-management thinking and system in place to deal with the situation. [...] With the freed captives now home, it is time to praise the positives and calmly analyze the negatives of the hostage-taking incidents. If this can be done with an even hand, I feel that Japanese society stands to reap benefits of far greater value than the purported costs of the victims' rescue that have been so hotly debated to date."

The Asahi Shimbun (Hiroshi Nakanishi, "INDEPENDENT ACTION INCLUDES RESPONSIBILITY," 05/24/04) reported an analytical article by Hiroshi Nakanishi, a professor of international politics at Kyoto University, on the bashing against Japanese hostages released in Iraq. Following is an excerpt: "Five Japanese citizens have been freed from captivity in Iraq and safely repatriated, but the controversy triggered by this train of events deteriorated into emotional diatribes along the way. [...] The controversy escalated not so much over the actions of the five detainees. Rather, it was because as soon as three Japanese citizens were reported to have been taken hostage, their families and supporters confronted the government through the mass media. Instead of blaming the hostage-takers, they demanded the government consider withdrawing the Self-Defense Forces from Iraq because the government was ultimately responsible for securing the hostages' release. For a hostage situation, such a development was extraordinary. It was completely natural for the families to plead for the safe release of their loved ones. However, I found it beyond belief that anyone could hold the government more accountable than the hostage-takers. [...] The government is of course responsible for protecting its citizens, irrespective of their political or personal convictions. However, the government is supposed to serve the entire nation, not act as servants of individual private citizens. [...] As with anyone who has chosen a dangerous line of work, people who leave the safety of their own nation -- especially those going into a dangerous part of the world like Iraq -- must shoulder heavy responsibility for their own safety. This is only common sense. [...] Having said this, however, I believe it is completely beside the point to make them pay for the cost of their rescue and repatriation or to prohibit Japanese nationals from traveling to certain parts of the world. [...] If anything is to be learned from this hostage crisis, I would say it is that the government and the public alike must reconsider the extent of their respective roles and responsibilities."

3. Japan-PRC Wartime Slave

Kyodo ("WARTIME SLAVE LABORERS DENIED REDRESS," Fukuoka, 05/25/04) reported that the Fukuoka High Court on May 24 overturned a landmark lower court ruling and denied redress to 15 PRC men forced to work in Japanese coal mines during World War II and said the statute of limitations has expired in the case. In the first-ever ruling at the high court level on a series of lawsuits filed by former PRC slave laborers across Japan, the court acknowledged, however, that the government and Mitsui Mining Co. shared joint liability for bringing the men from China to Japan and forcing them to work in the mines. The court rejected the government's argument that it enjoys immunity from liability for damages stemming from the exercise of state power under the Meiji Constitution. But the court dismissed the plaintiffs' demand for compensation on grounds that the statute of limitations has expired. "Even though the plaintiffs were able to leave China starting in 1986 (when the PRC government allowed people to overseas freely), they did not promptly file the lawsuit," presiding Judge Takayuki Minoda said. He applied a Civil Code provision that says the wronged party has 20 years to claim damages after an illegal offense is committed. The plaintiffs plan to appeal to the Supreme Court. The high court ruling comes after an appeal against a landmark April 2002 ruling by the Fukuoka District Court that for the first time acknowledged the liability of both the state and Mitsui Mining and ordered the firm to pay 165 million yen in compensation. The lower court supported the notion of state immunity from damages and rejected the demand for redress. But the district court rejected the defendant's claim that the statute of limitations had expired, saying that applying such a provision to this case "severely contradicts the idea of justice." Both Mitsui Mining and the plaintiffs appealed the lower court ruling. The Imperial Japanese Army and the Japanese-controlled government in China transported about 39,000 PRC to Japan between 1943 and 1945 to force them to perform unpaid slave labor.

4. Japan ROK Fishing Boat Poaching

Kyodo ("COAST GUARD FIRES TEAR GAS BOMBS AT ROK POACHERS," Kitakyushu, 05/25/04) reported that a Japan Coast Guard patrol boat fired 20 tear gas grenades on May 24 at an ROK fishing boat poaching in the Korea Strait off Japan's Tsushima Islands, wounding its captain. Five or six of the grenades hit the bridge of the fleeing fishing boat, according to coast guard officials. They said the 45-year-old skipper was hit in the face by fragments of the exploding grenades. Officials of the Seventh Regional Coast Guard Headquarters based in Kitakyushu said the fishing boat had ignored repeated warnings, and the actions of the patrol vessel were legal. They added that ROK maritime police share this view. The ROK's Yonhap News Agency said the captain, identified as Chung Ki Chol, was taken to a hospital on an ROK maritime police boat. It added that his wounds were not life-threatening.

5. US Bases in Japan

The Japan Times ("GOVERNMENT, NAVAL BASE WORKERS FAIL TO SETTLE SUIT OVER LUNG DISEASE," 05/25/04) reported that the Japanese government and 22 former workers at the US naval base in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture, failed to agree on a court-recommended settlement of a damages suit filed by the ex-workers, who claim they developed lung disease due to poor health safety measures. The former workers said they decided not to sign the pact recommended by the Yokosuka branch of the Yokohama District Court after the government proposed reducing the amount of compensation for some of them from the amount recommended by the court in March. Presiding Judge Teruo Yanagisawa urged the government to reconsider its proposal by June 28. The plaintiffs, for their part, said they have no intention of negotiating on the court-recommended settlement, and if the government does not accept it, they will terminate the talks and ask for a court

ruling.

III. CanKor E-Clipping Service

1. Issue #166

Japanese media report on Prime Minister Koizumi's intention to normalize relations during his term of office if Kim Jong Il allows relatives of abductees to return to Japan, and solves problems related to the nuclear issue. During private conversations with the DPRK at recent six-party Working Group talks in Beijing, the USA said it would consider resuming construction of light- water nuclear reactors, according to unnamed officials close to Joseph DeTrani, chief US representative to the talks. Senior Administration officials denied that there is any change in US opposition to the light-water project. Canadian diplomat and businessman, UN Envoy Maurice Strong returned to the DPRK to support six-country talks aimed at settling a standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear program as well as other problems on the divided Korean peninsula. Despite repeated applications from the DPRK for membership in the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the two largest ADB shareholders, USA and Japan, continue to oppose the DPRK's admission. Pyongyang's future entry into the international financial institution would give them access to much needed development advice and technical assistance, and would make it easier for nations to extend loans to the impoverished North. Does art imitate life or subvert its audience? To hear some ROK commentators, the 10 million viewers flocking to recent ROK blockbusters dealing with the theme of inter-Korean enmity are being "brainwashed" into sympathy with the DPRK. On the other side of the divide, North Koreans gather around their television sets, not to see the exploits of revolutionary leaders, but to watch ROK soap operas. Anyone unfamiliar with ROK pop songs is considered 'old fashioned'. If 'viewer's choice' reflects a people's desire, what is the message here? After years of delicate negotiation Germany's Goethe Institute announces a "big success for our cultural policies": the first western cultural institute to open a reading room in Pyongyang, giving North Koreans free access to uncensored material. For her part, a DPRK official in charge of cultural cooperation with other countries said she hoped the world would see her country's willingness to open up.

For more information: <http://www.cankor.ca>

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of [other NAPSNet resources](#).

We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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