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I. **United States**

1. **DPRK on ROK Impeachment**

Korea Central News Agency ("N KOREAN NEWS AGENCY SLAMS PARLIAMENTARY COUP IN SOUTH KOREA," Pyongyang, 03/17/04) reported that the railroading of "the motion on impeachment against the president" through the "National Assembly" (NA) of the ROK on March 12 is censured by the fellow countrymen and the international community for its illegality and impudence. Conservative forces of the ROK including the Grand National Party (GNP) perpetrated such unprecedented political gangsterism as railroading the "motion" through the NA in just 20 minutes, reminding one of a military operation carried out against the people's will. The GNP, the Democratic Party and the United Liberal Democrats conspired with one another in this rowdyism in a bid to achieve their political purpose to turn the situation before the April "general election" favourable to them. This is not just an internal issue of the ROK. The incident brought shame to the fellow

countrymen as it is recorded as an unprecedented parliamentary coup and a despicable political rebellion. The public at home and abroad termed the incident "a coup staged without guns" and "16 May coup carried out without the use of guns". The "motion on impeachment" was a product of the greed of a handful of political charlatans for power. This chaos has pushed the political situation of South Korea to an unpredictable phase, betraying the backwardness of its politics before the world. The US is chiefly to blame for the incident. The US egged the ROK political quacks, obsessed by the greed for power, on to stage such incident in a bid to install an ultra-right pro-US regime there. It is quite natural, therefore, for the people of different social standings in South Korea to brand this as illegal political gangsterism.

2. ROK Response to DPRK Impeachment Criticism

JoongAng Ilbo ("SEOUL TELLS NORTH OFF OVER IMPEACHMENT," 03/17/04) reported that the ROK government directed a rare complaint yesterday at the DPRK, calling the DPRK's reaction to the impeachment of President Roh Moo-hyun an "intervention in the domestic affairs of another country." After the National Assembly impeached Roh last week, the DPRK abruptly sought a change in the location of inter-Korean economic talks. The DPRK demanded the talks, originally scheduled to open Monday in the ROK's Paju, be held in Gaeseong in the DPRK, citing political instability in the South. The meeting was called off. In a telephone message to the DPRK, the Ministry of Unification expressed its regret and said the DPRK "is distorting the truth."

3. DPRK Working Groups

Yonhap ("S. KOREA, CHINA AGREE TO PURSUE EARLY WORKING GROUP TALKS," Seoul, 03/17/04) reported that the ROK and the PRC have agreed to closely cooperate to convene a working group session of the six-nation talks on the DPRK's nuclear activities at an early date, a senior ROK diplomat said Wednesday. "Like us, China also has the position to open working group talks as early as possible," said ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-hyuck after returning from a two-day trip to Beijing.

Kyodo ("JAPANESE OFFICIAL SAYS SIX NATIONS SETTING UP WORKING GROUP ON NUCLEAR ISSUE," Tokyo, 03/17/04) reported that a senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official indicated Wednesday that the six nations discussing the DPRK's nuclear ambitions are arranging to set up a preparatory working group by the end of April. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, also said senior officials from Japan, the ROK and the US are likely to coordinate policy before the group is established. Asked if the group will be created in April, the official responded, "I think so." He added that the six nations, which also include the PRC, the DPRK and Russia, are unlikely to set a specific agenda for establishing the working group.

4. Japan DPRK Ship Ban Bill

Kyodo ("GIST OF N. KOREA SHIP BAN BILL," 03/17/04) reported that the following is the gist of a bill to ban the entry of designated ships at Japanese ports which, targeting vessels from the DPRK, the two ruling coalition parties agreed Wednesday to submit to parliament next week.

A. Designated ships comprise ships with flags of foreign countries the cabinet designates and ships that have called at designated countries on or after a date decided by the cabinet. B. The cabinet will decide on a port call ban and its period of application when necessary to maintain the peace and security of Japan. C. When a port call ban is being imposed, ships that have called at designated countries can become subject to the ban where necessary. D. The cabinet will decide on extending a

port call ban when necessary. E. The prime minister will announce such cabinet decisions immediately. The government will seek Diet approval within 20 days of the announcement. F. The cabinet will swiftly decide to end a port call ban when it becomes unnecessary. G. Captains who violate the ban will be punished by a sentence of up to three years or a fine of up to 1 million yen or both. H. Provisions of this law will be reviewed and necessary steps taken when required in light of the international climate and other factors.

5. ROK Terrorist Alert

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA PUT ON ALERT OVER POSSIBLE TERRORIST ATTACKS," Seoul, 03/17/04) reported that acting ROK President Goh Kun put the ROK on high alert against possible terrorist attack, saying the country was among the main targets for terrorism following the Madrid bombings, a spokesman said. Goh told senior officials to convene a meeting of the government's anti-terror committee to thrash out measures to step up security following last week's bombing in Spain that killed 201 people and injured 1,500, the spokesman said. "Those countries which have their troops stationed in Iraq have become main targets for terrorist attacks," spokesman Kim Duck-Bong quoted Goh as saying. "South Korea, in some respects, is a country that should be on a high state of alert against terrorism." The ROK plans to send 3,000 troops to take control of rehabilitation efforts in Iraq's northern province of Kirkuk next month. Spain sent 1,300 troops to Iraq. Goh called for thorough preparations to ensure the safety of the troops and additional measures to prevent attacks on public facilities in the ROK, such as a new high-speed railway that will go into service in April. Following Goh's order, the government convened a meeting of officials from all government agencies engaged in security, including the defense ministry, the country's spy agency and the police. The Ministry of Construction and Transportation said it would carry out anti-terror drills at a subway station in Seoul and at the Incheon international airport this week.

6. US-PRC Trade Relations

Reuters (Doug Palmer, "U.S. COULD SCRUB US-CHINA TRADE MEET IN APRIL," Washington, 03/17/04) reported that the US could cancel a high-level trade meeting with the PRC scheduled for late April if the PRC does not show progress soon on a variety of disputes, a US official said on Wednesday. US Commerce Undersecretary Grant Aldonas told US business leaders "it may not be worth having a meeting" unless the PRC demonstrates it is serious about addressing US concerns about counterfeiting of patented and copyrighted products and discriminatory tax policies toward foreign semi-conductors. The PRC's record \$124 billion trade surplus with the US has become an issue in the US presidential campaign. The current "sulfuric" atmosphere on trade in the US makes it essential that next month's meeting in Washington of the US-PRC Joint Committee on Commerce and Trade produce concrete results, Aldonas said. Aldonas said he and Deputy US Trade Representative for Asia Josette Shiner would travel to the PRC next week for a final "hard negotiating session" before the April meeting.

7. PRC-HK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("HK DEMOCRATIC LEADER HITS BACK AT PRC CRITICS," 03/17/04) reported that Hong Kong's leading democracy campaigner has hit out at renewed attacks from the PRC over his mission to the US earlier this month to promote democracy in the former British colony. In an article published by the PRC's official Xinhua news agency, Legislator Martin Lee was accused of being a "traitor" and "distorting" the city's constitution. But Lee, the international face of democratic reform in Hong Kong, shrugged off the criticism. "I didn't lie," Lee told Hong Kong cable

TV of testimonies he and three other campaigners gave to the US Senate's East Asian and Pacific Affairs sub-committee. "We told them what the public wants and their concerns about the PRC government because it rejects Hong Kong people's wishes for democracy. "I went there to tell Americans the true picture ... and they (China) are still criticising me. There is nothing more I can do." The Xinhua article poured scorn on Lee and Senate sub-committee chairman Sam Brownback, and compared the veteran campaigner to Wu Sangui, a Ming Dynasty general who surrendered to the ethnic Manchu minority's armies of the Qing Dynasty, bringing about the demise of the Han Dynasty. "What's shameful is Martin Lee relied on foreign forces and willingly became foreign forces' pawn," said the commentary released by Xinhua. "It's not at all excessive that Hong Kong people scolded Martin Lee and his followers as 'Wu Sangui' and 'traitors.' He will eventually be cast aside by Hong Kong people."

8. Japan-Iran Relations

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN HOPES FOR STRONGER TIES WITH IRAN," 03/17/04) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi told a visiting senior Iranian official he wanted to further enhance Japan's ties with Iran after signing a two-billion-dollar oil deal with Tehran last month, an official said. "Japan-Iran relations have been strengthening as seen in the agreement to develop the Azadegan oilfield, and I very much hope this will go further," Koizumi was quoted as telling Iran's top nuclear policy-maker Hassan Rowhani. Japan announced on February 19 it had signed an agreement with Iran to develop the massive Azadegan oilfield in order to assure stable oil supplies. The deal unnerved the US which expressed its "deep concern" due to suspected nuclear developments in Iran. During their one-hour meeting Koizumi told Rowhani he understood that "Iran is trying to respond sincerely to the IAEA resolution and I appreciate the efforts" of Rowhani, stressing that such efforts "are very important for developing ties between Japan and Iran," the Japanese official said.

9. Inter-Korean Family Reunions

Associated Press ("S KOREA SELECTS CANDIDATES FOR FAMILY REUNIONS WITH NORTH," Seoul, 03/16/04) reported that the ROK has selected 100 finalists for next round of temporary reunions of family members separated by the 1950-53 Korean War, a Red Cross official said Wednesday. The two ROK and the DPRK plan to exchange their list of finalists Thursday for the March 29-April 3 reunions at the DPRK's east coast Diamond Mountain resort, Red Cross spokesman Moon Won-il said. Moon said his office expected no change in plans to hold the reunions, despite the cancellation of an inter-Korean economic meeting after last week's impeachment of President Roh Moo-hyun in the ROK.

10. DPRK Water Crisis

Korea Herald (Choi Sung-ah, "N.K. DESPERATELY NEEDS CLEAN WATER," 03/18/04) reported that for residents of most rural towns in the DPRK, water is only available two to four hours a day, and the quality of that water supply is visibly terrible, the executive director of UNICEF said yesterday. Speaking at a news conference in downtown Seoul, Bellamy stressed the urgency of water purification, as it is directly related to any issue being dealt with by the world's children-and-women's aid organization, including basic health care and education. "The needs in terms of water and sanitation are presently covered in a proportion of 20 to 25 percent," Bellamy said. "And a majority of the hospitals do not have clean water." After visiting child-care centers and public medical facilities in the DPRK, Bellamy spoke on the agency's problem at hand in making sure and

providing hospitals with clean water, which is basis in sanitation and care. The agency appealed for more than \$2.7 million in funds as of last month for water and environmental sanitation, and 89 percent of it has already been funded. The UNICEF chief said the agency is working with local DPRK authorities to bring clean water through a gravity driven system. Another area UNICEF is working on is expanding the coverage of iodine consumption in the DPRK's regular diet.

11. ROK DPRK Pharmaceutical Aid

Yonhap ("S KOREAN PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES DONATE PRODUCTS TO NORTH," Seoul, 03/04/04) reported that ROK pharmaceutical companies are donating products to North Korea following a request from Pyongyang last month for medical aid, officials from the ROK Red Cross said Wednesday. Medicines worth 593m won (509,000 US dollars) have been delivered to the relief agency in Seoul over the past several days to be shipped to the DPRK, they said. Seven companies have participated so far. Officials said the DPRK Red Cross Society had sent a request for medicines to the ROK agency to support its hospital in Pyongyang. Following the DPRK request, "The ROK Red Cross held talks with representatives of pharmaceutical manufacturers, and many responded positively," a Red Cross official, who preferred not to be named, said. The agency's president, Lee Yoon-gu, will visit Pyongyang in the middle of next month to deliver the donations.

12. Kaesong Industrial Complex

Yonhap ("INDUSTRIAL ZONE PROJECT HITS SNAG AS N KOREA DEMANDS HIGHER RENTS," Seoul, 03/17/04) reported that the inter-Korean project to build an industrial complex in the DPRK city of Kaesong hit a snag after Pyongyang abruptly demanded higher rent for the site, officials at a state-run ROK firm engaged in the project said Wednesday. In the latest economic talks in Seoul, the Koreans agreed to start the construction of a model industrial facility on a 1-million-pyong (1 pyong equals 3.3 square meters) site in Kaesong, a town just north of the Demilitarized Zone that separates the countries, in March for completion by June. The two sides also agreed to allow ROK firms to move into the complex starting in September. "North Korea previously pledged to offer the land almost free of charge, but the North abruptly switched its position to demand a considerable amount of rent for land during last week's working-level talks on the project," one of negotiators at the Korea Land Corp. said on condition of anonymity. This was the second such working-level meeting, and also involved Hyundai Asan Co., the DPRK business arm of South Korea's Hyundai Group. He refused to tell how much the DPRK demanded, saying that the negotiations are under way. The companies planned to fix the rent for the land at 10,000 won (8.6 US dollars) per pyong through negotiations to sell a lot in the complex at about 150,000 won per pyong to ROK companies. Government officials were concerned that a higher rent will result in hiking opening prices for the facility and discouraging ROK companies from moving in. "It's unclear whether we can finish the negotiations this month, but we'll do our best to reach a compromise with the North in time," he said. To start construction, the land developer and the Hyundai subsidiary must get approval from the government after winding up the rent negotiations.

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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