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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. PRC Airliner Crash in ROK
2. Russia-US Nuclear Disarmament
3. Japan Homeland Defense Bill
4. PRC US Navy Port Call Approval
5. Japan Koizumi Approval Ratings
6. ROK New Economic Chief
7. ROK-US Relations
8. Russia-DPRK Relations
9. DPRK Defections
10. Inter-Korean Family Reunions
11. Taiwan Military Document Declassification
12. Kissinger on PRC-US Relations

II. Republic of Korea 1. PRC Air Crash
2. PRC Air Rescue Work
3. Arirang Festival of DPRK

III. Japan 1. Japan-PRC Relations
2. DPRK-Japan Abductions

I. United States

1. PRC Airliner Crash in ROK

Agence France-Presse ("NEARLY 150 FEARED DEAD IN CHINESE AIRLINER CRASH IN SOUTH KOREA," 04/15/02) reported that an Air China Boeing 767-200 carrying 155 passengers and 11 crew crashed while trying to land in poor weather near the ROK city of Busan and most aboard were feared dead, officials said. Rescue officials said at least 20 people survived the fiery crash after the plane Monday, on a flight from Beijing to Busan, South Korea's second-largest city, smashed into a

hill. "Twenty people were taken alive to hospitals," Shin Mi-Ja, a fire department official at the government administration ministry said. Flight CA129 with 136 Korean and 18 Chinese passengers went down after experiencing difficulties on a first attempt to land at Gimhae airport, four kilometers (2.5 miles) north of Busan, a transportation ministry official said.

2. Russia-US Nuclear Disarmament

The Associated Press (Vladimir Isachenkov, "NUCLEAR DEAL TO INCLUDE DISARMAMENT," Moscow, 04/16/02) reported that a nuclear arms deal on the agenda of next month's US-Russian summit for the first time will include ways to verify the dismantling of the warheads themselves, arms control analysts said Tuesday. Earlier arms control agreements contained controls to verify the dismantling of nuclear submarines, missiles and bombers, but not warheads, said Rose Gottemoeller, an arms control expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "Historically, the strategic arms reduction agreements hadn't touched on warheads because they were considered to be too sensitive and difficult to monitor," Gottemoeller, who served on the National Security Council staff under former President Clinton stated. "In this new agreement there will apparently be some measures to monitor warheads cooperatively," Gottemoeller said. "This is a very welcome innovation in the strategic arms control process and the first in many years."

3. Japan Homeland Defense Bill

Reuters (Isabel Reynolds, "JAPAN'S CABINET OKAYS BILLS TO BOOST HOMELAND DEFENCE," Tokyo, 04/16/02) and the Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "JAPANESE CABINET ENDORSES EXPANSION OF MILITARY'S ROLE IN CASE OF FOREIGN ATTACKS," Tokyo, 04/16/02) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Cabinet endorsed new rules Tuesday that would expand Japan's military role and give the government new powers in case of foreign attack. Opponents denounced the move as trampling civil rights. The measures are designed to give a greater latitude to the prime minister and the Self Defense Forces in time of military emergency. Cabinet endorsement brings the measures a major step closer to ratification. The set of three bills are to be sent Wednesday to Parliament, which has until mid-June to vote them into law. "These are important bills for the protection of people's safety and must be considered in times of peace," Koizumi said after winning the Cabinet's endorsement. Under the proposed laws, the prime minister would have greater power to take steps to counter attacks and order local authorities to implement defensive measures. A special task force would also be appointed to manage such crises. The country's defense chief would also have greater leeway in deploying troops on private land or demolishing private homes to set up military facilities, local media reported. Restrictions on the military's use of firearms would also be relaxed. Additionally, ordinary citizens and private entities would be obliged to obey government orders to provide the military fuel or food and face penalties for refusing.

4. PRC US Navy Port Call Approval

Reuters ("CHINA APPROVES US NAVY PORT CALL IN HONG KONG," Hong Kong, 04/15/02) reported that the PRC has approved a US navy port call in Hong Kong after denying permission last month for a similar visit, a US consular spokesperson in the territory said on Monday. However, spokesperson Barbara Zigli declined to give further details of the expected visit.

5. Japan Koizumi Approval Ratings

Agence France-Presse ("SUPPORT FOR JAPAN PM STOPS FALLING: POLL," 04/16/02) reported that support for Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has stopped falling on the back of a four percent rise in endorsement from women, a poll showed Tuesday. Supporters outpolled detractors 42 percent to 40 percent, a reverse from the last survey two weeks ago, when non-supporters, at 44 percent, outnumbered supporters at 40 percent, an Asahi Shimbun poll said. However, "There has been no significant recovery since the rapid drop in popularity following the dismissal of former foreign minister Makiko Tanaka," the paper said.

6. ROK New Economic Chief

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT NAMES REFORMIST AS NEW ECONOMIC CHIEF," 04/15/02) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-Jung named a reformist as the new finance and economy minister. Jeon Yun- Churl, chief of the presidential staff, replaced Jin Nyum who resigned Saturday to take part in provincial elections. The president's office said Jeon, 62, has the right qualifications to pursue reforms. "He is the right man to sustain the government's economic reform policies with consistency and lead the economic team smoothly," presidential spokesperson Park Sun-Sook said. The president's special assistant for political affairs, Park Jie-won, will take over Jeon's current post. Lee Ki-Ho, a former senior presidential advisor for economic affairs, will be the president's special assistant for economic, welfare and labor affairs.

7. ROK-US Relations

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREAN FOREIGN MINISTER LEAVES FOR WASHINGTON," Seoul, 04/16/02) reported that the ROK's foreign minister left Tuesday for Washington where he will discuss the allies' policy toward the DPRK which earlier this month agreed to revive reconciliation efforts with the ROK and start talks with the US. Foreign Minister Choi Sung-hong is scheduled to meet Secretary of State Colin Powell and President George W. Bush's national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, during his April 16-21 visit, Choi's office said in a statement. It will be Choi's first visit to the US since he took the post in a Cabinet shake-up in January.

8. Russia-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("RUSSIA'S PUTIN SENDS NORTH KOREA'S KIM A LETTER," 04/16/02) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin has sent DPRK leader Kim Jong-il a letter, the DPRK 's official KCNA news agency reported on Tuesday. KCNA did not give details of the letter. KCNA said that Kim had received Vladimir Yakovlev, governor of Russia's second city of St Petersburg, on Monday and hosted a dinner for a Russian delegation. "(Yakovlev) courteously conveyed to leader Kim Jong-il a...letter of Russian President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin," the news agency reported. Yakovlev is scheduled to visit Seoul later this week to meet ROK officials.

9. DPRK Defections

Reuters ("MORE NORTH KOREAN FAMILIES FLEE TO SEOUL," Seoul, 04/14/02) reported that the ROK has reported the arrival of 24 more defectors, including a school teacher and three families, from the DPRK. The arrivals brought the number of DPRK defectors to have reached the ROK this year to 238. Last year, a record 583 people defected.

10. Inter-Korean Family Reunions

The Associated Press ("SOUTH, NORTH KOREA AGREE TO REUNIONS," Seoul, 04/13/02) and Reuters ("KOREAN FAMILY REUNIONS SET TO RESUME," Seoul, 04/14/02) reported that the ROK and DPRK have agreed to revive reunions of divided family members this month, after a visit to Pyongyang by a special envoy from the ROK prompted a resumption of dialogue between the nations, the Korea Red Cross said on Sunday. Under the agreement, 100 ROK citizens will visit the DPRK's Kumgang mountain resort for three days starting on April 28 and 100 DPRK citizens will come to an undecided venue in the ROK in the following three days, the agency said in a statement. The exchange of elderly Koreans, which was originally scheduled for last October but halted by the DPRK, was resumed after South ROK special envoy Lim Dong-won visited Pyongyang last week.

11. Taiwan Military Document Declassification

Reuters ("REPORT: TAIWAN MILITARY DECLASSIFIES DOCUMENTS ABOUT SECRET PLANS TO RETAKE CHINESE MAINLAND," Taipei, 04/14/02) reported that the Taiwan's military has declassified documents about the island's secret plans to retake the PRC mainland in the 1950s - including a plan to fire nuclear artillery shells at a PRC port. Hoping the US military would provide it with nuclear weapons technology, the Taiwanese army drew up a plan in 1958 to fire nuclear shells at the PRC's southern port of Xiamen from the nearby Taiwanese-held islet of Kinmen the documents read. The report said the US military first worked on the plan with Taiwan's army but later backed off, fearing such an attack could cause a heavy death toll in the PRC and could also prompt the PRC to seek nuclear technology from the Soviet Union. The Defense Ministry had declassified some documents for use by academics and researchers, but not to the public, a ministry official said on condition of anonymity Sunday. The newspaper report said that the Taiwanese army had also made detailed plans to launch a massive landing in southern PRC in 1956, involving infantry, marines, paratroopers and a tank unit. But the US military refused to offer logistical support and the plan was dropped, the report said.

12. Kissinger on PRC-US Relations

The Associated Press (Martin Fackler, "KISSINGER PUSHES US-CHINA RELATIONS," Shanghai, 04/15/02) reported that thirty years after he helped to broker a Cold War thaw with the PRC, Henry Kissinger said Monday that the US must not let "needless disputes" upset ties with the PRC. The former national security adviser said the two countries still face many of the same disagreements that President Nixon dealt with during his February 1972 visit - particularly over Taiwan. But Kissinger criticized those in the US who say the PRC is a rising threat to US interests and call for a stronger stance against the country. "Those who believe that confrontation with China can be a national strategy ... do not understand the dynamics of the current and foreseeable international system," Kissinger said. "We have extraordinary opportunities. We must not squander them in needless disputes." Kissinger was addressing a group of PRC and US officials gathered to celebrate the "Shanghai Communique." Kissinger said the diplomatic efforts 30 years ago succeeded far beyond what he had hoped for, pointing to billions of dollars in trade and investment between the two countires. "If anybody had told us that this was possible, it would have been considered a fantasy."

II. Republic of Korea

1. PRC Air Crash

Jooangang Ilbo ("112 die, 39 survive crash in Busan," Gimpae, 04/16/021) reported that an Air China passenger plane, with 167 people aboard, smashed into a mountain near Busan's Gimhae International Airport amid rain and fog on Monday. Of the 155 passengers and 12 crew members, 112 were found dead, 39 survivors were rescued and 16 are still missing. Because some survivors are critically injured, the number of dead is expected to grow. Most of the passengers aboard the flight CCA-129 were tourists, and 136 were Koreans. Authorities recovered the flight data recorder from the crash site at about 3 p.m. The Boeing 757 plane left Beijing at 9:30 a.m. and was scheduled to arrive at Busan at 11:30 a.m. The control tower contacted the pilot for the last time, giving permission to land, at 11:23 a.m.

2. PRC Air Rescue Work

The Korea Herald ("GOV'T INVESTIGATES CAUSE OF CRASH, COORDINAATES RESCUE WORK," Seoul, 04/16/02) reported that the ROK government immediately launched an investigation into the crash of an Air China jetliner Monday, in cooperation with a group of PRC officials who arrived in ROK late in the day. In an emergency cabinet meeting presided over by Prime Minister Lee Han-dong, participants agreed to muster all administrative, police and military resources in rescuing survivors and finding the cause of the crash, officials said. The Construction and Transportation Ministry established an emergency task force headed by Minister Lim In-taik immediately after Air China Flight CA-129 from PRC crashed while approaching Gimhae International Airport near Busan Monday morning. The Foreign Ministry also established a task force, led by Kim Kyung-keun, director general for overseas residents and consular affairs, to maintain cooperation with PRC on developments related to the accident as swiftly as possible. The PRC Embassy in Seoul also sent an emergency mission to the crash site.

3. Arirang Festival of DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Young-jong, "NO NOSY FOREIGNERS WANTED AT ARIRANG," Seoul, 04/16/02) reported that the DPRK's Arirang Festival will be scaled down to a domestic event, a high-ranking ROK government official said Monday. DPRK had been touting the two-month event, scheduled to begin April 29, as a magnet for at least 200,000 foreign tourists. DPRK had planned 50 performances, each to be seen by 4,000 tourists, and observers had estimated that it might earn US$80 million if the festival were an international success.

III. Japan

1. Japan-PRC Relations

The Japan Times ("JAPAN EYES FOUR PANELS FOR CHINA TRADE TALKS," 04/12/02) reported that Japan wants to create standing committees to discuss agriculture and three other sensitive trade issues with the PRC under a proposed framework for bilateral economic talks, Japan's government officials said on Thursday. Japanese officials say the creation of panels on agriculture, intellectual property, light manufacturing goods and quarantine systems is necessary because these areas could strain bilateral trade relations at any time. Japan's prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, hopes to agree on the framework with PRC Premier, Zhu Rong Ji during their meeting slated for Friday, the officials said.

2. DPRK-Japan Abductions

The Japan Times ("KOIZUMI TO RAISE ISSUE OF ABDUCTIONS," Haikou, 04/12/02) reported that Japan's prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi indicated Thursday that he will seek the PRC's help in settling allegations that the DPRK abducted Japanese citizens when he meets with PRC Premier Chu Rong Ji on Friday. "I want to discuss with Premier Zhu, Japan's stance of urging sincere measures from the North," Koizumi said on the airplane to the PRC. Koizumi, who will be in the PRC for three days, will meet Zhu on the sidelines of the first annual conference of the Baoa Forum for Asia on Hainan island, southern PRC. Koizumi also said he would try to confirm the PRC's position regarding Japan's claim that at least 11 Japanese were abducted to the DPRK in 1977 and 1983, apparently for espionage training.

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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BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies
Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@online.ru
Moscow, Russian Federation

Wu Chunsi: cswu@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

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