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I. NAPSNet

1. Transfer of DPRK Frozen Funds

Kommersant (Russia) ("NORTH KOREA CHOOSES RUSSIA TO HOLD ITS MONEY", 2007-04-30) reported that the DPRK has asked authorities in Macao to transfer the funds in its frozen accounts to financial organizations in Russia and Italy. This was announced by Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Wu Dawei to the Japanese delegation in Beijing. According to unofficial information, Banco Delta Asia is preparing for the transfers.

2. PRC on Japan-DPRK Relations

Xinhua ("JAPAN URGED TO PROVIDE ENERGY AID TO N. KOREA", 2007-04-29) reported that Wu Dawei, the PRC's chief delegate to the six-party talks, told Japanese lawmakers Saturday that Tokyo should shoulder its portion of energy aid to the DPRK. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, known for his hard line on DPRK, has said he would not provide any aid under the US-backed six-nation deal until the DPRK resolves a row over its kidnapping of Japanese citizens.

3. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap ("LAWMAKERS, BUSINESSMEN TO VISIT N. KOREA", 2007-04-30) reported that a group of ROK lawmakers and businessmen will travel to the DPRK this week for discussions on cross-border economic exchanges. The 10-member delegation is to visit Pyongyang from Wednesday through Saturday to meet top officials, including the DPRK's No. 2 leader Kim Yong-nam, said Rep. Kim Jong-yull, a first-term lawmaker with the Uri Party. High on the agenda of the meeting will be proposals to establish another inter-Korean industrial park and a heavy industry complex in the DPRK, designate a joint peace zone at the Imjin River, which flows through the tense inter-Korean border, and launch a project to dig aggregates in the area, Kim said. The sides will also discuss the DPRK's proposed entry into the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the hosting of a joint academic forum and the possibility of DPRK footballers playing in the ROK professional league, he said.

Yonhap ("SEOUL PROPOSES MILITARY TALKS WITH PYONGYANG THIS WEEK", 2007-04-30) reported that the ROK proposed holding working-level military talks with the DPRK this week to prepare for the agreed-upon test runs of reconnected cross-border railways. The DPRK has yet to reply to it.

4. DPRK-India Relations

ZeeNews ("INDIA, NORTH KOREA TALKS ON TUESDAY", 2007-04-30) reported that in the first high level contact between India and the DPRK since the nuclear tests last October, senior officials of the two countries will meet on Tuesday to discuss bilateral relations and other aspects of mutual interest. The DPRK will be represented by its Vice Foreign Minister Kim Hyong Jun while the Indian side will be led by Secretary (East) in the External Affairs Ministry V Ravi. At the meeting, the two sides are expected to discuss how bilateral relations can be strengthened, particularly in political and economic fields.

5. DPRK Missiles

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA DISPLAYS NEW MISSILE THAT CAN REACH GUAM, REPORT SAYS", 2007-04-29) reported that the DPRK has displayed a new ballistic missile that can reach the U.S. territory of Guam. A Chosun Ilbo news report said that a military parade in Pyongyang on Wednesday featured three new models, including a medium-range missile that can travel 2,500 to 4,000 kilometers, or 1,500 to 2,500 miles.

6. DPRK Defector-Refugee Hunger Strike

Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREAN REFUGEES IN THAILAND END HUNGER STRIKE", 2007-04-27) reported that DPRK detainees ended a three-day hunger strike at an immigration detention center in Bangkok. The 100-odd men and 324 women detained at the Suan Phlu detention center received confirmation that they would not be deported back to the DPRK and would soon leave for the ROK.

7. US-ROK Trade Relations

Donga Ilbo ("U.S. BUSINESSES URGE EARLY RATIFICATION OF KORUS FTA", 2007-04-30) reported that Bloomberg reports that U.S. business leaders in banks, insurance, and pharmaceuticals sent a joint letter to Congress on April 25 to urge the ratification of the KORUS Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The letter says that the KORUS FTA is all about eliminating trade barriers blocking exports to the ROK and that the FTA is economically important to both sides and helps to develop a strategic relationship.

Joongang Ilbo ("FTA EFFECTS Milder THAN PREDICTED", 2007-04-30) reported that the potential gains and losses for the ROK from a free trade pact with the US will be smaller than expected, 11 state-run think tanks said yesterday, because a large number of service industries were excluded from the agreement and many exceptions for agricultural and marine products were allowed. According to the think tanks' joint estimate, the agreement will lift the ROK's annual gross domestic product by just 0.6 percent on average for the first 10 years ? lower than an earlier forecast of 0.8 percent.

8. Japan Middle-East Diplomacy

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S ABE TAKES MIDEAST ENERGY SECURITY TOUR TO KUWAIT ", 2007-04-30) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe took his energy security tour to Kuwait after striking an accord with the United Arab Emirates to finance resource development projects. Abe was to hold talks with Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah later Monday a foreign ministry official said.

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN, SAUDI AGREE TO AIM AT 'MULTI-LAYERED' TIES ", 2007-04-30) reported that Japan and Saudi Arabia agreed to forge a "multi-layered partnership" beyond oil, while urging Iran to take a constructive approach to resolve the crisis over its nuclear ambition. The two also agreed to speed up free trade talks between Japan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which groups Saudi Arabia with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE.

9. US Military Sales to Japan

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. RULES OUT SALE OF F-22 STEALTH FIGHTER TO JAPAN", 2007-04-30) reported that a senior U.S. Defense Department official denied reports of the possible sale of the ultramodern F-22 stealth fighter jet to Japan, Reuters reported Friday. "This airplane was built to give us an edge way into the future, and that's why it's not exportable," Air Force Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Kohler, head of the Pentagon's Defense Security Cooperation Agency, told the news agency. He ruled out export of the fighter jet even if Congress approves it.

10. Japan on Comfort Women Issue

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN RULING DENIES CHINESE RIGHT TO WAR DAMAGES", 2007-0-30) reported that Japan's top court ruled that PRC people do not have the right to seek war reparations, in two landmark verdicts rejecting compensation to World War II sex slaves and forced labourers. The Supreme Court was ruling on the issue for the first time amid continued friction between the two Asian powers over memories of Japanese occupation. The court's decisions are in

line with the Japanese government's position that war reparations are a matter between nations and not between governments and individuals.

11. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA'S HU CALLS FOR CLOSER TAIWAN TIES ", 2007-04-30) reported that the PRC's president for closer business ties with Taiwan to help squelch the self-ruled island's pro-independence movement as he met with a former Taiwanese opposition leader. President Hu Jintao spoke at a forum on PRC-Taiwan business ties that opened amid strains over the 2008 Olympic torch route and rivalry between Beijing and Taipei for foreign diplomatic status.

The Los Angeles Times ("BEIJING, TAIPEI VIE FOR CARIBBEAN SUPPORT", 2007-04-30) reported that Taiwan has been investing in and inveigling Caribbean countries since it lost its United Nations seat to the PRC in 1971. A decade ago, it had eight of the tiny island states' support in its bid for membership in the world body. But as the PRC has surged to become the fourth-largest economy in the world, it has begun outbidding Taiwan for the islands' allegiance, compelling St. Lucia, Dominica and Grenada to switch sides and embrace the one-China policy espoused by Beijing.

12. PRC Anti-Corruption Laws

The Los Angeles Times ("CHINESE LAWS TARGET CHEATING, AT OFFICE OR IN THE HOME", 2007-04-30) reported that the PRC officials who have mistresses, fail to financially support their parents or abuse and abandon their families could be out of a job, according to a new set of ethics rules released by the central government. The regulations, set to take effect June 1, cover a variety of other misdeeds, including corruption, beating up or illegally detaining citizens, using drugs, having sex with a prostitute and organizing "superstitious gatherings." There was no mention of how the sweeping laws would be enforced.

13. US, PRC on Climate Change Report

The Associated Press ("U.S. AND CHINA CRITICIZE CLIMATE REPORT ", 2007-04-30) reported that the US and PRC want to water down a proposed plan for fighting climate change, arguing that action to reduce greenhouse gases will be more costly and time-consuming than scientists claim, documents show. The U.S. and PRC, in papers reviewed by The Associated Press, claim that a proposed European cap on greenhouse gas levels is too low and reaching the target would be too expensive.

14. PRC Human Rights

Washington Post ("REPORT FAULTS CHINA ON RIGHTS FAILURES", 2007-04-30) reported that the 2008 Olympic Games have become a catalyst for more repression in the PRC, not less, according to an Amnesty International report released today and aimed at pressuring the Beijing government a year before the start of the world's premier sporting event. The 22-page report says the PRC's illegal detention and imprisonment of activists and other measures have overshadowed some modest reforms, including how the PRC legal system reviews death penalty cases and the loosening of some restrictions on the foreign press.

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