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I. United States

- 1. [US on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 2. [US on Sanctions on the DPRK](#)
- 3. [US on DPRK Nuclear Program](#)
- 4. [US on Military Option for DPRK](#)
- 5. [US on PRC Role in DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 6. [PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 7. [PRC, Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 8. [Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 9. [DPRK on Relations with PRC, Russia](#)
- 10. [DPRK on Nuclear Talks](#)
- 11. [DPRK on Nuclear Program](#)
- 12. [ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 13. [Japan on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 14. [IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Program](#)
- 15. [US on DPRK Drug Trafficking](#)
- 16. [Russian Oil Exports to the DPRK](#)
- 17. [US-ROK Joint Military Exercise](#)
- 18. [DPRK on US-ROK Joint Military Exercise](#)
- 19. [US on ROK-US Military Alliance](#)
- 20. [ROK on ROK-US Military Alliance](#)
- 21. [Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation](#)
- 22. [Inter - Korean Trade](#)

23. [WFP on DPRK Food Aid](#)
24. [Education Assistance to the DPRK](#)
25. [DPRK on Bird Flu Outbreak](#)
26. [DPRK on Abductee Issue](#)
27. [US on Japanese UNSC Bid](#)
28. [US on US-Japanese Relations](#)
29. [ROK-Japanese Territorial Dispute](#)
30. [Cross Strait Relations](#)
31. [Russia on Cross Strait Relations](#)
32. [US on PRC Arms Ban](#)
33. [Missile Exports to the PRC](#)
34. [US on PRC Religious Freedom](#)
35. [PRC Environment](#)
36. [PRC AIDS Issue](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Reuters ("U.S. WARNS CAN'T WAIT FOREVER FOR N.KOREA TALKS", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice warned on Sunday that the US would not allow a stalemate over the DPRK's refusal to return to nuclear arms negotiations to go on forever. Seeking to be responsive to the DPRK's sensitivities, Rice said the US respected the country's sovereignty and that direct contacts between US and DPRK officials were possible at six-way talks. She also reminded the DPRK of a US proposal of economic aid and security carrots while refraining from tough language that has previously provoked the DPRK.

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("U.S. REMINDS N.KOREA OF INCENTIVES IN NUCLEAR TALKS", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sought on Sunday to coax the DPRK back to six-party talks on scrapping its nuclear arms, reminding the reclusive state of the economic and security incentives on offer. In Seoul, on a sweep through Asia to try to get the talks restarted, Rice also said Washington had no intention of attacking the DPRK -- an attempt to allay Pyongyang's fears the US has a "hostile" policy against it. "There is a lot for North Korea, that could benefit North Korea, if they are prepared to come back to the six-party talks, and to do so seriously," Rice told Internet-based reporters. [\(return to top\)](#) The New York Times ("VISITING KOREA BASE, RICE SENDS FORCEFUL REMINDER TO THE NORTH", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stepped off her airplane in Seoul on Saturday evening, boarded an Army Black Hawk helicopter and immediately flew to this underground command bunker from which military commanders would direct any war against the DPRK. The visit, a pointed reminder of American military capacity on the peninsula, came just hours after a speech in Tokyo in which Ms. Rice repeated that the US had no intention of attacking the DPRK. A senior official traveling with Ms. Rice said she was trying to send a clear message that it was time to bring talks over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program "to a satisfactory conclusion." [\(return to top\)](#)

2. US on Sanctions on the DPRK

Reuters ("U.S. SAYS IT MAY NEED NEW WAYS TO DEAL WITH N. KOREA", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Monday Washington and its Asian allies would have to find new ways of dealing with the DPRK if it continued to shun nuclear disarmament talks. Rice, concluding a sweep through Asia designed to revive the negotiations, also gave her strongest hint to date that the US was prepared to report the DPRK to the UN should the talks fail. Rice's remarks were the first time she had explicitly referred to looking beyond the possible collapse of the talks.

[\(return to top\)](#) The Los Angeles Times ("RICE PUTS PRESSURE ON N. KOREA", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice warned the DPRK today that if it didn't return to nuclear disarmament talks the US would "have to look at other options" to resolve the issue. Rice did not give a deadline for the DPRK to rejoin the stalled six-nation negotiations, nor did she specify what consequences the US might be contemplating in case Pyongyang refused. While Rice has said the US has no plans to attack the DPRK, hard-liners in the Bush administration have been pushing for tough UN sanctions on trade and limits on aid unless the DPRK becomes more cooperative.
[\(return to top\)](#)

3. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Washington Post ("U.S. MISLED ALLIES ABOUT NUCLEAR EXPORT NORTH KOREA SENT MATERIAL TO PAKISTAN, NOT TO LIBYA", 2005-03-21) reported that in an effort to increase pressure on the DPRK, the Bush administration told its Asian allies in briefings earlier this year that Pyongyang had exported nuclear material to Libya. But that is not what US intelligence reported, according to two officials with detailed knowledge of the transaction. The DPRK, according to the intelligence, had supplied uranium hexafluoride -- which can be enriched to weapons-grade uranium -- to Pakistan. It was Pakistan, a key US ally with its own nuclear arsenal, that sold the material to Libya. A DPRK-Pakistan transfer would not have been news to the US allies, which have known of such transfers for years and viewed them as a business matter between sovereign states.

[\(return to top\)](#) Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA CONSIDERS NUCLEAR ARMS A GUARANTEE OF SURVIVAL", 2005-03-21) reported that Lowell Jacoby, the director of the US Defense Information Agency (DIA), forecasted on March 17 that the DPRK's leader, Kim Jong Il, wouldn't completely abandon nuclear armament-related technology in order to maintain the DPRK's deterrent capability against the ROK and the US. Jacoby stated the above-mentioned matter at a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee, saying that the DPRK government considers nuclear weapons to be a decisive deterrent for its survival, as shown in its recent declaration that it has nuclear weapons.
[\(return to top\)](#)

4. US on Military Option for DPRK

Yonhap ("U.S. CAPABLE OF MILITARY ACTION ON N.K. DESPITE WAR IN IRAQ: MYERS", 2005-03-21) reported that the US still has enough military power in reserve to wage war on the DPRK, if necessary, despite its involvement in the global war on terror, a senior US commander said Sunday. General Richard Myers, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the US has the capability to provide security for its friends and allies, "despite the fact that we are very busily engaged in both Afghanistan and Iraq." "We have a certain force structure that's been designed to do certain things," the US commander said in an interview with NBC TV program Meet the Press.

[\(return to top\)](#)

5. US on PRC Role in DPRK Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press ("RICE SEEKS CHINA'S AID ON N. KOREA TALKS", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice hinted Monday that the DPRK faces possible international sanctions if it flouts a diplomatic effort to halt its nuclear weapons program. Rice said she asked PRC leaders for more help to bring the DPRK back to the six-way weapons talks. "It goes without saying that to the degree that a nuclear free Korean peninsula gets more difficult to achieve if the North does not recognize that it needs to do that then of course we'll have to look at other options," Rice said at a press conference.

[\(return to top\)](#)

6. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("CHINA TO SEND 2ND ENVOY TO NORTH KOREA", 2005-03-21) reported that the PRC is to send a second special envoy to the DPRK in April or May after the PRC Communist Party's international liaisons head Wang Jiarui met with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il on Feb. 19 but failed to convince him to return to six-party nuclear disarmament talks. The envoy could be Beijing's last try to get the DPRK back to talks, he said.

[\(return to top\)](#) Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA'S PRIME MINISTER TO VISIT CHINA", 2005-03-21) reported that DPRK Prime Minister Park Bong Ju will visit the PRC from March 22 to 27, following an invitation from PRC Premier Wen Jiabao. It marks the first visit by a Northern high-ranking official after the visit to the DPRK of Wang Jiarui, minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, on February 19. A government official said, "Park, the head of the North Korean economy, will focus on getting more economic aid," and added, "As participating countries' efforts to resume the six-way talks have entered the final stages, the main agenda will be the North's return to the negotiation table." [\(return to top\)](#)

7. PRC, Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap ("RUSSIA, CHINA TO MEET OVER N.K. ISSUE MARCH 24-25", 2005-03-21) reported that Russia and the PRC are scheduled to hold consultations in Beijing over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program on March 24-25, Russian news agency Itar-Tass said. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Alexeyev will have talks with the PRC's Deputy Foreign Minister Wu Dawei in Beijing to discuss DPRK issues and resumption of the six-nation nuclear disarmament talks, the agency said in a dispatch from Beijing Friday.

[\(return to top\)](#)

8. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Xinhua ("RUSSIA STANDS FOR NUCLEAR FREE KOREAN PENINSULA", 2005-03-21) reported that Russia stands for keeping the ROK peninsula free of nuclear weapons through a flexible approach, the Itar-Tass news agency reported Thursday, quoting Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Alexeyev. Moscow thinks the six-party negotiations should be aimed at "taking steps towards freeing the Korean peninsula of nuclear weapons through flexible approaches and diplomatic compromises," Alexeyev said Thursday at the embassy of the DPRK in Moscow. "We are in favor of resuming the six-party negotiations as soon as possible and finding solutions that would correspond with the interests of all sides in the negotiation process," he noted.

[\(return to top\)](#)

9. DPRK on Relations with PRC, Russia

Donga Ilbo ("PYONGYANG'S NEW EQUIDISTANT DIPLOMACY WITH CHINA AND RUSSIA", 2005-03-21) reported that with the six-party talks to resolve the DPRK nuclear issue deadlocked for the long term, the DPRK, who once was unilaterally cut off from the rest in a five versus one situation, is receiving the spotlight with a new "equidistant diplomacy," as it shows signs of restoring the tripartite alliance with Russia and the PRC. "It is a struggle to break the country's excessive dependence on China." Former Unification Minister Park Jae-gyu also explained the intimate Pyongyang-Russia relationship that "the personal friendship between Kim Jong Il and Putin is stronger than ordinary people feel."

[\(return to top\)](#)

10. DPRK on Nuclear Talks

Yonhap news ("N. KOREA INDIRECTLY CRITICIZES RICE'S SEOUL VISIT", 2005-03-21) reported that the DPRK issued no official comments on US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's visit to Seoul over the weekend, but indirectly denounced her visit on Monday, citing a statement by a group of ROK university students. Radio Pyongyang, one of the DPRK's official mouthpieces, reported that Hanchongryon, the Federation of Korean University Student Councils, said Rice's visit to Seoul was a step toward consolidating the US's hostile policy toward the Korean Peninsula.

[\(return to top\)](#)

11. DPRK on Nuclear Program

Reuters ("N.KOREA SAYS IT ADDS TO NUCLEAR ARSENAL", 2005-03-21) reported that the DPRK said Monday it has increased its nuclear arsenal to help prevent a US attack on the DPRK, the ROK's Yonhap news agency reported. "We've taken serious steps of boosting our nuclear arsenal and we are also prepared to mobilize all of our military force against any provocative moves by the enemy," Yonhap quoted the DPRK's state KCNA news agency as saying. It was the first time that Pyongyang actually said it had boosted its nuclear weapons programs.

[\(return to top\)](#)

12. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL FEARS PYONGYANG MISSING SIGNS OF THE TIMES", 2005-03-21) reported that with concerns mounting that six-party talks on the DPRK nuclear disarmament will remain stuck, ROK government officials worry the DPRK does not understand that the tide has turned against it. ROK officials believe the DPRK is unable to shake its expectation that brinkmanship will persuade the US to agree to bilateral talks where it can then extract bigger rewards. The government official warned the future looked bleak if the DPRK remains deaf to Rice's comment that a variety of discussions could take place within the six-party talk framework.

[\(return to top\)](#) Donga Ilbo ("ANALYSTS SEE NORTH FACING A DEADLINE", 2005-03-21) reported that ROK political analysts said yesterday that DPRK may have no more than a month or two in which to decide to return to the six-party nuclear disarmament talks before the US seeks tougher measures to resolve the standoff. Kim Tae-hyo, a professor of politics and international affairs at

Sungkyunkwan University, said Pyongyang is now under pressure to respond. "The next round of six-party talks should take place some time around June or July," Mr. Kim said. "In order to do that, working-level talks need to take place within the next two months. If that does not happen by then the situation gets really difficult." ([return to top](#))

13. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Talks

The Japan Times ("JAPANESE OFFICIAL MOOTS JUNE DEADLINE FOR NORTH KOREA'S RETURN TO NEGOTIATIONS", 2005-03-21) reported that a senior Japanese official has proposed ending the six-way negotiations on the DPRK's nuclear weapons program and taking the issue to the UN Security Council if Pyongyang does not return to the talks before June, sources close to the talks said. Akitaka Saiki, deputy director general of the Foreign Ministry's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, made the proposal at a conference Thursday in Shanghai on ending the DPRK's nuclear weapons program.

([return to top](#))

14. IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Program

Choson Ilbo ("N. KOREA MORE DANGEROUS THAN IRAN: IAEA CHIEF", 2005-03-21) reported that IAEA chief Mohammed ElBaradei said the DPRK posed a much bigger nuclear threat than Iran, CNN reported Thursday. "We know North Korea has the plutonium that can go into the bomb... We have not seen any such material in Iran," ElBaradei told the news channel. He said the DPRK represented an "imminent threat or an imminent danger," saying, "They have that plutonium... they have the industrial infrastructure, but more importantly, they said they are doing it." He added, "In Iran we are active, we are generating information and we know what's going on, more or less. In Korea, it is an absolutely black hole."

([return to top](#))

15. US on DPRK Drug Trafficking

The Asahi Shimbun ("U.S. BID TO STAUNCH NORTH'S DRUG FUNDS", 2005-03-21) reported that the Bush administration intends to squeeze the DPRK on drug trafficking and counterfeit money operations, activities that are suspected of funding Pyongyang's missile and nuclear ambitions and which often involve the reclusive state's diplomats, says a high-ranking US official. According to the official, Washington plans to share intelligence on the DPRK's smuggling ventures and other illegal activities. How much Pyongyang is actually earning from drug trafficking, counterfeit dollars and other illegal activities is not known, say US officials.

([return to top](#))

16. Russian Oil Exports to the DPRK

Associated Press ("RAILWAYS CHIEF: RUSSIA COULD SUPPLY OIL TO N.KOREA BY RAIL", 2005-03-21) reported that Russian investors are in talks with the DPRK on supplying the energy-starved country with oil by rail, Russia's railways chief said Monday in the Far Eastern city of Khabarovsk. Head of the state-run Russian Railways, Gennady Fadeyev, said that a project was under consideration to build a railway line linking the Russian border crossing of Khasan to an oil refinery in the nearby DPRK port of Najin, the Interfax news agency reported.

[\(return to top\)](#)

17. US-ROK Joint Military Exercise

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA, U.S. BEGIN MILITARY DRILLS", 2005-03-21) reported that thousands of US and ROK troops conducted joint maneuvers Saturday, rankling the DPRK, which denounced the exercises as a rehearsal for war. US officials said the weeklong exercise is one of several military drills the two allies conduct each year to boost their readiness against attack from the DPRK. This one involved some 17,000 US-based troops and 6,000 soldiers stationed in the ROK. An unspecified number of ROK troops also participated.

[\(return to top\)](#)

18. DPRK on US-ROK Joint Military Exercise

Voice of America News ("ANNUAL U.S.-SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY EXERCISES COMMENCE; NORTH KOREA FUMES", 2005-03-21) reported that US and ROK forces have begun their annual joint military exercises Saturday, which the DPRK denounced as what it called a rehearsal for war. The DPRK calls the exercises a "rehearsal" for an invasion of the DPRK, and says the maneuvers are further proof the US is not serious about finding a solution to the dispute over DPRK's nuclear weapons programs.

[\(return to top\)](#)

19. US on ROK-US Military Alliance

Choson Ilbo ("U.S. WILL PASS OFF DEFENSE RESPONSIBILITIES TO S. KOREA: RUMSFELD", 2005-03-21) reported that US Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld says the reduction and redeployment of US forces in the ROK is long overdue and the country is ready to take responsibility for its own defense. During a town hall meeting at the Pentagon on Friday, Rumsfeld said Washington is working closely with the ROK to ensure that the ROK is ready to assume a greater share of both its deterrent and defensive capabilities on the Korean peninsula.

[\(return to top\)](#)

20. ROK on ROK-US Military Alliance

The Japan Times ("ROH PUBLICLY BELITTLES ALLIANCE WITH U.S.", 2005-03-21) reported that in a little noticed speech, President Roh Moo Hyun of the ROK has once again disparaged his nation's alliance with the US and cast doubt on whether this partnership should continue. Roh told graduating cadets at the Korean Air Force Academy that the ROK was fully capable of defending itself against the DPRK, thus undermining the reason for posting American combat forces in his country. At the same time, the president asserted that the US would not be allowed to deploy US forces out of the ROK without his government's approval.

[\(return to top\)](#)

21. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap news ("HYUNDAI ASAN TO OPEN ITS THIRD HOTEL IN N. KOREA", 2005-03-21) reported that the ROK tour operator to Mount Geumgang plans to open its third hotel in the scenic DPRK

resort later this year to help improve its tourist accommodation, company and government officials said Monday. Hyundai Asan Corp. said it has been given the government's go-ahead for renovation of a leased DPRK hotel in the DPRK's east coast resort at an investment of 22 billion won (US\$21 million).

[\(return to top\)](#)

22. Inter - Korean Trade

Yonhap news ("INTER-KOREAN TRADE JUMPS 64 PCT IN FEBRUARY", 2005-03-21) reported that despite lingering tensions over the DPRK's nuclear armament, inter-Korean trade surged in February thanks to boosted private exchange and the partial operation of an industrial complex in the DPRK, a local trade agency said Monday. Trade between the two Koreas jumped 64 percent from a year earlier to US\$46.18 million in February, the Korea International Trade Association (KITA) said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

23. WFP on DPRK Food Aid

Korea Times ("WORLD FOOD PROGRAM TO RESUME DISTRIBUTION IN NORTH KOREA", 2005-03-21) reported that the World Food Program (WFP) plans to resume food distribution in Chagang Province, DPRK, this week as Pyongyang recently allowed it to become accessible for monitoring, the U.N. relief agency said in a recent report. Chagang Province, bordering the PRC, was inaccessible for WFP monitoring since October 2004, making the agency stop delivering food assistance from early last December to late February. "With the seven counties in Chagang reopened, WFP now has access to 158 out of 203 counties and districts, representing 83 percent of the population," the WFP said in the report issued on March 18.

[\(return to top\)](#)

24. Education Assistance to the DPRK

Kyodo News ("AID WORKER SEES NEED TO EXPAND N. KOREA ASSISTANCE TO EDUCATION", 2005-03-21) reported that international assistance to the DPRK, which has so far focused mainly on food, needs to be expanded to areas such as basic education to help the country stand on its own feet, an aid worker who visited Pyongyang said recently. Kaethi Zellweger, who is in charge of DPRK programs for Caritas Hong Kong, said in an interview following her three-week stay in the DPRK that she found the state of the country's elementary schools particularly worrying.

[\(return to top\)](#)

25. DPRK on Bird Flu Outbreak

Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA DENIES REPORTS ON AVIAN FLU", 2005-03-21) reported that the DPRK has denied a series of news reports about a suspected avian influenza outbreak in the vicinity of Pyeongyang, the communist country's capital. According to the National Intelligence Service yesterday, Choe Ung-jun, the head of DPRK's Public Health Department, appeared on Central TV on Tuesday and said no cases had been detected.

[\(return to top\)](#)

26. DPRK on Abductee Issue

Yonhap news ("NORTH KOREA SLAMS JAPAN OVER 'FAKE REMAINS THEORY'", None) reported that the DPRK on Saturday accused Japan of "manipulating" the results of forensics testing of the remains of a Japanese abductee returned by the DPRK, citing a recent article by a British science journal. The North's official Central News Agency reported in detail the Feb. 2 edition of "Nature," in which the Japanese forensics expert who determined that the remains were not the abductee's acknowledged possible errors in the testing process.

[\(return to top\)](#)

27. US on Japanese UNSC Bid

The Associated Press ("RICE ENDORSES JAPAN FOR U.N. COUNCIL", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice offered support for Japanese membership in the UN Security Council as she prepared to visit the ROK. Concerning the UN Security Council, permanent membership is a long-standing Japanese goal. Rice's endorsement was the most explicit statement yet of US support for Japan's request. "Japan has earned its honorable place among the nations of the world by its own effort and by its own character," Rice said. "That is why the United States unambiguously supports a permanent seat for Japan on the United Nations Security Council."

[\(return to top\)](#)

28. US on US-Japanese Relations

Washington Post ("RICE PUTS JAPAN AT CENTER OF NEW U.S. VISION OF ASIA", None) reported that Condoleezza Rice, on her first foray into Asia as secretary of state, outlined on Saturday a new US vision of Japan's increasing importance as a global power. In a speech to about 500 professors and students at Sophia University here, Rice offered an expansive view of Japan's role in the world -- including unambiguous support for its campaign to win a permanent seat on the UN Security Council -- that suggested the administration viewed the longtime US ally as a counterbalance to the rising regional influence of the PRC.

[\(return to top\)](#)

29. ROK-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Korea Times ("ROH PLANS AGENCY FOR TOKTO; FISHERY AGREEMENT NOT RELATED WITH ISLETS IN EAST SEA", 2005-03-21) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun instructed authorities to set up a body at an early date to deal with the recent controversy involving the Tokto islets in the East Sea, Chong Wa Dae spokesman Kim Man-soo said Monday. In a related development, the government opposed some politicians' proposal for the annulment of the ROK-Japan Fishery Agreement as the pact revised in 1999 is not related to the ROK's territorial sovereignty over the Tokto islets.

[\(return to top\)](#) Washington Post ("JAPANESE CLAIM TOUCHES NERVE IN SOUTH KOREA", 2005-03-21) reported that angry swells of ROK have protested at the Japanese Embassy here for more than a week, burning the flag of the Rising Sun and expressing emotions so deep that some demonstrators have cut off their fingers. The developments have rekindled charges about Japan's militarist past. ROK fighter jets have begun flying daily patrols of the disputed islands -- controlled by ROK since the 1950s -- and the military issued a warning last week to a Japanese reconnaissance

plane that officials say strayed too close to the volcanic outcroppings. [\(return to top\)](#) Joongang Ilbo ("ROH PROPOSES KOREA-JAPAN HISTORY GROUP", 2005-03-21) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun called for a permanent government body yesterday to handle historical issues between the ROK and Japan, including the Tokto islands dispute. "We will have to have a government body to formulate government-wide policies to cope with the issues," Mr. Roh said after he was briefed yesterday on the recent Tokto and history textbook disputes with Japan. [\(return to top\)](#)

30. Cross Strait Relations

Washington Post ("TIDE OF TENSION ON TAIWAN STRAIT", 2005-03-21) reported that the PRC's new anti-secession law has produced a sudden rise in tension across the Taiwan Strait, leaving Taipei in a combative mood and putting an indefinite hold on practical improvements such as direct airline flights to the PRC. President Chen Shui-bian, an ardent champion of independence for this self-governing island, has led his countrymen in venting anger at the legislation, calling it a "guillotine" over Taiwan's head. But he has been careful to limit his response to rhetoric, avoiding steps that the PRC would regard as provocative and that could cost Taiwan what it has gained in international sympathy since the law was passed in Beijing on Monday.

[\(return to top\)](#)

31. Russia on Cross Strait Relations

The New York Times ("RUSSIAN DENIES WAR GAMES WITH CHINA ARE A SIGNAL TO TAIWAN", 2005-03-21) reported that Yuri Baluyevsky, Russia's top general, outlined plans with PRC officials this week for the first joint military exercises between the countries and played down concerns that they could further aggravate rising regional tensions. General Baluyevsky, speaking Thursday during the first day of his four-day PRC visit, said the war games reflected the countries' shared desire to develop closer strategic military ties and were "not targeted at any third country," according to PRC state news media.

[\(return to top\)](#)

32. US on PRC Arms Ban

Washington Post ("RICE WARNS EUROPE NOT TO SELL ADVANCED WEAPONRY TO CHINA; MILITARY BALANCE AT RISK, ALLIES TOLD", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sternly warned European allies on Sunday that they "should do nothing" that alters the military balance of power in Asia through sales of sophisticated weapons to the PRC, suggesting that those arms ultimately could be directed at Americans. "It is the United States -- not Europe -- that has defended the Pacific," Rice said at a news conference in Seoul before she flew to Beijing for talks with PRC officials.

[\(return to top\)](#)

33. Missile Exports to the PRC

Associated Press ("UKRAINIANS SOLD MISSILES TO IRAN, CHINA, PROSECUTORS SAY", 2005-03-21) reported that Ukrainian weapons dealers smuggled 18 nuclear-capable cruise missiles to Iran and the PRC during the rule of former president Leonid Kuchma, prosecutors said Friday. The missiles have the range to reach Israel and other US allies in the region. The Kh-55 missiles were smuggled out of the former Soviet republic four years ago, the prosecutor general's office said in a

statement. The missiles, which can strike targets 1,860 miles away, were sold illegally, according to the statement.

[\(return to top\)](#)

34. US on PRC Religious Freedom

Reuters ("RICE URGES CHINA TO EMBRACE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM", 2005-03-21) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urged the PRC Monday to embrace religious freedom and think about political reforms to match its economic opening. Rice raised the sensitive issues of human rights and democracy with PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing in Beijing on the final day of her six-nation tour of Asia, and after attending a church service Sunday. "We ... talked a good deal about the need for China to think about a more open political system that will match its economic opening and allow for the full creativity of the Chinese people," Rice told a news conference.

[\(return to top\)](#)

35. PRC Environment

Agence France Presse ("CHINA TO SPEND 780 MILLION DOLLARS TO CURB SULFUR DIOXIDE EMISSIONS", 2005-03-21) reported that the PRC plans to invest 6.43 billion yuan (780 million dollars) to curb sulfur dioxide emissions spewing from the coal-fired power plants that are fueling its economic growth, state media said. The aim is to reduce emissions by 650,000 tons at 31 of the biggest plants, the China Securities Journal reported, citing the National Development and Reform Commission.

[\(return to top\)](#)

36. PRC AIDS Issue

Agence France Presse ("CHINA PLANS NATIONAL DATABASE OF HIV/AIDS VICTIMS AS EPIDEMIC LOOMS", 2005-03-21) reported that the PRC plans to set up a national database containing the records of its HIV/AIDS victims in a bid to get a better grip of the extent of the epidemic. The Ministry of Health had vowed to establish the database, with entries for every reported HIV/AIDS patient, the Xinhua news agency reported. The regulation would mainly set out the rights and duties of regional governments and residents in controlling the deadly disease, according to Xinhua.

[\(return to top\)](#)

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