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I. NAPSNet

1. US on Six Party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("HILL CALLS FOR NORTH TO RETURN TO BEIJING ", 2006-03-09) reported that Christopher Hill, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, in a hearing of the House International Relations Committee meet with the press, that the New York meeting briefing with the DPRK on the counterfeiting issue, was both a constructive and practical contact. Hill also said that the DPRK must return to six-party talks on their nuclear programs with no conditions attached. Hill also once again emphasized that the measures taken against the DPRK through the Banco Delta Asia are two separate issues and if the DPRK shows its intentions to abandon its nuclear ambitions there will be no problems. He also said that his bags are packed for a return to Beijing anytime.

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2. US Congressman on Six Party Talks

Washington File ("CONGRESSMAN LEACH URGES INCREASED INTERACTION WITH NORTH KOREA ", 2006-03-08) reported that it is in the interest of the US to increase interaction with the government of the DPRK -- even if prospects for success are uncertain, says Congressman James Leach, chairman of the House International Relations Committee's Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. Leach, a Republican from Iowa, expressed concern that the Six-Party are beginning to appear "moribund," with little substantive progress. "This circumstance is particularly regrettable because time is on no one's side," he said. "Every day of the status quo is another day for the North Korean regime to produce additional fissile material, and another day that the people of North Korea fall further behind the remarkable economic and social march of the rest of Asia."

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3. DPRK Missile Launch

Chosun Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA 'TEST-FIRES SHORT-RANGE MISSILES' ", 2006-03-09) reported that there is renewed concern over the DPRK's potential to create instability in the region amid reports that Pyongyang fired two short-range missiles on Wednesday. ROK government officials have confirmed the incident, explaining the missiles were aimed toward the East Sea in what was a test by the DPRK to improve its missile capacity. Seoul believes there is no need to attach great significance to the incident as this is not the first time Pyongyang has carried out test launches of ballistic missiles.

[\(return to top\)](#) United Press International ("NORTH KOREA TESTS SOLID-FUEL MISSILES", 2006-03-09) reported that the DPRK test fired at least three short-range ballistic missiles recently, demonstrating a more stable, mobile missile capability, top US officials said Thursday. Army Gen. Burwell Bell, commander of US Forces Korea, told the House Armed Services Committee Thursday the missiles tested this week are far more capable than those demonstrated in earlier tests. "They are in fact a quantum leap forward from missiles in the past," Bell said, noting that the short-range missiles were apparently solid-fuel rockets. He said the solid fuel missiles are more mobile and more

accurate than their liquid-fueled cousins. Solid-propellant missiles are also harder to detect prior to launch they are stable, easily stored and do not require refueling. They also have a smaller logistics support train, needing fewer vehicles and less activity overall to get them ready to fire, depriving the US of telltale signatures of a pending launch. "If they chose to proliferate these they've (shown) they've got a system working pretty well and they've got a buyer out there," Bell told the committee. [\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("NO SECURITY THREAT IN NORTH KOREA MISSILE TEST - ANALYSTS", 2006-03-09) reported that the DPRK's test-firing of two short-range missiles was more about checking performance than rattling sabres during a stalemate in talks on ending Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions, analysts said on Thursday. They said Wednesday's test did not constitute a major threat to stability and if Pyongyang had wanted to send a strong signal it could have wheeled out far bigger missiles. US officials said the missile test proved that the DPRK's nuclear programmes posed a threat to the region, but neighbours the PRC and the ROK were muted in their reactions. "We have taken note of the relevant reports," PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang told a news conference, without commenting further on Pyongyang's move which comes amid a stalemate in six-party talks to dismantle its nuclear programmes. [\(return to top\)](#) Associated Press ("US CALLS NORTH KOREA'S MISSILE PROGRAM A GLOBAL THREAT, AFTER TESTS ", 2006-03-08) reported that the US called the DPRK's missile programs a global "threat" after the nation reportedly test-fired two missiles. Washington also urged Pyongyang to abide by a moratorium on missile tests. "As we have continued to point out, North Korea's missile program and activities are a threat not only to the region, but the international community at large," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack told reporters. The US, he said, "call upon North Korea to abide by the moratorium concerning missile tests." [\(return to top\)](#)

4. DPRK on Counterfeiting

Associated Press ("NO US EVIDENCE ON COUNTERFEITING, SAYS NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMAT", 2006-03-09) reported that the US failed to present evidence to back up allegations of DPRK counterfeiting when US and DPRK officials met in New York this week, a Pyongyang diplomat has been quoted as saying. Ri Gun, the DPRK's top delegate to the meeting on Tuesday, told the Seoul-based newspaper Hankyoreh that he instead had proposed establishing a US-DPRK ad hoc body to tackle the issue. "There was no evidence," Ri, director general of the DPRK's foreign ministry, said in an interview with Hankyoreh conducted in New York. "There were neither comments nor discussions on them," he said, after being asked about the alleged forged dollar bills. He said he proposed to the US side creating a consultative body to "clear and clarify suspicions, if any." "If such a consultative body opens, we can exchange information on financial crimes and prepare countermeasures. If someone prints (bogus notes), we can arrest him, confiscate the machine, paper and ink, and let the US Treasury know about this."

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL TO REVIEW MARITIME BORDER WITH N.KOREA ", 2006-03-09) reported that the ROK government has started reviewing the West Sea Northern Limit Line separating DPRK and ROK waters. The review comes at the renewed prompting of the DPRK in talks between military top brass from the two sides on March 2-3. "We would ignore what the North said if it had just repeated its existing position, but this time the North asked for the NLL to be redrawn on the grounds of the annex agreement in the Inter-Korean Basic Agreement signed in 1992," a high-ranking government official said. So far Pyongyang has simply said it does not recognize the NLL. "As a result, the South Korean government has decided to take another comprehensive look at the issue to see whether the NLL can be redrawn taking international laws and the armistice agreement

into account, and whether there are any better alternatives.”

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6. Inter-Korean Cooperation

Yonhap News ("TWO KOREAS EXCHANGE LISTS FOR FAMILY REUNIONS", 2006-03-09) reported that the ROK and DPRK on Thursday exchanged lists of names for a fresh round of family reunions for people divided across the entrenched land border, according to the ROK's Red Cross. "One hundred people from South Korea will be reunited with their relatives from the North on March 20-22, while the same number from North Korea will be reunited with their relatives in the South on March 23-25," the Red Cross said in a statement.

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7. US on DPRK-PRC Military Relations

Yonhap News ("U.S. WILL DISCOURAGE CHINA-N.K. MILITARY COOPERATION: GEN. BELL", 2006-03-09) reported that the US will discourage the PRC from increasing its currently low-level military cooperation with the DPRK, a US commander said Thursday. Gen. Burwell Bell, head of US Forces Korea (USFK), testified that military exercises between the two Asian ideological allies are rare and that there are no indications of major weapons sales or exchanges of military personnel. "Although they do share in a friendship treaty, the amount of military support that the People's Republic of China provides to North Korea is minimal," the general told the House Armed Services Committee. "I would encourage, as I continue to work with the Chinese, all the methodologies to make sure it stays that way," Bell said.

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8. Cambodian King to Visit DPRK

Yonhap News ("CAMBODIA'S KING TO VISIT FATHER IN N. KOREA IN MAY", 2006-03-09) reported that Cambodia's King Norodom Sihamoni's planned visit to the DPRK is aimed at meeting his father, according to Cambodian diplomatic sources Thursday. Sihamoni plans to make a trip to the DPRK in May. He took over the royal throne in October 2004 after the surprise abdication of his father, Norodom Sihanouk

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9. Indonesian Terrorism Drill

The China Post ("INDONESIAN NAVY HOLDS ANTI-TERROR EXERCISE", 2006-03-09) reported that Indonesian marines launched an anti terrorism drill in the Straits of Malacca, storming a ship to free hundreds of passengers held hostage by men posing as Islamic militants.

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10. Trilateral Military Cooperation

The Japan Times ("U.S. EYES 'TRILATERAL' MILITARY COOPERATION", 2006-03-09) reported that the US plans to launch "trilateral military cooperation" with Japan and the ROK to deal not only with

the DPRK but also with the PRC and terrorist threats in Asia, according to Adm. William Fallon, head of the US Pacific Command.

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11. PRC-Russia Relations

Xinhua ("PUTIN'S CHINA VISIT HIGHLIGHTS PRAGMATIC CO-OP", 2006-03-09) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin will pay a state visit to the PRC from March 21 to 22, a visit which analysts say will facilitate the pragmatic comprehensive cooperation, including energy cooperation, between the two countries.

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12. PRC Bird Flu

Xinhua ("S. CHINA PROVINCE VOWS TO VACCINATE ALL POULTRY TO PREVENT NEW BIRDFLU", 2006-03-09) reported that Guangdong province pledged to vaccinate all its poultry to prevent new bird flu outbreaks, according to the provincial work meeting on prevention and control of the virus.

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13. PRC Intellectual Property Rights

The International Herald Tribune ("CHINA SETS NEW LAWS TO COMBAT PIRACY", 2006-03-09) reported that the PRC said that it would introduce a raft of new laws and regulations this year to help stem rampant violations of intellectual property rights.

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14. PRC Human Rights

The International Herald Tribune ("CHINA SEES 'HYPOCRISY' IN U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT", 2006-03-09) reported that the PRC criticized the human rights record of the United States, arguing that racial discrimination remains pervasive and that the American military abused prisoners held at detention centers abroad. The PRC's State Council, or cabinet, said the US government should concentrate on improving its own rights record.

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15. Japanese Economy

The International Herald Tribune ("READINESS TO INCREASE RATES AGAIN IN JAPAN", 2006-0-09) reported that the Bank of Japan decided to end one of the most unusual financial experiments in recent history: a supereasy monetary policy adopted five years ago as an emergency measure to resuscitate Japan's then-moribund \$4.6 trillion economy, and in essence announcing that the decade long financial crisis is over.

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16. Japan on UN Financial Contributions

Crisscross News ("ASO URGES CHINA, RUSSIA TO PUT UP 5% OF U.N. BUDGET", 2006-03-09) reported that Foreign Minister Taro Aso told a news conference that there are two countries, the PRC and Russia, among the Security Council's permanent members that do not even contribute 5% of the UN budget. If the two countries give at least 5%, Japan will maintain its current 19.5% contribution to the UN.

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17. Japan on UN Fishing Agreement

Crisscross News ("JAPAN TO RATIFY U.N. AGREEMENT TO PROTECT MIGRATORY FISH", 2006-03-09) reported that Japan has decided to ratify the 1995 U.N. Fish Stocks Agreement that aims to protect tuna, bonito and other types of migratory fish that primarily live in the high seas. U.N. member states agreed on the pact in 1995. Japan signed it in 1996 but has not ratified it in decade since then.

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18. Japanese Ballistic Missile Defense

Xinhua ("JAPAN-U.S. INTERCEPTOR TEST SUCCESSFUL", 2006-03-09) reported that Japan and the US successfully carried out their first test of a jointly developed ballistic missile defense system. This is also the first joint test for the upgraded version of the Standard Missile-3 interceptor tipped with an innovative nosecone made in Japan.

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19. Japan on Cross Strait Relations

BBC News ("JAPAN-CHINA ROW TURNS TO TAIWAN ", 2006-03-09) reported that the PRC has denounced a comment by Japan's Foreign Minister Taro Aso after he called Taiwan "a country".

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20. Cross Strait Relations

Xinhua ("MAINLAND ACTORS DENIED TAIWAN ENTRY FOR "SECURITY" FACTORS", 2006-03-09) reported that two PRC mainland actors have been denied entry by the Taiwan authorities for "security" reasons, while a local TV station in Taipei began screening their drama serial "Young Emperor Jiaqing."

[\(return to top\)](#) The China Post ("LEADING CHINA ECONOMIST SAYS TRADE WAR CAN BREAK TAIWAN", 2006-03-09) reported that the PRC can force Taiwan to its knees in a week with a massive trade war in the event the self-ruled island formally declares statehood. The scenario painted by economist Hu An'gang was a grim reminder of the island's ever increasing economic reliance on its giant neighbor. [\(return to top\)](#) Xinhua ("NPC DEPUTIES CONDEMN TAIWAN AUTHORITIES FOR NEW PROVOCATION", 2006-03-09) reported that deputies to the National People's Congress, who have Taiwan backgrounds and represent the island province, expressed indignation and condemnation against Taiwan authorities' recent decision to designate March 14 as Taiwan's "anti-

aggression day." [\(return to top\)](#) The China Post ("'ANTI-AGGRESSION DAY' PROCLAIMED FOR MARCH 14", 2006-03-09) reported that Premier Su Tseng-chang approved a request by the Mainland Affairs Council to proclaim March 14 as "Anti-Aggression Day". It will be a national memorial day. [\(return to top\)](#)

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