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I. United States

1. DPRK on Reactor Shutdown

U.S. News & World Report ("NORTH KOREANS SEND A SIGNAL: WE'LL WAIT TILL BUSH IS GONE", 2005-04-19) reported that Senior DPRK officials in Pyongyang have told a visiting American scholar that later this month they will begin unloading 8,000 nuclear fuel rods--a first step toward extracting their plutonium--from the reactor at Yongbyon, unless Washington agrees to their terms for a freeze in their nuclear programs. Selig Harrison, director of the Asia Program at the Center for International Policy in Washington, told US News the new DPRK position takes dismantling of nuclear facilities "off the table." Harrison's interpretation of the latest position: "They basically have given up on this administration . . . they're going to wait it out for another administration."

[\(return to top\)](#) Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREA CONFIRMS SHUTTING DOWN REACTOR FOR NUKES", 2005-04-19) reported that the DPRK has confirmed it shut down a nuclear reactor and plans to reprocess the spent fuel rods for nuclear warheads, USA Today reported. The daily quoted the country's deputy ambassador to the UN Han Sang-ryol, as saying Pyongyang was taking the step to "increase its deterrent against a possible US attack." "The ball is in the US court," Han said according to the paper's online edition. "We asked the United States to change its hostile policy. Then we can believe the United States and enter the disarmament process." [\(return to top\)](#)

2. ROK on DPRK Reactor Shutdown

Korea Times ("PURPOSE OF NK REACTOR SHUTDOWN UNCLEAR: FM", 2005-04-19) reported that the ROK's top diplomatic official said Tuesday it is difficult at present to verify the reason why the DPRK suspended operation of its key nuclear reactor, whose spent fuel rods could be used to extract plutonium for atomic bombs. "For now, it is difficult to confirm whether the North halted the reactor to unload spent fuel rods or for technical reasons," Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki-moon said at a session of the National Assembly's Unification - Foreign Affairs and Trade Committee.

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3. US on DPRK Reactor Shutdown

Bloomberg ("N. KOREA NUCLEAR REPROCESSING DELAYS TALKS, U.S. SAYS", 2005-04-19) reported that the DPRK's reprocessing of plutonium at its Yongbyon plant will only delay the chances of restarting six-nation talks on dismantling the country's nuclear program, the US State Department said. "Running reactors or not running reactors, reprocessing or not reprocessing, is not going to get North Korea to a solution to its troubles," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said yesterday at a briefing in the US, according to an e- mailed transcript.

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4. US on UNSC Sanctions on the DPRK

Reuters ("U.S. WILL CONSIDER U.N. IF N. KOREA REFUSES TALKS", 2005-04-19) reported that the White House said on Monday it would consider taking the DPRK to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions if Pyongyang refuses to return to six-party talks on its nuclear program. "If North Korea refuses to come back to the six-party talks then I fully expect we would consult with our partners in the region about the next steps, and that's certainly one possibility," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.

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5. ROK on UNSC Sanctions on the DPRK

BBC News ("SEOUL PLAYS DOWN THREAT TO NORTH", 2005-04-19) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon said that efforts to resolve the impasse still rested with six-party negotiations. His remarks came shortly after the US said that it would consider taking the matter to the Security Council if the DPRK continued to refuse talks. White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the administration would discuss taking the issue to the UN Security Council. But referring to Mr McClellan's comments, Mr Ban said on Tuesday: "There has not been discussion about that at the South Korea-US government level."

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6. US-ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Wall Street Journal ("US AND SEOUL DEBATE PYONGYANG'S NEXT STEP; REACTOR SHUTDOWN COMES AMID AGGRAVATED TENSIONS WITHIN DISARMAMENT CAMP", 2005-04-19) reported that if the DPRK is indeed moving ahead with what it describes as plans to enlarge its atomic arsenal, it could be a serious test for the US and the coalition of four other countries it has assembled to push the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear programs, at a time when ties among them are unusually strained. The US has been looking to isolate the DPRK and ratchet up the economic pressure. But the ROK, PRC and Russia are very reluctant to consider such steps and have been widening economic and other contacts with the DPRK. "US policy is essentially nowhere," says Joel Wit, a DPRK expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "The US won't negotiate," he says, "so there's no chance of a diplomatic settlement. And there's no chance of punishing [the DPRK] either because the other countries won't support the US."

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7. US on US-ROK OPLAN 5029

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. MILITARY WILLING TO INTERVENE IN CASE OF INTERNAL TURMOIL IN N.K.", 2005-04-19) reported that the US military has hinted its willingness to intervene in case of an emergency in the DPRK resulting from internal turmoil including the collapse of the DPRK. Officials say it will dispatch the US 7th Fleet, the biggest naval force stationed in Japan, in case of emergency. The possible US action is likely to spark controversy because it implies that Washington is planning its own military strategies regardless of Seoul's plan.

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8. ROK on US-ROK OPLAN 5029

Korea Times ("UNILATERAL US ACTION AGAINST NK DISMISSED", 2005-04-19) reported that the Defense Ministry said that it is impossible for the US to conduct a military contingency plan in case of instability in the DPRK without the ROK's consent. Ministry spokesman Shin Hyun-don said a top US Navy officer's recent remarks, which hinted at the possibility of unilateral actions in case of an emergency in the DPRK are "meaningless" as the relevant joint contingency plan, codenamed "5029-05," has been suspended. "Since the draft plan was suspended at the request of the Seoul government, it would be impossible for Washington to pursue it in a unilateral manner."

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9. US-ROK Relations

Korea Herald ("KOREA, U.S. MILITARY TIES IN TRANSITION", 2005-04-19) reported that recent disparities in military affairs between the ROK and the US ranging over cost-sharing, personnel and military operations mirror signs of a rift in the longtime alliance. Speculation about the alliance has mounted since the events all occurred within a short timeframe in line with President Roh Moo-hyun's diplomatic and military policy objective for the ROK to become a "balancer" in Northeast Asia and be less dependent on the US. "There are some points where the alliance has soured, but when seen from a broader perspective, the bilateral relationship is undergoing a transformation in accordance with enhanced inter-Korean ties and the end of the Cold War," said professor Kim Keun-sik at the Institute for Far Eastern Studies at Kyungnam University.

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10. ROK Foreign Policy

Joongang Ilbo ("FOREIGN MINISTRY TRIES TO UNTIE ROH'S KNOTS", 2005-04-19) reported that the ROK's Foreign Ministry is currently playing defense on three dicey issues: handling the stalemated six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear arms, trying to explain what the country's newly proclaimed "balancing role" actually means, and deciphering what President Roh Moo-hyun meant when he said this week in Turkey that some Koreans were too "pro-American."

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11. EU on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Korea Times ("EU PUSHES NEW STANCE ON NK NUKES", 2005-04-19) reported that the European Union is pushing a new, independent approach to resolving the DPRK nuclear issue as the US-led six-party negotiations appear to be gradually disintegrating, according to experts linked to the move. Glyn Ford, a member of the European Parliament, and Kwon So-young, a Stanford University expert, said in a research paper that Europe is "fed-up and concerned with the failure to resolve the ongoing crisis in North Korea." The European Parliament has "broken ranks" with the US negotiating line, presenting its own resolution for dealing with Pyongyang's nuclear programs, they said. The resolution called for the resumption of shipments of heavy fuel oil to the DPRK in exchange for a verifiable freeze of its Yongbyong nuclear reactor. It also recommended the European Commission offer to pay for the oil supply.

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12. Indonesia and Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Times ("MEGAWATI STIRS INTER-KOREAN SPECULATION", 2005-04-19) reported that a news report claiming that former Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri plans to pass on an important message from DPRK leader Kim Jong-il to President Roh Moo-hyun was dismissed as speculation. Kim Su-il, a Pusan University of Foreign Studies professor quoted in the Chosun Ilbo report, said the newspaper's conclusion that Megawati is acting as an inter-Korean mediator is guesswork. "The story was based on speculation by the journalist," Kim, an honorary consul of Indonesia in Pusan, told The Korea Times.

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13. Inter-Korean Infrastructure

Korea Times ("CHUNG HOPES CROSS-BORDER RAILWAY AVAILABLE BY 2008", 2005-04-19) reported that Unification Minister Chung Dong-young said that the government will try to make it possible for ROK citizens to travel by train to Beijing for the 2008 Summer Olympics. During an interpellation session at the Unification, Foreign Affairs and Trade Committee of the National Assembly, Chung said that commuting between Seoul and Beijing via the DPRK has no "technical" problems. The ROK finished construction works in the southern part of the Kyongui line and is currently helping the DPRK construct or repair the station buildings along the railway in the northern part. Another construction project for Tonghae Railroad on the east coast is also near completion.

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14. DPRK Intellectual Property Rights

Korea Times ("SEOUL PROTECTS NK COPYRIGHTS", 2005-04-19) reported that the ROK has agreed to protect the copyrights of DPRK books and music, following the DPRK's request, the Unification Ministry said. Both the copyright holder's acknowledgement and the Pyongyang authorities' approval are required to sell DPRK literary and artistic works in the ROK, Ko Gyoung-bin, director of the ministry's Social and Cultural Exchanges Bureau, told reporters.

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15. DPRK at Asia-Africa Summit

Agence France Presse ("N KOREAN DELEGATION HEADS FOR ASIA-AFRICA SUMMIT", 2005-0-19) reported that a delegation headed by the DPRK's number two leader left Pyongyang to take part in the Asia-Africa summit in Indonesia this week, Pyongyang's official media said. The group was led by Kim Yong-Nam, nominal head of state and president of the Presidium of DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly, the DPRK's parliament. About 50 heads of state are expected to converge on Jakarta and the nearby city of Bandung for the April 22 to 23 gathering.

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16. ROK on Maritime Border Violation

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA'S NAVY DENIES ENTERING NORTH KOREAN WATERS",

2005-04-19) reported that the ROK's military denied DPRK charges that it sent warships across their disputed western sea border, and accused the DPRK of increasing tensions. "We cannot understand the ridiculous allegations that the North has been making," the ROK navy said in a statement. "We expect sensible actions by the North's navy."

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17. ROK Maritime Border Security

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA TO PUSH MARITIME SATELLITE PLAN", 2005-04-19) reported that the ROK will embark on a plan this month to develop a maritime observation satellite capable of providing data on waters surrounding the Korean Peninsula, the government said. The envisioned geostationary satellite will be jointly designed and constructed by the Korea Aerospace Research Institute, the Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute and Astrium, a French satellite maker, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries said. The proposed satellite's would cover a 2,500-by-2,500 kilometer footprint surrounding the ROK and parts of the South China Sea.

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18. DPRK Pharmaceuticals

Financial Times ("PYONGYANG'S PEP PILL", 2005-04-19) reported that the DPRK claims to have developed a drug that not only cures impotence but also obesity, liver diseases, arteriosclerosis and joint pains. Kim Jong-il's regime is already rumored to be propping up its beleaguered finances by exporting fake Viagra pills to the ROK. But the April issue of Pyongyang's Chosun magazine boasts about Neo Viagra-YR. The YR was not spelt out but the Korean phrase chongchunbuhwal suggests it stands for "youth revival".

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19. ROK-Japan Relations

Financial Times ("SOUTH KOREANS FEEL JAPAN IS TOP THREAT ", 2005-04-19) reported that the ROKoreans fear Japan more than the US or even the DPRK, according to a survey that underlines the extent to which relations between the former colonial master and its subject have soured in recent months. More than 37 per cent of the 800 Koreans surveyed by Research and Research last week said they felt Japan posed the greatest threat to the ROK. DPRK was considered the second biggest threat with 28.6 per cent, followed by the US with 18.5 per cent and the PRC with 11.9 per cent.

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20. ROK, Japan on Textbook Issue

Joongang Ilbo ("KOREA, JAPAN PRODUCE JOINT TEXTBOOK ", 2005-04-19) reported that teachers from the ROK and Japan have succeeded in publishing an auxiliary history textbook ? albeit one that does not cover the 20th century. ROK teachers belonging to the national teachers union's Daegu chapter and Japanese teachers belonging to the Hiroshima prefecture's teachers association jointly started the project four years ago. Hangilsa is the ROK publisher; Akashi Bookstore is the Japanese publisher. At press conferences in both Seoul and Tokyo, the teachers hailed the auxiliary textbook as the first step between the two countries to overcome prevailing mistrust.

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21. Sino-Japanese Relations

Washington Post ("JAPANESE OFFICIAL'S TRIP TO CHINA FAILS TO BREAK POLITICAL DEADLOCK", 2005-04-19) reported that a two-day fence-mending visit by the Japanese foreign minister ended Monday with no sign the PRC and Japan are prepared to back away from the political and territorial disputes that have pushed their relations to a postwar low. "I don't know the reason why we would have to change our policies with regard to China," said Hatsuhisa Takashima, a spokesman for Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura. The PRC's deputy foreign minister Wu Dawei told reporters the crisis could be resolved only when Japan deals frankly with atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers in China during World War II.

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22. US on Sino-Japanese Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun ("SCHIEFFER CALLS FOR JAPAN, CHINA TO END TENSIONS", 2005-04-19) reported that US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer expressed concern over recent anti-Japanese demonstrations in the PRC, but he hoped the two countries would be able to resolve the issue themselves. "We're concerned about recent tensions," Schieffer said at a press conference at the US Embassy in Tokyo on Monday. "The United States doesn't want tension between Japan and China," Schieffer said. "We want to have an Asia in which everyone gets along, an Asia in which democracy and the values that Japan and the United States have embraced will be allowed to work their magic."

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23. Japan on Sino-Japanese Relations

The Associated Press ("JAPAN SHRINE PLAN FUELS FEUD WITH CHINA", 2005-04-19) reported that inflaming already tense relations with the PRC, Japanese lawmakers said they plan to visit a shrine that critics say glorifies Japan's militarist past, and a Tokyo court ruled against PRC victims of wartime atrocities. Nationalist lawmakers, headed by a former defense minister, announced plans to visit the Yasukuni Shrine, which honors Japan's 2.5 million war dead, an aide to lawmaker Yasu Kano said on condition of anonymity. Also Tuesday, the Tokyo High Court rejected demands to compensate PRC victims of atrocities committed by Japan's military in the 1930s and '40s, including the use of biological weapons, which historians estimate killed as many as 250,000 people.

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24. PRC on Sino-Japanese Relations

Reuters ("CHINA MAKES GESTURE TO JAPAN, BUT KEEPS UP HEAT", 2005-04-19) reported that the PRC offered to repair damage by protesters to Japan's embassy in Beijing but kept up the pressure in a diplomatic row on Tuesday, saying Japan needed to show its sincerity to reverse a downward spiral in relations. Protesters smashed more than 20 windows at Japan's embassy in Beijing as thousands of demonstrators converged on it on April 9, an embassy spokesman said, adding that a company under the PRC's Foreign Ministry had offered to do the repair work. "They offered to fix the damage" to the embassy office building, he said. "My colleagues in Tokyo are thinking of how to respond to this offer."

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25. PRC Energy Shortage

The New York Times ("THE GREAT ENGINE OF CHINA IS LOW ON FUEL", 2005-04-19) reported that service stations across the PRC are starting to run short on diesel this spring, while electricity blackouts here in southeastern PRC are growing worse as power stations cut back on purchases of fuel oil. The diesel and power shortages have one thing in common: they are largely the result of the clash between the PRC's Communist past and its increasingly capitalist present. The government has set retail prices too low for diesel and electricity. So businesses, facing high world oil prices, are supplying less of both.

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26. PRC Intellectual Property Law

Los Angeles Times ("U.S. CITIZENS SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR DVD PIRACY", 2005-04-19) reported that a court in Shanghai has sentenced two US citizens to prison for selling pirated DVDs online. Randolph Hobson Guthrie, 38, was ordered to serve a two-year, six-month prison sentence and pay a \$60,500 fine. Abram Cody Thrush, convicted as an accessory, was sentenced to one year in prison and fined \$1,200.

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