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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Visit to BDA

UPI ("N. KOREA'S MACAO FUNDS", 2007-04-24) reported that DPRK officials have visited the Banco Delta Asia, seeking ways to transfer their deposits, worth \$25 million, to other banks in Asia. DPRK officials, mostly from Zhuhai, the PRC's special economic area bordering Macao, have

traveled to the former Portuguese enclave to meet BDA officials to resolve the financial issue, they said. If the DPR Koreans successfully move the controversial funds to other banks, they say they will carry through with their nuclear obligations under the Feb. 13 agreement as promised. It would take more than a month for the transfer of all 52 accounts to be completed.

2. US-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("U.S. TO KEEP N. KOREA ON LIST OF TERRORISM-SPONSORING COUNTRIES: SOURCES", 2007-04-24) reported that the US will likely continue to designate the DPRK as a state sponsor of terrorism this year despite efforts to improve bilateral ties underway. The North was designated as a supporter of terrorism for the first time in January 1988, right after the bombing of a Korean Air jet by North Korean terrorists the previous year. Since 1987, the communist country is not known to have committed terrorist acts. According to the report, North Korea continues to sell ballistic missile technology to countries designated by the U.S. as state sponsors of terrorism, including Syria and Libya.

3. ROK Aid to DPRK

Yonhap ("SEOUL TO LINK AID TO SHUTDOWN OF NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR REACTOR: MINISTER", 2007-04-23) reported that the ROK told the DPRK it is important that it start shutting down its key nuclear facilities as agreed in the six-nation talks in February before Seoul resumes rice aid shipments. The remarks by Unification Minister Lee Jae-joung came one day after Seoul agreed to give 400,000 tons of rice to Pyongyang in bilateral economic talks that ended in Pyongyang on Sunday.

4. Foreign Investment in Kaesong

Yonhap ("S. KOREA TO INVITE U.S. COMPANIES TO IR MEETING IN KAESONG", 2007-04-24) reported that the ROK government said it plans to invite U.S. companies to an investor relations (IR) gathering at the Kaesong industrial complex in the DPRK this year. The event, planned for October, will permit American businessmen to see firsthand the growth of the industrial park that is being built with ROK capital, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy said.

5. UNDP Audit of DPRK Ops

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA ASKS U.N. DEVELOPMENT AGENCY TO WITHDRAW TWO REMAINING STAFF MEMBERS", 2007-04-24) reported that the DPRK requested the U.N. Development Agency to withdraw its two remaining staff members but the UNDP had already planned to recall them. They will leave Pyongyang on May 3. The agency suspended operations on March 1 because the DPRK failed to meet conditions set by its board following U.S. allegations that U.N. aid money was being diverted to Kim Jong Il's regime. It withdrew seven of its nine international staff in mid-March. In late March, UNDP announced that U.N. and U.S. authorities are investigating how \$3,500 in suspected counterfeit \$100 bills ended up sitting in a safe in the UNDP office in the DPRK for 12 years.

6. ROK-PRC Military Relations

Yonhap ("S. KOREA, CHINA TO STAGE JOINT NAVAL TRAINING", 2007-04-24) reported that the ROK and PRC agreed to push for their first joint naval rescue drills in September off the coast of Shanghai, defense officials said. The ministers also agreed to consider joint rescue drills in September, when a ROK vessel carrying naval cadets is to visit Shanghai on a training mission, the official added.

7. US-Japan Air Drills

Japan Today ("JAPAN, U.S. TO HOLD 1ST JOINT DRILLS USING F-22A FIGHTERS", 2007-04-24) reported that the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force and the U.S. Air Force will hold this week their first joint exercise involving F-22A stealth fighters temporarily deployed at the U.S. Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, the Defense Ministry said. The exercise will involve 10 to 18 fighters, including F-4, F-15 and F-22A aircraft, and is aimed at improving the interoperability of the ASDF and the U.S. Air Force.

8. Japan MSDF Mission

Xinhua ("JAPAN FURTHER EXTENDS MSDF MISSION IN INDIAN OCEAN", 2007-04-24) reported that the Japanese government decided to further extend the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF)'s mission in the Indian Ocean to refuel US-led coalition forces by another six months to Nov. 1. The decision of the six-month extension, the 11th of its kind, was made on a Cabinet meeting.

9. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN SAYS IT WOULD WIN WAR WITH CHINA", 2007-04-24) reported that a computer simulation projected that the PRC could land forces on rival Taiwan, but they would be repulsed after two weeks of fierce fighting and harsh losses to both sides, Taiwan's military said. The complex simulation involved a scenario of the PRC invading the island, 100 miles off its coast, in 2012. The computer simulation envisioned no role for the US in the fighting, Hsu said, despite American hints that Washington would come to Taiwan's aid if the PRC attacks.

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN CANDIDATES LOSE HARDLINE APPROACH", 2007-04-24) reported that as Chen Shui-bian's term as president of Taiwan winds down, so does the island's long-held and vehement insistence that it is independent from the PRC. Improved relations with the PRC have long been advocated by Taiwan's main opposition Nationalist Party, which favors eventual unification. But in a potentially crucial shift, the two leading presidential candidates from Chen's own Democratic Progressive Party — Premier Su Tseng-chang and ex-Premier Frank Hsieh — seem to be dropping pro-independence rhetoric and pushing instead for warmer ties.

10. Sino-Indian Territorial Dispute

Agence France-Presse ("INDIA SAYS BORDER TALKS WITH CHINA "FRIENDLY, CONSTRUCTIVE"", 2007-04-24) reported that India has said that talks to resolve a longstanding border dispute with giant northern neighbour the PRC were "friendly" and "constructive" and would be continued at a later date. The next round of talks would be held in the PRC "at a mutually convenient time," the statement added, without indicating whether differences on their border had been narrowed.

11. PRC Transparency

The Associated Press ("CHINESE OFFICIALS TO RELEASE INFORMATION", 2007-04-24) reported that the PRC's government said it has approved rules boosting official transparency but added that state secrets have to be safeguarded and social stability preserved. The decree ordered government bodies to be more open in giving out information, according to the State Council. The regulations say government departments are required to give out information of interest to the public and to explain administrative procedures. That included "government purchases, budgets and expenses, results of investigations into environmental protection, public health and food and drug safety."

12. PRC Internet Regulations

Reuters ("CHINA AIMS TO FURTHER TAME WEB", 2007-04-24) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao on Monday launched a campaign to rid the country's sprawling Internet of "unhealthy" content and make it a springboard for Communist Party doctrine, state television reported. With Hu presiding, the Communist Party Politburo discussed cleaning up the Internet, state television reported. The meeting promised to place the often unruly medium more firmly under propaganda controls.

13. PRC Environment

The Associated Press ("REPORT: CHINA WILL PASS U.S. AS POLLUTER ", 2007-04-24) reported that the PRC will pass the US as the world's biggest source of greenhouse gasses this year, an official with the International Energy Agency was quoted as saying. The PRC had been forecast to surpass the US in 2010, but its sizzling economic growth has pushed the date forward, the IEA's chief economist, Fatih Birol, was quoted as saying.

The Financial Times ("CHINA DELAYS CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN INDEFINITELY", 2007-04-24) reported that the PRC has delayed indefinitely its national "action plan" on climate change, which was due to be released on Monday after exhaustive consultations among ministries in Beijing and provincial and local governments. No explanation was given for the move, although global warming is causing increasing international concern about the country's high-speed economic growth model. The PRC has delayed the long-awaited release of its policy response to climate change, an issue that is increasingly focusing international attention on the country's high-speed economic growth model.

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Nautilus Institute

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

nautilus@nautilus.org