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I. United States

1. DPRK on Nuclear Talks

Xinhua ("DPRK DEMANDS US JUSTIFICATION FOR RETURN TO TALKS", 2005-04-26) reported that the DPRK on Monday defied the US threat to take the nuclear issue to the United Nations, demanding justification for its return to the six-party talks. "What matters is that there are still no conditions and justification for the DPRK to participate in the six-party talks," said a spokesman of the DPRK's Foreign Ministry, clearly in response to recent remarks by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. "If the US is really interested in the resumption of the talks, it should provide the DPRK with conditions and justification to return to the talks," the spokesman said.

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks, Nuclear Test

JoongAng Ilbo ("BAN WARNS NORTH AGAINST NUCLEAR TEST", 2005-04-26) reported that the ROK's foreign minister, Ban Ki-moon, warned the DPRK against conducting a nuclear test and said it should end efforts to exact apologies from US for calling the DPRK "an outpost of tyranny." "Conducting a nuclear test would not be recommended for North Korea's future," Mr. Ban said at a seminar sponsored by the JoongAng Ilbo. "I must warn that to do so would lead the North on a wrong path, and it would be an error of judgment." "North Korea is still demanding an apology for the 'outpost of tyranny' remark, and I think that is a very unrealistic demand," said Mr. Ban.

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3. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks, UN Sanctions

The Associated Press ("RICE: U.S. COULD ENLIST U.N. ON N. KOREA", 2005-04-26) reported that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Monday night the US reserves the right to seek UN Security Council action on the DPRK but remains committed for the time being to seeking a negotiated end to the country's nuclear weapons program. "We still believe there is a lot to be done within the six-party framework," Rice said, alluding to disarmament negotiations that began almost two years ago.

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("U.S. PLAYS DOWN TALK OF NORTH KOREA QUARANTINE", 2005-04-26) reported that US officials played down a report that the administration might seek a UN resolution empowering nations to intercept shipments in and out of the DPRK that may contain nuclear-related materials. While acknowledging there may be some discussion of such a move, they said no proposal has been presented to senior policymakers, nor was there a decision to formally bring the issue of the DPRK's nuclear programs to the UN Security Council. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told reporters traveling with her to Latin America that the United States' main way of dealing with the DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons was through six-party talks. But she said: "We reserve the right to go to the UN Security Council at any time." [\(return to top\)](#)

4. US-ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Kyodo News ("SENIOR S. KOREAN NATIONAL SECURITY OFFICIAL LEAVES FOR U.S.", 2005-0-26) reported that a senior ROK national security official left for the US for talks with officials on ways to resolve the impasse over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. During a three-day visit, Lee Jong Seok, deputy chief of the National Security Council, will meet with US National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley, the council said. Lee's talks with US officials are also expected to cover recent revelations that the DPRK has stopped the operation of a nuclear reactor in an apparent attempt to harvest plutonium from spent fuel rods for nuclear weapons.

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5. US-PRC on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Xinhua ("CHINA WELCOMES US NUCLEAR ENVOY'S VISIT, FM SPOKESMAN SAYS", 2005-04-26) reported that the PRC welcomes US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill's visit and is ready to exchange views with him on the Korean peninsula nuclear issue and PRC-US relations, a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman said. Spokesman Qin Gang said the PRC's Vice-Foreign Ministers Dai Bingguo, Yang Jiechi and Wu Dawei will meet or hold talks with Hill separately. "We believe it is helpful for China and the United States to improve exchange and communication," he said.

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6. PRC on UN Sanctions on the DPRK

Bloomberg ("CHINA SAYS UN ACTION ON N. KOREA WOULD `DESTROY' 6-PARTY TALKS", 2005-04-26) reported that the PRC's ambassador to the UN said any US effort to get the Security Council to impose sanctions on the DPRK over its development of nuclear weapons would "destroy" the six-party talks on the issue. This is the PRC's first direct response to White House spokesman Scott McClellan's statement on April 18 that raising the DPRK's nuclear program with the Security Council was "certainly" a possibility. "This would destroy the whole process," PRC Ambassador Wang Guangya told reporters at the UN. "It would make a solution for this issue even farther away. We are working with the other parties to have the talks resume as soon as possible. I hope others will come to agree with this."

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7. Sino-DPRK Trade Relations

Asia in Focus ("CHINA-NORTH KOREA TRADE LEAPS 49 PCT IN FIRST TWO MONTHS", 2005-0-26) reported that trade volume between the DPRK and PRC has risen to US\$156 million in the first two months of this year. This represents an on-year surge of 49 per cent. The jump was underlined by the DPRK's higher imports of crude oil and raw materials such as coal and iron ore. The DPRK imported \$107 million worth of goods from the PRC, while exporting \$49 million in steel.

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8. Kim Dae-jung on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Korea Times ("EX-PRESIDENT URGES US TO REWARD N. KOREA", 2005-04-26) reported that

former ROK President Kim Dae-jung urged the US on Monday to show "more flexibility" to offer the DPRK "concrete benefits" in return for the dismantlement of all nuclear weapons programs. In an address to the Asia Foundation in San Francisco, Kim suggested that the DPRK commit itself to a verifiable denuclearization and that the US, at the same time, give security assurances and ease the economic sanctions imposed on the impoverished DPRK. While staying in the US until April 30, Kim will also give lectures at the University of San Francisco and Stanford University, and meet other dignitaries there.

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9. DPRK-Russian Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("KIM JONG-IL SNUBS RUSSIAN WWII VICTORY PARTY", 2005-04-26) reported that the DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has reportedly told Russia he will not attend a May 9 celebration in Moscow of the 60th anniversary of the Russian victory in World War II, dashing hopes of a top-level inter-Korean summit on the sidelines. "Kim did not officially tell us by the April 25 deadline whether he would attend," an official with the planning team said, but added, "unofficially, he's informed us he won't come."

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10. Norway-DPRK Relations

Yonhap news ("NORWEGIANS LEAVE PYONGYANG AFTER TALKS OVER NUKE DISPUTE: REPORT", 2005-04-26) reported that a Norwegian delegation left Pyongyang after discussions over bilateral issues and the dispute on the DPRK's nuclear weapons program, the country's state-run radio station said. The delegation from Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led by deputy minister Vidar Helgesen, who also serves as state secretary, met DPRK foreign ministry officials, the Korean Central Broadcasting Station said. The meetings dealt with the development of relations between the two countries and the conflict between the DPRK and the US over the former's nuclear weapons program, said KCBS, without providing details.

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11. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Times ("2 KOREAS MEET FOR JUNE 15 FESTIVITIES", 2005-04-26) reported that civic leaders from the DPRK and ROK will meet at the DPRK's Mt. Kumgang on Tuesday to discuss details on their preparations for joint events marking the fifth anniversary of the historic June 2000 inter-Korean summit. ROK officials in the preparatory committee for the joint celebration said Monday that they would meet with their DPRK counterparts from April 26-28 to work on detailed plans and schedules for the events that will be held in Pyongyang.

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12. DPRK on ROK Military

Yonhap news ("PYONGYANG BLAMES SEOUL FOR SELF-DEFENSE PLAN", 2005-04-26) reported that the DPRK took the offensive against the ROK on Tuesday, denouncing the latter's move to develop its self-defense capabilities as a form of military empowerment aimed at invading the DPRK. The statement by the DPRK's Korean Central Broadcasting Station (KCBS) was issued after Seoul

announced its determination earlier this month to promote its self-defense system and become less dependent on US troops stationed in the country.

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13. Food Aid to the DPRK

Chosun Ilbo/Arirang TV ("N. KOREA DESPERATELY IN NEED OF FOOD AID: WFP", 2005-04-26) reported that the DPRK reportedly faces a looming food crisis. The UN World Food Programme has warned that the DPRK will face serious food shortages if supplies don't reach the country soon. Aggravating the DPRK's persistent food shortage this time is the country's traditional lean season, when crops are being planted. During the last few months, nearly 1 million elderly citizens and 600,000 children in the DPRK have stopped receiving cooking oil rations. Should the amount of international food donations continue to drop, another 2.5 million North Koreans are expected to see their rations cut as early as June.

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14. ROK on DPRK Defectors

Joongang Ilbo ("BILL ALLOWS DEFECTORS DIVORCE IN ABSENTIA", 2005-04-26) reported that the Ministry of Unification said yesterday it has drawn up a bill to allow DPRK defectors to seek divorces from spouses still in their homeland. According to the draft legislation, DPRK defectors would become eligible to file for divorce with the Seoul Family Court three years after establishing ROK family registration. For the court to grant divorces in absentia, defectors would be required to present documents confirming that their spouses are still in the DPRK, though their whereabouts may be unknown at the time of filing.

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15. Abductee Issue

Jiji Press ("JAPAN TO RECOGNIZE NEW CASE OF ABDUCTION TO N. KOREA", 2005-04-26) reported that the Japanese government is to recognize a new case of abduction to the DPRK, more than a quarter of a century after the incident, government officials said Monday. Minoru Tanaka will join 10 other Japanese currently listed by the government as abductees to the DPRK. The National Police Agency said Monday it has concluded that Tanaka was abducted to the DPRK based on new testimony by witnesses.

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16. US-ROK Military Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL CUTS SHARE IN USFK UPKEEP ", 2005-04-26) reported that the ROK and the US have agreed to cut Seoul's share in the upkeep for the US Forces in Korea by 8.9 percent over the next two years to W68.04 billion (US\$68 million). Last year's share came to W74.68 billion. "The US side officially notified us of the final agreement this morning," Kim Sook, head of the Foreign Ministry's North American Affairs Bureau, said during a briefing Tuesday. "This will be the first decrease since the cost sharing program started in 1991."

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17. ROK-Japanese Territorial Dispute

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREAN PARLIAMENT PASSES BILL ON DISPUTED ISLANDS", 2005-04-26) reported that the ROK's parliament passed a bill Tuesday to improve environmental protection of rocky islets also claimed by Japan - in an apparent bid to tighten its grip on the islands. The move comes at a time when the two countries are locked in a renewed dispute over the ownership of the volcanic islets - called Dokdo in Korea and Takeshima in Japan. The ROK has stationed a small detachment of police on the otherwise uninhabited islets, effectively controlling them. The bill approved by the ROK's National Assembly calls for better protection of the islands' environment to "raise their status and value as (ROK) territory," but it doesn't explicitly state the ROK's sovereignty over the islets.

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18. Sino-Japanese Relations

Los Angeles Times ("42 DETAINED IN ANTI-JAPAN PROTESTS ", 2005-04-26) reported that authorities in Shanghai detained 42 people and formally arrested 16 accused of "disturbing social order" during recent protests against Japan, state media reported today. State-run Shanghai Television aired video showing people suspected of throwing bottles at the Japanese Consulate and smashing windows of restaurants thought to be owned by Japanese. The same people were later shown in handcuffs, expressing remorse.

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19. South Asia and Sino-Japanese Relations

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN PM TO SEEK SUPPORT IN SOUTH ASIA TO BALANCE CHINA", 2005-04-26) reported that facing a major rift with the PRC, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi heads this week to India and Pakistan hoping to secure a counterweight to Beijing which is moving closer to New Delhi. The Japanese leader arrives Thursday in India where he is expected to highlight the two countries' joint bid for permanent seats on the UN Security Council and show Tokyo's interest in the fast-growing Indian economy. Koizumi heads on to Pakistan, the historic rival of India and a traditional ally of the PRC. But looming over the trip will be the presence of PRC Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, who in mid-April went on a charm offensive in India, which he used as a base to lash out at Japan's aspirations for a Security Council seat.

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20. Cross Strait Relations

The New York Times ("CHINA TRIES TO ISOLATE TAIWAN'S PRESIDENT", 2005-04-26) reported that Taiwan's two main opposition leaders will make consecutive visits to mainland PRC over the next two weeks as Beijing steps up a campaign to isolate the island's independence movement. Both opposition figures, Lien Chan, chairman of the Nationalist Party, and James Soong, who heads the pro-unification People First Party, are expected to meet Hu Jintao, the PRC's Communist Party chief. Beijing has not invited Taiwan's president, Chen Shui-bian, to visit the mainland and has ruled out talks with him unless he accepts the "one China" formula under which Beijing claims sovereignty over Taiwan, a condition Mr. Chen has rejected.

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