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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Weapons Program

Reuters ("N.KOREA SAYS MADE NUCLEAR WEAPONS", 2006-02-28) reported that the DPRK said on Tuesday it made nuclear weapons with its own technology and cash, while accusing the US of spreading far-fetched assertions Pyongyang counterfeited currency to help finance its atomic ambitions. "We manufactured nuclear weapons with our own technology, funds and raw materials from A to Z. As we are not dependent on the U.S. at all in the economic and financial fields, no U.S. sanctions would work on us," a spokesman for the DPRK said.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Weapons

Yonhap News ("U.S. DOESN'T KNOW FOR FACT N.K. HAS NUCLEAR WEAPONS: NEGROPONTE", 2006-03-01) reported that the US intelligence chief retreated slightly Wednesday on his DPRK nuclear assessment, saying the US. doesn't "know for a fact" that the DPRK has nuclear weapons. The assessment is that Pyongyang does have such weapons, National Intelligence Director John Negroponte said, but at the same time he declined to estimate how many.

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3. PRC on Six Party Talks

Kyodo News ("CHINA SAYS NO WAY TO PREDICT WHEN 6-WAY TALKS WILL RESUME", 2006-0--28) reported that the PRC, the host of the six-party talks on DPRK nuclear programs, said Tuesday there is no way to predict when the negotiations will resume as problems between the discussions' main protagonists remain unsolved. ''The current problem remains the lack of mutual trust'' between the US and the DPRK, Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said at a regular press conference. ''A consensus has yet to be reached on the question of when the talks will be resumed.''

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4. DPRK on US Sanctions

Associated Press ("N KOREA FOREIGN MIN URGES US TO END FINANCIAL SANCTIONS-REPORT ", 2006-02-28) reported that the DPRK Foreign Ministry on Tuesday urged the US to lift financial sanctions, according to the DPRK's official news agency. "If the U.S. is truly interested in the protection of its currency, it should stop such reckless act as linking the issue of `fake dollars' with

the DPRK in a far-fetched manner, lift financial embargo on the DPRK at an early date and opt for mutual cooperation in normal banking transaction," an unnamed ministry said in a statement carried by the DPRK Central News Agency.

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("MONUMENT READY FOR RETURN TO HOME IN N.KOREA ", 2006-02-28) reported that Seoul is ready to deliver a historic monument looted by Japan about a century ago to Pyongyang. After a brief ceremony here in the capital, the stone stele known as the Bukgwandaecheopbi will be sent to the DPRK in a wooden crate on Wednesday. The monument was carved in the 17th century in a region that is now the DPRK to mark Korea's victory over Japanese invaders in the 1590s.

(return to top) Yonhap News ("TWO KOREAS FAIL TO SET DATE FOR RAILWAY TEST RUN", 2006-02-28) reported that the ROK and the DPRK failed to agree on a date for the test run of inter-Korean railways during a two-day meeting, the ROK Unification Ministry said Tuesday. "The North didn't accept Seoul's call for the trial runs to be conducted in March for an early opening of the railways," the ministry said. Both sides also failed to fix a date for a subsequent meeting, the ministry added. Analysts said the failure to reach an agreement will likely affect former President Kim Dae-jung's plan to visit the DPRK by railroad in June. (return to top)

6. Inter-Korean Cooperation

JoongAng Ilbo ("SOUTH'S FERTILIZER SHIPPED TO NORTH ", 2006-02-28) reported that a ROK vessel carrying the first shipment of ROK fertilizer aid to the DPRK left yesterday for Nampo port. The 3,900-ton "Pioneer Kona" left Yeosu port, 455 kilometers southwest of Seoul, shortly after 10 a.m., carrying 6,000 tons of fertilizer. The shipment is the first of 150,000 tons Seoul has agreed to provide to the DPRK for its spring crop.

(return to top) Yonhap News ("S. KOREAN FIRMS TO BUILD HOTEL IN NORTH'S KAESONG COMPLEX", 2006-02-28) reported that the ROK's state-run Korea Land Corp. and Hyundai Asan, the DPRK business arm of Hyundai Group, said Tuesday they plan to build a hotel at an industrial complex in the DPRK by June next year. The two companies will invite a private enterprise to construct the hotel to resolve a shortage of accommodation at the complex in the DPRK border city of Kaesong. (return to top) JoongAng Ilbo ("JOB TRAINING SET AT PLANT SITE IN NORTH ", 2006-02-28) reported that the ROK government will build a job-training center for DPRK workers in Kaesong industrial complex, with the aim of supplying a skilled workforce to ROK factories in the DPRK border city, sources at the Ministry of Labor and other government offices said yesterday. "Up to 5,000 North Korean workers will be trained annually to find jobs at South Korean factories in Kaesong," an official at the Human Resources Development Service of Korea said. "North Koreans are showing performance rates of 50 to 70 percent of that of South Koreans. They have been working on production lines only after a short orientation in an auditorium, and we need a systematic education program to train them." (return to top) Korea Herald ("NORTH, SOUTH KOREAN FAMILIES MEET BY VIDEO ", 2006-02-28) reported that eighty divided families in the DPRK and the ROK took part in virtual reunions Monday and Tuesday via a cross-border video link. For many of the 575 people who participated in the two-hour sessions, it was the first time to see their relatives in over 50 years. Fiber optic video cables laid last year connect Red Cross centers across the ROK with the Koryo Hotel in Pyongyang, making it possible for families to communicate across the border. Each family is allowed two hours to spend with their relatives. (return to top)

7. ROK on DPRK Illicit Activities

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA URGED TO TAKE NECESSARY STEPS FOR RESUMPTION OF NUCLEAR TALKS", 2006-02-28) reported that the ROK foreign minister on Tuesday urged the DPRK to take necessary measures to diffuse international concern over its alleged counterfeiting and other illicit activities. Speaking at a forum in Seoul, Ban Ki-moon also expected the PRC leader's planned visit to the US to provide momentum for global efforts to end Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions. "It is desirable for North Korea to take measures, if it needs to do so, regarding its negative image," Ban said at the forum organized by the state-funded Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security.

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8. ROK Cardinal on Papal Visit to DPRK

Korea Times ("CARDINAL DEMANDS NK ADMIT PRIESTS ", 2006-02-27) reported that the ROK's second cardinal, Cheong Jin-suk, Monday suggested that Pope Benedict XVI would not visit the DPRK as long as it disallows dispatch of Catholic priests to the nation. ``We have demanded several times Pyongyang accept Catholic priests of any nationality. However, North Korea kept saying it is not time yet,'' Cheong said during a press conference held at Myongdong Catholic Cathedral in central Seoul. ``Therefore it is difficult for the pontiff to pay a visit to the North.''

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9. US on DPRK, IRAN, PRC

American Forces Press Service ("IRAN, NORTH KOREA, CHINA EMERGING AS THREATS ", 2006-02-28) reported that after terrorism, the ongoing development of weapons of mass destruction is the second major threat to the safety of the US and its allies, and Iran and the DPRK are both emerging as potential dangers in that area, a top US official told a Senate committee here today. "The time when a few states had monopolies over weapons of mass destruction is fading," said John D. Negroponte, director of national intelligence, at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on worldwide threats to US national security. "Technologies, often dual-use, move freely in our globalized economy, as do the scientific personnel who design them," he said. "The potential dangers of weapons of mass destruction proliferation are so grave that we must do everything possible to discover and disrupt it."

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10. DPRK on US Spy Flights

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA ACCUSES US OF CONDUCTING 170 SPY FLIGHTS ", 2006-0--28) reported that the DPRK accused the US on Tuesday of conducting more than 170 spy flights against the DPRK in February. US aircraft, including U-2s, RC-135s and EP-3s, conducted surveillance on "strategic targets" and "key military targets" in the DPRK from skies over the ROK, the DPRK official Korean Central News Agency reported, citing unidentified military sources.

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11. US-Japan Military Exercises

JoongAng Ilbo ("U.S.-JAPAN EXERCISE USES NORTH AS 'ENEMY'", 2006-02-28) reported that a joint military exercise in Japan that began Thursday pits US and Japanese forces against hypothetical provocations by the DPRK and PRC, a Japanese daily said yesterday. The Sankei Shimbun said the exercises, which involve only command post staff and not actual troop movements, are simulating such contingencies as DPRK moves to fuel its ballistic missiles.

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12. Japan on Post Remittances to DPRK

Kyodo News ("POST REMITTANCES TO N. KOREA IN FY 04 ONE THIRD OF EARLIER TALLIED", 2006-02-28) reported that Japan Post on Tuesday corrected an earlier calculation of the number of post remittances to the DPRK in fiscal 2004, saying the figure remained unchanged from a year earlier and had not, as the public corporation had previously said, tripled.

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13. PRC Scholar on DPRK

Yonhap News ("N.K. DEBATE GROWING IN CHINA, SOME CRITICAL OF PYONGYANG: SCHOLAR", 2006-02-28) reported that debate is growing within the PRC about DPRK nuclear development and the regime's sustainability, and not all views are sympathetic toward the ideological ally, a PRC scholar said Tuesday. According to Bonnie Glaser, senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the subject of whether the Pyongyang regime will collapse is going on "as fiercely" in the PRC as it is in the US.

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14. DPRK-Russia Relations

Itar-Tass ("NORTH KOREA HAS "WONDERFUL" RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA ", 2006-02-28) reported that DPRK Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun said his country has "wonderful" Russia. In an exclusive interview with Itar-Tass on Tuesday, Paek said, "Today Korean-Russian relations continue to develop, drawing special attention from the leaders of the two countries. Historical meetings between Chairman of the National Defence Committee of the DPRK Kim Jong-il and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in Pyongyang, Moscow, and Vladivostok in 2000, 2001 and 2002 opened a new page in the development of traditional relations between the DPRK and the Russian Federation." "We value relations with our close and good neighbour, Russia. The development of Korean-Russian relations is fully consistent with the aspirations and interests of the two peoples and, above all, contributes to peace and stability in Northeast Asia," the minister said.

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15. PRC on Taiwan Independence

New York Times ("CHINA EXPRESSES DISAPPROVAL FOR TAIWAN INDEPENDENCE SIGNALS ", 2006-02-28) reported that the PRC reacted sharply today to the decision by President Chen Shui-Bian of Taiwan to terminate the island's unification council, a move that analysts say has shaken confidence in Beijing that pressure from Washington or Mr. Chen's electoral setbacks will be sufficient to check his drive for formal independence.

(return to top) China Daily ("'DE JURE INDEPENDENCE' ACTIVITIES THREATEN STABILITY", 2006-02-28) reported that the PRC mainland said on Tuesday Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian's radical "Taiwan independence" line will bring disaster to the Taiwan society. "Chen Shui-bian has obstinately promoted radical 'Taiwan independence' line and stirred up all-round confrontation and conflict within Taiwan and across the Taiwan Straits. (return to top)

16. Taiwan Government

China Post ("KMT'S MA TO MOVE TO RECALL PRESIDENT CHEN, SPOKESWOMAN SAYS", 2006-02-28) reported that opposition Kuomintang (KMT) leader Ma Ying-jeou will make a move to recall President Chen Shui-bian, Ma's spokeswoman said yesterday, following Chen's announcement that a council for charting unification with the mainland will be scrapped.

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17. Taiwan Commemoration

China Post ("FLAGS TO FLY AT HALF-MAST IN MEMORY OF FEB. 28 INCIDENT", 2006-02-28) reported that offices and schools throughout Taiwan will fly the national flag at half-mast today to mark the Feb. 28 Incident of 1947 for the first time in 58 years. According to a special report commissioned by the Feb. 28 Memorial Foundation, more than 30,000 innocent people were killed by the PRC troops sent to Taiwan to suppress the riots.

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18. Cross Strait Relations

New York Times ("TAIWAN'S LEADER DEFIES BEIJING'S WARNINGS ", 2006-02-28) reported that President Chen Shui-bian of Taiwan announced late Monday afternoon that he was scrapping the island's unification council and guidelines for any political unification with mainland PRC, defying warnings from both the PRC and the United States.

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19. US on Cross Strait Relations

China Daily ("US URGED TO OPPOSE "TAIWAN INDEPENDENCE"", 2006-02-28) reported that the PRC on Tuesday urged the United States to stick to the commitments on Taiwan issue and be aware of the seriousness and harm of secessionist activities in Taiwan.

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20. US on Cross Strait Relations

Taipei Times ("US OFFICIALS `ACCEPT' NUC COMPROMISE", 2006-02-28) reported that US officials expressed their understanding of the terminology President Chen Shui-bian decided on concerning the National Unification Council (NUC) and unification guidelines. The US State Department was expected to make a statement in this regard during a routine press conference late yesterday and to confirm that Taiwan and the US are in sync regarding maintaining the status quo.

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21. Japan on Cross Strait Relations

Xinhua ("JAPAN REITERATES ITS POSITION ON TAIWAN ISSUE", 2006-02-28) reported that Japan's Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that the country's position on the Taiwan issue remained unchanged. The ministry said Japan did not want the status quo to be broken by any unilateral action from both sides of the Taiwan Straits so as to avoid further intensification of the situation.

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22. Japan on Iran Nuclear Program

Japan Times ("IRAN'S FOREIGN MINISTER TELLS JAPAN TEHRAN HAS A RIGHT TO NUKE PROGRAM", 2006-02-28) reported that despite diplomatic pressure by Japan, visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki maintained Monday that Tehran has the right to continue its nuclear program, a Foreign Ministry official said. Mottaki met with Foreign Minister Taro Aso in Tokyo amid a flurry of diplomatic efforts to defuse the nuclear standoff.

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23. Bird Flu in Japan

Japan Times ("VETERINARIANS HELD OVER IBARAKI BIRD FLU COVERUP", 2006-02-28) reported that police arrested four people Monday related to a poultry farm operator in Ibaraki Prefecture in connection with a suspected coverup of an avian flu outbreak last year.

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24. US-Japan War Games

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S.-JAPAN DRILLS 'GEAR UP FOR CHINA-N.KOREA THREAT'", 2006-02-28) reported that the DPRK and PRC are the imaginary enemy in military drills the U.S. and Japan have been conducting since Feb. 23, the Sankei Shimbun reported Tuesday. The command post exercises dubbed Keen Edge continue through Friday and come ahead of air, land and sea drills Japan's Self Defense Force is scheduled to start at the end of March.

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25. US-ROK Security Alliance

Korea Times ("SEOUL SEEKS NEW JOINT MILITARY STRUCTURE WITH US", 2006-02-28) reported that the government is studying ways to establish a new structure for the ROK-U.S. combined forces in line with its plan to recover wartime operational control of forces from the United States, a military source said on Monday.

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26. PRC Democratization and Regional Stability

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA DEMOCRACY COULD MEAN ASIA-PACIFIC INSTABILITY: REPORT ", 2006-02-28) reported that a democratic PRC could present Asia-Pacific countries with major

problems never experienced under the current authoritarian regime, an Australian defense think-tank said Feb. 28.The Australian Strategic Policy Institute said the PRC's aging communist leadership was committed to peacefully pursuing economic expansion but that could change when the next generation of leaders takes over.

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