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1. US on DPRK Missiles

Yonhap News ("N.K. PREPARING TO FIELD MISSILES THAT CAN REACH ALASKA: USFK CHIEF", 2006-03-07) reported that the DPRK is preparing to field intermediate-range ballistic missiles that could reach as far as Alaska, a senior US commander said Tuesday. But what used to be an active program in the DPRK to develop inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) appears to have tapered off over the last several years, Gen. Burwell Bell, chief of US Forces Korea (USFK), said at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing.

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2. DPRK-Iran Missile Sales

Chosun Ilbo ("IRAN 'BUYING MISSILES FROM NORTH KOREA' ", 2006-03-07) reported that Iran is reportedly stepping up development of long-range missiles. According to an intelligence report given to Reuters by a non-US diplomat, Tehran is pursuing a program code-named Project 111, whose aim is to arm Iran's Shahab-3 missiles, which experts believe have a maximum range of 2,000 kilometers, with nuclear warheads. The Shahab is based on the DPRK's Rodong missile technology. The report could not be independently confirmed, and an Iranian official who asked not to be named denied the charge. Reuters also said a German diplomat, citing his country's intelligence data, confirmed that Iran had purchased from the DPRK 18 disassembled BM-25 mobile missiles with a range of 2,500 km, which would render them capable of reaching Israel and Turkey from Iran.

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3. DPRK-ROK-US Unofficial Meeting

Chosun Ilbo ("TWO KOREAS, U.S. IN UNOFFICIAL CONTACT IN NEW YORK ", 2006-03-07) reported that officials from the two Koreas and the US reportedly held an unofficial meeting in New York on Monday to discuss the DPRK's alleged financial crimes and to exchange views on stalled six-country nuclear talks. The head of the DPRK Foreign Ministry's US Affairs Bureau, Li Gun, and Wi Sung-rak, political affairs minister at the ROK Embassy in Washington met with US State Department officials.

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4. US on Counterfeiting Briefing

Yonhap News ("TREASURY SAYS ACTION ON BDA WAS NOT INTENDED SANCTION ON N.K.", 2006-03-07) reported that the US Treasury Department, in briefing the DPRK on its actions against illicit financial activities, said the moves were taken to protect US institutions and not as sanctions against Pyongyang, the Treasury said in a press release Tuesday. US officials also emphasized that the issue should not be linked to multilateral nuclear negotiations Pyongyang is threatening to

boycott, the release said.

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5. Russia on DPRK Counterfeiting

Yonhap News ("RUSSIA URGES U.S. TO PRESENT EVIDENCE OF N. KOREAN COUNTERFEITING", 2006-03-07) reported that Russian Ambassador to the ROK Gleb Ivashentsov called Tuesday for the US to provide concrete evidence on the DPRK's alleged counterfeiting. "The side that raises the suspicions should present evidence," he said. "So, the U.S. should find evidence to convict (North Korea of counterfeiting)." The ambassador said his country has no substantial evidence or information on the counterfeiting alleged by US officials. "Russia has not received any concrete evidence (of North Korea's alleged counterfeiting). There is rumor-level talk on the issue," the envoy said, speaking to a group of senior journalists in Seoul. US officials have claimed that the Russian capital Moscow was one venue for the DPRK's trading of fake US dollars.

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6. Russia on DPRK Sanctions

Korea Times ("RUSSIA OPPOSES SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREA", 2006-03-07) reported that Russia opposes any kind of sanctions against what the US calls rogue states such as Iran and the DPRK, Gleb Ivashentsov, Moscow's top diplomat to Seoul, said on Tuesday. "In principle, we are against any economic sanctions because they do not work," Ivashentsov told The Korea Times after a forum hosted by the Korea News Editors' Association in Seoul. "There should be dialogue, there should be consultation, but sanctions do not work neither against North Korea, nor against Iran, nor against any other country," he said.

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7. DPRK Economic Zone

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA TO SET UP SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE NEAR CHINA", 2006-03-07) reported that the DPRK plans to develop the country's Bidan Island into a special economic zone, the Tokyo Shimbun reported Tuesday citing diplomatic sources. The DPRK intends to evict the island's residents to build a financial center and other facilities that will be open to the outside world, the Japanese daily said. The daily said DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is apparently experimenting with a domestic version of what he saw during a visit to China's special economic zone in January. At the time, Kim declared himself "very impressed."

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8. GNP on DPRK Visit

Yonhap News ("OPPOSITION PARTY TURNS DOWN PROPOSED VISIT TO INTER-KOREAN COMPLEX", 2006-03-07) reported that the ROK's main opposition party rejected a proposal Tuesday for some of its members to visit an inter-Korean industrial complex with ruling party officials later this month. Earlier Tuesday, the ruling Uri Party proposed that members of the Grand National Party (GNP) join a planned visit by its officials to the complex in the DPRK border town of Kaesong on March 29. "The ruling Uri Party and Chairman Chung Dong-young should stop playing the North Korea card for their political campaigns," said Lee Jung-hyun, deputy spokesman of the GNP. GNP

officials claimed the proposal is only aimed at boosting the ruling party's public image ahead of May's mayoral and gubernatorial elections.

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9. PRC-US Relations

Xinhua ("SINO-US TRADE RELATIONS SHOULD NOT BE POLITICIZED: FM", 2006-03-07) reported that the United States should not politicize its trade relations with the PRC, PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said here Tuesday. The two countries should solve trade problems under the framework of the World Trade Organization, Li said.

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10. Cross-Strait Relations

Xinhua ("CHINESE MAINLAND PREPARED FOR ANY COMPLICATIONS IN CROSS-STRAITS ", 2006-03-07) reported that the PRC mainland is highly vigilant against the development of the situation in Taiwan following Taiwan leader's "dangerous step" to cease the function of the "National Unification Council" and the application of its guidelines, PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said here Tuesday.

[\(return to top\)](#) Xinhua ("INT'L COMMUNITY REAFFIRMS INSISTENCE OF ONE-CHINA PRINCIPLE", 2006-03-07) reported that media and governments of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Vietnam, Romania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia, Afghanistan, and UN officials have made statements or speeches denouncing Chen Shui-bian's secessionist move and reiterating their support for the one-PRC principle. [\(return to top\)](#)

11. Taiwan on Unification Issue

China Post ("OPPOSITION SAYS TAIWAN HAS 'PUPPET CABINET'", 2006-03-07) reported that opposition politicians yesterday said Taiwan had a "puppet Cabinet" controlled by President Chen Shui-bian after Premier Su Tseng-chang did not shed any new light on the status of the National Unification Council (NUC). The premier, who was presenting a report to the legislature on Chen's decision to scrap the council, ducked questions from opposition law makers on whether the NUC still existed.

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12. Taiwan Economy

Reuters, International Herald Tribune ("TAIWAN POSTS RARE TRADE DEFICIT", 2006-03-07) reported that Taiwan on Tuesday posted its first trade deficit in more than a year, for February, as high oil prices caused the value of imports to soar and more than offset strong growth in exports.

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13. PRC-Japan East Sea Gas Dispute

Asahi Shimbun ("CHINA OFFERS GAS FIELD PROPOSAL ", 2006-03-07) reported that in a compromise of sorts, the PRC proposed a new joint development plan Tuesday during talks on gas

reserves in the East China Sea. The proposal included the possibility for joint development on the PRC side of the median line between Japan and the PRC.

[\(return to top\)](#) China Daily, Reuters ("CHINA, JAPAN GAS TALKS END WITH NO AGREEMENT", 2006-03-07) reported that the PRC and Japan have failed to agree on how to develop oil and gas reserves in disputed areas of the East China Sea, Kyodo news agency reported on Tuesday. At the end of two days of talks, they were split on the position of the border between their exclusive economic zones in the area around the islands, known in Japan as the Senkakus and in the PRC as the Diaoyus. [\(return to top\)](#)

14. PRC-Japan WWII Lawsuit

Japan Times ("JAPAN TO BE SUED OVER BOMBINGS OF CHONGQING", 2006-03-07) reported that survivors and relatives of victims of Japan's 1938-1942 bombings of Chongqing, PRC, will file a damages suit against the Japanese government later this month, their lawyers said. About 40 people will demand 10 million yen each in damages, arguing the repeated attacks violated international humanitarian law. Japan ratified the Hague Convention in 1911, which banned attacks on unarmed cities, the lawyers said.

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15. PRC on Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo News ("CHINA SAYS SHRINE VISITS TOP CAUSE OF STRAINED TIES WITH JAPAN ", 2006-03-07) reported that PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said Tuesday that continued visits by Japanese leaders to the war-related Yasukuni Shrine were the top cause for Japan's strained political ties with the PRC. Japanese leaders should not make the people of the PRC or any other World War II victim nations relive the war, he said at a press conference at the Great Hall of the People.

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16. Japan on Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo News ("KOIZUMI AGAIN REJECTS CHINA'S CALLS TO STOP YASUKUNI VISITS", 2006-0-07) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi again rejected a repeated PRC call Tuesday for Japanese leaders not to visit Tokyo's war-related Yasukuni Shrine. "Yasukuni will no longer be a diplomatic card," Koizumi said at his official residence.

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17. Japan on Immigration

Reuters, International Herald Tribune ("IN JAPAN, IMMIGRATION BILL SENT TO PARLIAMENT", 2006-03-07) reported that the Japanese cabinet endorsed legislation Tuesday that would require foreigners to be photographed and fingerprinted on arrival as part of measures to prevent terrorism. The cabinet approved a revised immigration bill, defying opposition from a lawyers' group and human rights activists who argue that such steps would risk breaching human rights and invade privacy.

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18. Discrimination in Japan

Asahi Shimbun ("NGOS CALL FOR ACTION AGAINST RACISM", 2006-03-07) reported that facing international criticism that Japan is not doing enough to stop racial discrimination, officials of key ministries met Tuesday with minority groups in Tokyo to assess the situation. Officials from the Foreign Ministry, labor ministry and Justice Ministry sat in on hearings with 18 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) representing minorities such as resident Koreans, foreign laborers and indigenous Ainu people.

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19. US-Japan Missile System

Associated Press ("JAPAN, US TO JOINTLY TEST MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM THIS WEEK", 2006-03-07) reported that Japan and the United States will test-fire an interceptor of their jointly developed next-generation shipborne missile system later this week, a Japanese defense official has announced. The two allies are currently developing a new version of the US sea-based Standard Missile 3 (SM-3), amid growing concern about the DPRK and rising tension between Japan and PRC.

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20. Terrorist Leader Sentenced in Japan

China Post, AP ("JAPAN RED ARMY FOUNDER APPEALS PRISON SENTENCE", 2006-03-07) reported that a founder of the Japanese Red Army terrorist group has appealed a 20-year prison sentence for her role in a 1974 attack on the French Embassy in The Hague, her lawyers said Monday.

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21. UN Leadership in Asia

Chosun Ilbo ("RUSSIA COULD BACK BAN AS PAN-ASIAN CHOICE FOR UN ", 2006-03-07) reported that Russian Ambassador to the ROK Gleb Ivashentsov on Tuesday declined to come out in support of Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon's candidacy for the top UN post but said his country wants the next secretary-general to come from Asia. "It is Russia's firm position to support a candidate from Asia," he told ROK reporters when asked about Ban's bid.

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Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org