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I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Missile Launch

Yonhap News ("U.S. KNEW IN ADVANCE OF N.K.'S MISSILE LAUNCH: ADMIRAL", 2006-03-14) reported that the US knew in advance about the DPRK's plans to launch missiles and was also able to confirm very quickly the actual launch, an aerospace defense commander said Tuesday. Testifying at the Senate Armed Services Committee, Adm. Timothy Keating, commander of the US Northern Command, said this was proof that the US has the right monitoring system in place. "As you probably know in open-source reporting, North Korea launched three surface -- very short-range surface-to-surface missiles about a week ago," he told the hearing. "In this session, I think I am okay to say we were aware of their plans to launch and we were aware in very, very, very...short order after those missiles actually did launch that they had, in fact, launched," he said.

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2. Rice on DPRK Nuclear Status

Yonhap News ("RICE REFUTES N.K.-INDIA COMPARISON AS 'HOLLOW RHETORIC'", 2006-03-13) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice scoffed at any attempt by the DPRK to equate itself with India in nuclear status, saying one nation proliferates weapons while the other does not. In an opinion piece contributed to Monday's edition of the Washington Post, Rice said aspiring nuclear powers like the DPRK and Iran may try to draw connections between themselves and India.

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3. KPA on Pre-Emptive Attack

Reuters ("N.KOREA ARMY THREATENS PRE-EMPTIVE ATTACK", 2006-03-14) reported that the DPRK has the right to launch a pre-emptive attack against US-backed ROK forces because the two Koreas are technically still at war, the DPRK's official media said on Tuesday. A spokesman for the DPRK's Korea People's Army (KPA) said distrust is high between the US and DPRK, and Pyongyang "will never remain a passive onlooker to the U.S. pre-emptive attack on the DPRK," its official news agency reported. "The KPA side is of the view that a pre-emptive attack is not (the) monopoly of the U.S. and the DPRK, too, has the right to pre-empt an attack as the most effective and positive act for self-defense in the light of the hard reality that the DPRK and the U.S. sides are still technically at war," the spokesman was cited as saying.

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4. Former Minister on Six Party Talks

Yonhap News ("FORMER MINISTER TELLS U.S., JAPAN TO STOP PRESSURING N. KOREA", 2006-03-14) reported that the ROK's former unification minister on Tuesday called on Washington and Tokyo to break the ongoing impasse in international negotiations over the DPRK's nuclear programs through dialogue, claiming a prolonged stalemate may give the DPRK enough time to develop nuclear arms. "I give you my word the North Korean nuclear issue will not be solved by U.S. and Japanese pressure" on the DPRK, Jeong Sye-hyun said at a symposium here organized by the

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5. Multilateral Railway Talks

Yonhap News ("TWO KOREAS, RUSSIA TO DISCUSS RAILWAY LINKS", 2006-03-14) reported that the ROK's railway corporation chief will leave for the far eastern Russian city of Vladivostok this week to attend a multilateral conference to discuss ways of connecting railroads linking the two Koreas and Russia, his officials said Monday. "Lee Chul, president of the Korea Railroad Corp. (KORAIL), will depart for the Russian city on Wednesday to attend the three-nation meeting set for Friday," a KORAIL official said. It is the first time for the railway heads from both Koreas and Russia to get together, the official said. The DPRK delegate serves as his nation's railway minister, he added. The main agendas will be how to connect the Trans-Siberian Railway (TSR) with the Trans-Korean Railway (TKR), ways of modernizing railway links between the Russian city of Hatan and the DPRK eastern city of Rajin, and the creation of an international consortium to upgrade railways in the DPRK, the official said.

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6. DPRK-UN Talks on Food Aid

Reuters ("WFP OFFICIALS IN NORTH KOREA FOR TALKS ON FOOD AID", 2006-03-14) reported that officials from the World Food Programme flew into Pyongyang on Tuesday for talks on resuming aid to the DPRK. "The donors on the executive board expressed pretty serious concern about the operating conditions that were on offer and gave us a mandate to try and better them," WFP spokesman Gerald Bourke said in Beijing where he is based. "While they have approved the operation in principle, it still has to be funded and resourced," he said. The new WFP programme, which was to have started on April 1 but now will almost certainly be delayed, would provide 150,000 tonnes of food. "Until donors are happy, they're not going to be too inclined to resource the operation," Bourke said.

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7. DPRK on Human Rights

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA VOWS TO FIGHT BACK OVER HUMAN RIGHTS ", 2006-03-14) reported that the DPRK on Tuesday rebuffed an annual US State Department report on human rights released earlier this month which said the DPRK's human rights record "remained extremely poor." In a statement by a Foreign Ministry spokesman on Monday, the DPRK claimed its regime guarantees the highest level of human rights conditions for its people. The statement warned that the more the US attacks the DPRK over human rights issues, the more it will strengthen measures to protect its sovereignty. Citing Washington's war on Iraq and illegal wiretapping, it called on the US to review its own human rights violations, adding it was only using the issue to isolate Pyongyang.

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8. US to Fund DPRK Human Rights Organizations

JoongAng Ilbo ("WASHINGTON EARMARKS \$1 MILLION FOR NORTH", 2006-03-14) reported that the US State Department will provide \$1 million to the National Endowment for Democracy, which

will support DPRK human rights organizations around the world and fund broadcasting services for DPRK residents, an official with the group told the JoongAng Ilbo Monday. At the end of last year, the US Congress decided to grant \$1 million from the federal budget for 2006 in order to promote human rights in the DPRK, said Louisa Coan Greve, a senior program officer for Asia with the endowment, adding that the funding would be provided through the State Department this summer.

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9. Middle Powers on Nonproliferation

Global Security Institute ("MIDDLE POWERS INITIATIVE", 2006-03-14) reported that the Middle Powers Initiative (MPI), a program of the Global Security Institute (GSI), on March 2-3, 2006 held a significant high level consultation at The Hague, The Netherlands, as part of the Article VI Forum. The Article VI Forum represents one of the few multilateral forums in the world this year in which nonproliferation/disarmament discussions are formally taking place. It is a great privilege and responsibility for a civil society organization to make this contribution to global security.

Background paper on the Article VI Forum:

http://www.gsinstitute.org/docs/ClingendaelBrief_Final.pdf First Meeting of the Article VI Forum:

http://www.middlepowers.org/mpi/pubs/ArticleVI_Report.pdf

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10. PRC Rural Commitment

BBC News ("CHINESE PM ISSUES RURAL PLEDGE", 2006-03-14) reported that Wen Jiabao promised to punish officials who seized land without offering compensation and to tackle a growing gap between the PRC's rich and poor. In particular he was talking to the PRC's 700 million peasant farmers. "We will make sure we guarantee the long-term land rights of farmers. We will maintain the strictest controls to prevent their land being forcibly taken away from them," he said.

[\(return to top\)](#) China Post ("CHINA VOWS TO PROMOTE HONESTY AND PLAIN LIVING", 2006-0-14) reported that the top advisory body to the PRC's parliament promised Monday to promote an official system of virtues conceived by President Hu Jintao that calls for honesty and plain living amid discontent over corruption and a growing gap between rich and poor. [\(return to top\)](#) Xinhua ("CHINA'S PARLIAMENT ENDORSES MAJOR ECONOMIC POLICY CHANGES", 2006-03-14) reported that the National People's Congress, PRC's Parliament, endorsed Premier Wen Jiabao's work report and the country's 11th Five-Year Plan on Tuesday with votes close to unanimity, which enshrined the country's new economic policies of relying on rural development and sci-tech progress. [\(return to top\)](#)

11. PRC Economy

International Herald Tribune, New York Times ("CHINA RULES OUT REVALUING IN 2006", 2006-03-14) reported that Prime Minister Wen Jiabao used a wide-ranging news conference Tuesday to announce that the PRC would not revalue its currency in the coming year. Wen also deflected criticism over Internet censorship while adding that the PRC's rapid economic rise was being accompanied by a "high concentration of all kinds of acute problems."

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12. Japan-PRC Relations

Kyodo News ("CHINA PREMIER LINKS IMPROVED TIES WITH JAPAN TO SHRINE ROW", 2006-0-14) reported that PRC Premier Wen Jiabao said Tuesday that tense Sino-Japanese relations cannot change if Japanese leaders continue visiting Tokyo's war-related Yasukuni Shrine but said the Japanese people are not to blame.

[\(return to top\)](#) Kyodo News ("JAPAN SAYS CHINA'S CONCILIATORY STEPS ACCEPTABLE IF TALKS RESUMED", 2006-03-14) reported that Japan showed positive reaction to PRC Premier Wen Jiabao's proposal Tuesday that the two countries take three steps to improve relations, but maintained that the PRC should first move to resume the stalled top-level dialogue. [\(return to top\)](#)

13. Japan-PRC History Debate

Xinhua ("CHINA CALLS FOR JAPAN TO PROPERLY SETTLE TAIWAN, HISTORY ISSUES ", 2006-0-14) reported that the PRC has called on Japan to properly settle major issues relating to Taiwan and its history, and work with the PRC to promote the development of bilateral relations, said PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang here Tuesday. At a regular press conference, Qin said the PRC hopes the Japanese side will abide by the spirit of "taking history as a mirror and looking forward to the future" and live up to the three political documents signed between the two countries.

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14. Japan on Bioterrorism

Japan Times ("SYSTEM TARGETS BIOTERROR, FLU THREATS", 2006-03-14) reported that a national center for infectious disease surveillance has begun building a system aimed at detecting early signs of bioterrorism and new types of influenza based on factors that include a slight increase in the number of emergency patients, center officials said Monday.

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15. USFJ Realignment

International Herald Tribune, Associated Press ("STUNG BY VOTE, KOIZUMI VOWS TO PUSH MOVE OF GIs ", 2006-03-13) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, stung by the overwhelming rejection of a plan to relocate some U.S. troops in an unprecedented plebiscite, said Monday he would push forward on negotiations with Washington to drastically rework America's military presence in Japan.

[\(return to top\)](#) Japan Times ("IWAKUNI VOTE WON'T HALT U. S. MOVE: ABE ", 2006-03-14) reported that the central government will go ahead with plans to move 57 U.S. carrier-based warplanes and support personnel to the U.S. Marine Corps Iwakuni Air Station in Yamaguchi Prefecture, despite the overwhelming opposition expressed in a nonbinding local plebiscite, Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe said Monday. [\(return to top\)](#) Yomiuri Shimbun ("U.S. TROOP TRANSFER MAY COST 10 BIL. DOLLARS", 2006-03-15) reported that the cost of transferring U.S. Marine Corps troops and facilities from Okinawa Prefecture to Guam, most of which is to be covered by Japan, will total about 10 billion dollars, the U.S. government said during recent talks with Japan-and the sum may increase. [\(return to top\)](#)

16. US-Japan Military Exercises in Taiwan

Taipei Times ("US-JAPAN MAY USE TWO DISPUTED ISLETS AS TARGETS", 2006-03-14) reported that the National Security Bureau yesterday revealed it was monitoring plans for the US-Japan joint military exercise, which intends to use two islets that form part of the Diaoyutai group claimed by Taiwan as missile ranges this year.

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17. Cross-Strait Relations

Xinhua ("MAINLAND KEEPS CLOSE WATCH OVER SITUATION IN TAIWAN", 2006-03-14) reported that the PRC mainland is keeping close watch over the situation in Taiwan and making preparations to cope with any possible consequences from the change of the situation, said PRC Premier Wen Jiabao here Tuesday. "We will never give up our efforts for peaceful reunification, we will never sway in opposing 'Taiwan independence' secessionist activities, and never allow anyone to secede Taiwan from the motherland," the premier said.

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18. Europe on Cross-Strait Relations

Xinhua ("MERKEL, CHIRAC REAFFIRM ONE-CHINA PRINCIPLE", 2006-03-14) reported that German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Jacques Chirac reaffirmed here on Tuesday their countries' constant and clear one-PRC policy. They made the remarks at a joint press conference when asked to comment on Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian's decision to cease the functioning of the "National Unification Council" (NUC) and the application of the "National Unification Guidelines."

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19. Taiwan Government on NUC Issue

Taipei Times ("OFFICIALS SNUB NUC QUESTION SESSION", 2006-03-14) reported that despite being invited, officials from the Presidential Office and National Security Council declined to report to the legislature yesterday about the president's decision on the unification council and guidelines, irking opposition lawmakers, who passed a motion of condemnation and threatened to more fiercely boycott government budgets.

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20. Assassination Case in Taiwan

China Post ("VIDEO FOOTAGE OF '319 INCIDENT' PROBE RELEASED", 2006-03-14) reported that Tainan district chief prosecutor Chu Chao-liang released yesterday selected footage on the interrogation of the bereaved family of Chen Yi-hsiung, the alleged assassin trying to kill President Chen Shui-bian on March 19, 2004.

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21. Taiwan on Bird Flu

Taipei Times ("WHO FIXES H5N1 MAP DESIGNATION", 2006-03-14) reported that responding to Taiwan's strong protests, the World Health Organization (WHO) has corrected the global avian influenza maps posted on its Web site by changing the color of Taiwan to indicate the nation's H5N1-free status, an official said yesterday. "We welcome and recognize the WHO's prompt and positive response to our demand," Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesman Michel Lu said, "and we hope the organization would avoid a similar incident happening again."

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