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I. United States

1. DPRK on Nuclear Talks

Yonhap News ("N.K. SAYS IT CAN RETURN TO NUKE TALKS IF ITS POSITION IS HONORED", 2005-04-06) reported that the DPRK told the PRC that it can rejoin stalled six-nation talks on its nuclear weapons program only when its position is honored, a ROK official. The ROK official, speaking on condition of anonymity, briefed reporters on discussions PRC officials had with the DPRK's First Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok-ju in Beijing on April 2-5. "North Korea is not returning to the talks at the request of a party but it can return to the talks when its stance is honored," a PRC diplomat quoted Kang as saying, according to the ROK official.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Korea Times ("NON-AGGRESSION PACT POSSIBLE WITH N. KOREA: HILL", 2005-04-06) reported that the US is prepared to reach a multilateral nonaggression pact with the DPRK within the context of the six-party process Washington's top negotiator said. Christopher Hill, the outgoing US ambassador to the ROK, stated in a forum in Seoul that his country "does have evidence" on the DPRK's weapons program using the highly enriched uranium (HEU). "We're prepared to reach a multilateral agreement with North Korea, which will be a nonaggression agreement, that is security guarantees for North Korea," he said during the forum hosted by the Civil Network for a Peaceful Korea, headed by Cheong Wook-sik.

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3. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The Associated Press ("RICE: WORLD CAN'T UNDER-REACT TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS THREATS", 2005-04-06) reported that the world may never know precise details about nuclear efforts in Iran and DPRK but must not "under-react" because of incomplete intelligence, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said. In her first public remarks about last week's scathing report by a presidential commission studying US spy agencies, Rice said she could not guarantee that US intelligence was on the mark now, as the Bush administration seeks international cooperation to end suspected or declared nuclear programs in Iran and the DPRK.

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4. ROK on US Policy Toward the DPRK

Korea Times ("VICE MINISTER CRITICIZES WASHINGTON'S NK POLICY", 2005-04-06) reported that the US is making the DPRK believe that Washington's goal is to change the regime in Pyongyang, rather than to eliminate the DPRK's nuclear programs, Vice Unification Minister Rhee Bong-jo said in New York. "North Korea is suspicious of the United States' goal, which Pyongyang thinks is regime change, rather than the elimination of nuclear programs," Rhee said at a meeting with ROK correspondents. "It is true that Washington is stocking this perception."

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5. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("GOV'T HOPEFUL THAT NORTH WILL DECIDE ON TALKS SHORTLY", 2005-04-06) reported that government officials said that it seemed the restart of the six-party talks on the DPRK nuclear issue, which have been stalled for the last nine months since the conclusion of the third round of discussions, would be decided around this weekend.

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6. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Donga Ilbo ("HU JINTAO WILL VISIT NORTH KOREA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR", 2005-04-06) reported that accepting an invitation from the DPRK, PRC President Hu Jintao has decided to visit Pyongyang in the first half of this year, and six-way talks surrounding the DPRK nuclear issue will resume around the middle of May, according to a report by the Yomiuri Shimbun from Washington, quoting a high-ranking US official. "The Chinese government seemed to be successful in persuading North Korea to return to the table in exchange for Hu's visit," the official added.

[\(return to top\)](#) Kyodo News ("N. KOREA OFFICIAL'S TRIP FAILED TO BRING BREAKTHROUGH: SOURCES", 2005-04-06) reported that a recent trip to the PRC by DPRK First Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok Ju ended without a breakthrough over the issue of the DPRK's nuclear programs, with Kang saying that Pyongyang is not ready to resume multilateral talks on the topic in the near future, diplomatic sources said. Kang "took a tough attitude throughout, and did not show any readiness to resume the negotiations," one of the sources said. The source also said that due to the lack of progress during the talks, "it has become difficult" to set a schedule for PRC President Hu Jintao's first visit to the DPRK. [\(return to top\)](#)

7. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Kyodo News ("NO INFO YET ON RESUMPTION OF N. KOREAN NUCLEAR TALKS: HOSODA", 2005-04-06) reported that Japan has not yet been informed of a possible resumption of stalled six-party talks aimed at resolving the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, Japan's top spokesman said Wednesday. "We have not heard yet that any such agreement has been reached...or obtained any information as to who is discussing what," Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda told a press conference, reacting to a report in the evening edition of the Japanese daily Yomiuri Shimbun.

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8. KEDO LWR Project

Yonhap news ("N.K. LIKELY TO HOLD TALKS WITH KEDO ON SUSPENDED REACTOR PROJECT", 2005-04-06) reported that the DPRK and a US-led international consortium are likely to hold high-level talks later this month over a suspended project to build two nuclear reactors in the DPRK, officials said. "The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization is in the process of forming a delegation for talks," Chang Sun-sup, the ROK envoy in charge of the project, told Yonhap News Agency. "The North appears likely to make some demands." The KEDO delegation is likely to travel to Hyangsan, North Pyongan Province, later this month.

[\(return to top\)](#) Asahi Shimbun ("DPRK SUGGESTED TO ABANDON MOU; LETTER SENT TO KEDO", 2005-04-06) reported that the DPRK hinted to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), which has suspended the project to build light water reactors in the DPRK, that it would abandon a "memorandum" concluded between the DPRK and KEDO in March last year, a high-ranking US government official has told the Asahi Shimbun. The memorandum stipulates agreements on such matters as the safety of about 120 workers who are still at the construction site and free visits to the site. To examine the DPRK's real intentions, KEDO is hastening preparations to send high-ranking officials to the DPRK this month. [\(return to top\)](#)

9. DPRK Bird Flu Outbreak

The Associated Press ("WHO EXPERT: BIRD FLU STRAINS COULD COMBINE", 2005-04-06) reported that two strains of bird flu in Asia may combine to create a highly lethal and easily transmissible virus, a UN health official warned, amid fears that the disease could cause the next human pandemic. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization confirmed that birds in the DPRK were infected with the H7 bird flu strain. It is distinct from the H5N1 strain that has decimated poultry populations across Asia since December 2003 and killed at least 50 people in Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia. Both strains can jump from birds to humans but only the H7 virus has been shown to spread from person to person, raising concern that it could unite with the deadlier H5N1 strain and cause a global pandemic.

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10. US on DPRK Bird Flu Outbreak

Financial Times ("US SENDS BIRD FLU TESTING KITS TO N KOREA", 2005-04-06) reported that in a move that appears to run counter to its isolationist policy towards Pyongyang, the US has sent bird flu testing kits to the DPRK to help determine what influenza viruses are breaking out in the reclusive state and to test whether humans are infected. The US has given three kits to the World Health Organisation, and the administration approved the donation "on a humanitarian basis to help the people of North Korea," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said in a statement.

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11. ROK on DPRK Bird Flu Outbreak

Asia Pulse ("N. KOREA NOT PROVIDING DETAILS OF BIRD FLU DAMAGE: S KOREAN GOVT", 2005-04-06) reported that the DPRK's failure to provide detailed information about its acknowledged outbreak of bird flu leaves the ROK unable to provide any assistance, ROK officials said. The ROK sent telephone messages by way of the border village of Panmunjom, asking the

DPRK to provide detailed information but there has been no response, according to the Unification Ministry.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap news ("SOUTH KOREAN VISITORS TO NORTH RESORT INCREASE DESPITE BIRD FLU", 2005-04-06) reported that despite a bird flu outbreak in the DPRK, the number of ROK tourists to the DPRK's scenic mountain resort, Mount Kumgang, went up, officials said Wednesday 6 April. The number of ROK tourists to Mount Kumgang on the DPRK's east coast reached an average 18,998 a month in the first three months, up 91 per cent from a year ago, said Kim Chun-shik, a senior official at the Unification Ministry. [\(return to top\)](#)

12. DPRK Agriculture

Yonhap news ("NORTH KOREA PRODUCES 30 PERCENT OF FERTILIZER NEEDS", 2005-04-06) reported that the DPRK's annual chemical fertilizer output was about 450,000 tons, 30 per cent of the 1.55m tons it needs, the ROK's top spy agency said Wednesday. "Fertilizer is being produced at 11 factories in North Korea, but most are not in full operation owing to obsolete facilities and shortages of energy and raw materials," the National Intelligence Service said on its Internet web site.

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("NK SUBSTITUTES HUMAN MANURE FOR FERTILIZER", 2005-0-06) reported that the DPRK's annual chemical fertilizer output is about 450,000 tons, only 30 percent of 1.55 million tons it needs, the National Intelligence Service (NIS) in Seoul said Wednesday. The Pyongyang regime is recommending farmers substitute coalmine humus, factory soot and human and livestock manure for chemical fertilizer, the NIS said. [\(return to top\)](#)

13. DPRK Defectors

Agence France Presse ("APPARENT N KOREAN ASYLUM SEEKERS ENTER SOUTH KOREAN SCHOOL IN CHINA", 2005-04-06) reported that a group of apparent DPRK asylum seekers entered a ROK international school in northeast PRC's Dalian city Wednesday, officials said. The ROK's Yonhap News Agency, citing ROKoreans helping the asylum seekers, said nine DPRKoreans, including three children, had entered the school. It was likely that the school had no diplomatic immunity and would come under PRC jurisdiction, the teacher said.

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14. Abductee Issue

Kyodo News ("MACHIMURA APPEALS FOR ASIAN SUPPORT IN ABDUCTION ISSUE", 2005-04-06) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura on Wednesday appealed for Asian and Middle Eastern countries to join forces with Japan in settling the issue of the DPRK's abductions of Japanese citizens. The abductions are 'state-sponsored crime committed by North Korea,' Machimura told a meeting of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue in Islamabad. 'We ask for understanding and support from ACD member countries for the resolution of the issue.'

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15. DPRK World Cup

Yomiuri Shimbun ("FAIR HEARING FOR DPRK, SAYS BLATTER ", 2005-04-06) reported that FIFA president Sepp Blatter guaranteed the DPRK would receive a fair hearing after trouble at last

month's World Cup qualifier against Iran, but that he would not be involved in the disciplinary proceedings against the DPRK due to take place later this month. "When such a case is reported, as was the case between DPR Korea and Iran, then this matter will be deferred to the disciplinary committee and the disciplinary committee will open an investigation," said Blatter.

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16. ROK-US Military Alliance

Yonhap news ("ROK-US OPEN ALLIANCE TALKS", 2005-04-06) reported that the ROK and the US opened defense talks aimed at readjusting their half-century military alliance. The allies began the two-day military talks in Hawaii, called the Security Policy Initiative, to discuss US moves to expand the role of its 32,500 troops in the ROK and other pending bilateral military issues. Washington officials said they will transform the US Forces in Korea into mobile regional "stabilizers" to check the PRC and other potential regional military threats. The US actions prompted security concerns among some South Koreans, but the US says its commitment to its major Asian ally will not be weakened.

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17. ROK Military Cooperation with the PRC and Russia

Donga Ilbo ("PROPOSED BUREAU TO OVERSEE MILITARY TIES WITH CHINA AND RUSSIA", 2005-04-06) reported that it was confirmed that the Ministry of National Defense is planning to create a policy desk, provisionally dubbed the Department of Northeast Asian Policy, to oversee military cooperation with the PRC and Russia. The drive comes on the heels of a recent policy announcement by defense minister Yoon Kwang-ung to strengthen military ties with the PRC, as a follow-up military gesture to supplement President Roh Moo-hyun's design to position Korea as a "balancing force in the Northeast Asian region." The plan is expected to have profound repercussions on the existing ROK-US alliance.

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18. PRC on ROK Foreign Policy

Korea Times ("CHINA SUPPORTS S. KOREA'S BALANCING ROLE", 2005-04-06) reported that the PRC's top diplomat in Seoul said his country supports the ROK's plan to play the role of a "balancer" in Northeast Asia as long as it contributes to peace and prosperity in the region. Ambassador Li Bin stressed that there would be no co-prosperity in Northeast Asia if regional actors are caught in a Cold War mentality of the last century. "China will give unreserved support to South Korea if it plays a positive role in the peace and prosperity of Northeast Asia, though it is not clear, so far, as to how the 'balancer' role will go in future," he said.

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19. Japanese Textbook Issue

Washington Post ("JAPANESE SCHOOLBOOKS ANGER S. KOREA, CHINA", 2005-04-06) reported that the Education Ministry approved a controversial new series of school textbooks that critics say whitewash Japan's militaristic past. The PRC ambassador, Wang Yi, lodged a protest with Japan's Foreign Ministry, while officials in Beijing blamed a violent anti-Japanese protest there over the

weekend on Japan's "irresponsible attitude" toward history. Outrage was fiercest in the ROK, where President Roh Moo Hyun has warned of a "diplomatic war" with Japan.

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20. PRC, ROK on Japanese Textbook Issue

Joongang Ilbo ("KEY MINISTERS FROM KOREA, CHINA CONFER OVER JAPAN", 2005-04-06) reported that the ROK and PRC appeared to have a meeting of the minds in Pakistan about how the two countries will now approach ties with Japan. In talks in Islamabad, the ROK's foreign minister, Ban Ki-moon, met with Li Zhaoxing, his PRC counterpart, on the sidelines of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue. The ministers exchanged views over ruptures with Tokyo caused by a territorial dispute with Seoul and the approval of textbooks, which the ROK and the PRC have denounced for whitebring Japan's acts during World War II.

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21. ROK on Japanese Textbook Issue

Kyodo News ("S. KOREA SUMMONS JAPANESE AMBASSADOR, PROTESTS TEXTBOOK", 2005-0-06) reported that the ROK government summoned Japanese Ambassador Toshiyuki Takano to the Foreign Ministry on Wednesday and filed a formal protest over Japan's adoption of a junior high school civic study text that says the ROK is 'illegally occupying' a disputed island in the Sea of Japan. In a meeting with Takano, Vice Foreign Minister Lee Tae Sik also demanded that Japan 'immediately delete' references in some history textbooks to Japan's sovereignty over the ROK-held island, called Tokto in the ROK and Takeshima in Japan.

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22. PRC on Japanese Textbook Issue

Reuters ("CHINA SHOPS BOYCOTT JAPAN GOODS IN HISTORY BOOK ROW", 2005-04-06) reported that some PRC shops have stopped selling selected Japanese goods in protest against Tokyo's approval of a school history book they say whitebres Japan's militaristic past, an industry official said. The China Chain Store & Franchise Association, the largest retail group in the country, had urged members to take products made by Asahi Breweries Ltd. and MSG maker Ajinomoto Co. Inc. off the shelves, the association said in a statement. "Any Chinese customers with patriotic spirit and morality will understand and support us. Let's take action for our dignity and for our descendants," the association said in a statement.

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23. Japan on Textbook Issue

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN HITS BACK AT CHINA OVER TEXTBOOKS AS SOUTH KOREA PROTESTS", 2005-04-06) reported that Japan's decision Tuesday to approve a textbook which both the PRC and ROK say glosses over Japanese wartime atrocities has opened old wounds in East Asia. However Koreshige Anami, Japan's envoy to Beijing, responded to the protest with robust criticism of the PRC government. "Anami expressed concern about recent anti-Japanese demonstrations in various cities in China," an embassy spokesman told AFP. "He asked the Chinese authorities to take necessary measures to protect Japanese people and companies' activities in China."

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24. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT SEEKS TO COOL CHINA FEVER", 2005-04-06) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian has asked his government to investigate any unauthorized contacts with the PRC and review the island's trade policy with its arch foe. Chen met his cabinet and officials of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party late on Tuesday after last week's fence-mending visit to the PRC by the opposition Nationalist Party, which is also known as the Kuomintang. In remarks clearly aimed at the KMT, which favors eventual unification with the PRC, Chen said no political party, group, or individual had the right to bypass the government and deal with Beijing.

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25. Hong Kong Elections

The New York Times ("HONG KONG LEADERS ASK BEIJING FOR RULING ON TERM LIMIT", 2005-04-06) reported that the Hong Kong government asked the PRC government today to issue a legally binding decision on how long the next chief executive will serve here, a decision that would mark the third time Beijing has directly intervened in the legal system here. Democracy advocates strongly criticized the government for seeking the interpretation, saying that it represented another surrender of part of Hong Kong's autonomy and undermined the rule of law here. But Donald Tsang, the acting chief executive here, said that a binding decision from Beijing was needed to make sure that legal challenges did not prevent elections for the next chief executive from being held as scheduled on July 10.

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26. Sino-Colombian Relations

The Associated Press ("COLOMBIAN LEADER PROMOTES TRADE IN CHINA", 2005-04-06) reported that Colombia's president met top PRC leaders Wednesday during a visit to boost trade, seek financing for an oil pipeline and to promote sales of Colombian coal to fuel the PRC's booming economy. "We hope that the integration of Colombia with this great nation of China happens as quickly as possible," Colombian President Alvaro Uribe told the PRC's President Hu Jintao in a meeting.

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27. US on PRC Clean Energy

The Associated Press ("U.S. PRESSES CHINA ON CLEANER ENERGY", 2005-04-06) reported that a US energy official was in Beijing on Wednesday seeking PRC investment to build the first zero-emissions coal-fired power plant. The US government research project, called FutureGen, would turn coal into gas before burning it and then trap pollutants so they aren't released into the atmosphere. "I invite China to be among the first to join FutureGen," said Mark Maddox, deputy assistant secretary of energy, in a text of remarks he made to PRC officials.

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II. Japan

28. CanKor # 201

CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("DPRK CATHOLICS GRIEVE FOR POPE", 2005-04-06) Catholics in the DPRK send condolences to the Vatican and hold memorial services at the Pyongyang cathedral in honour of the late Pope John Paul II.

[\(return to top\)](#) CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("BIRD FLU STRAIN IN DPRK OUTBREAK "FIRST FOR ASIA"", 2005-04-06) An outbreak of bird flu leads to the culling of over 200,000 chickens in food-insecure North Korea. South Korea takes measures to prevent the spread of the flu across the DMZ. FAO experts discover a virus strain not previously detected in Asia. The outbreak has not so far affected humans. [\(return to top\)](#) CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS TO WFP FOOD MONITORING", 2005-0-06) In the previous issue of CanKor we reported that the DPRK had requested the United Nations to close the Pyongyang branch of Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). On his return from a recent visit, WFP Asia Region Director Tony Banbury says that the DPRK government misunderstood the role of OCHA. Subsequent clarifications have led to agreement to maintain the office. Banbury also describes monitoring issues discussed with DPRK authorities, excerpts of which are included in this issue. [\(return to top\)](#) CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("PROTECT DPRK REFUGEES: UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR", 2005-04-06) The 61st session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva is contemplating another EU resolution on human rights in the DPRK. Special Rapporteur Vitit Muntarbhorn makes his first report, recommending protection for North Korean refugee-defectors in China and Russia. The DPRK representative at the meeting accuses the EU of "jumping on the US bandwagon" of anti-North Korean policies. [\(return to top\)](#)

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