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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Six Party Talks

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA SAYS DENUCLEARIZATION IMPOSSIBLE UNTIL U.S. WITHDRAWS HOSTILITY", 2006-03-29) reported that the DPRK on Wednesday said denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula would be impossible unless the US first abandons its hostility toward the state. "The dangerous war exercise, which destroys the negotiation framework to resolve the nuclear issue between North Korea and the United States, is seriously threatening the security of our nation as well as the nation's work toward national unification," Rodong Sinmun, an official newspaper of the North's Workers' Party, said in a commentary. "The conflicts and frictions between North Korea and the United States around the six-party talks over the nuclear issue are currently showing no signs of resolution while the situation is getting worse by the day," the commentary said. "The situation is now getting more tense than ever before and the outlook of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula growing dim due to the United States' hostile policy and maneuvers to start a war against North Korea," it added.

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2. US on Six Party Talks

Yonhap News ("SENIOR U.S. OFFICIAL QUESTIONS N.K. SINCERITY ON NUKE TALKS", 2006-0-29) reported that a senior US official seriously questioned the DPRK's commitment to the six-party nuclear agreement with a repeated warning against the regime's illicit activities. Stephen Rademaker, acting assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation, said the US was committed to the six-nation negotiations, which he said was the "key component" to Washington's strategy.

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3. ROK on Six Party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("UNIFICATION MINISTER DECRIES UNFOCUSED APPROACH TO NUCLEAR ISSUE", 2006-03-29) reported that ROK Unification Minister Lee Jong-seok -- regarding a previous statement in which he referenced what he called "extremely subtle changes taking place on the peninsula" -- explained Wednesday, "We are witnessing a trend in which various nations are seeking to tack their mid- and long-term strategies for the Korean Peninsula onto the preexisting North Korean nuclear issue in their attempts to settle the matter." Lee also said "It is true that such a trend may provide us with certain opportunities but it is certain that it also makes those countries less attentive to resolving the North's nuclear problems." In other words, the US, rather than putting the focus solely on the DPRK's nuclear issue, as it used to, is now poised to raise other DPRK issues such as the counterfeiting of US dollars, human rights abuses and drugs.

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4. Scholar on Six Party Talks

Yonhap News ("CHINA 'WINNER' OF SIX-PARTY TALKS REGARDLESS OF OUTCOME: SCHOLAR", 2006-03-29) reported that Gilbert Rozman, a sociology professor at Princeton University, said the

six-party talks will benefit the PRC, even if they fail to resolve the dispute. "The U.S. is mismanaging the crisis, South Korea is drawing closer (to China), Japan is being more alienated from Asia, Russia is relying more on China on this crisis," he said in his lecture at American University in Washington. "China is the winner whether the crisis continues or the crisis resolves." DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is nervous about relying on the PRC but "has no choice," according to the professor.

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5. US Democrats on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap News ("U.S. DEMOCRATS VOW REDOUBLED EFFORTS TO STOP N.K. NUCLEAR BUILDUP", 2006-03-29) reported that US Democrats on Wednesday presented national security plans that include redoubling efforts to stop the DPRK's nuclear weapons development. In what they called a comprehensive plan for providing "real" security that contrasts with the Republicans, Democratic Party leaders called for doubling the size of US Special Forces and increasing human intelligence capabilities.

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6. DPRK on US Pressure

Associated Press ("N. KOREA WARNS U.S. WILL PAY HIGH PRICE FOR PRESSURING IT", 2006-0-28) reported that the DPRK warned Tuesday that Washington's pressure tactics won't work against the state and said the US will pay a "high price" for its actions. "The U.S. is calculating that it can achieve its intended purpose if it ties up our hands and legs and stifles us," said the DPRK's Minju Joson newspaper in a commentary, carried by the KCNA. "This is a policy error and mistake that can be committed only by the Bush administration that belittles the other side and has overconfidence in itself." The DPRK's newspaper said the country won't give in to US pressure. "We make this clear that the U.S. will pay a high price for all consequences," the commentary said, without elaborating.

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7. Inter-Korean Industrial Cooperation

Reuters ("S.KOREA PLANS FIRST IMPORTS OF IRON ORE FROM NORTH", 2006-03-29) reported that the ROK plans to receive its first shipment of iron ore from the DPRK in May, an official said on Wednesday, marking a significant step in a newly formed relationship between the two Koreas. The iron shipment will come at about the same time as a shipment of graphite from the DPRK, the official from the ROK's state run Korea Resources Corporation said. The iron ore will come from a mine northwest of Pyongyang that has been developed by Korea Resources Corporation and a PRC state-run company, the official said.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap News ("N. KOREA TO HOLD INVESTOR RELATIONS SESSION FOR S. KOREAN FIRMS", 2006-03-29) reported that the DPRK is pushing to hold an investor relations session in late April for ROK businesses interested in exploring mineral resources in the DPRK, the Seoul-based Korea Resources Corp. (KRC) said Wednesday. According to KRC officials, the DPRK's National Economic Cooperation Federation is planning to invite about 110 representatives from the Korea Development Bank, Export-Import Bank of Korea, Daewoo International and other ROK institutions to the IR session slated for April 28 in Pyongyang. [\(return to top\)](#)

8. Japan on DPRK Abductions

Kyodo News ("ENGLISH PAMPHLET ON ABDUCTIONS UPDATED FOR KIN'S U.S. TRIP ", 2006-0-29) reported that the Foreign Ministry of Japan said Wednesday it has updated an English-language pamphlet on the DPRK's abductions of Japanese nationals and presented copies of it to the abductees' relatives to take with them on a trip to the US next month. "I'd like to distribute (the pamphlets) to all those concerned so that their understanding on the abduction issue would be deepened," said Shigeru Yokota, who heads the group of abductees' families.

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9. ROK-Uzbek Joint Energy Projects

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA EYES OIL FIELD DEVELOPMENT IN UZBEKISTAN", 2006-03-29) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun and the visiting president of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov met at Cheong Wa Dae on Wednesday and agreed to develop the relationship between the countries to the level of a strategic partnership. The two heads of state agreed a plan for joint exploration of two possible oil fields and one gas field and decided to jointly develop a second.

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10. USFJ Realignment

The Asahi Shimbun ("U.S. FLIGHT DRILLS TO BE DISPERSED", 2006-03-23) reported that Tokyo and Washington plan to disperse drills involving fighter jets at three US bases but will scrap the limit on the number of joint flight drills at Air-Self Defense Force bases. The relocation of the drills to five ASDF bases and the Misawa base will start in autumn and be implemented on a full scale from fiscal 2007, according to the DFAA officials.

[\(return to top\)](#) The Japan Times ("NATION SPLIT ON COST", 2006-03-28) reported that roughly one in two Japanese polled over the weekend said they were not keen on the idea of shouldering some of the cost of relocating US Marines from Okinawa to Guam, a Kyodo News survey released Monday showed. The poll showed 51.3 percent were negative about the cost sharing, with 37 percent saying Japan should not be shouldering too much of the cost and 14.3 percent saying Tokyo should not finance any part of the move. [\(return to top\)](#) Kyodo ("JAPAN, U.S. TO MEET NEXT TUES. FOR REALIGNMENT TALKS: ASO", 2006-03-29) reported that Japan and the US will hold subcabinet-level talks for three days from next Tuesday in a bid to finalize a package to realign US forces in Japan, Foreign Minister Taro Aso said. [\(return to top\)](#)

11. Japan SDF Information Leakage

The Japan Times ("DEFENSE AGENCY PROBES LEAKS ABOUT CHINA INTEL", 2006-03-26) reported that the Japanese Defense Agency has conducted an internal probe into what it says are media leaks that resulted in two newspaper reports detailing PRC military operations last May and September. The investigation was prompted by a series of rare complaints about leaks from the agency's intelligence division.

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12. Japan Nuclear Power

Kyodo ("GENKAI, SAGA GRANT REQUEST TO BURN MOX", 2006-03-29) reported that the mayor of Genkai and the governor of Saga Prefecture told Kyushu Electric Power Co. President Shingo Matsuo on Sunday that they will grant the utility's request to use the controversial uranium-an-plutonium mixed oxide fuel called MOX in the Genkai nuclear power plant.

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13. Japan on Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Chosun Ilbo ("KOIZUMI FLAGS YET ANOTHER VISIT TO WAR SHRINE", 2006-03-29) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi says he would like to pay another visit to a controversial war shrine in Tokyo before his term ends in September.

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14. Japan Textbook Issue

Kyodo ("NEW TEXTBOOKS REFLECT GOV'T VIEWS ON DISPUTED ISLES, HISTORY", 2006-03-29) reported that many Japanese senior high school textbooks have ended up reflecting the government's views on issues such as disputed territories and history-related matters after the education ministry wrapped up its annual textbook screening. The ministry asked for revisions to the majority of references made to two sets of islands disputed with the ROK and PRC, saying they should be clearly referred to as Japanese territory, ministry officials said. It also requested modifications to passages on the number of victims in the 1937 Nanjing Massacre in the PRC, as well as a caption which said Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi made an "official" visit to Yasukuni Shrine.

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15. Japan-Mongolia Relations

Kyodo ("JAPAN TO PROVIDE MONGOLIA WITH 2.98 BILLION YEN IN LOANS", 2006-03-28) reported that Japan and Mongolia signed an agreement Tuesday for Japan to provide Mongolia with about 2.98 billion yen in yen-denominated loans on projects to develop small and medium-size enterprises and protect the environment.

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16. PRC Land Rights

Xinhua News Agency, translated by CDT ("CHINA SAYS ABSENCE FOR WORK IN CITY NOT EXCUSE TO SEIZE LAND - TIAN YU", 2006-03-29) reported that a document released by the State Council stresses that the absence of migrant workers who work in cities is not an excuse to seize their contracted land. The transfer of land usage should be practiced on the legal, voluntary and compensated basis. No organization or individual shall force, restrict or seize the benefits of land transfers, the document emphasizes.

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17. PRC Rural Debt

Xinhua News Agency, translated by CDT ("VILLAGE AND TOWNSHIP DEBTS A NEW SOURCE OF POTENTIAL INSTABILITY - GE RUJIANG", 2006-03-29) reported that village and township debts, after the rural taxation reform, has become a key potential source of complaints from village cadres and rural instability. It is learned that, by 2004, the country's total amount of debts at the village and township levels went behind 600 billion renminbi, or \$75 billion.

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18. PRC Environment

The Los Angeles Times ("CHINA ROLE SEEN IN ILLEGAL TIMBER TRADE", 2006-03-29) reported that global demand for cheap consumer wood products has turned the PRC into the center of a thriving illegal timber trade that is wiping out some of the world's most endangered forests, the environmental group Greenpeace charged.

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