

BULLETIN

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NORTH ASIA - ASIE DU NORD

CHINA/CHINE

- The Public Security Ministry announced last week the release of 97 additional persons who had been detained since last year's June 4th crackdown. This is the third group of persons released, bringing the total to 881. Official figures indicate 334 still remain in detention.

- China showed signs of an improving trade position, recording a US\$ 380 million surplus in May, as tough austerity programmes sent imports tumbling. This was the third month in a row the country registered a favourable trade balance, bringing the nation's surplus for the year to US\$ 1.8 billion. In 1989, China recorded a deficit of US\$ 6.5 billion.

- Various media reports indicate the leadership of China's 3.5 million-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been reshuffled to "ensure its loyalty to the Communist Party". It is believed a group of 10 elderly cadres now has control of the PLA, taking over from the Central Military Commission under Jiang Zemin who has no military background.

- The Vice-Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Chen Yaobang will attend a session of the Canada-China Joint Agricultural Committee in Ottawa, June 18-19. The meeting is a working-level visit on technical matters and will not deal with bilateral policy matters.

- A.T. and T, the American telecommunications company is reported to have signed a contract with China Electronic System Equipment Corporation (CESEC) for the supply of digital telephone exchanges.

- The first phase of a potash plant, the largest of its kind in China, has begun operation in Qinghai Province. The plant has a designed annual capacity of 200,000 tons and is in an area with an estimated 370 million tons of Potassium Chloride reserves.

JAPAN/JAPON

- Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party has failed to win a key by-election which would have made it easier for the party to control the Upper House of the Diet. Shigeko Mieno of the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP) won over Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) candidate Tokuhiko Sumiyoshi by an unexpectedly high margin of 120,000 votes. The election result is expected to give momentum to the JSP for the upcoming debates on the Consumption Tax and controversial farm policies.

- La visite du ministre soviétique des Affaires étrangères, M. Shevardnadze qui devait avoir lieu en mars, est reportée à la première quinzaine de septembre.

- Le Japon est passé au deuxième rang des pays d'origine des investissements directs étrangers aux É.U. (après la G.-B. et devant les Pays-Bas), et ce grâce à une augmentation des investissements directs de 32.4% à ÉU\$ 70,6 milliards, soit 17,6% des investissements directs étrangers aux É.U.

- The hard-won trade harmony between Japan and the US is in danger of crumbling, as each country begins to raise doubts about the other's commitment to trade promises. Prime Minister Kaifu confirmed that Japan will refuse to set a fixed target on government spending on public works against GNP, as has been demanded by the US in the final report of the SII talks. Instead, Japan will inform the US of all large scale public works projects and how much money the Government plans to spend on these projects.

- Canada's Triple Five Corp., developers of the world's largest shopping mall in Edmonton, and a Tokyo consulting firm, Commerce System Corp., have agreed to set up a joint venture company, International Malls Inc., to develop shopping centres in Japan.