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NORTH ASIA - ASIE DU NORD

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based on media surveys in the North Asia region

JAPAN/JAPON

- L'association des constructeurs automobiles japonais a annoncé que les ventes de véhicules avaient baissé en février dernier de 7,1% sur la même période l'année dernière. C'est la troisième baisse mensuelle consécutive.

- The *Economist* will launch a bi-weekly Japanese language edition next year.

- La direction de Toyota a offert une augmentation de 4,8% alors que, comme prévu, le secteur des appareils électriques offre 4,6%.

- The Bank of Japan cut the discount rate to 3.75% on April 1. The Tokyo Stock Price Index dropped 4.1% to 1,359.67. The plunge continued for the balance of the week.

- The Export-Import Bank is considering a US\$5.25 billion loan to Bank of China to promote development of energy resources such as oil and coalfields.

- According to the National Land Agency, land prices fell 5.6% on average in 1991, the first drop in 17 years.

- Chrysler has sold nearly half of its remaining stake in Mitsubishi Motors. It now owns 5.88% of Mitsubishi, down from a high of 24%.

CHINA/CHINE

- President Yang Shangkun will pay a goodwill visit to North Korea from April 13 to 17.

- China is considering opening its inland oilfields to foreign firms. Foreign firms are currently restricted to the South China Sea.

- Le ministère de la justice a annoncé que les juristes étrangers, pourront dorénavant à titre expérimental exercer indépendamment la profession d'avocat. Ce changement renforcera la protection des intérêts légaux des investisseurs étrangers, et promouvra la compétitivité de la profession juridique chinoise, aussi que le processus de réforme et d'ouverture.

- Vice Premier Tian Jiyun predicts that China's annual foreign trade volume will reach \$200 billion by 1996. Last year's figure was \$135.7 billion.

-China's northern Heilongjiang province will accelerate economic cooperation with the bordering Russian federation. Compared with the same period in 1991, border trade jumped 63% in January/February.

MONGOLIA/MONGOLIE

- D. Jigird, Energy Minister, has said that Mongolia's chronic energy difficulties of the "long, hard winter will be followed by a capricious spring".

- Prime minister Byambasuren travelled to Western Europe and Russia in February and March as part of Mongolia's efforts to expand trade relations with the West and regularize precarious trade links with Moscow.

KOREA/CORÉE

- The presidential nominating convention for the ruling Democratic Liberal Party will be held May 19. Factions opposed to the candidacy of executive chairman Kim Young-sam are manoeuvring to put up a