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NORTH ASIA - ASIE DU NORD

based on media surveys in the North Asia region

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JAPAN

- Russian sources in Tokyo said on the 12th that President Yeltsin may hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Miyazawa on the margins of the July Tokyo Summit. While official negotiations would not be held on the Northern Territories dispute, there were conflicting reports about whether it would be on the agenda.

- According to a report released on the 6th by the Finance Ministry, Japan's trade surplus in 1992 amounted to a record high of 126.76 billion dollars, up 39.7% from the previous year.

- Prime Minister Miyazawa stressed at the Lower House's plenary session on the 11th that Japan does not intend to terminate its peacekeeping operations in Cambodia and withdraw its mission. Foreign Minister Muto added that the Government will not withdraw the mission even after the election.

- Le 11, six membres des forces d'auto-défense japonaises ont quitté Tokyo pour participer aux opérations onusiennes de maintien de la paix au Mozambique. Les autres membres de l'unité japonaise de l'ONUMOZ (53 au total) les rejoindront le 17 mai.

HONG KONG

- Le Gouverneur Patten est rentré à Hong Kong le 9 mai, satisfait d'avoir pu bien livrer son message à Washington à propos des préoccupations commerciales de Hong Kong mais pessimiste sur les chances que la Chine puisse échapper à un renouvellement conditionnel de son statut de Nation-la-plus-favorisée. Il a affirmé que l'échéance du 3 juin

serait cruciale pour le futur des relations sino-américaines.

- China and Britain struck their first deal for months on May 11 by agreeing to release 127.8 hectares of Hong Kong land for development in the current financial year. They failed to agree, however, to make land available for the controversial container terminal 9 project, which was resubmitted after approval given in last year's land disposal programme lapsed.

- Follow-through buying on a wave of optimism over the future of Sino-British relations blasted the Hang Seng index past the 7,000-point barrier on May 12, sending Hong Kong's brokers into a spin as property stocks made record gains.

- Hong Kong's gross domestic product grew an average 5% over 1992.

CHINA/CHINE

- The official media gave low-key coverage to a May 4 mortar attack on a Chinese engineering unit serving with the UN Peacekeeping mission in Cambodia. No casualties were reported. All the Cambodian factions except the Khmer Rouge met again in Beijing, on May 6, to seek a total cease-fire prior to the May 23 elections.

- According to a survey published in the official media, 63% of Chinese workers approve of further market-based economic reforms. 77% thought success of the reforms would depend on development of political democracy, which in turn they thought would

depend on building up the legal system.

- Siégeant en plénière, la Jeunesse communiste (JC) a élu un nouveau leader. Li Keqiang, 37 ans, diplômé en droit et en économie, est un réformiste qui a été, dans les années 80, un protégé du Secrétaire général du Parti, Hu Yaobang. La JC s'est engagée à faire de son mieux pour promouvoir le programme de réforme.

- The State Economic and Trade Commission Minister, in widely-reported remarks, stated that China should be able to hold inflation to 8% in 1993, but called for restraint in investment in fixed assets and indicated that the Government might readjust interest rates.

- Le "Quotidien du Peuple" rapporte, le 10 mai, que le Conseil d'État a approuvé 7 nouvelles zones technologiques et économiques 'ouvertes' dans les villes de Shenyang, Hangzhou, Wuhuan, Harbin, Chongqing, Changchun et Wuhu. Suite à une explosion dans le nombre de zones ouvertes, le gouvernement a prévenu les régions que toute nouvelle zone devra être approuvée par les autorités centrales.

TAIWAN/TAÏWAN

- A recent poll indicates that Taiwan residents' support for independence has reached a record high. 24% indicated they were in favour of Taiwan independence, compared to 15% last October. The same poll indicates that, following the historic PRC-Taiwan talks, 53% of respondents still view the former as an enemy, 48% said the it seemed unlikely to invade Taiwan by force, and 55% believed the it would invade if Taiwan declares independence.

- Following the signing of four agreements, April 28, during the PRC-Taiwan talks in Singapore, Taiwan legislators and officials are disputing over whether the agreements need to be approved by the legislative Yuan, or whether the Yuan should merely be notified of them.

- The Taiwan media report that the Dalai Lama has agreed to visit Taiwan soon, at the invitation of the World League for Freedom and Democracy.

KOREA/CORÉE

- The United Nations Security Council, on May 11, called on North Korea to open military sites to nuclear inspectors and reconsider its decision to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The vote was 13-0, with China and Pakistan abstaining. During the debate, the North Korean Ambassador warned that his country would take "corresponding self defensive measures" in the face of any Security Council pressure.

- The South Korean Foreign Ministry described the 11 may UN Security Council resolution on the North Korean nuclear inspections issue as "timely and appropriate". President Kim noted that the abstention by China "carries an immense meaning".

- Maintenant que les États-Unis s'apprentent à permettre les relations commerciales avec le Vietnam, les quatre principaux conglomérats coréens, Samsung, Hyundai, Lucky-Goldstar et Daewoo prévoient faire progresser leur programme vietnamien.

ONGOING AND UPCOMING/ A VENIR 1993

- Canada-China Joint Economic and Trade Committee (Ottawa); May 17-18

- CONSUMER CHINA 93 (Guangzhou); June 8-13,

- World Economic Forum: Europe/East Asia Conference (Hong Kong); October 13-15

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