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BULLETIN

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NORTH ASIA - ASIE DU NORD

based on media surveys in the North Asia region

JAPAN

- The Japanese economy remains in a slump, the Economic Planning Agency said in a monthly survey of statistics. The report said personal consumption is still growing, but ever so slowly, and three major components of it, department stores sales, auto sales and tourism are all in decline. The only encouraging data, EPA said, are housing starts and public spending- and even the housing sector slowed a bit last month.

- D'après un sondage du réseau de télévision publique NHK, un nombre croissant de Japonais semblent prêts à voir la constitution changer sur la question militaire. Le sondage, mené auprès de 1 213 adultes, les 6 et 7 mars, révèle que 38% des répondants sont en faveur d'un changement, soit 7% de plus que lors d'un sondage précédent en septembre, tandis que 34% s'y opposent, une baisse de 13%. L'agence de nouvelles n'a pas donné de détails sur les questions ou les changements particuliers souhaités par les répondants.

- At a state dinner with Prime Minister Miyazawa, Philippines President Fidel Ramos said he supports Japan's bid for a permanent seat at the U.N. Security Council.

HONG KONG

- A political optimism and strong performances on overseas markets sent the Hang Seng index crashing back through the 6,500 point level on March 9. With record highs recorded in London and Wall Street, foreign money flooded into Hong Kong, pushing the Blue Chip index to an all-time closing high of 6,508.

- According to a survey by the association of expatriate civil servants, about two-thirds of expatriate civil servants on contracts would remain in the civil service even if it meant downgrading their terms to those of locals. Government would be pressed to give expats the chance to opt for local pensionable terms when their contracts expire.

- Hong Kong's monetary links with its future sovereign master took another step closer on 10th March with the announcement by Governor Patten that a senior Bank of China official had been appointed to the board which oversees the territory's \$230 billion-plus in foreign currency reserves. The move is seen as significant both in symbol and substance.

CHINA/CHINE

- Le Premier Ministre Li Peng a profité de l'occasion fournie par la visite de la Chambre de Commerce de Hong Kong, le 5 mars, pour réitérer l'engagement de la Chine envers la prospérité future du Territoire et déclarer le consentement de la Chine à discuter les réformes démocratiques proposées par Patten.

- An editorial in the People's Daily has called for reforms to be further accelerated, arguing that economic restructuring problems which appeared over the past year can only be solved by going even further in the direction of reform.

- Les journaux ont abondamment couvert les commentaires faits à l'éditeur en chef du "US News and World Report" par le Secrétaire

Général du Parti, Jiang Zemin, mettant l'emphase sur l'importance que la Chine accorde à sa relation avec les États-Unis. Bien que la rencontre ait eu lieu le 23 février, les commentaires de Jiang n'ont été rapportés que le 10 mars.

TAIWAN/TAÏWAN

- A Recent poll indicates that 34% of people in Taiwan believe the KMT will be driven from power by the opposition DPP win in February election in Penghu Island, considered a KMT candidates would lose in election for mayors and county magistrates slated for late 1993.

- According to Taiwan government statistics, 62% of Taiwanese broke the law in 1992, and crime has risen by an annual rate of over 40% over the last three years. Of Taiwan's 16 million people over the age of 14, 10 million were either incarcerated, issued traffic tickets, fined for environmental pollution or charged with tax evasion last year. 70% of motorists were charged with traffic violations.

- Des accusations ont été portées contre 27 personnes suite à la fraude électorale lors des élections législatives de décembre à Hualien. Parmi les accusés se trouve le candidat du KMT Wei Mu-tsun qui est présentement maire de Hualien.

- Le Canada a signé une entente avec les États-Unis permettant à l'uranium canadien d'être enrichi aux États-Unis puis expédié à Taiwan pour être utilisé dans des réacteurs nucléaires. Ceci permettra à l'uranium canadien d'entrer maintenant sur le marché taiwanais.

KOREA/CORÉE

- President Kim Young Sam replaced three cabinet ministers - Justice, Construction and Health-Social Affairs - 8 March in a bid to calm the controversy over past illegal or unethical activities by some of his top government appointees. Health and Social Affairs Minister Mrs. Park Yang-Sil was dismissed as early as 08 March following suspicions that she had amassed a huge undisclosed fortune through real estate

speculation. This, along with other scandals related to other recent appointments, has led the government to decide to conduct thorough background checks on all Cabinet and other senior appointments. Kim also sacked Seoul Mayor, Kim Sang-Chul

- US and South Korean troops began 10 days of joint military exercises 09 March with a large pre-dawn mock amphibious assault near Pohang on the West Coast, as North Korea placed its entire army on full alert. The exercises are amongst the largest held anywhere involving more than 120,000 U.S. and South Korean troops.

- D'après des sources occidentales, la Chine tente maintenant de convaincre la Corée du Nord d'accepter les inspections spéciales de ces deux installations nucléaires par l'Agence Atomique Internationale, et ce avant l'échéance du 9 Mars. Entre temps, la Corée du Nord s'est maintenant retirée du Traité de non-prolifération.

ONGOING AND UPCOMING/ A VENIR 1993

- Exhibition "Selected Treasures of Canadian craft" (Taipei); February 13-March 21

- Asian Development Bank Annual Meeting (Manila); May 4-6

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

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

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