

NORTH ASIA - ASIE DU NORD

JAPAN/JAPON

- Prime Minister Kaifu has decided to send Japanese minesweepers to the Persian Gulf. The four minesweepers, command ship and supply vessel will set out following ratification of the decision by the National Security Council on April 26.

- Finance Minister Hashimoto has informed USA Treasury Secretary Brady that Japan does not intend to make up the US\$ 400 million shortfall in its Gulf War contribution caused by the decreased value of the yen. Japan has indicated that it would consider providing aid for Kurdish refugees and to the new Multilateral Investment Fund for private investment in Latin America to compensate for the shortfall.

- The visit by Soviet President Gorbachev to Japan has resulted in the release of a joint communique acknowledging the difficulty of the Northern Islands sovereignty issue without offering any concrete solutions. In his address to the Diet April 17, Gorbachev called for a security conference among the USA, the USSR, China, India and Japan.

- Le Japon va commencer d'ici mars prochain 1992, la construction de son premier centre d'entraînement entièrement consacré à la préparation des astronautes. Le centre formera des astronautes japonais, américains, canadiens et européens.

- Le comité sur les problèmes de la condition féminine a remis à M. Kaifu son rapport, préconisant un certain nombre de mesures à prendre d'ici cinq ans, dont la possibilité pour les femmes de conserver leur nom et l'augmentation à 15% de la proportion des femmes dans les commissions consultatives gouvernementales.

KOREA/CORÉE

- The Korean Government has announced that it will raise its official beef quota to 84,000 MT and an additional 3,000 MT of pork will be allowed into the market in an effort to stabilize food and livestock prices and keep inflation down.

- According to the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), Korea's economy will likely grow 8 percent in the second quarter of this year, compared with an estimated 7.1 per cent growth in the first quarter. KCCI based its predictions on the stabilization of oil prices due to the end of the Gulf War and the expected global economic recovery.

- The USA principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for

International Security Affairs said that 6,987 USA soldiers would be withdrawn from South Korea by the end of 1992.

- La Corée du Sud et l'URSS vont signer un accord visant à développer leur coopération dans la promotion de l'utilisation de l'énergie atomique à des fins pacifiques.

- President Roh, Tae Woo initiated the ground-breaking for Taejon's EXPO '93, the first international exposition to be held in a developing country.

- NORTH KOREA: North Korea's fiscal budget for 1991 will reach 17.3 billion dollars, a rise of 4 per cent in revenues and an increase of 4.5 per cent in expenditures. Military expenses for 1991 are estimated at 12.3 per cent of the total budget compared to 12.1 per cent in 1990.

CHINA/CHINE

- During a visit to Peking April 12-15, former USA President Carter urged Chinese leaders to release jailed dissidents and not to reject international criticism of China's human rights abuses. Chinese leaders, including Prime Minister Li Peng, told Carter that the right of existence and development are the two most important human rights issues in China.

- In his annual press conference on April 9, PM Li Peng asserted that given similar circumstances to those which occurred in Tiananmen Square in June 1989, he would again employ "resolute action" to preserve stability. Li also confirmed that former party Secretary General, Zhao Ziyang remains under investigation for attempting to split the party.

- Le nouveau vice-premier ministre, Zhu Rongji, est en visite officielle en France, après l'Italie, les Pays-Bas et la Belgique.

- The Canadian Chemetics International Co. Ltd. has won contracts worth US\$ 16.32 million to build a fertilizer plant in Anhui province and a chemical plant in Hubei province. EDC has agreed to lend up to US\$ 16.32 million to the Bank of China for the projects.

- Le ministre des Affaires Étrangères de la France effectuera une visite en Chine du 29 avril au 01 mai.

HONG KONG

- Sino-British senior officials talks aimed at resolving the current impasse over Hong Kong's ambitious port and airport development strategy (PADS) concluded April 13 without reaching a conclusion. The main impediments to agreement remain the potential drain on Hong Kong's financial reserve and China's role in Hong Kong's decision making process in the run up to 1997.

- China's party Secretary General Jiang Zemin has taken over all of China's relations with Hong Kong including the controversial airport project. It has not yet been decided when the next round of airport talks will take place.

- Hong Kong's reexports to most of its major markets recorded a modest rise in 1990. China remains the major source of reexports, accounting for 27 per cent of the territory's total 1990 reexport trade.

- Pan Zengxi, vice-directeur de l'agence Chine Nouvelle, a été relevé de sa poste à Hong Kong. Aucune explication officielle n'a été communiquée sur son départ.

- Taipei has opened a new trade office in Hong Kong to promote economic cooperation with the territory and the mainland. The office will be called the Taipei Trade Centre of Hong Kong. It is the second office established in Hong Kong by the China External Trade Development Council.

TAIWAN

- Les exportations de Taiwan vers l'Europe orientale se sont accrues de 24% cette année. La majorité de ces exportations est allée vers la Pologne, la Hongrie et l'URSS.

- The dyeing industry lobby in Taiwan has succeeded in relaxing the deadline for departure from Taiwan of all illegal workers. The Council of Labour Affairs has agreed to permit foreign workers to remain in Taiwan for another three months to cover the "busy season" of April to June.

- Taiwan has drafted a bill defining a 200 nautical mile "exclusive economic zone" beginning from a "baseline" which authorities claim has been marked in accordance with United Nations Law of the Sea guidelines.

ONGOING AND UPCOMING/A VENIR

-Festival Canada--Hong Kong June 18-July 1. Two week multidimensional festival (trade, public affairs, academic, cultural). For info contact Georgina Wainwright at (613) 992-8077.

-Great Canada '91--Tokyo, July 1-14. Two week cultural festival featuring Canadian visual and performing arts. For info contact Georgina Wainwright at (613)992-8077.

-Foodex -- Osaka, Japan, Sept 17-20. Contact Greg Bates at (613)995-8628.

The North Asia Bulletin is produced weekly by the North Asia Relations Division. Le Bulletin de l'Asie du nord est un hebdomadaire rédigé par la Direction des relations avec l'Asie du nord. Circulation-Delores Latoche-613-996-0905; Editor/Éditeur-Sarah Fountain-613-943-0896; fax-613-996-4309.

