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I. Napsnet

1. US, ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Times ("S. KOREAN OFFICIAL MEETS KEY OBAMA AIDE ON NK NUKES", Washington, 2008/11/10) reported that Hwang Joon-kook, head of the the ROK Foreign Ministry's bureau dealing with the DPRK nuclear issue, met with Barack Obama foreign policy adviser Frank Jannuzi Friday to discuss the DPRK nuclear program and other issues, Yonhap News reported quoting diplomatic sources in Washington Sunday. Hwang also met with Sung Kim, head of the State Department's Korea Desk, but did not meet with DPRK Ambassador Ri Gun, the source said, noting Hwang was not invited to the seminar which both Ri, Jannuzi and Kim attended.

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2. US-DPRK Relations

Korea Herald ("N.K. WANTS TO KEEP 'MOMENTUM' IN U.S. RELATIONS", 2008/11/10) reported that diplomats said they want to maintain "the momentum" in relations with the United States during the transition to newly elected President Barack Obama, participants at a forum held Thursday and Friday organized by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy said. "I was very encouraged that the North Koreans recognize it was very important to continue the momentum - the word momentum was used - over the next three months", said Donald Zagoria, a trustee of the committee, Friday. The closed event was attended by Sung Kim, the U.S. special envoy to the six-party talks, Ri Gun, the DPRK director for North American affairs, and U.S. officials including former

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Chosun Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA 'TO MOVE DOWN OBAMA'S DIPLOMATIC AGENDA'", Washington, 2008/11/10) reported that a diplomatic source in Washington on Sunday said president-elect Barack Obama will probably give top priority to overcoming the economic crisis and subordinate all other foreign policy issues to this. "So it doesn't seem likely that the North Korean nuclear issue will get a high priority in the Obama administration," he added.

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3. DPRK-Japan Relations

Yonhap ("N. KOREA WARNS OF ULTRA-HARDLINE RESPONSE TO JAPAN SANCTIONS MOVE", Seoul, 2008/11/10) reported that the DPRK said Monday it will react in an ultra-hardline manner to Japan's move to increase sanctions. "Japan's attempt to handle our republic by putting more pressure or imposing additional sanctions itself is nonsense," Rodong Sinmun said in a commentary. "Our country has stayed alive under Japanese sanctions and built up stable grounds for a self-reliant national economy despite the persistent sanctions," it said.

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4. DPRK Leadership

BBC News ("'FAKE PHOTO' REVIVES KIM RUMOURS", 2008/11/07) reported that an analysis by the UK's Times newspaper of an image released on Wednesday of Kim Jong-il inspecting two military units highlighted incongruities around the leader's legs, and the BBC found what look like mismatched pixels. DPRK expert Dr Aidan Foster-Carter told the BBC, "They've faked pictures from way back in the day, such as ones with his father on top of Paektu Mountain. It does seem likely that he's still ill. They sometimes don't realise that what a domestic audience will accept won't necessarily work for a more sceptical international audience."

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5. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Joongang Ilbo (Ser Myo-ja, "OFFICIALS TRY TO CALM CONCERNS THAT KAESONG IS THREATENED BY THE NORTH", Seoul, 2008/11/10) reported that a five-member delegation from the DPRK's National Defense Commission inspected the Kaesong Industrial Complex on Thursday, asking ROK factory managers how long it would take for them to pull out of the site. Lieutenant General Kim Yong-Chol, leader of the delegation, stated, "I have no authority over this issue. The decision has already been made." The Lee Myung-bak administration said Sunday it will not overreact to the DPRK's every move. "The Kaesong industrial complex was ordered by the North's leader Kim Jong-il based on the June 15 and Oct. 4 inter-Korean agreements after the summits," Kim Ho-nyoun, the Unification Ministry spokesman, said. "It will be illogical for the North to shut down the project, while demanding that the South fully implement the accords."

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6. DMZ Environment

Korea Herald ("STUDY TO BE LAUNCHED ON DMZ ECOSYSTEM", Seoul, 2008/11/10) reported that a joint study on the ecosystem, forests and cultural properties of the Demilitarized Zone was launched Monday, ROK Environment Ministry and the Defense Ministry officials said Sunday. They said a series of examinations will be made in all parts of the DMZ through 2010. The project will be led by a 20-member research team headed by Seoul National University professor Kim Kwi-gon. The team will focus its research on nine areas: topography/scenery, vegetation, plant life, birds, mammals, fish, amphibians/reptiles, land insects and freshwater invertebrates, according to ministry officials.

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7. US-ROK Alliance

Korea Herald ("LITTLE CHANGE SEEN IN U.S.-ROK MILITARY TIES", Seoul, 2008/11/10) reported that high-profile US-ROK defense agreements are unlikely to change course under President-elect Obama. "Many perceive that Korean forces are fully capable of defending the ROK without much U.S. help, and therefore transferring OPCON (operational command) will properly recognize all that the South Korean military has accomplished," said Bruce Bennett of the U.S.-based RAND Corp. "There is a strong desire to demonstrate to people in the ROK and in the rest of the world that (the United States) have full confidence in the Korean military. Along with this is a concern that if we were to postpone OPCON transition, we would be showing a lack of confidence in the quality of the Korean military, and that would be bad for Korea in general and for deterrence of North Korea, in particular."

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8. ROK Troops in Iraq

Korea Herald ("S. KOREA SET TO LEAVE IRAQ AFTER FOUR YEARS OF SERVICE", Seoul, 2008/11/10) reported that the ROK will withdraw all troops stationed in Iraq next month, ending a four-year military presence, the Defense Ministry was quoted as saying by Yonhap News Agency. "The biggest achievement of the Zaytun unit is that it successfully helped rebuild the city while restoring peace and security in the Kurdish-controlled region," the ministry said in a press release.

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9. US-ROK Free Trade Agreement

Korea Times ("SEOUL REITERATES 'NO' TO FTA RENEGOTIATION", Seoul, 2008/11/10) reported that the ROK on Monday ruled out the possibility of renegotiating a free trade agreement (FTA) with the new administration of President-elect Barack Obama. "If the U.S. calls for renegotiations, it would run counter to international practices and undermine its credibility," Lee Hye-min, deputy minister for FTA, was quoted as saying in a radio interview by Yonhap News.

Donga Ilbo ("RIVAL PARTIES CLASH OVER FTA RATIFICATION", Seoul, 2008/11/10) reported that the ROK's ruling Grand National Party said Sunday that it will submit this week a motion for the US-ROK free trade agreement ratification to the National Assembly's Unification, Foreign Affairs and Trade Committee. The main opposition Democratic Party, however, said it will prevent its rival from laying the motion before parliament. Lee Hye-min, Seoul's chief negotiator for the agreement, stated, "If Korea approves the deal, the United States will have no case for opposing ratification. With a hardly won ratification, achieving re-ratification after renegotiations is out of the question."

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10. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

Kyodo News ("TOWADA LEAVES FOR INDIAN OCEAN ON FUEL SUPPLY MISSION", Hiroshima, 2008/11/10) reported that the Japanese supply ship Towada left its home port in Kure, Hiroshima Prefecture, on Monday morning for the Indian Ocean for a refueling mission to support the U.S.-led operations in and around Afghanistan. The Towada is expected to be joined by the destroyer Ariake in waters off Kyushu, southwestern Japan, and together arrive in the Indian Ocean in three weeks to carry out their activities which should last about three months.

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11. US Military in Japan

Yomiuri Shimbun (Satoshi Ogawa, "U.S. MARINES' MOVE TO GUAM MIGHT BE DELAYED", Washington , 2008/11/09) reported that the completion of the transfer of 8,000 U.S. marines in Okinawa Prefecture to Guam likely will be delayed from the initially scheduled 2014 to sometime after 2015. According to the sources, the U.S. defense budget likely will be cut because of the financial crisis, making it difficult for the United States to allocate sufficient funds for fiscal 2010, which starts in October 2009, to complete the transfer as initially scheduled. The U.S. government has unofficially informed Japan of the circumstances, the sources said.

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12. Japan-Russia Relations

Vladivostock Times ("THE RUSSIAN MILITARY DELEGATION COMES TO JAPAN", Vladivostock, 2008/11/08) reported that a Russian military delegation headed by Colonel-General Vladimir Bulgakov, commander of the Far Eastern Military District, under invitation of the Defense Ministry of Japan arrived in Tokyo. The visit program included a working meeting between the Bulgakov and the army General Oriki Ryoichi, chief of the Japan self-defense land forces.

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13. Japan-Russia Territorial Dispute

Yomiuri Shimbun (Toshikazu Seguchi, "PUTIN WEB SITE SHOWS DISPUTED ISLETS AS JAPANESE TERRITORY", Moscow, 2008/11/09) reported that a map on Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's

official Web site depicts the Russian-held islets north of Hokkaido as Japanese territory. Clicking on the map highlights the disputed islets in magenta, signifying they are part of Japan. The Russia-based Association of Japanologists, comprising Russian academics and former diplomats, e-mailed Putin on Nov. 1 requesting the "technical error" be revised to show the islets as being Russian territory.

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14. Japanese Climate Change

Yomiuri Shimbun ("GOVT EYES SOLAR POWER GENERATORS FOR SCHOOLS", Tokyo, 2008/11/09) reported that Japanese public middle and primary schools are to be encouraged to introduce solar power generators as part of efforts to cut greenhouse emissions, the government announced Friday. Under the new system, companies will be asked to provide financial support for the purchase of solar power generation systems for schools. This financial support would then be counted toward greenhouse gas emission targets introduced as part of a trading plan launched in October.

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15. Cross Straits Relations

Associated Press ("CHINESE CANCEL TAIWAN TRIPS AFTER VIOLENT PROTESTS", Taipei, 2008/11/10) reported that at least two groups of PRC officials have canceled plans to visit Taiwan because of violent protests against Chen Yunlin's visit, ruling Nationalist Party spokeswoman Chen Chu-jung said Monday. "They may not have acted on government orders, but were concerned about their own safety," she said. Lin Yu-fang, a Nationalist lawmaker, said PRC leaders may be reluctant to let the protests affect their ties with Taiwan, but hard-liners could play up the violence. "The likelihood of the mainland taking a tougher stance could increase, and that may not be good news for Taiwan," Lin said.

BBC News (Audra Ang, "CLASHES MAR CHINESE TAIWAN VISIT", Taipei, 2008/11/07) reported that clashes between protesters and police in Taipei over the visit of PRC envoy Chen Yunlin have left at least 150 people injured. Street fights erupted as hundreds of protesters surrounded the hotel where the official was staying. By Friday morning, 149 police officers had been injured, according to Taipei City Police Department. Local media report that dozens of demonstrators and journalists were also hurt.

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16. Sino-US Relations

Xinhua ("CHINESE PRESIDENT, OBAMA DISCUSS RELATIONS, INT'L ISSUES ON PHONE", Beijing, 2008/11/08) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao and U.S. president-elect Barack Obama Saturday discussed in a telephone conversation relations between the PRC and the United States and major international issues of common concern, including the ongoing global financial crisis. Hu expressed appreciation to Obama for emphasizing in his election campaign speeches the great importance of PRC-U.S. relations, and for advocating the strengthening of PRC-U.S. cooperation in jointly responding to global challenges and in sharing global development opportunities. Saying that

U.S.-PRC relations face many development opportunities, Obama expressed the hope that the United States and the PRC will strengthen cooperation, and promote greater development of bilateral relations, to bring benefits to both nations.

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17. Sino-Russian Relations

Vladivostok Times ("OLEG SAFONOV: RUSSIA AND CHINA SHOULD COOPERATE NOT ONLY IN FIELD OF RAW MATERIALS", Vladivostok, 2008/11/09) reported that Oleg Safonov, the Plenipotentiary of the RF President in the Far Eastern Federal District (FEFD), started his 3-day working visit to the PRC on Friday. "In the framework of the visit we intend to discuss concrete proposals on the developing of relations with the Chinese provinces. The extending of the all-round cooperation between Russia and China meets the national interests of both countries in full. The issues of cooperation in the power industry, bidding of the Chinese companies for the contracts on building of the APEC Summit objects in Vladivostok, attracting of the investments into the timber processing industry, joint projects in the field of aircraft construction, nanotechnology, and oil-and-gas industry were discussed at the third Russia-Chinese Economics Forum that was held in Moscow," Safonov noted.

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18. PRC Tibet Issue

Reuters (Chris Buckley, "CHINA SAYS NO COMPROMISING ON TIBET'S FUTURE", Beijing, 2008/11/10) reported that Zhu Weiqun, a vice minister of the Chinese Communist Party's United Front Work Department, said Monday that envoys of the Dalai Lama had pressed his long-standing demand for "genuine autonomy" during talks in Beijing last week. Ahead of an agenda-setting meeting of exiled Tibetan activists, the Dalai's representatives gave their Chinese hosts a "Memorandum for all Tibetans to enjoy genuine autonomy." Zhu said the PRC would "never allow ethnic splitting in the name of genuine autonomy." "In fact, this is seeking a legal basis for so-called Tibetan independence, or semi-independence or covert independence," said Zhu, whose department oversees the ruling Party's dealings with religious organizations.

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19. PRC Human Rights

Los Angeles Times (John M. Glionna, "CHINA'S 'ACTION PLAN' ON HUMAN RIGHTS MEETS WITH SKEPTICISM", Beijing, 2008/11/07) reported that the PRC is preparing a national "action plan" on human rights. In an article published in state-run news media, the State Council Information Office said this week that the plan would involve "expanding democracy, strengthening the rule of law, improving people's livelihood, protecting rights of women, children and ethnic minorities, and boosting public awareness of human rights." "Most international observers who follow human rights in China consider this mostly eyewash," said Jerome Cohen, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York. "It would be wonderful if the Chinese government would open up and discuss concrete cases. Human rights watchers want to talk about reality, not principle."

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20. PRC Economy

Associated Press (Scott McDonald, "CHINA ANNOUNCES \$586 BILLION STIMULUS PLAN", Beijing, 2008/11/10) reported that the PRC unveiled a \$586 billion stimulus package on Sunday. The Cabinet approved the plan to invest money in infrastructure and social welfare by the end of 2010, a statement on the government's Web site said. The statement did not say how much of the spending is on new projects and how much is for ventures already in the pipeline that will be speeded up.

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21. PRC Cyber Hacking

Financial Times (Demetri Sevastopulo, "CYBER ATTACKS ON MCCAIN AND OBAMA TEAMS 'CAME FROM CHINA'", Washington , 2008/11/07) reported that US government cyber experts suspect that an attack on the Obama and McCain campaign computer networks this summer originated from the PRC, according to a US official. The cyber attackers successfully downloaded large quantities of information from the campaign networks, which security agencies believed was an attempt to learn more about the contenders' policy positions. The official said investigators had determined that the attacks originated from the PRC, but cautioned that they had not ascertained whether they were government-sponsored, or just unaffiliated hackers.

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II. PRC Report

22. PRC Urban Insecurity

China Radio International ("CHINA CONTINUES TO IMPROVE POOR PEOPLE'S LIVING CONDITIONS", 2008/11/06) reported that vice minister of Housing and Urban-Rural Construction Qi Ji said that the PRC government will further construct and repair the shantytowns and improve the poor people's living conditions. In the past few years, 50 million square meters urban slums have been reconstructed and about a million urban poor families have better living conditions. Form the next year, we will reconstruct the slums in forest areas and farms at a large scale, said Qi.

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23. PRC Civil Society and the 512 Earthquake

China News Network (Zeng Liming, "CHINA INVITES INTERNATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS TO EARTHQUAKE DISASTER AREAS", 2008/11/06) reported that in order to provide a long time psychological aid to Sichuan earthquake areas, China Youth Development Foundation and China Doctors Association have launched "512 Mind Care Project", inviting 5 international psychological crisis intervention experts. The project will last for 3 to 5 years. The experts will mainly train the

domestic psychological assistance personnel to help establish a professional team of post disaster psychological assistance.

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24. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

China Radio International (Jiao Jian, "GANSU DESERTIFICATION CONTROL FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED", 2008/11/06) reported that Gansu Desertification Control Foundation was established today. The Foundation will raise folk money to be used to help control desertification. Gansu province is one of the most serious desertification provinces, with an area of 12.03 million hectares desertified land, accounting for 23% of the total land area of the province.

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