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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

United Press International ("N. KOREA NUCLEAR FUSION CLAIM DISPUTED", 2010/05/12) reported that the DPRK said Wednesday the country achieved nuclear fusion, a claim ROK officials dismissed as unlikely. A ROK government official said Seoul wasn't aware of the reports or that Pyongyang had the facility necessary to conduct such an experiment, calling the claim "absurd." The official told the Times that secretly building such a facility would be nearly impossible. Hong Sang-hee, a nuclear engineering professor at Seoul National University, told Korea Times he heard nothing about DPRK scientists undertaking nuclear fusion reaction studies before. "Having said that, I guess the Rodong Sinmun (article) probably tried to say that North Korea performed an experiment with a thermonuclear reaction device," he said.

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2. PRC on Six Party Talks

Yonhap News ("KIM JONG-IL'S VISIT RAISES HOPE FOR SIX-PARTY TALKS: CHINESE PARTY OFFICIAL", 2010/05/12) reported that leader Kim Jong-il's recent trip to the PRC has raised hopes on the resumption of the stalled six-nation denuclearization talks chaired by the PRC, a Beijing official said Wednesday. "Kim's visit further enhanced mutual communication and understanding among leaders of the two countries and strengthened the traditionally strong China-DPRK friendship," said Zhang Liangui, professor at the Party School of the Communist Party. "The DPRK leader's willingness to discuss ways to create favorable conditions to resume the six-party talks aimed at maintaining a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula also raised the hopes of the international community. From this perspective, Kim's visit is of great significance."

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3. Six-Party Talks

Kyodo News ("U.S. ENVOY TO 6-PARTY TALKS ARRIVES IN SEOUL FOR CONSULTATIONS", 2010/05/12) reported that U.S. special envoy to the six-party talks on denuclearizing the DPRK, Sung Kim, arrived in Seoul on Wednesday for a two-day visit to hold consultations with ROK officials, an official from the U.S. Embassy said. Kim is to hold talks with Wi Sung Lac, the ROK's chief nuclear negotiator to the six-party talks. The official from the U.S. Embassy said Kim's itineraries are closed to the press.

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4. DPRK Public Health

Yonhap News ("UNICEF'S DEPUTY CHIEF SAYS N. KOREAN CHILDREN SERIOUSLY MALNOURISHED", 2010/05/12) reported that one out three DPRK children is suffering from malnutrition, but a U.N. agency's efforts to help them is hampered by the country's reclusive nature, the agency's deputy chief said. "It is serious, in terms of nutrition. Every third child in North Korea is stunted due to bad nutrition," said Hilde Johnson, deputy executive director of the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF). UNICEF has a number of programs operating in the DPRK similar to those for developing countries, she said. But UNICEF is restricted in alleviating what she called the "very serious" condition resulting from a decades-long food shortage.

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5. ROK Naval Ship Sinking

Chosun Ilbo ("GOV'T HOPES FOR CLINTON VISIT AS CHEONAN PROBE CONCLUDES", 2010/05/12) reported that the government is hoping that U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will visit around May 20, when the investigation of the sinking of the Navy corvette Cheonan is to be complete. Seoul apparently wants to show to the international community that it has closely cooperated with the U.S. in the aftermath of the sinking. But ministry officials say conclusive evidence proving the DPRK's involvement in the sinking is vital if Clinton is to come to Seoul. "Which U.S. official comes to Seoul depends on the findings of the investigation," another government official said.

Yonhap (Chang Jae-soon, "S. KOREA COMPARES N. KOREAN TORPEDO WITH METAL PIECES COLLECTED FROM SUNKEN SHIP", Seoul, 2010/05/13) reported that investigators are testing metal pieces collected from the site where an ROK naval ship sank and comparing them with a DPRK torpedo to see if they are made of the same material, defense ministry spokesman Won Tae-jae said Thursday. "It's a matter of course for us to compare the samples" with the torpedo, Won told reporters. "But we've reached no conclusion on this." Unification Minister Hyun In-taek said Thursday the sinking showed "the world the cruel reality of division" on the Korean Peninsula. Senior Presidential Secretary Park Hyung-joon also said in a radio interview that "an external attack was highly likely" to have sunk the vessel.

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6. US on ROK Naval Ship Sinking

Arirang News ("SEOUL SHOULD REFER N. KOREA TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL IF RESPONSIBLE

FOR SINKING", 2010/05/12) reported that the head of the Washington-based National Committee on American Foreign Policy says the ROK government should refer the DPRK to the UN Security Council if the communist country is found at fault for the sinking of the ROK Navy vessel in March. George Schwab, co-founder of the US foreign policy think tank, told reporters that he believes that countermeasures from the UN Security Council remain the best course of action.

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7. ROK-UAE Military Cooperation

Defense News ("UAE ASKS TO BUY S. KOREAN AIRBURST RIFLE", 2010/05/12) reported that the ROK has won a purchase order from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for the K11 airburst rifle, the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) said May 12. "Once a final contract is signed, it will be the first export sale of the K11, possibly making it one of the country's major export items together with the T-50 supersonic trainer jet and K2 Black Panther main battle tank," the release said. A DAPA official said the UAE wants to buy about 40 units initially for pilot runs.

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8. ROK-US Military Cooperation

Korea Herald ("AMERICAN SOLDIERS PROVIDE ENGLISH CLASSES FOR SCHOOLKIDS", 2010/05/12) reported that the U.S. Forces Korea will run a seven-day English camp for 60 ROK high-school students as part of its broader program to strengthen the ROK-U.S. alliance. The "Good Neighbor English Camp," which has been held annually since 2005, is aimed at offering ROK students chances to learn English and experience American culture, and enhance their understanding of the bilateral alliance, officials said yesterday. The camp is one of the core events of the U.S. military's "Good Neighbor" program, designed to enhance the public understanding of its mission on the peninsula through a series of community programs involving citizens, schools, media and businesses.

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9. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Yonhap News ("NEW GUIDELINES GIVE DOKDO MORE SPACE IN HISTORY TEXTS", 2010/05/12) reported that the Education Ministry in Seoul announced new educational guidelines on Dokdo yesterday, instructing publishers to include more material about the ROK's control of the East Sea islets in middle- and high-school textbooks. The guideline is the latest in a series of government moves to strengthen the education of young students on the history of the easternmost ROK islets, which are also claimed by Japan. Under the revised guideline, at least two chapters in all history textbooks will cover Dokdo's history and Japan's claim to the islets during and after its colonial rule.

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10. ROK-Japan Historical Disputes

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREAN, JAPANESE LAWMAKERS SEEK TO DECLARE ANNEXATION INVALID ", 2010/05/12) reported that ROK and Japanese lawmakers are pushing for a joint statement condemning Japan's annexation of Korea 100 years ago as unjust and invalid. Opposition Democratic Party lawmakers Kang Chang-il and Jang Se-hwan and Liberty Forward Party representative Park Sun-young will visit Japan's Diet on May 25 to meet with likeminded lawmakers and civic activists to discuss the wording. But the response in Japan has been lukewarm. A staffer with one media organization there said Japanese society "lacks the capacity to understand what declaring the annexation treaty null and void would mean, and there is not enough consensus over the issue."

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11. Japan on Nuclear Disarmament

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, 41 NATIONS CALL FOR PROMOTION OF NUKE DISARMAMENT EDUCATION", 2010/05/12) reported that a group of 42 countries led by Japan called for promoting education for nuclear disarmament in a joint statement at a U.N. conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. "Education can raise the awareness of the public, in particular the future generations, of the tragic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons," the statement said. It is the first statement promoting education for nuclear disarmament issued at the NPT review conference held every five years. "Education is imperative to promote disarmament and nonproliferation, and thus to achieve a world without nuclear weapons," Akio Suda, permanent representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament.

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12. USFJ Base Relocation

Stars and Stripes ("REPORT: JAPAN COULD ASK U.S. TO CLEAN UP RETURNED BASE LAND ", 2010/05/12) reported that perhaps as a peace offering to Okinawa, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama reportedly is suggesting a change to the U.S.-Japan Status of Forces Agreement that would force the U.S. to clean up returned base property. Facing increased pressure from Okinawan officials, part of the base proposal Japan is considering is the inclusion of a new environmental provision in the SOFA, according to Japanese media accounts. "Changing SOFA provisions is something Okinawa has been asking for many years," Oyakawa told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday.

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, U.S. HOLD TALKS TO DISCUSS TOKYO'S BASE RELOCATION PLAN", 2010/05/12) reported that Japan and the United States held working-level talks Wednesday to discuss Tokyo's draft on the relocation of a U.S. Marine base in Okinawa which had been presented to the U.S. side during a preparatory meeting on Tuesday at the Pentagon. In the draft, Tokyo proposes building a replacement facility by creating a pile-supported runway in shallow waters off the coast of Nago in Okinawa Prefecture instead of reclaiming the sea nearby, as previously agreed, diplomatic sources said. But the United States has been opposed to the idea, citing the risk of coming under a terrorist attack from beneath the runway. On the Japanese suggestion of transferring some of the base functions at Futenma to Tokunoshima Island in Kagoshima Prefecture, the United States remains reluctant on the basis that the Marines' ground troops and helicopter unit should operate together, they said.

Kyodo News ("HATOYAMA EXPRESSES CONFIDENCE IN SOLVING BASE RELOCATION ROW ",

2010/05/12) reported that despite continuing uncertainty over the relocation of a U.S. military base in Okinawa, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama expressed confidence that he can reach a conclusion that will satisfy the public, according to attendees at a meeting Wednesday night at the premier's office. "I am confident that I will not give (the Democratic Party of Japan) any trouble in the (upcoming) upper house election" because of the handling of the matter, the prime minister was quoted as telling the meeting between senior government officials and DPJ executives.

Kyodo News ("HIRANO ASKS TOKUNOSHIMA POLITICIANS TO SHARE BASE BURDENS", 2010/05/12) reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano on Wednesday asked local assembly members of Tokunoshima Island to share the burdens of hosting U.S. military bases. After a meeting with the five assembly members at a hotel in the city of Kagoshima, the top government spokesman told reporters that the politicians of the island said the islanders' reaction to the government proposal is "very severe."

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13. US on USFJ Base Relocation

Kyodo News ("JAPAN AND THE US SHOULD CONTINUE TALKS TO MOVE FUTEMMA BASE: EX-ENVOY", 2010/05/12) reported that Japan and the United States should continue negotiations to resolve the relocation of a U.S. Marine base in Okinawa, as the transfer of the facility will benefit both countries, former U.S. Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer said. Acknowledging difficulties regarding the issue, Schieffer said, "We need to get this resolved, and to move on, so that we can talk about building this alliance." "Both governments have agreed that replacing Futenma is in the best interests of the alliance," he said. Schieffer said maintaining the Futenma base in its present state is "not in the long-term interests of either Japan or the United States because it puts too much stress on the alliance."

Kyodo ("U.S. AGAINST JAPAN BASE RELOCATION PLAN FROM ENVIRONMENT CONCERN ", Washington, 2010/05/12) reported that according to sources close to bilateral relations, the U.S. side told Japan through unofficial contacts that a pile-supported runway would have as much of a negative environmental impact on the sea as the reclamation plan because it would prevent sunlight from reaching the seabed and result in destruction of seaweed beds. The United States told Tokyo that the environmental impact of creating 140 hectares of dark sea surface under the runway is unpredictable, the sources said.

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14. Japanese Politics

Associated Press (Eric Talmadge, "JAPAN PRIME MINISTER SAGS DANGEROUSLY IN POLLS", Tokyo, 2010/05/13) reported that public support for Japan's Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has fallen so low that he is now in a danger zone from which few of his predecessors recovered. A national poll released this week by the Yomiuri found the approval rate for Hatoyama's Cabinet plummeted to 24 percent in May, down 9 percentage points from the previous month. The Yomiuri survey showed the disapproval rate for Hatoyama's Cabinet rose to 67 percent in May from 56 percent in April, with 51 percent of respondents saying the prime minister lacked leadership. A poll conducted by NHK, Japan's national broadcaster, found similar results.

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15. Sino-Japan Relations

("CHINA-JAPAN RELATIONS ENJOY CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, SAYS PREMIER WEN", 2010/05/12) reported that PRC Premier Wen Jiabao Wednesday said Sino-Japanese relations are continuously improving and developing. "This lays an important political foundation for the two sides to jointly cope with the international financial crisis and increase cooperation," Wen said when meeting with a delegation of the Japan Business Federation. Wen hoped the businesses would increase cooperation in energy saving, environmental protection and new energies.

Kyodo News ("CHINA URGES JAPAN TO SUPERVISE MEDIA OVER GAS ROW REPORTS", 2010/05/12) reported that the PRC has repeatedly asked Japan to supervise the domestic media over their coverage of a bilateral row concerning the PRC's gas field development in the East China Sea, with Beijing regarding the reports as biased for using the term "joint development," sources close to bilateral ties said Wednesday. Senior PRC government officials and high-level members of the PRC Communist Party have insisted that bilateral negotiations to resolve the gas development dispute will not move forward unless the Japanese media improve their reports, they said.

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16. Sino-US Relations

Washington Post ("U.S. RISKS CHINA'S IRE WITH DECISION TO FUND SOFTWARE MAKER TIED TO FALUN GONG", 2010/05/12) reported that the State Department has decided to fund a group run mainly by practitioners of Falun Gong, a Buddhist-like sect long considered Enemy No. 1 by the PRC government, to provide software to skirt Internet censorship across the globe. State Department officials recently called the group, the Global Internet Freedom Consortium, offering it \$1.5 million, according to Shiyu Zhou, one of the group's founders. A State Department official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, confirmed the offer. "GIFC is an organization run by elements of the Falun Gong cult, which is bent on vilifying the Chinese government with fabricated lies, undermining Chinese social stability and sabotaging China-U.S. relations," said Wang Baodong, spokesman for the PRC Embassy in Washington.

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17. PRC Nuclear Posture

Financial Times ("CHINA SEEN TAKING LIMITED ANTI-NUCLEAR ROLE", 2010/05/12) reported that the PRC is updating its nuclear forces even as it promotes nonproliferation and as Russia and the United States make moves to reduce their stockpiles, the *Financial Times* reported. "Although the U.S. and Russia have some 20 to 30 times more nuclear weapons deployed than China and the Chinese have the moral argument on their side for now, China is probably the only country undertaking modernization," says Bates Gill, who heads the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Current nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament efforts could force Beijing to take action it has delayed for more than a decade, Gill said.

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18. Sino-India Climate Cooperation

Financial Times ("INDIA EYES PACT WITH CHINA TO SAVE TIGERS", 2010/05/12) reported that India wants to agree on a pact with the PRC to protect its fast dwindling tiger population from extinction, as part of an attempt to capitalise on the goodwill created between the neighbours in their alliance during recent climate change talks. A trans-Himalayan agreement to calibrate national strategies would be the first of its kind.

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II. PRC Report

19. PRC Demographics

Jinghua Times ("50% CHINESE LIVE IN CITY BY 2020", 2010/05/12) reported that according to the China Urban Development Report, the PRC has entered into an accelerating period of urbanization. It is expected that by 2020, 50% of the total population will live in a city, and by 2050 75% will live in a city.

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20. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction

China News Net ("CHINA RED CROSS FOUNDATION ARRANGED 1.3 BILLION RMB IN WENCHUAN EARTHQUAKE AREAS", 2010/05/12) reported that China Red Cross Foundation announced Tuesday that by the 2nd anniversary of 5/12 Wenchuan earthquake, the Foundation has supported over 2300 reconstruction projects in the Wenchuan earthquake area and appropriated funds and materials worth of 1.3 billion RMB.

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