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1. DPRK On Nuclear Talks

JoongAng Daily (Christine Kim, "NORTH PUSHING NUKE TALKS", 2010/10/14) reported that after several days of cajoling its own masses to accept a young successor to its leader, the DPRK is now reaching out to the PRC to revive six-party talks on its nuclear weapons program. Kim Gye-gwan, the first vice minister of the DPRK's ministry of foreign affairs, was seen late Tuesday getting off a plane in Beijing, according to sources in the PRC capital. It is Kim's first visit to PRC since his recent promotion to first vice minister from vice minister of the foreign ministry last month before a party congress that made Kim Jong-il's son, Jong-un, his designated successor. Kim Gye-gwan has been the DPRK's top negotiator for the six-party talks, which have been stalled since April 2009, and his unexpected trip to the PRC is believed to be related to their revival.

<http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2927159>

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2. US On DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("FORMER US ENVOY PESSIMISTIC ON N.KOREA NUCLEAR WEAPONS", 2010/10/13) reported that the former chief US negotiator in talks to rid the DPRK of its nuclear weapons said he was less optimistic than ever before about the prospects for a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. Speaking during a visit to the ROK, Christopher Hill said the chances of persuading the DPRK to give up its atomic weapons appeared bleak, according to Yonhap news agency. "I think it's very clear at this point that it is a more difficult proposition than ever before," Yonhap quoted Hill as saying. "They have continued to work on their systems for delivering nuclear weapons."

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gnXYLBEq99QoIQb7If7XN9K2gTRQ?docId=CNG.27c83e08bf6f57ad4ae2a9d1ca3e4f.31>

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3. ROK-US Military Exercises

The Korea Herald (Song Sang-ho, "PSI EXERCISE BEGINS IN WATERS OFF BUSAN ",) reported that a two-day multinational maritime exercise, aimed at fighting the trafficking of weapons of mass destruction, began Wednesday in waters off the southern port city of Busan, marking the first time for ROK to host such a drill. Fourteen countries, including the U.S., Japan, Australia, France and Canada, are taking part in the Proliferation Security Initiative exercise, codenamed "Eastern Endeavor 10." Seoul initially planned to host the exercise as part of its response to the March 26 sinking of the corvette Cheonan, which it holds Pyongyang responsible for. However, it said the exercise is not targeting any particular country. "During the maritime drill, we will (practice) intercepting vessels suspected of carrying nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. But the exercise scenario does not target any specific countries, including North Korea," said a senior official at the Ministry of National Defense on condition of anonymity.

<http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20101013000824>

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4. Japanese-US Nuclear Relations

The Mainichi Daily News ("A-BOMB SURVIVORS OUTRAGED AT OBAMA OVER SUBCRITICAL NUCLEAR TEST", 2010/10/14) reported that victims of atomic bombings expressed their disappointment at U.S. President Barack Obama after his administration carried out its first subcritical nuclear test last month. Sumiteru Taniguchi, the 81-year-old chairman of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Council, did not hide his anger with Obama, saying, "He was even awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. What was that all about? How will the U.S. government apologize to A-bomb survivors?" Taniguchi visited New York earlier in May and called for the abolition of nuclear weapons during the review conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20101013p2a00m0na019000c.html>

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5. ROK-Kazakhstan Energy Agreement

The Korea Herald (Koh Young-aah, "KOREA, KAZAKHSTAN TO COOPERATE ON ENERGY, RESOURCES", 2010/10/13) reported that the ROK and Kazakhstan will form a strategic partnership on energy and resources, the government said Wednesday. The move comes as the Central Asian nation is seeking to build up to five nuclear power plants while the ROK is in desperate search of rare earths whose demand is expected to rise in the next few years. Minister of Knowledge Economy Choi Kyung-hwan met with Aset Issekeshev, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and New Technology of Kazakhstan, Tuesday during his visit to Astana and agreed to sign an inter-government agreement on co-establishing a coal-fired steam power plant in Balkhash. In addition to the Balkhash Project, the two countries have also agreed to collaborate further in exploring new mines, uranium and other rare metals.

<http://www.koreaherald.com/business/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20101013000848>

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