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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap News (Lee Chi-dong, "N. KOREA TO ALLOW SAMPLING ONLY IN NEXT DENUCLEARIZATION PHASE: NEWS REPORT", Seoul, 2008/11/19) reported that the DPRK has agreed to allow international inspectors to take samples from its main nuclear complex, but only after it enters the next phase of the denuclearization process, a news report said. The DPRK and the US reached the verbal deal early last month when Washington's chief nuclear envoy Christopher Hill visited Pyongyang, according to the Kyunghyang Shinmun.

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1. Sino-DPRK Relations

The Korea Times (Michael Ha, "CHINA BOOSTS TROOPS ON N. KOREA BORDER ", 2008/11/13) reported that that the number of PRC soldiers guarding the border has gone up since September amid "mounting concerns about the health of Kim Jong-il." Citing unnamed US officials, the report said "the People's Liberation Army (of China) has stationed more soldiers on the border to prepare for any possible influx of refugees due to instability or regime change in North Korea." It said the increase in PRC troops was not "dramatic." But in addition to more soldiers, the PRC military is also constructing more fences and installations at key border outposts, according to the report.

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA RESTRICTS TRAVEL FOR CHINESE VISITORS", Beijing, 2008/11/12) reported that the DPRK is restricting visitors from the PRC, travel agents said, including virtually closing off one of its main border crossings at Dandong. "The border has been closed since October. If you want to go to North Korea, you have to go to Shenyang and fly from there to North Korea," said one travel agent in Dandong.

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2. PRC, DPRK on Six Party Talks

Xinhua ("CHINESE AND DPRK DIPLOMATS MEET OVER SIX-PARTY NUCLEAR TALKS", Beijing, 2008/11/12) reported that the PRC confirmed that its diplomats and diplomats from the DPRK met to discuss how to move forward the six-party talks on the Korean Peninsular nuclear issue. "Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei on Wednesday met with Ri Gun, director general of the DPRK Foreign Ministry's American affairs bureau, on the current situation and the next phase of the six-party talks," PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang told the regular briefing. "The six-party talks remain in the second phase. We expect all parties to make joint efforts to make progress," Qin said.

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3. US, ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Herald ("SEOUL, WASHINGTON QUESTION N. KOREAN INTENTIONS", 2008/11/12) reported that the US is attempting to ascertain intentions behind the DPRK's public denial of nuclear verification measures Washington has said Pyongyang agreed to, ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan was quoted as saying. Yu said the ROK's top nuclear envoy Kim Sook and his American counterpart Christopher Hill had telephone conversations earlier in the day to discuss Pyongyang's latest statement claiming it had never agreed to allow sample taking by inspectors and access to undeclared sites. "There is a need to analyze why North Korea issued such a statement before Ri's return," Yu said.

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4. Japan, ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, S. KOREA AGREE TO CONTINUE COOPERATION ON N. KOREA ISSUES", Fukuoka, 2008/11/13) reported that Japanese and ROK senior foreign and defense officials agreed in a meeting Thursday to continue joint efforts in pressing the DPRK forward with its denuclearization and reaffirmed the need to ensure continued trilateral cooperation with the United States in

Northeast Asia, Japan's top nuclear envoy said. Thursday's security meeting, held in Fukuoka in southwestern Japan, was the eighth such dialogue between the two nations.

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

The Korea Herald (Jin Dae-woong , "SEOUL PROPOSES DIALOUE WITH N.K. ", 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that ROK Thursday proposed a dialogue with the DPRK to discuss how to provide military communication equipment the DPRK has requested. Seoul's Defense Ministry said it sent the phone message to Lt. Gen. Kim Yong-chol, head of the DPRK's delegation to inter-Korean military talks. In the message, the Seoul government expressed its hope to continue inter-Korean economic projects including the Gaeseong joint industrial complex, the ministry said.

The Korea Times (Kim Sue-young , "DP LEADER SAYS SOUTH MUST HONOR INTER-KOREAN ACCORDS ", 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that the main opposition Democratic Party (DP) Thursday renewed its call for the government to show respect for previous inter-Korean accords to improve frosty relations with the DPRK. DP Chairman Chung Sye-kyun said that the root cause for the icy ties is the Lee Myung-bak administration's ambiguous stance toward the agreements. Even though a change of government occurred, Lee must keep promises made in two rounds of inter-Korean summit, Chung emphasized. The DP leader also urged DPRK to stop criticizing President Lee and make efforts to build mutual trust.

JoongAng Daily (Jung Ha-won , "SEOUL SEEKING TO REVERSE NORTH'S TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ", 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that ROK expressed regret over the DPRK's latest warning that it would slap tougher restrictions on traffic through the inter-Korean border, and pledged to work harder to prevent local civic groups from sending anti-Pyongyang leaflets to DPRK. The Blue House said Pyongyang's perceived brinkmanship tactic is "a big mistake."

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6. DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Herald ("EARTHQUAKE MONITORS TO WATCH FOR N. KOREA NUCLEAR ACTIVITY", 2008/11/02) reported that the ROK's weather agency said Thursday it will install earthquake recorders in three regions adjacent to the inter-Korean border so as to detect possible nuclear activities by the DPRK, Yonhap News Agency reported. The seismometers will be set up 100 meters below ground in the rural towns of Ganghwa, Yeoncheon and Inje to record seismic waves that can be generated by nuclear tests and other artificial explosions as well as earthquakes, said the Korea Meteorological Administration.

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7. US-ROK Security Alliance

The Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "COMBINED FORCES COMMAND FETES 30TH ANNIVERSARY ", 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that the combined defense readiness of ROK and the US will continue to grow stronger despite the planned deactivation of the Combined Forces Command (CFC) in 2012, the top U.S. military officer in ROK said. "This alliance has stood strong. Today, the Combined Forces Command is the vanguard of the most effective alliance in history," CFC Commander Gen. Walter Sharp stressed. ROK's Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee echoed the comments. "The two countries will continue to develop their strong alliance while closely working together to defend their mutual interests and world peace," said Lee.

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8. ROK International Relations

The Korea Times (Michael Ha, "PRESIDENT BEGINS TRIP TODAY FOR GROUP-20, APEC SUMMITS ", 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that President Lee Myung-bak leaves for Washington, D.C., today to attend the G-20 meeting of world leaders and discuss the global economic downturn. It's the first stop in President Lee's 11-day overseas trip. Following the Washington summit, Lee will visit Brazil and Peru and attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. In Washington, President Lee and other world leaders from the G-20 group of major economies will meet for an emergency economic summit hosted by U.S. President George W. Bush.

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9. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Korea Times ("11 LAWMAKERS TO VISIT DOKDO ISLETS TODAY", 2008/11/13) reported that a group of lawmakers who belong to the National Assembly's special committee on Dokdo will visit the islets today. Rep. Won Yoo-chul, chairman of the committee, said they are scheduled to inspect the security facilities and a museum there. "The purpose of our visit is to raise public awareness of a bill on the sustainable use of the islets, which is pending in the legislature," Won said.

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10. US-Japan Security Alliance

Kyodo News ("U.S. MILITARY TO STOP PUBLIC SHOWING OF ARTILLERY TRAINING IN HOKKAIDO", Kushiro, 2008/11/13) reported that the US military in Japan has decided to stop

showing to the public its artillery training in Hokkaido involving its Marines and no longer hold a press conference on the training either, Japanese Defense Ministry and local sources said Thursday. The move has triggered a backlash among local communities, with Hokkaido Gov. Harumi Takahashi saying in a press conference, "It's highly regrettable," while local municipalities criticized the move as "a huge retreat on efforts on provision of information" by the U.S. military.

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11. Japan SDF

Kyodoo News ("ASO VOWS TO REEDUCATE SDF PERSONNEL, CRITICIZES TOMOGAMI'S ESSAY ", Tokyo , 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso vowed to "reeducate" Self-Defense Forces personnel, following the dismissal of Air Self-Defense Force Gen. Toshio Tamogami who released a controversial essay on Japan's role in World War II. "I will take all possible measures to prevent a recurrence and to reeducate (SDF personnel)," Aso said, adding the government will review ways to supervise SDF members and educate them, as well as ways to check the contents of their opinions expressed externally.

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12. Japan Nuclear Power

Associated Press ("WORKER INJURED IN FIRE AT JAPANESE NUCLEAR PLANT ", Tokyo, 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that one worker was injured Thursday in a fire at a Japanese nuclear power plant, but there was no release of radioactivity, the operator said. The fire occurred in an air filter at the plant, which has been closed since February for routine inspections, said Mitsuhiro Takauchi, a spokesman for Tohoku Electric Power Co. Inc. The worker suffered minor burns on his hands, Takauchi said. Police and fire department officials were investigating the cause of the fire at the plant in Miyagi, 205 miles (330 kilometers) north of Tokyo.

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13. Japanese Whaling

The Asahi Shimbun ("JAPAN TO REDUCE WHALING TARGET ", 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that Japan will reduce its total whaling target catch by about 10 percent, sources said. While actual catches have fallen short of the targets in recent years, it is the first time Tokyo has lowered the target itself since the International Whaling Commission (IWC) imposed a moratorium on commercial whaling in 1986.

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14. Sino-Russian Energy Trade

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA AND RUSSIA SUSPEND PIPELINE TALKS", Moscow, 2008/11/13) reported that Russia and the PRC have suspended talks on the construction on a new Siberian oil pipeline, the Interfax news agency reported Wednesday. Citing a source close to the negotiations, Interfax said the PRC wanted to attach "absurd conditions" to a 25-billion-dollar (20-billion-euro) loan package for Russian state pipeline monopoly Transneft and oil production company Rosneft, which was negotiated in exchange for importing oil to the PRC. Another source close to the management of the PRC's state oil company CNPC said that the PRC had asked for higher rates of interest owing to the recent freeze in lending following the financial crisis.

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15. PRC Food Supply

The Associated Press ("CHINA TO ENSURE GRAIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY", Beijing, 2008/11/12) reported that the PRC is aiming to produce virtually all the grain it needs for at least the next decade despite a growing population and declining farmland because of urbanization, climate change and other factors. The goal is for PRC to keep producing more than 95 percent of its grain needs until 2020, said Zhang Xiaoqiang, vice chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission, China's powerful economic planning body. The self-sufficiency plan is intended to make China less dependent on imports from countries such as the U.S. and Australia, said Wang Xiaoyi, an agricultural analyst at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

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16. PRC Environment

The New York Times (Andrew Jacobs , "REPORT SEES NEW POLLUTION THREAT ", Beijing , 2008/11/13) reported that a noxious cocktail of soot, smog and toxic chemicals is blotting out the sun, fouling the lungs of millions of people and altering weather patterns in large parts of Asia, according to a report released Thursday by the United Nations. According to the United Nations report, smog blocks from 10 percent to 25 percent of the sunlight that should be reaching the city's streets. The report also singled out the southern city of Guangzhou, where soot and dust have dimmed natural light by 20 percent since the 1970s.

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17. PRC Media

Financial Times (Kathrin Hille and Mure Dickie, "CHINA OPENS TO FINANCIAL NEWS MEDIA ", Beijing , 2008/11/13 19:00:00 GMT+0) reported that PRC has opened its market to financial information providers, ending an attempt to give the official Xinhua news agency tight control over its foreign competitors and resolving a trade dispute with the US, the European Union and Canada. Under a deal signed by the four parties in Geneva on Thursday, PRC agreed to transfer Xinhua's role in overseeing foreign financial information suppliers to an independent regulator and to allow such suppliers to set up commercial operations. The agreement, reached after seven months of World Trade Organization consultations, removes a big operational risk for financial information providers such as Thomson Reuters, Dow Jones and Bloomberg.

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18. Taiwan Politics

BBC News ("TAIWAN'S CHEN 'ON HUNGER STRIKE' ", 2008/11/13) reported that Taiwan's former President Chen Shui-bian - in custody facing corruption allegations - has gone on hunger strike, his lawyer says. Cheng Wen-lung said his client had not eaten since being sent to Tucheng jail in suburban Taipei early on Wednesday. He wants to "protest the death of justice and the regression of democracy", Mr Cheng said, according to the AP news agency.

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19. PRC Minorities

McClatchy Newspapers (Tim Johnson, "CHINA'S ETHNIC MONGOLIANS HANG ON TO IDENTITY BY A THREAD", Hohhot, 2008/11/13) reported that as the capital of a sprawling frontier region that was once in Mongol leader Genghis Khan's vast domain, Hohhot has many ethnic Mongol flourishes. There's only one thing in short supply: ethnic Mongolians. Fewer than 10 percent of the greater metropolitan area's 2.6 million inhabitants are ethnic Mongolian, and the ratio isn't much higher in the surrounding grasslands. Activists say the influx has overwhelmed them and imperiled their culture.

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II. PRC Report

20. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net (Hu Rihan, "CHINA'S MAIN DUST SOURCE REGION ALASHAN AREA EXPECTED TO TURN BETTER ECOLOGICALLY", 2008/11/12) reported that learning from Inner Mongolia Sand and Grass Industry Association that "Inner Mongolia Alashan Area Ecological Comprehensive Management Project" has got through the experts assessment. When the project is finished, desertification area will decrease 21,200 square kilometers, recovered green area will increase over 20,000 square kilometers, and the river sediment to Yellow River in the governance section will drop 90%. The Alashan Area of Inner Mongolia is the PRC's main sand and dust source region. Both the north path and north-west path of the PRC's dust storm get across the Alashan Area.

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21. PRC Climate Change

China Economy Network ("CHINA DENMARK COOPERATE IN LOW CARBON TECHNOLOGY", 2008/11/12) reported that Denmark Embassy in China and China National Development and Reform Committee held the first China and Denmark Climate Change Conference recently. This Conference is an important meeting before the Conference of Parties (COP15) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen next year. Denmark Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen said solving climate change problem is conducive to the balanced development of global economy. Denmark's advanced low carbon technology can help the PRC and both the two sides will benefit from the cooperation.

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22. PRC Economy

Beijing Evening News (Yan Bin, "CHINA GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO INTRODUCE NEW STANDARDS OF TV SHOPPING", 2008/11/12) reported that according to Media Shopping Committee of the PRC General Chamber of Commerce that new standards of TV shopping is under formulation. This morning, over 40 enterprises of media shopping industry promised to the public that the product advertising will not contain false and misleading contents; and the principle of no reason return and exchange for consumers will be implemented. All the promises related issues will embody in the new standards.

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III. ROK Report

23. ROK Policy toward DPRK

Hankyoreh ("WHY DAMAGE THE GAESONG PROJECT?", 2008/11/13) wrote that the DPRK should not use the Gaesong Complex as their 'hostage' to pressure the ROK. Since it must have been difficult for the DPRK to endure the ROK government's negligence of the 6.15 and 10.4 declarations, they had to do something, but the closure of the Gaesong Complex damages the DPRK as well. This means that the key to solve the problem is up to the ROK. Government officials' clear statement to show their will to implement the agreements can make the situation far better. Chongwadae should stop thinking that they will dominate over the DPRK.

Herald Kyungje ("GOVN'T SHOULD MAINTAIN CURRENT DPRK PRINCIPLES", 2008/11/13) said in a column that it seems that the inter-Korean relationship now faces another crucial phase. Concerning such atmosphere, the ROK government should maintain their current DPRK policy. The global community should also let the DPRK know that resuming dialogue with the ROK and the US is more beneficial for them.

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24. DPRK Nuclear Program

Seoul Shinmun ("WILL DPRK RUIN NUKE PROBLEM AND INTER-KOREAN RELATIONSHIP?", 2008/11/14) wrote that concerning the DPRK is trying to worsen the inter-Korean relationship so that they can talk with the U.S. directly, according to analysts. Also, their refusal to allow sample collection is aimed to force direct talks with President-elect Barack Obama, but experts say that it would not happen.

Segye Ilbo ("US SHOULD BE CALM WITH DPRK'S BRNIKMANSHIP", 2008/11/14) reported that the DPRK's firm attitude toward the ROK and the U.S. is wrong. The DPRK should realize that there will be no change in the U.S.'s DPRK policy. Both the ROK government and the U.S. government should react calmly on the matter, while working collaboratively with one another. It was appropriate for the U.S. to ship 50,000 tons of heavy oil without showing other reactions.

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Nautilus Institute
2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:
nautilus@nautilus.org