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1. DPRK Leadership

The Korea Times (Kim Se-jeong , "NORTH KOREA SETS OUT POLITICAL CLEANSING", 2010/11/16) reported that the DPRK has recently conducted a nationwide inspection of regional party officials to root out corruption, in what appears to be a political cleansing to support Kim Jong-un's rise as heir. According to North Korea Intellectuals Solidarity, an NGO based in Seoul dedicated to spreading news about the DPRK, the central inspection committee and the provincial authorities of the DPRK's Party in North Hamgyeong Province ran a week-long evaluation early November on provincial officials, and found 15 of them guilty of corruption.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2010/11/113_76475.html

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2. Inter-Korean Relations

Donga-Ilbo ("NK RE-FREEZES S. KOREAN FACILITIES AT MOUNT KUMGANG", 2010/11/16 16:00:00 GMT+0) reported that the DPRK has re-frozen and re-seized ROK facilities at the Mount Kumgang resort that were reopened in the latest reunions of inter-Korean separated families. An official at the South Korean Unification Ministry said that the DPRK attached “frozen” labels on dining and container-type lodging facilities and a vehicle maintenance plant at the resort owned by Hyundai Asan Corp. of the ROK. Pyongyang will also likely attach “seized” labels on a family reunion center owned by the ROK government where the reunions took place.

http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?biid=2010111572848

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3. Japan-ROK Relations

Kyodo News ("KAN, LEE AGREE ON RETURN OF LOOTED ARCHIVES", 2010/11/16) reported that Prime Minister Naoto Kan and ROK President Lee Myung Bak have formally signed an accord to have Japan to return 1,205 volumes of Korean historical records stolen during its colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945. Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara and ROK counterpart Kim Sung Hwan signed the agreement after holding a bilateral summit on the margins of the APEC summit. Kan hailed the pact and said this year marks a "milestone" in bilateral ties.

http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20101116f2.html

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4. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Mainichi Shimbun ("RUSSIA DITCHES PLAN TO RETURN 2 ISLANDS TO JAPAN: RUSSIAN PAPER", 2010/11/16 16:00:00 GMT+0) reported that Russia has changed its mind about eventually returning two disputed islands to Japan, in line with a 1956 joint declaration, and will no longer negotiate with Tokyo over the matter, Russian newspaper Kommersant said. Japan has an "anime-like" illusion that it will first regain the sovereignty of the two islands and subsequently the two other Russian-held islands, the paper quoted a Russian source as saying. While Japan and Russia failed to sign an agreement on a joint liquefied natural gas development project near the Far Eastern Russian city of Vladivostok as Alexey Miller, president of OAO Gazprom, recently canceled his scheduled trip to Japan, Kommersant quoted the source as saying that the Russian state-run gas company may choose the ROK as its project partner.

http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20101116p2g00m0in035000c.html

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5. Japan on Nuclear Non-Proliferation

The Japan Times ("NOBEL LAUREATES CALL FOR PACT TO ABOLISH NUCLEAR ARMS", Hiroshima, 2010/11/15) reported that Nobel Peace Prize laureates called on countries around the

world to discuss the creation of a "universal treaty" aimed at realizing a world without nuclear weapons. The past peace prize winners made the call in a declaration they announced at the end of their three-day summit in Hiroshima, which was devastated by the U.S. atomic bombing in 1945, as part of efforts to abolish nuclear weapons. Although there was speculation that the laureates may assert their view on human rights issues as this year's Nobel Peace Prize winner Liu Xiaobo remains imprisoned in the PRC, the matter was not included in their declaration.

http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20101115a3.html

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