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1. US on Six Party Talks

Kyodo News ("STEINBERG, WU MEET OVER STALLED 6-PARTY TALKS ON N. KOREA'S NUKE", 2010/09/01) reported that U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Jim Steinberg held talks Wednesday with the PRC's top envoy on the six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear programs as Beijing seeks an early resumption of the long-stalled denuclearization framework, the State Department said. State Department spokesman Philip Crowley repeated the U.S. position that the DPRK should take specific action to show its seriousness to return to the six-party talks. "It will be up to North Korea to demonstrate that it is prepared to cease its belligerent behavior, live up to its obligations, begin to take actions associated with the 2005 joint statement," he told a news conference. While showing reluctance to get back to the denuclearization talks immediately without a significant change in Pyongyang's behavior, Crowley said, "The six-party process has importance. It has value."

<http://home.kyodo.co.jp/modules/fstStory/index.php?storyid=520634>

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2. Sino-DPRK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA PRODS N.KOREA ON ECONOMIC REFORM", 2010/09/01) reported that the PRC has pressed the DPRK to speed up economic reforms in a summit encounter that underscored Beijing's concerns about its impoverished and wayward ally. PRC state media said a meeting in Changchun between Kim and Hu focused in large part on economic issues, with Hu again stressing that the PRC was "ready to grow trade and economic cooperation" with Pyongyang. The PRC leader reminded Kim that Beijing's stunning economic rise over the past three decades would not have been possible "without cooperating with the outside world", the Xinhua news agency said.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5ityjPqHOb1xO4dzijN-hKx0Mx8Cg>

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA WILL WIDEN DEBATE ON UNIFICATION COST: LEE AIDE", 2010/09/01) reported that the ROK will continue to broaden national debate on ways to tackle the cost of reunifying itself with the DPRK, a top presidential aide said Wednesday, despite Pyongyang's continuing allegations that Seoul is seeking to absorb the communist neighbor. On Aug. 15, ROK President Lee Myung-bak proposed a "unification tax" that he said would help lessen the financial burden of uniting with DPRK if such a situation arises. Kim Sung-hwan, Lee's senior secretary for foreign affairs and security, denied that the proposed tax was meant to suggest unification by absorption or a radical contingency in the DPRK, but insisted that the debate on financial costs must continue.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2010/09/01/10/0401000000AEN20100901007000315F.HTML>

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4. PRC Military

Agence France Presse ("CHINA LAUNCHES WAR GAMES IN YELLOW SEA", 2010/09/01) reported that the PRC on Wednesday launched live-fire naval exercises in the Yellow Sea, state media said, after voicing opposition to similar war games to be staged there by the United States and the ROK. The Beihai fleet of the navy of the People's Liberation Army will conduct a "live ammunition drill" through Saturday in waters off the eastern coast near the city of Qingdao, Xinhua news agency reported. "This is an annual routine training, mainly involving the shooting of shipboard artillery," Xinhua said in a previous report, citing the PRC's defence ministry.

<http://www.news.com.au/breaking-news/world/china-launches-war-games-in-yellow-sea/story-e6frku-i-1225912943938>

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5. Japan Reprocessing Plant

Kyodo News ("COMPLETION OF NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT LIKELY PUSHED BACK BY 2 YRS", Aomori, 2010/09/01) reported that Japan Nuclear Fuel Ltd is making arrangements to postpone by roughly two years the completion of a spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in the village of Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture, due to a series of troubles during test operations, sources close to the matter said. The plant has been in the stage of what the operator calls the "Final Commissioning Test" and its construction is currently expected to be completed in October. But tests have been about eight months behind schedule following the troubles, including the fall of bricks into a melting furnace during a test involving highly radioactive waste.

<http://home.kyodo.co.jp/modules/fstStory/index.php?storyid=520494>

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