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1. Inter-Korea Relations

Korea Times ("SEOUL NOT TO DESCRIBE PYONGYANG AS MAIN ENEMY ", 2010/09/20) reported that this year's defense white paper will not describe the DPRK as the "main enemy" despite the sinking of the frigate Cheonan in March, an official at the Ministry of National Defense said Monday. But the biennial defense report will depict the DPRK as posing a grave threat to the security of the ROK, the official said. The white paper, which is due out in October, would mark a contrast to last year's paper, in which DPRK was described as a "direct and serious threat."

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2010/09/205_73376.html

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2. US on PRC Arms Trade

Global Security Newswire ("CHINA SUSPECTED OF UNDERMINING MISSILE PROLIFERATION CONTROLS", 2010/09/20) reported that a recent report by the U.S. Congressional Research Service cautions that the PRC could be undermining international efforts to limit the spread of missile technology through its dealings with Iran, Pakistan and the DPRK. The Congressional Research Service report on conventional arms transfers to the developing world states that "credible reports persist in various publications that China has sold surface-to-surface missiles to Pakistan. North Korea and Iran have also reportedly received Chinese missile technology, which may have increased their capabilities to threaten other countries in their respective neighborhoods. Such activities reported by credible sources raise important questions about China's stated commitment to the restrictions on missile transfers set out in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), including its pledge not to assist others in building missiles that could deliver nuclear weapons," according to the Sept. 10 report. "Because China has military products -- particularly missiles -- that some developing countries would like to acquire, it can present an obstacle to efforts to stem proliferation of advanced missile systems to some areas of the developing world where political and military tensions are significant, and where some nations are seeking to develop military capabilities of an asymmetric nature," the report says.

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20100920_5750.php

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3. Japan Nuclear Energy

Kyodo News ("TEPCO STARTS 'PLUTHERMAL' REACTOR", 2010/09/20) reported that Tokyo Electric Power Co. started its first plutonium-thermal power generation, known as "pluthermal," at its Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant Saturday morning, the utility company said. The launch came after Tepco had trouble starting up the No. 3 reactor at the power plant in Okuma, Fukushima Prefecture, and postponed the activation initially scheduled for Friday evening. Tepco said the alarm light indicating the conditions of the pipe valve for the emergency core cooling system didn't function properly. There were no problems with the pipe or the valve, according to the company. The No. 3 reactor achieved a self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction in the early afternoon and actual power generation is expected to begin in several days, Tepco said. The reactor is the third in Japan used for pluthermal generation, following Kyushu Electric Power Co.'s Genkai plant in Saga Prefecture and Shikoku Electric Power Co.'s Ikata plant in Ehime Prefecture.

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100919a8.html>

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4. Sino-Japan Relations

Telegraph ("CHINA RETALIATES IN DISPUTE WITH JAPAN AS BOAT ROW ESCALATES", 2010/09/20) reported that the PRC imposed harsh retaliatory sanctions on Japan on Monday as a dispute over territorial incursions escalated into an international stand-off that means East Asia's largest powers have cut high-level diplomatic contacts and travel links. By halting all ministerial and provincial-level contact with Japan, the PRC has frozen official and commercial ties until the PRC captain is released. "If Japan acts wilfully, making mistake after mistake, China will take strong countermeasures, and all the consequences will be borne by the Japanese side," said the Chinese foreign ministry, which said that it does not recognise Japanese legal jurisdiction over the Diaoyu's. "We would like to encourage the Chinese side to take a retrained and calm position so as not to further escalate the situation," said a Japanese spokesman, who added that the captain was being dealt with according to Japanese law.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/8013559/China-retaliates-in-dispute-with-Japan-as-boat-row-escalates.html>

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5. PRC Nuclear Energy

Reuters ("CHINA'S NUCLEAR SECTOR FACES SHORTAGE OF SPECIALISTS", 2010/09/20) reported that the PRC's rapidly expanding nuclear power industry is demanding more professionals than the country can produce, a potential threat to safety, senior government officials said on Monday. "The development trend is good but there are lots of hidden worries," said Li Ganjie, chief of National Nuclear Safety Administration and also vice-minister of environmental protection. "The training for professional staff is inadequate ... we are short of specialised talent and also short of experience." Since the PRC's first reactor started operating in 1991, the industry had maintained a fairly good safety record, with no reports of accidents of grade 2 or above, said Zhang Guobao, head of the National Energy Administration. But there had been some quality problems and accidents during plant operations, exposing gaps in management and quality control, said Zhang. Neither Zhang or Li gave specific figures for the shortage, but an official with the PRC Nuclear Society estimated the country would need 5,000 to 6,000 professionals annually in the next decade or so, versus a yearly supply now of about 2,000.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFTOE68J04920100920>

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org