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2. Russia on Naval Ship Sinking

Kyodo News ("RUSSIA REFUSING TO BLAME N. KOREA FOR DEADLY SHIP SINKING AT G-8 ", 2010/06/21) reported that Russia is demanding that other member countries of the upcoming Group of Eight summit remove the words blaming the DPRK for the deadly sinking of a ROK warship from a draft of the meeting's statement, delaying its preparations, a Japanese government source said Monday. Russia is basing its request on its own investigation into the March 26 sinking of the Cheonan in the Yellow Sea in which 46 sailors died, saying it has yet to reach an official conclusion, according to the source. While Japan and the United States approved the draft, Russia called for eliminating the wording, saying there is no clear evidence that the incident was caused by the DPRK.

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3. PRC on Naval Ship Sinking

Korea Herald ("CHINA MULLS NO-NAMING UN CENSURE", 2010/06/21) reported that the PRC is looking at how the United Nations' censured Israel for an attack on a Turkish aid flotilla as it gropes for a diplomatic way to rebuke the DPRK for the sinking of the Cheonan without hurting relations with its closest ally, according to government sources yesterday. "China is showing an attitude that it wants the UNSC to deal with the Cheonan case at a similar level to the one at which it condemned Israel for the use of force on the ships carrying aid to Palestinians on May 31," said the source. "A

UNSC statement without any mention of North Korea is a preposterous demand for [South] Korea," said an official of the government, requesting anonymity. "Our goal is to draw a resolution or a statement naming and condemning North Korea."

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4. UN on Naval Ship Sinking

Xinhua News Agency ("S. KOREAN SHIP SINKING DISCUSSIONS TO CONTINUE: FOREIGN MINISTRY ", 2010/06/21) reported that the ROK's foreign ministry said Monday that unofficial discussions among UN envoys over the sinking of a ROK warship will continue, responding to a claim that Seoul's diplomatic momentum to censure Pyongyang has died down. Top envoys of the UN Security Council will be away for a little less than a month since June 19 as they are scheduled to visit Afghanistan and Turkey, but unofficial discussions among deputy ambassadors and other UN officials can still go on, Seoul's foreign ministry spokesman Kim Young-sun told reporters in a briefing.

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5. US on Naval Ship Sinking

Arirang News ("US CONSIDERS IMPOSING FINANCIAL SANCTIONS ON ASIAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS", 2010/06/21) reported that the United States is said to be considering imposing financial sanctions on a number of Asian banks that are in charge of managing the DPRK's money. A Japanese daily, Yomiuri Shimbun, reported that such consideration comes amid Washington's efforts in trying to punish Pyeongyang for the March torpedo attack on a ROK naval corvette. The newspaper added that a PRC financial institution is expected to be one of several financial institutions that are targeted for such sanctions, which will restrict them from making transactions within the US.

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6. DPRK Nuclear Program

Associated Press ("ABNORMAL RADIATION DETECTED NEAR BORDER, BUT SKOREA SAYS NKOREA DID NOT CONDUCT NUCLEAR TEST", 2010/06/21) reported that the Science Ministry said its investigation ruled out a nuclear test by the DPRK, but failed to determine the source of the radiation. It said there was no evidence of an earthquake, which follows an atomic explosion. The ROK looked for signs of an artificially induced earthquake of a magnitude typically registered during a nuclear test. Experts, however, found no signs of such a quake in the DPRK, a ministry statement

said. "We determined that there was no possibility of an underground nuclear test," it said. While any fusion test would have registered seismic activity, according to nuclear expert Whang Joo-ho of the ROK's Kyung Hee University, the presence of xenon could also have come from a leak originating from a ROK power plant.

Voice of America ("SEOUL: PYONGYANG'S 'FUSION BREAKTHROUGH' PRODUCES ABNORMAL RADIATION LEVELS ", 2010/06/21) reported that some nuclear scientists are discounting the possibility that a successful attempt at achieving nuclear fusion caused the release of xenon detected on the ROK-DPRK border. Professor David Hinde, who is the department head of nuclear physics at The Australian National University, suspects a conventional fission reaction is a more likely explanation. "It would have to be man-generated unless one came up with some very unusual alternative scenario. The lifetime of those radioactive xenon isotopes, they're not terribly long. So it could not be anything that came naturally, I would say," said Hinde. "Heavy xenon isotopes could be a signature of a fission device of some kind."

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8. DPRK Leadership

Columbia Broadcasting System ("KIM JONG IL, ROBERT MUGABE TOP LIST OF DICTATORS", 2010/06/21) reported that DPRK strongman Kim Jong Il has been ranked the world's worst dictator in Foreign Policy Magazine's annual index. "None of the current top 10 has shown much improvement, if any, since Foreign Policy and the Fund for Peace began publishing the index in 2005," the magazine said on its website. The index uses publicly available data to analyze 177 countries on "12 metrics of state decay -- from refugee flows to economic implosion, human rights violations to security threats," the magazine said.

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9. Sino-DPRK Relations

Kyodo News ("47-MEMBER N. KOREAN GROUP VISITS CHINA TO FOLLOW UP ON KIM VISIT ", 2010/06/21) reported that a 47-member DPRK Workers' Party delegation are on a 10-day visit to the PRC from June 12 to follow up on leader Kim Jong Il's visit in May, Yonhap News Agency reported from Beijing on Monday, quoting a diplomatic source. The visit by the delegation, headed by Minister of Land and Environment Preservation Kim Chang Ryong, was made at the invitation of the International Department of the Chinese Communist Party, the source said. The DPRK delegates were believed to have visited Dalian and Tianjin as did Kim Jong Il during his May 3-7 visit, said Yonhap.

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10. ROK Military

Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA'S NEW ARMY CHIEF VOWS TO BOLSTER READINESS TO DEAL WITH ANY NKOREAN PROVOCATIONS", 2010/06/21) reported that the ROK's new army chief of staff vowed to strengthen readiness to deal with any possible DPRK provocations amid heightened tensions after the deadly sinking of a warship Seoul and Washington blamed on Pyongyang. "Our military is charged with a supreme task to maintain high readiness to sternly counter any North Korean provocations," Gen. Hwang Eui-don said in his inauguration speech at military headquarters in Daejeon, south of Seoul. He said he will ensure any provocations can be dealt with when they occur.

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11. ROK on Nuclear Abolition

Yonhap (Chang Jae-soon, "FOUR S. KOREAN ELDER STATESMEN ISSUE STATEMENT CALLING FOR WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS", Seoul, 2010/06/22) reported that former ROK Prime Minister Lee Hong-koo, former Foreign Minister Han Sung-joo, former parliamentary speaker Park Kwang-yong and former Army general Paik Sun-yop issued a joint statement Tuesday calling for a world free of atomic weapons. "Our support for these efforts is directly related to the grim reality we face in Korea and the vision of the Korean Peninsula without nuclear weapons," the statement said. "The nuclear weapons programs in North Korea constitute a clear and present danger to the peace and stability in this region." "We strongly encourage the U.S. Senate to accelerate the ratification process of the CTBT so that other remaining states will follow suit," it said. "Such a move will send a strong signal to nuclear aspirants such as North Korea, which conducted nuclear tests."

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12. ROK Space Program

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA'S OWN WEATHER SATELLITE READY FOR LAUNCH", 2010/06/21) reported that the ROK is poised to launch its first communication, ocean and meteorological satellite on Thursday. The satellite, dubbed Cheollian, has been installed on a space rocket in preparation for blastoff at the Ariane Space Center in Kourou, French Guiana, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology said. It is the first communication and ocean satellite the country has developed with its own technology. If it enters the target orbit, the ROK will be the seventh country in the world to have a geostationary meteorological satellite, the 10th to develop a communication satellite, and the first nation to operate a marine observation satellite from geostationary orbit.

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13. ROK-India Nuclear Cooperation

Dow Jones Newswires ("SOUTH KOREA'S CHOI: INDIA'S NON-NPT STATUS NOT PROBLEM FOR POSSIBLE NUCLEAR PLANT DEALS", 2010/06/21) reported that a top ROK government official said that he sees no problems in possibly doing business in the civilian nuclear power sector with India, despite India not being a member of a key treaty to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. "I believe that India being not a member of the non-proliferation treaty does not pose any problem" the ROK's Minister of Knowledge Economy, Kyunghwan Choi, told Dow Jones Newswires. Under former President George W. Bush, the U.S. and India reached a deal on civilian nuclear power cooperation. Choi cited that deal as a precedent for other countries, such as the ROK, in possibly reaching similar agreements with India.

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14. USFJ Base Relocation

Kyodo News ("OKADA VOWS TO CLINTON TO STRIVE TO RELOCATE U.S. BASE IN OKINAWA ", 2010/06/21) reported that Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada told U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton over the phone Monday that he will strive to realize a recent bilateral accord on the relocation of a key U.S. military base within Okinawa Prefecture, Japanese officials said. At the same time, the Japanese foreign minister asked his U.S. counterpart for cooperation in reducing the burden on Okinawa of hosting the bulk of U.S. forces in Japan. He also said that the new administration of Prime Minister Naoto Kan hopes to further deepen the bilateral relationship following in the footsteps of previous governments, they said.

Kyodo News ("OKINAWA ASSEMBLY HEAD ASKS OBAMA IN LETTER TO SCRAP FUTENMA PLAN", 2010/06/21) reported that the chairman of the Okinawa prefectural assembly on Monday handed U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos a letter calling for scrapping a plan to transfer the Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station within the southern prefecture. Zenshin Takamine said in the letter addressed to U.S. President Barack Obama that 90 percent of residents in the prefecture are opposed to the plan to move the airfield in the city of Ginowan to the Henoko district of Nago, as agreed on last month between the Japanese and U.S. governments. Takamine also urged Washington to shut down the Futenma base in a residential area and return its land to Japan. Roos, who met Takamine in the prefectural capital of Naha, promised to give the letter to Obama, according to officials with knowledge of the meeting.

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16. Japan-US Relations

Foreign Policy ("HOSONO: WASHINGTON CAN TRUST JAPAN AGAIN", 2010/06/21) reported that the new acting secretary general of Japan's ruling party took time out of a heated campaign to visit Washington briefly to deliver the message that the Obama administration no longer has to worry about the Japanese government's commitment to the U.S.-Japan alliance. In what several observers called his "reassurance tour," rising star Goshi Hosono spoke to a group of experts and officials at a dinner hosted by the Center for a New American Security, the culminating event of the think tank's two-day conference on U.S.-Japan relations. Hosono was forceful, even aggressive, in describing the importance of the security relationship between the world's top two economies and the need for Japan to take a larger and more active role in regional security operations. He spoke about working toward a "close and equal" U.S.-Japan alliance and pledged to work to "deepen" the alliance through a "functional expansion of its powers." The decline of U.S. naval power presents an opportunity for Japan to be more involved in maritime security, Hosono said, including participating in operations to protect sea lanes.

Associated Press (Eric Talmadge, "US-JAPAN SECURITY PACT TURNS 50, FACES NEW STRAINS", Tokyo, 2010/06/22) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan said Tuesday he sees the US-Japan security pact as a crucial means of maintaining the balance of power in Asia. "Keeping our alliance with the United States contributes to peace in the region," Kan said in a televised question-and-answer session with other party leaders. "Stability helps the U.S.-Japan relationship, and that between China and Japan and, in turn, China and the United States."

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18. Japan-Afghanistan Relations

Microsoft National Broadcasting Company ("KARZAI: JAPAN GETS PRIORITY IN AFGHAN MINING", 2010/06/21) reported that Afghan President Hamid Karzai prepared to wrap up a five-day visit to Japan after pledging the host nation would be granted priority to explore and extract untapped mineral resources recently valued at more than \$1 trillion. Karzai said the leg up in mineral exploration would be granted in return for the aid Japan has given his nation. "Morally, Afghanistan should give access as a priority to those countries that have helped Afghanistan massively in the past few years," he said, noting Japan has been his country's No. 2 aid donor.

"What . . . we have to reciprocate with is this opportunity of mineral resources, that we must return at the goodwill of the Japanese people by giving Japan priority to come and explore and extract," he said.

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19. Japan Nuclear Energy

Kyodo News ("JAPAN PROMOTES NUKE EXPORTS WITH MONJU TOUR", 2010/06/21) reported that delegations from Vietnam and Malaysia, in Fukui Prefecture for a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, were given a tour of the experimental Monju reactor in Tsuruga as Japan attempts to promote its nuclear technology for export. Monju, a prototype fast-breeder reactor, resumed operations in May after a more than 14-year suspension caused by an accident. "By resuming operations, we would like to show to the world the outcome of our study on (the technology's) practical use at an early date," Japan Atomic Energy Agency chief Toshio Okazaki said.

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20. Japan Politics

Agence France Presse ("PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR NEW JAPAN CABINET DROPS: POLLS", 2010/06/21) reported that public support for Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan's cabinet dropped in polls published Monday, after he began actively discussing an eventual tax hike ahead of an election. The influential Asahi Shimbun said the support rate for the cabinet, which came to power less than three weeks ago, slipped to 50 percent in its survey taken over the weekend, down from the 59 percent a week earlier. The poll showed disapproval was up to 32 percent from 27 percent, just weeks ahead of an expected upper house election.

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21. Sino-US Relations

Agence France Presse ("CHINA YUAN MOVE 'TAKES IRRITANT OFF THE TABLE': US DIPLOMAT", 2010/06/21) reported that US Ambassador to the PRC Jon Huntsman said Monday that Beijing's cautious pledge at the weekend to loosen its exchange rate policy "takes an irritant off the table in the US-China relationship". Huntsman described it as a "genuine attempt" to address concerns from the US and other nations about the value of the PRC's currency. But the diplomat also said Sino-US military ties were "seriously lagging", several days after the US defence secretary defended arms sales to Taiwan. "There are no signs of real progress on the military relationship," Huntsman said after a speech to the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce. "It's the one end of our relationship that is seriously lagging and one we would like to see strengthened.

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22. Sino-Australia Relations

Agence France Presse ("AUSTRALIA, CHINA SIGN MAJOR DEALS, PUSH FREE TRADE", 2010/06/21) reported that Australia and the PRC signed new deals worth 10 billion dollars (8.8 billion US) Monday and vowed to push for an early free trade agreement as they ignored diplomatic concerns to focus on economic ties. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd warmly welcomed the PRC's Vice-President Xi Jinping to Canberra, entertaining 300 PRC delegates with jokes in Mandarin, as he spoke of the booming economic ties with Australia's biggest trading partner. "If we are going to face the global economic challenges of our time, then we must do so together," Rudd said, adding that total trade between Australia and the PRC grew by 15.1 percent to 85 billion dollars during the slump of 2009.

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23. PRC Nuclear Energy

Korea Herald ("ALARM RAISED AGAINST CHINA'S NUCLEAR PROJECT NEAR MT. BAEKDU", 2010/06/21) reported that the ROK's largest environmental activist group Monday called for Seoul's diplomatic efforts to block the PRC's plan to construct a nuclear power plant near Mount Baekdu, a volcano on the border between the PRC and the DPRK. The statement by the Korea Federation for Environmental Movements came after a geologist last week hinted at the possible eruption of the dormant Baekdu in the near future. "Many experts here and abroad have warned of the high possibility of the eruption, saying that the consequences could be much more serious than the recent one in Iceland," the group said in a statement. A ROK research institute had reported in February that the northeastern PRC province of Jilin, which borders the DPRK and Russia to the east, was seeking to build six 1,250-megawatt nuclear power plants in the area, 100 kilometers from the peak of Baekdu, from 2012. Even though the PRC central government has not yet approved the plan, the group said, the result could be catastrophic when the highly dangerous nuclear materials react to natural disasters such as earthquakes and volcanic activity.

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24. PRC Unrest

Bloomberg ("HU JINTAO TO FOCUS ON WIDENING WEALTH GAP, TIBET, XINJIANG, SCMP REPORTS", 2010/06/21) reported that the PRC's President Hu Jintao identified the country's widening wealth gap and the development of the Tibet and Xinjiang regions as top priorities for the central government, the South China Morning Post reported, citing unidentified officials. Hu sees the three issues as potential triggers of social unrest, the newspaper said, citing officials who attended internal meetings with the President. Hu chaired two Politburo meetings, one on Tibet and Xinjiang, earlier this year, and plans to convene a meeting to discuss how to address the widening income gap later in the year, the Hong Kong-based newspaper said.

Agence France Presse ("CHINA PLANS XINJIANG CRACKDOWN FOR RIOT ANNIVERSARY ", 2010/06/21) reported that police in the capital of the PRC's restive Xinjiang will launch a security clampdown ahead of the anniversary of ethnic riots, the government said, in an indication they fear further unrest. Authorities in the city of Urumqi, which exploded in deadly riots last July 5, will "increase the police presence in key places, vital sectors and public areas," the Xinjiang region's state-run Tianshannet website said. Police will also ramp up inspections of all people transporting and using dangerous explosive materials and "severely deal" with those found violating the rules and police stations in Urumqi will be strengthened with an additional 1,000 officers for three weeks from June 25. Dilxat Raxit, a spokesman for the World Uyghur Congress, an overseas group, condemned the "repressive measures". "They are provoking a deterioration of the situation, and all Uighurs that are under China's supervision endure discrimination and face the risk of detention at any time," he said.

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26. Hong Kong Politics

New York Times ("HONG KONG MOVES AHEAD ON REFORMS", 2010/06/21) reported that after many years of negotiations and a series of false starts, Hong Kong's chief executive and some of the city's pro-democracy politicians have compromised on a plan to make the legislature at least a little more democratic. Pro-Beijing parties, with 36 members of the legislature, endorsed the plan on Monday, and the chairman of one of the two main pro-democracy parties proposed the compromise, so lawmakers and political analysts give the bill a strong chance of passing. Beijing's willingness to endorse the compromise, which goes beyond what it has been willing to accept in previous discussions of electoral changes here, represents a rare sign of political flexibility toward Hong Kong, even as political controls on most of the mainland remain tight.

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27. Cross-Strait Relations

Taiwan News ("CHINA ASKS TAIWAN LEAVE DONGYIN FOR MISSILE PULLOUT: REPORT", 2010/06/21) reported that lawmakers gave a cool response to reports yesterday that the PRC would withdraw missiles targeted at Taiwan if Taipei decided to withdraw troops from the small island of Dongyin. There are 3,000 Taiwanese troops stationed on Dongyin, according to the Chinese-language Liberty Times daily. Some lawmakers said the proposal could be considered, while others insisted it was up to the PRC to make the first move and show goodwill toward Taiwan. Opposition Democratic Progressive Party lawmaker Huang Wei-cher said the reported Beijing offer might be acceptable because moving and restationing troops and missiles could both happen quite quickly. In addition, the PRC was only asking for a partial withdrawal, and not for a complete evacuation of

Dongyin, Huang said.

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29. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction

China News Net ("CHINA POVERTY ALLEVIATION FOUNDATION LAUNCHES YUSHU ASSISTANCE ACTIVITY", 2010/06/21) reported that China Poverty Alleviation Foundation launched the second round of Yushu Earthquake Disaster Area Assistance on June 19th in Beijing. The two main post-disaster reconstruction projects of this activity are “market and product base reconstruction” and “construction of a whole village”, and the total investment is 20 million RMB.

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30. PRC Civil Society

Jinghua Times ("PHILANTHROPY WEEKLY STARTS PUBLICATION", 2010/06/21) reported that the news conference celebrating Philanthropy Weekly's initial edition was held in Beijing yesterday evening. The Weekly is sponsored by the Jinghua Times and co-sponsored by the Beijing Longshijianglan International Communication Agency. Representatives from NGOs, enterprises and society have gathered together for this celebration and respectively expressed their philanthropic dreams.

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31. PRC Employment Assistance

Economic Information Daily ("HUBEI SETS 100,000 PUBLIC POSITIONS FOR HELPING EMPLOYMENT", 2010/06/21) reported that Hubei province has planned to put aside 600-800 million RMB for “Employment Aid Special Action” this year. It is said 100,000 public positions are

being developed and financially supported by government, including traffic warden and urban construction assistant positions. The positions are for people who have difficulty finding jobs and students who don't find jobs for one year after graduation.

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Nautilus Institute

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

nautilus@nautilus.org