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I. United States

1. DPRK Trade Fair

The Los Angeles Times (Tingi Cai and Barbara Demick, "TRADE FAIR GIVES NORTH KOREANS A VIEW OF WORLD; AMID LIMITED WARES, ATTENDEES WERE EAGER TO LEARN AND BUY, FOREIGN SALES REPS SAY," Pyongyang, 09/22/03) reported that with the microphones broken and toilets damaged, a most unusual capitalist-style trade fair was launched in the DPRK. Over a four-day period last month, about 20,000 curious North Koreans filed through a cavernous exhibition hall here to ogle seldom-seen products such as imported chocolates and wireless telephones. By the standards of Asian trade shows, the event in the DPRK capital was rather small and dowdy, offering a hodgepodge of products. "This is a low-end exhibition It's so different from South Korea's that it is hard to imagine that the two used to be the same country," said Albert Chen, a sales representative for a Taiwanese sewing machine manufacturer. But it nonetheless offered the isolated North Koreans a rare glimpse into the spice and variety of commerce in the outside world at a time when they are testing the waters of capitalism. "The trade fair is an important window for the North Koreans," said Tony Michell, a Seoul-based consultant who works with European firms doing business in the DPRK. There was a motley assortment of merchandise that ranged from PRC-made sunglasses and cigarette lighters to computerized pig-feeding equipment from Germany. The foreign sales representatives in attendance said they were struck by the North Koreans' enthusiasm and eagerness to learn. "They desperately want to understand all of these technologies," said a Beijing-based representative who gave only his first name, Colin. He ran an exhibit of wireless communications equipment that attracted curiosity from the North Koreans. "The nation's basic science training is very good. They just don't know yet how to apply what they've learned. But once they access these new technologies, they will learn very fast." Trade fairs are among the halting moves the DPRK has made to steer its economy toward a freer market. Last year, the government dropped its rationing and public distribution system and loosened price controls and exchange rates. This was the sixth annual international trade fair held in Pyongyang. Companies from five countries attended, while last year there were representatives of 15.

2. DPRK Broadband Internet

Reuters ("N.KOREA TO DEVELOP BROADBAND INTERNET," Beijing, 09/19/03) reported that the DPRK plans to develop broadband Internet capabilities linked with the outside world to improve the business environment. Vice Trade Minister Ri Yong-nam disclosed the plan to a delegation of members of Britain's House of Lords who arrived in Beijing on Friday after a six-day visit to the DPRK. "We are now going to actively encourage a broadband system and will seek to link the domestic intranet network...to the international Internet," Lord David Alton quoted Ri as saying. Ri also said he was "well aware of the close linkage of political and economic issues." Internet access is extremely limited in the DPRK where people cannot get online without the right political connections. There is an intranet, or internal network, within Pyongyang, but it is unclear how extensive it is. Nevertheless, DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is said to be a regular Web surfer and a fan of the Internet.

3. Japan Domestic Politics

Agence France-Presse ("KOIZUMI REELECTED PRESIDENT OF JAPAN'S RULING PARTY," 09/20/03) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has been re-elected president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), virtually ensuring he would retain the nation's premiership. The 61-year-old premier won 399 votes or 60 percent of the combined 657 votes cast by 357 LDP parliamentary lawmakers and as 1.4 million rank and file members -- which accounted for 300 ballots -- a party official said. Former LDP policy research council chairman Shizuka Kamei

came second with 139 votes, followed by former transport minister Takao Fujii with 65 and former foreign minister Masahiko Komura at 54. With the victory, Koizumi secured a new three-year term as the head of the LDP, which confers the nation's premiership, given the party's parliamentary majority. "From the bottom of my heart I thank you for my re-election as the president of the ruling party," Koizumi said after bowing to LDP lawmakers packing the main hall of the party's headquarters after the vote. "This presidential election is part of the procedures in letting the LDP meet the people's expectations and trust at a time which is the turning point to a new era," Koizumi said. "The election was held for the purpose of making the LDP a real party to serve the people and drive forward reforms," Koizumi said.

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PM KOIZUMI KEEPS REFORMERS IN CABINET SHAKE-UP," 09/22/03) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi kept Heizo Takenaka as Japan's economic czar in a cabinet shake-up hailed as a bolstering of the premier's reform agenda before an expected general election this year. The move kept unelected Takenaka as both chief financial system regulator and economic and fiscal policy minister, and ignored calls from within the ruling party to remove him. Koizumi also surprised commentators by retaining Yoriko Kawaguchi, 62, another unelected politician, as foreign minister, and elevating Sadakazu Tanigaki, 58, to the finance minister's post to replace the ailing Masajuro Shiokawa, 81. "I think this shows the prime minister's strong expectations with regard to structural reforms," Takenaka told a post-appointment news conference on Monday. "Japan's economic performance in the past three to four quarters has been the best among industrial nations. I want to take advantage of it and push for structural reform." The shuffle comes ahead of a lower house general election that must be called by June. But many expect Koizumi to dissolve parliament and seek a mandate from the country at the ballot box this year to avoid conflict with an upper house vote due by July.

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PM KOIZUMI DISSOLVES CABINET, SET TO ANNOUNCE RESHUFFLE," 09/22/03) reported that all 17 ministers in the administration of Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi resigned ahead of the launch of his new cabinet, officials said. As a formality, the ministers presented their resignation letters to Koizumi during a special cabinet meeting Monday morning, officials said. Koizumi, who easily prevailed as president of his party in a leadership election on Saturday, is expected to announce the lineup of new cabinet members within a few hours with the focus on key posts central to his policies on structural reforms, the economy and the DPRK. The fate of Heizo Takenaka, the unelected minister most closely associated with Koizumi's reforms because of his crackdown on the troubled banking system, is being closely watched. A key Koizumi aide hinted Sunday that Takenaka may keep either of his two posts -- minister for financial affairs or minister for economic and fiscal policy. Reports have suggested former Bank of Japan bureaucrat and Harvard-educated ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lawmaker Yasuhisa Shiozaki, 52, would replace Takenaka as the chief financial system regulator. Shiozaki, twice elected, has argued for the same kind of tough stance on banks as Takenaka, with tough asset assessments followed by public injections of funds and changes in management. If appointed financial affairs minister, Shiozaki would head the Financial Services Agency, which regulates the banking system. The replacement for Masajuro Shiokawa, the 81-year-old finance minister who has said he would quit for health reasons, has also been under scrutiny.

4. DPRK on US-ROK Missile Defense

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA DENOUNCES US MISSILE DEFENSE UPGRADE IN SOUTH KOREA," 09/19/03) reported that the DPRK has denounced a US missile defense upgrade in the ROK insisting the program amounts to war preparations that will hamper efforts to resolve a crisis over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions. The DPRK's state-run television said late Thursday the revamp of US Patriot missiles in the ROK would "complete war preparations for preemptive strikes

against North Korea," according to the Yonhap news agency. "If the US wants to resolve the nuclear problem peacefully, it must stop the war preparations and change its hostile policy on the DPRK (North Korea)," the television said in a commentary. "The US arms buildup in South Korea is creating a stumbling block to resolving the nuclear problem as it is dangerous war preparation to increase tensions on the Korean peninsula." US military authorities said Tuesday they had completed upgrading its Patriot missile batteries in the ROK as part of an 11-billion-dollar plan to beef up its deterrence against the DPRK.

5. IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Developments

The Associated Press (George Jahn, "IAEA URGES NORTH KOREA TO ABANDON NUKES," Vienna, 09/19/03) reported that the 137-nation U.N. nuclear watchdog agency urged the DPRK on Friday to scrap its atomic weapons program and agree to the resumption of international scrutiny of its activities. In a resolution adopted by consensus, the general conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency urged the DPRK to "completely dismantle" its nuclear arms efforts. It also called on the DPRK to "accept comprehensive IAEA safeguards and cooperate with the agency in their full and effective implementation." The conference has no authority to enforce its resolutions and the DPRK severed its ties with the agency last year.

6. ROK DPRK Infiltration Training

Reuters ("REPORT: S.KOREA TRAINS 13,000 TO INFILTRATE NORTH," Seoul, 09/21/03) reported that the ROK trained about 13,000 commandos to infiltrate into the DPRK over a four-decade period, Yonhap news agency said Sunday, quoting a military information agency. Of the 13,000 or so agents, some 7,800 had been killed or were missing and 200 were wounded between 1951 and 1994, the Defense Information Command said in a report submitted to a lawmaker, according to Yonhap News Agency. Hundreds of former commandos, who say they were trained to infiltrate into the DPRK, held violent protests last year demanding government compensation and recognition. The protesters said they were part of a unit that had existed since the 1950-53 Korean War. The ROK government has yet to officially acknowledge the existence of the infiltration teams. The two Koreas remain in a technical state of war because the Korean War ended in an armed truce that was never replaced by a peace treaty.

7. ROK-Russia Dept Agreement

Asia Pulse ("S KOREAN FINANCE MINISTER SIGNS RUSSIAN DEBT AGREEMENT," Seoul, 09/19/03) reported that ROK Deputy Prime Minister Kim Jin-pyo signed a formal agreement outlining the settlement of Russia's debt to the ROK, the Ministry of Finance and Economy said today. It said the signing ceremony took place in Moscow, with Kim and his Russian counterpart Alexei Kudrin representing the two countries. Under the deal ironed out in June, the ROK will write off US$660 million in overdue interest payments, while the remainder of the US$2.24 billion won will be paid in installments for the next 23 years. The finance ministry added that the conclusion of the drawn-out deal will allow the resumption of financial cooperation between the two countries, permitting expanded investment and export opportunities for Korean companies wanting to do business in that country. In a related development, the Export-Import Bank of Korea is expected to conclude a US$160 million loan agreement with Rosbank and other Russian financial institutions. The ministry also said there were about US$3 billion worth of business projects involving the two countries. The settlement of Russia's debt problem will allow the countries to work closely on ways to diffuse tensions over the DPRK's nuclear ambitions.

8. US PRC Port Visit

Agence France-Presse ("SHIPS MAKE PORT VISIT TO CHINA TO 'REDUCE MISUNDERSTANDINGS,'" 09/22/03) reported that two US Navy ships have arrived at a port in southern PRC for a visit aimed at building trust and reducing misunderstandings between the navies of the two countries, a US naval official said. The calls by the USS Cowpens and USS Vandegrift to the Zhanjiang port are part of a series of exchanges between the two militaries for the past few years, Lieutenant Commander Mike Brown said. "I think it's a good indication that the continuation of relations between the two countries is moving in a positive direction," Brown, the public affairs officer for the US Navy's Carrier Group Five, told AFP. "Obviously, these port visits are an opportunity for the two countries to strengthen the bonds of friendship." It is the first time US Navy ships have been allowed to visit the PRC Navy's South Sea Fleet headquarters in Zhanjiang in southern Guangdong province, Brown said. In the past few years of exchanges, US ships have only docked at the mainland PRC ports of Qingdao in northeastern China and Shanghai in the east, he said. In return, a PRC naval ship and a support ship will be allowed to visit the US territory of Guam for the first time this year, Brown said. The schedule for the visit has not been finalized.

9. US on PRC Human Rights Record

Reuters (Sue Pleming, "US BERATES CHINA OVER HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD," Washington, 09/22/03) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell berated the PRC on Monday for not doing enough to improve its human rights record but thanked Beijing for its efforts on the DPRK. A State Department official said Powell had urged PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing during talks at the State Department to make Beijing act on promises made at US-PRC human rights talks last December. "The secretary took note of our disappointment that China had not moved forward to implement commitments made at last year's human rights dialogue and subsequently discussed by Assistant Secretary of State (Lorne) Craner during his March trip to China," said the official, who asked not to be named. Craner, the assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor who attended Monday's meeting, has been strongly critical of the PRC's human rights record. The US is troubled by the PRC's refusal to allow U.N. human rights investigators to examine allegations that the PRC jails people without due process. The PRC also promised to allow a US Commission on International Religious Freedom to visit but the trip was postponed after the PRC insisted the group not visit Hong Kong. Washington is also concerned about the execution of a Tibetan, the arrests of a number of pro-democracy activists and harsh sentences handed down to labor protesters and others.

II. People's Republic of China

1. PRC-US Relations

China Daily ("CHINA DENIES US DRUG ALLEGATIONS," Beijing, 09/20-21/03, P2) reported that PRC expressed discontent with and opposition to a US government report, in which PRC is listed as a major drug producer and trafficker, Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said on September 19. US President George Bush has submitted this report to Congress. "The US action is wrong," said Kong. He said the Chinese Government has made drug prohibition a priority and has set policies and measures to fight drug production and distribution. PRC also keeps close contact with all nations, including the US, in this work and has made remarkable achievements, he added. PRC hopes the US side would respect these facts and correct its mistake, Kong said.

China Daily ("CULT LOSES COURT BID," Beijing, 09/15/03, P2) reported that Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan welcomed a US Illinois court's rejection of an appeal against a ban on the Falun Gong cult by Chinese government agencies and officials. Kong said the US court's decision is correct and aids Sino-US relations. He said the Falun Gong cult had tried to tarnish PRC's image and damage its ties with the US by falsely accusing Chinese leaders and government agencies. According to international law, one country's judiciary cannot overrule that of another nation.

China Daily (Meng Yan, "MILITARY CHIEF TO TRAVEL TO US," 09/19/03, P1) reported that PRC's Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan will visit the US in the second half of next month, Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said on September 18 in Beijing. Kong, declining to say if nuclear issues regarding the DPRK will be on the agenda, said the visit is still under discussion. Military exchanges between PRC and the US play an important part in bilateral relations and are conducive to deepening mutual understanding and expanding consensus, Kong said at the regular news briefing. He also noted that the two countries should properly handle occasional problems and friction in bilateral trade relations.

2. PRC's Commemoration of the "September 18th Incident"

China Daily (Tian Xiuzhen and Wu Yong, "JAPAN'S WAR CRIMES STAIN PAGES OF HISTORY," Shanghai/Changchun, 09/19/03, P1) reported that over 120 people attended the International Symposium on Japanese Responsibilities for its Invasion of Asian Countries in Shanghai. The Japanese Government should acknowledge the nation's war crimes and reach settlements with its victims, the meeting was told on September 18. They included lawyers, "comfort" women used as sex slaves, and forced laborers from PRC, Japan, the Philippines, the ROK, the DPRK and the US. "Half a century has passed since the end of Japanese military aggression. However, Japan still behaves unreasonably and ignores the feelings of the countries they victimized," said Wang Xuan, the chairwoman of a legal group advising plaintiffs suing Japan for damages over its use of germ warfare. Across PRC, ceremonies were held to commemorate the 72nd anniversary of the "September 18th Incident," in which Japanese troops launched a sudden attack on the Chinese army in Shenyang, Liaoning Province in the northeast.

3. Relations Across Taiwan Straits

People's Daily ("TAIWAN'S REPRESENTATION APPEAL DENIED," Beijing, 09/19/03, P3) reported that PRC's Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said on September 18 that the latest rejection of a proposal on Taiwan's "representation" in the UN shows once again that the one China is the basic principle generally observed by the international community. "There is only one China in the world, and the Chinese mainland and Taiwan belong to one China. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of China cannot be severed," Kong said. It is in the fundamental interests of China to safeguard national unity, Kong added in the report.

China Daily (Guo Nei, "NO PLACE FOR POLITICS IN DIRECT STRAITS FLIGHTS," 09/16/03, P1) reported that a China Civil Aviation Association spokesman Pu Zhaozhou said on September 15 that direct flights between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan are an economic, not a political matter. Pu made the remarks in response to the Taiwan authorities' proposal on Wednesday to start regular indirect cargo flights to and from the mainland later this month. Pu said the flights should be direct. However, Taiwan authorities have insisted that chartered cargo flights land in Hong Kong or Macao before they reach the mainland. Pu urged Taiwanese authorities to allow mainland airlines to operate cargo services to Taiwan island, on an equal footing with Taiwanese airlines, said the report.

4. DPRK-ROK Relations

People's Daily ("ROK, DPRK CONCLUDES MILITARY AUTHORITIES' MEETING," 09/19/03, P3) reported that ROK and DPRK military officials on September 17 agreed to use the roads being built through the western and eastern areas of the demilitarized zone (DMZ) as new temporary roads. The agreement was clinched at the 8th Inter-Korean Military Authorities' Meeting held on September 17 on DPRK's side in the truce village of Panmumjom. The two sides agreed to use two sects of the Gyeongui road and Donghae road as new inter-Korean temporary corridors whenthe construction work of the two sects finish, said the report.

China Daily (Seoul, 09/16/03, P11) reported that a DPRK plane flew ROK tourists to Pyongyang on September 15 on the first commercial flight since the Korean Peninsula was divided half a century ago.

5. DPRK Relations with US, ROK and Japan

China Daily ("DPRK DENOUNCES US MISSILE DEPLOYMENT," Seoul, 09/20-21/03, P8) reported that the DPRK denounced the recent US deployment of new anti-missile weapons in the ROK as a provocative step that could hinder talks on Pyongyang's nuclear program. The US Army said on September 16 it had deployed an upgraded system in ROK that can hit ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and aircraft. It put them on display on Thursday. The deployment of Patriot 3 missiles in ROK is a provocative action by the US to complete its preparations for a war, the DPRK's news agency said in a commentary on September 18, said the report.

People's Daily (Zhao Jiaming, "DPRK COMPLAINS US, JAPAN HOLD UP UN AID," Pyongyang, 09/17/03, P3) reported that DPRK said on September 15 the US and Japan had put pressure on UN aid agencies to stop or delay food shipments to DPRK. "This is attributable to the political attempt of the U.S., Japan and some other countries to use the U.N. organizations' assistance to the DPRK as a leverage," it said, referring to an international standoff with Pyongyang over its nuclear ambitions. "Lack of transparency concerning assistance peddled by the U.S. and Japan is nothing but a rigmarole intended to hinder the humanitarian aid to the DPRK and scuttle it," the spokesman was quoted as saying in the report.

China Daily (Tokyo, 09/17/03, P12) reported that senior diplomats from the US, Japan and ROK will meet in Tokyo on September 29 and 30 to discuss nuclear program of the DPRK, Japan's Foreign Ministry said on September 16.

6. PRC's Army Development

China Daily (Hu Qihua, "FM: REPORTS OF BORDER TROOP BUILD-UP GROUNDLESS," 09/17/03, P1) reported that PRC on September 16 rejected reports that its troops were building up on its border with the DPRK. The army's movement was part of a longstanding plan to unify border controls nationwide, Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said. Kong said the People's Liberation Army (PLA) had taken over guard duties along the border with the DPRK from the armed police, noting that it had been decided years ago to turn over the job to the PLA's border guard unit to bring it into line with other parts of PRC's land border. He said the PLA was also taking over guard duties from the armed police along the border between Myanmar and Southwest China's Yunnan Province. The changes were "based on requirements of the law of the PRC to unify the form and streamline the system of national land border administration," he said. "It is a normal adjustment that has been carried out after many years of preparation by the relevant parties."

7. ROK-Japan Relations

China Daily (Seoul, 09/17/03, P11) reported that in a gesture of reconciliation with its former colonial ruler, ROK said on September 16 it would remove the last import barrier for Japanese movies, pop songs and video games beginning next year.

8. DPRK-Japan Relations

People's Daily (Zhao Jiaming, "LIQUIDATING HISTORY IS CONDITION OF RELATIONS NORMALIZATION," Pyongyang, 09/18/03, P3) reported that DPRK Foreign Ministry Spokesman said on September 16 that the key to the implementation of the DPRK-Japan Pyongyang Declaration lies in liquidating history, which is the prerequisite condition for the normalization of bilateral relations. The Pyongyang Declaration was made to improve relations and realize bilateral relations normalization and has brought a transitional better situation of the DPRK-Japan relations. The DPRK urged Japan to resolve serious human rights issues it had committed on Korean people in spirit of the Declaration, said the spokesman in the report.

9. PRC's Attitude towards IAEA Resolution on DPRK

People's Daily (Song Guocheng, "CHINA SAYS IAEA RESOLUTION ON DPRK 'IMBALANCED'," Vienna, 09/21/03, P3) reported that PRC says the latest resolution adopted by the UN nuclear watchdog agency on the North Korean nuclear issue is "imbalanced" and does not address DPRK's security concerns. The 137-nation International Atomic Energy Agency adopted a resolution by consensus in Vienna on September 19, urging DPRK to "completely dismantle" its nuclear arms efforts, accept comprehensive IAEA safeguards and cooperate with the agency in their full and effective implementation. The conference has no authority to enforce its resolutions and DPRK severed its ties with the agency last year. The document nevertheless reflects international concern over DPRK's declared intention to build nuclear weapons. PRC's ambassador to UN organizations in Vienna, Zhang Yan has expressed his regret over the IAEA resolution, saying it fails to address DPRK's security concerns. The Chinese ambassador said the resolution does not fully reflect the consensus reached at the recent six-party talks in Beijing on the North Korean nuclear issue. The consensus included realizing a nuclear-free Korean peninsula and properly addressing DPRK's security concerns.

III. Japan

1. ASDF Officer's Death in Explosion

Kyodo ('WEAPONS CACHE IS FOUND IN ASDF MEMBER'S HOME,' Naha, 09/04/03) reported that an Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) member who died in an explosion in the city of Okinawa kept an arsenal in his home, consisting of two antitank rockets, a US military issue M-16 rifle and about 500 rounds of live ammunition, police said. The Okinawa Prefectural Police suspect Senior Master Sgt. Takio Tamura, 53, was handling munitions in violation of the explosives and firearms control laws. Tamura died instantly in the explosion at a junkyard at 3:50 p.m. on Aug. 31. He was stationed at the ASDF's Naha base. They will send papers on the dead man to prosecutors. The base commander, Maj. Gen. Kiyoshi Yada, meanwhile offered Okinawa Mayor Masakazu Nakasone an apology on behalf of the Self-Defense Forces over the incident. The police said they confiscated all the munitions except for the rockets, which posed a danger if moved because their fuses were still intact. The rockets had no warheads, they added.

Kyodo ('MORE WEAPONS FOUND IN OKINAWA,' Naha, 09/06/03) reported that police investigating an explosion that killed an Air Self-Defense Force (SDF) sergeant found two antitank rockets and 15 rocket launchers in a house he rented to store some of his military items. Senior Master Sgt. Takio Tamura, 53, who died while handling ammunition at a separate storage site, is suspected of amassing an arsenal that included at least four antitank rockets, 15 rocket launchers, a US military issue M-16 rifle and about 500 rounds of ammunition, and an M-1 carbine rifle and about 50 rounds and 50 empty magazines. Police planned to hold an emergency meeting with the city government and nearby residents to discuss measures concerning the removal of the weapons. Police also believe Tamura was collecting the military goods intending to sell them. Investigators are trying to determine how he obtained the arsenal.

Kyodo ('ASDF SERGEANT'S ROCKETS DEFUSED,' Naha, 09/07/03) reported that Japanese police and US Air Force personnel finished defusing four US antitank rockets in the possession of a sergeant in the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF), police officials said. In the afternoon, three officers from a US Air Force explosives disposal team defused two 66-mm rockets found in a house rented by Senior Master Sgt. Takio Tamura, 53, in Naha. Some 400 people living close to the house were evacuated from their homes during the operation in the afternoon, while around 550 nearby residents were evacuated to a community center about 300 meters from Tamura's apartment in the morning.

2. Japan New US Navy Commander

Kyodo ('U.S. NAVY IN JAPAN GETS NEW LEADER,' Yokosuka, 09/06/03) reported that Rear Adm. Frederic R. Ruehe assumed the top post of the US Navy in Japan, with about 500 people, including members of the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF), attending his inauguration ceremony. In the ceremony on the Blue Ridge, the command ship of the Navy's 7th Fleet, Ruehe took over as commander of the naval forces in Japan from his predecessor, Rear Adm. Robert Chaplin. Since March, Ruehe has served concurrently as commander of Amphibious Force 7th Fleet and Amphibious Group One.

3. Japan Iraq Troop Deployment

The Japan Times ('OKAMOTO TO ASSESS IRAQ SECURITY,' 09/06/03) reported that the Japanese government is sending Yukio Okamoto, a foreign policy adviser to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, to Iraq to check security conditions and determine how the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) can contribute to rebuilding the country. Okamoto was to be dispatched last month, but the mission was postponed due to worsened security conditions, such as the bombing of the United Nations' headquarters in Baghdad. "I would like to see what kind of humanitarian assistance we can offer and check other conditions, including the political and security situations," Okamoto said. Okamoto's trip, which will last a week to 10 days, will be separate from a large-scale mission the government plans to send later to determine the SDF's specific tasks and areas of operation, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said.

4. Japan Nuclear Reactor

Kyodo ('HOKKAIDO REACTOR SPRINGS COOLANT LEAK; NO RADIATION,' Sapporo, 09/09/03) reported that a nuclear reactor in the Hokkaido village of Tomari sprung a coolant leak over the weekend, but no radioactive material seeped out of the facility, according to officials of Hokkaido Electric Power Co. The primary coolant leak occurred at the regenerated heat exchanger room at

the Tomari nuclear power station's No. 2 pressurized water reactor, the officials said. About 140 liters of primary coolant had leaked for 16 hours inside the reactor, capable of producing up to 579,000 kilowatts of electricity. It is the first time that primary coolant has leaked at this power plant. Hokkaido Electric said that the leak had been caused by a small crack in the weld connecting the heat exchanger and the piping system. The firm said it would examine the crack in an ultrasonic wave test to see if it can be repaired while keeping the reactor in operation. The reactor will have to be shut down if the repair needs more than a week, the officials said.

Kyodo ('REACTOR IN HOKKAIDO TO BE SHUT DOWN,' Sapporo, 09/11/03) reported that Hokkaido Electric Power Co. is shutting down for repairs a nuclear reactor that suffered a primary coolant leak over the weekend, Hokkaido government officials said. It is the first time that the No. 2 pressurized water reactor at the Tomari nuclear power station in the village of Tomari has been shut down since it began operating in 1991, the officials said. Ultrasound tests found a hole of less than 1 mm in the welding that connects the regenerated heat exchanger with a pipe, the officials said.

5. Japan Domestic Politics

The Japan Times ('KOIZUMI CRITIC NONAKA TO RETIRE FROM POLITICS,' 09/10/03) reported that Hiromu Nonaka, an influential member of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), expressed his intention to retire from politics. Nonaka, 77, told a hastily arranged news conference at the party's headquarters in Tokyo that he will not run in the next general election of the House of Representatives. He is a former LDP secretary general and a senior member of the party's largest faction, led by former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. "I would like to devote all of my remaining energy to the struggle to throw out the administration of (Prime Minister Junichiro) Koizumi by cutting my escape routes," Nonaka said, expressing his determination to do his utmost to help Takao Fujii, a Hashimoto faction member running against Koizumi for the LDP presidency. In addition to Fujii, a former transport minister, former LDP policy chief Shizuka Kamei and former Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura are challenging Koizumi and his reform agenda. Regarding the presidential race, Nonaka harshly criticized Mikio Aoki, a senior Hashimoto faction member who heads the LDP caucus in the Upper House, and Kanezo Muraoka, a veteran Hashimoto faction member who once held the post of Chief Cabinet Secretary. The two have expressed their support for Koizumi in the election, exposing a rift in the faction. "I cannot forgive them for their acts as politicians," Nonaka said, stressing that the Hashimoto faction had agreed to support Fujii as a candidate. Nonaka emphasized that Japan is standing at a crossroads, and national leaders have to take bold steps. "The ongoing presidential election will determine the future course of Japan . . . whether it will survive or die," Nonaka said. Nonaka's announcement sent shock waves through Nagata-cho. Asked about the impact of the retirement of his reform drive's No. 1 foe, Koizumi avoided direct comment, in an apparent bid not to stimulate anti-Koizumi forces within his party. "It's OK that there are lots of people with different opinions," he said. Lawmakers supporting Fujii, however, were apparently shocked by the news, because Nonaka is one of the most powerful lawmakers among Koizumi's dissenters within the LDP.

6. Japan Foreign Affairs Bureaucrat Bomb Threat

The Japan Times ('OFFICIAL RECEIVES BOMB THREAT,' 09/11/03) reported that Police found a bomb on Sep. 10 at the Tokyo home of Deputy Foreign Minister Hitoshi Tanaka, the key official for negotiations and policymaking on the DPRK, after being alerted by news organizations that received suspicious calls, police officials said. They found the device -- a cylindrical steel object containing a small heater and a pressured gas cylinder connected by lead wires to a small box with batteries and a timer -- in the ground floor carport of Tanaka's home in Meguro Ward. The timer was ticking,

police said. The device was accompanied by an envelope addressed to "Hitoshi Tanaka, traitor" and identifying the sender as "Kenkoku Giyugun Kokuzoku Seibatsutai," which roughly translates into the "nation-building volunteers corps to conquer traitors." The act is believed to have been perpetrated by ultra-rightists. They are also looking for possible links with a recent string of incidents attacking facilities related to the pro-Pyongyang General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryun). The series of incidents against Korean-related facilities started last November when bullets and threatening letters from groups with a slightly different name were mailed to Chongryun's Tokyo headquarters and the Social Democratic Party.

Kyodo ('TANAKA 'DESERVED' IT,' Nagoya, 09/11/03) reported that Tokyo Gov. Shintaro Ishihara said that Deputy Foreign Minister Hitoshi Tanaka deserved to be threatened by the bomb discovered at his home earlier in the day because his attitude toward the DPRK is too soft. "A bomb was planted there. I think it was deserved," the hawkish governor said in a speech in Nagoya. Tanaka "is at North Korea's beck and call," he said, criticizing the secretive way in which the bureaucrat arranged for a summit between Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il in September last year.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of other NAPSNet resources.
We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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