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I. United States

1. Japan Domestic Politics

Agence France-Presse ("PRESS URGES JAPAN'S NEW CABINET TO MAP OUT CONCRETE STEPS," 09/23/03) reported that Japanese newspapers urged Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's new cabinet to display concrete policies to fulfill reforms, revamp the economy and clarify its position on Iraq. Major dailies welcomed the new line-up of the cabinet formed on Monday, saying the re-appointment of Heizo Takenaka as the nation's economic czar showed Koizumi was determined to stick to reforms. "The prime minister made the decision because the replacement of Takenaka might be interpreted by the public as Koizumi yielding to forces that have been demanding he change policy," the Yomiuri Shimbun said in an editorial on Tuesday. "Bowing to this pressure could have caused a drop in his popularity rating, something he wishes to avoid in the run-up to a general election," the mass-cirdulation daily said. "The prime minister stuck to his guns." Koizumi said after the cabinet reshuffle on Monday: "This line-up shows that the Koizumi cabinet's policy to promote reforms has not wavered at all." Newspapers, however, called on the prime minister to provide a concrete blue-

print for leading the nation. "For the past two years and five months, the Koizumi cabinet has begun procedures of reforms, but it left a thing half done and just shouted slogans," the Mainichi Shimbun said in an editorial. "The responsibility of the new cabinet is to show results," the newspaper said. The Asahi Shimbun said in its editorial: "It is important for the prime minister to hammer out firm political promises under this new cabinet."

2. US DPRK Spy Plane Deployment

Agence France-Presse ("NEW US UNMANNED SPY PLANES DEPLOYED AGAINST NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 09/23/03) reported that US military authorities said they had deployed new unmanned spy planes in the ROK as part of a 11-billion-dollar defense build-up plan against the DPRK. The 8th US army said in a statement it would test-fly its new "Shadow-200" unmanned surveillance planes from a military base near the border Friday. It said the system was to "contribute to the overall deterrence US forces brings to the alliance" with the ROK by offering "real time, accurate and relevant intelligence of the battle field." It is "part of the planned 11 billion dollar investment over the next several years in some 150 programs to enhance US defensive capabilities in support of...US forces (in) Korea," it said.

3. DPRK on IAEA Calls for Nuclear Safeguards

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA REJECTS IAEA CALLS FOR ACCEPTING NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS," 09/23/03) reported that the DPRK has rejected calls by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to dismantle its nuclear program, accusing the UN nuclear watchdog of acting as a stooge for the US. At a general conference in Vienna of its 137 members on Friday, the IAEA passed a resolution urging the DPRK "to promptly accept comprehensive IAEA safeguards and co-operate with the agency in their full and effective implementation." It urged the DPRK to dismantle "any nuclear weapons program" it might have. But on Tuesday the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) dismissed the resolution as "unworthy of consideration." "We don't accept such an unjust resolution and declare it null and void," KCNA said in a statement. It stressed that the DPRK had no obligations to heed such calls as it has pulled out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, asserting that the "nuclear issue" has arisen from the US hostile policy toward it. "(The IAEA's) handling the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula and its passing of a resolution singling out us are an unreasonable act that cannot be sold to anyone," it said. "IAEA has manifested itself as the stooge of the US by pressing us, victim of the US breach of the Agreed Framework, to give up our rights to self-defense while turning a blind eye to the US," it said.

Korean Central News Agency ("NORTH KOREA DECLARES IAEA RESOLUTION 'INVALID,'" Pyongyang, 09/23/03) reported that a "resolution" on the issue of the DPRK Democratic People's Republic of Korea was reportedly adopted at the 47th meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency IAEA on 19 September. The resolution demanded the DPRK "return to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and scrap its nuclear program in a verifiable manner." The DPRK can never recognize but declares invalid such "unreasonable resolution" as it was adopted in disregard of the nature of the nuclear issue, a product of the US hostile policy towards the DPRK, and the status in which the DPRK is no longer bound to the NPT. This resolution does not deserve even a passing note as the DPRK is no longer legally bound to the NPT because it is not committed to implement it. It would be better for the delegates of those countries which supported the resolution to take a walk and drink coffee than sitting idle for unproductive discussion. The DPRK once again keenly realized what a beneficial step it took to protect its right to existence and dignity when it terminated its relations with the unfair and partial IAEA which is in the clutches of the US and withdrew from the NPT. The IAEA and its member states are well advised to behave themselves for

their own sake.

4. ROK IAEA Board of Governors

Yonhap, "SOUTH KOREA ELECTED NEW MEMBER OF IAEA'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS," Seoul, 09/22/03) reported that the ROK has been newly elected to the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) board of governors, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said Monday. Members of the U.N. nuclear watchdog endorsed the election through a unanimous vote Thursday at a plenary session of its annual general conference in Vienna.

5. DPRK-US Relations

Korea Central News Agency, "NORTH KOREAN COMMENTARY CRITICIZES US 'HOSTILE' POLICIES," Pyongyang, 09/23/03) carried a response to the threat of US sanctions that read Sanctions and military threat and blackmail never work on the army and the people of the DPRK. The US hostile policy towards the DPRK aimed at stifling it is a pipe dream that stands no chance of realization. Genaro Ledesma Izquieta, chairman of the People's Front of Workers, Peasants and Students of Peru, on 12 September issued a statement titled "the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) made the US shudder" as regards the military parade and mass demonstration held in celebration of the 55th anniversary of the DPRK. Referring to the fact that CNN TV and other US broadcasting programs monitored in Lima made an unprecedented wide coverage of the military parade and mass demonstration held in the DPRK in celebration of its 55th anniversary, the statement continued: the DPRK dealt another mental tactical blow at the US, and US could neither judge nor assess the enigmatic nuclear force of the DPRK. The epic scenes of the military parade of the KPA proved the validity of the songun (military-first) politics and the invincible might of the KPA and aroused stronger support for the songun politics among the world people and socialists.

6. US Wesley Clark on DPRK Issue

Council for a Livable World ("Wesley Clark Position on whether the US should negotiate with North Korea," 09/23/03) released a statement on Wesley Clark's position on the DPRK that read, "We need to be talking to the North Koreans. They don't want war. We don't want war. But you know truth is, there are very few wars that begin by design. Most war begins as a result of miscalculation and accident and ratchet intentions that people aren't smart enough to stop. And there is a risk in the situation in North Korea and our government needs to engage in that situation now. Not only working multi-laterally, but working bi-laterally with North Korea to turn off the tap on the nuclear weapons production and work so that regime doesn't feel compelled to either proliferate or strike out."

7. 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. Foreign traders said that the North Koreans have so little access to merchandise from the outside world that they tended to buy everything, regardless of whether they really needed it, wasting a lot of money. Of even greater interest to the North Koreans than the products were the foreign visitors themselves. The DPRK interpreters at the fair said they had volunteered to work for free for the chance to practice their English. One of them confided to a reporter that there was only one instructor at Pyongyang College of Foreign Languages who is a native English speaker, and that teacher had a British accent. "Since we are having political troubles with the US, we don't study American English but British English in schools. But I want to learn American English because the language is easier and more comfortable to speak," the DPRK interpreter said. Special correspondent Cai reported from Pyongyang and staff writer Demick from Seoul.

8. DPRK Thailand Asylum Seekers

The BBC ("NORTHERN THAI BORDER POLICE STEP UP SECURITY AGAINST ENTRY BY NORTH KOREANS," 09/23/03) reported that police at the Chiang Saen border crossing in Chiang Rai have been placed on high alert following the arrest yesterday of five DPRK asylum-seekers on charges of illegal entry. Chiang Saen Police Superintendent Lt-Col Apichart Kaewpumpuang said patrols have been stepped up on the Mekong River, which serves as a natural boundary between Thailand and Laos. There have been reports that more than 1,000 DPRK asylum-seekers in southern China are waiting to enter Thailand through Laos. Earlier this month, four refugees appeared at a press conference in Bangkok pleading for asylum in the US, citing religious and political persecution at home. They were assisted by two Christian pastors - a Korean-American and a German - who claimed to have an extensive network in the US. The pastors said they were trying to bring down the DPRK regime by creating a situation where people would flood across the border into China.

9. PRC on Currency Exchange Rate

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA'S TOP FOREX REGULATOR SAYS EXCHANGE RATE IS 'INTERNAL AFFAIR,'" Beijing, 09/23/03) reported that the PRC's top foreign exchange regulator said the country's exchange rate system is its own internal affair and that foreign interference is not welcome, state media has reported. The remarks by a spokesman for the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, carried in several mass-circulation dailies Tuesday, marked some of the most strident rhetoric so far in the row over the value of the yuan. "The exchange rate system and policy are a country's internal affair and no other country has the right to interfere," the unnamed spokesman said according to the Beijing Youth Daily, the China Daily and several other publications. "On this issue, China has always been independent and highly responsible, (something) on which the international community has long agreed," he said.

10. PRC-Russia Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Agence France-Presse ("SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION SHIFTS FOCUS TO ECONOMIC COOPERATION," 09/23/03) reported that the PRC, Russia and the four Central Asian members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) anti-terrorism grouping have forged an agreement here to strengthen trade ties between the six countries. The premiers of the PRC, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan on Tuesday set out the SCO budget for 2004,

which will be used to fund a Beijing secretariat and an anti-terrorism center in Tashkent from January 1. "The six prime ministers signed a guiding document today on the long-term multilateral economic and trade cooperation of the SCO," Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said. "This is of far reaching significance as it has brought the economic cooperation of the SCO into a new era..., to bring economic and trade cooperation into the SCO is the biggest achievement of this meeting." Wen further proposed setting up an SCO free trade zone to "promote the facilitation of trade and investment" within the grouping. The SCO was formally established two years ago and grew out of efforts in the 1990s to strengthen confidence-building measures in the border regions, but gradually broadened its agenda to fight terrorism and separatism in the region.

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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