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1. Japan, US on DPRK Leadership

Korea Herald ("NUKE TALK PARTNERS 'CLOSELY OBSERVING' CHANGES IN NK", 2010/09/29) reported that partners of international talks aimed at denuclearizing the DPRK were observing with interest the reclusive state's father-to-son power transition, while emphasizing "no shift" in their ultimate goal of persuading the country to give up its nuclear ambitions, news reports said Wednesday. Spokesman P.J. Crowley of the U.S. State Department told reporters it is "still too early" to figure out the meaning of such changes, adding his government was closely watching the Workers' Party meeting which will have "implications" for the country's "present and future policies." Kurt Campbell, the assistant secretary of state for East Asia, said he would head next week to Japan and the ROK to discuss the DPRK's apparent official appointment of Kim Jong-il's youngest son as successor. "I think our key here is to be careful to make sure that we're in very deep consultations with our friends in the region," Campbell said. "We obviously want to hear their views." Japan, which has long taken a hardline stance against Pyongyang and shared views with the

ROK and the U.S. on holding off the stalled denuclearization talks, said “no changes have been made” to its “ultimate goal of resolving the issues of nuclear weapons, missiles and abductions” in the DPRK. “We plan to closely monitor if there is a change in the DPRK’s power structure,” said Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara, adding Japan wants “to firmly maintain cooperation with the countries concerned.”

<http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20100929000860>

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2. Inter-Korea Relations

Arirang News ("INTER-KOREAN WORKING LEVEL MILITARY TALKS TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY", 2010/09/29) reported that the DPRK notified Seoul's Ministry of National Defense on Wednesday of its agreement to the ROK's proposed date for the pending working-level military talks meaning the two are expected to sit down for their first military meeting since October 2008. Pyongyang initially proposed meeting on the 24th but Seoul requested that the talks be moved to the 30th. ROK Army Colonel Moon Sang-kyun and two delegates are scheduled to meet their DPRK counterparts, Lee Sun-kwon and his two delegates in the border village of Panmunjom at 10 a.m., Korea time. Military officials say that the talks are likely to focus on points proposed by the two sides so far. Discussion topics suggested by Seoul include the DPRK's reaction towards the Cheonan incident, its continued denouncement of the ROK government as well as ways to ease the escalated tension on the Northern Limit Line. The agenda from Pyongyang's side so far is the execution of an inter-Korean military agreement.

http://www.arirang.co.kr/News/News_View.asp?nseq=107422&code=Ne2&category=2

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3. Sino-ROK Relations

Korea Herald ("SEOUL, BEIJING TO WORK TOGETHER FOR NUCLEAR-FREE N. KOREA", 2010/09/29) reported that the ROK and PRC agreed Wednesday to work closely together for a nuclear-free DPRK, in addition to promoting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, the Foreign Ministry said. “The two sides exchanged views on the recent situation on the Korean Peninsula, the North Korean nuclear issue and the six-party talks, and agreed to cooperate closely under the joint strategic objectives of denuclearizing North Korea and pursuing peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula,” the ROK Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Both countries also took note of the fast development of their relations in economic, trade, cultural and human exchange areas, and agreed to further expand their ties in all sectors while boosting cooperation in regional and international issues, the statement said.

<http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20100929000862>

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4. Sino-Japan Territorial Dispute

Asahi Shimbun ("CHINA STILL PATROLLING SENKAKU ISLANDS", 2010/09/29) reported that two

PRC fisheries patrol boats have been operating in waters off the disputed Senkaku Islands since Friday, when Japan announced its decision to release a detained PRC trawler captain and bring closure to a major diplomatic row between the two countries. Japan has made four requests to the PRC through diplomatic channels to end the patrols in the East China Sea, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshito Sengoku said. According to the Japan Coast Guard, two patrol boats belonging to the PRC's Ministry of Agriculture arrived near the islands, called Diaoyutai in Chinese, around 6 p.m. Friday. The boats stayed inside Japan's exclusive economic zone and veered into the contiguous zone, which is the outer edge of Japanese territorial waters. Coast guard officials said the same vessels were in the area from Sept. 10 to 18. As no such boats usually patrol in waters near the Senkaku Islands, the coast guard views their presence as a heavy-handed demonstration of the PRC's claim to the territory. The PRC Fishery News reported that after the collision, two fisheries patrol boats were dispatched to waters near the Senkaku Islands. The paper quoted a PRC government official as saying that the government "hereafter would make permanent and strengthen the activities of its patrol boats."

<http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201009280282.html>

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