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1. Sino-DPRK Relations

Guardian News ("KIM JONG-IL MEETS TOP CHINESE OFFICIAL AS US GOVERNOR HEADS TO NORTH KOREA", 2010/12/09) reported that Kim Jong-il met the PRC's top foreign policy official today, two weeks after a deadly artillery attack by the DPRK on a ROK island. Kim held "warm and friendly" talks with PRC state councillor Dai Bingguo in Pyongyang, the DPRK's official Korean Central news agency reported, without saying whether the two discussed the DPRK's 23 November attack on an island near the Koreas' disputed sea border. The PRC's official Xinhua news agency said the two reached consensus on the situation on the Korean peninsula during candid and in-depth talks, but did not elaborate. PRC foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu confirmed the meeting took place but said she had no information about what was said.

<http://www.google.ca/reader/view/?hl=en&tab=wy#stream/feed%2Fhttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.guardian.co.uk%2Fworld%2Fnorth-korea%2Frss>

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2. Inter-Korea Relations

Financial Times ("NORTH KOREA WARNS SEOUL OVER MARITIME BORDER", 2010/12/09) reported that the DPRK has warned the US and ROK to recognise a more southerly maritime border between the two Koreas to avoid further conflict. The DPRK's state news agency on Thursday said the US and ROK were trying to trigger conflict with exercises "deep inside" DPRK waters. Pyongyang's statement is an expression of frustration that its 1999 definition of the maritime frontier is being ignored. Michael Breen, author of a biography of Kim Jong-il, said: "People spend a lot of time trying to guess what North Korea wants with its attacks, but they should actually just listen to what the North Koreans say. Since 1999, the thing they have been most angry about is the Northern Limit Line. That is where nearly all the violence has been."

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/db4e4472-035d-11e0-9636-00144feabdc0.html#ixzz17dOYj8rb>

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3. ROK-Japan Relations

Arirang News ("KOREAN, JAPANESE LAWMAKERS DISCUSS REPARATIONS FOR FORCED LABORERS", 2010/12/09) reported that a meeting to discuss unresolved issues between the ROK and Japan took place at the National Assembly in Seoul on Wednesday. Lawmakers from the ROK including the Liberty Forward Party's Park Sun-young and 14 Japanese Diet members met to exchange views on how to compensate ROK victims forcefully relocated to Japanese territory as laborers during the colonial period. The Japanese lawmakers said that concluding the reparation issue is "a ticket to [Japan's] entering the international community" as a responsible nation. Park explained that she and other lawmakers have already submitted legislation calling for a fund to be set up to help the victims.

http://gc.nautilus.org/Nautilus/internal/internal/training/napsnet/epistle_writer_add

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4. Japan-US Military Relations

Voice of America ("JAPAN, US AGREE TO ENHANCE MILITARY COOPERATION", 2010/12/09) reported that U.S. and Japanese officials have agreed to increase regional military cooperation in wake of increased aggressive acts by the DPRK. The top U.S. military officer says he has "a real sense of urgency" about the need for Washington, Tokyo and Seoul to enhance security cooperation to deter the DPRK. Admiral Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, made the comment after talks in Tokyo Thursday with Japanese defense officials. They agreed to increase security cooperation with the ROK. Professor Hiro Katsumata at Tokyo's Waseda University says three-way military cooperation has quietly been going on since the mid-1990's. However, Katsumata contends the latest crisis does not mean that Tokyo, Seoul and Washington are forming a comprehensive, long-standing tripartite alliance. "The only purpose of this partnership is to deal with the issue of North Korea," he said.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/Japan-US-Agree-to-Enhance-Military-Cooperation-111586484.html>

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5. Japan-US Nuclear Cooperation

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, U.S. TO WORK ON NUCLEAR FORENSIC INVESTIGATION", 2010/12/09) reported that Japan and the United States will seek ways of promoting cooperation in investigating nuclear smuggling at a bilateral Nuclear Security Working Group established under an agreement between Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan and U.S. President Barack Obama, a senior U.S. official said in a recent interview with Kyodo News. The working group, composed of senior representatives from U.S. and Japanese agencies including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Japan's National Police Agency, will also help Asian and other countries achieve the thorough protection of nuclear materials and related facilities when they introduce atomic power generation, the official said on condition of anonymity. The official explained a broad scope of activities for the two allies to work together on in the field of nuclear security. One of the key areas is founding a body due to be named the Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Security under the Japan Atomic Energy Agency in the village of Tokai, Ibaraki Prefecture. The center would be used as a resource for best practices for the development of a nuclear energy infrastructure for countries considering introduction of commercial nuclear power.

<http://www.istockanalyst.com/article/viewiStockNews/articleid/4730924>

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