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1. Inter-Korean Relations

The New York Times (Mark McDonald, "SOUTH KOREA DROPS ITS CALL FOR APOLOGY FROM NORTH", Seoul, 2010/11/09) reported that in a shift that could pave the way for new talks on the dismantling of DPRK's nuclear weapons program, the government in the ROK has quietly abandoned its demand that the DPRK apologize for the sinking of a ROK naval vessel, no longer making that a condition for the nuclear talks or other future exchanges. President Lee Myung-bak, in an interview at the Blue House, the presidential residence, said he would instead be looking for "sincerity in North Korea's behavior" before returning to the six-party talks on disarmament. When pressed about an apology as a condition, he twice declined to say it was still a requirement.

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/09/world/asia/09korea.html?_r=1

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2. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters ("CHINA STOPS BLOCKING HARSH NORTH KOREA REPORT: U.N. ENVOYS", Washington, 2010/11/09) reported that after months in limbo due to PRC objections, a U.N. report suggesting the DPRK may have supplied Syria, Iran and Myanmar with banned nuclear technology is heading to the Security Council. The latest report by the so-called Panel of Experts on Pyongyang's compliance with U.N. sanctions was delivered to the Security Council's DPRK sanctions committee in May. "China has suddenly decided to allow this very damning report to go to the Security Council," one diplomat said on condition of anonymity. "I think Syria and Myanmar were happy the Chinese were blocking it. Now China has other priorities." But the PRC is unlikely to allow the report to be used for further sanctions against Pyongyang, envoys said.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20101109/ts_nm/us_korea_north_un_1;_ylt=AnoK8OdSZZeMz898buR82iABS5Z

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3. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("DPRK CABINET DISCUSSES 4TH QUARTER PROJECTS AS CHINESE PARTICIPATION GROWS IN THE PYONGYANG INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR", 2010/11/10) reported that the DPRK held an extended meeting of the entire Cabinet in order to discuss the types of projects to be pursued in the last quarter of the year, and to strategize on how these projects should be implemented. According to the article, efforts are being made to strongly construct the foundation upon which exemplars of the 'military-first' era will be erected. Production lines and facilities in all realms of the People's Economy need to come into alignment with CNC, and efforts need to be made toward modernization, environmental protection, and reforestation. In particular, the Cabinet has pledged to decisively improve city management and restore socialism in cities and agricultural villages. Efforts will be focused on restoring socialist principles to economic management and ensuring that the centrally planned national economy is implemented.

<http://ifes.kyungnam.ac.kr/eng/m05/s10/content.asp?nkbriefNO=393&GoP=1>

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4. PRC Climate Change

China Daily (Jin Zhu, "CLIMATE CHANGE 'TAKES TOLL' ON GRAIN HARVEST", Beijing, 2010/11/08) reported that climate change will trigger a drop in the PRC's grain harvest over the next few decades and threaten food security, a leading agriculturalist warns. Tang Huajun, deputy dean of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), said a 5 to 10 percent crop loss is foreseeable by 2030 if climate change continues. "The impact of climate change, coupled with arable land loss and water shortages, will cause a bigger grain production fluctuation and pose a threat to reaching output targets," Tang told China Daily.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-11/05/content_11505107.htm

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5. Russo-Japanese Energy Cooperation

The Mainichi Daily News ("JAPAN FIRM, RUSSIAN INSTITUTE TO PRODUCE HYDROGEN IN SAKHALIN", 2010/11/09) reported that a Japanese company and a Russian institute will start a feasibility study soon on producing hydrogen through wind-power generation in Sakhalin in Russia's Far East for export to Japan. The Tokyo-based company, where hydrogen researcher Yasukazu Saito, honorary professor at the University of Tokyo, serves as a board member, and the Vladivostok-based Far Eastern Center for Strategic Research on Fuel and Energy Complex Development are expected to establish a joint venture for the project possibly by the middle of 2013.

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/business/news/20101109p2g00m0bu017000c.html>

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