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I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

International Herald Tribune ("U.S. HINTS AT REWARD TO A DISARMED NORTH KOREA", 2004-12-09) reported that the DPRK can expect a range of benefits if it drops its nuclear arms programs, a US official knowledgeable about talks with the DPRK said Thursday, as he called for the DPRK to return to nuclear negotiations. He ruled out offering any incentives to bring Pyongyang back to the six-party talks, however.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap ("U.S. TO GIVE N.K. AID IN EXCHANGE FOR DENUCLEARIZATION: OFFICIAL", 2004-12-09) reported that a ranking US official said Thursday the US is ready to provide economic aid to the DPRK if the DPRK agrees to "comprehensive denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula. The official, who asked not to be identified, also said the US may consider removing the DPRK from its list of terror-sponsoring states if the DPRK decides to abandon its nuclear development program and promises not to support terrorism and terrorist groups. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. US - DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("U.S. SECURITY ADVISER URGES N.K. TO MAKE 'STRATEGIC CHOICE'", 2004-12-09) reported that Stephen Hadley, who was named the new US national security advisor, urged the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons program to improve its destitute economy and relations with the US, lawmakers said Thursday. "Hadley said North Korea will have to make a strategic choice between the two options -- abandoning its nuclear weapons ambitions and improving relations with the United States or international isolation and an impoverished economy," Rep. Kim Hyuk-kyu of the governing Uri Party told reporters.

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3. DPRK on Nuclear Talks

Associated Press ("US OFFICIAL: NORTH KOREA SAYS COMMITTED TO 6-NATION TALKS", 2004-12-09) reported that the DPRK has told US officials that it is committed to six-nation talks pressing the DPRK to give up its nuclear program, but the US won't offer any new incentives to lure Pyongyang into restarting negotiations, a US official said Thursday. The DPRK "said they had determined to work through the six-party process to peacefully resolve the issue," the official, knowledgeable about the talks, told journalists in the ROK capital, Seoul. "But they were not prepared to give us a date to resume the talks."

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4. US on Sino-DPRK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("US URGES CHINA TO TALK NORTH KOREA INTO RETURNING TO NUCLEAR TALKS", None) reported that the US has urged the PRC to work harder to persuade the DPRK to return to talks over its nuclear weapons drive, a senior ROK foreign ministry official said. "While appreciating China's efforts that have been made so far, special envoy DeTrani expressed hope that Beijing make further efforts to persuade North Korea to return to dialogue," Cho told journalists.

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5. DPRK on Sino-DPRK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("KIM AIDE SAYS CHINA HAS LITTLE INFLUENCE OVER NORTH KOREA", 2004-12-09) reported that as pressure mounts for the PRC to do more to bring the DPRK back to talks over its nuclear program, a leading expert and old friend of Kim Jong-Il insists Beijing has far less influence than perceived. The PRC can only persuade and not pressure the DPRK to cooperate, said Cui Yingjiu, a retired Beijing University professor and former Kim schoolmate. "Kim Jong-Il doesn't listen to anybody. China has at times tried to force him to do this or that, but the results have not been good. It had the opposite effect," Cui told AFP in an interview.

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6. Task Force on US DPRK Policy

Reuters ("PANEL URGES U.S. TO SWEETEN NUCLEAR DEAL FOR N.KOREA", 2004-12-09) reported that the US should use incentives to entice the DPRK to scrap its nuclear programs, including a "buyout" pegging aid to the amount of plutonium Pyongyang surrenders, a panel of experts said. In a report issued late on Tuesday as diplomats worked to persuade the DPRK to return to negotiations, the Task Force on US Korea Policy said Washington should improve proposals to tackle the urgent threat posed by the DPRK's stock of weapons-grade plutonium.

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7. DPRK Purge

Los Angeles Times ("KIM OUSTS KEY RELATIVE, A POTENTIAL RIVAL, FROM N. KOREAN GOVERNMENT; PURGE OF BROTHER-IN-LAW CHANG SUNG TAEK, WHO IS SAID TO BE FAVORED BY SOUTH KOREA AND THE U.S., IS SEEN AS AN EFFORT TO REINFORCE POWER", 2004-12-09) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong Il recently purged his brother-in-law from the government, removing a powerful party official who was thought to be a possible rival to Kim and his sons, ROK intelligence officials have reported. "It leads you to believe that stability is not that big of a problem after all," said a Western diplomat, who asked not to be quoted by name.

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8. DPRK Defections

Chosun Ilbo ("EVEN HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS DEFECTING: CHINESE N.K. EXPERT", 2004-1-09) reported that Professor Zhao Huji, a DPRK specialist at the Central Party School in Beijing, said

Thursday that DPRK generals and high-ranking officials are deserting the crisis-plagued state as a mirror of growing instability and its leader's waning authority. "These high-ranking defectors aren't leaving because of material want, but because these feel chaos within the Kim Jong-il regime..." said Zhao.

[\(return to top\)](#) Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREAN GENERALS, OFFICIALS DEFECTING, BUT KIM JONG-IL STILL STRONG", 2004-12-09) reported that defections by ordinary DPRK citizens fleeing hunger have been common in recent years, but generals and high ranking officials are also escaping the DPRK, analysts and aid groups say. Unlike most refugees crossing into the PRC, the high-level defectors and their families did not lack basic necessities. Rather, they were disconcerted with Kim Jong-il's rule, Zhao told AFP. Despite the defections and missing Kim pictures, analysts argued Kim's power was far from waning. [\(return to top\)](#)

9. Japan on DPRK Abductee Issue

United Press International ("N.KOREA CAUGHT IN SECOND LIE ABOUT REMAINS", 2004-12-09) reported that for a second time, DNA testing showed that remains given to Japan by the DPRK were not those of a kidnapped Japanese national, an official said Thursday. The cremated remains, which Pyongyang claimed were those of Kaoru Matsuki, abducted to the DPRK in 1980 at the age of 26, were actually those of four different people, a Foreign Ministry official said, according to Kyodo News.

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10. Japan on DPRK Sanctions

Kyodo News ("DIET PANEL TO PASS RESOLUTION URGING SANCTIONS ON N. KOREA", 2004-1-09) reported that the ruling and main opposition parties decided Thursday to pass a resolution Friday at a Diet panel calling on the government to consider imposing economic sanctions on the DPRK for handing Japan cremated remains it falsely said were of a Japanese abductee, lawmakers said.

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11. DPRK on Japan UNSC Bid

Bloomberg ("N. KOREA DENOUNCES JAPAN FOR SEEKING PERMANENT UN COUNCIL SEAT", 2004-12-09) reported that the DPRK denounced Japan for seeking a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, saying it has failed to apologize and compensate its neighbors for war crimes it committed. "Japan started the Pacific War 63 years back, but it has not yet shaken itself of the ill fame of an enemy state," the official Korean Central News Agency said today.

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12. DPRK Infrastructure

Korea Times ("NK TO BOOST TRAIN SERVICES TO CHINA, RUSSIA", 2004-12-09) reported that isolated DPRK is preparing to increase its railroad traffic with the PRC and Russia, a pro-Pyongyang publication based in Japan reported Thursday. The Choson Shinbo quoted Ryu Byong-kuk, a Pyongyang official in charge of the DPRK's railroad system, as saying that representatives from the three countries held a five-day meeting in Pyongyang from Nov. 15 to discuss ways to boost the

frequency of the railroad services.

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13. Inter - Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap ("INTER-KOREAN TRADE RISES 13 PERCENT LAST YEAR", 2004-12-09) reported that trade between the ROK and DPRK rose 13 percent year-on-year to US\$724.22 million in 2003, the state office of statistics said Thursday. The number of ROK visitors to the DPRK, excluding ROK tourists to the scenic Mount Geumgang resort on the DPRK's east coast, increased 19.1 percent to total 15,280 last year, according to the National Statistical Office (NSO).

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14. Inter - Korean Relations

Yonhap ("KOREAS TO SURVEY LAND FOR SEPARATED FAMILY REUNION CENTER", 2004-12-09) reported that the ROK and the DPRK will begin a joint survey of land in the DPRK this weekend for the construction of a permanent meeting place for separated family members, local Red Cross officials said Thursday. An eight-member team, including experts, from the Korean National Red Cross (KNRC) will leave for Mount Geumgang where the facility is to be built on the DPRK's east coast on Friday, they said.

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15. DPRK Food Issue

Kyodo News ("36% OF N. KOREANS WERE STARVING IN 2000-2002: U.N. REPORT", 2004-12-09) reported that the hunger problem in the DPRK worsened in the 2000-2002 period, when 8.1 million DPRK citizens, or 36 percent of the population, were suffering from hunger and malnutrition, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization said Wednesday. The percentage of hungry and malnourished people in the country has risen steadily -- from 18 percent in the 1990-1992 period and 35 percent in the 1995-1997 period, the FAO said in an annual report.

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16. Kim Jong-nam E-mails

Agence France Presse ("KIM JONG-IL'S SUPPOSED SON GOES MUM", 2004-12-09) reported that a man believed to be the mysterious eldest son of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il this week broke off e-mail communication with Japanese reporters who had run into him in Beijing, a press report said. "There is a tendency to suspect my identity, and I notify you that I am ending on-line dialogue with you reporters with this one," the man said in an e-mail message to the journalists based in Beijing, the Jiji Press said Tuesday.

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17. ROK Spying Allegation

Donga Ilbo ("RULING ON URI LAWMAKER LEE CHUL-WOO, AN ALLEGED MEMBER OF THE NORTH KOREA WORKERS' PARTY", 2004-12-09) reported that tensions are mounting in political

circles as the ruling and opposition camps are fiercely confronting each other over the speculation that Uri lawmaker Lee Chul-woo was a member of the DPRK Workers' Party. The ruling Uri Party convened an urgent joint conference on December 9 and decided to file a complaint against the opposition GNP lawmakers Choo Sung-young, Park Seung-hwan, and Kim Ki-hyun to expel them from parliament.

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18. ROK - US Military Alliance

United Press International ("S.KOREA, US FAIL TO AGREE ON DEFENSE COSTS", 2004-12-09) reported that the ROK and the US ended two days of talks in Seoul Thursday without an agreement on defense cost sharing, officials said. They decided to reopen talks in the US next month to discuss how to share next year's budget for keeping some 34,000 US troops in the ROK, said officials at the Foreign Ministry.

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19. Japan Iraq Extension

The Associated Press ("JAPAN OKS PLAN TO KEEP TROOPS IN IRAQ", 2004-12-09) reported that Japan's Cabinet voted to keep its troops in Iraq for another year Thursday, overriding public opposition to extend the country's largest overseas military operation since the end of World War II.

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20. US Missile Defense Test

The Associated Press ("WEATHER DELAYS TEST OF MISSILE DEFENSE", 2004-12-09) reported that bad weather Wednesday forced the military to scrub the first full flight test of its national missile defense system in nearly two years. "It is just heavy cloud cover," Rick Lehner, a spokesman for the Missile Defense Agency, said of conditions Wednesday evening off the Alaskan coast. The launch was being put on hold for 24 to 48 hours.

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21. New Zealand on Disarmament

New Zealand Herald ("PM SAYS NUCLEAR POWERS SHOULD BE AIMING TO GET RID OF WEAPONS", 2004-12-09) reported that Prime Minister Helen Clark said yesterday that nuclear weapon states should not lose sight of a commitment to eliminate their nuclear arsenals. And she implied that growing emphasis on non-proliferation should only be advanced if the old weapons states stuck by their side of the bargain to disarm.

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22. Sino - US Relations

Kyodo News ("U.S. PROPOSES SETTING UP MILITARY HOT LINE WITH CHINA", 2004-12-09) reported that the US has proposed to the PRC that the two nations set up a military hot line to prevent a possible crisis from a lack of communication, but Beijing has yet to convey any positive

response, sources familiar with the matter said Wednesday.

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23. Taiwan Election

Reuters ("SUSPECTED EXPLOSIVES FOUND BEFORE TAIWAN ELECTION", 2004-12-09) reported that police found four packages of suspected explosives at the Taiwan capital's main railway station on Thursday, triggering a bomb scare days before a hotly contested legislative election. TVBS cable television station said it had received a letter by courier saying four bombs had been placed at the Taipei railway station and at the world's tallest building, Taipei 101.

[\(return to top\)](#) The New York Times ("SMALL PRO-INDEPENDENCE PARTY GAINING IN TAIWAN", 2004-12-09) reported that the T.S.U. favors immediate steps toward greater independence from mainland PRC. It has benefited from a strong and unexpected surge in opinion polls here in the last two weeks. But growing support for the party has forced President Chen Shui-bian and his governing Democratic Progressive Party to tilt further toward independence as well, a trend that could be a harbinger of increased tensions across the Taiwan Strait. [\(return to top\)](#)

24. PRC on Workers' Rights Meeting

The New York Times ("CHINA BLOCKS WORLD MEETING ON WORKERS' RIGHTS", 2004-12-09) reported that the PRC on Wednesday abruptly blocked a meeting of global union and business leaders scheduled for next week that aimed to press Beijing to do more to protect workers' rights. The PRC cited inconvenient timing. But it seems possible that officials decided that, after all, they did not want foreign union leaders talking about workers' rights to organize, health and safety standards, stopping child labor and preventing discrimination at a high-profile meeting in the capital.

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25. South China Sea Oil Spill

The Associated Press ("CHINESE BOATS TRY TO CONTAIN OIL SPILL", 2004-12-09) reported that dozens of boats worked to clean up a massive oil spill in the South China Sea caused by a collision between two container ships, after divers were sent to patch the hull of the leaking vessel, state television reported. Earlier reports said the spill was the PRC's worst in five years.

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