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I. NAPSNet

1. US on Six Party Talks

U.S. Department of State ("U.S. OUTLINES STRATEGY FOR UPCOMING NORTH KOREA TALKS", 2006-11-15) reported that US Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns told Congress that United States will continue to honor its long-standing commitment to security in Asia in the upcoming round of Six-Party Talks. Working multilaterally with Pyongyang's neighbors to confront this threat, he said, "is one of our government's highest foreign policy priorities." Burns also outlined the U.S. strategy: a two-track approach focused on aggressively implementing U.N. sanctions in an effort to induce Pyongyang toward a diplomatic settlement. Burns recently returned from meetings with his diplomatic counterparts in the PRC, Japan and the ROK, accompanied by Robert Joseph, under secretary for arms control and international security affairs. "Our message to Pyongyang remains clear: Abandon nuclear weapons, move to implement the Joint Statement and join your neighbors as a responsible member of the international community and the prosperous region of Northeast Asia," Burns said. Burns warned that Pyongyang must now demonstrate its willingness to fulfill diplomatic commitments. "The world will not accept merely the resumption of talks for talks' sake," Burns said. "We need to make real progress in the next round."

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2. DPRK on Six Party Talks

(US) National Public Radio ("ANALYSTS: NORTH KOREA EXPECTS SANCTIONS TO END", 2006-1--15) reported that a delegation of four American experts who visited Pyongyang describe a renewed confidence among DPRK leaders as a result of its successful nuclear test -- and a clearer idea of why the DPRK has agreed to return to the six-party talks. The DPRK claims the US agreed to lift financial sanctions put in place a year ago. That account differs sharply from the stated U.S. position, which holds that the financial sanctions will only be lifted over time. Siegfried Hecker, former director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, says the delegation, had the opportunity to question DPRK experts about their ongoing plutonium production program, concluding that the country can produce enough material for one bomb a year. Hecker's group, which included Jack Pritchard, former U.S. special envoy for the DPRK; and Bob Karlin, a former CIA analyst, also found evidence of renewed vitality in the DPRK's economy, especially in Pyongyang. They describe new shopping markets that cater to thousands of customers a day.

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3. ROK on DPRK Human Rights

BBC ("S KOREA TO CONDEMN NORTH RECORD", 2006-11-16) reported that the ROK is set to support a UN resolution condemning the DPK human rights record, marking in an abrupt reversal of its previous policy. In a statement, the South Korean foreign ministry said: "The government has decided to vote in favour [of the resolution]." The ROK has abstained from previous votes, citing delicate relations with Pyongyang. The draft resolution is expected to be voted on in the coming days. Analysts say Seoul was also finding it difficult to justify its stance in the face of growing international pressure and the selection of former ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon as new UN Secretary General may have contributed to the decision, according to sources.

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4. Koreas at 2008 Olympics

Deutsche Presse-Agentur ("NORTH KOREA PROPOSES SENDING ONE KOREAN TEAM TO 2008 OLYMPICS", 2006-11-16) reported that the DPRK has proposed holding new talks on sending unified delegations to the opening ceremony of next month's Asian Games in Qatar and a unified team to the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Though the two Koreas have sent unified delegations to seven international sporting events since the 2000 Summer Olympic Games in Sydney, they have yet to field a unified team for any athletic event.

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5. DPRK on ROK Monster Film

Yonhap News Agency ("NORTH KOREA LAUDS S. KOREAN MOVIE 'THE HOST' FOR ANTI-AMERICAN STANCE", 2006-11-16) reported that the DPRK gave a rare compliment to an ROK blockbuster movie on Thursday, upholding its critical stance toward the U.S. troops stationed in the South and dubbing them the "monster of the Han River." The remarks came as the mega-hit thriller by Bong Joon-ho was set to be released in the United States next month. The story revolves around a monster created by toxic fluid poured into the Seoul river on the orders of a U.S. Army boss, and is based on a real accident in 2000. "The movie portrays realistically and through impersonation that the American troops occupying South Korea are the monster that steals people's lives and destroys their happiness," the DPRK's weekly magazine Tongil Sinbo said in its latest edition. The commentary was carried by the North's Web site Uriminzokkiri.

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6. US-ROK Security Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA-U.S. ALLIANCE MUST CHANGE: NEXT UNIFICATION MINISTER", 2006-1--16) reported that unification minister-designate Lee Jae-joung said while the ROK-US alliance is crucial and should remain solid, it must not be allowed to affect the ROK's future negatively. Lee said the two countries should break away from the form their relations took in the Cold War and pursue a new relationship suited for the post-Cold War age.

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7. US-Japan Missile Defense Cooperation

The Associated Press ("JAPAN: U.S. TO SPEED UP MISSILE DEFENSE DEPLOYMENT", 2006-11-16) reported that the US and Japan agreed to speed up deployment of a missile defense system amid growing concerns about the DPRK's weapons development, a Japanese government official said. The Japanese newspaper Nihon Keizai reported late last month that the US was considering deploying the Patriots in the Tokyo area. The report said Washington had informed Tokyo that the US could put Patriot Advanced Capability 3 surface-to-air missile intercept weaponry around Yokota Air Base in Tokyo's western suburbs and around Yokosuka Naval Base.

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8. Japan Education Reform

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S PARLIAMENT PASSES BILL TO INSTILL SCHOOL 'PATRIOTISM'", 2006-11-16) reported that Japan's lower house of parliament passed a bill requiring schools to teach patriotism, a taboo since World War II, despite an opposition boycott and street protests by liberals. "There is no denying that our education system has not sufficiently addressed ideas such as moral values, ethics and self-discipline," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said.

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9. Sino-Japanese Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA, JAPAN MOVE TO RECONCILE OVER WARTIME HISTORY", 2006-11-16) reported that the PRC and Japan pushed ahead with efforts to improve bilateral ties strained over their wartime history, tasking experts to study the issue and publish their findings by 2008. The history research group, made up of 10 PRC and 10 Japanese experts, will first meet before year's end, with the group likely finishing their study and reporting on their findings by 2008, the Japanese official said.

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10. US on PRC Security Policy

The Associated Press ("LAWMAKERS URGED TO PRESS CHINA ON SECURITY ", 2006-11-16) reported that a congressional advisory panel said it seriously doubts the PRC will reject what it describes as a selfish pursuit of narrow interests and instead embrace US calls to act as an international pillar of stability. The US-China Economic and Security Review Commission made 44 recommendations in its annual report to lawmakers. It includes calls for the US to combat PRC attempts to isolate Taiwan by supporting the island's membership in various world bodies, and to pressure Beijing to help end the bloody conflict in Sudan's Darfur region.

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11. Sino-Pakistani Relations

Reuters ("CHINA'S HU SET TO OFFER PAKISTAN NUCLEAR PLANTS", 2006-11-16) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao is poised to unveil an ambitious expansion of nuclear power cooperation with Pakistan when he visits next week, testing the PRC's balance between Pakistan and its wary neighbor, India. On the first trip to Pakistan by a PRC president in a decade, Hu is likely to announce that the PRC will help the South Asian nation construct several nuclear plants in coming decades, said analysts and diplomatic sources.

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12. Sino-Indian Relations

Reuters ("INDIA CABINET APPROVES SIGNING FDI PACT WITH CHINA", 2006-11-16) reported that India's cabinet approved signing of an investment promotion pact with the PRC to bolster economic ties, a minister said ahead of PRC President Hu Jintao's visit next week. Hu visits India from Nov. 20-23 and is expected to sign an economic and trade cooperation agreement.

(return to top) India Daily ("WE WILL NEVER ALLOW INDIA TO OVERTAKE ECONOMICALLY : CHINA", 2006-11-16) reported that the PRC has dismissed global forecasts that a democratic India will overtake the PRC on the economic front by 2020, saying those predictions lacked 'statistical evidence.' "There is a prevailing belief in the international community that India will overtake China by 2020. This statement lacks statistical evidence," Secretary-General of the PRC Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), Wang Jinzhen said. (return to top) Reuters ("HISTORY, MISTRUST HAUNT INDIA-CHINA TRADE TIES", 2006-11-16) reported that as businesses in India and China, among the world's fastest growing economies, set ambitious targets to push their trade, governments in the two countries need to bury the ghosts of the past to help them succeed. "Trade has been expanding rapidly ... but at the same time we shouldn't be blind to the difficulties in relations," said Zhang Li of the Institute of South Asian Studies at Sichuan University in southwest PRC. (return to top)

13. Sino-Russian Trade Relations

The Vladivostok News ("RUSSIA, CHINA INK INVESTMENT INITIATIVES", 2006-11-16) reported that Russia and the PRC signed 10 investment agreements with a total worth of over $1 billion during the November 9-13 investment forum in Beijing, Khabarovsk Governor Viktor Ishayev told a press conference in Khabarovsk. These agreements anticipate cooperation in the oil and gas industries, the power industry, banking, and aluminum production.

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14. Sino-Canadian Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA'S HU TO MEET WITH CANADIAN PM DESPITE RIGHTS ROW: OFFICIAL ", 2006-11-16) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao will meet with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper at the APEC summit in Hanoi, an official said, despite a row over the PRC's human rights record. "The Chinese government attaches great importance to the China-Canadian relationship," foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said. While saying Hu would meet with Harper, Jiang said the Canadian leader should not be commenting on the PRC's human rights situation.

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15. PRC Internet Controls

International Herald Tribune ("CHINA LIFTS ITS WIKIPEDIA BAN, BUT SOME TOPICS ARE BLOCKED", 2006-11-16) reported that internet surfers in the PRC once again have unfettered access to Wikipedia, the popular free online encyclopedia, after the PRC government quietly dismantled its digital barriers against the service, according to the founder of Wikipedia. The move restores access to the PRC version of Wikipedia and comes less than a month after the PRC government moved to extend access to the English version of the Web site from within the country.

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II. CanKor

16. Report #266

CanKor ("Current Events", 2006-11-10) In a meeting hosted by China, a compromise is reached between the DPRK and the USA, allowing the DPRK to return to Six-Party Talks. US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill, negotiating directly with DPRK counterpart Kim Gye Gwan, agrees that a mechanism could be created in the context of the 6-PT to address the issue of financial sanctions, a key demand of the DPRK. One day later, the United Nations agrees on three separate lists of banned nuclear-related, chemical and biological-related, and missile-related material and equipment, and orders all countries to prevent the DPRK from importing or exporting these items. Responding to statements by Japanese leaders that the resumption of Six-Party Talks was not premised on acceptance of the DPRK as a nuclear weapons state, the DPR Korean Foreign Ministry calls into question Japan's participation in the 6-PT. Drawing up a list of luxury items to be banned from export to the DPRK (in line with Security Council Resolution 1718), Japan targets culinary goods known to be favoured by DPRK leader Kim Jong Il. But as columnist Yeh Young-june points out, sanctions can cut both ways. The Japanese people have a special, historical attachment to songi, or matsutake mushrooms. The banning of imports from the DPRK will deprive Japan of 783 tons (worth $142.4 million) of North Korean mushrooms annually. A report by the US Congressional Research Service entitled "North Korea's Nuclear Test: Motivations, Implications, and US Options," concludes that none of three options provides a satisfactory scenario: a "status quo" approach, direct talks with Pyongyang, or accepting the DPRK as a nuclear power.

(return to top) CanKor ("Opinion", 2006-11-10) In this week's OPINION section, veteran Indian diplomat M K Bhadrakumar examines US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's October jaunt to Northeast Asian capitals, where she received a less than enthusiastic response to her stated objective of "collectively isolating" the DPRK. Bhadrakumar explains why Rice got a "Taste of Tough Love". Isolation is a completely counterproductive strategy, agrees New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, playing into the hands of totalitarians in any part of the world. Instead, he suggests sending in "the fat guys", i.e. dieting business executives promoting trade, listening to love songs on iPods and watching decadent television comedies. (return to top)

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