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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

BBC News ("N KOREA FOREIGN MINISTER IN CHINA", 2006-05-29) reported that the DPRK's Foreign Minister, Paek Nam-sun, is visiting Beijing amid diplomatic efforts to revive stalled six-nation nuclear talks. This visit comes as PRC officials say negotiations over the DPRK's nuclear programme are facing serious difficulties.

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2. Roh on DPRK Nuclear Program

JoongAng Ilbo ("ROH ACCUSED OF DEFENDING NORTH", 2006-05-30) reported that for the second time in two years, President Roh Moo-hyun has been quoted as making excuses for the DPRK's nuclear development. On Monday, President Roh told a closed-door meeting with the Korean Veterans Association that the DPRK is not developing nuclear weapons for a pre-emptive attack, but rather to defend itself, the DongA Ilbo reported yesterday. The president was also quoted as saying, "If North Korea did use nuclear weapons to make a pre-emptive attack, it would lead to several restrictions, such as losing China's cooperation."

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3. Kim Dae-jung's DPRK Visit

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH, SOUTH KOREA RESUME TALKS ON EX-LEADER'S PYONGYANG VISIT", 2006-05-30) reported that the DPRK and the ROK have resumed talks on a planned trip to the DPRK by former ROK leader Kim Dae-Jung after Pyongyang opposed his wish to cross the heavily-fortified border by train. The talks began at the DPRK's border town of Kaesong to fix Kim's Pyongyang visit details, including transportation, the size of his delegation and specific itineraries, the unification ministry here said.

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4. Inter-Korean Broadcasting Cooperation

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA ASKS SOUTH FOR HELP TO AIR WORLD CUP", 2006-05-30) reported that the DPRK has asked the ROK for help broadcasting television coverage of the World Cup. The ROK's unification ministry, which is in charge of policy towards the DPRK, would "positively" consider the request, a ministry official said by telephone. The Korea Broadcasting Commission declined to comment on whether it had initiated discussions with world soccer body FIFA on extending the broadcast rights to include the DPRK.

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5. Kaesong Industrial Complex

Chosun Ilbo ("BANKRUPTCY CASTS SHADOW OVER KAESONG COMPLEX", 2006-05-30) reported that a kitchenware manufacturer that was among the first to move to the joint Korean Kaesong Industrial Complex in the DPRK in 2004 went bankrupt not long afterwards. The firm was picked despite being in serious trouble already, prompting suspicions of irregularities in the selection process.

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6. World Bank on DPRK Role

Associated Press ("WORLD BANK NOT YET READY FOR N. KOREA ROLE ", 2006-05-30) reported that the World Bank could potentially play a role in the DPRK's economy though is not yet ready to do so, Paul Wolfowitz, the institution's president, said Tuesday. Wolfowitz said that the bank was able to play "a very valuable role" in the PRC when that country embarked on economic reform. "In principle, the same thing could happen with North Korea, but there's a lot that has to happen to get there," he told The Associated Press upon arrival in the ROK from Japan for a two-day visit.

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7. DPRK Foreign Investment

Reuters ("TRAIL BLAZING N.KOREA FUND LAUNCHED IN UK", 2006-05-30) reported that the DPRK this month welcomed a trail-blazing investment by a foreign asset management firm. Anglo-Sino Capital, a fund management firm based in London, secured regulatory approval earlier this month to invest in the DPRK, the first such firm to do so, principals in the team running the portfolio said on Tuesday.

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8. PSI Drill

The Associated Press ("CHINA, S. KOREA OUT OF NAVAL EXERCISE", 2006-05-29) reported that the PRC and ROK have canceled participation in a multinational naval security exercise, the Japan Coast Guard said Sunday. The drills began Saturday with Japan and three other participants -- the US, Canada and Russia -- a coast guard official said. Although Japanese officials refused to give a specific reason for the cancellation, The ROK said it was because of concerns that part of the exercises may upset the DRPK.

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9. USFK Troop Realignment

Chosun Ilbo ("24 OF 27 U.S. BASES VIOLATE KOREAN POLLUTION STANDARDS", 2006-05-30) reported that the level of soil pollution at 24 of the 27 bases the US Forces Korea are vacating exceeds the maximum considered safe in the ROK, it was revealed Tuesday. The disclosure comes amid a continuing standoff between the allies over who should pay for the environmental cleanup when the USFK moves to new bases.

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10. USFJ Base Realignment

Reuters ("JAPAN APPROVES US FORCES PLAN", 2006-05-30) reported that Japan approved on Tuesday a final plan to tighten security ties with the US and reorganise US troops in the country, part of Washington's strategy to make its forces more flexible in the face of modern threats. Cabinet approval of the plan paves the way for streamlining the approximately 50,000 US military personnel in Japan and giving Tokyo a bigger role in the key alliance, the central pillar of its post-war diplomacy.

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11. Japan-India Tourism Cooperation

International Herald Tribune ("JAPAN TO HELP INDIA DEVELOP BUDDHIST SITES", 2006-05-30) reported that Japan will assist India in building roads and airports to improve access to Buddhist sites in India, helping it attract more tourists.

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12. PRC-Japan Energy Cooperation

The Associated Press ("JAPAN TO HELP CHINA IN ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT FIELDS", 2006-05-29) reported that Japan will help the PRC raise its energy efficiency and conserve its environment, officials said at the start of a joint forum in Tokyo on Monday. METI minister Toshiro Nikai said Japan had built up a wealth of expertise and technology in the energy and environmental fields, and was prepared to assist the PRC as it tackles the environmental challenges posed by its rapid economic growth.

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13. PRC-Middle East Energy Cooperation

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA EYES CLOSER ENERGY, POLITICAL TIES AT SINO-ARAB FORUM", 2006-05-29) reported that the PRC will seek to develop closer energy links with the Middle East when it hosts an Arab summit this week although the presence of a Hamas official as Palestinian foreign minister could grab the headlines. The second ministerial meeting of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum will be held in Beijing Wednesday and Thursday, attended by foreign ministers from Arab countries and co-chaired by Arab League Secretary General Amr Mussa.

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14. PRC on Hamas

Xinhua ("CHINA CALLS FOR HAMAS TO RENOUNCE VIOLENCE, RECOGNIZE ISRAEL", 2006-05-30) reported that the PRC calls for Hamas to take consideration into the fundamental interests of the Palestinian people, and to renounce violence, recognize Israel. And it should accept previously reached Palestinian-Israeli agreements, said PRC Foreign Ministry Spokesman Liu Jianchao at a regular press conference here Tuesday.

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15. PRC-India Military Relations

Reuters ("CHINA, INDIA PLEDGE TO DEEPEN MILITARY EXCHANGES", 2006-05-29) reported that the PRC and India pledged on Monday to deepen military exchanges during a visit by Indian Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee, the latest sign of warming relations between the neighbors and one-time foes. The PRC's Defense Minister Cao Guangchuan said the PRC supported greater cooperation with India, the official Xinhua news agency reported, following talks between the two. It did not give any details.

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16. Economist on PRC Growth

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA GROWTH UNSUSTAINABLE ON ALL COUNTS, MUST CHANGE: ECONOMIST", 2006-05-30) reported that the PRC's growth model, based on the West's economic model with its massive appetite for resources and increasing environmental degradation is unsustainable and will have to change, a leading environmentalist said. Lester Brown, head of the Washington-based Earth Policy Institute, told reporters in Beijing that the PRC's current path could not be maintained at either the national or international level.

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17. PRC Environment

Reuters ("CHINA'S LONGEST RIVER "CANCEROUS" WITH POLLUTION", 2006-05-30) reported that the PRC's longest river is "cancerous" with pollution and rapidly dying, threatening drinking water supplies in 186 cities along its banks, state media said on Tuesday. Chinese environmental experts fear worsening pollution could kill the Yangtze river within five years, Xinhua news agency said, calling for an urgent clean-up.

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18. World Media on PRC Censorship

Agence France-Presse ("WORLD MEDIA CHIEFS TELL CHINA TO END CYBER CENSORSHIP", 2006-05-30) reported that global press leaders told the PRC to stop Internet censorship and free all detained cyber-dissidents, and they slammed Western companies that helped it develop software that prevents Chinese citizens from accessing information on human rights and democracy. Members of the International Press Institute (IPI), a global body of editors, leading journalists and media executives, unanimously adopted the firm line at their annual general assembly in the Scottish capital Edinburgh.

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19. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIPEI'S AMCHAM CALLS FOR DIRECT TAIWAN-CHINA LINKS", 2006-0-30) reported that the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Taipei called for direct transportation links across the Strait and investment flows, given closer economic ties between the island and the PRC. "The free flow of goods to and from China is essential to regional economic

integration and, on the company level, to the implementation of effective business plans," it said.

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20. APEC Consensus

Xinhua ("APEC PLEDGES STRONGER FREE TRADE, INVESTMENT ACCELERATION", 2006-05-30) reported that senior officials from 21 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) members have reached consensus on various issues, including trade and investment facilitation, Doha negotiation support, and anti-terrorism.

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II. CanKor

21. Report #250

CanKor ("CURRENT EVENTS", 2006-05-25) US and Chinese officials discuss the possibility of negotiating with the DPRK for a formal end to the Korean War. Citing the failure of inter-Korean military talks designed to work out an accord on cross-border safety, the DPRK cancels the much anticipated first railway crossing of the DMZ. The ROK lodges a formal protest, to which the DPRK replies.

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