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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Test Plans

Guardian Unlimited ("NORTH KOREA SAYS IT WILL CARRY OUT NUCLEAR TEST ", 2006-10-03) reported that this is the first time the DPRK has explicitly, publicly announced its intent to conduct a nuclear test. The announcement was a blow to the already beleaguered diplomatic efforts and puts pressure on the US to hold direct talks with Pyongyang. The DPRK's statement gave no precise date as to when a test might occur but said it would be carried out "in a condition where safety is firmly guaranteed". The DPRK has said it has nuclear weapons in the past, but has not conducted any known test to prove its claim.

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("NORTH KOREA PLANS NUCLEAR TEST, U.S. CALLS IT THREAT", 2006-10-03) reported that a statement by the DPRK Foreign Ministry said it would conduct its first nuclear test, and Washington warned it would respond to such an "unacceptable threat" to world peace. Pyongyang's announcement was condemned by neighboring Japan, and the ROK heightened its security alert. Britain said it would view a test as highly provocative, while Russia urged the DPRK to show restraint. "The US extreme threat of a nuclear war and sanctions and pressure compel the DPRK (North Korea) to conduct a nuclear test, an essential process for bolstering nuclear deterrent, as a corresponding measure for defense," said the statement carried by the country's official KCNA news agency. It added that it would never use nuclear weapons first and would "do its utmost to realize the denuclearization of the peninsula and give impetus to the world-wide nuclear disarmament and the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons." [\(return to top\)](#)

2. US on DPRK Nuclear Test Plans

Reuters ("BOLTON URGES U.N. COUNCIL TO REACT TO N.KOREA THREAT", 2006-10-03) reports that US Ambassador John Bolton urged the UN Security Council to respond to DPRK's threat to conduct a nuclear test, saying it would be a grave threat to international peace and security. "Given the very strong action by the council in July condemning the North Korean ballistic missile tests, I think it's important we're prepared to follow up here," Bolton said.

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3. Arms Control Experts on DPRK Nuclear Test Plans

The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation ("EXPERTS CALL FOR DIPLOMATIC RETHINK OVER NORTH KOREA THREATS", 2006-10-03) warns that the threat from the DPRK will only continue to escalate unless the United States pursues a more effective and viable plan to engage in negotiations that will lead to its abandoning its nuclear weapons and missile programs. Leonor Tomero, a Nuclear Non-Proliferation Policy Analyst at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, noted "The Administration's strategy of focusing on form over substance by insisting on negotiations only in the context of the six-party talks has clearly failed to make us safer from the North Korean nuclear threat, instead allowing North Korea to produce enough material for perhaps as many as ten nuclear weapons." Lt. General Gard (USA, Ret.), Senior Military Fellow at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, warned "It is high time the United States negotiate in good faith and put forward a serious proposal, that would include a non-aggression pact, a promise not to threaten the North Korean regime, and economic and energy incentives, in exchange for North Korea dismantling its nuclear weapon program and accepting intrusive inspections."

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4. DPRK Nuclear Test Plans Affect Markets

Market Watch ("YEN BROADLY PRESSURED AFTER NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR TALK GREENBACK STEADIES AS MARKET AWAIT ECONOMIC DATA", 2006-10-03) reported that the yen dipped against the dollar and euro Tuesday after news from the DPRK that it will conduct a nuclear test sparking concerns over geo-political tensions in the region. Meanwhile, the dollar recovered from a sharp sell-off in the prior session as traders awaited economic releases and comments from Federal Reserve officials later in the week.

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5. Japan Financial Sanctions against DPRK

Bernama (Malaysia) ("JAPAN FREEZES NORTH KOREA-LINKED BANK ACCOUNT", 2006-10-03) reported that Japan has frozen an account opened at a bank under the name of the DPRK's Tanchon Commercial Bank in line with Tokyo's economic sanctions. Japan's Jiji Press reported Monday that the foreign currency deposit account had an outstanding balance of slightly less than US\$1,000 (US\$1=RM3.66). For the past 10 or more years, there have been no withdrawals or deposits, Japan's Finance Ministry said. It was the first time a bank account has been frozen since the economic sanctions came into force on Sept. 19.

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6. DPRK Labor Rights

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA: LABOR RIGHTS AT RISK IN JOINT INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX", 2006-1-02) reported that the organization Human Rights Watch released a briefing paper calling for an amendment to the law governing the Kaesong Industrial Complex to ensure adequate protections of basic workers' rights. Although labor conditions for DPR Korean workers at Kaesong likely represent an important step forward compared with the rest of the country, the report said, the law governing the complex and some practices by ROK firms operating there still fall far short of international labor protection standards. The 19-page briefing paper, "North Korea: Workers' Rights at Kaesong Industrial Complex," documents the Labor Law's shortcomings in the areas of the freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, the prohibitions on sex discrimination and harassment and harmful child labor, among others.

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7. DPRK Human Rights

Christian Post ("N. KOREA MUSICAL GARNERS SUPPORT AHEAD OF U.S. PREMIERE", 2006-1-02) reported that a musical on life in one of the DPRK's most notorious political labor camps will hold its 100th performance in the United States this week. Yoduk Story is directed by Jung Sung San, a defector from the DPRK. Jung's father was publicly executed for involvement with an RO Korean television station which sought to expose the life of Kim Jong Il in 2001. Following his father's death, the musical director vowed to bring the suffering of DPR Koreans to the world stage and tell the stories of life in the DPRK's prison camps.

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8. US-ROK Security Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. DETERMINED TO HAND OVER TROOP CONTROL", 2006-10-03) reported that the ROK and the US have so far been unable to agree a date for the handover of wartime operational control of ROK troops to Seoul, a Pentagon official said. Richard Lawless, the US deputy under secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, said the two sides failed to narrow their differences in the recent Security Policy Initiative meetings. Speaking at a Defense Department press conference, Lawless reiterated that the target is 2009, but added if the handover turns out to be impossible within that timeframe, it was understandable.

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9. Japan on Constitutional Revision

The Associated Press ("ABE: WAR NOT AIM FOR REVISED CONSTITUTION", 2006-10-03) reported that Japan's new prime minister denied that he wants to change the country's pacifist constitution to permit its military to wage war overseas. "Criticism that the purpose of our plan to revise the constitution is to become a country that wages war overseas is totally off the mark," Abe said. Abe, however, declined to discuss details of his intended changes to Article 9 of the constitution.

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10. Japan-Russian Territorial Dispute

Agence France-Presse ("JAPANESE RELEASED BY RUSSIA, RECANTS ADMISSION ", 2006-10-03) reported that a Japanese fisherman returned home after a month and a half in Russian custody and swiftly recanted his admission in a dispute which has raised tension between the two countries. Russia released boat captain Noboru Sakashita after he paid a fine for fishing in Russian-controlled waters. But on returning to Japan, a tired-looking Sakashita took back his admission of poaching.

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11. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("U.S. SUSPENDS F-16 SALE TO TAIWAN OVER BUDGET DELAY", 2006-10-03) reported that the US has temporarily blocked the sale to Taiwan of 66 advanced fighter planes after the island's parliament repeatedly failed to approve funds for an earlier arms package, a Taiwan defense official said. In 2001 the US offered to sell a previous weapons package, but opposition lawmakers have blocked a special budget to buy the arms in parliament, where they hold a slim majority, claiming the package is unnecessary and expensive.

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12. PRC Human Rights

The Associated Press ("FOREIGN SCHOLARS PROTEST CHINA POLICIES ", 2006-10-03) reported that more than 50 leading scholars and rights campaigners from the US, Europe, and Australia have issued a rare public protest of PRC policies, sending an open letter to President Hu Jintao asking him to stop the harassment of human rights activists. The Foreign Ministry said it was studying the contents of the letter.

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