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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S., JAPAN AGREE TO PRESSURE PYONGYANG ON NUKES", 2006-09-05) reported that top negotiators in the stalled six-party nuclear talks from the US and Japan are highlighting the importance of a quick resumption of multilateral discussions on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. Meeting in Tokyo on Tuesday, US chief negotiator Christopher Hill and his Japanese counterpart, Kenichiro Sasae, also saw eye-to-eye on the need to curb the DPRK's illicit trade of arms, and to discourage possible plans of a nuclear test by the DPRK. Hill's visit to Japan is the first leg of a Northeast Asia tour which also includes the PRC and the ROK.

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("U.S. ENVOY SAYS CHINA DISAPPOINTED WITH N.KOREA", 2006-09-05) reported that the DPRK's test firing of a volley of missiles in July has disappointed its traditional ally the PRC, US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill said in Beijing on Tuesday. Hill, the top US negotiator in six-party talks aimed at dismantling the DPRK's nuclear weapons, said the talks were jeopardized by Pyongyang's refusal to participate, and the host country, the PRC, was also frustrated. "We would like to get on with a diplomatic track, but I think we have to be realistic about the fact that one member of the six-party process appears right now to have no interest," he told reporters after arriving from Tokyo for talks. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. DPRK Nuclear Tests

Yonhap ("JAPAN'S DEFENSE MINISTER SAYS N. KOREAN NUCLEAR TEST 'NOT' IMMINENT", 2006-09-05) reported that Japan's minister of defense on Tuesday said the DPRK may not be able to test a nuclear weapon for at least a while longer. "I do not believe we are in a situation facing an imminent underground nuclear test by North Korea," Nukaga Fukushima was quoted as saying by Japanese broadcaster NHK.

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3. Kim Jong-il Visit to PRC

JoongAng Ilbo ("NORTH'S LEADER TRAVELS TO BORDER, NOT OVER IT", 2006-09-05) reported that speculation continues to swirl about Kim Jong-il's travel plans, but signs are that the reclusive DPRK leader has not yet begun an expected trip to Beijing. A government source said yesterday that Mr. Kim's special train is still in the DPRK. A DPRK television station said Mr. Kim was visiting factories in Sinuiju, a city on the border with the PRC. That publicity would be a departure, DPRK watchers said, from Pyongyang's usual practice of clamping a blackout on news about the "Dear Leader" before a trip abroad.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap ("BEIJING DENIES REPORT OF N. KOREAN LEADER'S CHINESE TRIP", 2006-09-05) reported that the DPRK has blockaded all roads leading to a city bordering the PRC, a source said Tuesday, suggesting the state's leader Kim Jong-il may be preparing a trip to the PRC, but a spokesman for the PRC's Foreign Ministry dismissed reports of his imminent trip. "As far as I know, there is no such arrangement now," the ministry spokesman, Qin Gang, told reporters in Beijing. [\(return to top\)](#)

4. Inter-Korean Demilitarized Zone

Chosun Ilbo ("URI PARTY SEEKS TO FREE RESTRICTED BORDER LAND", 2006-09-05) reported that the Uri Party wants to shrink the restricted area along the border with the DPRK to cut down on

infringements on the property rights of people there. Ruling-party spokesman Noh Woong-rae said Tuesday the party wants to move the Civilian Control Line from within 15 km south of the Military Demarcation Line to 10 km. The proposal is to be discussed with the government and the Defense Ministry.

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5. Inter-Korean Industrial Cooperation

Yonhap ("DESPITE TENSION, INTER-KOREAN INDUSTRIAL PROJECT WILL CONTINUE: OFFICIAL", 2006-09-05) reported that despite heightened tension caused by the DPRK's recent missile launches, the ROK will go ahead with its plan to expand a joint industrial complex in the DPRK as scheduled, officials said Tuesday.

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6. US-ROK Troop Control

Chosun Ilbo ("BUSH WON'T RAISE TROOP CONTROL AT SUMMIT IF ROH WON'T", 2006-09-05) reported that US government officials believe that it is up to President Roh Moo-hyun whether Seoul's plans to take over sole operational control of its troops will be discussed in his meeting with his American counterpart, a lawmaker here said Monday. The opposition Grand National Party's international committee chief Hwang Jin-ha made the remark after returning from a four-day trip to the US "NSC officials think that President George W. Bush doesn't intend to bring up the issue first and that President Roh will do so," Hwang told National Assembly. He said the US Defense Department was fairly determined about the deadline of 2009 to hand over wartime operational control, quoting Rodman as telling him Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was "very firm" about that date.

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7. US-ROK Free Trade Talks

Yonhap ("AMERICAN CRITICS BLAST S. KOREAN-U.S. FREE TRADE TALKS", 2006-09-05) reported that American opponents of a proposed ROK-US free trade accord on Monday accused the deal of devastating the lives of workers in both countries, while benefiting only big businesses. About 60 ROK farmers and factory workers will join "thousands" of their American supporters in a peaceful rally on Wednesday to coincide with the start of a third round of free trade talks between the two nations.

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8. Japan-ROK Territorial Dispute

Associated Press ("SKOREA, JAPAN END MARITIME BORDER TALKS", 2006-09-05) reported that the ROK and Japan failed to make any breakthrough Tuesday in talks aimed at settling a territorial dispute that led to nearly two dozen gunboats being deployed in a high seas showdown earlier this year, an official said. The lack of progress at the end of the two-day round of talks increased the possibility that tensions could flare again over the ownership of disputed islands -- known as Dokdo in Korean and Takeshima in Japanese -- as Japan plans to survey the waters near them.

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9. Japan Ministerial Elections

Kyodo News ("JAPAN'S PARLIAMENT TO CONVENE SEPT. 26 TO PICK NEW PRIME MINISTER", 2006-09-05) reported that Japan's parliament is expected to convene Sept. 26 to pick a new prime minister after the governing Liberal Democratic Party's leadership election slated for Sept. 20, parliamentary sources said Tuesday. The prime minister to succeed the outgoing Junichiro Koizumi is expected to form his new Cabinet during the day of nomination by the Diet, the sources said.

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10. Japan Constitutional Reform

Kyodo News ("ABE SEEKS CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION FOR COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE", 2006-09-05) reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe, all but certain to be Japan's next premier, again expressed his strong ambition Tuesday to revise the nation's pacifist Constitution and enable the exercising of the right to collective self-defense on specific occasions. But Abe, known for his hawkish position on security issues, also did not rule out the possibility of just changing the government's interpretation of the war-renouncing Constitution to achieve the goal. "Given the expectations for Japan to contribute actively on the international stage and to maintain stability and security in the region, we must consider more seriously specific cases (to exercise the right)," Abe told a news conference in response to a reporter's question, citing changes in international affairs since the Constitution was written 60 years ago.

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11. Japan Royal Succession

BBC News ("JAPAN AWAITS NEWS ON ROYAL BABY", 2006-09-05) reported that excitement is mounting in Japan ahead of the expected arrival of a royal baby who could resolve the country's succession crisis. Princess Kiko, wife of the emperor's second son, is due to give birth to her third child in a Tokyo hospital on Wednesday, two weeks early. At present, only men can ascend the throne, but the current emperor's children are yet to produce a boy.

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12. PRC on Iran Nuclear Talks

Reuters ("CHINA WANTS IRAN TALKS DESPITE U.N. DEADLINE EXPIRY", 2006-09-06) reported that the PRC said on Tuesday it still wanted big powers to negotiate with Iran even after Tehran defied a UN deadline to stop enriching uranium. The Chinese stance, echoing Russia, underlined obstacles to a US-led push for consideration of sanctions against Iran in the UN Security Council where Beijing and Moscow wield vetoes. Washington's EU allies, also hesitant about sanctions, were looking to talks this week to explore hints by Iran that it could negotiate over the extent of its nuclear fuel programme, which the West fears is a disguised bid to build atom bombs.

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13. PRC Media Freedom

Reuters ("BEIJING TO BACK MEDIA FREEDOM TO TRAVEL IN CHINA: JOWELL", 2006-09-05) reported that Beijing chief organizer Liu Qi will back the freedom of media to report "unimpeded" around the PRC during the 2008 Olympics, Britain's Olympic Minister Tessa Jowell said on Tuesday. Jowell said she had raised the issue of freedom of access for journalists "in the strongest possible terms" in a meeting in the Chinese capital with Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG) President Liu. "I made clear the expectation of the UK and others that China would comply with international norms of free access and reciprocity," she said. "He gave me a clear assurance that BOCOG would support unimpeded movement of accredited and non-accredited journalists to report not just on the Games, but on China"

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14. PRC-Zambia Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA ISSUES WARNING OVER OPPOSITION LEADER'S REMARKS", 2006-09-05) reported that the PRC will have "nothing to do" with Zambia if opposition leader Michael Sata wins this month's general elections and recognizes Taiwan as a sovereign state, a senior diplomat has said. "We shall have nothing to do with Zambia if Sata wins the elections and goes ahead to recognize Taiwan," PRC ambassador Li Baodong told AFP late Monday.

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15. PRC Bird Flu

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA WILL NOT BE HIT HARD BY BIRD FLU THIS FALL", 2006-09-05) reported that the PRC does not expect to be hit hard by deadly bird flu in coming months, a top agricultural official said Tuesday, but a WHO expert warned there could be more outbreaks as temperatures fall. The government was stepping up vaccinations and strengthening surveillance of poultry, Li Jinxiang -- the deputy director general of the Ministry of Agriculture's veterinary department -- told a news conference. "If our measures and vaccinations are successfully implemented, I believe the situation will be very good," he told AFP on Tuesday. A World Health Organization (WHO) expert said the virus is known to thrive in cold weather and that vaccination alone could not prevent the spread of the deadly disease. "We've certainly seen peaks of animal outbreaks and human outbreaks in the winter time," said Julie Hall, a communicable disease expert at WHO's office in the Chinese capital.

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