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I. United States

1. Inter - Korean Relations

Korea Times ("SOUTH AND NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMATS DISCUSS NK NUCLEAR ISSUE", 2004-12-01) reported that diplomats from the two Koreas met in New York on Tuesday at a seminar on the dispute over the DPRK's nuclear program. Wi Sung-lac, political minister at the ROK's embassy in Washington, said he met Han Song-ryol, deputy chief of the DPRK's mission to the United Nations, at the luncheon seminar organized by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy (NCAFP).

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap News ("NO COUNTRY CAN ENFORCE NUCLEAR SOLUTION UNACCEPTABLE TO SOUTH: ROH", 2004-12-01) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun said Wednesday that his country has grown strong enough that any country can enforce an option unacceptable to the ROK people to resolve the dispute over the DPRK's nuclear program. Roh did not directly mention it, but the comment was seen as related to concerns that the US may seek a military option to resolve the standoff with the DPRK.

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3. PRC on US-DPRK Relations

Yonhap News ("WASHINGTON, TOKYO USE PYONGYANG FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, MEDIA SAY", 2004-12-01) reported that the US and Japan are spreading rumors of growing instability in the DPRK leadership in an attempt to drum up public support for policies hostile toward the DPRK, the PRC's state-funded media outlet reported recently. The Global Times, a bi-weekly journal on international news, published by the People's Daily, said in an analysis that such false rumors carried by US media reflect neoconservatives' toughening stance toward the DPRK.

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4. Australia on Sino - DPRK Relations

AAP Newsfeed ("AUST PM ENCOURAGES CHINA TO REMAIN INVOLVED IN NTH KOREA TALKS", 2004-12-01) reported that Prime Minister John Howard today encouraged the PRC to remain involved in talks aimed at diffusing the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. Mr Howard thanked the PRC for the way it had approached the DPRK issue. "China is the one country in the world that has a real capacity to influence the North Koreans."

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5. DPRK Portrait Issue

Christian Science Monitor ("SHIFTING SIGNS IN NORTH KOREA", 2004-12-01) reported that Stanislav Varivoda reported last month that portraits of DPRK leader Kim Jong Il had disappeared from key public buildings. Further, the media had stopped using the honorific "Dear Leader" in official bulletins. Varivoda thinks that Kim Jong Il realizes that foreigners find the personality cult absurd and so has had the portraits taken down at places where foreign delegations are received.

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6. DPRK on ROK Nuclear Experiment

The Associated Press ("N KOREA: WILL RAISE S KOREA NUCLEAR EXPERIMENTS IN TALKS", 2004-12-01) reported that the DPRK vowed Wednesday to make the ROK's past secret nuclear experiments a top priority for discussion in six-nation nuclear talks aimed at ending the DPRK's nuclear weapons programs. The DPRK's new maneuver threatens to further complicate the prospects for the stalled talks, as the US and its allies are struggling to set a date for resuming the nuclear negotiations. "Under this situation (North Korea) is left with no option but to increase its nuclear deterrent force," the spokesman said.

[\(return to top\)](#) Kyodo News ("N. KOREA VOICES 'DISGUST' AT IAEA, COMPLAINS OF DOUBLE STANDARDS", 2004-12-01) reported that the DPRK on Wednesday criticized the International Atomic Energy Agency for failing to thoroughly probe the ROK's undeclared nuclear-related experiments, and vowed to press the issue at the next round of six-nation talks on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. "It is illogical for the DPRK to unilaterally dismantle its nuclear deterrent force unless the secret nuclear-related experiments of South Korea are thoroughly probed," a Foreign Ministry spokesman was quoted as saying by the official Korean Central News Agency. [\(return to top\)](#)

7. DPRK on KEDO LWR Suspension

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA HOLDS NUKE CRISIS BARGAINING CHIP", 2004-12-01) reported that the DPRK is holding ROK construction cranes, bulldozers, road graders, dump trucks and almost 200 cars hostage at the site of a suspended power plant project as a bargaining chip in the international standoff over its bid to develop nuclear weapons. The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), the New York-based consortium set up to build safe power plants in the DPRK in exchange for Pyongyang's agreement to dismantle its weapons program, says no progress has been made on the impasse.

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8. Inter - Korean Infrastructure

Donga Ilbo ("ROAD CONNECTING THE TWO KOREAS OPENS", 2004-12-01) reported that the road to the DPRK has officially opened. After the 4.2 kilometer road construction (from the Military Demarcation Line to the Tongil Tower) connecting the two Koreas was completed, the road officially opened as the Main East Sea Road on December 1.

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9. DPRK on US Reconnaissance

Korean Central News Agency of the DPRK ("NORTH KOREA SAYS OVER 190 CASES OF US AERIAL

SPYING IN NOVEMBER", 2004-12-01) reported that the US imperialists committed more than 190 cases of aerial espionage against the DPRK by mobilizing strategic and tactical reconnaissance planes of different missions in November, according to a military source. This is a clear indication that the US imperialists are watching for a chance to mount a pre-emptive attack on the DPRK, while frantically pursuing their hostile policy towards it.

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10. DPRK Defectors

Chosun Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA ROUNDING UP DEFECTORS", 2004-12-01) reported that the DPRK began a wide-scale roundup of defectors Monday in areas along the Sino-DPRK border that have traditionally served as paths to the PRC such as Hoeryong and Musan, Japan's Sankei Shimbun reported Wednesday.

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("NK HUNTS POTENTIAL DEFECTORS", 2004-12-01) reported that DPRK authorities are intensifying efforts to hunt down would-be defectors to the PRC and their families, a Japanese daily reported Wednesday. Citing information from unspecified sources, the Sankei Shimbun said the DPRK has begun a large-scale manhunt to find potential defectors near the border with the PRC. [\(return to top\)](#)

11. ROK on DPRK Defectors

Joongang Ilbo ("A SPY TURNS UP AMONG DEFECTORS", 2004-12-01) reported that ROK intelligence officials said yesterday that a DPRK agent had successfully infiltrated the ROK in the wave of defectors who have fled the DPRK and sought asylum in the ROK. The agent, who recently turned himself in to the ROK authorities, had been ordered to gather information on Seoul's handling of defectors. According to the sources, the man, who was not identified, returned to the DPRK to deliver information to authorities in Pyeongyang.

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12. Defectors on DPRK Government in Exile

Korea Times ("DEFECTORS IN SEOUL SKEPTICAL OF NK EXILE GOVERNMENT", 2004-12-01) reported that DPRK defectors residing in the ROK on Wednesday expressed skepticism over an attempt to establish a DPRK government-in-exile in Japan. Several prominent defectors in Seoul told The Korea Times that while they sympathize with any bid to democratize the DPRK, they have reservations about the proposed government's political motives, support-base and chances of bringing about real change.

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13. Japan on DPRK Food Aid

Jiji Press ("JAPAN TO SEND 2ND AID MONITORING TEAM TO N. KOREA SAT", 2004-12-01) reported that the government will send a second mission to the DPRK Saturday to look into whether Japan's food and medical aid to the impoverished nation has been distributed appropriately, Foreign Ministry sources said Tuesday. The team, to be made up of about 10 members including Foreign Ministry officials, will stay in the DPRK for about a week, the sources said.

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14. Jenkins Case

Kyodo News ("JENKINS, SOGA, 2 DAUGHTERS TO GO TO SADO ON FRI", 2004-12-01) reported that former Japanese abductee Hitomi Soga will return to her hometown of Sado, Niigata Prefecture, on Friday together with her husband, Charles Jenkins and their two DPRK-born daughters, the Sado city government said Wednesday.

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15. USFK Troop Realignment

Joongang Ilbo ("U.S. SAYS DISPUTED PAPER NOT DISCUSSED WITH THEM", 2004-12-01) reported that a US Defense Department official said a document created by the Korean Defense Ministry covering alternate missions for US forces in the ROK was not discussed in bilateral defense talks. Representative Roh Hoe-chan of the Democratic Labor Party argued that the document was proof that repositioning efforts by US forces stationed on the peninsula were preparations for preemptive military strikes against the PRC or DPRK.

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16. US - ROK Relations

Korea Herald ("NEXT ENVOY TO U.S. WILL HAVE VITAL ROLE", 2004-12-01) reported that as the ROK-US alliance enters a new stage with the second George W. Bush administration, a question arousing much interest here is who will be the next ambassador to the US since the months ahead will be a crucial phase of bilateral relations including issues such as the DPRK.

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17. ROK - UK Relations

The Times ("TAKING THE SUNSHINE PATH TO PROSPERITY", 2004-12-01) reported that when the first state visit to Britain by a ROK president, which starts today, should create interest in the country's political and business establishments. During his visit the President will have talks with Tony Blair, the Prime Minister -their talks are certain to focus on efforts to achieve a peaceful deal with Kim Jong Il over the elimination of nuclear devices the DPRK is said to have, along with the missile capacity to deliver them.

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18. Japan on ROK Visa Exemption

Yomiuri ("S. KOREANS MAY BE EXEMPT FROM VISAS", 2004-12-01) reported that the government is planning to allow ROK tourists to enter Japan without visas by autumn next year, it was learned Tuesday. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi may tell ROK President Roh Moo Hyun of Japan's intention at their meeting scheduled for Dec. 17 and 18 in Ibusuki, Kagoshima Prefecture.

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19. Japan UNSC Bid

Kyodo News ("JAPAN TO WORK WITH GERMANY, INDIA, BRAZIL TO SEEK ENTRY TO UNSC", 2004-12-01) reported that Japan plans to cooperate with Germany, India and Brazil in jointly seeking to become new permanent members of the U.N. Security Council amid proposals to expand the membership of the body, Japanese government sources said Wednesday. The government will urge the three countries to agree with its position of supporting a U.N. panel's proposal for increasing the number of permanent Security Council members from the current five to 11 and demanding that new permanent members also be given veto rights, the sources said.

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20. AIDS in Asia

The Associated Press ("ASIA MARKS WORLD AIDS DAY AMID NEW WARNINGS", 2004-12-01) reported that in the PRC, the government signaled it was heeding dire warnings of an AIDS explosion this decade by broadcasting television footage of President Hu Jintao making a rare visit to AIDS patients in a hospital and ordering thousands of local officials to learn about the disease. Activists in Tokyo began handing out condoms and about 20,000 pamphlets in the streets, and a popular nightclub was planning a benefit concert for Wednesday night. In the ROK, members of the Korean Alliance to Defeat AIDS made balloons out of colorful condoms and distributed some wrapped as lollipops in a busy Seoul subway station.

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21. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN'S LEADER PROMISES U.S. THAT CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE WON'T SPELL INDEPENDENCE", 2004-12-01) reported that President Chen Shui-bian tried to reassure the US on Wednesday that planned changes to Taiwan's constitution won't bring the island closer to formal independence from rival PRC. Chen calls the current constitution, implemented more than a half century ago, outdated, and says a new document is needed to increase government efficiency. The PRC, however, claims the move is a plan to declare formal independence.

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22. PRC Mine Accident

Los Angeles Times ("CHINA MINE EXPLOSION DEATH TOLL RISES TO 166", 2004-12-01) reported that on Sunday, a gas explosion swept through Chenjiashan mine here in Shaanxi province, about 450 miles southwest of Beijing. This morning, the official New China News Agency confirmed that 103 miners who were trapped as deep as five miles underground were dead. The PRC, which produces 35% of the world's coal, accounts for 80% of coal mining fatalities, according to government figures — 4,153 deaths were reported in the first nine months of 2004. Experts say corruption, poor oversight and the fact that it's often cheaper to pay off a death claim than invest in safety equipment contribute to the country's dubious record.

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