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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Six Party Talks

Associated Press ("REPORT: NORTH KOREA WILLING TO SHUT DOWN NUCLEAR REACTOR IF CONDITIONS MET", 2006-12-13) reported that the DPRK has told the United States it is willing to shut down a key nuclear reactor and accept U.N. inspections if certain conditions are met. The conditions include the DPRK's long-standing call for Washington to lift financial restrictions for its alleged currency counterfeiting and money laundering and a demand for energy aid.

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2. Six Party Talks Diplomacy

Kyodo News Service ("U.S. NEGOTIATOR TO VISIT JAPAN SAT. FOR TALKS ON N. KOREA", 2006-12-13) reported that U.S. negotiator on North Korea, Christopher Hill, is considering visiting Japan for preliminary consultations with his Japanese counterpart before the Six Party Talks resume in Beijing next week. Hill, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, now seems likely to arrive in Beijing on Sunday, one day later than earlier planned, after meeting with Kenichiro Sasae, director general of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau. He is also expected to meet with his counterparts from other parties involved for similar consultations before the formal six-way discussions restart next Monday.

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3. Future DPRK Nuclear Capacity

Yonhap News Agency ("N KOREA TO HAVE OVER 50 NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY 2010 - RETIRED SOUTH GENERAL", 2006-12-13) reported that, according to Joon-ik, a retired general and former president of the Korea Military Academy, the DPRK is expected to possess as much as 55 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium by year's end and its continued accumulation of the material would allow production of over 50 atomic bombs by 2010 "The North unloaded spent fuel rods in May from the Yongbyon nuclear reactors, which were reactivated in 2003, and reprocessing the fuel rods before the end of the year would give it an additional 13 kilograms of plutonium," Jang said. He said the amount is enough to make as many as 50 nuclear weapons, adding that it takes about 5 kilograms of plutonium to make a 20-kiloton atomic bomb. One kiloton is equivalent in terms of explosive power to 1,000 tons of TNT.

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4. Russia on DPRK Sanctions

Interfax ("RUSSIA TO OBSERVE BAN ON DELIVERIES OF LUXURY GOODS TO NORTH KOREA", 2006-12-13) reported from Russia will observe a UN Security Council ban on delivering some types of weapons and luxury goods to DPRK. "Russia will fulfill United Nations' Security Council resolution 1718 adopted on October 14, 2006. As a permanent member, Russia participated in developing the list of objects, materials, equipment, goods and technologies that are banned from being delivered to North Korea," a Russian report cited by the UN News Center reads. The resolution envisages a ban on delivering some types of weapons, as well as materials, equipment, goods and technologies related to nuclear, ballistic missile or other weapons of mass destruction. The resolution also bans trade in luxury goods with DPRK. A document on the fulfillment of the UN resolution is being prepared in Russia, the report reads. "At the same time, we think that the main goal of the resolution

is to politically settle the North Korean nuclear issue, rather than to punish the country," the reports reads.

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5. DPRK Human Rights

Yomiuri Shimbun ("RIGHTS ENVOY: DPRK MAY HAVE ABDUCTED 30 MORE", 2006-12-13) reported that Fumiko Saiga, ambassador for human rights issues, said more than 30 people had probably been abducted by the DPRK, in addition to the 17 already certified by the government. It was the first time a government official has referred to the number of abductees other than those who have been officially recognized. Saiga's comments came in a keynote speech at a conference organized by a support group for DPRK defectors that was discussing the issue of accepting defectors as well as DPRK human rights violations.

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6. USFK Base Relocation

Joongang Ilbo ("U.S. FORCES' MOVE NOW 7 YEARS OFF", 2006-12-13) reported that the US Army's move to a new headquarters in Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggi province, will be delayed for as long as five years beyond the target date of 2008, a senior government official said. He said the delay was caused primarily by the failure so far to obtain all the necessary land for the transfer of the US military command.

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7. ROK Power Supply

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA BUILDS WORLD'S LARGEST GARBAGE-FUELLED POWER PLANT", 2006-12-13) reported that the ROK has opened the world's largest garbage-fuelled power plant and expects to reduce its imports of heavy oil by 500,000 barrels a year as a result. The 50-megawatt plant, designed to provide power to more than 180,000 households, began operating on Tuesday. For fuel, it uses only the methane gas naturally generated from the decomposing garbage on the site.

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8. Sino-Japanese Relations

Kyodo ("CHINESE ENVOY SAYS CRISIS WITH JAPAN OVER, BUT TENSIONS REMAIN", 2006-1-13) reported that the PRC ambassador to Japan believes that while a political crisis between the PRC and Japan has been overcome by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Beijing, tensions resulting from the PRC's rising power still remain, according to recent PRC media reports.

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9. PRC on Yasukuni Shrine Issue

The Associated Press ("CHINA TO ADD SHRINE VISITS IN MEMORIAL ", 2006-12-13) reported that a memorial marking the slaughter of PRC citizens of Nanjing by Japanese troops will soon include

exhibits showing visits by Japanese politicians to a Tokyo shrine that honors war dead, state media reported. The visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, where convicted Japanese war criminals are honored, have become a sticking point in relations between Beijing and Tokyo.

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10. Sino-US Trade Relations

International Herald Tribune ("U.S. AND CHINA DIFFER ON AIM OF ECONOMIC TALKS", 2006-1-13) reported that the PRC appears to see the "strategic economic dialogue" with the US less as a vehicle for adjusting its policies than as a means to air its own call for the US to reform its own economy to end its addiction to PRC goods and PRC loans sustaining gigantic American trade and budget deficits. The US goal is to discuss a range of issues as a way of coaxing the PRC to move on the major economic priorities. Besides currency manipulation, the issues are opening the PRC economy to foreign investment and services and cracking down on piracy of videos, software, pharmaceuticals and other items.

[\(return to top\)](#) Bloomberg News ("CHINA BECOMES SECOND-LARGEST U.S. TRADE PARTNER ", 2006-12-13) reported that the PRC passed Mexico as the second- largest US trading partner in the first 10 months of this year, demonstrating a surge in commerce between the two countries since the PRC joined the World Trade Organization. The trade deficit with the PRC rose to a record \$24.4 billion in October, from \$23 billion in September, the Commerce Department said today. Year to date, total trade with the PRC reached \$281 billion, passing Mexico's \$278.3 billion. [\(return to top\)](#)

11. PRC Activist Trial

The Los Angeles Times ("CLOSED TRIAL HELD, LAWYER SAYS", 2006-12-13) reported that an activist PRC lawyer was tried on subversion charges in Beijing without his family or defense lawyer being allowed to attend, his attorney said. No verdict or sentence was immediately announced. The case against Gao Zhisheng comes amid a crackdown on PRC lawyers representing people with grievances over corruption, land seizures and other politically sensitive issues.

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12. PRC Demographic Changes

The Associated Press ("CHINA: WELFARE FOR OLD WILL BE CHALLENGE ", 2006-12-13) reported that the PRC said that creating welfare programs for its soaring numbers of elderly is a national priority, but warned that will be a daunting challenge in a rapidly graying society. The PRC faces an acute demographic crunch due to birth-control programs that limit most urban couples to one child, which will cause the ratio of working people to retirees to drop sharply. The government has launched pension, health care and other programs for the elderly, the Cabinet said. It mentioned no new initiatives.

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13. PRC School Fees

BBC News ("CHINA ENDS SCHOOL FEES FOR 150M", 2006-12-13) reported that the PRC is to abolish tuition and other fees for 150 million rural students, in a bid to narrow the gap between wealthy coastal provinces and poorer regions. The students will be exempt from tuition fees over the

course of their compulsory nine-year education. But children of rural families who have migrated to China's booming cities will not be included.

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