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I. United States

1. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Chosun Ilbo ("NK WOULD GIVE UP NUKES FOR PROPER COMPENSATION: PRESIDENT ROH", 2004-11-17) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun, who is currently in Brazil on a state visit, said the ROK government thinks the DPRK would abandon its nuclear development programs if it were provided with sufficient compensation, the Brazilian newspaper Estado de Sao Paulo reported Wednesday.

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2. US - ROK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT REFUTES ROH SPEECH IN LA", 2004-11-17) reported that in relation to President Roh Moo-hyun's recent speech on the DPRK nuclear issue, the US State Department released its official position that it believed Pyongyang's nuclear weapons posed a threat to US allies and those nations friendly with the US. The State Department, seemingly taking aim at Roh's position opposed to a US hardline on the DPRK, said the ROK president's speech contained points about which the US hoped to have a chance to discuss with ROK high officials in the near future.

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3. ROK - Japanese Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPANESE CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY EXPRESSES DISBELIEF AT ROH COMMENTS", 2004-11-17) reported that in regards to ROK President Roh Moo-hyun's remark made at a luncheon meeting in Los Angeles on Nov. 13 that there was some truth in the DPRK's claim that its nuclear programs were a means to deter threats from outside, Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary

Hiroyuki Hosoda said he could not believe President Roh had made such a remark.

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4. US - ROK Military Relations

Yonhap ("S. KOREAN DEFENSE CHIEF VOWS TO PROMOTE 'COOPERATIVE SELF-DEFENSE'", 2004-11-17) reported that the ROK's defense chief reiterated his plan Wednesday to solidify a national defense capability less dependent on US troops. "The security environment facing the Korean Peninsula is that a dual situation is being maintained: although inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation have made progress, North Korea's military threats remain unchanged," Yoon Kwang-ung told retired generals in a policy forum.

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5. US - ROK Diplomatic Relations

Korea Times ("BAN, RICE CLOSE ENOUGH TO GO WITHOUT ICEBREAKER", 2004-11-17) reported that Ban Ki-moon, the ROK's chief diplomat, will likely meet his new US counterpart, Condoleezza Rice, in Chile this weekend, on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. "Among South Korean officials, Rice is known to be quite rational and reasonable," a senior government official said. "And, because Ban and Rice have been in contact with each other since the early Bush administration, there will be no need for a period of fine-tuning between them."

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6. ROK on DPRK Portrait Issue

Joongang Ilbo ("PYEONGYANG REGIME IS STABLE, SAYS TOP AIDE ON NORTH KOREA", 2004-1-17) reported that in testimony yesterday before the National Assembly, Unification Minister Chung Dong-young, the ROK's top policymaker on the DPRK, carefully dismissed international media reports that Pyeongyang's leadership might be undergoing an upheaval. ROK intelligence officials expressed skepticism that any missing portraits might be connected with changes in the DPRK's regime.

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7. Ex-UN Envoy on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Korea Herald ("EX-U.N. ENVOY URGES ECONOMIC AID TO N.K.", 2004-11-17) reported that the most effective way to end the DPRK nuclear standoff would be for the international community to provide economic aid to coax the DPRK to open up to the world, a former key UN policymaker said. "We have long believed that the best way of dealing with regimes where we do not share their values, we do not share their interests, but nevertheless, is to deal by establishing relations with and having dialogue with them, having trade with them, getting to know them," Maurice Strong, a former senior advisor to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan said yesterday.

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8. DPRK on Portrait Issue

Reuters ("N.KOREA REPORTS KIM TROOP TRIP AFTER PORTRAITS FLAP", 2004-11-17) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has visited a military unit, the country's official KCNA news agency reported Wednesday, just hours after reports surfaced that his portrait had been removed from some public places. Reports of Kim's inspection of military units, which customarily lack specific details, are generally considered in the ROK to be an indicator of the leader's whereabouts.

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9. DPRK Portrait Issue

The New York Times ("WHERE KIM'S PORTRAIT HUNG IN PYONGYANG, A BAFFLING BLANKNESS", 2004-11-17) reported that portraits of the DPRK's leader, Kim Jong Il, have been quietly taken down this fall in important institutions in the country's capital, Pyongyang, several diplomats there say. Analysts are debating the reasons, with explanations that range from a demotion of the DPRK's "Dear Leader" to a simple desire to place the portraits in more ornate frames.

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10. DPRK Leader on Portrait Issue

Yonhap ("KIM JONG-IL ORDERS REMOVAL OF HIS PORTRAITS: SOURCE", 2004-11-17) reported that the DPRK is quietly taking down the portraits of leader Kim Jong-il at all public places and homes in what could signal a major change in the policy of the DPRK, a source in Seoul said Wednesday. The order to remove Kim's portraits was issued three weeks ago by the leader himself, who is concerned that he "has been lifted too high," said the source who claims to have "good connections" in the DPRK.

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11. DPRK Unrest

Korea Herald ("N.K. PREOCCUPIED WITH CONTROLLING REGIME: EXPERTS", 2004-11-17) reported that despite repeated pledges by the international community that it will make concerted efforts to end the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, most analysts agree that Pyongyang's attitude is key to any breakthrough. Others, however, say that dissension over internal affairs may be the main factor behind the stalling of inter-Korean talks and the nuclear standoff. They say Pyongyang is preoccupied with its own problem of tightening the ideological reins on the DPRK, which were loosened amid its drive to introduce market-oriented principles in desperate efforts to feed its 22 million people.

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12. DPRK Leader Title Change

Kyodo News ("N. KOREAN MEDIA DROP KIM JONG IL'S 'DEAR LEADER' TITLE", 2004-11-17) reported that the DPRK's official media on Wednesday dropped the glorifying description of "dear leader" from the nation's leader Kim Jong Il, the Japanese monitoring agency Radiopress reported.

"The North Korean leader is reportedly concerned his personality receives too much praise," the report said.

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13. Japan on DPRK Abductees, Sanctions

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PM WARY OF FREEZING AID TO NORTH KOREA DESPITE ABDUCTION ROW", None) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi ruled out Wednesday a freeze on Japan's humanitarian food aid to the DPRK, despite the DPRK's reluctance to come clean on its Cold War abductions of Japanese people. "It is necessary to employ both dialogue and pressure by assessing if they work effectively," Koizumi said.

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14. Japan on DPRK Abductees

Yomiuri Shimbun ("N. KOREA'S EXPLANATIONS SAID QUESTIONABLE", 2004-11-17) reported that documents and other articles presented by the DPRK on Japanese abductees are questionable and only intended to support Pyongyang's claim that eight of the 10 Japanese believed to have been abducted to that country are dead and two did not enter the country, according to government officials.

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15. US NSC Asia Director

Chosun Ilbo ("VICTOR CHA EXPECTED TO BECOME ASIA DIRECTOR IN U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL", 2004-11-17) reported that it has been learned that Korean-American Professor Victor Cha will be appointed Asia Director of the National Security Council in US President George W. Bush's second term. Succeeding incumbent senior director Michael Green, Prof. Cha, 43, will constitute America's Asia policy line, taking charge of the Korean Peninsula and Japan, along with Stephen J. Hadley, National Security Advisor-designate.

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16. APEC on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Agence France-Presse ("ASIA-PACIFIC POWERS TO SET SIGHTS ON NKOREAN NUKES, TRADE OBSTACLES", 2004-11-17) reported that Asia-Pacific power brokers, starring US Secretary of State Colin Powell, convene here Wednesday determined to suppress terrorism, free up world trade and thwart the DPRK nuclear ambitions. After a string of one-on-one negotiations on the sidelines, they open formal meetings of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, wrapping up with another series of discussions on Thursday.

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17. PRC on DPRK Defectors

Yonhap ("CHINA REPATRIATES 20 N. KOREAN DEFECTORS, ACTIVISTS SAY", 2004-11-17) reported that the PRC has repatriated 20 out of the 62 DPRK defectors who were arrested in Beijing

late last month, a human rights group here claimed Wednesday. The defectors were recently sent to the DPRK border city of Sinuiju, while the remainder are still in a detention camp in Tumen in the northeastern PRC province of Jilin, the Democracy Network Against North Korean Gulags said.

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18. Russia on DPRK Defector

Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREAN ASYLUM SEEKER CAN COME TO SEOUL: RUSSIAN ENVOY", 2004-1-17) reported that Russia's top envoy here said Wednesday that a DPRK man who sought asylum in Vladivostok this week can travel to the ROK if the country agrees to accept him. "It depends on if South Korea grants the asylum, he comes to South Korea," said Amb. Teymuraz Ramishvili in an interview with Yonhap News Agency.

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19. US on DPRK Defectors

Joongang Ilbo ("U.S. EXPLAINS NORTH KOREAN REFUGEE POLICY", 2004-11-17) reported that a senior US official in charge of refugee issues has clarified the US's policy toward DPRK defectors in the PRC, saying the Bush administration is ready to accept all bona fide refugees but believes "the most appropriate solution" would be for them to go to the ROK.

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20. ROK on Pro-DPRK Web Sites

Korea Times ("PRO-NORTH KOREAN SITES OUTFOX SEOUL GOVERNMENT", 2004-11-17) reported that operators of pro-DPRK Web sites have sidestepped Seoul's blocking by providing a detour through mirror sites. Some of the sites, like the Center for Korean Affairs, a New York-based group aimed at helping the reunification of the two Koreas, has created mirror sites to circumvent the block.

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21. Sino - DPRK Trade Relations

Korea Times ("N. KOREA-CHINA TRADE VOLUME SOARS 40.5%", 2004-11-17) reported that the DPRK's trade volume with the PRC totaled \$886 million in the first nine months of this year, up 40.5 percent from a year earlier, the Ministry of Unification reported Wednesday. With soaring trade between the two countries, Pyongyang's trade surplus with Beijing jumped 22.8 percent over the same period last year to \$539 million, a ministry official said. Exports with the PRC reached \$347 million, up 81.1 percent from a year earlier.

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22. Japanese Maritime Border Violation

Washington Post ("BEIJING EXPLAINS SUBMARINE ACTIVITY; JAPAN CONSIDERS ACCOUNT AN APOLOGY", 2004-11-17) reported that facing strong protests, the PRC broke a week-long silence Tuesday and offered Japan its first explanation about a submarine that the Japanese said breached

their territorial waters without signaling its identity. Japanese government spokesman, Hiroyuki Hosoda, said in Tokyo that Koreshige was called in on Tuesday and told that technical problems caused the submarine to veer accidentally into Japanese territorial waters on Nov. 10 and that the PRC government regretted the mistake.

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23. Japanese Constitutional Reforms

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN EYES CONSTITUTION OVERHAUL TO ALLOW MILITARY FORCE, EMPRESS", 2004-11-17) reported that Japan's ruling party is eyeing an overhaul of the post-war constitution to allow the military to use force in international missions and let a woman ascend the throne. With some 550 Japanese troops in Iraq and Japan facing threats from the DPRK, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has said the founding document should be revised "in the light of common sense."

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24. Japanese Maritime Border Violation

Los Angeles Times ("CHINA REGRETS SUB INCIDENT, JAPAN SAYS", 2004-11-17) reported that the PRC expressed regret through diplomatic channels Tuesday that one of its nuclear-powered submarines intruded into Japanese territorial waters last week for "technical reasons," Japanese officials said. "China got its fingers burned," said Jean-Pierre Cabestan, a PRC expert at the French National Center for Scientific Research in Paris. "It had no choice but to send a rather mild form of apology."

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25. Sino - Japanese Summit

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, CHINA TO HOLD SUMMIT SATURDAY IN CHILE", 2004-11-17) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and PRC President Hu Jintao will meet as early as Saturday in Chile, realizing the countries' first summit this year with Beijing apparently easing its stance after a submarine incident, government sources said Wednesday.

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26. Sino - Iranian Relations

Washington Post ("IRAN'S NEW ALLIANCE WITH CHINA COULD COST U.S. LEVERAGE", 2004-1-17) reported that a major new alliance is emerging between Iran and the PRC that threatens to undermine US ability to pressure Tehran on its nuclear program, support for extremist groups and refusal to back Arab-Israeli peace efforts. The relationship has grown out of the PRC's soaring energy needs -- crude oil imports surged nearly 40 percent in the first eight months of this year, according to state media -- and Iran's growing appetite for consumer goods for a population that has doubled since the 1979 revolution, Iranian officials and analysts say.

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27. Sino - Argentine Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA PLANS TO INVEST \$19B IN ARGENTINA", 2004-11-17) reported that Argentine officials announced Tuesday that the PRC will invest more than \$19 billion in Argentina over the next 10 years, deepening trade links between the world's fastest growing economy and South America's second-largest. The announcement of the trade and investment agreements came as PRC President Hu Jintao opened a two-day visit to Argentina, part of a Latin American tour widely seen as an effort by the PRC to expand the country's economic presence in the region.

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28. Cross Strait Relations

United Press International ("CHINA OPPOSES TAIWAN CURRICULUM CHANGES", 2004-11-17) reported that Taiwan's plans to revise history textbooks was denounced by the PRC Wednesday as an attempt to promote the independence movement on the island. Taiwan media recently quoted President Chen Shui-bian as saying the island needs educational reform, including history textbook revision for high school students, part of an effort to foster a unique self-identity for the island.

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29. Japan SDF Dispatch to Iraq

The Japan Times ("TROOP-PULLOUT BILL", 2004-11-03) reported that the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) will submit a bill to the Diet aimed at withdrawing the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) from Iraq, DPJ sources said. The bill would revise the Iraq reconstruction assistance law under which the troops were sent to Iraq to prevent any extension of their stay there, the sources said.

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30. Japan SDF Dispatch to Iraq

The Japan Times ("ROTATION TROOPS GET MARCHING ORDERS", 2004-11-06) reported that the Defense Agency ordered on Nov. 4 some 600 Ground-Self Defense Force (GSDF) troops to be dispatched to southern Iraq later this month to relieve the GSDF troops already there. According to the dispatch order, the GSDF troops, most of whom belong to the GSDF Sixth Division, headquartered in Yamagata Prefecture, will leave for the southern Iraq city of Samawah on a three-month mission of reconstruction and water-purification work.

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31. Japan SDF Dispatch to Iraq

The Japan Times ("KOIZUMI SAYS TROOPS IN IRAQ ARE STILL IN A 'NONCOMBAT ZONE'", 2004-11-09) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said he still considers the southern Iraqi region around the city of Samawah a "noncombat zone," despite the Iraqi government declaring a state of emergency for most of the nation. The noncombat-zone designation is a prerequisite for Self-Defense Forces troops to operate in Iraq under a special law authorizing the mission. Takemasa Moriya, vice minister at the Defense Agency, said in a separate news conference, "We do not think (the declaration of a state of emergency) will affect our troops in Iraq in any way."

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32. Japan Defense Policy

The Japan Times ("DEFENSE AGENCY SAYS SDF CUT WOULD PUT REACTORS IN DANGER", 2004-11-08) reported that an internal Defense Agency document says that cuts in Self-Defense Forces (SDF) personnel and equipment as proposed by the Finance Ministry could leave nuclear reactors open to attack and hamper disaster relief operations. The document was drafted by officers in all three branches of the SDF, agency sources said. The personnel cut proposed by the Finance Ministry would force the Defense Agency to abolish at least 50 garrisons, a third of the total, which would have a serious impact on nearby economies and employment, the document also says. These proposals cannot be accepted, the document says.

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33. Japan Defense Scenario

The Japan Times ("DEFENSE STRATEGISTS LOOK TO CHINA'S ATTACK THREAT", 2004-11-09) reported that @Japan fs Defense Agency officials have established three scenarios in which the PRC attacks Japan. The scenarios involve attacks stemming from disputes over ocean resources and claims over the Senkaku Islands as well as a clash across the Taiwan Strait, agency sources said. reported that @Japan fs Defense Agency officials have established three scenarios in which the PRC attacks Japan. The scenarios involve attacks stemming from disputes over ocean resources and claims over the Senkaku Islands as well as a clash across the Taiwan Strait, agency sources said.

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34. Japan Foreign Residents' Suffrage

The Japan Times ("SUFFRAGE FOR FOREIGNERS GAINS MOMENTUM", 2004-11-10) reported that the issue of granting suffrage to foreigners in local-level elections has gained renewed interest due to recent moves by lawmakers. New Komeito, the junior partner in the governing coalition and billing itself as a champion of human rights, has proposed a bill that would conditionally allow non-Japanese residents the right to vote at the local level. But the New Komeito's bill as it now stands is unsatisfactory on three points: DPRK nationals would be excluded because Tokyo and Pyongyang do not have diplomatic ties; voting rights would only be given to foreigners with permanent residency; and foreigners would not be allowed to run in elections.

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35. Japan on US Led War in Iraq

The Japan Times ("KOIZUMI BACKS U.S.-LED OFFENSIVE AGAINST FALLUJAH INSURGENTS", 2004-11-10) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi threw his weight on Nov. 9 behind the US-led offensive in Iraq against insurgents in Fallujah. The attack "must be successful because improvement in security holds the key to efforts to support (Iraq's) reconstruction," Koizumi told reporters at the Prime Minister's Official Residence. Meanwhile, earlier in the day, three veteran lawmakers of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) met with Koizumi to express their opposition to any extension of the SDF mission which is schedule to end Dec. 14.

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