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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

The Korea Times ("SONG TO VISIT BEIJING TO DISCUSS NK NUKES", 2005-11-30) reported that Song Min-soon, the ROK's chief delegate to six party talks, will visit Beijing on December 2 to prepare for the next round of talks. "Song will have a meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wu Dawei to discuss the status of the six-party process and discuss ways to move it forward," Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki-moon told reporters on Wednesday. The ministry will hold similar meetings with other participating countries such as the US, Russia, and Japan during the first half of December, Ban said.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters ("NEW US ENVOY TO SEOUL NOT ENCOURAGED BY N. KOREA TACTICS", 2005-11-30) reported that the new US ambassador to the ROK said on Wednesday he was not encouraged by the way the DPRK was approaching an agreement to dismantle its nuclear programs. "It remains to be seen whether North Korea is truly prepared to eliminate its nuclear programs, and to do so in a prompt and verifiable manner," Alexander Vershbow said in a speech to the American Chamber of Commerce in the ROK. Vershbow said if the DPRK was ready to move forward on ending its nuclear ambitions, the US was ready to respond by looking at items such as striking a peace treaty to replace the armistice that ended the 1950-1953 Korean War.

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

Agence France Presse ("N. KOREA THREATENS TO SEVER MILITARY TIES WITH SEOUL", 2005-11-30) reported that the DPRK has threatened to sever military ties with the ROK, accusing Seoul of allowing US troops to flaunt their presence in two border areas used for inter-Korean exchanges and tourism. In an unusual statement carried by the Korean Central News Agency on Tuesday, the DPRK's military said the ROK's "servile" attitude to the US was putting inter-Korean military relations in jeopardy. An unnamed DPRK military spokesman insisted in Tuesday's statement that the ROK had refused to stop US soldiers from "strutting about" in the areas managed by the two Koreas. US soldiers have come close to the border line in the Joint Administration Areas (JAAs) without prior notice, "watching vehicles moving, photographing areas of the north side and jesting its guard personnel on duty by finger and body languages," he said.

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4. DPRK Human Rights

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL LUKEWARM ABOUT N. KOREAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE", 2005-11-30) reported that the ROK government is treading softly over an international conference on DPRK human rights to be held in Seoul next week. Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon told a press conference on Wednesday that the government would take some time to decide its position on the conference scheduled for December 8-11 since it was a privately organized event. "The government's involvement in the conference could affect inter-Korean relations as a whole," officials said. "We are mindful how the North will react to the conference since inter-Korean ministerial talks are scheduled on Dec. 13, right after the conference." Ban also hinted that the government is wary of meeting with Jay Lefkowitz, the special US envoy for DPRK human rights, who will come to Seoul to attend the conference.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap News ("N. KOREA BLASTS JAPAN'S MOVE TO APPOINT HUMAN RIGHTS ENVOY", 2005-11-30) reported that the DPRK slammed the Japanese government's plan on Wednesday to establish a new ambassadorial post to oversee the DPRK's human rights situation. The plan is a "ridiculous act by blind followers of the U.S.," the Korean Central News Agency said in a commentary. [\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap News ("OUTSIDE INFORMATION KEY TO FREEDOM IN N. KOREA: DEFECTOR", 2005-11-30) reported that DPRK citizens are unlikely to make any demands for improvements to their living standards unless they have access to outside information that allows them to compare their lives with that of people in other countries, a former DPR Korean claimed on Wednesday. "Freedom of press (or access to outside information) would be the best present for North Koreans right now," Rim Hong-kun said in a meeting with a group of reporters visiting the country's island of Ganghwa, located some 60 kilometers west of Seoul. [\(return to top\)](#)

5. DPRK Economy

The Korea Times ("NK OFFERS MORE INCENTIVES TO FOREIGN INVESTORS", 2005-11-30) reported that the DPRK has recently implemented a set of reform measures to revive its economy, lifting or drastically easing regulations imposed on joint-venture companies and other foreign investors, according to a source close to the state on Wednesday. The new guidelines, worked out by the Workers' Party and presented to its local chapters, government ministries and frontline enterprises in early November, give the foreign investors tax cuts and allow them to sell goods produced in the DPRK in the domestic market without tariffs.

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6. DPRK Leadership

Chosun Ilbo ("KIM JONG-IL'S SUCCESSION 'REMAINS TABOO'", 2005-11-30) reported that according to the LA Times, the mere mention of the fact that there will come a time when Kim Jong-il no longer rules the DPRK is taboo in the country. "Succession is a taboo subject here, as are Kim's three sons, their names, ages and whereabouts," the paper said. "Questions about any of these topics are met with averted eyes or uncomfortable silence." The paper quoted English interpreter Bang Yu Gyong as saying "Please don't ask about the Dear Leader's family." As for who will succeed Kim, she said the matter is not discussed because "nobody thinks about it."

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7. DPRK Telecommunications

The Korea Times ("PYONGYANG TO ALLOW USE OF CELL PHONES AGAIN NEXT YEAR", 2005-11-30) reported that the DPRK will likely allow the use of mobile phones in the country again next year, restoring the handsets it took away from the 30,000 carriers right after a railway explosion in April last year, according to a well-informed source on Wednesday. "I heard the ban on cell phones will be lifted around the birthday of the North's leader Kim Jong-il on Feb. 16 or that of the late Kim Il-sung on April 15," the source, who frequents Pyongyang for business affairs, said on condition of anonymity. The technology used for wireless phone calls in the DPRK will likely be shifted from the European-style global system for mobile communications (GSM) it has used to date to US-style code division multiple access (CDMA) due to security concerns, the source said.

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8. US on DPRK Counterfeiting

Chosun Ilbo ("NO NEED FOR TALKS ON COUNTERFEITING WITH N. KOREA: RICE", 2005-11-30) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice says there is no need for talks with DPRK officials about Washington's zero tolerance for the country's alleged counterfeiting and drug smuggling activities. Asked in an interview in USA Today about reports that she will invite DPRK officials to discuss US sanctions on a bank in Macau for aiding the DPRK's distribution of counterfeit dollars, Rice said, "They don't need to have a bilateral on how to stop counterfeiting other people's money."

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9. ROK on Yasukuni Issue

Asahi Shimbun ("SEOUL: DON'T EXPECT ROH TO VISIT JAPAN THIS YEAR", 2005-11-30) reported that after a few glimmers of hope, the ROK government effectively ruled out any visit to Japan by President Roh Moo Hyun this year because of the Yasukuni Shrine issue, officials here said.

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10. Japan on Yasukuni Issue

Kyodo ("KOIZUMI PAYS NO HEED TO ASIAN CRITICISM OF HIS YASUKUNI VISITS ", 2005-11-30) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi indicated he has no intention of paying heed to criticism from other Asian countries of his visits to Tokyo's war-related Yasukuni Shrine. "The issue of Yasukuni doesn't make a diplomatic card," he said in an address as Liberal Democratic Party president at LDP headquarters.

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11. US on Sino-Japanese Relations

The Associated Press ("ENVOY: JAPAN, CHINA MUST RESOLVE DISPUTES ", 2005-11-30) reported that Japan and the PRC must resolve their differences in the interest of regional stability, the US ambassador to Tokyo said Wednesday, adding that Washington's role as a mediator was limited. "We hope Japan and China can resolve their differences because it's important for the whole region that

everyone gets along," US Ambassador Thomas Schieffer said at a news conference.

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12. ROK-Japanese Relations

Asia Pulse ("S KOREA, JAPAN TO HOLD REGULAR FINANCE MINISTERS' MEETING", 2005-11-30) reported that the ROK and Japan have agreed to hold annual meetings of finance ministers to discuss outstanding bilateral issues, the government said. In a press release issued jointly by the two sides, Seoul's Ministry of Finance and Economy said the ministerial talks are needed as the level of economic interdependence between the two neighbors has grown rapidly in recent years.

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13. ROK - Russian Far East Trade

The Vladivostok News ("PRIMORYE, S. KOREA BOOST TIES", 2005-11-30) reported that economic relations between Primorye and the ROK have noticeably intensified, showing a 34 percent increase in trade turnover in 2005 compared to the previous year. Trade turnover of Primorye and the ROK has reached \$471.7 million during a nine month span of 2005, Viktor Gorchakov, Primorye's Vice Governor in charge of foreign relations.

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14. Japan Iraq Troop Contribution

Kyodo ("JAPAN TO EXTEND IRAQ MISSION FOR 1 YEAR ", 2005-11-30) reported that the Japanese government plans to extend the mission of Japanese troops engaged in reconstruction work in Iraq for another year, sources at the ruling Liberal Democratic Party said Wednesday.

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15. Japan Military

Washington Post ("JAPAN'S DRAFT CHARTER REDEFINES MILITARY", 2005-11-30) reported that the governing Liberal Democratic Party on Tuesday released a draft revision of Japan's pacifist constitution that would recognize the country's armed forces as a fully functioning military. The constitution would continue to reject war as an option. But the new draft would remove limitations on the country's 240,000-member Self-Defense Forces, which have been defined as being strictly limited to defending Japan's home islands.

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16. Sino-US Relations

Agence France Presse ("US, CHINA TO HOLD SECOND ROUND OF STRATEGIC DIALOGUE IN DECEMBER ", 2005-11-30) reported that PRC Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo will visit the US for the second round of high-level bilateral strategic dialogue on December 7-8, the foreign ministry said on its website. Dai will hold talks with US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick in an effort to deepen an exchange of views on international and bilateral issues of common concern, the ministry said.

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17. Sino-Mongolian Relations

BBC News ("MONGOLIA IN COAL DEAL WITH CHINA", 2005-11-30) reported that Mongolia has agreed to develop its coal fields with the PRC, as its neighbour looks to feed a booming economy and rapacious appetite for energy. In return for its help, the PRC will get coal to burn in power plants, helping it tackle a power shortage that has led to blackouts and factory closures. The deal will allow Mongolia to exploit valuable natural resources and help it finance economic expansion.

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18. PRC on Hong Kong Political Reform

Agence France Presse ("HONG KONG OPPOSITION LAWMAKERS AGREE TO CHINA MEET", 2005-11-30) reported that Pro-democracy opposition lawmakers in Hong Kong have agreed to meet a PRC official in a landmark meeting viewed as an olive-branch effort by Beijing to cool a row over political reform here. Beijing has invited 19 pro-democracy lawmakers to meet senior parliamentarian Qiao Xiaoyang in the PRC on Friday.

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19. US on Hong Kong Political Reform

Agence France Presse ("HONG KONG POLITICAL FATE SHOULD BE DECIDED BY ITS PEOPLE: RICE ", 2005-11-30) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stressed that the political fate of Hong Kong should be decided by its people, as Beijing faced demands for greater freedom from democracy advocates in the former British colony. Rice made the point during talks at her office with Hong Kong's veteran democrat Martin Lee, who is pushing the PRC leadership for a timetable for full democracy in the freewheeling capitalist city.

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20. PRC Chemical Spill

The New York Times ("CHINA DECLARES CITY'S WATER SUPPLY FIT TO DRINK", 2005-11-30) reported that water drawn from the Songhua River to supply almost four million people in Harbin, in northern PRC, was fit to drink Tuesday, the state news media reported, almost a week after pumping was suspended because of a vast chemical spill. But the slick continued to threaten communities downstream. Authorities in Heilongjiang Province cut off supplies to communities downriver from Harbin in the path of the 50-mile-long slick of benzene compounds, according to the state media.

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21. PRC Judiciary

The New York Times ("A JUDGE TESTS CHINA'S COURTS, MAKING HISTORY", 2005-11-30) reported that faced with a conflict between national and provincial law, Judge Li Huijuan had declared the provincial law invalid. In doing so, she unwittingly made legal history, setting in motion a national debate about judicial independence in the PRC's closed political system. In many countries, including the US, a judge tossing out a lower-level law would scarcely merit attention. But

in the PRC, the government, not a court, is the final arbiter of law. What Judge Li had considered judicial common sense, provincial legislators considered a judicial revolt.

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22. PRC Property Rights

Reuters ("FORCED EVICTIONS RIFE AS CHINA EYES OLYMPICS - GROUP", 2005-11-30) reported that the PRC continues to forcibly evict people to make way for new buildings despite fears among its leaders that it could spark unrest, with 400,000 moved from Beijing Olympic venue sites, a rights group said on Tuesday. Handing China, Zimbabwe and the Indian state of Maharashtra its annual "housing rights violator awards", the Geneva-based Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) said the PRC government was sacrificing residents' rights for economic growth.

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II. CanKor

23. Report #228

CanKor ("CURRENT EVENTS ", 2005-11-30) The board of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) agrees to terminate construction of two nuclear power reactors in the DPRK. A final decision awaits examination of legal and financial matters. KEDO itself will continue to function, since proponents argue that the organization's experience in working with DPRK Korean officials could prove valuable in implementing any decisions reached at the Six-Party talks.

[\(return to top\)](#) CanKor ("OPINION", 2005-11-30) In this week's CanKor OPINION section, UK Member of the EU Parliament Glyn Ford contends that "defeat was snatched from the jaws of victory" during the first phase of the fifth round of Six-Party Talks. He blames sabotage by US neocons who forced US negotiators once again to play hardball. CanKor also includes the text of the Chairman's Statement read by Chinese delegation head Wu Dawei at the closing ceremony. [\(return to top\)](#) CanKor ("FOCUS: Human Rights, the United Nations and the DPRK", 2005-11-30) The CanKor FOCUS this week's examines "Human Rights, the United Nations and the DPRK," as the fallout spreads from a resolution passed by a divided UN General Assembly committee expressing "serious concern" about reports of human rights violations in the DPRK. Following the EU's introduction of the resolution, European NGOs operating in the DPRK have been ordered to wrap up their programming and leave the country by year's end. Only three NGOs according to the latest information obtained by CanKor (and contrary to the article in this issue) are to remain: Sweden's PMU Interlife, the Australian group Korea Maranatha Enterprise Development Ltd., and the Canadian organization Global Aid Network (misnamed as Global Action Network in the article). All three are faith-based organizations. A DPRK Foreign Ministry Statement reacting to the UN human rights resolution is reprinted in full. Oddly enough, while the EU resolution is debated at the UN General Assembly, a United Nations legal delegation visits Pyongyang -- invited by the DPRK -- in order to conduct a seminar on treaty law and practice (including obligations, termination and breaches of treaties), statelessness and refugee issues. On the UN delegation is the Senior Liaison Officer from the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a remarkable event that seems to have gone largely unnoticed in the major media. [\(return to top\)](#)

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