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I. NAPSnet

1. USFK on DPRK Nuclear Program

The Chosun Ilbo ("USFK CHIEF DESIGNATE WARNS OF N.KOREA MISSILES", 2005-10-26) reported that a US general says the DPRK is developing a ballistic missile capable of hitting the US. Gen. Burwell Bell, nominated to replace Gen. Leon LaPorte as head of the US Forces Korea, made the remark at a Senate confirmation hearing. General Bell said the DPRK's test in May demonstrated intent to continue missile development. With the world's fourth-largest military, he called the DPRK a serious threat to the peace and security not just to the Korean Peninsula but to the Asia Pacific region as a whole.

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2. Korean Reunification

The Korea Times ("CHUNG DENIES CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE FOR UNIFICATION ", 2005-1-25) reported that Unification Minister Chung Dong-young said Tuesday the government is not considering a revision of the Constitution in preparation for the possible unification of the two Koreas. Dismissing rumors concerning the possibility of holding the second inter-Korean summit early next year and inter-Korean discussions over the new Constitution for a unified Korea, Chung said, "I can clearly say that the government has not taken the issue into account." At an interpellation session at the National Assembly, Chung said he is also waiting for the day when the ROK and the DPRK could discuss the issue, but the constitutional revision should be mutually and seriously discussed through an inter-Korean body, when the reconciliation mood on the peninsula is ripe enough to deal with the issue.

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3. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

The Korea Times ("NK ESSENTIAL FOR BUILDING NORTHERN ECONOMY", 2005-10-26) reported that a top Unification Ministry official said Wednesday that it is time to look at ways of linking the Korean Peninsula to the continent by opening the era of the "Northern economy." To open the era, three kinds of networks including physical distribution, energy and communications must be set up to link the Korean Peninsula with the continent, Rhee Bong-jo, vice minister of unification said. He stressed that it is time for the concept of economic community on the peninsula, which pertains to the peace mechanism of the region. "In the process of building the economic community, military tensions will ease," he said.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap News ("S. KOREAN MINISTER VISITS KAESONG INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX IN N. KOREA ", 2005-10-26) reported that the RO Korea's trade minister visited the DPRK on Wednesday to inspect a joint industrial complex there, one of the primary issues discussed in the

ROK's free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations with its trade partners, the ministry said Wednesday. Kim Hyun-chong met with officials from the Kaesong industrial park during his visit and had lunch with representatives of companies involved in it. [\(return to top\)](#)

4. Inter-Korean Tourism

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA ALLOWS 1,600 S. KOREAN STUDENTS TO VISIT MT. GEUMGANG", 2005-10-26) reported that the DPRK allowed an unprecedented number of RO Korean university students to visit its scenic mountain of Geumgang on Wednesday, a pro-reunification civic group said. "Some 1,600 students attending 12 universities and colleges across the country will visit Mount Geumgang in two groups in October and November for pro-reunification events that we are hosting," the organization, Jiudau, said. The trip was arranged by Hyundai's inter-Korean business arm, Hyundai Asan.

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5. Red Cross Reunion Centre in DPRK

Chosun Ilbo ("RED CROSS CHIEF HINTS AT N.KOREA HOMECOMINGS", 2005-10-26) reported that a reunion center for families separated by the Korean War in the DPRK's Mt.Kumgang will house Red Cross officials from both sides who could facilitate visits from ROK citizens to their hometowns in the DPRK, a long-cherished dream for many. The ROK Red Cross President Han Wansang told the Chosun Ilbo on Wednesday that once the site is completed, Red Cross officials housed there will oversee correspondence between families, find out if family members are alive, and preside over homecomings. "The meeting site will serve as a peace center rather just a block of building," Han said.

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6. DPRK-US Relations

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA CALLS FOR CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES BY U.S.", 2005-10-26) reported that the DPRK on Wednesday urged the US to take practical measures to build confidence between the two countries if it wants to resolve the dispute over its nuclear program. "If the U.S. actually recognizes the DPRK as a sovereign nation and has no intention to invade it, there is no reason that it cannot take an action to build confidence (between the two parties)," the Rodong Sinmun said in a commentary.

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7. DPRK-Japanese Bilateral Talks

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN, NKOREA TO RESUME TALKS ON NOVEMBER 3 IN BEIJING :FM", 2005-10-26) reported that Japan and the DPRK will resume bilateral talks on November 3 in Beijing following a one-year suspension, Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura said. "Japan and North Korea will hold bilateral talks on November 3 in Beijing," Machimura told a news conference Wednesday.

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8. DPRK Human Rights

Chosun Ilbo ("UN DRAFT DEMANDS URGENT RIGHTS REFORM IN N.KOREA", 2005-10-26) reported that a resolution to be submitted to the UN General Assembly by the 25 member states of the EU demands urgent reforms to the way the DPRK treats its own people. The draft resolution, exclusively obtained by the Chosun Ilbo, expressed serious concern about the DPRK's rejection of UN humanitarian deliveries from the end of the year and urges the DPRK to give humanitarian groups full access to the country so they can monitor much-needed aid. The draft calls for an end to human rights violations such as torture and illegal detention, singling out the brutal treatment of defectors who are caught or repatriated.

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9. DPRK Defectors

Joongang Ilbo ("IN MEXICO, NORTHERNER PLANS TO SETTLE IN U.S. ", 2005-10-26) reported that the 46-year-old DPR Korean who escaped from the DPRK into the PRC and then to Mexico, said he planned either to apply for refugee status at an American consulate or cross the border illegally. If the man decides to apply for asylum, his would be the first such application since the passage of US legislation intended to ease the way for DPR Koreans seeking it.

[\(return to top\)](#) Donga Ilbo ("REPORT: NO NORTH KOREAN GRANTED REFUGEE STATUS BY U.S. IN 2004 ", 2005-10-25) reported that according to a report submitted to the US Congress last week, the US Department of State and US Department of Homeland Security said that some states are against the US policy of granting DPR Korean defectors refugee status. According to a Donga Ilbo report, the US has reviewed 13 DPRK applications for refugee status since 2004, but none were approved. This report explains that some states are opposed to granting DPRK defectors entry because they feel that once some are allowed in, many others will follow for economic reasons. The report also mentioned that if DPRK defectors are granted refugee status under the DPRK Human Rights Law, it could cause political unrest in their country, and could break the subtle political balance in Northeast Asia. [\(return to top\)](#)

10. DPRK Aid

Yonhap News Agency ("CHINA PROVIDES 10,000 TONS OF HEAVY OIL AS AID TO N. KOREA ", 2005-10-26) reported that according to a PRC shipping company, the PRC recently supplied 10,000 tons of heavy fuel oil to the DPRK to mark the 60th anniversary of the foundation of the North's ruling Workers' Party. PRC oil aid was revealed after the company said that the DPRK embassy in Beijing had sent a letter of thanks to the company for successfully delivering the PRC heavy fuel oil to the DPRK.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap News ("S. KOREAN CHARITY DONATES CATTLE TO N. KOREA ", 2005-1-26) reported that a ROK civic organization said Wednesday it has delivered 34 head of cattle as humanitarian aid to the DPRK. A ship carrying 30 dairy cows and four oxen left Incheon port Wednesday for the DPR Korean port of Nampo Wednesday morning, Good Neighbors Inc. said. [\(return to top\)](#)

11. DPRK Food Production

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA HOPES FOR HUGELY IMPROVED HARVEST", 2005-10-26) reported that

DPRK officials predict the country's crop yields this year will increase some 500,000 tons from last year to 4.8 million tons, a weekly newspaper for ethnic Koreans in the PRC reported Wednesday. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization in its latest report also estimates that the North's crop yields would grow some 400,000 tons from last year thanks to the first rich harvest in almost a decade. The Hei Lo Jiang News said officials told its publisher when he visited Pyongyang in September they expected the first good harvest in several years. But even with crop yields of 4.8 million tons and 500,000 tons in aid from the ROK and 150,000 tons from Japan, the DPRK will fall far short of requirement, which the National Intelligence Service estimates at 6.45 million tons.

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12. USFJ Base Realignment

The New York Times ("U.S. AND JAPAN AGREE ON PLAN TO RELOCATE OKINAWA AIR BASE", 2005-10-26) reported that the US and Japan agreed on a plan today to relocate a major American air base on the southern island of Okinawa, removing the biggest obstacle to talks on the redeployment of American troops across the country. According to the plan, the Futenma Marine Corps air base, located in the city of Ginowan, will move to an existing US base, Camp Schwab, in a less-populated area of the main Okinawa Island.

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13. Japan Afghanistan Support Mission

Reuters ("JAPAN EXTENDS AFGHANISTAN NAVAL SUPPORT MISSION ", 2005-10-26) reported that Japan's parliament on Wednesday voted to extend for another year a naval mission on the Indian Ocean that provides rearguard support for US-led military operations in Afghanistan. Parliament's upper house voted to extend the law another year, following a vote by the more powerful lower house earlier this month.

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14. Japan on Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPAN LAWMAKERS CALL FOR ALTERNATIVE TO YASUKUNI SHRINE ", 2005-1-26) reported that members of Japan's ruling coalition and the main opposition party are seeking to secure government funding for the establishment of a secular war memorial. Lawmakers have agreed to set up a parliamentary group to persuade the government to earmark funds in the fiscal 2006 budget for research into building a new memorial.

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15. ROK Elections

The Korea Times ("GNP SWEEPS BY-ELECTIONS", 2005-10-26) reported that the largest opposition Grand National Party (GNP) swept all four National Assembly seats up for grabs in Wednesday's by-elections. The ruling Uri Party failed to win a single seat, repeating the crushing defeat of April's by-elections, in which it lost all six seats up for grabs.

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16. Sino-Russian Trade Relations

Interfax ("RUSSIA-CHINA TRADE COULD EXCEED \$28BLN - LEADERS", 2005-10-26) reported that a meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin with PRC State Council Premier Wen Jiabao on Wednesday focused on the fact that bilateral trade turnover may exceed \$28 billion this year. "I hope this happens. Moreover, there are all of the opportunities for this. These opportunities were created by long-term Russian-Chinese relations," Putin said.

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17. Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The Christian Science Monitor ("RUSSIA, CHINA LOOKING TO FORM 'NATO OF THE EAST'?", 2005-10-26) reported that Russia and the PRC could take a step closer to forming a Eurasian military confederacy to rival NATO at a Moscow meeting of the six-member Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Wednesday, experts say. One initiative that core members Russia and the PRC agree on, experts say, is to squeeze US influence - which peaked after 9/11 - out of the SCO's neighborhood.

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18. US and Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("US APPROVES \$280 MLN MISSILE SALE TO TAIWAN", 2005-10-26) reported that the US Defense Department on Wednesday notified Congress that it had approved the sale to Taiwan of 10 AIM-9M Sidewinder missiles and 5 AIM-7M Sparrow missiles -- both built by Raytheon Co. The proposed sale, valued at \$280 million if all options are exercised, also included continuation of a pilot training program and logistics support for F-16 aircraft, as well as associated equipment and services.

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19. PRC-Singapore Relations

Xinhua ("CHINA, SINGAPORE SEEKING BETTER POLITICAL TIES", 2005-10-26) reported that Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's high-profile visit to the PRC demonstrates the two countries are seeking political ties commensurate with their close economic relationship. In his first official visit to the PRC since taking office, Lee has met with four PRC leaders since his arrival in Beijing Monday, including President Hu Jintao, top lawmaker Wu Bangguo, Premier Wen Jiabao and top political advisor Jia Qinglin.

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20. PRC Bird Flu Outbreak

Interfax-China ("CHINA CONFIRMS NEW BIRD FLU OUTBREAK IN HUNAN, HONG KONG BLOCKING IMPORTS", 2005-10-26) reported that the PRC government has confirmed another outbreak of bird flu, the third outbreak in a week in the country, in the southeastern Hunan Province and in reaction the Hong Kong government is blocking imports of poultry products from the region.

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21. PRC Executions

Agence France Presse ("CHINA PLEDGES TO CUT NUMBER OF EXECUTIONS ", 2005-10-26) reported that the PRC has pledged to cut the number of people it executes as the Supreme Court initiated reforms that will return the review of death sentences to the nation's highest court. "Although China still has the death penalty to punish severe criminals, we will try to execute less people to avoid any unjust cases," Chief Justice Xiao Yang told the National People's Congress, the PRC's parliament.

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22. PRC Energy Use

Xinhua ("CHINA TO REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION PER UNIT BY 4.4 PERCENT ANNUALLY ", 2005-10-26) reported that the PRC determined to reduce energy consumption per GDP (gross domestic product) unit in the 11th Five-Year (2006-2010) program period, which will be the first time the PRC let investment index enter its statistical system. "This means energy consumption per unit should be reduced by 4.4 percent annually in the next five years," said Yang Weimin, official with State Development and Reform Commission, at an exclusive interview with Xinhua.

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23. US on Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator Project

The Associated Press ("U.S. DROPS PLAN FOR NUCLEAR BUNKER-BUSTER ", 2005-10-26) reported that the Bush administration is abandoning its push to develop a "bunker-buster" nuclear warhead and instead will pursue a conventional weapon that can penetrate hardened underground targets. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said that lawmakers had agreed drop funding for the proposed nuclear bunker-buster from the Energy Department's budget for the 12 months beginning Oct 1. He said the Energy Department had requested the move because it no longer planned to pursue a nuclear bunker-buster.

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