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I. United States

1. DPRK on Nuclear Talks

United Press International ("NORTH KOREA CITES FRESH REASON NOT TO TALK", 2004-10-06) reported that the DPRK is threatening to stiff six-nation talks on its nuclear ambitions because the US Senate passed a North Korean human rights act. The act has deprived the DPRK of "any justification to deal with the United States, to say nothing of the reason for holding the six-party talks for settling the nuclear issue," a North Korean official said.

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2. DPRK on US Elections

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH OFFERS A DIM VIEW OF KERRY", 2004-10-06) reported that a senior DPRK diplomat said even if John Kerry, the Democratic candidate for the US presidency, wins the election next month, the DPRK will not sit down for bilateral talks with the US, unless Washington ends hostile policies aimed the DPRK. Han Song-ryol, deputy chief of the DPRK's UN mission, said Tuesday that "the United States' real intention is to overthrow North Korea. We cannot talk with the United States, whether it is six-nation talks or a bilateral dialogue."

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3. DPRK Chemical Imports

Donga Ilbo ("N. KOREAN USE OF INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS AS WEAPONRY: IMPOSSIBLE TO DETECT ", 2004-10-06) reported that a recent report carefully announced that the DPRK could possibly use "toxic industrial chemicals (TIC)," chemicals easily obtained by any nation, as a military weapon, and it would be impossible to detect such weaponry with military equipment. Doctor Bruce Benet of the US RAND research center contributed information on this subject in the 2004 Fall

edition of the Korean Institute of Defense Analysis's (KIDA) English magazine: the Korean Defense Analysis Journal. Here, Benet stresses the fact that "TIC chemicals such as chlorine, phosgene, and ammonia can be used for chemical weaponry, and these chemicals are not detectable by the military's chemical-biological-radiological (CBR) equipment. Also, gas masks or protective clothing will not be able to protect soldiers."

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4. DPRK Cyberattacks

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA CLAIMS NORTH HAS 600 COMPUTER HACKERS", 2004-10-06) reported that the DPRK is believed to have trained up to 600 computer hackers to launch cyberattacks against countries such as the US and the ROK, according to the ROK's Defense Ministry. Computers are a rarity and Internet access is almost nonexistent for most people in the impoverished DPRK, but the Defense Ministry said in a report submitted to the National Assembly's national defense committee that it believes the DPRK's intelligence warfare capabilities have already reached the level of those in advanced countries.

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5. IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The Associated Press ("OFFICIAL: N. KOREA NUCLEAR TALKS TOO SLOW", 2004-10-06) reported that the international community is losing patience over the slow-moving six-nation talks on DPRK's nuclear weapons program, and the UN Security Council should act on the matter, the UN nuclear chief said Wednesday. Mohamed ElBaradei, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said a passive response by the Security Council could set "the worst precedent of all." He did not specify what measures should be taken.

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6. IAEA on ROK Nuclear Experiment

Chosun Ilbo ("SOUTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR ISSUE NOT LIKE NORTH'S", 2004-10-06) reported that International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Mohamed ElBaradei said Wednesday that the ROK's past nuclear experiments are not comparable to the DPRK's current nuclear program because the former were part of laboratory studies, while the latter is part of fully operational nuclear reprocessing facilities. He made this remark while responding to a question comparing nuclear programs in the ROK with those in the DPRK. He added that the IAEA has not discovered any attempts by the ROK government to hide anything since the energy agency started its inspection.

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7. DPRK on ROK Nuclear Experiment

Xinhua ("TALKS ON DENUCLEARIZATION SHOULD START FROM S.KOREA: DPRK ", 2004-10-06) reported that multilateral talks on a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula should begin with the ROK nuclear issue, a spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the DPRK said Wednesday. The spokesman said the nuclear experiments are an overt confrontation to the aim of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

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8. ROK on DPRK at ASEM

Korea Times ("SEOUL SEEKS TO ADDRESS NK ISSUE AT ASEM", 2004-10-06) reported that the ROK is petitioning nations participating in the 5th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) starting here Oct. 8 to voice their support for resolving the continuing standoff over the DPRK's nuclear weapons programs. "We are pushing to have the Senior Officials Meeting adopt an article concerning security on the Korean peninsula in the chair's statement at the end of the ASEM session," Chung Woo-sung, presidential secretary for foreign policy, told The Korea Times.

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9. Japan on DPRK Food Aid

Kyodo News ("JAPAN TO SEND TEAMS TO N. KOREA TO MONITOR FOOD AID IN OCT., NOV.", 2004-10-06) reported that Japan will send two teams to the DPRK in October and November as part of an international monitoring mission to check whether food aid and other humanitarian relief goods are reaching their intended recipients, government sources said Wednesday. There have also been calls within the Cabinet for the government be more assertive in monitoring food aid to Pyongyang. Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Shoichi Nakagawa has said, "Monitoring should be carried out."

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10. Japan on DPRK Sanctions

Kyodo News ("JAPAN LDP TEAM TO CONSIDER SANCTIONS ON N KOREA", 2004-10-06) reported that a panel of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party decided Wednesday to appoint a team to consider whether to impose economic sanctions on the DPRK, Kyodo News agency reported. The decision came at a meeting of the LDP panel dealing with the issue of Japanese citizens abducted by DPRK in the past. The panel is headed by hard-liner Shinzo Abe, the party's acting secretary general.

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11. ROK on Sino-DPRK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA COULD GET DRAWN INTO WAR ON KOREAN PENINSULA", 2004-10-06) reported that the ROK's military authorities said yesterday they expected that the PRC would be drawn inevitably into any war on the Korean peninsula because of a mutual assistance treaty with the DPRK. The PRC would deploy some 400,000 troops in support of North Korea in case of war with the ROK, which would be backed by its ally the US, according to JCS data provided to the hearing.

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12. Inter - Korean Military Relations

Yonhap ("TWO KOREAS TO RESUME STALLED MILITARY TALKS ", 2004-10-06) reported that the ROK and DPRK will resume military talks this week after about three months of hiatus, the Defense Ministry said Tuesday. The working-level meeting will take place on Thursday for discussions on cross-border passages via the inter-Korean rail and road links now under construction, ministry

officials said.

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13. Inter - Korean Relations

Yonhap ("EX-PRESIDENT HINTS AT N.K. VISIT TO EASE STRAINED TIES; KYUNGHYANG", 2004-10-06) reported that Former President Kim Dae-jung said Wednesday he would like to do something indirectly to help ease the strained inter-Korean relationship, hinting at the possibility of going to the DPRK to broker inter-Korean rapprochement. "I think I should play a supporting role and keep a low profile, although I may have to go (to the DPRK)," Kim said in an interview with Kyunghyang Shinmun.

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14. DPRK Defectors in the ROK

Yonhap ("EIGHT OUT OF 10 N. KOREAN DEFECTORS LIVE IN POVERTY: LAWMAKER", 2004-1-06) reported that eight out of ten DPRK defectors in Seoul live below the poverty line and receive government subsidies, an opposition lawmaker said, quoting the Seoul City government as saying. Of about 1,800 defectors residing in the ROK capital as of June, 1,400 or 77.5 percent depend on state handouts to keep their heads above water, Rep. Park Chan-sook said.

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15. DPRK Defectors

Kyodo News ("N. KOREAN DEFECTORS IN CHINA LIKELY TO LEAVE JAPAN EMBASSY IN GROUPS", 2004-10-06) reported that Japan has started to make arrangements with the PRC to have 24 apparent DPRK asylum seekers who have been in the Japanese Embassy in Beijing since September leave for the ROK in small groups later this year, Japanese Foreign Ministry sources said Tuesday. The plan is motivated by concern that if the DPRK defectors are allowed to leave the PRC together and early it could encourage other potential DPRK defectors to come to Japanese facilities overseas, the sources said.

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16. US Missile Defense

Associated Press ("US OFFICIAL: MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM WORKING IN WKS-REPORT", 200-10-06) reported that a senior US diplomat said Wednesday that the US missile defense system could become operational within weeks, helping counter threats posed by nations such as Iran, the Interfax news agency reported. After years of vociferous protests, Russia reacted calmly to the deployment of the US missile shield - the subdued response reflecting warmer US-Russian ties, bolstered by Russian President Vladimir Putin's support for the US-led war against terror. The DPRK, which US intelligence officials believe has an untested intercontinental ballistic missile, has been regarded by the US administration as the most immediate threat.

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17. Jenkins Case

Reuters ("ACCUSED U.S. DESERTER CASE MAY BE NEARING END-MEDIA", 2004-10-06) reported that US Army Sergeant Charles Robert Jenkins, accused of deserting to DPRK four decades ago, appears to have struck a plea bargain deal with US authorities, the Far Eastern Economic Review said on Wednesday. Quoting unidentified sources familiar with the case, the Far Eastern Economic Review, in an article to appear in the Thursday edition, said charges against Jenkins had been formally referred last month after a pre-trial hearing was bypassed.

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18. Japan on US Troop Realignment

Washington Post ("JAPAN PLANS TO PRESS U.S. ON TROOPS FOREIGN MINISTER SEEKING REDUCTION OF 'BURDEN' ON OKINAWA", 2004-10-06) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura said Tuesday he would press his country's case in Washington this week for reducing what he called "the excessive burden" placed on Okinawa by the presence of US troops. But he said he would urge the Americans to leave adequate forces in Japan to promote security in the region. "The US is trying to rationally realign its military to respond to the new era," Machimura said in an interview. "As for Japan, we are requesting that the US retain its role of maintaining the security and peace of Japan, the Far East and its surrounding areas."

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19. ROK on US Troop Realignment

The Washington Post ("U.S. TO SLOW PULLOUT OF TROOPS FROM S. KOREA", 2004-10-06) reported that the US has agreed to withdraw 12,500 troops from the ROK over several years rather than pulling them all out by the end of next year, as was initially planned, the Pentagon and ROK officials said Wednesday. However, ROK officials, whose military was scheduled to pick up the slack, complained that the massive withdrawal was being planned too quickly and that they needed more time to take over the missions now run by US forces. They also said a rapid withdrawal could generate a "security gap" with the DPRK.

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20. ROK National Security Law

Chosun Ilbo ("RULING PARTY TAKES LEGAL CHALLENGE TO OPPOSITION", 2004-10-06) reported that the ruling Uri Party is on the offensive over the Grand National Party's release of confidential documents during the parliamentary audit and conservative groups' opposition to the abolition of the National Security Law. The Uri Party announced during an executive meeting at the National Assembly Wednesday that it will file a complaint against GNP lawmaker Park Jin and Chung Moon-hun to the parliamentary ethics committee and, if necessary, will take the case to court, saying that the two lawmakers' release of confidential documents during the audit constitutes a leak of military secrets.

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21. ROK - Indian Relations

Reuters ("ROH CALLS FOR DEEPENING INDIA-S.KOREA TRADE TIES", 2004-10-06) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun called on Tuesday for deepening trade and business ties with India, saying the possibilities for cooperation between two of Asia's fastest growing economies were boundless. "Over the years, bilateral trade soared nearly 280 times and Korea's investments in India have been steadily on the rise, totaling \$1.4 billion at the end of last year," Roh told a meeting of businessmen from the two countries. "The possibilities for cooperation remain boundless, especially in light of the potential and complementary character of our two economies."

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22. Japan Iraq Dispatch

The New York ("JAPAN'S TROOPS PROCEED IN IRAQ WITHOUT SHOT FIRED", 2004-10-06) reported that seven months into Japan's first mission since the end of World War II into a country with active fighting, its ground troops have succeeded in not firing a single shot. Though of little military significance, Japan's small contingent of about 550 troops has provided the Bush administration with diplomatic support and laid the groundwork for Japan's own transformation.

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23. Japan Whaling Ban

Reuters ("JAPAN MORE CONFIDENT ON CITES WHALE VOTE", 2004-10-06) reported that Japan is confident it can secure the votes needed to resume commercial trade in whale products and that this would be a step toward lifting a ban on hunting the marine giants, a Japanese official said Wednesday. "It's difficult, but this time we are confident that we have more support than we had at previous meetings," said Joji Morishita, deputy director of the international affairs division of Japan's Fisheries Agency.

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24. Japan Earthquake

Reuters ("STRONG QUAKE, 5.8 ON RICHTER, JOLTS TOKYO", 2004-10-06) reported that a strong earthquake measuring 5.8 on the Richter scale jolted eastern Japan including Tokyo on Wednesday evening, but there was no danger of tsunami tidal waves, the Meteorological Agency said. The epicenter of the quake was about 40 miles below the earth's surface in Ibaraki northeast of Tokyo, the agency added. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage and Kyodo news agency quoted the Tokyo fire department as saying that there was no damage or injuries in the nation's capital.

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25. Mongolian Archeology Find

The Associated Press ("REMAINS OF GENGHIS KHAN PALACE UNEARTHED", 2004-10-06) reported that archaeologists have unearthed the site of Genghis Khan's palace and believe the long-sought grave of the 13th century Mongolian warrior is somewhere nearby, the head of the

excavation team said Wednesday. A Japanese and Mongolian research team found the complex on a grassy steppe 150 miles east of the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator, said Shinpei Kato, professor emeritus at Tokyo's Kokugakuin University.

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26. Sino - Japanese Relations

Kyodo News ("CHINA POSITIVELY CONSIDERING HU-KOIZUMI SUMMIT IN NOV.: ENVOY", 2004-10-06) reported that the PRC's envoy to Japan told the New Komeito party leader on Wednesday that Beijing is positively considering realizing a bilateral summit on the sidelines of an international meeting in Chile in November, party lawmakers said. "There was a strong request by the Japanese Foreign Ministry and China also places importance on it. We would like it to be a meeting to build a strong foundation for China-Japan relations," PRC Ambassador to Japan Wang Yi was quoted by the lawmakers as telling New Komeito leader Takenori Kanzaki at a meeting in Tokyo.

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27. Hong Kong Elections

Reuters ("NEW HONG KONG LEGISLATURE SWORN IN", 2004-10-06) reported that Hong Kong's newly elected lawmakers took the oath of office on Wednesday and, with nearly half of them pro-democracy politicians, the city's Beijing-backed leader could expect a few headaches ahead. Although pro-Beijing legislators managed to keep a majority of the 60 seats in last month's elections, pro-democracy lawmakers boosted their number from 22 to 25. Faced with an increasingly demanding and politically aware electorate, pro-Beijing and normally government-friendly politicians will be under greater pressure to side with populist demands against Tung's unpopular government.

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28. US on Hong Kong Elections

Agence France-Presse ("HONG KONG REJECTS US CRITICISM OF CHINA'S ROLE IN CITY", 2004-10-06) reported that Hong Kong rejected a US Congressional report that poured scorn on PRC for backsliding on promises of autonomy in the former British colony. The Congressional-Executive Commission on China report described as troubling Beijing's efforts to stymie democratic reform in the city, a semi-autonomous territory since 1997. Hong Kong's government in a statement said political development was progressing in accordance with the Basic Law mini-constitution introduced at the handover.

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29. PRC on One Child Policy

Reuters ("GROUP: OPPONENT OF CHINA'S ONE-CHILD RULE ABUSED", 2004-10-06) reported that a PRC woman who waged a 15-year campaign against the PRC's one-child policy has suffered torture in custody because of her protests, a rights group said. Mao Hengfeng was dismissed in 1988 from her job at a Shanghai soap factory after becoming pregnant a second time in violation of national population control measures, New York-based Human Rights in the PRC said in a statement seen on Wednesday. Because she had refused to give up her petitioning since then, the Shanghai public security bureau sentenced her in April to 18 months in a labor camp, it said.

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30. PRC AIDS Issue

United Press International ("CHINA RANKS AIDS AS MAJOR PRIORITY", 2004-10-06) reported that the PRC's fight against AIDS was highlighted in a state media editorial Wednesday, part of a new policy to "exercise power in the interest of the people." Xinhua said the PRC is now taking up the growing challenge posed by HIV/AIDS. It stated peasants and the urban poor are "the most vulnerable of all the vulnerable groups" in the country.

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31. PRC Energy

Reuters ("CHINA'S DEPENDENCE ON DANGEROUS COAL KEEPS GROWING", 2004-10-06) reported that the fate of the sleepy mining town of Sandaoling -- and of the entire country and its booming economy -- is tied to coal. "The economic development is going to be extremely significant," said Graham Wailes of AME Mineral Economics based in Sydney. "It is going to need large loads of energy." In the PRC, that means large loads of coal. The country is already the world's top producer of coal and is expected to pull 1.9 billion tons from the ground this year, up 10 percent from last year. In 2010, it aims to raise that to 2.2 billion tons.

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32. PRC Music

Agence France-Presse ("CHINESE ROCK 'STILL HELD BACK BY CONSERVATIVE PUBLIC, GOVERNMENT'", 2004-10-06) reported that with his head shaven in a mohican and wearing trendy blue-tinted sunglasses, Zhang Hui is not the kind of young man you would bump into on the street in the PRC. The 20-year-old student was screaming and bouncing like the rest of the crowd at a four-day rock festival in a Beijing park over the weekend. "This is my way of letting off steam," Zhang said. "I feel so repressed -- there are just too many restrictions in our society. Most people can't accept our music, they are still bound by a very traditional culture," the student at a contemporary music college said. Although Western-inspired music like rock and roll is now enjoying unprecedented freedom in the PRC, rock fans say the lack of acceptance by a largely conservative society and a reluctant government is still limiting its development.

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33. US Bases in Okinawa

The Asahi Shimbun ("DEEP DIVIDE OVER U.S. AIR BASE PLAGUES COMMUNITY", 2004-09-27) reported that as surveying began in early September for an offshore US military air base in Nago, Okinawa, residents remain split years after city officials accepted the controversial plan. It was in 1996 that Henoko, a district in the city of Nago, emerged as a possible site for the relocation of the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Ginowan, Okinawa. Eight years on, Nago residents say the controversy over the plan remains deeply rooted: Those in favor hoped it would bring more business, while those opposed cited the risk of accidents and harm to the environment.

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34. Japan UNSC Bid

Kyodo News ("KAWAGUCHI WOOS AFRICA OVER SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT", 2004-09-26) reported that the UN Security Council should be more representative of African member states and should have a permanent African representation, Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said on Sep. 24. Kawaguchi made the remarks at a luncheon on the sidelines of the 59th UN General Assembly, a Japanese official said. Japan, which is bidding for a permanent seat on the Security Council, hosted the luncheon in an apparent move to win support from African nations.

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35. PRC on Anti-Japan Sentiment

Kyodo News ("CHINA HARDENS STANCE ON JAPAN PROTESTS", 2004-09-24) reported that after softening its stance on public protests targeting Japan over the past year, Beijing is once again cracking down on demonstrations. PRC authorities have scuttled a number of protests against Japan and limited the scale of others, after the Japanese Embassy protested the burning of the Japanese flag during four days of demonstrations in late March over the detention in Okinawa of seven Chinese for landing on the disputed Senkaku Islands. A Japanese Embassy spokesman said Japan did not ask the PRC to stop anti-Japanese expression by PRC citizens. He also could not say whether the embassy felt the recent curbs had improved bilateral relations.

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36. US Forces Realignment

The Associated Press ("U.S. MILITARY REALIGNMENT UNLIKELY TO AFFECT 7TH FLEET", 2004-09-24) reported that despite a global realignment of US troops, Vice Adm. Jonathan Greenert expects little change for the Japan-based 7th Fleet, the largest fleet in the navy and the only one that has its home port outside the US. In his first interview since taking command last month, Greenert said he believes the fleet will be little affected by the sweeping rethink of the deployment of American forces worldwide that has been initiated under US President George W. Bush. Greenert said that, if anything, the role of the fleet is expanding.

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