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United States

1. US Bolton on the DPRK

US under secretary of state for arms control and international security al John Bolton once branded "human scum" and a "bloodsucker" by the DPRK, has vowed that the DPRK would win no reward for "blackmail and bad behavior" during a nuclear crisis. Bolton also warned that Kim JoJng Il's regime had chemical and biological agents it could deploy in the event of a war on the Korean peninsula.

"US Bolton on the DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, 2003, US)

2. US Rumsfeld ROK, Japan Visit

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld announced he will travel this week to Japan and the ROK for talks on security in the region, including US plans to reconfigure its forces on the tense Korean peninsula. "Our goal is to reinforce deterrence and to reposition the alliance for the period ahead," he told reporters at the Foreign Press Center here. He said any reduction in US forces on the peninsula would be more than matched by an increase in military capabilities. The trip is Rumsfeld's first to east Asia since he assumed office in 2001.

"US Rumsfeld ROK, Japan Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

3. CIA on PRC-Pakistan Nuclear Links

The CIA says in a new report that it cannot rule out links between PRC firms and Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, despite Beijing's assurances that it will provide no such help. The Central Intelligence Agency also cautions that PRC entities continued to work with Pakistan and Iran on ballistic-missile-related projects during the first six months of this year. Despite a warming of relations in recent years, the US and the PRC frequently find themselves at odds over proliferation. Washington has slapped sanctions on a long list of PRC firms accused of links to nations including Pakistan, the DPRK and Iran.

"CIA on PRC-Pakistan Nuclear Links" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

4. CIA on DPRK Missile Capabilities

The CIA is sounding a new alarm that the DPRK may be ready to flight test a nuclear capable multi-stage missile capable of reaching parts of the US. The assessment in an unclassified report to Congress gels with another recent analysis of Pyongyang's missile programs by the Defense Intelligence Agency, made public last week. The agency said in previous reports that in a regular two-stage set up, the Taepo Dong-2 could deliver a payload of several hundred kilograms to Alaska, Hawaii and parts of the continental US. In an adapted three-stage configuration, the Taepo Dong-2 could in theory ferry a warhead to anywhere in North America. The DPRK has said it will stick to its missile moratorium until the end of this year, but yet to commit to extending it into next year.

"CIA on DPRK Missile Capabilities" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

"CIA on DPRK Nuclear Development" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

"DPRK Has One of Two Nukes After Conducting High Explosive Tests" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, ROK)

Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Nuclear Offer

The DPRK is willing to give up its nuclear weapons program and stop testing and exporting missiles, subject to certain guarantees, The Washington Times reported, quoting diplomats from the DPRK. Pyongyang expected written security guarantees and compensation for economic losses incurred by closing two nuclear power plants, the two diplomats told the daily in Geneva during an interview. Identified as Kim Yong-ho and Kim Song-sol, the envoys said the US would also have to pledge not to affect the DPRK's economic development, especially its dealings with Japan and the ROK.

"DPRK Nuclear Offer" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

"DPRK on Nuke Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, PRC)

2. DPRK-US KEDO Relations

The DPRK said Tuesday it will seize equipment for two nuclear power plants being built in the country, until the US pays a "penalty" for its decision to stop their construction. Last week, the US, the ROK, Japan and the European Union tentatively decided to suspend work at Kumho, a remote northeastern coastal village where they have been building two light-water reactors to generate badly needed electricity for the DPRK. They say that halting the \$4.6 billion project is inevitable because the DPRK has violated a 1994 agreement by secretly building nuclear weapons.

"DPRK-US KEDO Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

3. DPRK-ROK Military Talks

Working-level military officials of the two Koreas met Friday at the truce village of Panmunjom to discuss the operation of guard posts in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) dividing the Korean Peninsula. Col Moon Sung-mook of the South and his DPRK counterpart Ryu Yong-chol opened the talks between the two three-member delegations at 10 a.m., officials said. Details of the meeting were not immediately available. The South proposed the talks on 8 November and the North accepted the offer on Wednesday.

"DPRK-ROK Military Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

4. ROK on Iraq Troop Dispatch

ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun is to convene a meeting of his top security advisors, officials said, as the ROK agonizes over a US request for thousands of troops for Iraq. Roh said last month that he was ready to comply with the US request but opposition has grown more vocal as fighting intensifies and the death toll rises in Iraq. Roh and his National Security Council will meet Tuesday, his security advisor Ra Jong-Yil said. The troop dispatch will be discussed when US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visits Seoul for security talks next week. "ROK on Iraq Troop Dispatch" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

5. ROK Hyundai DPRK Visit

The ROK's Hyundai Asan Co. said today it has sent a delegation to Pyongyang to discuss with the DPRK ways to further various economic cooperation projects agreed upon since the inter-Korean summit in June 2000. "A 12-member group led by our president Kim Yoon-kyu left for Beijing in the morning to enter Pyongyang Tuesday," a Hyundai official said. Hyundai Asan's main projects, which are underway, include building an industrial complex in the DPRK, expanding inter-Korean tour projects and reconnecting cross-frontier railways, roads and communication lines. The delegation will discuss issues of mutual interest with the DPRK before coming back to Seoul Saturday, the official said.

"ROK Hyundai DPRK Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

6. ROK-DPRK Kaesong Trade Office

The ROK and the DPRK agreed on Friday to set up a joint office in the DPRK's border city of Kaesong next year to expand inter-Korean direct trade, ROK officials said. But the two sides decided not to include the DPRK's demand for electricity assistance from the ROK in a joint agreement expected to be announced after midnight. Cho Myoung-gyun, a spokesman for the ROK delegation said the ROK and the DPRK neared an agreement to begin construction of an industrial park in the DPRK city early next year. The two sides also came closer to other economic cooperation projects, including mutual visits to the construction sites of inter-Korean railways and roads.

"ROK-DPRK Kaesong Trade Office" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

"ROK Will Have Trade Liaison Office To Aid" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, ROK)

7. DPRK Domestic Economy

The DPRK government is moving to merge the nation's insolvent banks. Sources said the effort is intended to expand the function of the market and push financial reform. The DPRK government established Kyongyong Credit Bank, which was capitalized at 12 million euro (\$14 million) on Jan. 15. A source in Dandong, PRC, said the new bank covers foreign currency operations, issuance of letters of credit, loans and deposits and facilitates bank mergers. The source said Kyongyong presided at the marriage of Korea Joint Venture Bank and Sintak Eunhaeng, an investment trust bank. Korea Joint Venture Bank, the DPRK's first private bank, was established in 1989.

"DPRK Domestic Economy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

8. US Experts Speculate on Post-Kim DPRK

US intelligence agencies say the government of Kim Jong Il appears unlikely to crumble from within, though they differed on who would succeed Kim if he died, the Washington Post said Sunday. The newspaper quoted the Defense Intelligence Agency as saying, "We lack reliable insights into the internal dynamics of the regime, but his successor would most likely come from the military." But the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research said the successor would probably be one of Kim's two sons - Jong Nam, 32, or Jong Chol, 22. The report pointed out that because the two have different mothers, tensions exist between their families.

"US Experts Speculate on Post-Kim DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, ROK)

People's Republic of China

1. PRC-US Relations on DPRK Issue

Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi traveled to Washington on November 6 to prepare for a new round of six-party talks on the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue. Wang will meet US officials on November 7, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhang Qiyue said at a regular briefing yesterday. Wang's visit to the US comes just weeks after his trip to the DPRK with a top PRC leader Wu Bangguo, head of the National People's Congress, PRC's top legislature. During that trip, PRC and the DPRK agreed in principle to hold a second round of six-party talks on ending Pyongyang's suspected nuclear arms program. Another vice-foreign minister, Dai Bingguo, who has also been key in efforts to defuse the nuclear crisis, will visit the ROK and Japan next week, according to the ministry. "China stands ready to work with other countries to push for the next round of Beijing talks and make them a reality soon," said Zhang according to the report.

"PRC-US Relations on DPRK Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, PRC)

"PRC on DPRK Nuke Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, PRC)

2. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Diplomacy

The PRC hopes for results by next year from its strenuous efforts to resolve the DPRK nuclear crisis, Beijing's Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo said here. Dai, in brief comments to journalists at the start of talks with ROK Foreign Minister Yoon Young-Kwan, set no time frame for a new round of multi-party talks on the crisis. However, he indicated that next year would be significant. The DPRK agreed in principle late last month to attend a new round of talks following an inconclusive first round of six-way talks in Beijing in August.

"PRC on DPRK Nuclear Diplomacy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

"DPRK Nuke Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, PRC)

"ROK & PRC Foreign Ministers Have Talks On the Six-Nation Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, ROK)

3. PRC-Russia Relations

Responding to questions about Russia's YUKOS company and the proposed Sino-Russian oil pipeline project, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhang Qiyue said the project has been confirmed by the two governments many times and will be a major component in economic and energy co-operation between the two countries. She said both sides have confirmed their intent to carry out co-operative projects, including the oil pipeline, according to the principles of a joint statement signed by the two countries' top leaders.

"PRC-Russia Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, PRC)

4. PRC-India Joint Naval Exercises

The PRC and India conducted their first ever joint naval exercises off the coast of Shanghai as part of a drive to warm frosty ties between the two nuclear-armed Asian powers. Led by the NS Ranjit, a 5,000-tonne Russian guided missile destroyer, the INS Kulish, a guided missile corvette, and the INS Jyoti, a tanker, the Indian taskforce cast off from Shanghai at 9:00 am (0100 GMT), a consular official said. Joined by two PRC warships, a light cruiser and a supply boat, as well as helicopters, they conducted five-hour rescue, firefighting and anti-piracy maneuvers in the East China Sea before the Indian ships set sail for home.

"PRC-India Joint Naval Exercises" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

5. PRC Communications Satellite Launch

The PRC sent a communication satellite into orbit on Saturday in its third launch since its first manned space mission last month, the government said. The Zhongxing-20 satellite went up from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in the southwestern province of Sichuan at 12:01 a.m., the official Xinhua News Agency said. It was carried up by a Long March 3-A rocket, Xinhua said. The launch was declared a success from the Xi'an Satellite Monitor and Control Center 25 minutes later, when the satellite entered orbit, Xinhua said.

"PRC Communications Satellite Launch" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

6. Taiwan US Submarine Purchase

Taiwan may back out of its plan to buy eight submarines from the US claiming they have been overpriced, the China Times reported. Washington had estimated the eight conventional submarines for Taiwan's navy could cost up to 11 billion US dollars, more than double the market price, a defense official told the paper. If the differences over the cost could not be resolved, Taiwan's navy might switch to buying used submarines instead, the official said.

"Taiwan US Submarine Purchase" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

7. Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization

Asia-Pacific nations are planning to establish a space cooperation grouping to better coordinate environmental protection, disaster reduction and resources exploration, state media and officials said. The Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) will be officially set up next year after final approval from participating governments, the China Daily said. Representatives from 14 countries and the United Nations are in Beijing to sign formal proceedings following a preliminary meeting last year in Bangkok, which designated the PRC capital as APSCO's headquarters. Among those attending are officials from Bangladesh, Brazil, the PRC, the ROK, Iran, Malaysia, Mongolia, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Thailand, Pakistan, Ukraine and Chile -- some as observers.

"Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

8. PRC Internet Crackdown

A PRC crackdown on online activism -- highlighted by a mounting wave of arrests and trials -- is unlike other recent government campaigns, because anyone can become a victim, experts said Monday. The year-long detention of Liu Di, an ordinary Beijing student who posted democracy essays on the Internet, shows that this time the target is not just a well-defined group of open-mouthed intellectuals. The ministry of culture has announced plans for a nationwide surveillance system aimed at controlling what people read and write when they visit one of the country's 110,000 Internet cafes. "PRC Internet Crackdown" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

9. Russia-PRC-ROK Gas Pipeline

Russia, the PRC and the ROK unveiled a giant 17-billion-dollar project to supply Siberian gas to energy-hungry PRC and ROK markets from one of the world's largest undeveloped gas fields. Rusia Petroleum, which is 63-percent owned by TNK-BP, signed a feasibility study with its partners the state-run China National Petroleum Corporation and Korea Gas Corporation, giving the initial go-ahead for the project. The 4,887-kilometre (3,055 mile) pipeline would transport gas from the vast Kovytko gas field near Lake Baikal in eastern Siberia to the ROK through the PRC and the Yellow Sea. Asia's longest pipeline will tap into estimated reserves of 1.9 trillion cubic meters of gas.

"Russia-PRC-ROK Gas Pipeline" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

10. PRC Global Fund Award for AIDS Crisis

The PRC has won a 95 million dollar grant from the Global Fund to fight its ballooning AIDS problem amid growing concerns that Beijing is not doing enough to tackle the crisis, state-run media said. The money from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will be used to control and prevent the spread of the HIV virus and to help patients. The PRC has come under increasing pressure to tackle the issue with the United Nations estimating that the number of victims could grow to 10 million by 2010 unless urgent action is taken. It is the first time Beijing has won money from the Global Fund, which was created to dramatically increase resources to fight three of the world's most devastating diseases, and to direct those resources to areas of greatest need.

"PRC Global Fund Award for AIDS Crisis" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

"PRC AIDS Situation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

11. Relations Across Taiwan Straits

Residents in Fujian Province may be looking forward to visiting Jinmen and Mazu islands as tourists around the Spring Festival period in January next year, according to a tourism official of this coastal province. As a port city facing Taiwan across the straits, Xiamen will take advantage of its regional proximity to effectively promote communication on tour routes to Jinmen. Negotiations on travel to Taiwan islands have already reached what is considered a significant phase, local sources said.

"Relations Across Taiwan Straits" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, PRC)

Japan

1. Japan on Troops in Iraq

Japan's decision to delay sending troops to Iraq just before a visit Friday by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld is another sign of the growing trouble the US faces in persuading allies to help in Iraq. The rare rebuff before a top-level visit was coupled with the ROK's announcement Thursday it would limit any possible troop deployment to 3,000. The Bush administration had hoped the Japanese also would send troops before the end of the year. But after Wednesday's deadly attack on the Italian compound in south-central Iraq, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda backed off, saying the security situation in Iraq is not yet stable enough.

"Japan on Troops in Iraq" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

2. Rumsfeld and Koizumi Meeting on Japan Troops in Iraq

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld met with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to discuss Asian security issues and support for Iraq a day after Japan backtracked on a pledge to send troops there. Rumsfeld said the latest suicide attack in Iraq, which killed 18 Italian troops and six Iraqis in Nasiriya on Wednesday, had not hurt support for the coalition despite Japan's reluctance to commit troops. Every country should make its own judgments about whether to send troops and the timing and size of any contributions to the US-led force, Rumsfeld told reporters on the flight here from Guam.

"Rumsfeld and Koizumi Meeting on Japan Troops in Iraq" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

3. US on Japan Economy

Washington wants Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to make more progress in opening and streamlining the Japanese economy, a US trade official said Friday as the two countries kicked off a new round of annual talks on deregulation. While the US delegation applauded Koizumi's efforts to create 164 special economic zones that have cut tariffs, red tape and loosened rules for businesses, the trade official said Washington wants similar policies implemented on a broader scale across the country.

"US on Japan Economy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 14, 2003, US)

4. Japan Domestic Politics

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi faces a rocky ride within his own party after the strong showing by the main opposition in the weekend's general elections, but analysts warn a true two-party system is still a long way off. Initial results showed the coalition led by Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) had won 275 of 480 parliamentary lower house seats after Sunday's vote. The LDP alone won 237 seats, down from 247 held before the poll. Three successful candidates who ran as independents joined the LDP on Monday, increasing its tally to 240, while the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) won 177 seats, up from 137 before the election. Full official results were due later Monday.

"Japan Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, US)

5. ROK-Japan Relations

China Daily ("ANTI-JAPAN PROTEST," 11/06/03, P11) reported with a photo that a protester holds a portrait showing Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara, whose mouth is sewed shut with large stitches, at an anti-Japan protest in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul on November 5. Dozens of protesters yesterday demanded an apology from the Tokyo Governor after he recently said Koreans bore responsibility for Japan's 1910 annexation of Korea.

"ROK-Japan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 11, 2003, PRC)

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org