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United States

1. US on New Korean Armistice

The US has proposed creating a new multilateral peace mechanism on the Korean Peninsula to replace the armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War, a newspaper said Wednesday. The US made the offer to the DPRK at the three-nation talks, which included the PRC in April, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun said. Washington has proposed the mechanism as a way to officially end the war and to break the impasse over Pyongyang's nuclear arms development -- an issue that continues to threaten East Asia's stability, the business daily said. The US is believed to be weighing a legally binding peace agreement or treaty signed by armistice signatories -- US, the DPRK, the PRC as well as the ROK and Japan, the daily said. It would also stipulate how the ROK and DPRK should co-exist. "US on New Korean Armistice" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

"US Offers DPRK New Peace Framework" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 5 2003, ROK)

2. US on DPRK Power Plant Threat

The US warned the DPRK not to seize the assets of an international consortium if it suspends a plan to build a nuclear power plant on its soil. A DPRK foreign ministry spokesman earlier said the consortium, led by the US, European Union, the ROK and Japan, could be prevented from taking equipment, documents and other items out of the DPRK. "North Korea is obligated to allow the safe removal of equipment from the site," said State Department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli. "KEDO has reminded North Korea of its obligations in this regard, and we expect it to comply."

"US on DPRK Power Plant Threat" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

3. US Nuclear Security

A dozen keys that enable scientists to enter off-limits buildings at a top-secret US nuclear weapons laboratory have been lost presenting a potential security breach, a government inspector said. The critical report, dated Tuesday, by the Department of Energy's Inspector General Gregory Friedman found a total of twelve keys are missing from the department's Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California. Livermore officials had initially estimated it would cost the taxpayer 1.7 million dollars to replace and upgrade 100,000 locks in 526 buildings at the site, but government officials have yet to validate these costs.

"US Nuclear Security" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

4. US Surveillance of DPRK Nuclear Threat

A year after the DPRK provoked a crisis with the US by admitting a secret effort to make weapons-grade uranium, US officials say the program appears to be far less advanced than diplomats had feared. Intensive international monitoring and DPRK ineptitude have significantly slowed efforts to build a plant to produce highly enriched uranium, says a State Department official involved in US attempts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. A US intelligence official says the CIA, which has conducted extensive surveillance of the DPRK, is "not certain there even is" a uranium-enrichment plant. He says the DPRK may have overstated its capability as part of a strategy of "bluff and bluster to extract concessions from the US." If it turns out that the DPRK's uranium production is not advanced, it could be much easier to work out a new deal to end the DPRK's bombmaking efforts.

"US Surveillance of DPRK Nuclear Threat" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

5. KEDO Project Are Mostly Likely Suspended For The Time Being

ROK Foreign Minister Yoon Young-Kwan said his government wants a one-year suspension, not an end, to a multi-billion dollar energy project in the DPRK. Yoon's remarks came after the US, Japan, the ROK and the European Union met inconclusively in New York this week to discuss the fate of the controversial project. "Our government's position is to temporarily suspend it for one year. That means work could resume after one year," Yoon said during a briefing here. KEDO delayed a decision on a US request to suspend the 3.72-billion-dollar project. Executive members of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) consortium which groups the US, Japan, the ROK and the European Union instead decided to reach an agreement by November 21.

"KEDO Project Are Mostly Likely Suspended For The Time Being" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 5 2003, ROK)

"ROK on KEDO Project Suspension" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

6. US "Mini-Nukes" Weapons Funding

US President Bush will get funds for research on "bunker buster" bombs and other lower-intensity nuclear weapons, but not as much as he wanted. House-Senate bargainers agreed to the cuts Wednesday as part of a compromise \$27.3 billion bill financing energy and water programs for the government's new budget year. Lawmakers hope to push the measure through Congress in the next several days. The bill also contains \$580 million for early work on a nuclear waste storage site at Yucca Mountain in the Nevada desert - nearly the full amount Bush requested.

"US "Mini-Nukes" Weapons Funding" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Nuclear Power Plant Data Threat

The DPRK will take equipment and technical data from two nuclear power plants being built there, its government said Thursday, days after a US-led group stopped the \$4.6 billion US project in retaliation for the DPRK's atomic weapons programs. The tit-for-tat came as the DPRK and the US vied for leverage ahead of six-country talks being arranged by the PRC to peacefully resolve the yearlong dispute over the DPRK's nuclear weapons ambitions.

"DPRK Nuclear Power Plant Data Threat" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Power Plant Tactics

The DPRK's threat to seize equipment and technical data from two nuclear power plants being built there is aimed at gaining leverage in future six-nation talks on its nuclear weapons development, a ROK official said Friday. The DPRK made the threat Thursday, days after a US-led group tentatively agreed to suspend the \$4.6 billion project in retaliation for the DPRK's atomic weapons programs. The DPRK said it will block the US and its allies from removing equipment and technical data from the two nuclear power plants. It also demanded full compensation for the project.

"ROK on DPRK Nuclear Power Plant Tactics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Deterrent

The DPRK's envoy in Britain said Pyongyang had a nuclear deterrent ready to use, but the ROK played down the assertion Friday and said there was no sign the DPRK would walk away from international talks. The DPRK's envoy in Britain, Ri Yong Ho, told Reuters in London Thursday Pyongyang had a nuclear deterrent that was not only ready but powerful enough to deter any US attack. Asked about Ri's remarks, ROK Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun told reporters: "It's hard to see any consistency in various DPRK remarks, and it's more important to consider the overall trend than any one particular outburst."

"ROK on DPRK Nuclear Deterrent" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

4. ROK US Missile Deployment

The ROK will begin deploying US-made missiles next month that can strike most of the DPRK, a defense ministry official said Wednesday. The Army Tactical Missile System Block 1A missiles, made by the US company Lockheed Martin, has a range of 186 miles and will be deployed near the Demilitarized Zone - a 2 1/2 mile-wide border separating the two nations.

"We plan to start deploying the missiles next month," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The ROK has already purchased an undisclosed number of the weapons and intends to buy a total of 111 Army Tactical Missile System Block 1A missiles by 2004.

"ROK US Missile Deployment" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 5 2003, US)

"ROK Will Introduce New US Missile System" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 5 2003, ROK)

5. ROK-DPRK Kaesong Industrial Park

The ROK is planning to build a model industrial park in the DPRK's border city of Kaesong during the first half of next year, the state-run Korea Land Corp. said today. The model industrial complex, which will be pushed as part of Korea Land Corp.'s bid to build a 3.3 million square-meter industrial park just north of the inter-Korean border, will be open to ROK manufacturers and investors from the second half of 2004, company officials said. The model complex is to be 33,000 square meters in size.

"ROK-DPRK Kaesong Industrial Park" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

6. ROK Delegation for Economic Talks Leaves for DPRK via PRC

An ROK delegation has left for the DPRK to pursue talks on reconciliation and economic cooperation as diplomatic efforts were renewed to set up another round of nuclear crisis talks. The ROK's chief delegate, Kim Gwang-Lim, said in a statement that discussions would include a year-long crisis over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. The four-day meeting in Pyongyang will also cover economic cooperation, relinking cross-border railways severed during the 1950-1953 Korean War and an industrial park under construction in the DPRK's border city of Kaesong. The two sides have agreed to reconnect the railways by the year's end.

"ROK Delegation for Economic Talks Leaves for DPRK via PRC" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 5 2003, ROK)

"DPRK-ROK Economic Cooperation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

7. US DPRK Defector on Kim Jong-il

DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's biggest ambition is to rule over a unified, Communist Korea, the DPRK's highest-ranking defector said in an interview published on Tuesday. Hwang Jang-yop, a former mentor to Kim Jong-il, told the Washington Times that Kim's "priority in life is to become the supreme ruler of the unified Chosun, or as you call it, Korea." Hwang, 81, was a mentor to Kim and was a confidant of Kim Il Sung, the DPRK's late leader and father of the current leader. "Before Kim Jong-il came to power, there was his father, Kim Il Sung. No one starved to death under Kim Il Sung. However after Kim Jong-il came to power, millions of people starved to death. The economy has been destroyed and the whole government and the country became one big prison," Hwang said.

"US DPRK Defector on Kim Jong-il" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

8. Pakistan on DPRK Nuclear Drive

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf met with ROK leader Roh Moo-Hyun here after denouncing as a smear campaign charges that Islamabad helped the DPRK's nuclear weapons drive. Pakistan, which maintains cordial ties with the DPRK leadership, has been repeatedly accused of aiding Pyongyang's atomic ambitions in return for help with Islamabad's own missile development. "I would like to assure you that all reports linking Pakistan to North Korea's nuclear program are totally incorrect and malicious in nature," said Musharraf in an interview with the Korea Herald newspaper.

"Pakistan on DPRK Nuclear Drive" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

9. ROK Domestic Politics

The ROK's business conglomerates are moving to ban direct political donations by individual corporations as part of efforts to help improve political fundraising transparency, the Federation of Korean Industries (FKI) said Thursday. According to the FKI's revised guidelines for political fundraising, its member companies, mostly the units of South Korea's top-30 conglomerates, will be banned from offering political funds directly to lawmakers and politicians. Instead, the corporations will be asked to make political donations indirectly through the National Election Commission (NEC) or business organizations, like the FKI, paving the ground for a more transparent fundraising environment.

"ROK Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

People's Republic of China

1. PRC-US DPRK Diplomatic Talks

PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi has briefed senior US officials on Beijing's behind-the-scenes drive to convene a new round of six-nation talks on the DPRK nuclear crisis. Wang met Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, but neither side gave any indication when they expected the dialogue, the last round of which ended inconclusively in August, to resume.

"PRC-US DPRK Diplomatic Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

"PRC-US DPRK Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

"US on PRC-DPRK Diplomacy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 5 2003, US)

"PRC on DPRK Diplomacy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

"PRC-ROK on DPRK Nuclear Crisis" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

"US-DPRK Relations on DPRK Nuke Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, PRC)

"PRC on DPRK Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, PRC)

2. PRC-India Joint Naval Operations

First-of-a-kind military exercises between the PRC and India due next week show the Asian giants' desire to move past decades of mistrust and could herald a more active role in South Asia for Beijing, a traditional ally of Pakistan. The Indian and PRC navies will hold a day of search and rescue drills November 14 off the Shanghai coast. The joint operations come after President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan, India's rival neighbor, finished a visit to the PRC Wednesday in which Beijing pledged to support Islamabad on territorial disputes and strengthen defence cooperation.

"PRC-India Naval Joint Operations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

3. PRC-Pakistan Relations

The relationship enjoyed by two of the world's nuclear powers was made plain Wednesday in a joint declaration by Pakistan and the PRC in which bilateral ties were deemed "exemplary." Signed by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and PRC counterpart Hu Jintao, the communique described their cooperation as an "indispensable" factor in maintaining peace and stability in Asia. Musharraf has now left Beijing after a three-day state visit to cement ties with close ally the PRC. The trip allowed Musharraf to meet the PRC's new leaders for the first time since they took office in March. A raft of bilateral agreements were signed and a joint statement pledging continued cooperation on trade, military and other strategic issues was issued.

"PRC-Pakistan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

4. PRC on Taiwan-US Relations

The PRC said Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's recent stopovers in the US were aimed at "splitting China" and sabotaging improving Sino-US relations. "The goal of Chen Shui-bian's 'stopovers' in the US is to carry out separatist activities on the international stage and sabotage the improvement and development of Sino-US ties," foreign ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said. "China has many times made serious representations to the US on this issue and expressed strong dissatisfaction to the US side for allowing Chen Shui-bian to make stopovers and spread messages of splitting China," she said in a statement on the ministry's website.

"PRC on Taiwan-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

5. US on Cross-Straits Relations

US Secretary of State Colin Powell reassured the PRC that the US had "no hidden agendas" with Taiwan but warned Beijing about its increasing military buildup across the straights. Powell, who on Monday irritated the PRC by shaking hands with Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian in Panama, said the US sought a peaceful solution to the Taiwan dispute and pledged that Washington would adhere to its commitments to both parties. At the same time, he stressed that Washington would judge the PRC's intentions toward its neighbors and the US by how it deals with Taiwan.

"US on Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 5 2003, US)

"US-PRC Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

6. Kiribati Taiwan Diplomatic Ties

The central Pacific nation of Kiribati has switched its diplomatic ties from the PRC to Taiwan, a statement from its capital Tarawa said. The switch by Kiribati, which hosts a key tracking facility for the PRC's space program, is the first major foreign policy move of new President Anote Tong, who has been in office less than six months. Kiribati becomes the 27th nation to recognize Taiwan.

"Kiribati Taiwan Diplomatic Ties" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 7, 2003, US)

Japan

1. Japan Domestic Politics

Japan's main opposition party is campaigning for power in a general election Sunday but its more realistic goal, analysts say, is to establish itself as a viable alternative, forging a two-party political system. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) led by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has ruled Japan for all but 11 months since its formation in 1955 and most polls and commentators expect it to maintain its grip on power.

"Japan Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

"Japan Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

2. DPRK-Japan Relations

Japan denounces a DPRK slur on Japan made during a United Nations meeting but has no plan to issue further protest, a foreign ministry official said. A UN General Assembly meeting in New York late on Tuesday plunged into a name-calling row as the DPRK's deputy UN ambassador Kim Chang Guk referred to the Japanese as "Japs." "It was outrageous" as Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda put it Wednesday, the official said Thursday.

"DPRK-Japan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

"Japan Responds to DPRK Racial Slur" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 5 2003, US)

"DPRK Japanese Racial Slur" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, US)

3. Japan Iraq Troop Deployment

Japan will send Self-Defense Forces (SDF) elements to the southern Iraq city of Samawa if the ruling coalition comes out on top in the upcoming election, according to a senior Dutch military officer quoting a Japanese fact-finding mission. The officer said that during a meeting earlier this month, senior SDF and Foreign Ministry members of the mission told him that Japan intends to set up an SDF operational base near the Dutch base in Samawa. The mission returned last week after spending nearly a month in Iraq to study the local security and other conditions.

"Japan Iraq Troop Deployment" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, Japan)

4. Japanese Defense Chief on the Future SDF

Japan should use its Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to contribute to world peace and stability, Defense Agency chief Shigeru Ishiba said. "I think there are ways to make use of the Self-Defense Forces other than in the exercise of the right to self-defense," Ishiba, 46, told The Japan Times in an interview. Ishiba also said the role of the SDF in Iraq is "becoming focused." The SDF is expected to help with "water and medical supply and the reconstruction of damaged buildings," Ishiba said, adding that "the repair of ports is not a high priority."

"Japanese Defense Chief on the Future SDF" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, Japan)

5. Japanese Imperial Army's Chemical Weapons in the PRC

Japan has agreed to pay 300 million yen to the PRC for the recent fatal leak of poison gas from chemical weapons left behind by the Japanese military at the end of World War II. The embassy in Beijing announced that Japan will make the payment as "fees for operations to dispose of abandoned chemical weapons," and the PRC has said it would "appropriately distribute" the funds to the victims and their families. The embassy stated that the payout "is not compensation."

"Japanese Imperial Army's Chemical Weapons in the PRC" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, Japan)

6. US Bases in Japan

A US Marine Corps major on trial for attempted rape has sent a petition to US Ambassador to Japan Howard Baker, maintaining that he is not receiving a fair trial and calling on the US government to lodge a formal complaint. Brown stands accused of attempting to rape a woman in a parked car in the city of Gushikawa on Nov. 2 last year. While he admits to being with the woman, he has denied trying to rape her.

"US Bases in Japan" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 4, 2003, Japan)

7. Japan-ROK Student Visa Exemptions

Japan agreed Wednesday to exempt visa requirements for ROK students on school excursions to Japan from March at the latest, officials said. Japan also agreed to consider implementing a temporary visa exemption for all South Koreans sometime in 2005 to mark the 40th anniversary of the two countries' diplomatic ties, Seoul's Foreign Ministry said in a statement summing up a two-day meeting of the two countries' consular chiefs.

"Japan-ROK Student Visa Exemptions" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 6, 2003, US)

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