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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. Russo-DPRK Relations

Yonhap News (Kim Bo-ram, "N. KOREA EXPECTS CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH RUSSIA ", Seoul, 2008/08/12) reported that a top DPRK military leader called for closer cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow to ensure world peace and security as the two allies celebrate their 60th year of diplomatic ties this fall, Pyongyang's state-run radio said Friday. "The DPRK and Russia will work more closely in efforts to ensure peace and security of the region and elsewhere in the world this year, honoring the 60th birthday of their diplomatic ties," the North's Korean Central Broadcasting Station quoted Kim Yong-chun, deputy chairman of the National Defense Commission, as saying.

Donga Ilbo ("N. KOREA, RUSSIA TO REDRAW BORDER ALONG TUMEN RIVER", 2008/08/08) reported that the DPRK and Russia have decided to redraw their border along the Tumen River stretching 17 kilometers. A Moscow diplomatic source said yesterday, “Russia is reviewing a new agreement on a new border based on topographical changes after finishing checks and examinations on the border along the Tumen River.” In accordance with the 1990 agreement, both sides are expected to reach a consensus to mark their border in the working-level meeting, sign an agreement and commit to put it in writing.

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2. TSR and Inter-Korean Railway Connection

Moscow Times ("NORTH KOREA TO RENT RAIL LINK TO RZD", 2008/08/11) reported that the DPRK has agreed to rent out a 52-kilometer section of track to Russian Railways as part of a plan to link East Asia to Europe via the Trans-Siberian Railroad. The 49-year lease was signed during talks Tuesday and Wednesday in Pyongyang, Russian Railways said. Russian Railways will refurbish the

line and build a container terminal at the DPRK port of Rajin. Construction is expected to begin by the end of the year, Russian Railways said. The DPRK and Russia also agreed to study the possibility of upgrading the rail link from Rajin to the PRC border.

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3. Russo-DPRK Maritime Dispute

RIA Novosti ("N.KOREAN VESSEL DETAINED FOR POACHING IN RUSSIA'S FAR EAST", Vladivostok, 2008/08/08) reported that Russian costal guards have detained a DPRK vessel in the Sea of Japan on suspicion of poaching in Russia's economic zone, a spokesman for Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said. The vessel had nearly four metric tons of squid onboard. "The captain of the vessel admitted squid poaching in Russia's exclusive economic zone," the spokesman said. "He was unable to produce permission for crossing Russia's maritime border and fishing in its waters."

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4. Japan-DPRK Relations

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("N. KOREA TO RESPOND TUESDAY", Shenyang, 2008/08/12) reported that the DPRK said it would reply on Tuesday to Japan's request for Pyongyang to detail the steps it would take in its reinvestigation of the issue of Japanese nationals abducted by the DPRK, officials said. During the meeting, Japan presented its suggestions for how and when the DPRK should conduct its reinvestigation of the abductees issue. In response, the DPRK said it would give its opinions on the issue in the Tuesday meeting.

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5. ROK Energy Aid to the DPRK

Yonhap News ("SEOUL DELIVERS ENERGY AID TO PYONGYANG UNDER SIX-PARTY ACCORD ", Seoul, 2008/08/08) reported that ROK has delivered part of energy assistance promised to the DPRK under a six-nation accord signed last year that has led to the disablement of the DPRK's key nuclear facilities, including the demolition of a cooling tower, the Unification Ministry said. This week's shipment included 600 tons of round steel bars, according to ministry officials.

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6. Inter-Korean Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("GANGWON PROVINCE TO DEVELOP DMZ INTO TOURIST AREA ", 2008/08/11) reported that the heavily-armed, 4 km wide demilitarized zone separates the two Koreas, and because civilians are not allowed to enter, Mother Nature has been free to do what she wants there for half a century. Now Gangwon Province along the eastern half of the no-man's land, wants to turn this into a tourist attraction. Officials there have signed an agreement with travel company Lotte Tour to develop the area close to the DMZ as an ecological tourist site. With this agreement, Gangwon will cooperate with officials from the military and local governments while Lotte Tour

works on marketing.

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7. Inter-Korean Ship Collision

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "NKOREAN BOAT COLLIDES WITH SKOREAN SHIP, 2 MISSING", Seoul, 2008/08/12) reported that a DPRK fishing boat collided with an ROK cargo ship early Tuesday. The 658-ton ROK ship was carrying sand from the DPRK when it collided with the fishing boat in waters just north of the sea border, Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Ho-nyeon told reporters. Two of the fishing boat's four crewmen were rescued by the ROK ship, Kim said. The other two were still missing. The ROK vessel carrying seven people was believed to have sailed to a nearby DPRK port for questioning, he said. Another ministry spokesman, Kim Young-il, said because it was an accident, it was unlikely the DPRK would hold the South Koreans for long.

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8. DPRK Bird Flu Measures

Xinhua News ("DPRK VIGILANT ON BIRD FLU ", Pyongyang, 2008/08/10) reported that the DPRK has remained vigilant toward a possible outbreak of bird flu and has made several scientific achievements in preventing the disease, the official KCNA news agency said. DPRK scientists have developed some methods for quickly differentiating the subtypes of bird flu, which may be helpful in keeping bird flu from spreading, the KCNA said.

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9. US on DPRK Human Rights

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "US HUMAN RIGHTS ENVOY CANCELS SKOREA TRIP", Seoul, 2008/08/12) reported that Jay Lefkowitz, the U.S. presidential envoy on North Korean human rights, will not visit the ROK as planned this week, the U.S. Embassy said Tuesday. The official said he did not know why Lefkowitz had canceled his trip.

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10. DPRK Economy

Xinhua News ("DPRK TO SHOW PROSPEROUS PYONGYANG AT SHANGHAI WORLD EXPO", Pyongyang, 2008/08/12) reported that the DPRK will show "a prosperous Pyongyang based on Daedonggang river culture" at the Shanghai World Expo in 2010, a Korean newspaper said. Its debut includes: the birthplace of Daedonggang river culture, city developed from Korean War ruins, city reconstruction, environmental protection, architecture legacy and tourism, reported Choson Sinbo. It will also hold cultural events such as national masked dance and a "Korean Day" at the Expo, it added.

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11. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Chosun Ilbo ("DOKDO MARITIME RESEARCH CENTER TO BE BUILT", 2008/08/12) reported that the government is planning to build a maritime research center to study Dokdo and its surrounding area. The Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute says it will build its East Sea research center annex in Uljin, North Gyeongsang Province. Some 20 researchers will be stationed there studying East Sea and Dokdo issues, maritime safety and pollution. The center is scheduled to open in October and officials are also considering building an ocean platform to collect information on the underwater rock beds near the islets.

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12. Japan Politics

The Asahi Shimbun ("FUKUDA HINTS AT EARLY DIET SESSION", Nagasaki, 2008/08/12) reported that Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda hinted at convening an extraordinary Diet session by early September to give his ruling coalition time to push a number of contentious bills through the Diet. Speaking at a news conference, Fukuda said the new Diet session "must not start too late." Fukuda's ruling coalition faces the possibility that some bills, including one that would allow the extension of the Self-Defense Forces' refueling activities in the Indian Ocean, will require more than one vote in the Lower House before being passed.

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13. Cross Strait Relations

The Financial Times (Kathrin Hille , "TAIWAN TO SEEK PARTICIPATION AT UN", Taipei, 2008/08/12) reported that Taiwan intends to ask the United Nations next month to grant it “participation” in the global club, in a move that will put the nascent détente with the PRC to its biggest test so far. Government officials said the island would neither ask to “return” to the UN to retake the China seat the Republic of China lost to the People’s Republic of China in 1971, nor apply to “join” as a new member. “We believe asking for participation is more pragmatic,” said a foreign policy official.

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14. PRC Protest

The Washington Post (Edward Cody, "FOREIGN ACTIVISTS MANAGE TO PIERCE CHINA'S BROAD SECURITY APPARATUS", Beijing, 2008/08/12) reported that the PRC's intense efforts to block any protest that would mar the Olympic Games were challenged Wednesday by foreign activists equally bent on diverting attention to issues as varied as Tibetan independence, the crisis in Darfur and religious freedom. Two American and two British protesters slipped through a smothering Olympic security net, climbed a pair of lampposts and unfurled banners demanding freedom for Tibet.

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15. PRC Security

The Associated Press ("CITY IN CHINA'S WEST LOCKS DOWN AFTER BOMBINGS", Kuqa, 2008/08/12) reported that soldiers with machine guns guarded the sidewalks and police yelled at residents who tried to leave their homes Sunday, hours after officers battled bomb-tossing assailants in the second daring attack in a week in the PRC's restive Muslim territory. No group has claimed responsibility for Sunday's attack in Kuqa county, and police have not released any evidence that a terrorist organization was involved.

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II. PRC Report

16. PRC Environment

China Environment News (Wu Zhaohua, "CHENGDU CITY PROMULGATES NEW REGUALTIONS TO PROTECT AIR POLLUTION", 2008/08/12) reported that at present, the air quality of Chengdu city reaches Grade 2. The excellent rate rises 1.6% compared to the same period last year. In order to better strengthen the governance of air pollution control, Chengdu has recently promulgated the "Regulations on Management of Air Pollution Control (solicited Draft) ", and openly solicits comments to the public. Compared with "Air Pollution Control Regulations" which was implemented in March 2004, this draft defined for the first time that exhaust logo management will be implemented on Chengdu motor vehicles, and also defined the minimum amount of fines for 200 yuan, making the fine basis more clarity.

Enorth website, http://news.enorth.com.cn/system/2008/08/08/003630964.shtml (Tan Yihua, "124 WATER USER ASSOCIATION OF FAMERS ESTABLISHES IN TIANJIN", 2008/08/12) reported that according to Tianjin Water Conservancy Bureau, in recent years, Tinajin makes great efforts in continuously deepening the management system reform of the rural water conservancy projects, vigorously promoting the water user association of farmers to set up, fully mobilizing the initiative of farmers to participate in agricultural irrigation and water project management, and actively exploring new mechanism for farmers to participate independently in the management of water irrigation mains in rural areas. As at present, a total of 124 Water User Association of Famers have been set up in the city, which have benefited 230,800 people and 42.4 million mu of cultivated land.

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17. PRC Consumer Protection

Shanghai Securities News ("INSURANCE ASSOCIATION TO STRENGTHEN THE PROTECTION OF CONSUMERS", 2008/08/11) reported that recently when Wu Dingfu, the chairmen of China Insurance Regulatory Commission surveyed the Insurance Association, he pointed out that the most important task of Insurance Association is rights-protection and self-discipline. It should strengthen the protection of insurance consumers. Wu also said that the insurance social organizations should have a comprehensive understanding of the new stage and new starting point of Insurance industry

development and reform. The Insurance Association should improve their serving capacity, corresponding capacity and innovating capacity, advancing the good as well as rapid development of Insurance industry.

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III. ROK Report

18. DPRK-US Relations

Ohmynews ("NEGOTIATION CONTINUES", 2008/08/12) wrote that the gap between the U.S and DPRK stances toward nuclear report and verification system is deep. The DPRK wants the removal from the state sponsor of terrorism as a reward for the nuclear report. The Bush administration is being criticized for yielding too much to the DPRK, and have to show the concreteness of the nuclear verification system. Cho Sung-ryul, researcher at Institute for National Security Strategy, pointed out that the Bush administration is trying to slow down the pace, considering the internal hardliners.

Seoul Shinmun ("DELAY OF DPRK REMOVAL FROM THE STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM", 2008/08/12) wrote that removal of the DPRK from the state sponsor of terrorism list was expected to be done Monday, but came out to be delayed. The U.S request to establish complete and reliable DPRK nuclear verification system as a prerequisite for the removal caused the dispute. The gap between the U.S and DPRK stances is too deep. The Bush administration, considering the conservative press, insisted on a comprehensive approach including enriched uranium and nuclear proliferation. On the other hand, the DPRK wants to complete the 2 nd level with disablement process and nuclear report, and do multilevel negotiations on 3 rd dismantlement level. We hope that the U.S and the DPRK could reach a practical agreement.

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19. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Tongil News ("ROK PEOPLE BELIEVE 10.4 DECLARATIONS SHOULD BE FULFILLED", 2008/08/11) reported that Social Trend Institute, a private investigation center, reported that the 55.6% of the sample group responded that the Lee administration should follow the 6.15, 10.4 joint declarations, and only 21.4% replied it does not need to. 43.8% of Grand National Party supporters replied that the Lee administration should follow the agreements, overwhelming the 32.9% of ‘do not need to’. The Institute analyzed that the plan of the Lee administration to differentiate its DPRK policy from that of the former administration failed to get people’s agreement, and most people view the reconciliation and cooperation policy as a success and do not want to put back the result.

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