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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yomiuri Shimbun (Yuji Anai, "GOVT ANXIOUS AFTER LATEST 6-PARTY TALKS", Beijing, 2008/07/14) reported that the latest round of six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear program has left the Japanese government anxious and frustrated. The talks failed to produce details of when and how verification of nuclear program declaration will take place. Meanwhile, some observers say that Japan could become increasingly isolated if the US, ROK and other participants in the six-party talks decide to shoulder Japan's share of energy assistance to DPRK. On the issue of DPRK's abduction of Japanese nationals, some Japanese government officials had previously believed the DPRK would likely try to offer a concrete response by Aug. 11 to make itself look good to the US. But some feel this is no longer the case.

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2. DPRK-Japan Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN WANTS N. KOREA TO HOLD TALKS ON ABDUCTION REINVESTIGATION PLEDGE ", Tokyo, 2008/07/14) reported that Japan will again demand that the DPRK hold talks on its pledge to reinvestigate cases of its abductions of Japanese nationals, Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said. ''I do not understand why North Korea has not responded (to Japan's call), but we have continued seeking a progress on the abduction issue and we are going to strongly seek progress in the future,'' Machimura said.

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News ("GOV'T TEAM FORMED TO PROBE KILLING OF S. KOREAN TOURIST IN N. KOREA ", Seoul, 2008/07/14) reported that the government organized a team of senior officials and experts on Monday to investigate last week's killing of a ROK citizen by a DPRK soldier at the DPRK's resort

mountain, the Unification Ministry said. The team is composed of officials from eight government offices related experts, including forensics doctors, and held its first meeting in the afternoon, the ministry said. Led by Hwang Bu-gi, a senior official of the Unification Ministry, the team will focus on questioning ROK witnesses and preparing for potential on-site inspection of the scene in the DPRK, Kim Ho-nyoun, spokesman for the ministry, told reporters.

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "NORTH KOREA REJECTS PROBE INTO SHOOTING DEATH", Seoul, 2008/07/15) reported that the Hyundai Asan failed to persuade the DPRK to cooperate in an investigation into the killing of an ROK tourist at Mt. Kumgang, Yoon Man-jun, head of the firm, said after a four-day trip on Tuesday. "The North also feels sorry for this incident and is seriously pondering how to cope with it," Yoon said in a statement after returning to the ROK. Also Tuesday, the ROK attempted again to send an official message calling for the DPRK's cooperation, but Pyongyang refused to receive the message, Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Ho-nyeon said. Kim said the government has an "idea in mind" on how to resolve the issue in case Pyongyang keeps refusing to cooperate, but he declined to elaborate.

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4. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA TOURS FACE COMPLETE SUSPENSION", 2008/07/14) reported that with the killing of a ROK tourist by DPRK soldiers, tour programs to Mt. Kumgang and Kaesong operated by Hyundai Asan are in danger of complete suspension. It seems likely that the stalemate will be protracted, considering that the two Koreas are in a standoff over how to respond to the incident and that unlike the previous two ROK administrations, the Lee Myung-bak government has no proper dialogue channel with the DPRK.

Joongang Ilbo (Moon Gwang-lip, "INTER-KOREA TRADE COMPANIES FALL ", 2008/07/14) reported that shares in companies known to be related to inter-Korean economic exchange fell sharply after the death of a ROK tourist during a trip to Mount Kumgang in the DPRK. Affiliates in the Hyundai Group sank, with Hyundai Merchant Marine falling 3.3 percent to 37,700 won ($37.5). Hyundai Group owns Hyundai Asan, the exclusive operator of tours from to the DPRK. Some stocks, which are also classified by several local analysts as Inter-Korean business-related shares mainly because they are headquartered in the DPRK's Kaesong Industrial Complex or they have high chances of selling their products to the DPRK, closed considerably lower in the day.

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5. Sino-DPRK Cultural Exchange

Xinhua ("CHILDREN'S ART GROUP FROM DPRK VISITS HONG KONG", 2008/07/14) reported that the Pyongyang Children's Art Group of the DPRK gave their premiere performance at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). This was the group's first visit to Hong Kong. The Art Group of 40-member, aged between 7 and 15, presented 12 songs, dances and instrument playing filled with traditional elements for students and guests. When they sang in Mandarin "the Oriental Pearl", a famous song in Hong Kong, the hall resounded with applause.

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6. US-ROK Joint Military Exercise

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA, U.S. GEAR UP FOR COMPUTER-LED DRILLS", 2008/07/14) reported that the ROK and the US will stage a joint military exercise, code-named "Ulchi-Freedom Guardian," from Aug. 18 until 22, with about 10,000 US troops participating, ROK-US Combined Forces Command said. Significantly, the ROK Army will this time take charge of the exercise with assistance from the US troops -- a preparation for the transfer of full control of ROK troops to Seoul in 2012. Some 5,000 US troops stationed in the ROK will be joined by about 5,000 from overseas bases.

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7. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Kyodo News ("JAPAN ENVOY TO S. KOREA SAYS ISLET ISSUE MUST NOT HARM CLOSE TIES ", Seoul, 2008/07/14) reported that Japanese Ambassador to the ROK Toshinori Shigeie, after being summoned Monday by Foreign Minister Yoo Myung Hwan to hear a protest over Japan's description of two disputed islets as part of its territory, said that the issue must not be allowed to harm favorable bilateral ties.

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8. Japan Whaling Issue

The Financial Times (Peter Smith, "AUSTRALIA SET TO MONITOR JAPANESE WHALING", Sydney, 2008/07/14) reported that Australia will this week begin surveillance of Japan’s controversial whaling programme in the Antarctic when the patrol ship Oceanic Viking leaves a naval base south of Perth. Stephen Smith, foreign minister, said that the patrol ship would be deployed for 20 days to monitor the whaling programme, while a plane used by the Australian government’s scientific division in Antarctica will conduct surveillance flights over the Japanese fleet.

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9. Japan Nuclear Power

The Asahi Shimbun ("POLL: GIVE NUKE SAFETY AGENCY AUTONOMY", 2008/07/14) reported that nearly 40 percent of municipalities hosting nuclear power plants want an independent nuclear regulatory agency, free from the ministry that serves as a cheerleader for nuclear energy, according to an Asahi Shimbun survey. Eight, or about 38 percent, of the 21 mayors of the cities, towns and villages where nuclear power plants are located said the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) should be independent of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. The agency is currently affiliated with the ministry, which promotes nuclear energy policies.

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10. PRC Unrest

Reuters (Chris Buckley, "MIGRANT WORKERS PROTEST AND RIOT FOR 3 DAYS IN EAST CHINA ", Beijing, 2008/07/14) reported that migrant workers in eastern PRC rioted and protested for three days last week, officials said, vowing tough steps to quell the latest ripple of unrest ahead of the Beijing Olympics. The clashes broke out in Yuhuan County in coastal Zhejiang province. Rioting broke out in Kanmen town in Yuhuan on the night of July 10 after a migrant worker surnamed Zhang came to a local law-and-order office to complain about injuries. Zhang agreed to be taken to a hospital by police, but on the way an angry crowd surrounded the police and yanked the fuel pipes out of six of their motorcycles.

Agence France-Presse ("POLICE ARREST 100 OVER SOUTHWEST CHINA RIOT", Beijing, 2008/07/14) reported that police in southwest PRC have arrested 100 people for their involvement in a major riot last month that highlighted social tensions ahead of the Beijing Olympics, state press said. A protest involving 30,000 people saw government buildings and cars torched on June 28 in Weng'an county, Guizhou province, after crowds accused police of covering up the alleged rape and murder of a 17-year-old girl.

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11. PRC Security

Agence France-Presse (Robert J. Saiget, "CHINA VOWS TO BOOST OLYMPIC SECURITY ", Beijing, 2008/07/14) reported that the PRC vowed to step up security for the Beijing Olympics, warning of an unprecedented threat to the Games amid reports that two "terrorists" were executed in the mainly Muslim far northwest. With up to 80 heads of state expected to attend the August 8 opening ceremony, the PRC said it was faced with a "huge responsibility" to defend its own people, Olympic athletes and visiting dignitaries. "As far as China is concerned, the international situation and the political environment is becoming increasingly complicated by the day, and the dark clouds of terrorism on our borders are a fact that cannot be ignored," it said.

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12. PRC Environment

The Financial Times (Geoff Dyer, "CHINA'S ALGAE SPREAD TO RESORTS", Baishatan, 2008/07/14) reported that the algae outbreak that threatened the Olympic sailing competition in Qingdao has spread hundreds of kilometres up the coast to popular tourist areas, even as PRC officials claimed near-victory over the thick green sludge. The long stretch of beach at Baishatan, 150km north of Qingdao, has been lined in recent days with 10-metre-wide slicks of algae that gave out a noxious odour to the few tourists who braved the sand, causing panic among tourist operators.

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13. PRC Energy Supply

Reuters (Rujun Shen, "AS CHINA'S SMALL MINES STAY SHUT, CRISIS GROWS", 2008/07/14) reported that a push by the PRC to reopen thousands of small coal mines is failing, deepening its worst power crisis in years as local officials still fear Beijing's wrath if they suffer high-profile disasters. Weeks after the central government urged miners to reopen the mines, effectively

reversing a years-old policy of shutting them in order to improve safety, local officials are proving reluctant. And Beijing's freeze on coal prices has lowered the incentive for miners. The failure to increase domestic coal supplies spells trouble for coal-fired electricity generators, who produce four-fifths of the power in the PRC and could add to the emerging power crisis.

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14. PRC Media Control

Sydney Morning Herald ("CHINA'S MEDIA FREEDOM IS IN NAME ONLY", 2008/07/14) reported that PRC authorities have ordered a 10-second broadcast delay to avoid "undesirable" incidents - such as protests or anti-Chinese slogans - being seen by the domestic masses, according to Hong Kong's *Ming Pao* daily, a Chinese-language newspaper. But technically the 4 billion viewers around the world should be able to see everything live - including any protests - under the PRC's promise to give the foreign media "complete freedom to report when they come to China".

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15. PRC Afican Diplomacy

Telegraph ("CHINA'S £4BN DRIVE TO BUY AFRICA'S MINERAL WEALTH", 2008/07/14) reported that full scale work by the PRC begins to rebuild 2,050 miles of roads in the Democratic Republic of Congo, left to rot in the rainforest after the Belgian colonialists pulled out 48 years ago and further shattered by seven years of war. The vast project, which will triple Congo's current paved road network, is part of the PRC's largest investment in Africa, a £4.5 billion infrastructure-for-minerals deal signed in January.

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II. PRC Report

16. PRC Earthquake

China News online, http://www.chinanews.com.cn/ ("CHINA SETS NEW SUBSIDY PLAN FOR EARTHQUAKE SURVIVORS", 2008/07/14) reported that the PRC government will modify its temporary subsidy plan for quake survivors starting in September, with each survivor experiencing financial hardship to get 200 yuan (29 U.S. dollars) per month, a State Council statement said. The policy will cover such categories as orphans, the elderly and the disabled without family support, those whose relatives were killed or severely injured, those who were displaced and those whose residences were destroyed, it said. Since the disaster, every needy survivor has been eligible to receive 10 yuan and 500 grams of food a day. The policy has covered about 8.82 million people but will end in August. The new system won't include any food allotment. The new policy will expire in November, the statement said. <!-- /* Font Definitions */ @font-face {font-family:SimSun; panose-1:2 1 6 0 3 1 1 1 1 1; mso-font-alt:"Arial Unicode MS"; mso-font-charset:134; mso-generic-fo-t-family:auto; mso-font-format:other; mso-font-pitch:variable; mso-font-signature:1 135135232 16 0 262144 0;} @font-face {font-family:"@SimSun"; panose-1:0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0; mso-font-charset:134;

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17. PRC Environment

People's Daily (Wang Mingfeng, "ONE MONTH AFTER "PLASTIC BAG BAN"", 2008/07/14) <!-- /* Font Definitions */ @font-face {font-family:SimSun; panose-1:2 1 6 0 3 1 1 1 1 1; mso-font-alt:"Arial Unicode MS"; mso-font-charset:134; mso-generic-font-family:auto; mso-font-format:other; mso-fon--pitch:variable; mso-font-signature:1 135135232 16 0 262144 0;} @font-face {font-family:"@SimSun"; panose-1:0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0; mso-font-charset:134; mso-generic-font-family:auto; mso-font-format:other; mso-font-pitch:variable; mso-font-signature:1 135135232 16 0 262144 0;} /* Style Definitions */ p.MsoNormal, li.MsoNormal, div.MsoNormal {mso-style-parent:""; margin:0in; margin-bottom:.0001pt; text-align:justify; text-justify:inter-ideograph; mso-pagination:none; font-size:10.5pt; mso-bidi-font-size:12.0pt; font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-fareast-fo-t-family:SimSun; mso-font-kerning:1.0pt; mso-fareast-language:ZH-CN;} @page Section1 {size:8.5in 11.0in; margin:1.0in 1.25in 1.0in 1.25in; mso-header-margin:.5in; mso-footer-margin:.5in; mso-paper-source:0;} div.Section1 {page:Section1;} --&gt reported that from June 1 this year, the PRC formally implemented the "Plastic Bag Ban". It mainly requires that the thickness of plastic shopping bags should be no less than 0.025 mm, and all kinds of supermarkets, shopping malls, markets can not provide plastic shopping bags with a lower price than the sales cost. After one month of this Ban's implementation, the reported learned from relevant personnel that the use of plastic bags reduced 80%-90% in supermarkets and shopping malls, 50% in markets. The overall reduction is nearly 2/3. More than half of the plastic bag manufacturers have discontinued or semi-discontinued. Some plastic bag manufacturers have transferred successfully into producing non-woven bags, but now the market of non-woven bags is already saturated.

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18. PRC Development

China Broadcast Network (Liu Zhan, "NORTH AREA OF CHONGQING MAY BECOME THE THIRD NEWLY DEVELOPED AREA", 2008/07/14) <!-- /* Font Definitions */ @font-face {font-family:SimSun; panose-1:2 1 6 0 3 1 1 1 1 1; mso-font-alt:"Arial Unicode MS"; mso-font-charset:134; mso-generic-font-family:auto; mso-font-format:other; mso-font-pitch:variable; mso-font-signature:1 135135232 16 0 262144 0;} @font-face {font-family:"@SimSun"; panose-1:0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0; mso-font-charset:134; mso-generic-font-family:auto; mso-font-format:other; mso-font-pitch:variable; mso-font-signature:1 135135232 16 0 262144 0;} /* Style Definitions */ p.MsoNormal, li.MsoNormal, div.MsoNormal {mso-style-parent:""; margin:0in; margin-bottom:.0001pt; text-align:justify; text-justify:inter-ideograph; mso-pagination:none; font-size:10.5pt; mso-bidi-font-size:12.0pt; font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-fareast-font-family:SimSun; mso-font-kerning:1.0pt; mso-fareas--language:ZH-CN;} @page Section1 {size:8.5in 11.0in; margin:1.0in 1.25in 1.0in 1.25in; mso-header-margin:.5in; mso-footer-margin:.5in; mso-paper-source:0;} div.Section1 {page:Section1;}

reported that after the Pudong Area of Shanghai and Binhai Area of Tianjin, North area of Chongqing may become the third newly developed area in the PRC, said Wang Yi, Vice Director of North Chongqing Administration Committee. He also said, once the north area of Chongqing becomes the newly developed area, it will enjoy the same preferential policy as Pudong Area of Shanghai and Binhai Area of Tianjin. The area will be enlarged from 100 sq.kms to 900 sq.kms. The north area of Chongqing has its own advantages. It is the biggest transportation center of water, land and air in the PRC. It can become the motor of social development.

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