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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. Napsnet

1. Mt. Kumgang Shooting

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "SEOUL TO RAISE TOURIST SHOOTING AT ASIAN FORUM", Seoul, 2008/07/21) reported that the ROK will deliver a message of protest during an Asian security forum that opened Monday in Singapore against the DPRK's recent killing of an ROK tourist at the Mount Kumgang resort, an official said. "We will raise the issue of the tourist killing as an official discussion topic at the forum,'' the official said. "It's natural to raise the issue given the forum is the venue for talks over regional security affairs.'' The United States, Australia, Singapore and some other nations are in support of addressing the incident during the talks, so there is a possibility that the issue could be included in the chairman's declaration at the end of the meeting, he said.

Yonhap ("N.K. SAYS SHOOTING WAS ACCIDENTAL: CIVIC ACTIVISTS", Seoul, 2008/07/21) reported that DPRK officials say the killing of an ROK tourist by their soldier was unintentional and are worried about possible far-reaching repercussions on inter-Korean ties, ROK civic group activists said Monday. "Many North Korean officials with the North's Council for National Reconciliation asked about the atmosphere in the South (following the incident). Some said the shooting was not premeditated," a civilian group official who recently returned from a trip to Pyongyang said.

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2. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "GESONG PROJECT WILL CONTINUE DESPITE SOUR TIES", Seoul, 2008/07/21) reported that Seoul will continue to develop an inter-Korean industrial complex in Kaeseong despite sour ties between the two sides, Kim Young-tak, director general of the Gaeseong Industrial Complex Project Bureau, said Monday. "I think it is difficult to resume the tour to Mt. Geumgang unless the shooting death is clarified,'' he said. "But the industrial project should be constantly developed in a stable way.''

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3. US on DPRK Human Rights

Agence France-Presse ("US ENVOY CANCELS TRIP TO NKOREA: OFFICIALS", Seoul, 2008/07/21)

reported that Jay Lefkowitz, US special envoy on DPRK human rights, has called off a planned trip to the Kaesong industrial complex, ROK and US officials said Monday. Lefkowitz has also cancelled a three-day visit to the ROK. Officials at Seoul's unification ministry and the US embassy confirmed the trips have been called off but gave no reasons.

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4. ROK on DPRK Human Rights

Donga Ilbo ("BILL SEEKS TO RAISE N. KOREA'S HUMAN RIGHTS", Seoul, 2008/07/21) reported that the ROK's ruling Grand National Party will seek to pass a bill on improving human rights in the DPRK within a day or two. The draft bill includes helping the DPRK people in addition to those who fled the DPRK. The Unification Ministry will also establish a basic plan on improving human rights including humanitarian aid and yearly improvement of human rights. The ministry will also seek to provide the DPRK people with free circulation and flow of information about liberal democracies. Seoul will also subsidize private organizations seeking to improve human rights in the DPRK.

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5. Inter-Korea Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("TWO KOREA'S TO MARCH 'VIRTUALLY' TOGETHER AT OLYMPICS", Seoul, 2008/07/21) reported that the Olympic teams from the two Koreas will effectively parade together at the Beijing Olympics opening ceremony on Aug. 8, although they have not formally agreed to do so, officials of the PRC Foreign Ministry and the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games said Sunday. During the opening ceremony, teams will parade according to the stroke count of their names written in simplified Chinese characters. As the characters for the two Koreas have the same stroke count, the Olympic teams from the two countries are expected to parade one after the other. The ROK Olympic Committee has tried to send a telephone message via the Unification Ministry to the ROK to ask for a consultation on the issue, but the ROK refused to accept the message. The Unification Ministry on Saturday said, “The government still hopes for a joint parade during the opening ceremony at the Beijing Olympics, and there still is time.”

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6. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Korea Herald (Lee Joo-hee, "MAKING DOKDO 'MORE HABITABLE'?", Seoul, 2008/07/21) reported that top officials from the government and the ruling Grand National Party over the weekend announced a project to make the Dokdo islets habitable as part of efforts to fend off Japan's claims of sovereignty. "The International Court of Justice, in case of territorial dispute, looks into who has been residing in the island before the point of debate. In other words which national has been living there before (both sides of confrontation) began making claims," a government official said on condition of anonymity. "While it would make political sense to enhance the habitability right now, it gives little meaning when legally speaking," the official said.

Joongang Ilbo ("SEOUL GETS TOUGH ON ISLETS, PLANS TO SEND MILITARY", Seoul, 2008/04/21) reported that the ROK said it would consider sending military troops to the Dokdo islets currently

guarded by police, and building an oceanic science research center there. During a joint meeting between the government and the Grand National Party on Sunday, “The GNP strongly suggested that Marines be dispatched to Dokdo, and the government said it would carefully consider the option,” said GNP spokesman Cha Myung-jin.

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7. ASEAN Role in ARF

Kyodo ("ASEAN BEGINS MEETING AMID FEAR OF BEING SIDELINED IN REGION", Singapore, 2008/07/21) reported that Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong expressed concern Monday that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations could end up being sidelined in the region if Japan, the PRC, and the ROK improve their relations and pursue their own initiatives without the involvement of the 10-member group. ''ASEAN cannot take its continued relevance for granted. If our efforts to achieve faster and deeper integration falter, ASEAN may well be sidelined,'' Lee said. 'Because of longstanding tensions and rivalries between the major Asian powers, ASEAN could play a useful role as a neutral platform for regional interactions,'' Lee said. However, ''major power relations are improving, and alternative platforms are emerging.''

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8. Sino-Russian Relations

Associated Press ("CHINA, RUSSIA SIGN BORDER AGREEMENT", Beijing, 2008/07/21) reported that the PRC and Russia signed an agreement Monday to end a long-running dispute over the demarcation of their eastern border. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov signed the agreement with his PRC counterpart, Yang Jiechi, but no details were immediately released on how the border issues were resolved. "From a legal point of view we have created the preconditions for the border to become a link of stability, openness, mutual benefit, friendship and cooperation," Lavrov said.

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9. Terrorism in PRC

Los Angeles Times (Barbara Demick, "3 KILLED IN EXPLOSIONS ON BUSES IN CHINA", Beijing, 2008/01/21) reported that explosions Monday morning in the southern PRC city of Kunming killed at least three people and injured 13 in what appears to have been a coordinated terrorist attack. Police have not yet given any explanation other than to say that the attacks were "sabotage," according to the New China News Agency.

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II. PRC Report

10. PRC Civil Society

Taian News ("TAIAN NGO ASSOCIATION ESTABLISHED", 2008/07/17) reported that on the morning of July 16, the first Member Congress of Taian NGO Association was held, which symbolized its formal establishment. It becomes the home of 2109 NGOs in Taian. Of them, 1099 are social organizations and 1010 are private non-enterprise units. According to Civil Administration Bureau of Taian, this Association will be a communication platform among NGOs. It will carry out the research work and train their members according to their own function.

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11. PRC Security

Xinhua News Agency (Yan Liang, "CHINA HANDS OUT MANUALS TEACHING CITIZENS TO ESCAPE TERRORIST ATTACKS", Beijing, 2008/07/17) reported that the PRC's Ministry of Public Security issued a manual to help citizens survive terrorist attacks as the country was tightening security in the last-minute preparation for the Olympic Games. PRC police invited experts in this field to work out such a manual to teach citizens how to discover possible terrorist attacks, to take proper actions in face of such attacks, and to minimize damages. The book included 39 scenarios of terrorist attacks including explosion, arson, kidnapping, shooting and even attacks of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. It teaches people how to identify suspicious substances such as bombs and how to help themselves and each other in such dangerous conditions as being kidnapped by terrorists.

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12. Tibet Issue

Tibet Daily (Jiang Cuilian, "BLESSING CHINESE TRAINING CENTER OF CHINESE EDUCATION FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED", 2008/07/17) reported that recently, a team of 12 PRC media abroad lead by deputy director of Overseas PRC Office of State Department Zhao Yang and chief editor of China News Agency Liu Beixian, visited Tibet. They also cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony of Blessing Chinese Training Center of Chinese Education Foundation. This Training Centre aims at improving the Chinese language level of the local herders. It cost more than 100,000 yuan to set up and also recruits two teachers to train the herders.

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III. ROK Report

13. Northeast Asian Security Cooperation

YTN ("SIX PARTY TALKS TO PERMANENT SECURITY ORGANIZATION.", 2008/07/21) wrote that on July 23, an inofficial six-party foreign minister's conference wil be held in Singapore. The six party foreign minsiters forum was supposed to held on Beijing after the completion of first step

denuclearizaiton, as mentioned in last year's 2.13 agreement. The conference is expected to discuss the general plan to develop the six party talks from a problem-solving temporary committee into a permanent Northeast Asia security cooperation organization. The conference was suggested by the U.S. If foreign ministers agree to the establishment of multiparty security organization, with the U.S, Japan, China and Russia all participating, Northeast Asian security will be dramatically enhanced.

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14. ROK at ARF

asiaeconomy ("SILENCE FOR JAPAN, CONVERSATION FOR THE DPRK", 2008/07/18) wrote that the ROK government is planning to react to the MT. Kumgang shooting incidence and Dokdo issue in this coming ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The strategy for Japan is silence. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade announced that it rejected Japan's offer to have foreign minister conversation. The ROK government holds the opinion that a foreign minister conversation is not necessary when Japan's attitude toward the Dokdo issue is unchanged. Thus rejecting a conversation is demonstration of firmness and a measure to pressure Japan. The strategy for the DPRK is conversation. The ROK government decided to officially propose the Mt. Kumgang incident be discussed at the ARF. The ROK government seems to request a approval of a joint investigation committe for on the spot inspection. However, the ROK government is also considering decisive measures if necessary. Kim Ho Nyun, the spokesman of the Ministry of National Unification, mentioned that safety and security matters should be considered for Kaesong tourism, implying that suspension of Kaesong tourism can be done to pressure the DPRK.

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