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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters ("N. KOREA SAYS IT PRODUCED 30 KILOGRAMS OF PLUTONIUM, JAPANESE DAILY REPORTS", Tokyo, 2008/04/21) reported that the DPRK told the US in December it has produced a total of around 30 kg (66 lbs) of plutonium, about 20 kg less than what the US estimates, a Japanese newspaper reported. The daily Tokyo Shimbun reported that the DPRK's chief envoy to the talks, Kim Kye-gwan, told his U.S. counterpart, Christopher Hill in the DPRK last December the DPRK had used about 18 kg of its plutonium stockpile for nuclear development and around 6 kg for its first and only underground nuclear test in October 2006. The newspaper, citing a source involved in the six-way talks on the DPRK's nuclear programme for the report, did not elaborate on what the remaining 6 kgs was used for.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Joongang Ilbo (Jung Ha-won, "U.S. TEAM OFF TO PYONGYANG TODAY TO TALK ABOUT NUKES", 2008/04/21) reported that a team of Washington officials plans to head to Pyongyang today to talk to officials there about the DPRK's promised declaration of its nuclear activities and inventory, a ROK Foreign Ministry spokesman said. Sung Kim, director of the U.S. State Department's Korean Affairs office, will lead the team to Pyongyang, the spokesman said. Moon said the U.S. team would come back to Seoul Thursday to share the results of its talks with the Pyongyang officials.

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3. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters (Chisa Fujioka, "NORTH KOREA MUST DISCLOSE NUCLEAR PROGRAMS: FUKUDA ", Tokyo, 2008/04/21) reported that Japan and the ROK agreed that the DPRK needs to swiftly give a full account of its nuclear programs, Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda said. Speaking after

meeting ROK President Lee Myung-bak in Tokyo, Fukuda also welcomed Lee's stance on the DPRK, which is tougher than what Pyongyang has seen from Seoul over the past decade and more in line with Tokyo's position. "On the nuclear issue, we confirmed the need for North Korea to swiftly make a correct and full declaration," Fukuda told a joint news conference with Lee after their meeting.

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4. US, ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Washington Post (Dan Eggen, "BUSH, S. KOREAN PRESIDENT SUGGEST MORE PATIENCE WITH KIM JONG IL", 2008/04/21) reported that President Bush and ROK President Lee Myung-bak urged patience in nuclear talks with the DPRK, arguing that recent concessions proposed by the US could lead to tangible progress in stalled negotiations with Pyongyang. Bush and Lee, appearing at the US presidential retreat at Camp David, sought to tamp down criticism from many of Bush's fellow Republicans, who say the US is yielding too much ground in six-nation negotiations with the DPRK government. "Why don't we just wait and see what they say before people go out there and start giving their opinions about whether this is a good deal or a bad deal?" Bush said. Lee said talks with the DPRK require "persistent patience."

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap ("N. KOREAN OFFICIAL WARNS AGAINST SEOUL'S TOUGH STANCE", Seoul, 2008/04/21) reported that a DPRK official indicated Pyongyang will unleash more threats if Seoul sticks to its tough policy toward the DPRK, a pro-Pyongyang online newspaper in Los Angeles said Sunday. "The South Korean government will face a more intensive measure if it keeps going on the anti-national and anti-reunification path, ignoring the spirit of the June 15 Summit Declaration and denying the Oct. 4 Summit Declaration," Choe Song-ik, a chief councilor of the DPRK's Committee for the Fatherland Reunification, told the Minjok Tongshin. "There is no other way but to fulfill the June 15 and Oct. 4 declarations if the Lee Myung-bak regime wants to survive," he said in the interview conducted on Wednesday.

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6. DPRK-Russian Relations

Yonhap ("N. KOREA, RUSSIA TO SET UP JOINT VENTURE: REPORT", Seoul, 2008/04/20) reported that the DPRK's railway minister arrived in Moscow to sign an agreement on setting up a joint venture company with Russia, the Russian news agency Itar-Tass reported. The joint venture between the DPRK's Ministry of Railways and Russia's Railways Company will undertake the modernization of the railway line linking Russia's border station of Khasan to the eastern DPRK port of Rajin, the report said.

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7. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("MARKET ACTIVITY FLOURISHES IN THE DPRK", 2008/04/21) reported that the March issue of "Rimjingang", a magazine publishing stories on life inside the DPRK as reported by defectors and those still inside the DPRK, contains an eye-opening report on activities in the DPRK's markets. According to the magazine, more than 60 markets have been set up, with each market housing around 50 traders. The use of mannequins at clothing stores and attractive price tags used to catch the eye of the shopper are in force. These days, it is not even surprising to hear cassette players extolling the virtues of a particular vendor's goods. Sellers here do not speak abruptly to customers as they might in a State-run store.

Interview Blog ("INTERVIEW WITH MR. JU JONG CHOL (VICE-PRESIDENT OF NOSOTEK)", 2008/04/21) reported that "Nosotek is the first European-invested software development & research company in the DPRK, with the head office in Pyongyang." **Ju Jong Chol** (Vice President of Nosotek) : Nosotek is the first European-invested software development & research company in the DPRK, with the head office in Pyongyang. It is founded by the General Federation of Science and Technology (GFST) of DPRK and experienced European IT-entrepreneurs. Felix Abt, the president of the European Business Association (www.eba-pyongyang.org) is one of Nosotek's directors ... we specialize on offshore IT outsourcing services we already have produced a large range of software products. Among our finished products, you find scientific software, video games, web applications, embedded software and 3D virtualization tools.

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8. DPRK Food Supply

Chosun Ilbo ("FAMINE LOOMS IN NORTH KOREA", 2008/04/21) reported that the United Nations World Food Program warns the DPRK is facing a potential humanitarian food crisis. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization predicts the DPRK will suffer the largest food deficit since 2001. It says the country will have a shortfall of 1,600,000 tons of rice and wheat. A spokeswoman for the World Food Program, Christiane Berthiaume, says food shortages have led to a doubling of prices of staple foods in the capital, Pyongyang, over the past year. She says prices are now at their highest recorded levels since 2004, making food unaffordable for most people.

Yonhap ("N.K. DISCUSSES FOOD SHORTAGE IN CABINET MEETING ", Beijing, 2008/08/21) reported that the DPRK has recently convened a Cabinet meeting to discuss food shortages, the PRC's Xinhua News Agency said, as international concerns grow over the DPRK's economic woes. The DPRK's Cabinet recently held an enlarged session and decided to address the chronic shortages of food and consumer goods, the news agency said, citing a recent edition of the cabinet daily Minju Josen. "The meeting also decided to focus national efforts on developing such major industries as electricity, coal mining, metal and transportation this year," Xinhua said.

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9. ROK-Japan Relations

Agence France-Presse (Hiroshi Hiyama, "JAPAN, SKOREA LOOK TO FUTURE WITH SUMMIT", Tokyo, 2008/04/20) reported that the ROK's new President Lee Myung-Bak sought to turn the page in fraught relations with Japan, pledging to cooperate over the DPRK and to avoid "knee-jerk" reactions. In a televised meeting with students and other members of the public, Lee compared the

relationship to Japan to an adult remaining resentful decades later about being punched by a childhood classmate who has long forgotten about the incident. And in a summit with Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, Lee agreed to restart talks on a free-trade deal. Negotiations broke down in November 2004 as both countries tried to shield key industries.

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10. Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group

The Asahi Shimbun (Toru Tamakawa, "FUKUDA, LEE TO SEEK 3-WAY TALKS WITH U.S.", 2008/04/21) reported that visiting South Korean President Lee Myung Bak and Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda are expected to reach an agreement today that would strengthen ties between Japan, the ROK and the United States, sources said. The deal would call for setting up a new framework for three-way dialogue between the countries, likely as an expanded version of the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG), at which the three nations discussed the DPRK's nuclear programs. The new framework for dialogue would allow for closer cooperation not only in dealing with the DPRK, but also in tackling such issues as the environment, energy and natural resources.

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11. ROK, Japan, PRC Summit

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN, CHINA, SKOREA EYE ANNUAL SUMMIT: REPORT ", Tokyo, 2008/04/21) reported that Japan, the PRC, and ROK plan to launch a trilateral annual summit in a bid to jointly take the lead over regional disputes, a daily said Saturday. Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda will agree on the plan when he separately meets ROK President Lee Myung-Bak next week and PRC President Hu Jintao next month, the Yomiuri Shimbun said. Their first meeting is expected to take place in Japan this autumn, the mass-circulation daily said. High on the agenda for their first meeting are the DPRK's nuclear row, protection of intellectual property rights and establishment of an investment accord, it said.

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12. Sino-Japanese Relations

Bloomberg (Tak Kumakura, "JAPAN REVIEWS DEFENSE POLICY TO DEAL WITH CHINA, YOMIURI SAYS ", 2008/04/21) reported that Japan will review its defense policy to take into account the expansion of the PRC's military, the Yomiuri newspaper reported on its Web site, citing unidentified people with knowledge of the situation. The government will create a panel to discuss policies for the next decade and aims to have a defense outline approved by cabinet by the end of next year, the report said. Japan's last defense policy review was released in 2004 to deal with the threats of ballistic missiles and terrorism, Yomiuri said.

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13. Japan Defense Policy

Kyodo ("LDP PANEL PROPOSES WEAKENING BUREAUCRATS POWER IN OPERATING SDF ", Tokyo, 2008/04/21) reported that a dominant Liberal Democratic Party panel on Defense Ministry reforms has compiled a draft proposal to allow top Self-Defense Forces officers greater control over the SDF's operation, changing the current system in which bureaucrats wield more power over it, the draft showed. The proposal of the LDP's subcommittee noted that the ministry's ground, maritime and air staff offices, which comprise uniformed officers, will be given power to operate the SDF under the defense minister's order, scrapping the Operational Policy Bureau, a key section that consists of bureaucrats.

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14. Sino-Indian Relations

PTI ("INDIA, CHINA TO DISCUSS BILATERAL AND REGIONAL ISSUES", Beijing, 2008/04/21) reported that India and the PRC will discuss a range of bilateral and regional issues when Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon meets PRC Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs He Yafei here tomorrow. Menon, the senior most Indian diplomat to visit the PRC after the Tibet unrest broke out in mid March, is expected to finalise dates for planned visit of External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee to Beijing, official sources said.

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15. PRC Human Rights

Reuters ("CHINA DEFENDS HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD AS OLYMPICS LOOM ", Beijing, 2008/04/21) reported that the PRC mounted a stern defense of its much maligned human rights record as the clock ticks ever nearer the Beijing Olympics, accusing Western countries of ignoring problems of their own and having double standards. Luo Haocai, deputy head of a largely ceremonial top government advisory body and in charge of the government affiliated China Society for Human Rights Studies, said the PRC had made "huge strides" in improving human rights. "Chinese citizens' rights and political rights are fully guaranteed... Chinese people enjoy unprecedented freedom of every kind and basic human rights, including freedom of religious belief and the right to political assembly," Luo said.

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16. Tibet Unrest

Reuters (Chris Buckley , "CHINA LAUNCHES EDUCATION DRIVE IN LHASA ", Beijing, 2008/04/21) reported that the PRC's Communist Party has launched a political education drive in Tibet's restive capital, Lhasa, vowing a long campaign to attack pro-independence sentiment and support for the Dalai Lama. The campaign to "fight separatism, protect stability and promote development" would focus on "unifying the thinking and cohesive strength of officials and the masses, deepening the struggle against separatism and counter-attacking the separatist plots of the Dalai clique," said the paper. Party members and officials would be assessed on their "performance" in the two-month drive, which will include television programs and organized denunciation sessions.

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17. PRC Economy

The Financial Times (Richard McGregor and Geoff Dyer, "CHANNEL 'ZEAL' INTO ECONOMY, CHINA URGES", 2008/04/21) reported that Beijing has called on its citizens to channel their "patriotic zeal" into the economy in a sign the government wants to cool the nationalistic backlash against the west over criticism of the Olympics and Tibet. Xinhua, the official news agency, said in an editorial that patriotism should be "cherished hundred-fold", but harnessed "rationally" in the pursuit of the most important priority - "sound and fast development". The PRC government and some citizens, mainly via the internet, have attacked foreigners in often virulent terms in response to criticism of Beijing's handling of Tibet and to protests against the Olympics torch relay. But while the government has echoed the ire of its citizens, the leadership fears giving any local protest movement too much leeway lest it should turn on them.

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II. ROK Report

18. ROK Policy toward DPRK

Tongil News (Park Kyung-Soon, "THE DIRECTION OF DIPLOMATIC SITUATION IN KOREAN PENINSULA WHERE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE INTERSECT", 2008/04/22) carried an article by the chief of the Korea Progressive Movement Research Institute, who wrote that while alleviation of DPRK-US relations and peaceful co-existence from the "10.3" agreement is fulfilled and the six-party talks will again take place, inter-Korean tension and conflict concerning the fulfillment of the 6.15 Joint Declaration and the 10.4 declaration will also occur in the near on the Korea Peninsula. The core of conflict concerning the fulfillment of the 10.3 declaration are two. One is to enlarge the public support and defend the cooperation among the people for the 6.15 Joint Declaration and 10.3 declaration. Another one is to enthusiastically expose the problems of Lee Myung-bak administration.

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19. DPRK Nuclear Problem

Electronic Time (Koo Hae-woo, "[unification forum] DPRK AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION ARE TO BE DEALT SIMULTANEOUSLY", 2008/04/22) carried an article by the executive secretary of the permanent committee of the unification forum, who wrote that the solution of the DPRK nuclear issue and inter-Korean economic cooperation must be dealt with through comprehensive thinking and detailed strategy on a large scale. The ROK government should realize that economic cooperation is the most effective factor in having dominance over the DPRK in negotiation, and should not be miserly in supporting systemic and material aid for the vitalization of economic cooperation. Also, the government should especially strongly encourage companies for inter-Korean economic cooperation. The solution of the DPRK nuclear issue and economic cooperation must go hand in hand.

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20. DPRK Nuclear Problem

Yonhap News ("JAPAN—WHEN WILL THE RING OF ABDUCTION-NUCLEAR BREAK?", 2008/04/22) wrote that predictions that Japan's role in DPRK nuclear issue will be very restricted are becoming more persuasive. Japan's position is becoming more puzzled as US-DPRK relations improve with imminent agreement of nuclear report problem leading to cancellation of its listing as a terrorist-supporting nation. However, there are predictions that Japan will not maintain its position on holding up the DPRK nuclear talks just because of the abduction problem once US-DPRK relations become intimate as six-party talks develops to the stage of nuclear abandonment.

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