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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Yonhap News ("NUKE TALKS TO BE HELD IN MID-JUNE: FM ", Seoul, 2008/05/21) reported that Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said that six-way talks on the DPRK nuclear program will resume "sometime in the middle of" next month. He made the statement during a meeting with a group of top foreign envoys here.

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2. DPRK Nuclear Program

Joongang Ilbo (Jung Ha-won, "PYONGYANG TO HAND ITS NUCLEAR DATA TO BEIJING", 2008/05/21) reported that the DPRK will fully declare its nuclear inventories and activities to the PRC and in turn, the US will take the DPRK off its list of state sponsors of terrorism, according to the ROK's chief nuclear envoy, Kim Sook. After that, Kim said, the DPRK will dismantle the cooling tower at its Yongbyon nuclear site. Kim said the move will revive the six-party talks on the denuclearization of the DPRK among the three countries and the ROK, Russia and Japan. It was the first time for a senior government official here to publicly map out a schedule on the DPRK's moves to address its nuclear programs.

Yonhap ("S. KOREA SEEKS TO BUY N. KOREAN NUCLEAR FUEL RODS", Seoul, 2008/05/22) reported that the ROK is pushing to purchase nuclear fuel rods stored at the DPRK's main atomic facility as work continues for the disablement of the complex under a denuclearization agreement, a senior ROK government official said Thursday. The ROK thinks the unused rods in Yongbyon can be used at its nuclear power plants, he added. "Details of the purchase plan will be discussed at the six-way talks," he stated.

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3. ROK Food Aid to the DPRK

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "SEOUL RESERVES 100,000 TONS OF CORN FOR PYONGYANG ", Seoul, 2008/05/21) reported that the ROK is preparing to provide the DPRK with about 100,000 tons of corn in case it is affected by either drought or floods in the coming months, a government official here said. "The government is still waiting for the North to request food aid first. Unless it does so, the government will wait for an appropriate moment," the Foreign Ministry official told Yonhap News Agency. "That (moment) includes when the North faces either drought or floods." The Lee administration plans to send corn, not rice, as corn requires immediate consumption, the official said. It is relatively easy to stock rice for military use.

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4. Inter-Korean Relations

United Press International (Lee Jong-Heon, "SEOUL STEPS UP RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH", Seoul, 2008/05/21) reported that the ROK has stepped up its challenge to the DPRK over its human rights record even as it considers providing food aid to its famine-stricken neighbor. The country's state-run human rights watchdog launched this week a policy advisory body consisting of DPRK specialists, international law experts and human rights activists, which will brainstorm over how to incorporate human rights concerns into its policy toward the DPRK. "The panel held its first meeting on Tuesday, and they will meet regularly to discuss ways to improve human rights conditions in North Korea," said an official at the National Human Rights Commission.

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5. US-ROK Trade Relations

Korea Herald ("GNP MAKES LAST-DITCH PITCH FOR FTA", 2008/05/21) reported that the government and ruling Grand National Party are scrambling to save the ROK-US free trade agreement, pinning hopes on emerging signs of cracks in the main opposition party toward the proposed ratification. The GNP made a hectic last-minute effort to persuade the plurality United Democratic Party to take up the trade bill before the current parliamentary session ends this weekend. GNP officials said they will push to extend the session toward next week if the liberal opposition continues to block floor voting. The 17th Assembly ends its four-year term May 29.

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6. Japan Politics

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("POLL: SUPPORT FOR FUKUDA, OZAWA EQUAL", 2008/05/21) reported that Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and Democratic Party of Japan leader Ichiro Ozawa share the same amount of support for their handling of recent political issues, according to survey conducted by The Yomiuri Shimbun on Saturday and Sunday. Both politicians had an approval rating of 37 percent in the survey, in which 1,837 of the targeted 3,000 voters nationwide provided valid answers in face-t-

-face interviews.

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7. Japan Weapons in Space

The Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "JAPAN PARLIAMENT OKS SPACE DEFENSE BILL ", Tokyo, 2008/05/21) reported that Japan's parliament voted to allow the country's space programs to be used for defense for the first time Wednesday as part of Tokyo's push to give its military a greater international role. The upper house of parliament approved the legislation with an overwhelming 221-14 vote. The vote followed earlier approval by the lower house, thereby lifting a 1969 ban on military use of outer space. The law, one of several moves in recent years by Japan to give greater freedom to its armed forces, allows the military to develop more advanced spy satellites for intelligence gathering and missile defense.

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8. Sino-Japanese Relations

Kyodo News ("FUKUDA OFFERS CONDOLENCES TO CHINESE ENVOY OVER QUAKE VICTIMS ", Tokyo, 2008/05/21) reported that Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda expressed his condolences to PRC Ambassador Cui Tiankai on Wednesday over the thousands of deaths in the PRC following the devastating earthquake there on May 12. After signing a condolence book at the PRC Embassy in Tokyo, Fukuda stressed the need for people to "help each other in trouble," while Cui thanked Japan for its support for the PRC following the quake, such as by sending an emergency disaster relief team.

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9. PRC Earthquake

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "RESCUES CONTINUE IN CHINA, BUT FOCUS IS SHIFTING TO THE 5 MILLION LEFT HOMELESS", Chengdu, 2008/05/21) reported that eight days after a massive earthquake struck southwest PRC, the government began to grapple Tuesday with what may be its biggest quandary: what to do with what it says are the five million people left homeless by the disaster. As the confirmed death toll rose to more than 40,000 on Tuesday, PRC authorities issued an urgent appeal for tents. "The quake zones need more than three million tents," said Li Chengyun, the vice governor of hard-hit Sichuan Province, according to the state-run news media. "If the public wants to donate, please donate tents."

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10. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse (Amber Wang, "TAIWAN'S NEW PRESIDENT VOWS NO ARMS RACE WITH CHINA", Taipei , 2008/05/21) reported that Ma Ying-jeou, on his first day as Taiwan's president, vowed not to enter an arms race with the PRC but said he would build on the island's defence to

deter a possible attack from Beijing. "We will not engage in an arms race with China because it is not in our interests and we would not be able to afford that... We will continue arms procurement on defensive weapons. We will not build or acquire nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction," he added.

Associated Press ("CHINA OFFICIAL: TAIWAN RELATIONS BETTER", Beijing, 2008/05/22) reported that Chen Yunlin, director of the Taiwan Work Office of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, said in a speech Thursday that peaceful development across the Taiwan Strait is "the common wish and mutual benefit of people both in China's mainland and Taiwan." Chen also praised the "selfless assistance" from Taiwan for the PRC earthquake, saying it shows that "blood is thicker than water." "We warmly welcome those who used to have the illusion of 'Taiwan independence,' those who used to advocate 'Taiwan independence' and even those who used to be engaged in such activities to return to the correct path of peaceful development of cross-straits relations," Chen said.

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11. US-PRC Relations

Reuters (Jim Wolf, "U.S. MILITARY CITES GROWING CHINA SPACE, CYBER THREAT ", Washington, 2008/05/21) reported that the US military painted the PRC on Tuesday as posing a growing threat to the United States and others in space and cyberspace. The PRC is "aggressively" honing its ability to shoot down satellites along with other space and counter-space capabilities, said Army Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Horne of the U.S. Strategic Command. Such know-how has big implications for Beijing's potential to curb access in the Taiwan Straits "and well beyond," he told the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, a congressionally created advisory group.

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12. US on Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("US HOPES NEW TAIWAN PRESIDENT WILL REDUCE TENSIONS WITH CHINA ", Washington, 2008/05/21) reported that the US said it looked forward to working with Taiwan's new president Ma Ying-jeou and hoped he would launch initiatives to reduce tension with the PRC. "We congratulate Ma Ying-jeou on his inauguration," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said in a statement. "We welcome initiatives to reduce tension in the Taiwan Strait," he added.

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13. Sino-Russian Relations

Agence France-Presse (Victoria Loginova, "IN FIRST FOREIGN VISIT, MEDVEDEV SPOTLIGHTS CHINA ", Moscow, 2008/05/21) reported that Russia's new President Dmitry Medvedev travels to powerful neighbour PRC this week in the centrepiece of his first trip abroad since taking office. Analysts doubt the PRC and Russia will hammer out specific deals during Medvedev's symbolic maiden voyage as president -- the PRC has for example long wanted a Russian commitment to extend a far eastern oil pipeline to its territory. But the visit underscores that today Russia takes account of its populous and resource-hungry neighbour in numerous spheres -- a major change for a

country used to measuring itself against the West.

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14. PRC Activist

The Financial Times (Mure Dickie, "LEADING ACTIVIST DETAINED", Beijing, 2008/05/21) reported that PRC police have detained the academic who last year announced the creation of a democratic opposition party after he criticised Beijing's handling of the earthquake, according to family members and associates. Guo Quan, a former university professor in the eastern city of Nanjing, is the latest in a series of high-profile dissidents and human rights activists to be detained or imprisoned in what some analysts see as a crackdown ahead of the Beijing Olympics in August. Nanjing police detained Mr Guo and seized his computer, according to statements issued on an overseas dissident website in the name of the New Democracy party, whose founding he announced in December 2007.

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II. PRC Report

15. PRC Earthquake

The State Council Information Office Website, www.scio.gov.cn ("THE EIGHTH EARTHQUAKE RELIEF NEWS CONFERENCE", 2008/05/21) reported that on the 20th afternoon, the State Council Information Office held the Eighth Earthquake Relief News Conference, Deputy Bureau Chief of the State Information Office Long Huaqing reported the latest progress of the earthquake relief work. According to the Ministry of Finance, as at 14:00 on the 20th, governments at all levels had spent 11.727 billion yuan in the relief work, out of which the central government 8.679 billion yuan, local governments 3.048 billion yuan. As at 13:00 on the 20th, the total donation received from all circles of society was 13.925 billion yuan, Ministry of Civil Affairs reported. The Audit Commission has already begun the audit of relief use.

The Oriental Morning Post, <http://www.dfdaily.com/> ("EARTHQUAKE PUSHED UP DOMESTIC ENERGY PRICE, PRICE BAN MAY BE LIFTED ADVANCED TO NEXT MONTH", 2008/05/21) reported that recently two petrochemical giants - China National Petroleum Corporation and China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation, joined with other regulatory authorities, opened up a joint consultation on energy price control, which was originally expected to open in August. Now because of the sudden earthquake, it is likely to be advanced to early June. Relax price control, and the oil prices will quickly rise, which is expected to curb the domestic demand, thereby reducing people's speculative demand to eliminate the pressure of inflation.

One Foundation, <http://www.onefoundation.cn> ("TO SET UP "5.12 SICHUAN EARTHQUAKE DISASTER RELIEF COMMAND (PROVISIONAL) ", 2008/05/21) reported that on May 20, Jet Li One Foundation "5.12 Sichuan Earthquake Disaster Relief Command (provisional)" will be officially set up in Chengdu. This is the first time for One Foundation to set up an entity for natural disaster relief, it also marks the stage of Sichuan earthquake relief work has come into a long-term

sustainable reconstruction from the initial emergency relief. Relief work of major natural disaster generally can be divided into three stages: The first stage is within the first 72 hours , focusing on emergency relief to save lives; the second is the previous week, focusing on epidemic prevention and post-disaster psychological crisis intervention; The third is mainly a long-time comprehensive post-disaster reconstruction.

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16. PRC Children's Rights

Xiamen Municipal Government Website, <http://www.xm.gov.cn/> ("HARMONIOUS SOCIETY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT" SUMMIT FORUM OPENED YESTERDAY IN XIAMEN", 2008/05/21) reported that "Harmonious Society and Child Development" Summit Forum, hosted by the Xiamen Municipal Government and the PRC Soong Ching Ling Foundation, co-hosted by Xiamen Women and Children Work Committee, opened yesterday in Xiamen. In this forum, experts home and abroad communicated and discussed how to maintain and enhance children's rights, including education, health, legal protection, environment etc.; And also the strengthen of government's action and responsibility awareness.

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17. US on PRC IEA Role

HexunNet, <http://www.hexun.com/> ("UNITED STATES CALLED ON CHINA'S ACCESSION TO THE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY",) reported that according to the report of U.S. Financial Cable Satellite News 05/20, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Sullivan called on the PRC's accession to the International Energy Agency, to help stabilize the current oil market, on Tuesday at a business conference. The International Energy Agency currently has 27 member countries, including the United States, major European countries and other important oil-consuming countries such as Japan, Australia and the ROK. "China's participation is beneficial to China itself as well as to the International Energy Agency. China may consider the publication of a statement which shows their wish to become a member of the International Energy Agency", he said.

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III. ROK Report

18. DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap News ("SIX-PARTY TALKS AT A VISIBLE PROXIMITY", 2008/05/21) wrote that considering the willingness of the ruling bodies of the US and DPRK, the progress in denuclearization is being realized at a rate faster and more daring than predicted. It seems that once the six-party talks are re-started by the first half of next month, which will determine the method for verifying the nuclear report contents and brief outlines of the roadmap of for phase three, the DPRK can take even more daring measures. Some in the diplomatic world suggest the possibility of a visit of a high-level DPRK official to the US around the time of the country's removal from the state sponsor of terrorism list,

which the DPRK sees as a crucial step for the abandonment of the hostile DPRK policy of the US.

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19. Inter-Korea Relations

Hankyoreh ("DETERIORATION OF INTER-KOREAN RELATION MAKING CRAB FISHERMEN SIGH", 2008/05/22) wrote that fishermen working near the Northern Limit Line (NLL) are concerned by the deterioration of inter-Korean relations. The ROK government still does not change its unrealistic and one-way concept regarding the DPRK. Before blaming the DPRK for criticizing the ROK's president with harsh words or unconditionally denying the achievements of the former administration, the ROK government must seriously consider a realistic reciprocal DPRK policy. This incident clearly illustrates how unchanged inter-Korean relations inevitably cause disadvantage to both the ROK and DPRK.

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20. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Pressian ("'RESTORATION' OF ROK-US ALLIANCE THREATENS ROK-US ALLIANCE", 2008/05/21) wrote that the ROK government's DPRK policy is proving to be no more than the first Bush administration's inclination to neo-conservatism. How the government sees Kim Jong-il regime separates itself from the people talking about the human rights issues in the DPRK and how it disregards the solutions for change in the Kaesong complex are examples. However, one month into the administration, it is now necessary to question its expectations and prudence.

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