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I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "NKOREA PREPARING TO RESTORE NUCLEAR REACTOR", Panmunjom, 2008/09/19) reported that DPRK deputy director-general of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hyun Hak Bong said Friday the DPRK is making "thorough preparations" to restart its nuclear reactor. Hyun spoke in the border village of Panmunjom before talks Friday with ROK officials on energy aid. The talks concluded late Friday afternoon. The Foreign Ministry later issued a statement, "Now that the United States' true colors have been brought to light, the DPRK no longer wishes to be delisted as a 'state sponsor of terrorism' — and does not expect such a thing to happen."

Associated Press ("NKOREA ASKS UN ATOMIC AGENCY TO PULL REACTOR SEALS", Vienna, 2008/09/22) reported that International Atomic Energy Agency head Mohammed El Baradei said that the DPRK has asked his agency to remove its seals from the Yongbyon nuclear reactor. Baradei said authorities in Pyongyang say they only want to carry out unspecified tests that will not involve nuclear materials.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Joongang Ilbo (Jung Ha-won, "U.S. CALLS NORTH OUT OVER JUNE NUKE LIST", Seoul, 2008/09/22) reported that Stephen Hadley, U.S. President George W. Bush's national security affairs adviser, on Saturday raised doubts over North Korea's nuclear declaration in June. "They've given us a declaration on which we have a lot of questions. It was not the complete and correct declaration that we had hoped," Hadley stated. Hadley indicated it remains uncertain whether the latest threats from Pyongyang "reflect a change in policy or are simply the kind of negotiating that we've seen before."

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3. DPRK Leadership

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMAT DENIES LEADER KIM IS ILL", Seoul, 2008/09/19) reported that DPRK Foreign Ministry official Hyun Hak-bong denied Friday that leader Kim Jong-il is ill. Hyun called the reports about Kim's ill health "nonsense spread by bad people who don't wish our republic well." "Even if they do (spread false speculation about Kim), we are not surprised, and our solidarity will not be broken," Hyun told reporters at Panmunjom.

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4. ROK Aid for DPRK

Agence France-Press ("SEOUL TO DELAY AID FOR STALLED NKOREA DISARMAMENT: REPORT", Seoul, 2008/09/21) reported that the ROK will delay a planned aid shipment to the DPRK this week as Pyongyang moved to restart its nuclear reactor in violation of the aid-for-disarmament deal, a news report said Sunday. Yonhap news agency, citing an unnamed government source, said the delivery of 1,500-tonne steel pipes -- originally due on Thursday -- would be put on hold until mid- or late-October.

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "CIVIC GROUP MEMBERS TO VISIT NK", Seoul, 2008/09/19) reported that members of the Korea Sharing Movement, a local civic group, will begin a trip to the DPRK Saturday, a spokesman of the group said Friday. Pyongyang sent an invitation to 142 members of the group and journalists, but rejected applications by journalists from three media outlets including Reuters. Members of several other civic groups and the main opposition Democratic Party plan to make trips to the DPRK next month, sources said.

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6. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Korea Times (Michael Ha, "MORE CONSERVATIVE TAKE TO GRIP HISTORY TEXTBOOKS", Seoul, 2008/09/21) reported that the ROK Ministry of Unification's request to replace the term ``sunshine policy" with the more generic phrase ``reconciliation and cooperation policy" in high school textbooks is drawing heat from political opponents. The Unification Ministry expressed its view that the more generic term ``reconciliation and cooperation policy" would do a better job of explaining the DPRK policy.

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7. ROK Military in Iraq

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "S.KOREA TO WITHDRAW ALL REMAINING TROOPS FROM

IRAQ", Seoul, 2008/09/19) reported that the ROK will completely withdraw its remaining troops from Iraq by December, Defense Ministry spokesman Won Tae-jae said Friday. Another Defense Ministry official said there is "little chance" of the ROK extending the tour again. "There is no more need for us to stay there," he said, adding that the U.S. has not requested another ROK troop extension.

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8. Terrorist Suspects in ROK

Korea Times (Kang Hyun-kyung, "'S. KOREA NO LONGER SAFE FROM TERRORISM'", Seoul, 2008/09/21) reported that seventy-four terrorist suspects, including those with links to Islamic terrorist group al-Qaeda, have been sent to prison or deported from the ROK since 2003, Rep. Won Hye-young of the main opposition Democratic Party (DP) said Sunday. Won, a member of the National Assembly's Intelligence Committee, made the remarks, disclosing a classified document produced by the National Intelligence Service (NIS).

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9. US-ROK Alliance

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "S. KOREA, U.S. TO HOLD TALKS ON DEFENSE COST SHARING", Seoul, 2008/09/22) reported that the ROK and the United States will try again to narrow differences this week over how much Seoul should pay for the presence of American troops, officials said Monday. The new round of talks, the third this year, will be held in Washington on Wednesday and Thursday, focusing on setting the ROK's portion for the coming years and changing the formula for its financial contributions, they added. "The two sides reviewed each other's position in the two previous rounds," an ROK foreign ministry official said. "Full-fledged negotiations are expected from now on."

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10. US Military in Japan

Asahi Shimbun (Fumiaki Sonoyama and Kuniichi Tanida, "ANXIETY ABOUT NUCLEAR SAFETY AS U.S. CARRIER ARRIVAL NEARS", Tokyo, 2008/09/22) reported that there is growing concern over the safety of U.S. nuclear vessels ahead of the arrival Thursday of the USS George Washington, the first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to be deployed in Japan. According to a private-sector organization, many local residents could die if a major nuclear accident should strike the carrier and expose the population to high levels of radiation. "It is Japanese citizens who will suffer in the case of an accident," said Hiroshi Honma, a professor emeritus at Hosei University and an expert on legal issues concerning the U.S. military. "To protect their lives and property, the Japanese government must propose standards on information (to be disclosed) and renegotiate an agreement."

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11. Japanese Politics

Kyodo ("EX-FOREIGN MINISTER ASO ELECTED LDP CHIEF TO BE JAPAN'S NEW LEADER",

Tokyo, 2008/09/22) reported that Former Foreign Minister Taro Aso scored a landslide victory in the Liberal Democratic Party's presidential election Monday to succeed Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda. Aso told a plenary meeting of the party lawmakers after defeating his four rivals, "I think I will only be able to fulfill my fate by winning" the general election. Of the total 527 votes, which are held by 386 LDP lawmakers and 141 prefectural chapter representatives, Aso took 351, following a 12-day campaign.

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12. PRC Food Safety

Associated Press (Scott McDonald, "NEARLY 12,900 CHINESE CHILDREN SICKENED BY MILK", Beijing, 2008/09/21) reported that the PRC said Sunday the number of children sickened by baby formula tainted with the banned industrial chemical melamine has doubled to nearly 12,900 as the government confronts a scandal over widespread contamination of the milk supply. More than 80 percent of the 12,892 children hospitalized in recent weeks were 2 years old or younger, the Health Ministry said in a statement posted on its Web site late Sunday. Four children have died.

Yomiuri Shimbun ("TAINTED' FOOD SUPPLIED TO 3,000 FACILITIES", Tokyo, 2008/09/22) reported that major catering firm Nisshin Healthcare Food Service Co. has been supplying one of five Marudai Food Co. products suspected to contain the toxin melamine to more than 3,000 facilities nationwide since July, the catering firm said Sunday. The firm said that as of Sunday it has not received any reports of people sickened by eating the product. Marudai Food said Saturday that five products including Cream Panda marketed in the country might contain melamine as milk produced by a Chinese dairy firm that was confirmed to have contained the chemical was used in the products.

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II. PRC Report

13. PRC Civil Society and Public Health

Shenyang Daily (Yeqing, Huxiaozhen, "FIRST SPECIAL DISEASE RELIEF FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED IN SHENYANG", 2008/09/18) reported that recently, media and medical institutions jointly established the first Special Disease Relief Foundation in Shenyang city, Liaoning province. After conferring with the designated hospitals, the first startup capital will be ¥100,000. The Foundation aims at helping every special disease patient. Each of the patients will have their own fund-using record and this record will be open to the public. The choice of the patients is also under strict verification by the jury of the Foundation and the result will be released to the public.

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14. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

China Weather News Agency (Wang Jianzhong, "ZHOU GUANGZHAO FOUNDATION ENCOURAGES RESEARCH ON ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE", 2008/09/18) reported that on 17 September, the 10th annual meeting of the China Association for Science and Technology awarded two scientific prizes from Zhou Guangzhao Foundation for the first time. The prizes aim at encouraging scientific researchers to research climate change. Mr. Zhou Guangzhao, also the chairman of China Association for Science and Technology, is a famous physical scientist. The Zhou Guangzhao Foundation was established by Hongkong businessman Zhong Jianguo, under the support of China Association for Science and Technology.

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15. PRC Environment

Xinhua News Agency (Cao Guochang, "HEBEI BEGINS TO SUPPLY WATER TO BEIJING", 2008/09/18) reported that at 10 o'clock on September 18, Hebei Huangbizhuang Reservoir began to open the sluice gate, which signaled that the middle line of south-to-north water diversion project was fully started. The water supply time is from September 18, 2008 to March 10, 2009. The total quantity of the water is 300 million cubic meters. The whole process will be supervised by relevant authorities.

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III. ROK Report

16. DPRK Nuclear Issue

Ohmynews ("FORMER MINISTER OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL UNIFICATION SAYS U.S. MIGHT NOT WANT TO RID DPRK OF ITS NUCLEAR WEAPONS", 2008/09/19) reported that according to Sehyun Jung, the former minister of the Ministry of National Unification, to the U.S. it is more beneficial if the DPRK listens to them well while keeping their nuclear weapons, because once the DPRK gets rid of all nuclear weapons and solve all the matters regarding missiles, the ROK will definitely start pushing out the U.S. army. However, from the ROK's point of view, the DPRK must get rid of all its nuclear weapons, and that is what the ROK must request of the DPRK and the U.S. It is also the main reason why the ROK and DPRK should be in the center of the six-party talks.

Hankyoreh ("DPRK NUKE VERIFICATION NEGOTIATION NEEDS PRODUCTIVE COMPROMISE", 2008/09/22) reported that the DPRK revealed their own position about the nuclear verification issue Friday. Thus the participants of the six-party talks such as the ROK, U.S., and PRC resumed conversation to respond to it appropriately. There is a large possibility that the conflict over the verification issue will last longer than expected unless they find clues to solve the problem. Productive compromise, which is both theoretical and practical, is needed at the moment. One way is to focus on the Yongbyon nuke facilities first and then move the procedure on to the three-step process.

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17. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Tongil News ("MEANINGS OF OFFICIAL WARNING FROM UNIFICATION MINISTRY AND VISIT PERMISSION OF LARGE-SCALE DELEGATION TO FLY TO DPRK", 2008/09/22) said in an op-ed that the ROK Unification Ministry is now settling in after almost being scuttled after the Lee Administration came into the office. Specifically, Kim Ha-joong, the ROK Unification Minister's, public action is getting people's attention. In contrast to before, now the Unification Ministry has their own voice when dealing with the rumor of the DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's illness and giving large-scale civic delegations permission to visit the DPRK. However, it is still unclear whether the Minister's public responses will be able to break the ice on the peninsula by resuming inter-Korean dialogue.

Kookmin Ilbo ("WE SHOULD NOT FORGET ABOUT SHOOTING-DEATH IN MT. KUMKANG", 2008/09/22) reported that members of Korean Sharing Movement flew to the DPRK Saturday. Even though what they are aiming at is humanitarian aid, according to what they say, it is still controversial if it is right to allow such a large-scale civic delegation to visit the DPRK at the moment, only two months after the shooting-death in Mt. Kumkang occurred. Further, the DPRK is currently rebuilding their nuclear facilities. The government and civic organizations must realize that such an action will only result in giving more confidence to the DPRK that they can handle the ROK and nuclear issue the way they want.

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