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I. Napsnet

1. DPRK on US-ROK Exercises

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA SLAMS SOUTH KOREA-US WAR GAMES", Seoul, 2008/08/24) reported that the DPRK claimed Sunday that joint military exercises by the ROK and the United States were a rehearsal for an attack against it and warned it would repel any aggression. "The army and people of the DPRK will never remain an onlooker to the U.S. military and the South Korean bellicose forces staging frantic anti-DPRK war moves," the Korean Central News Agency quoted Gen. Kim Jong Gak as saying at a meeting in its capital. "Should the U.S. imperialists and their following forces misjudge the DPRK's will and act rashly," the people and army "will mercilessly wipe out the aggressors to the last man," Kim said.

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2. ROK, PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program

Associated Press (Kwang-tae Kim, "CHINA, SKOREA AGREE TO KEEP WORKING ON NKOREA DEAL", Seoul, 2008/08/25) reported that the leaders of the ROK and the PRC agreed Monday to expand cooperation in political, economic and other fields — including the DPRK's nuclear disarmament. "We agreed to make joint efforts to ensure the six-party talks process enters a new phase," PRC President Hu Jintao said. Hu, speaking at a press conference with ROK President Lee Myung-bak after their summit, also called for the "full implementation" of the second phase of the denuclearization process. Lee said he told Hu of Seoul's "endeavor to develop South-North relations based on the principle of co-existence and co-prosperity with a view to bringing about permanent peace and a common economic community on the Korean peninsula."

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3. DPRK Refugees

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "PROTEST BLASTS CHINA'S REPATRIATION OF NK REFUGEES", Seoul, 2008/08/25) reported that DPRK defectors in Seoul staged a rally Monday to protest the PRC's repatriation of DPRK refugees with the arrival of PRC President Hu Jintao. They also sent a letter to Hu through the PRC Embassy demanding that he stop the deportations and help asylum

seekers go wherever they wish to. ``An estimated 100,000 to 300,000 North Korean escapees are in China. Between 150 to 300 of them are caught by Chinese police and sent to the North every week," said the Rev. Kim Kyou-ho, secretary general of Christians for Social Responsibility which organized the rally.

Yonhap (Yoo Cheong-mo, "LEE CALLS HU'S ATTENTION TO N. KOREAN DEFECTORS' HUMAN RIGHTS", Seoul, 2008/08/25) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak on Monday asked his visiting PRC counterpart, Hu Jintao, to prevent Beijing from forcibly repatriating DPRK defectors in consideration of their human rights, the presidential office, Cheong Wa Dae, said. Lee asked for the PRC leader's assistance in gaining the release of ROK prisoners of war still held captive in the DPRK, said the office.

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4. DPRK Environment

Korea Times (Kang Hyun-kyung, "S. KOREA TO BENEFIT FROM GREEN FOREST IN N. KOREA", Seoul, 2008/08/25) reported that ROK Rep. Chung Doo-un said that the ROK will benefit from forestation projects in the DPRK. ``Approximately 1.63 million hectares of forest in the North has been destroyed over the past decades partly due to the lack of an effective policy response. Residents suffer as a result of the poor forestation as their lives are directly exposed to the natural disaster," Chung said. Chung added that ROK businesses ``can obtain carbon credits, also known as Certified Emission Reductions, through the forestry plantation project."

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5. Sino-ROK Relations

Korea Times (Na Jeong-ju, "KOREA, CHINA TO EXPAND MILITARY EXCHANGES", Seoul, 2008/08/25) reported that the ROK and the PRC agreed Monday to set up strategic talks between senior diplomats of the two countries and expand military exchanges. ``Both countries share the goal of fostering stronger ties in the political, economic and cultural sectors," said a joint statement issued at the end of a summit between ROK President Lee Myung-bak and PRC President Hu Jintao at Cheong Wa Dae. ``Hu came to Seoul only one day after the Beijing Olympics ended, which shows how importantly he thinks of South Korea," a Cheong Wa Dae spokesman said.

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6. Geographical Naming Disputes

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "SEOUL REGRETS CHINA'S SEA NAMING", Seoul, 2008/08/25) reported that the government filed a protest Monday over the PRC's use of the name ``Sea of Japan" at the closing ceremony of the Beijing Olympics Sunday, a spokesman for the Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry in Seoul said Monday. The Beijing Olympics Organizing Committee displayed a world map containing the term "Sea of Japan" to denote the body of water between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. ``We plan to inform the Beijing Olympics Organizing Committee of its wrongfulness over the description of the Sea of Japan. I know the Korean Embassy in Beijing has already taken related measures," ministry spokesman Moon Tae-young told reporters. Moon said the government will

continue efforts to ensure other governments and international organizations use the term "East Sea" along with the name "Sea of Japan."

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7. ROK Refugee Policy

Korea Times (Park Si-soo, "CENTER FOR REFUGEES TO BE BUILT NEXT YEAR", Seoul, 2008/08/25) reported that the ROK government will build a refugee-only detention center next year to accommodate the soaring number of asylum seekers during their applications are processed. Those who obtain refugee status will be given a six-month education course there designed to help them settle in the ROK. "We plan to build the center in Paju, Gyeonggi Province," a source told The Korea Times. "The Ministry of Justice is in talks with the Ministry of Strategy and Finance to secure budget."

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8. US-PRC Relations

BBC ("CHINA DEPORTS US TIBET PROTESTORS", Beijing, 2008/08/25) reported that the PRC has deported eight Americans detained in Beijing last week for demonstrating about Tibet during the Olympic Games. The eight Americans were deported at 2100 PRC time (1300 GMT) on Sunday on a China Air flight to Los Angeles, the White House said. Two other detainees, a Briton and a German, were reportedly also freed.

Associated Press ("US AMBASSADOR TO CHINA: RELEASE US PROTECTORS", Beijing, 2008/08/24) reported that U.S. Ambassador to the PRC Clark T. Randt Jr. is pressing PRC officials to immediately release eight Americans who were detained for holding pro-Tibet protests during the Olympics. He said U.S. officials are "disappointed that China has not used the occasion of the Olympics to demonstrate greater tolerance and openness."

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9. Cross Strait Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun (Toshinao Ishii, "JINMEN ISLAND BRIDGE TO LINK TAIWAN, CHINA", Jinmen Island, 2008/08/23) reported that Saturday marked the 50th anniversary of the PRC's bombing of Taiwan-controlled Jinmen Island. A ferry between Jinmen Island and the city of Xiamen, PRC, takes about 50 minutes and crosses 10 times per day. In July, 43,200 Taiwanese traveled to Xiamen. The number of passengers using the ferry has increased by about 40 percent from the same period last year. Construction of a bridge connecting the island and Xiamen is planned.

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10. Japanese Politics

Yomiuri Shimbun ("LDP LAWMAKERS WARY OF EARLY ELECTION", Tokyo, 2008/08/25) reported

that an increasing number of Liberal Democratic Party members have voiced opposition to the dissolution of the House of Representatives anytime soon, as visits to their constituencies for summer holidays earlier this month led many to feel an election would be disastrous for the ruling coalition. Political observers predict that differences will grow between the LDP and its junior partner New Komeito, as the latter has been demanding that the lower house be dissolved soon.

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II. PRC Report

11. PRC Rural Development

People's Daily online (Fu Xianjie, "22 RURAL COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER OF DAGANG DISTRICT, TIANJIN CITY START OPERATION", Tianjin, 2008/08/24) reported that Dagang District of Tianjin City has invested 23.71 million RMB for the construction of 22 rural community service centers. Recently all of these service centers have been put into use. These service centers can be found all over the rural residential communities. Each center has 9 basic function settings including the medical station, the relaxation room, the recovery room for the disabled, the party member's activity room, the labor security room, the civil service room, the community school, the reading room, and the cultural information room. These centers will greatly improve the villagers' life quality.

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12. PRC Environment

Finance&Economy website, <http://www.caijing.com.cn/> ("ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROJECT LAUNCHED BY FINANCE&ECONOMY UNVEILED", 2008/08/20) reported that 20 civil environmentalists were invited by Finance & Economy to Beijing for an environmental tourism and experiencing the green Olympics. All of these people have been insisting on environmental protection activities for years. Some of them set up the environmental hotline, and gather volunteers discussing and spreading environmental ideas; some of them introduce advancing the grass-planting technology into restoring grassland ecosystems; some of them organize their students carrying out various kinds of environmental protection activities. Finance&Economy organizes this activity to enhance the communication between environmentalists and the media and to spread environmental ideas.

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13. Tibet Resources

Jinghua Times ("1 BILLION TONS OF MAGNETITE FOUND IN TIBET", 2008/08/22) reported that according to the official website of Ministry of Business, Jiangxi provincial Institute of Geological Survey found a large scale of rich magnetite in Tibet. The quality average rate (which is the composite index of the iron content, the chemical composition, and the physical properties of the magnetite) reaches 50% - 60%. And the expected resource quantity may reach 1 billion tons.

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III. ROK Report

14. PRC-ROK Relations

PRESSian (Lee Hee-Ok, Professor of Political Science of Sungkyunkwan University, "POST-OLYMPIC PRC ", 2008/08/25) said in a column that the U.S. and PRC will maintain confrontation while retaining the peaceful atmosphere, which will be advantageous to both nations. PRC President Hu Jintao's visits to several nations including the ROK right after the Olympic Games well prove this prediction. This is one of the effort to practice the hedging strategy to confront the U.S.' global strategy and their PRC policy. Also, the PRC seeks ways to establish a strong regionalism in East Asia, so that they can change the 'Chinese threat' theory into 'Chinese opportunity'. The PRC has been trying to improve relations with the ROK to weaken the U.S' power on the Korean Peninsula. That is why the ROK needs to view the ROK-PRC Free Trade Agreement (FTA) from the standpoint of PRC's regionalism strategy, and not as an economic issue.

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15. DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap News ("DPRK UTILIZES MULTILATERAL WAY OF TALKS DURING DIALOGUE WITH US", 2008/08/25) reported that the DPRK started utilizing the six-party talks as one of their means for achieving their strategic goals. It is quite different from five years ago when the talks first started, when they insisted on talking with the U.S. bilaterally. Currently, the biggest concern between the U.S. and the DPRK is the delay of terrorism delisting and completing the verification mechanism. The DPRK plans to conclude negotiations on the verification mechanism by the end of October when the disabling of the nuclear facilities and the economic and energy aid for them is finished. This is also when the delisting is going to be completed as well. However, many predict that the DPRK's actual verification will be delayed until after they are removed from the terrorism-supporting list.

JoongAng Ilbo ("DPRK NUKE TALKS, NEEDS OVERALL RE-EVALUATION", 2008/08/25) said in an op-ed that it has been already two months since the DPRK and the U.S. started arguing over the nuclear verification mechanism. The DPRK's strong will to maintain the position as a member of the nuclear club makes the talks even more complicated. In this situation, the government should work more on improving relationships with the U.S. and PRC. What is more important is to make PRC realize their role as one of the most crucial factors for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and to seek practical methods together. Meanwhile, since the U.S. seems to put more focus on the transfer of nuclear weapons, rather than their complete abandonment, the government should be concern more about the U.S.' will about abandonment while retaining the partnership.

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