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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("US ACCUSES NKOREA OF VIOLATING SIX-NATION NUCLEAR ACCORD", Washington, 2008/08/26) reported that the US accused the DPRK of violating a six-nation accord aimed at ending its nuclear drive after the DPRK stopped disabling its atomic plants. The State Department said Pyongyang's decision to stop disabling its key Yongbyon nuclear complex was of "great concern" and "a step backward" in diplomatic efforts aimed at denuclearizing the Korean peninsula. "It certainly is in violation of its commitments to the six-party framework, certainly in violation of the principle of action-for-action," department spokesman Robert Wood told reporters.

The Associated Press ("US SAYS NKOREA MUST VERIFY NUCLEAR DECLARATION ", Washington, 2008/08/26) reported that the White House says the DPRK has not fulfilled conditions necessary for its removal from the US blacklist of state sponsors of terrorism. White House press secretary Dana Perino says the DPRK has to come up with an internationally accepted plan for verifying that it is abandoning its nuclear program. She says the US will fulfill its commitments as the DPRK fulfills its commitments.

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2. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program

Xinhua ("CHINA URGES PARTIES TO HONOR PROMISES AS DPRK HALTS DENUCLEARISATION ", Beijing, 2008/08/26) reported that the PRC urged parties in the Korean Peninsula nuclear talks to honor their commitments and take joint actions even when difficulties arise. "Whether opportunity knocks or difficulty arises, we should keep in mind our goal of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula and a peaceful and stable northeast Asia, honor our commitments, enhance mutual trust and work closely to push the six-party talks," Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang told a regular press briefing. "We hope the communication and consultation can overcome all difficulties and complex factors and take the nuclear talks into anew phase," Qin said.

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3. Japan on DPRK Nuclear Program

RIA Novosti ("JAPAN WORRIED OVER N. KOREA'S SUSPENSION OF NUCLEAR DISABLEMENT", Tokyo, 2008/08/26) reported that Japan is concerned over the DPRK's decision to halt the disablement of its nuclear facilities and consider reactivating its Yongbyon reactor, a Japanese diplomat said. "The government of Japan is seriously concerned with the slowdown of the denuclearization process on the Korean peninsula," said Kazuo Kodama, a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry. "Japan will continue applying pressure on North Korea in order to complete the dismantlement of the [Yongbyon] facility in close cooperation with all participants in the six-party talks," the diplomat said.

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4. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Xinhua ("S KOREA EXPRESSES CONCERNS OVER DPRK'S SUSPENSION OF DISABLING NUCLEAR FACILITIES", Seoul, 2008/08/27) reported that the ROK government expressed concerns over Pyongyang's announcement of suspending the disablement of nuclear facilities, vowing to cooperate with related parties of the six-party talks to deal with the situation. "The measure is regrettable as it came at a time when the six parties have to make concerted efforts to complete phase two of the denuclearization process," said Moon Tae-young, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry.

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5. ROK on DPRK Defectors

Yonhap News (Shim Sun-ah, "S. KOREA TO PUNISH N.K. DEFECTORS SEEKING REFUGEE STATUS IN THIRD COUNTRY ", Seoul, 2008/08/26) reported that DPRK defectors may be criminally punished if they seek refugee status again in another country after obtaining ROK citizenship, officials said. "The government decided to cut down resettlement subsidies promised to North Korean defectors who settled in South Korea if they apply for asylum in a third country by lying about their nationality," Kim Ho-nyoun, spokesman for the Unification Ministry, told reporters. "The government may consider criminally punishing them, depending on individual cases."

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6. ROK Aid to the DPRK

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA DIVERTED W2 BILLION IN AID: BAI", 2008/08/26) reported that the DPRK diverted some W2 billion (US$1=W1,079) worth of asphalt pitch and subsidiary materials provided for repair of the runway at Mt. Baekdu Airport from the Inter-Korean Cooperation Fund during the Roh Moo-hyun administration, the Board of Audit and Inspection said. The government watchdog said agencies including the Unification Ministry “made no preparations to deal with shoddy construction or illegal diversion of the fund”. They took “no action even when a senior North Korean

cabinet counselor publicly said in 2006 the North would use a shipment to Nampo Port out of the aid materials to pave the runway of Sunan International Airport in Pyongyang" rather than Mt. Baekdu Airport.

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7. US-ROK Joint Military Exercise

Korea Herald ("ALLIES SAY JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE WAS SUCCESSFUL", 2008/08/26) reported that the latest joint military training of the ROK and the US has proved that their alliance is firmly on track for the future, top defense officials here were quoted as saying. "My first priority is that as an alliance, we must be prepared to fight and win. My second priority is to continue to strengthen one of the world's most important, long-standing alliances. UFG has helped both the ROK and U.S. focus on plans, processes and coordination on both of those," said Gen. Walter L. Sharp. "UFG highlighted that the Korean military is world-class and fully capable of defending their nation. OPCON transfer will afford them that opportunity with the U.S. fighting by their side in a strong supporting role," he added in a statement.

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8. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Chosun Ilbo ("NETIZENS FUND DOKDO AD IN WASHINGTON POST", 2008/08/26) reported that a full-page advertisement pointing out that the Dokdo Islets are Korean territory appeared in the Monday issue of Washington Post, funded by thousands of Korean Internet users. Internet portal site Daum said money raised from some 110,000 Internet users paid for the ad, which was placed by Korean publicist Seo Kyoung-duk, who last month put a similar ad in the New York Times with sponsorship from singer Kim Jang-hoon.

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9. Sino-ROK Environmental Cooperation

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "LEE, HU SHARE 'GREEN LEADERSHIP'", 2008/08/26) reported that President Lee Myung-bak and PRC President Hu Jintao have shared their mutual views on environmental policies, Cheong Wa Dae said Tuesday. Hu, who was on a two-day stay in Seoul for summit talks, visited Seoul Forest, a large eco-forest public park in eastern Seoul built in 2005 when Lee served as Seoul mayor. The visit was arranged at the request of the PRC leader, who is seeking new policies to combat environmental pollution in the PRC's big cities, Cheong Wa Dae officials said.

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10. Japan Aid Workers in Afghanistan

The Asahi Shimbun ("GUNMEN GRAB JAPANESE IN AFGHANISTAN", 2008/08/26) reported that a Japanese aid worker was abducted by gunmen in Afghanistan on Tuesday, and the Foreign Ministry was trying to confirm reports that he had been released. Kazuya Ito, 31, a worker for Peshawar-kai,

an NGO that provides relief programs in Afghanistan and Pakistan, was abducted on his way to work along with a local driver between 6:30 a.m. and 7 a.m. Tuesday in the suburb of Jalalabad, eastern Afghanistan. Local authorities told the Japanese Embassy in Kabul that the two were released unharmed after being held hostage for a few hours.

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11. Sino-Indian Relations

IANS ("INDIA, CHINA SCIENTIFIC TIES GROWING - BUT SLOWLY", Bangalore, 2008/08/25) reported that Indian and PRC scientists are increasingly working together, but it might take a few years before it becomes significant or sets the pace for South-South scientific collaboration, a study says. Just published in Current Science, a prominent Indian science publication, the study says from 2004 onwards, "there has been a slow but perceptible rise in collaboration". Physics was found to be the most prominent area of India-PRC collaboration. Way behind came medicine.

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12. PRC Earthquake

Agence France-Presse (Robert J. Saiget, "CHINA QUAKE REFUGEES STILL FACING UNCERTAIN FUTURE", Dujiangyan, 2008/08/26) reported that more than 100 days after a powerful earthquake devastated much of this region in southwest PRC, Li Kuilan still faces an uncertain future, having lost her husband and her home. Li is among millions of residents whose lives were destroyed by the May 12 Wenchuan disaster and who were forced to move into hastily-built refugee camps now dotting the quake belt in Sichuan province. According to government figures, 978,000 urban households have been relocated to 3,400 refugee camps like Happy Family Garden.

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13. PRC Anti-Corruption Drive

Reuters ("CHINA TO TARGET CORRUPT OFFICIALS' LOVERS", Beijing, 2008/08/26) reported that the PRC will go after the lovers and family members of corrupt officials by amending an existing law to make it easier to prosecute them, a state newspaper said, as the government tries to tackle a surge in graft. "Spouses and children of and/or people who have 'intimate relations' with corrupt officials could be jailed for more than seven years if they are found guilty of taking advantage of such officials' positions to get bribes or make money illegally," the China Daily said. It cited a legal official, Huang Taiyun, as saying "people who have intimate relations" mainly meant "secret lovers of corrupt officials."

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14. PRC Environment

The Times (Michael Sheridan, "MILLIONS FORFEIT WATER TO OLYMPIC GAMES", 2008/08/26) reported that thousands of PRC farmers face ruin because their water has been cut off to guarantee

supplies to the Olympics in Beijing. In the capital, foreign dignitaries have admired millions of flowers in bloom and lush, well-watered greens around its famous sights. But just 90 minutes south by train, peasants are hacking at the dry earth as their crops wilt, their money runs out and the work of generations gives way to despair, debt and, in a few cases, suicide.

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II. PRC Report

15. PRC Public Education System

Jinghua Times (Zhou Yimei, "SCHOOLS WHO ADMITTING CHILDREN OF MIGRANT WORKERS WILL GET AWARDS", 2008/08/26) reported that the Minister of Education Zhou Ji recently proposed three measures to guarantee the admissions problems of the children of migrant workers. He said the compulsory education of children of migrant workers should be bought into the public education system. The public schools who admit children of migrant workers should be allocated with full funding. The educational investment should be enhanced, and the central finance will provide public funds and school running conditions as two awards for those schools according to the number of children of migrant workers they admitted.

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16. PRC Olympics

People’s Daily online ("OLYMPIC VOLUNTEERS – SIGN OF CIVIC AWARENESS", 2008/08/26) reported that according to the record of Qianjiang Evening Paper, there are 100,000 game volunteers, 400,000 city volunteers, 1 million social volunteers and 200,000 cheerleader volunteers participating in the Olympic Games. The total record-breaking number of volunteers is 1.7 million. They join in all aspects of the games, such as protocol reception, translation, transportation, security, health care, audience guide, goods distribution, communication, press-running support, and other voluntary work. Their sincere smile, good service and meticulous care become an integral part of the Olympic Games.

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17. PRC Environment

People’s Daily online (Yan Huaqiang, "PUBLISHING CAN BE GREENER", 2008/08/26) reported that Book Industry Observe Forum and the Greenpeace jointly organized the first public discussion about “Green Publishing” recently. Many directors of publishing companies, paper businessmen, publishers and relevant experts from Beijing have participated in it. The participants all agree with that the key of green publishing are compressing the frivolous topics to reduce the paper consumption, and more using of recycled papers and alternatives.

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III. ROK Report

18. DPRK Nuclear Issue

PRESSian (Kim Yeon-chul, "DPRK STOPS DISABLING, ROK NEEDS TO DEAL WITH NEW PERSPECTIVE", 2008/08/27) said in a column that the DPRK Foreign Affairs Ministry declared on 26 that they will suspend the nuclear facilities disablement process. It is unlikely for both the U.S. who just started electoral campaign and the DPRK to have wills for compromise. Even though current nuke problem is stagnant due to the U.S. election, it is a temporary matter. Whoever becomes the next president will have to work on solving the problem. The ROK needs to prepare for what is going to happen on the peninsula after the U.S. election. The government keeps saying that despite the break of the inter-Korean relationship, the number of personal exchanges and trade is increasing. However, statistics about inter-Korean economic cooperation is what the former administration had achieved, not what the current one has done. Rather, the government needs to focus on the increasing number of DPRK-PRC trade affairs. Long-term breakoff of the inter-Korean relationship will not only result in negative effects upon the two nations' economic cooperation, but also in making the DPRK's economy rely more on the PRC.

Ohmynews ("DPRK "DISABLEMENT PROCESS, CONSIDERING REHABILITATION"", 2008/08/27) reported that the Baek Hak-soon from Sejong Institute analyzed that the reason why the DPRK is being firm is due to its belief that U.S. neo-cons and conservatives are two barriers that block the flow of nuclear talks, so that current controversy over completing the verification mechanism also stems from them. Also, the DPRK is now beyond the boundary of negotiation, and it now violates the action for action principle, he added. One DPRK expert said that the current situation is similar to the confrontation that arose between the DPRK and IAEA concerning the special inspection back in early 1990s. He added that the DPRK regards U.S. requirement for verification as a special inspection.

Hankook Ilbo ("DPRK'S DISABLEMENT SUSPENSION", 2008/08/27) said in a column that it is yet unclear whether the announcement about the suspension is aiming for a complete destruction of the six-party talks, or merely for taking advantages during the verification talks. Even if it is the latter case, concern still arises in the sense that the disabling process has been delayed anyway, and the driving force for the six-party talks has been weakened. The date of the announcement is another concern. It was right after the Beijing Olympic Games closed, which was one day ahead of the 5 th anniversary of six-party talks, and also was the day Hu Jintao left Seoul. It clearly shows that the DPRK tried hard not to give the PRC any burden. It is difficult for both the ROK, who is in the middle of tension with the DPRK, and the U.S. who just started their presidential election campaign, to deal with the matter appropriately, which makes the situation even more serious.

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