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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. Napsnet

1. Inter Korean Relations

Donga Ilbo ("DEFENSE WHITE PAPER NOT TO CALL N. KOREA 'MAIN ENEMY'", Seoul, 2008/07/28) reported that the ROK will not refer to the DPRK as its “main enemy” in a defense white paper to be published in December, a Defense Ministry source in Seoul said Sunday. A ministry official said, “Since the inauguration of the new administration, talks have discussed reviving the label of ‘main enemy’ in the defense white paper, as [the new administration] has emphasized troop education. However, it is not appropriate to use the expression again at this moment.”

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2. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Asahi Shimbun ("TAKESHIMA ISLES DISPUTE SCRAPS JAPAN-KOREA STUDENT EXCHANGES", Tokyo, 2008/07/28) reported that soon after the latest flareup in the Tokdo/Takeshima dispute, the Seocho ward government in Seoul informed Tokyo's Suginami Ward that it has suspended exchange programs for junior and senior high school students in the two wards. The planned visit from Aug. 6 to Yeongcheon city in South Korea by high school students in Kuroishi, Aomori Prefecture, was also scrapped. The Musashino municipal government in western Tokyo called off a visit by junior and senior high school students to Gangdong ward in Seoul at the request of the ward government.

Korea Times (Na Jeong-ju, "LEE, BUSH TO DISCUSS DOKDO", Seoul, 2008/07/28) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak is expected to raise the issue of the US Board of Geographical Naming (BGN)'s decision to change Dokdo's status to "undesignated sovereignty'' from its previous recognition of it as ROK territory during his planned summit with U.S. President George W. Bush in Seoul in early August. "Given the strategic importance of Dokdo and the diplomatic impact of the BGN's decision on Seoul-Tokyo relations, Lee may raise it as a topic during his summit with Bush,'' an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said. We are talking with U.S. officials through the embassy in Washington about the BGN's decision,'' a presidential spokesman said. "The question is why the BGN changed its stance on Dokdo. We are not sure yet about whether Lee will bring it up during his meeting with Bush.''

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "DEFENSE WHITE PAPER TO SPECIFY SOVEREIGNTY OVER DOKDO", Seoul, 2008/07/28) reported that the Defense White Paper 2008, which will be published later this year, will include more phrases reaffirming ROK sovereignty over Dokdo in the East Sea than that published two years ago, the Ministry of National Defense said Monday. "The 2006 Defense White Paper has three phrases reaffirming our ownership of Dokdo, but this year's paper will have more

than that,'' a senior policymaker at the ministry said, asking not to be named. "Japan has referred to the Dokdo islets as their own territory in their defense white papers, so we've felt the need to reaffirm the islets are under our jurisdiction and territory that our forces must protect.''

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3. ROK Military Procurements

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "ARMY TO DEPLOY SHRAPNEL BULLET-FIRING RIFLE", Seoul, 2008/07/28) reported that the ROK Army soldiers will be able to use a new type of rifle that fires special bullets that explode over targets and scatter shrapnel beginning next year, the Agency for Defense Development (ADD) said Monday. The ADD-built "next-generation multi-purpose'' rifle, tentatively named the XK-11, has successfully undergone 15 months of test trials that ended last February, said Kim In-woo, an ADD researcher in charge of development. "The new rifle exceeds existing rifles in every aspect. It is expected to help improve our forces' combat capabilities at very low cost,'' Kim told reporters.

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4. ROK Beef Imports from US

Joongang Ilbo ("FIRST SHIPMENTS OF U.S. BEEF ARRIVING IN KOREA", Seoul, 2008/07/28) reported that according to the National Veterinary Research and Quarantine Service, 2.2 tons of US beef with bones including short ribs and fresh beef ribs were to arrive at Incheon International Airport Monday for the first time in four years. The ROK quarantine agency will check whether the ribs have been verified by the U.S. government to have come from cattle less than 30 months old and that certain parts, like bone marrow, have been excluded.

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5. PRC-US Relations

Associated Press ("CHINA CRITICIZES MCCAIN-DALAI LAMA MEETING", Beijing , 2008/07/28) reported that Republican presidential candidate John McCain and the Dalai Lama met for 45 minutes Friday in Colorado. The presumptive Republican nominee called on the PRC to release Tibetan prisoners and account for any people who disappeared during an uprising earlier this year in Tibet and surrounding areas. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said in a notice posted on the ministry's Web site on Monday that Tibet is an internal affair and the PRC opposes anyone using the Dalai Lama to interfere in the internal affairs of the country. "We urge relevant Americans to conform to the basic standard of international relations and realize the fact that the Dalai is trying to split China and undermine the social order of Tibet and the ethnic unity under the cover of religion," Liu said.

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6. US on PRC Human Rights

Associated Press (Matthew Lee, "RICE WARNS CHINA ON OLYMPIC SECURITY", Auckland, 2008/07/27) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice warned the PRC on Saturday not to use its Olympic security apparatus to crack down on legitimate dissent. "Security threats have to be dealt with and that is fully understood by everybody, but security should not become in any way a cover to try and deal with dissent," said Rice who will head the U.S. delegation to the Olympic closing ceremonies. "That would be unfortunate." "We are hopeful that the Olympic games will come off without a hitch," Rice said, adding that Chinese authorities should make good on promises to "showcase not just the Olympics but an attitude of openness and tolerance."

Washington Post (Michael Abramowitz, "RIGHTS ISSUE LOOMS AS BUSH HEADS TO CHINA", Washington, 2008/07/28) reported that with US President George W. Bush set to leave next week for the Olympics in Beijing, the White House is coming under increased pressure from lawmakers and advocacy groups to make a public statement of concern about the crackdown on human rights and freedom in the PRC. White House aides said it is likely that Bush, who has focused considerable attention to the cause of Chinese religious freedom, will worship at a church in Beijing during his trip, but they say the rest of his schedule remains in flux.

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7. PRC Terrorist Attacks

Washington Post (Jill Drew, "CHINA GROUP ASSERTS THAT IT BOMBED BUSES", Beijing, 2008/07/27) reported that a group calling itself the Turkestan Islamic Party has released a video asserting responsibility for deadly bus bombings last week in Yunnan province and other recent incidents, and threatening attacks during the Olympic Games. In the video, a man identified as Commander Seyfullah says the group aims "to target the most critical points related to the Olympics." "We will try to attack Chinese central cities severely, using the tactics that have never been employed." Li Wei, director of the Center for Counter-Terrorism Studies at China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations in Beijing, said the group is "not capable of launching different attacks in different cities in China. I think they just wanted to increase their influence and attract more funding by claiming responsibility."

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II. PRC Report

8. Shanghai World Expo

Xinhua Net, www.xinhuanet.com (Qiu Yi, "211 COUNTRIES, INT'L ORGANIZATIONS TO ATTEND SHANGHAI EXPO", Shanghai, 2008/07/26) reported that an official with the 2010 Shanghai World Expo said 211 countries and international organizations had confirmed their participation for the event at a press conference here on Wednesday. "A large number of visitors are expected to attend," said Chen Xianjin, deputy director of the expo coordination bureau, at an international conference held under the theme of "Modern service and metropolis development." The expo, running from May 1 to Oct. 31, 2010, will feature five theme pavilions -- "Urbanian," "City as a Form of Life," "Urban Planet," "Urban Future" and "Urban Culture.

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9. PRC Environment

Xinhua News Agency (Dong Jun, "CHINA HOLDS 1ST ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEETING FOR RURAL AREAS", Beijing, 2008/07/25) reported that the PRC's State Council is targeting improved water quality and pesticide pollution prevention as its main focus for environmental protection in rural areas as of 2010. This was stated at the State Council's first national environmental protection meeting for rural areas held here on Thursday. It declared that up to a 10 percent rate rise should be achieved in the treatments of sewage and consumer waste, as well as in the livestock and poultry waste utilization rate. As the society and economy developed, people in rural areas had a higher expectation for the quality of their living environment. The government should make great efforts in solving environmental problems that damage health and threaten food safety.

China Radio International Online (Ding Ning, "CHINA TO ADOPT ECOLOGICAL COMPENSATION MECHANISM IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION",) reported that the vice chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Qian Yunlu said at a related forum that it is necessary to speed up the establishment of a sound ecological compensation mechanism for the Sanjiangyuan region. Sanjiangyuan region is in the hinterland of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and is the birthplace of three major rivers: Yangtze River, Yellow River, and Lancang River. It is an important supply area for the PRC's freshwater, and is the ecological protective screen of the western PRC. But with the rapid development of the PRC's economy, the region is facing serious environmental challenge. Qian said the establishment of an ecological compensation mechanism will help increase the local environmental investment, ease the poverty of local farmers and maintain social equity.

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III. ROK Report

10. DPRK Internal Situation

Goodfriends ("FOOD CRISIS, LITTLE CHANGE BUT STILL DESPERATE", 2008/07/27) reported that the DPRK food crisis started to change characteristics after this July. First, fluctuations of food prices became much less and this lead to a comparatively stable situation. Second, starvation also decreased. Third, the suffering region is changing. Although double cropping is available and food price is showing stability, it is still not positive. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) expected that the DPRK deficit would be 1.66 million tons.

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11. ASEAN Regional Forum

PRESSIAN ("ARF STATEMENT FAILS TO INCLUDE 1.4 DECLARATION AND MT.KUMGANG",

2008/07/25) wrote that the Asia Regional Forum(ARF) declaration failed to include the 10.4 summit declaration as the ROK refused, and contents about Mt. Kumgang were also omitted. It is interpreted as the ROK strongly disliking the 10.4 declarations, even to the point of giving up a mention of the Mt. Kumgang incident, and that will have negative effect on inter-Korean relations.

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12. Inter-Korean Relations

Tongil News ("ROK INTERNAL OPINION CRITICIZES THE GOVERNMENT", 2008/07/28) wrote that there is internal opinion that government policy to just cut off even private-level inter-Korean exchanges is wrong. One representative of the private level organizations said that the Lee administration seems to turn the era of detante back to the era of cold war.

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