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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Missile Exports

Joong Ang Ilbo ("WITH CHINA COOPERATING, MISSILE SANCTIONS TIGHTEN", 2006-08-05) reported that in the aftermath of last month's launch of missiles by the DPRK, the PRC and other countries in the central Asian region are tightening the noose around potential air routes that could be used by Pyongyang to export its missile technology. In an exclusive interview with the JoongAng Ilbo, a US official said on the condition of anonymity, that about 80 percent of countries in the central Asian region had agreed to prevent DPRK missiles or weapons of mass destruction-related material from passing through their territory, including their air space, after consultations with Washington.

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2. DPRK Missiles

Associated Press ("N. KOREA MAY HAVE MOVED SECOND MISSILE", 2006-08-04) reported that the DPRK may have removed a long-range missile from a launch site, lowering the possibility of carrying out further tests. ROK intelligence reports have said the DPRK may have moved two long-range Taepodong-2 missiles to its Musudan-ri launch site on its east coast before test-firing one of them July 5. But the intelligence is not conclusive and needs further confirmation. The JoongAng Ilbo newspaper carried a similar report, citing an anonymous government official, saying satellite images show the missile disappeared from the launch site in mid-July. ROK and US intelligence authorities are trying to assess the DPRK's intentions.

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3. DPRK Sanctions

Chosun Ilbo ("PM BEGS TO DIFFER WITH JAPAN, U.S. OVER N.KOREA ", 2006-08-04) reported that Prime Minister Han Myong-sook has made it clear Seoul does not agree with Washington and Tokyo about slapping additional sanctions on the DPRK to enforce a ban on proliferation of missile technology. In an exclusive interview with the daily on Thursday, Han said there was no need to give up the administration's engagement policy toward the DPRK and vowed the government would proceed with inter-Korean cooperative projects. Han downplayed reports of a rift between Seoul and Washington over the DPRK. "Our two countries can coordinate their differences over those issues because they stem only from different geopolitical factors and policy priorities," she said.

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4. DPRK-US Relations

Associated Press ("U.S. DENIES NORTH KOREA CLAIM IT CAPTURED UNMANNED US SUBMERSIBLE ", 2006-08-07) reported DPRK claims it has captured an unmanned US submersible and put it on display in Pyongyang near the spy ship USS Pueblo, but the US dismissed the report. The ultra-small unmanned submersible vessel was allegedly captured during a reconnaissance mission in waters off the eastern city of Hamhung. A spokesman for the US military in the ROK,

David Oten, dismissed the report as unverifiable.

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5. Inter-Korean Political Relations

Joong Ang Ilbo ("EX-AIDE: ROH CAVED ON NORTH'S REQUESTS", 2006-08-08) reported on an interview with Kim Hee-sang, former defense policy advisor to ROK President Roh, in which he criticized the Roh administration of caving to the DPRK's demands at the expense of ROK security. In October, the Roh administration is scheduled to announce the timeline to take over wartime operational control. This is too soon, Mr. Kim said. "It will not be too late to take it over after we beef up our military capability first to replace the U.S.-South Korea alliance." Mr. Kim was also skeptical about the engagement policy and for making no progress on the nuclear crisis. "The policy said that it will be okay to feed North Korea, but the North has been engaged in nuclear development and increased threats," Mr. Kim said. "A nuclear-armed North Korea maintains peace, but the peace comes from subordination and slavery, and unifying the two Koreas under liberal democracy will probably become impossible."

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6. Inter-Korean Economic Relations

Asia Pulse ("N KOREA VOWS COMMITMENT TOWARD INTER-KOREAN ECONOMIC COOP", 2006-08-07) reported that the DPRK has reaffirmed its commitment toward inter-Korean economic cooperation projects despite growing tension over its recent launches of missiles. "We are confident that ongoing inter-Korean economic cooperation projects such as the Mount Kumgang tour will produce new meaningful results," the DPRK's Asia Pacific Peace Committee said in a letter sent to Hyundai Asan Corp., the operator of the Mount Kumgang tourist resort. The letter was sent to mark the third anniversary of the death of Chung Mong-hun, former chairman of Hyundai Asan. It is the first time that Pyongyang expressed its stance toward inter-Korean economic cooperation projects since it launched missiles in early July. Chung committed suicide in 2003 after being interrogated by prosecutors about slush funds he allegedly provided to politicians to promote his company's DPRK business projects, including the inter-Korean industrial complex in the border town of Kaesong.

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7. DPRK Floods

BBC ("'549 DEAD' IN N KOREA FLOODING ", 2006-08-07) reported "549 people dead" and "295 missing" as the most specific numbers released so far. These figures were reported by the Choson Shinbo, a newspaper based in Japan and run by a pro-DPRK association. Over 7,000 homes were destroyed or damaged, the daily said, and almost 40,000 acres (16,000 ha) of farmland has been bred away. Last month, the UN estimated that about 60,000 people have been left homeless by the flooding. One activists' group has suggested that the number of dead or missing is as high as 10,000, but has not said where it obtained the information. The DPRK has not confirmed the extent of the flooding, but has cancelled Arirang, the mass gymnastics festival which is a key source of tourist income.

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8. Kim's Absence from the Public Eye

Donga-Ilbo ("KIM JONG IL VANISHES FROM PUBLIC EYE", 2006-08-07) reported that DPR Korean leader Kim Jong Il has disappeared from the public eye since the missiles were fired on July 5, and signs indicate that his concealment will be prolonged for the long term. Ever since his father, Kim Il Sung, died on July 8 of 1994 he has not missed a visit Kumsusan Memorial Palace to commemorate his passing, but this year, Kim skipped even this ceremony. There are allegedly two main reasons for Kim's low profile. The first reason is a deliberate disappearance from the public in order to observe the worsening situation around the DPRK after the missile launches and the devastating floods. There are also speculations that Kim, who declared the current situation a national crisis, went into hiding because he felt his life under threat. In addition, there are cautious speculations that Kim, who has a history of heart disease treatment, has fallen ill.

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9. US-ROK Security Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA, U.S. IN WAR OF NERVES OVER TROOP CONTROL", 2006-08-07) reported that the US is playing tit-for-tat by offering to hand over wartime operational control of troops to the ROK at what experts say is the unfeasibly early date of 2009-2010, a high-ranking official speculated. "Perhaps this is a counterattack motivated by anger because [U.S. authorities] feel Korea is seeking the 2012 withdrawal for political reasons," the official said. By picking 2012, the ROK government escapes responsibility for the withdrawal, since the process will not start until 2009, by which time the Roh Moo-hyun administration will be already gone.

[\(return to top\)](#) Joongang Ilbo ("OFFICIAL: U.S. TROOPS WILL REMAIN HERE", 2006-08-07) reported that after the US hands over wartime operational control to the ROK in 2012, the two countries have agreed that US troops will remain, a top defense official of the Roh administration told the Joong-Ang Ilbo yesterday. Meanwhile, Suh Choo-suk, senior presidential secretary for unification, foreign affairs and security, told the KTV network the handover does not mean the weakening of the alliance or a demand that the US troops be withdrawn. [\(return to top\)](#)

10. ROK-Japan Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("BAN WILL ASK ABE TO STOP SHRINE VISITS", 2006-08-07) reported that Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon will ask the likely next prime minister of Japan not to visit the controversial Yasukuni Shrine, the government announced. Mr. Ban is scheduled to meet in Tokyo with Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe. Mr. Ban, who has dreams of higher office is also expected to deliver the ROK's position that it is the rightful owner of the Dokdo islets, which Japan also claims and calls Takeshima.

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11. Japan Elections

Kyodo ("SUPPORT FROM ALMOST HALF OF LDP LAWMAKERS MEANS ABE NEAR SURE-WIN", 2006-08-07) reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe is close to gaining majority support from ruling Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers to succeed Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, with more than 180 of 403 LDP parliamentarians expressing support for him as of Monday, Kyodo News learned. Abe is likely to be elected as LDP leader and thus heir to Japan's premiership in the first

round of the Sept. 20 LDP presidency election.

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12. Japanese Atomic Bomb Victims

The Associated Press ("JAPANESE COURT SUPPORTS A-BOMB SURVIVORS", 2006-08-07) reported that a Japanese court ruled that the government had wrongfully denied 41 Hiroshima atomic bomb survivors recognition as sufferers of radiation sickness, but rejected the plaintiffs' demands for damages, the court said. Those recognized as sufferers of radiation illness are eligible for medical allowances of about \$1,200 a month, while most other survivors receive about \$300 a month.

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13. PRC-Japan Relations

Kyodo ("JAPAN, CHINA FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMEN TO HOLD DIALOGUE TUES.", 2006-0-07) reported that Japan and the PRC will hold talks between their spokesmen from both foreign ministries to discuss their respective roles in promoting Sino-Japanese ties, Japan's Foreign Ministry said. Taking part in the talks Tuesday afternoon are Mitsuo Sakaba, the Japanese Foreign Ministry's press secretary, and Liu Jianchao, a spokesman with the PRC Foreign Ministry.

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14. Japan-PRC East Sea Gas Dispute

Kyodo ("JAPAN CONFIRMS CHINA HAS NOT BEGUN PRODUCTION AT CHUNXIAO GAS FIELD ", 2006-08-07) reported that the PRC has yet to begin full-fledged production in the Chunxiao gas field in the East China Sea, where Japan and the PRC are at odds over resource exploration rights, the Japanese Foreign Ministry's top bureaucrat said. The China National Offshore Oil Corp. said on its website that full-scale development and production had begun. But that information was deleted from the website after Japanese media reported the news.

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15. PRC Middle-East Diplomacy

Xinhua ("CHINA'S SPECIAL ENVOY TO VISIT 5 MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES", 2006-08-07) reported that the PRC's special envoy on Middle East issues, Sun Bigan, will visit Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia from Aug. 6, the PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang announced. Sun will exchange views with different parties on regional issues, especially the situation in Lebanon, in a bid to help ease tensions in the region, Qin said.

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16. Taiwan Defense Spending

Asia Pulse ("TAIWAN'S DEFENSE BUDGET TO BE RAISED TO 2.85% OF GDP NEXT YEAR", 2006-08-07) reported that the country's defense budget will be increased to account for 2.85 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) next year, up from this year's 2.45 per cent, a Ministry of National Defense (MND) official said Saturday. The whole of the extra budget will be used for military arsenal

procurement instead of financing personnel costs.

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17. Chad and Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHAD CHOOSES REALISM, CASH AND CHINA OVER TAIWAN", 2006-0-07) reported that Chad's decision to break diplomatic ties with Taiwan and reestablish links with Beijing is motivated by financial self-interest and the advantages of a relationship with a major global force, observers have said. Chad's chief preoccupation is financial, a senior Chadian diplomat speaking on condition of anonymity said. From now on "if the World Bank imposes too many conditions, N'Djamena will tell it it has a ready alternative: Beijing," he said.

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18. Hong Kong Surveillance Bill

The New York Times ("HONG KONG LEGISLATORS PASS SWEEPING SURVEILLANCE BILL", 2006-08-07) reported that Pro-Beijing lawmakers approved legislation that gives broad authority to the police to conduct covert surveillance, including wiretapping phones, bugging homes and offices and monitoring e-mail. The bill passed the 60-member Legislative Council on a vote of 32-0 after pro-democracy lawmakers walked out of the chamber in protest during the morning.

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