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I. United States

1. ROK on Multilateral Talks

Arirang TV ("SIX-PARTY NUCLEAR TALKS LIKELY TO BE HELD IN SEPTEMBER ", 2004-08-30) reported that the ROK ambassador to the US says the next round of multilateral talks aimed at resolving the DPRK nuclear impasse will likely happen in September. Speaking at a seminar held in New Jersey Saturday, Ambassador Han Seung-joo said, however, that he is not sure whether there will be any tangible progress at the six-nation talks involving the two Koreas, the US, Japan, PRC and Russia. Ambassador Han's remarks followed recent comments by the DPRK, that it has no plans to participate in what it calls a "hastily proposed meeting by the United States."

Chosun Ilbo ("AMBASSADOR TO U.S. SAYS 6-PARTY TALKS TO OPEN IN SEPTEMBER", 2004-0--30) reported that the ROK Ambassador to the US Han Sung-joo said Sunday that because not only the ROK and the US, but also Russia and the PRC were working hard, it was highly likely that the fourth round of six-party talks would be held in September as the fruit of multilateral efforts. Speaking at an academic conference in New Jersey to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of Korea University, Han said, however, that no one could know whether substantive progress would be made at the talks. He said the DPRK believes that the redeployment of US forces in the ROK

might be in preparation to attack the DPRK. He said it was hard to tell whether the DPRK actually felt threatened by the US or whether it was simply stalling ahead of the US presidential election, but it was true that the preparations for the fourth round of talks have been difficult.

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2. DPRK on DPRK - US Relations

Yonhap ("N. KOREA URGES U.S. TO MAKE CONCESSIONS FOR PROGRESS IN NUKE TALKS ", 2004-08-30) reported that the DPRK said Monday that the US is to blame for little progress in the six-way talks aimed at ending the DPRK's nuclear ambition, casting doubts over the prospects for the fourth round of dialogue slated for next month. "Washington's hostility toward us is a fundamental obstacle to the resolution of the nuclear issue and regional peace and security," a commentary carried by Rodong Sinmun and monitored by Yonhap News Agency said.

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3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA ENVOY TO DISCUSS NUKES IN U.S.", 2004-08-27) reported that the ROK's top envoy to the DPRK will travel to the US for high-level talks amid stalled negotiations on getting the DPRK to give up its nuclear weapons program, officials said Friday. Unification Minister Chung Dong-young will leave Monday for Washington and meet with US Secretary of State Colin Powell, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, a ministry spokesman said on condition of anonymity. ROK officials and analysts believe Pyongyang is seeking to put off the talks until after the November presidential elections, hoping it will have an easier time negotiating if Democratic challenger John Kerry unseats Bush.

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4. US, Japan, ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap ("S. KOREA, U.S., JAPAN LIKELY TO HOLD NUKE STRATEGY TALKS NEXT WEEK ", 2004-08-30) reported that senior officials from the ROK, the US and Japan will likely meet next week to discuss strategies for a new round of six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear program, a Seoul official said Monday. The three countries usually meet for such a strategy session ahead of talks with the DPRK. A new round of six-country talks, which also involve the DPRK, the PRC and Russia, is supposed to take place before the end of next month under an agreement reached at the third and most recent meeting in June. "Regarding the fourth round of six-party talks, the South, the US and Japan are likely to hold a meeting around the second week of next month," a Seoul official said. "The meeting's specific schedule will likely be fixed in a day or two."

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5. Sino - DPRK Relations

Donga Ilbo ("HIGH-RANKING CHINESE OFFICIALS CONTINUE TO VISIT NORTH KOREA ", 2004-08-30) reported that high-ranking PRC officials continue to visit the DPRK amid expectations that the fourth round of six-way talks to solve the DPRK nuclear issue will not be held until after the US presidential election. After the Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People`s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Li Zhaozhuo arrived at Pyongyang leading a delegation of

the CPPCC on August 28, a standing committee member of the politburo, Li Changchun, will visit the DPRK for three days starting September 10. It is expected that Vice Chairman Li will mainly discuss the matter of six-party talks during the visit. It is reported that Li, a member of a standing committee in charge of ideology and propaganda, will meet the head of the DPRK, Kim Jong-il, during his visit.

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6. UN on Libya - DPRK Relations

The Associated Press ("U.N.: N.KOREA-LIBYA NUCLEAR LINK POSSIBLE", 2004-08-30) reported that diplomats on Monday said a report by the U.N. nuclear watchdog did not rule out DPRK involvement in supplying Libya with banned technology for its weapons program. In a restricted report made available to The Associated Press the International Atomic Energy Agency also said that some of the equipment ordered by Libya as part of its weapons program remains missing, raising concerns that other countries or groups might have secretly received it. The report confirmed that uranium hexaflouride was bought in 2000 "from a foreign supplier" but made no conclusion of where the substance originated from. A senior diplomat familiar with the Libyan investigation said that indicated that the agency remained uncertain about whether the uranium hexaflouride was purchased on the black market from Pakistan or the DPRK.

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7. ROK on Suspected DPRK HEU Program

Yonhap ("DEALING WITH HEU ISSUE UNAVOIDABLE: DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ", 2004-0--30) reported that ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-hyuk said Friday that the issue of Pyongyang's suspected highly enriched uranium (HEU) program must be resolved and there was no way of skirting around it. Speaking to reporters after returning from talks with Mitoji Yabunaka, director general of the Asian and Oceania affairs bureau in Japan's Foreign Ministry in Tokyo, Lee said the HEU issue and how to get the DPRK to the negotiations table on this matter had been the focal point of the meeting.

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8. DPRK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap ("NORTH KOREA CALLS ON U.S. TO ABANDON NUKES FIRST: N.K. MAGAZINE ", 2004-08-30) reported that giving the US tit-for-tat, the DPRK has called on Washington to first abandon its nuclear weapons in a complete and thorough manner. In its August edition, the DPRK's monthly magazine Kumsugangsan dismissed as "preposterous" the US's logic that only the US can possess nuclear weapons and questioned the US monopoly on such weapons.

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9. Death of Ko Young Hee

Washington Post ("'REVERED' WIFE OF NORTH KOREAN LEADER REPORTED DEAD", 2004-08-27) reported that ROK officials said Thursday they were investigating reports that the woman considered to be DPRK leader Kim Jong Il's most influential wife has died after a long battle with breast cancer. News that Ko Young Hee -- idolized in the DPRK as the nation's "revered mother" --

apparently succumbed to her illness was first reported Wednesday on the Web site of an investigative journalist for Chosun, a monthly ROK magazine based in Seoul. Officials in Seoul said they were still trying to confirm the death. She was believed to have been suffering from breast cancer for several years, and her death was widely expected in intelligence circles following her return to the DPRK after a reported hospitalization in Paris in April. Information on Kim and his family is closely guarded in the DPRK, and the official press in Pyongyang, the capital, did not mention the reports.

The New York Times ("A MYSTERY ABOUT A MISTRESS IN NORTH KOREA", 2004-08-27) reported that ROK government officials are struggling to confirm persistent reports from the DPRK of the recent death of its leader Kim Jong Il's favorite mistress. The woman, Koh Young Hee, a Japanese-born Korean dancer, was treated in Paris last spring for advanced cancer. Over the summer, Ms. Koh, the 51-year-old mother of two of Mr. Kim's sons, was flown back to the DPRK capital, Pyongyang, where she fell into a coma. "The intelligence sectors on North Korea in South Korea, the United States and Japan have shared a common assessment that North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il's wife has died of illness," Cho Gab Je, a South Korean journalist who specializes in the DPRK, said on his Web site on Tuesday, referring to Mr. Kim's main partner of the last quarter-century. "Some say this death would have serious psychological effects on Kim. Kim, who has heart problems, had been refraining from drinking on Koh's advice."

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10. DPRK Environment

The Associated Press ("U.N.: N. KOREAN ENVIRONMENT IN POOR SHAPE", 2004-08-27) reported that urgent investment is needed in the DPRK to deal with severe environmental problems that have depleted the country's forests, contaminated water supplies and polluted the air, the head of the UN Environment Program said Friday, The DPRK "has very severe environmental challenges, very severe," said Klaus Toepfer, the executive director of the Nairobi-based UN Environment Program. Toepfer spoke after signing an agreement with DPRK officials that would increase cooperation with the UN agency, which is based in Nairobi. DPRK officials declined to answer any questions at the signing ceremony. Toepfer said they told him they did not want to participate in a news conference that followed the signing. The agency also released the first-ever UN report on the state of the environment in the DPRK on Friday, which revealed how the country's environmental, economic and political problems have all compounded each other. "There is a reliance on coal for power generation and domestic heating and this has created serious urban air pollution problems," Toepfer said.

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11. NGOs in the DPRK

Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA TO REDUCE SCALE OF FOREIGN NGOS ", 2004-08-30) reported that the ITAR-Tass Russian News Agency reported Saturday that the DPRK will reduce the number and scale of foreign NGOs by the end of 2004, which are actively working in Pyongyang as their headquarters. According to the report, the DPRK's Foreign Office is selecting the NGOs to expel from the country, and relatively small-scale NGOs will be the first target of the reduction. It was alleged that the DPRK made such a decision because members of some NGOs are engaged in works other than humanitarian aid. However, a diplomatic source from the DPRK conveyed that large-scale NGOs, such as the World Food Program (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization (WHO), will be allowed to stay to work in the country.

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12. DPRK Food Aid

Yonhap ("GOV'T TO BEGIN DELIVERY OF THAI RICE TO N.K. NEXT MONTH", 2004-08-30) reported that the first part of a rice aid shipment which was purchased overseas by the ROK government will arrive at a DPRK port on Sept. 15, officials here said Monday. "The first shipment of 5,000 tons of rice which was bought in Thailand will sail from Thailand Wednesday," Unification Ministry officials said.

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13. Inter - Korean Relations

Yonhap ("NORTH KOREA BERATES SOUTH KOREA'S MAIN OPPOSITION PARTY ", 2004-08-30) reported that the DPRK berated the ROK's main opposition party on Saturday over its claim that pro-DPRK activities should be included in an investigation into past wrongdoings. Controversy has been raging in the ROK's political circles over the ruling camp's move to bring to justice those who collaborated with the authorities during the Japanese colonial period and others who went unpunished for their wrongdoings.

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14. ROK on Inter-Korean Summit

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREA PLAYS DOWN TALK OF NORTH SUMMIT", 2004-08-27) reported that a DPRK-ROK summit could provide a breakthrough in the crisis over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions, the ROK's prime minister was quoted as saying on Friday, but the government made clear no such meeting was planned for now. There has been no indication that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun is set to meet DPRK leader Kim Jong-il any time soon, although diplomats say there has been speculation about such a summit, possibly in the Russian Far East. Prime Minister Lee Hae-chan, in comments released by his office, also told the Japanese financial daily Nihon Keizai Shimbun that he expected the deadlock in bilateral ministerial talks between Seoul and Pyongyang to end soon. "If a summit meeting between the leaders of North and South Korea were to be held, I hope it could help provide a breakthrough over the nuclear problems," Lee said in an interview conducted on Thursday. But he made clear that such a summit was unlikely soon.

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15. Inter - Korean Economic Talks

Yonhap ("N. KOREA EFFECTIVELY BOYCOTTS INTER-KOREAN TALKS THIS WEEK ", 2004-08-30) reported that the DPRK has effectively boycotted previously scheduled inter-Korean economic talks, dealing another setback to relations between the two countries. The ROK has twice in as many weeks asked the DPRK for contacts to prepare for the Aug. 31-Sept. 3 talks, but the DPRK's representatives have not responded positively, saying they have no instructions from their superiors.

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16. ROK on Kaesong Complex

Yonhap ("SEOUL TO COMPLETE REVIEW ON STRATEGIC ITEMS FOR KAESONG COMPLEX ", 2004-08-27) reported that the ROK appears likely to soon complete its review of strategic materials local companies plan to take to the DPRK for a cross-border industrial complex. The review is underway on 15 ROK companies selected to move into the pilot site of an industrial park being built in the DPRK's border town of Kaesong.

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17. Inter - Korean Economic Exchange

Yonhap ("INTER-KOREAN EXCHANGES, COOPERATION IRREVERSIBLE: FOREIGN MINISTER ", 2004-08-30) reported that inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation have developed to a point where it is impossible to reverse the trend, the ROK's foreign minister said Monday. "Despite recent difficulties, cooperation and exchanges between South and North Korea are on an irreversible track," Ban Ki-moon said during a speech before the National Press Club in the Australian capital. "Too many big interests would be at stake on both sides, especially the North, if they reversed the trend," he said. As an example of inter-Korean economic cooperation, Ban cited a project under way in the DPRK to build an industrial complex for companies from the ROK.

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18. DPRK Arms Market

The New York Times ("U.S. AND RUSSIA STILL DOMINATE ARMS MARKET, BUT WORLD TOTAL FALLS", 2004-08-30) reported that the US and Russia continued to dominate the global arms market last year, especially when measured in weapons deals to developing nations, although the total value of arms sales worldwide tumbled for the third consecutive year, according to a new Congressional study. The report, "Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations," is published each year by the Congressional Research Service, part of the Library of Congress. The study offers glimpses into the speculative and secret world of missile proliferation by the DPRK. Between 1996 and 1999, no surface-to-surface missiles were delivered to developing nations by the US, Russia, PRC or European arms manufacturers. But 30 such missiles were delivered during that period by a state classified by the report as "Other," a category that includes the DPRK, Israel and South Africa. Between 2000 and 2003, 20 more surface-to-surface missiles were delivered by the nations in that category, according to the study. Although the report does not identify the country that manufactured and delivered the weapons, Pentagon analysts say the missile proliferation statistics almost certainly refer to the DPRK.

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19. ROK - DPRK Military Capability

Yonhap ("S. KOREAN MILITARY CAPABILITY STILL LAGS BEHIND N. KOREA: REPORT ", 2004-0--30) reported that the ROK's military capability was found to be weaker than that of DPRK, even if the DPRK's nuclear and biological weapons are not included, a government report showed Tuesday. The ROK Army and Navy's strengths were 80 percent and 90 percent of those of the North, while its Air Force power was 103 percent of the DPRK's, according to a study by the state-run Korea Institute for Defense Analyses.

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20. ROK on US Troop Realignment

Chosun Ilbo ("SMALL KOREAN MISTAKES HASTENED USFK REDUCTIONS", 2004-08-30) reported that Yonsei University professor Moon Chung-in, head of the Presidential Committee on Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative, said Friday that while USFK reductions were primarily the result of changes in US global strategy following the Sept. 11 attacks, small mistakes on Korea's part like anti-American demonstrations moved up the timing of those reductions. Speaking at a monthly breakfast held by the International Management Institute, Moon said that on Dec. 30 of last year, U.S. NBC News broadcasted a 3-5 second scene of a US military policeman at the Yongsan Garrison bleeding after he had been hit by a rock thrown by a Korean university student. After watching this scene, US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld became enraged and ordered USFK to be removed immediately. Moon said there was discussion of reducing US ground forces due to changes in US global strategy, but he could say with certainty that the date was moved up due to slight mistakes on the part of Koreans, and he had experienced this personally. On unofficial occasions, Moon relayed an anecdote he had heard in which Rumsfeld, as soon as he saw the scene on NBC News, said, "God damn it! Get them out!"

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21. PRC Reporting on the DPRK

Donga Ilbo ("CHINESE GOVERNMENT CONFISCATES, BANS ON SALES OF MAGAZINE CRITICAL OF NORTH KOREA ", 2004-08-30) reported that the Sankei Shimbun of Japan reported Saturday from Beijing that the PRC government imposed a sales ban on and confiscated the latest issue of the diplomacy bimensal-magazine "Strategy and Management," which carried a dissertation that severely criticized the DPRK's political system. A source said, "The Chinese government concluded that contents of the dissertation causes diplomatic trouble because North Korea raged against it." The source suggested that the DPRK prohibited a visit to Pyongyang by the PRC on August 20 out of rage against the dissertation. The controversial dissertation was written by a researcher from the PRC's Research Institute for International Economy in the Tianjin Research Institute of Social Science, a research institute for national policy. It criticizes the political hereditary system and political persecution in the DPRK, and urges a review of Chinese diplomatic strategy that entirely supports the DPRK.

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22. DPRK Defectors in the PRC

Korea Times ("NK DEFECTORS IN CHINA FACE GROWING RISK", 2004-08-30) reported that the security situation for DPRK defectors in the PRC has deteriorated with a growing number of defectors being deported back to their home country and facing severe punishment. Citing a survey with 30 DPRK defectors in the PRC, Refugees International (RI), an NGO dealing with human rights issues, said the PRC government's crackdown on DPRK defectors has become so severe in recent months that most of the people they interviewed either knew personally or knew of DPRK defectors that had been deported in recent weeks. PRC authorities even offer a reward of around $16 to those who turn in DPRK defectors, which is a large sum to most PRC citizens in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture that is adjoined to the DPRK.

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23. DPRK Defectors

Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA, FIRING MACHINE GUNS AT DEFECTORS ", 2004-08-30) reported that Hong Kong's South China Morning Post reported on August 27 that the DPRK allegedly has fired machine guns at the country's defectors. The newspaper quoted Tim Peters, who founded "Helping Hands," as saying, "A foreigner who is very much knowledgeable of the plight of the North Korean defectors said he heard gun shots in the border area," and added, "The North Korean government is thought to have issued an order to shoot people." He also said, "I heard that someone saw at least two or three dead bodies floating on the Duman River," and guessed, "They were not identified, but I think they must have defectors." An activist of an international organization for DPRK human rights, Joanna Hosaniak, said, "I heard that the number of North Korean secret agents increased in China, and electric barb wire and extra guards have been installed in the border area."

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24. ROK Cyberattacks

Chosun Ilbo ("COMPUTERS OF TAIPEI MISSION ALSO HACKED ", 2004-08-30) reported that it has been revealed that the computers of the Taipei Mission in Korea were also hacked at a similar time when the computers of Korean major government agencies including the National Assembly were attacked by suspected PRC hackers from computers belonging to a foreign language school of the PRC Peoples Liberation Army. Taiwan's United Daily News reported Monday that the Taipei Mission in the ROK had been assaulted by computer hackers and wiretapped for a long time. In the process, confidential diplomatic information was stolen, the newspaper said. The Taipei Mission said that its computers had presumably been hacked around the time when Korean public agencies like the National Assembly, the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute and Korea Institute for Defense Analyses had been attacked by suspected PRC hackers from the computers belonging to a foreign language school of the PRC Peoples Liberation Army.

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25. ROK - Australia

Yonhap ("S. KOREA, AUSTRALIA HOLD FOREIGN MINISTERS' TALKS", 2004-08-30) reported that the foreign ministers of the ROK and Australia met on Monday and discussed economic cooperation, security and other bilateral and international issues, officials said. Ban Ki-moon asked his Australian counterpart, Alexander Downer, to ease anti-dumping measures on ROK automobiles, saying his country runs a deficit of more than US$2 billion in trade with Australia every year.

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26. US Foreign Relations

Agence France-Presse ("US INFLUENCE IN ASIA SEEN WANING UNDER BUSH, BUT RELATIONS IMPROVE", 2004-08-30) reported that Asia may have little to complain about if President George W. Bush wins a second term in office despite the lack of a coherent US policy and its waning influence in the region, analysts say. The US-led war in Iraq and global war on terror may have diverted US attention from Asia and given the PRC greater clout in the region. But many believe Washington's relations with Asian powers have improved under Bush. "Even though much of the world and many people in Asia are very angry at Bush and the US, the governments in Asia are pragmatic and see

their interests well-served by not antagonizing Bush and working with him," said Robert Sutter, visiting professor of Asian studies at Georgetown University. The PRC is seen to be slowly filling the vacuum left behind by the US in the political, economic and security spheres in the region. "A more effective approach would be to build on the US role as Asia's leading power and the region's economic and security partner of choice," John Tkacik, a former 23-year veteran of the US State Department said.

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27. Japan on US - Japan Military Relations

Reuters ("JAPAN HINTS MAY SEEK CHANGE IN U.S. FORCES DEAL", 2004-08-29) reported that Japan's Defense Minister said on Sunday Japan may have to consider negotiating changes in the agreement that governs the status of US forces in Japan following a dispute over the management of a US helicopter crash in the southern prefecture of Okinawa earlier this month. "If the Status of Forces Agreement has been used arbitrarily, we have to discuss ways of preventing this from happening," Shigeru Ishiba said on a program broadcast by public television. "If the discussions make no progress, the issue of revision will arise," he added. Japan lodged a protest with the US embassy last week after the US flew CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters over its territory without having provided a full explanation for an August 13 crash involving the same model of helicopter.

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28. PRC - Japan on Falungong

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA SLAMS JAPAN FOR GIVING FALUNGONG NON-PROFIT STATUS", 2004-08-30) reported that the PRC issued "strong dissatisfaction" with Japan for approving the Falungong spiritual group as a non-profit organization, comparing it to the Aum Supreme Truth doomsday cult. Falungong, known as the Japan Falun Dafa Society in Japan, "is of the same nature as the Aum Supreme Truth cult", the PRC embassy in Japan said, referring to the group that spread deadly Sarin nerve gas in the Tokyo subway in 1995, killing 12 people. It said Falungong, outlawed as an "evil cult" by PRC since 1999, had a "stinky reputation" around the world. "They have complete spiritual control of their followers," the embassy said in a statement on its website. "They have seriously harmed society's order as well as people's lives." Tokyo's approval of Falungong as a non-profit organization was "against the wish of Chinese people in Japan and the Japanese people", it said.

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29. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("CHINA WAR GAMES MAY BE OFF, SAYS TAIWAN MILITARY", 2004-08-30) reported that the PRC has withdrawn about 3,000 soldiers from a military exercise on an island facing Taiwan, said the Taiwan defense ministry on Monday, prompting speculation that Beijing may have cancelled plans for further war games. The southeastern PRC island of Dongshan was the scene of a major military drill in May, when 18,000 troops from the Chinese People's Liberation Army simulated an invasion of Taiwan, over which Beijing claims sovereignty. Defense ministry spokesman Huang Shuey-Sheng said more than 3,000 ground troops moved to Dongshan in mid-August had since been gradually pulled out. "We will continue to monitor to see whether they plan to cancel the Dongshan drill," he said. "The likelihood (of a drill) is quite low but we will continue to watch the situation." A spokesman for the PRC's military said he knew nothing about an exercise on Dongshan. "We have

not received a notice from the Ministry of National Defense. We don't know if there is such an exercise or if the exercise has been cancelled," the spokesman said.

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30. PRC Mapping Satellite

The Associated Press ("CHINA LAUNCHES MAPPING SATELLITE", 2004-08-30) reported that the PRC on Sunday launched a satellite that will carry out land surveying and other scientific projects for several days and return to Earth, government media reported. It was the 19th recoverable science satellite the PRC has launched, the agency said. The report said the satellite would remain in orbit "for a few days" but didn't specify when it would return to Earth. "The satellite is mainly for space scientific research, land surveying, mapping and other scientific experiments," Xinhua said, citing space officials.

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31. PRC on Tibet

Reuters ("CHINA AIMS TO BRIDGE THE GAP WITH TIBET", 2004-08-30) reported that on a dusty river bed in the shadow of the Potala Palace a bridge is rising that the PRC says will bring prosperity to the Roof of the World. The bridge will carry trains from the PRC into a railway station to be built in the capital, Lhasa, ferrying supplies, investment and people to one of the most sparsely populated, remote and least developed regions on earth. Whether that investment is intended to bring prosperity to the 2.7 million ethnic Tibetans, to ease immigration of more ethnic Han Chinese workers or to supply huge army garrisons charged with keeping a lid on anti-PRC feeling are questions many experts ask. Thousands upon thousands of ethnic Chinese are seeking their fortune in this western outpost of the PRC, opening businesses along Lhasa streets that were grassland less than a decade ago. An internal report says the government plans to increase the population of Lhasa from 350,000-400,000 to 2.5 million in line with the PRC's policy of bringing development through urbanization and ensuring that ethnic Chinese outnumber the restive, deeply Buddhist, native Tibetans.

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32. Sino - Indian Relations

Reuters ("CHINESE, INDIAN TROOPS HOLD MOUNTAIN EXERCISE", 2004-08-28) reported that PRC and Indian border troops have held their first-ever joint mountaineering exercise as part of a program to improve understanding along the historically tense border between the world's two most populous countries. A dozen troops from each country held the exercise in the PRC's Tibet region Saturday at an altitude of nearly 13,600 feet, hiking 1.8 miles in an hour, the PRC's official Xinhua news agency said. "The drill was carried out in line with the consensus reached between senior military leaders of the two armies to conduct friendly exchanges for maintaining peace and tranquility along the border regions," Xinhua quoted an unidentified Defense Ministry official as saying. The Indian troops returned to Indian territory Saturday, Xinhua said. It gave no other details.

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33. PRC Foreign Trade

The New York Times ("ACROSS ASIA, BEIJING'S STAR IS IN ASCENDANCE", 2004-08-30) reported that these days, Australian engineers - like executives, merchants and manufacturers elsewhere in the region - cannot seem to work fast enough to satisfy the hunger of their biggest new customer: the PRC. Not long ago Australia and the PRC regarded each other with suspicion. But through newfound diplomatic finesse and the seemingly irresistible lure of its long economic expansion, the PRC has skillfully turned around relations with Australia, America's staunchest ally in the region. The turnabout is just one sign of the broad new influence Beijing has accumulated across the Asian Pacific with American friends and foes alike. The PRC's rapid growth is sucking up resources and pulling the region's varied economies in its wake. For now, the PRC's presence mostly translates into money, and the doors it opens. But more and more, the PRC is leveraging its economic clout to support its political preferences.

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34. PRC Free Trade

The Associated Press ("HONG KONG, CHINA EXPAND FREE TRADE PACT", 2004-08-27) reported that the PRC and Hong Kong expanded their free trade pact on Friday, with a deal to let Hong Kong companies enter a variety of businesses ranging from oil product sales to moviemaking and media marketing. The PRC agreed to eliminate tariffs on hundreds of Hong Kong goods and add eight more industries to the so-called Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, also known as CEPA. Although Hong Kong was returned from Britain to the PRC in 1997, it has separate legal and economic systems. The PRC's Vice Commerce Minister An Min and Hong Kong Financial Secretary Henry Tang said the pact will improve the territory's economy, but they did not offer any figures.

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35. Hong Kong Elections

The Associated Press ("HONG KONG LAWMAKER BARRED FROM CHINA", 2004-08-28) reported that a top Hong Kong opposition lawmaker said he was barred from entering the PRC on Saturday - an incident that may fuel anti-Beijing sentiment in upcoming legislative elections. Law Chi-kwong of the Democratic Party said Friday the mainland assured him he could visit for six days, in what seemed to be a conciliatory gesture by the central government, which has branded pro-democracy figures here as troublemakers or even "traitors." The eased attitude toward the pro-democracy camp also appeared to coincide with the run-up to Sept. 12 elections that are expected to return a record number of opposition politicians into the Legislative Council. But Law told The Associated Press by telephone that PRC authorities confiscated his travel document that allows him to enter the mainland without a visa and deported him shortly after he arrived in Shanghai on Saturday afternoon. The PRC authorities did not give an explanation other than to say his presence "would not be beneficial for the country," Law said.

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36. PRC Freedom of the Press

Washington Post ("CHINA FREES PIONEERING JOURNALIST", 2004-08-27) reported that authorities in southern PRC on Friday released a pioneering newspaper editor whose arrest five

months ago sent a chill through the nation's increasingly independent-minded newsrooms and prompted a campaign on his behalf by journalists, lawyers, writers and retired officials. Cheng Yizhong, 39, the former executive editor of the Southern Metropolis Daily in the coastal city of Guangzhou, returned home at about 10 p.m. and appeared to be in good health, according to a source close to his family. But it was not clear if conditions were placed on his release or whether he would be permitted to return to the newspaper. Cheng was arrested March 19 in a corruption probe that party sources said was a veiled act of retaliation by local officials who were upset by the newspaper's aggressive reporting. The sudden decision to release him instead of putting him on trial underscored divisions in the ruling Communist Party about the creeping expansion of media freedoms.

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37. PRC AIDS Issue

Reuters ("CHINA BANS BLOOD TRADE TO STOP AIDS", 2004-08-28) reported that the PRC's parliament passed a law Saturday banning the buying or selling of blood to prevent the spread of AIDS and outlawing discrimination against victims of infectious diseases, state media said. The PRC says it has 840,000 HIV/AIDS cases, but experts say at least one million poor farmers were infected in the central province of Henan alone as a result of botched blood-selling schemes in the 1990s. President Hu Jintao signed 12 decrees enacting two revised laws and 10 amendments to laws which were passed at the 11th session of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, which ended Saturday. Most significant was the revised Law on the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases, which requires the government to guarantee funds for infectious disease prevention.

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38. SARS Repercussions in the PRC

The Associated Press ("SARS CRITICISM PROMPTS ANOTHER RESIGNATION", 2004-08-27) reported that a senior Hong Kong hospital official who was criticized for his performance during the SARS crisis will resign at the end of the year. Dr. Ko Wing-man had wanted to step down after the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome subsided last year but was persuaded to defer his decision, the Hospital Authority said in a statement issued late Thursday. The authority said Ko, its director of professional services and human resources, decided not to renew his contract when it expires at the end of this month, but has agreed to stay on until December to provide for a smooth transition. Ko had been criticized for failing to provide hospital staff with enough protective gear against the virus. Ko admitted that management didn't do as well as it could have in dealing with the crisis and apologized to the public.

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39. Death of Ko Young Hee

Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREA MAY EMULATE JOSEON DYNASTY'S 'CRUEL DYNASTIC POLITICS': NYT", 2004-08-29) reported that New York Times ran an article Friday on rumors of the death of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's wife Koh Young-hee. The NYT analyzed that if Kohs death is true, Kim Jong-ils first son, Kim Jong-nam, would most likely be the next leader of the nation and added, Korea has hundreds of years of history of brutal dynastic politics. The NYT discussed where DPRK throne might be heading in an article entitled A Mystery About a Mistress in DPRK, and explained that, (For hundreds of years), male family members have frequently killed one another in fights over the

throne. The newspaper also quoted a high-ranking DPRK flee, Kim Duk-hong, "If Koh Young Hee had not died at this moment, one of her two sons (Jong-chul or Jong-woon) would be a high candidate for successor but if she is dead, all three sons are in the same position." Kim added, Kim Jong-nam was most loved by Kim Jong-il and Kim Il-sung and has the most international sense of the three.

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40. Inter- Korean Relations

Arirang TV ("ENTOURAGE TO 2000 SEOUL-PYEONGYANG SUMMIT SEEKS TO MEET N.KOREAN LEADER", 2004-08-30) reported that ROK entourage who accompanied former President Kim Dae-jung to the first-ever ROK-DPRK summit in 2000 is seeking to visit DPRK next month to meet with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. According to ROK's Yonhap News Agency, the group called Jooamhoe proposed the plan to DPRK officials at an international conference marking the fourth anniversary of the historic summit and received a positive response. However, Yonhap said the group was recently asked by DPRK to put off the plan indefinitely as a string of events including a mass defection of DPRK people weakened inter-Korean ties. The entourage includes Deputy Chief of the National Security Council Lee Jong-suk and former Unification Minister Lim Dong-won, among other incumbent and former high-ranking government officials.

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41. CanKor # 177

CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("",) The first assessment of the state of the Environment in the DPRK was launched this week by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) at its headquarters in Nairobi. Produced in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the report involved DPR Korean officials from 20 different government and academic agencies. Persistent reports of the death of one of Kim Jong Il's wives have been accompanied by speculation on how this will complicate his succession. Japanese-born Ko Young Hee, 52, has been viewed as the foremost of at least three women considered to be among Kim Jong Il's wives or consorts. Mother of two of Kim's sons, and idolized in the DPRK as "the respected mother" of the nation, Ko appears to have succumbed to a long battle with breast cancer. ROK officials are seeking to prolong the suspension of the KEDO light-water reactor project in the DPRK for another year, rather than end the project, as Washington prefers. The KEDO executive board will decide in October. Few Western journalists have had the opportunity to visit the DPRK. After months of negotiations, Canadian reporter Martin Himel was given that chance this spring when officials granted him a visa. In a series of articles, in this week's FOCUS: INSIDE DPRK - a Canadian journalist in Pyongyang, Mr. Himel examines the fundamental changes under way in North Korea.

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org