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I. United States

1. US on KEDO

Kyodo News ("U.S. HOUSE OKS PROVISION REJECTING N. KOREA NUCLEAR REACTOR PROJECT", 2004-07-9) reported that a bill the U.S. House of Representatives recently approved includes a provision effectively rejecting any resumption of plans to build two light-water nuclear reactors in the DPRK, congressional sources said Thursday. The provision calls for stopping all transfers by the U.S. government of any nuclear technology or materials to the DPRK, Iran and other countries on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism, they said. The Senate is also expected to endorse the bill with the provision. A staff member of Markey's office said Markey is ready to support non-nuclear energy assistance to the DPRK if Pyongyang agrees to dismantle its nuclear programs and return to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty with strict inspections led by the International Atomic Energy Agency. But he ruled out any congressional support for nuclear assistance to the DPRK even if the current nuclear standoff with Pyongyang is resolved.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The Associated Press ("RICE CAPS ASIAN TOUR FOCUSED ON NUKES ", 2004-07-9) reported that U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said Friday that the DPRK could reap "surprise" rewards if it dismantles its atomic weapons program, as she capped an Asian tour focused on easing the nuclear standoff. Speaking with South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon, Rice said "North Korea will be surprised to see how much will be possible" if the DPRK agrees to abandon its nuclear

ambitions, South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported. "So much is possible if North Korea just does that," she said.

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3. DPRK - US Relations

Yonhap ("N. KOREA ACCUSES U.S. OF DEVELOPING NEW TYPE OF NUCLEAR WEAPON ", 2004-07-11) reported that the DPRK accused the US on Sunday of stepping up efforts to develop a new type of nuclear weapon while pretending to be interested in resolving the nuclear dispute with the state. Radio Pyongyang, monitored in Seoul, claimed that the U.S. is trying to develop a new type of nuclear weapon capable of destroying underground targets and plans to earmark US\$6.6 billion in next year's budget for the project and to increase the budget to \$7.5 billion in several years.

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4. US - PRC on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Wall Street Journal ("U.S. ASKS CHINA'S AID ON NORTH KOREAN ARMS", 2004-07-9) reported that U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice asked top PRC leaders for help in persuading the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear program, an American official said. Ms. Rice also complained to the PRC's foreign minister about the treatment of Jiang Yanyong, the PRC surgeon who exposed an official cover-up of Beijing's epidemic of severe acute respiratory syndrome last year but who was put under detention last month for his subsequent criticism of the government. In separate meetings with former President Jiang Zemin and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, Ms. Rice "asked the Chinese to use their considerable leverage with the North Koreans to push them to dismantle their nuclear weapons in a transparent and verifiable way," said the U.S. official, who is traveling with Ms. Rice on a three-day visit to Japan, the PRC and the ROK. "We made the point to the Chinese that we've given [the North Koreans] an opportunity to take a page out of the Libya book," the official said.

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5. Sino-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("NORTH KOREAN MILITARY DELEGATION VISITS CHINA ", 2004-07-12) reported that a DPRK military delegation left Pyongyang on Monday to visit the PRC, the North's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported. The DPRK delegation is headed by Kim Il-chol, minister of People's Armed Forces and member of the National Defense Commission, the report said, adding the North's military leaders, including Vice Minister of the People's Armed Forces Kim Sang-Ik, and the PRC's Ambassador to the DPRK Wu Donghe saw him off at the airport.

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6. Inter-Korean Summit

Donga-Ilbo ("PRIME MINISTER: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO THE NORTH WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE ", 2004-07-12) reported that Prime Minister Lee Hae-chan said yesterday that "it is not appropriate for the president to pay an adventurous visit to North Korea," and added, "It is time for North Korean leader Kim Jong-il to pay a return visit to South Korea," regarding the promotion of a second inter-Korean summit. After saying this during the National Assembly government Q&A session on unification, diplomacy, and security, Lee said, "The President's visit to North Korea needs

advance preparations, which can help settle the North Korean nuclear issue or improve inter-Korean relationships. The meeting itself can't be an object." "An inter-Korean summit meeting itself has symbolic meaning, but I'm concerned about reverse progress occurring if the summit results are not good," said Lee, and added, "an inter-Korean summit should be held on the grounds of settlement of the North Korean nuclear issues and the conversion of North Korea's policy to a more open one."

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7. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap ("NEW LEGISLATION EYED FOR FREER INTER-KOREAN CIVILIAN CONTACTS ", 2004-0-10) reported that a ruling party legislator said Saturday he will push legislation to allow freer ROK civilian contacts with the DPRK without government intervention. Currently, prior government approval is mandatory for all ROK citizens to contact DPRK citizens for any purposes, even for e-mail exchanges through the Internet.

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8. ROK - DPRK Family Reunions

Yonhap ("HUNDREDS OF SOUTH KOREANS LEAVE FOR FAMILY REUNIONS",) reported that several hundred ROK citizens left for the DPRK on Sunday for temporary reunions with their relatives that they have not seen for more than half a century. A total of 471 people were to arrive at the North's Mount Geumgang resort around 1 p.m. aboard buses that left Sokcho around 8:30 a.m.

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9. DPRK on US Stealth Bombers

Korean Central News Agency of the DPRK ("U.S. ARMS BUILDUP CASTIGATED IN S. KOREA", 2004-07-11) reported that the South Headquarters of the National Alliance of Youth and Students for the Country's Reunification reportedly released a statement on July 7. The U.S. has introduced F-117 Stealth fighter bombers into the ROK to stage a large-scale war exercise, which clearly proves that the war scenario of the U.S. which listed the DPRK as the next target of its preemptive attack after Iraq, is being put into practice, the statement said, and continued: Unpardonable is the U.S. criminal move to ignite a nuclear war against the north in the Korean peninsula at any cost quite contrary to the will and desire of the Korean nation at a time when the spirit of national reconciliation and great unity is increasing after the publication of the June 15 joint declaration. Our youth and students will conduct a more vigorous struggle against the U.S. and war to resolutely frustrate the U.S. adventurous moves for arms buildup to ignite a nuclear war on the Korean peninsula and drive the U.S. troops, the root cause of aggression and war, out of the ROK.

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10. DPRK Industrial Complex

Yonhap ("N.K. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX TO GENERATE LARGE ADDED VALUE: BOK ", 2004-07-11) reported that a DPRK industrial complex for ROK firms is expected to generate US\$600 million annually for the DPRK in value added after its completion, ROK's central bank said Sunday. The 28-million-square-meter complex, to be completed in 2011, will also create 730,000 jobs in the DPRK by 2012, according to a report released by the Bank of Korea (BOK).

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11. DPRK Domestic Security

Yonhap ("NORTH KOREA APPOINTS NEW POLICE CHIEF ", 2004-07-10) reported that the DPRK has replaced its police chief, only a year after he was appointed to the post, the country's media reported Saturday. Ju Sang-song, an army general, became the new public security minister in a shakeup ordered by the North's legislature, the Supreme People's Assembly, on Friday, the Korean Central News Agency said.

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12. DPRK Security Minister

Reuters ("N.KOREA SECURITY MINISTER REMOVED AFTER TRAIN BLAST", 2004-07-10) reported that the DPRK has appointed a new public security minister after his predecessor was apparently fired due to a train blast in April that killed 161 people and razed much of a small town, Tokyo-based Radiopress said on Sunday. Choe Ryong Su had been relieved of his post and replaced by Ju Sang Song, an army general, the North's official Korean Central News Agency and Japan's Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper said. Choe appeared to have absent from high-level events since the April 22 train disaster in the town of Ryongchon, near the border with China the Radiopress monitoring organization said. KCNA gave no explanation for the personnel change.

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13. Nuclear Black Market

The Associated Press ("U.S. FIRM SUPPLIED NUCLEAR BLACK MARKET ", 2004-07-10) reported that an investigation of the black market supplying nations wanting nuclear arms has spread to more than 20 firms - some of them North American - the chief of the U.N. atomic agency told The Associated Press Friday. A senior diplomat identified one of the firms as U.S. based. Demanding anonymity, the diplomat also said the Syria and Saudi Arabia are also being investigated as possible buyer nations, beyond Iraq, Iran, Libya and the DPRK - the countries known to have been in contact with Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan and members of his procurement network. In separate comments to The Associated Press, IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei avoided specifics on the locations of the firms supplying the nuclear black market beyond saying there were "over 20 countries, some of them in North America." The diplomat said at least one of them was in the United States. He declined to elaborate, saying the agency "was not yet at the bottom of that story."

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14. Japanese - US Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN, US TO TEST MISSILE DEFENCE OFF HAWAII", 2004-07-9) reported that Japan and the US plan to conduct the first joint tests of a sea-based antimissile system in 2005, Japan's English daily Yomiuri Shimbun reported on 9 July. The paper said it had learned that the tests are to involve an interceptor missile intercepting a target missile launched from an Aegis destroyer off Hawaii. The paper quoted a government source as saying the tests will be the first in a series aimed at developing a system to intercept ballistic missiles such as the DPRK's Nodong missile. The first test will not involve a target missile but will examine the flight characteristics of the interceptor missile, according to the source. The second test will intercept a target missile

launched from the Marshall Islands, the source said.

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15. Japanese - ROK Relations

Yonhap ("ROH-KOIZUMI SUMMIT TO BE HELD JULY 21-22 ON JEJU ISLAND: REPORT ", 2004-0-12) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun is expected to hold summit talks with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi from July 21-22 on the ROK's southern resort island of Jeju, a Japanese news agency reported Monday. Roh and Koizumi are likely to discuss ways to build future-oriented relations ahead of the 40th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic ties, which falls next year, as well as moves to normalize relations between DPRK and Japan, Kyodo News Service said.

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16. Japanese - DPRK Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, N. KOREA TO DISCUSS RESUMING NORMALIZATION TALKS SOON", 2004-07-9) reported that Japan and the DPRK will hold working-level talks soon to resume their stalled talks for normalizing diplomatic ties, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda said Friday. As part of the normalization talks, Tokyo plans to address the issue of the 10 Japanese abductees the DPRK says are dead or have never entered the country, the top government spokesman told a press conference. Hosoda said. 'In such meetings, our officials will first seek a reply on the issue of the 10 people for sure, and then discuss what stance to take and how to arrange schedules for the future normalization of ties,' he said. Also at stake is the ongoing standoff over the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, and the officials are expected to discuss the matter along with the details for the normalization talks and the issue of the 10 people as Tokyo has not accepted the DPRK's explanations about their fates, he said.

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17. Japanese Abductee Reunion

Reuters ("JAPANESE WIFE TRIES TO WOO U.S. SPOUSE, N.KOREAN KIDS", 2004-07-12) reported that a Japanese woman, hoping to persuade her American husband and their daughters to follow her out of DPRK to a new life, tried tempting them with home cooking at a family reunion on neutral territory in Indonesia. The problem for Hitomi Soga is that her former soldier husband Charles Jenkins might face U.S. court martial for desertion in 1965 if he goes to Japan. Also, their two daughters have known no world but their isolated homeland. DPRK agents abducted Soga, now 45, in 1978 but she was allowed home two years ago amid a thawing of ties with Japan, which also opened the way for Friday's emotional reunion.

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18. Japanese Elections

The Washington Post ("JAPANESE VOTERS DEAL SETBACK TO RULING PARTY", 2004-07-12) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's ruling Liberal Democratic Party suffered a setback in key upper house elections Sunday, as Japanese voters handed decisive gains to the opposition Democratic Party, which has criticized Koizumi for keeping troops in Iraq. The governing coalition

led by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) held on to its majority in the upper house of the Diet, or parliament. But the LDP lost one seat while the Democratic Party gained 12, according to final results released Monday morning. Some opponents immediately demanded that Koizumi dissolve the Diet and hold new elections, but the prime minister and other LDP officials said he would remain in office. Nevertheless, analysts said Koizumi -- the Bush administration's closest ally in Asia and once a highly popular political figure here -- is bound to emerge from the vote with diminished influence and a damaged reputation. Koizumi has championed difficult economic reforms in Japan, which some economists say have played a role in an increasingly strong recovery after 13 years in the doldrums.

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19. US - PRC Relations

The New York Times ("IN U.S.-CHINA TALKS, A SHARP AND ENDURING FOCUS ON TAIWAN", 2004-07-9) reported that Senior PRC leaders conveyed a heightened sense of alarm on Thursday about their nation's relations with Taiwan, and they strongly warned the US national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, that continued American sales of high-tech weapons to Taiwan would increase the chances of conflict, a Bush administration official said. Jiang Zemin, the PRC's military chief, appeared agitated about Taiwan in a meeting here with Ms. Rice on Thursday, the official said. Mr. Jiang gave the visiting American delegation the impression that the PRC was still struggling to agree on a strategy for dealing with Taiwan's president, Chen Shui-bian. "There's a sense that they do not know what to do," the official said. The PRC has argued that President Chen, who recently began his second four-year term, intends to achieve formal independence from mainland China, a move the PRC says it would counter with force. Ms. Rice emphasized that the United States did not support Taiwanese independence. She argued that the Bush administration had worked to temper Mr. Chen's independence-oriented rhetoric, especially during his inaugural address in May. But Mr. Jiang indicated that PRC leaders saw things differently. "They clearly did not find the inaugural encouraging," the official said.

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20. PRC Industrial Output

The Associated Press ("CHINA'S INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT SLOWS AGAIN ", 2004-07-9) reported that growth in the PRC's industrial output slowed for the fifth straight month in June as efforts to rein in dangerously fast economic growth appeared to be taking effect, the government reported Friday. Industrial output grew at an annual rate of 16.2 percent, down from 17.5 percent in May and 19.1 percent in April, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. The government is trying to slow growth which is forecast at more than 9 percent for the first half of this year, warning that such rapid expansion could ignite inflation and create financial dangers for banks. "Economic cooling measures are working ... and in a manageable fashion, which means probably Beijing will keep the status quo in terms of (tightening policies) in the coming months to let the trend continue," Qu said.

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21. US - PRC Trade Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA PLANS CHECKS ON NON-STICK COOKWARE", 2004-07-12) reported that PRC officials said Monday they plan to inspect non-stick cookware following allegations that U.S. chemical giant DuPont failed to report potential health risks from a chemical used to make Teflon. Officials at Quality Supervision Bureaus in Beijing and the southern city of

Guangzhou said they were preparing to conduct spot checks of cookware. That follows reports last week that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency expects to take action against DuPont for failing to disclose information about the synthetic chemical perfluorooctanoic acid, known as PFOA or C8. "Any products that pose a threat to health will be removed from the shelves immediately," the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported.

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22. US - PRC Semiconductor Dispute

The Associated Press ("U.S., CHINA RESOLVE SEMICONDUCTOR DISPUTE", 2004-07-12) reported that the Bush administration said Thursday it had resolved a trade dispute with the PRC over U.S. semiconductor exports, countering Democratic criticism it is not doing enough to protect American jobs and manufacturers. Under the agreement, the PRC agreed to phase out tax preferences for Chinese makers of semiconductors that put U.S. manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage. The dispute had led the US to file its first case against the PRC before the World Trade Organization. If the PRC had not met Thursday's deadline for resolving the issue, the United States would have taken the next step in the process, putting the issue before a WTO dispute panel, said U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick. The PRC could have been required to pay compensation or face U.S. trade penalties. "We've been steadfast in insisting that China needs to play by the rules of international trade and we have not hesitated to use the full range of tools at our disposal to make that happen," Zoellick said.

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23. PRC Domestic Economy

The Washington Post ("IN CHINA, A GROWING TASTE FOR CHIC ", 2004-07-12) reported that beneath the high ceilings of the Plaza 66 shopping center, a temple of consumption in the PRC's most materialistic city, Nicole Jiang steps through the glass doors of Louis Vuitton. Christian Dior sunglasses tinting her view and an Omega watch glinting from her wrist, the 30-year-old entrepreneur exemplifies the new-money mentality that has made the PRC the world's hottest market for purveyors of expensive chic. But the scene just a few blocks away reveals the flip side of the PRC's influence on the global fashion trade. At the open-air Xiangyang market, vendors hawk counterfeit Vuitton wallets laid out in plain view for as little as \$4. Merchants offer high-quality fake Gucci and Prada handbags, most accompanied with forged certificates of authenticity. The PRC's small but growing nouveau riche have become an increasingly significant market for luxury products, giving fashion executives visions of duplicating the staggering growth they enjoyed in Japan in the 1980s and '90s. But at the same time, the PRC's factories and merchants are growing more sophisticated in counterfeiting and exporting many of those same products. Nearly three-fourths of all counterfeit luxury goods seized last year at ports in France and Italy originated in the PRC or Hong Kong, according to customs authorities in Europe.

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24. Bird Flu Outbreak

The Associated Press ("STUDY WARNS OF POSSIBLE BIRD FLU EPIDEMIC", 2004-07-9) reported that the bird flu strain that killed 24 people in east Asia this year and resurfaced in recent weeks has become endemic to the region, and the virus could trigger a global health crisis if it goes unchecked, a new study says. The World Health Organization said Thursday that the study suggests the virus is

more widespread than previously thought and therefore will be harder to eliminate. The WHO urged governments in the region to share virus samples from recent outbreaks with WHO laboratories so the disease can be effectively monitored. In the study, published by the London-based science journal *Nature*, researchers led by a Hong Kong microbiologist found that domestic ducks in southern PRC played a key role in creation of the H5N1 flu virus, while wild birds probably helped spread it through Asia. New outbreaks from the same deadly strain re-emerged in eastern PRC and two Thai provinces this week, and officials began slaughtering thousands of chickens to halt its spread. Vietnam also has reported bird flu outbreaks in recent weeks.

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25. Peasants in the PRC

The New York Times ("EXPOSURE OF PEASANTS' PLIGHT IS SUPPRESSED BY CHINA", 2004-07-9) reported that in their muckraking best seller about abuses against PRC peasants, the husband-and-wife authors, Chen Guidi and Wu Chuntao, told the stories of farmers who fought the system and lost. The book, "An Investigation of China's Peasantry," describes how one farmer's long struggle against illegal taxes ended only when the police beat him to death with a mulberry club. It profiles a village activist who was jailed on a charge of instigating riots after he accused a local Communist Party boss of corruption. Now, Mr. Chen and Ms. Wu say, it is their turn to be silenced. Though their tautly written defense of China's 750 million peasants has become a sensation, their names have stopped appearing in the news media. Their publisher was ordered to cease printing at the peak of the book's popularity this spring, leaving the market to pirates who subsequently churned out millions of copies in violation of the copyright. A ranking official sued the authors, accusing them of libel, in his home county court. In a country that does not protect a right to criticize those holding power, it is a case they say they are sure to lose. Top Beijing leaders acknowledge that the PRC's surging urban economy has done relatively little to benefit the two-thirds of the population living in rural areas. They have put forward new programs to reduce the widening gap between urban and rural living standards. But the effort to quiet Mr. Chen and Ms. Wu makes it clear that officials will not tolerate writers who portray the PRC's vast peasantry as an underclass or who assign blame for peasants' enduring poverty.

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26. Singapore on One China Policy

Agence France-Presse ("SINGAPORE TRIES TO CALM CHINA OVER LEE'S VISIT TO TAIWAN", 2004-07-11) reported that Singapore moved to calm the PRC over a visit by Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to Taiwan, saying it was a private and unofficial trip to meet friends. Following an angry reaction from the PRC to the visit, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement that also emphasized Singapore's support for the "One China" policy and its opposition to Taiwanese independence. "Lee is making a private and unofficial visit to Taiwan to meet with friends. He last visited them in 1992," the statement said. "Singapore has consistently maintained a 'One China' policy. We do not support independence for Taiwan. This is our fundamental position. "DPM Lee's private visit does not in any way change this policy, nor does it represent any challenge to China's sovereignty or territorial integrity."

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27. ROK Terror Alert

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA AIR TRAFFIC AUTHORITY GETS TIP EMAIL ABOUT POSSIBLE TERRORIST BOARDING", 2004-07-12) reported that airport officials were on alert Monday morning after the Korea Air Traffic Control Center (KATCC) received an email claiming that an Al-Qaeda terrorist may board a plane bound for the ROK. According to the KATCC, it received an email message at around 9:30 a.m. Monday that said that an Al-Qaeda terrorist called Abdul Rajab would board a plane for Seoul and that he had an invitation to a Christian event. The email came in through a Yahoo account and gave no personal information about the sender, the KATCC said. Meanwhile, a few days ago, Incheon International Airport received a letter from someone threatening to blow up a plane bound for the U.S. The airport authority including the KATCC has checked passenger lists and investigated how the email was delivered. A passenger named Abdul Rajab was not identified, however. The airport security authority said it asked the U.S Traffic Safety Agency about Abdul Rajab and found out that he is on the "No Flight" list, which means that he will be barred from boarding a plane. The airport authority said there is little possibility that he boarded a plane using his real name and if he did, he might have used a fake passport or other person's name. Related agencies are trying to confirm it, the airport authority said.

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28. ROK Maritime Terror Alert

Reuters ("S.KOREA WARNS SHIPPING FIRMS OF TERROR THREAT ", 2004-07-10) reported that the ROK has warned the country's shipping firms of potential terror attacks following a threat from an Islamic militant group, a government official said Saturday. The Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Ministry asked Hanjin Shipping Co and seven other shipping firms in official letters to strengthen vigilance and urged crew members not to go ashore in Middle Eastern countries. "The government have urgently sent warning letters to eight shipping companies following an Iraqi militant threat," said ministry spokesman Kim Jong-soo. "We are now closely monitoring their routes." An Islamic group said in a warning posted last week on the Web site albasrah.net that companies delivering goods to U.S. forces would be targets for attack. Kim said the group named a ROK firm along with eight other international firms.

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29. ROK Capital Relocation

Donga Ilbo ("U.S. EMBASSY TO REMAIN IN SEOUL REGARDLESS OF CAPITAL RELOCATION", 2004-07-9) reported that The U.S. ambassador to ROK, Thomas Hubbard, said on July 9 that "wherever the capital of ROK will be, keeping the U.S. embassy to ROK or some parts of it in Seoul is important for the U.S. to play an important role." It is considerable because it suggests the U.S. embassy to ROK may remain in Seoul although the administrative capital is moving to Chungcheong province. Ambassador Hubbard answered like this to the question of "will the U.S. embassy to ROK move if the administration capital of ROK moves?" after a lecture titled "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow of the U.S.-ROK relationship" in the Western Chosun Hotel in Junggu, Seoul, which was held by invitation of the businessmen's association of ROK University. He said, "However the decision of ROK's capital is made, Seoul is still important and will be the center of all kinds of activities. Although it is important to work related to the government as an ambassador, it is also important to be in contact with economic circles, academic circles and the civil sector, and to do consular tasks." To a question of: "Will you newly construct the U.S. embassy to ROK in Camp Coiner

in Yongsan base?" he answered "There is no concrete plan in relation with it. We are discussing the possibility of construction according to ROK government's suggestion, but we have not drawn a conclusion yet." He added that "the U.S. bought the area where the former Gyeonggi girl's high school was located for the new U.S. embassy to ROK. I hope the conclusion is made as soon as possible on the matter of alternative area suggestions by ROK government through continuous discussion."

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30. Mongolian Elections

Reuters ("MONGOLIA ELECTION MIRED IN CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATE", 2004-07-10) reported that Mongolia's disputed election became tangled in a web of constitutional debate Saturday after the ruling party and opposition held separate sessions of parliament, each accusing the other of voting irregularities. "Things are getting more and more complicated," a Western observer said, adding that members of parliament were unlikely to reconvene until after Naadam, a holiday celebration of horse riding, wrestling and archery that ends Wednesday. President Natsagiin Bagabandi Friday called the first session of the Great Hural parliament since the June 27 elections, prompting a boycott by the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) which held its own session, threatening to bring Bagabandi before the constitutional court. The MPRP has won 36 confirmed seats in the 76-seat parliament to the opposition Motherland Democratic Coalition's 34, the General Election Committee said this week. The coalition claims victory with the support of three independents but a court has yet to rule on whether a re-vote will take place in three polling stations in two constituencies after both sides complained of electoral irregularities.

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31. Tibet Earthquake

The Associated Press ("EARTHQUAKE STRIKES REMOTE REGION OF TIBET", 2004-07-12) reported that a powerful earthquake struck a remote, sparsely populated region of Tibet on Monday, the government said. No injuries or damage were immediately reported. The 6.7-magnitude quake hit a high-altitude area in the Gangdise mountains, about 350 miles west of the Tibetan capital of Lhasa, the official Xinhua News Agency said, citing seismological authorities. A magnitude 6.7 quake is capable of causing severe damage, but Xinhua said the area struck Monday had "little human habitation." The area is about 60 miles north of the PRC's border with Nepal.

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32. Malaysian - US Relations

Agence France-Presse ("MALAYSIA, US TO HOLD JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE IN SOUTH CHINA SEA", 2004-07-12) reported that Malaysia and the United States will hold a joint naval and land exercise in the South China Sea aimed at bolstering military ties, the US embassy said. "Malaysian soldiers and sailors will be joining with their US counterparts this week for the annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (Carat) exercises," it said in a statement. This year's exercise off Malaysia's Pahang state would feature simulated landings with Malaysian troops riding US amphibious landing craft, it said. Guided-missile destroyer the USS Russell is participating in the exercise under task group commander Captain Buzz Little. They will remain in Malaysia until the weekend. "The Carat mission helps enhance regional cooperation, increase interoperability and builds stronger friendship between the US and Malaysia. "It also strengthens professional skills at

every level for the military personnel involved," the embassy said.

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33. CanKor # 173

CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE", 2004-07-9 The DPRK would be "surprised to see how much is possible" if it abandoned its nuclear ambitions, US National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice tells South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon in Seoul, the final stop on her Asian tour which included Japan and China. Thursday marked the tenth anniversary of the passing of the DPRK's President Kim Il Sung. The DPRK has beefed up its combat readiness since the start of the Iraq war by fortifying military facilities, digging tunnels and testing new missiles, according to a newly-released report by the RO Korea's defence ministry. Members of the former Japanese Red Army, living as fugitives in the DPRK since a 1970 hijacking, have applied to North Korean authorities for permission to return to Japan. The Bush administration has cited their presence as one of the reasons it condemns the DPRK as a state sponsor of terrorism. Pyongyang responded that it has no objections to the request. Alleged American deserter to the DPRK, Charles Jenkins, will be reunited with his Japanese wife Hitomi Soga in Indonesia after a two year separation. His existence was virtually unknown to the outside world until 2002, when Japanese citizens abducted to the DPRK returned home, Soga among them. Jenkins has refused to join her fearing the USA would extradite him and prosecute him for desertion. Indonesia does not have an extradition treaty with the USA. Hanawon, the transitional home for North Korean refugee-defectors to Seoul celebrates its fifth anniversary this week. At a commemorative ceremony, the new Unification Minister Chung Dong-young said that the facility is a "meaningful" place where the two Koreas can learn to coexist. However, despite the preparatory training offered at Hanawon and the services of civic organizations, assimilation into Southern society proves more difficult than most anticipated. The words of a disillusioned refugee-defector "utopia does not exist anywhere" inspire the title to this week's CanKor FOCUS: No utopia for North Korean refugee-defectors.
<http://www.cankor.ca>

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34. DPRK Domestic Economy

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH SPEEDS MARKET OPENING", 2004-07-9) reported that Recently, DPRK has speeded up the opening of its economy by actively seeking investment from companies in PRC and Hong Kong. A PRC businessman here who does business with DPRK said yesterday that DPRK plans to hold the "DPRK 21st Century Commerce, Trade and Investment Conference" in Pyongyang from Nov. 15. "They plan to invite about 500 foreign companies to the conference," he said. "And, in particular, they have extended individual invitations to several PRC and Hong Kong companies to participate in the event." At the conference, DPRK's economic and business-related bodies will be involved in seeking foreign investment, and will even allow overseas businessmen who have intentions of investing in DPRK to conduct field surveys in the country. According to sources here, DPRK also plans to start building a business center in Pyongyang for foreign firms conducting trade with DPRK by the end of the year. DPRK authorities and PRC officials in Dandong, PRC have agreed to create a tax free zone in an eastern port of Dandong, which is located near the border between the two countries.

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35. DPRK to Delay Civil Group Trip to DPRK

Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREA TO DELAY CIVIL GROUP TRIP TO NORTH", 2004-07-9) reported that As ROK government rejected a request by the wife of the late Rev. Moon Ik-hwan and other ROK people to participate in the 10th anniversary of the death of DPRK leader Kim Il-sung, DPRK issued a statement Thursday regarding the delay of another civil group's trip to DPRK. On Friday, DPRK unilaterally informed ROK of a delay in the working-level maritime talks, which were scheduled to be held from Tuesday in Sokcho, through a phone message under the name of the head of DPRK delegation of DPRK-ROK economic cooperative talks. However, DPRK did not mention anything about the family reunions, which were scheduled to take place at Mount Geumgang on Sunday. ROK government and ROK Red Cross expect the reunions to take place as scheduled. The spokesperson of the Unification Ministry said, "We regret what DPRK people said Thursday. In this situation in which DPRK-ROK relations are developing steadily, unnecessary misunderstandings and criticism are not desirable for both DPRK and ROK. We hope that this issue will not become an obstacle."

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36. Korean DMZ

CONFERENCE ON TRANSFORMING KOREA'S DMZ INTO A PEACE AND NATURE SANCTUARY
The DMZ Forum, in collaboration with the Gyeonggi Province and the Gyeonggi Cultural Foundation, in the Republic of Korea, is conducting a pivotal conference on "Transforming Korea's DMZ, A World Heritage, into a Peace and Nature Sanctuary" in the capital city of Seoul, from July 14 to July 19, 2004. The province borders the DMZ. Its people still suffer from the effects of the war and are dedicated to reuniting with their North Korea families and neighbors. The province also wants to foster DMZ-based sustainable eco-tourism and protection efforts. The DMZ Forum's mission is to work collaboratively to protect Korea's Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) as a transboundary peace and nature reserve. Our immediate goal is to have the DMZ designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The DMZ is a 4 x 250 kilometers (2.5 by 150 miles) corridor, rich in biodiversity, with five rivers, over 1,100 plant, 51 mammal (67% of Korea's fauna and including leopard, Asiatic Black Bear, lynx, a rare sheep and perhaps even tiger), 83 fish and hundreds of bird species. Many of these, like the Red-crowned and White-naped crane and Black-faced spoonbill, are globally endangered. During the fifty-one years since the armistice, the DMZ has been a geopolitical vacuum, a symbol of tension, war and separation. However, nature has used that time to regenerate its wetland, forest, mountain, river and grassland ecosystems and habitats.

[http://www.dmzforum.org/6-30-04-dmz conference program schedule 2004%5B1%5D.doc](http://www.dmzforum.org/6-30-04-dmz%20conference%20program%20schedule%202004%5B1%5D.doc)

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