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I. NAPSNet

1. US-DPRK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("US READY TO ISOLATE NORTH KOREA OVER NUCLEAR WEAPONS: STATE DEPT ENVOY", 2006-07-30) reported that the DPRK refused to rejoin negotiations on its

nuclear program on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional forum on security issues in Malaysia last week. In Kuala Lumpur on Friday, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urged the DPRK to rejoin negotiations on its nuclear programme, saying the United States was ready "at any time, at any place and without any conditions" to meet it under the six-nation talks framework. The DPRK said it was also considering withdrawing from the ASEAN Regional Forum, one of the few diplomatic gatherings it attends.

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2. Inter-Korean Relations

Donga-Ilbo ("CIVIC LEADERS WANT NORTH POLICY SHIFT", 2006-07-29) reported that ROK civic leaders called for a need to review the ROK's DPRK policy, citing possession of nuclear weapons and recent missile tests as "yet another reminder of how futile the Sunshine Policy is". The signatories included former Director of Religious Affairs of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism Song Weol-ju, former President of the Christian Council of Korea Choi Seong-kyu, former President of the Korean Bar Association Lee Se-jung, Chairman of the World Peace Forum Kim Jin-hyun, Standing Chairman of the New Right Kim Jin-hong, Secretary General of the Council for A Better Society Seo Kyung-seok, Professor Lee Myung-hyun of Seoul National University, and Chair Professor Lee In-ho of Myongji University.

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3. ROK Launches Satellite

Stratfor ("SOUTH KOREA: PLUGGING THE INTELLIGENCE GAP", 2006-07-28) reported that the ROK's first completely indigenous satellite, the Arirang-2, was launched atop a Russian rocket July 28. The multipurpose satellite is equipped with a multispectral imaging camera, also making this Seoul's first imaging spy satellite, thereby reducing Seoul's reliance on US satellite imagery and marking a step toward addressing a critical intelligence gap in the ROK's defense structure.

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4. DPRK Floods

Associated Press ("UN: 154 DEAD IN NORTH KOREA FLOODS", 2006-07-27) reported that, according to the United Nations, the death toll from floods and landslides in the DPRK this month has risen to at least 154 people, with 127 others missing. More than 31,000 houses were destroyed and about 17,000 families are left homeless. The disaster has damaged about 74,000 acres of arable land, which could lead to a loss of 100,000 tons of food -- about 10 percent of the country's annual food shortfall.

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("NORTH KOREA CANCELS MASS GAMES SHOW DUE TO FLOODS", 2006-07-30) reports that the DPRK has cancelled the Mass Games known as Arirang, citing torrential rains, floods and the planned joint military drill 'Ulchi Focus Lens', which will be performed by the US and ROK military forces as the reasons. The 80-minute performances that are part rhythmic gymnastics floor show, part military parade and part circus act were scheduled to start on August 15 and run through mid-October. The games are said to be rescheduled for April 2007. Although the crowds are typically made up of DPRK Koreans, thousands of tickets are sold to foreigners, with prices ranging from 240 euros (\$306.30) for a box seat to 40 euros for a third-class seat. [\(return to top\)](#)

5. DPRK-Singapore Relations

Channel News Asia ("NORTH KOREA'S FOREIGN MINISTER MAKES OFFICIAL VISIT TO SINGAPORE", 2006-07-31) reported that the DPRK's Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun will make an official visit to Singapore from 31 July to 3 August at the invitation of Foreign Minister George Yeo. A Singapore Foreign Ministry statement says this will be the first official visit by Mr Paek in his capacity as Foreign Minister.

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6. DPRK in World Cup

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA ANGY, BUT IN WORLD CUP ", 2006-07-31) reported that the DPRK qualified for the 2007 women's World Cup with a 3-2 win over Japan in the play-off for third at the Asian Cup in Adelaide, but considerable bitterness remains about the team's ugly semi-final loss to China. The DPRK Football Association wrote to the Asian Football Confederation demanding a rematch of its turbulent loss to the Chinese, in which three DPR Korean players were banned for an astonishing attack on the referee.

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7. Japan Spy Satellite Launch

Yomiuri Shimbun ("BETTER SPY SATELLITE SYSTEM NEEDED", 2006-07-31) reported that the government plans to launch the nation's third information-gathering satellite on Sept. 10 to be followed by its fourth in January or February next year to complete a four-satellite system primarily for monitoring the DPRK's military activities. If brought to completion, however, the system would likely fall short of detecting a real-time missile launch by the DPRK, and it seems more must be done to make Japan's antimissile system flawless.

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8. Japan SDF Mission

Kyodo ("JAPAN'S AIR DEFENSE FORCE MAKES 1ST AIRLIFT TO BAGHDAD", 2006-07-31) reported that a transport aircraft of Japan's Air Self-Defense Force on Monday made its first flight to Baghdad from Kuwait, government officials said. Japan has expanded airlift operations by its Kuwait-based units for United Nations and multinational forces following the withdrawal of its ground troops earlier this month from the southern Iraqi city of Samawah.

[\(return to top\)](#) The Los Angeles Times ("SUPPORT FOR U.S.-LED MISSION MAY CONTINUE", 2006-07-31) reported that Japan is considering a one-year extension of its naval mission to support US-led troops in Afghanistan, a news report said today. Japan's navy has provided fuel for coalition warships in the Indian Ocean since November 2001 under a special law set to expire Nov. 1. [\(return to top\)](#)

9. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo ("KONO, IN LDP RACE, CRITICIZES KOIZUMI'S YASUKUNI VISITS", 2006-07-31) reported that Senior Vice Minister of Justice Taro Kono, showing a willingness to run in the Liberal

Democratic Party presidential election, criticized Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. "I think his visits to Yasukuni Shrine are totally unnecessary when he is trying to get (Japan) onto the U.N. Security Council as a permanent member," Kono said.

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10. PRC-Japan Relations

Kyodo ("ASO EAGER TO MEET CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER, EYES TALKS 'SOON'", 2006-07-31) reported that Foreign Minister Taro Aso reiterated he is keen to meet again with his PRC counterpart, Li Zhaoxing, sometime soon, after the two ministers held talks on the sidelines of a regional ministerial conference in Kuala Lumpur. Touching on Sino-Japanese ties, Aso said forging Japan-PRC friendship is not the aim but rather a means to achieving the original goal which is mutual prosperity for both their countries.

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11. PRC Economic Control

The Financial Times ("CHINA MULLS FREER HAND FOR CENTRAL BANK", 2006-07-31) reported that a PRC central bank official has suggested economic policymaking could be more effective if the institution were free to manage interest rates independent of other ministries and direct central government oversight. Liu Lida said in a little-reported speech to a conference at the weekend that the ability of the People's Bank of China to adjust interest rates on its own would make such decision-making more effective and faster.

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12. PRC Economy

The Associated Press ("U.S. WORRIES CHINA MAY WANE REFORM ", 2006-07-31) reported that the PRC's economic reforms could slow or stop once the World Trade Organization market-opening pledges are completed this year, leaving the government without explicit goals, a US official warned Monday. Washington is worried about suggestions by some officials that the PRC restrict foreign investment or impose technology standards on mobile phones and other products that might limit competition, said Franklin L. Lavin, the US undersecretary of commerce for international trade.

[\(return to top\)](#) Agence France-Presse ("CHINA'S LOCAL GOVERNMENTS NOT LISTENING TO ECONOMY WARNINGS ", 2006-07-31) reported that after a week of high-level warnings that the PRC economy needs to be reined in, the nation's leaders still face the daunting task of getting local officials to listen. Both Premier Wen Jiabao and President Hu Jintao have emphasized the need for better macroeconomic controls, using deliberately unambiguous rhetoric that many observers see directed squarely at the provinces. [\(return to top\)](#)

13. Trans-Pacific Pollution

The Associated Press ("CHINA'S GROWING POLLUTION REACHES U.S. ", 2006-07-31) reported that researchers say the environmental impact of the PRC's breakneck economic growth is being felt well beyond its borders. They worry that as the PRC consumes more fossil fuels to feed its energy-hungry economy, the US could see a sharp increase in trans-Pacific pollution that could affect human health, worsen air quality and alter climate patterns.

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Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org