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I. NAPSNet

1. US-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("US, NORTH KOREA MAY BE ON COLLISION COURSE: GROUP", 2006-08-08) reported that the International Crisis Group (ICG) released a report which suggests the DPRK be given a face-saving way of coming back to talks lest it opt to increase tension through missile or nuclear tests. One way to reduce tensions might be for the United States to ease some of the financial restrictions. "Unless negotiations resume soon with both sides showing more flexibility, Washington and Pyongyang could find themselves on a collision course with Seoul caught in the middle," the report said.

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("EX-CLINTON OFFICIAL MAY GO TO NORTH KOREA: REPORT", 2006-0-08) reported that Bill Richardson, former Clinton administration official and current Governor of New Mexico, was in talks with the DPRK mission to the UN in New York about a visit sometime soon, and may be planning to travel to Pyongyang. Richardson is unlikely to travel as an official U.S. envoy but has had acted as a conduit for the Bush administration before. Richardson is seen a possible Democratic presidential candidate in 2008. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. DPRK-PRC Relations

Reuters ("CHINA OFFICIAL CRITICISES NORTH KOREA FOR MISSILE TEST", 2006-08-08) reported that the PRC's foreign ministry has acknowledged that its vote in favor of a UN resolution criticizing Pyongyang for test firing missiles has led to tensions between the two nations. "North Korea's missile launches have led to a disagreement between China and North Korea," Liu Jianchao said in comments posted on the Web site of the ROK daily Chosun Ilbo in Chinese and Korean. "North Korea doesn't listen to China. And it (DPRK) doesn't listen to what it itself says." During his stay in the ROK, Liu called on the DPRK to return to stalled six-party talks and for flexibility in the negotiations.

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3. ROK Aid for DPRK Flood Victims

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL MAY GIVE RICE TO FLOOD-HIT N.KOREA AFTER ALL", 2006-08-08) reported that the ROK may lift the freeze on rice aid to help DPR Korean victims affected by the recent floods. An official later explained the policy to suspend the rice aid following the missile tests has not changed. Unification Minister Lee Jong-seok will announce the scope of aid on Friday once he has met with relief organizations and Korean Red Cross chief Han Wan-sang.

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("HYUNDAI TO DELIVER AID FOR NK FLOOD VICTIMS", 2006-08-08) reported that Hyundai Asan will send relief goods to victims of flooding near a scenic mountain on the southeastern coast of the DPRK. From Wednesday to Saturday, Hyundai Asan will deliver 500 tons of cement and 200 tons of flour, worth about 100 million won (\$104,000), by trucks across the inter-Korean border for victims in the inner part of Mount Kumgang, the company said. It would be the second relief delivery from the ROK after the devastation caused by torrential rains late last month. [\(return to top\)](#)

4. DPRK Refugee-Defectors

Seoul Times ("RUSSIA TURNS SOUR ON N. KOREAN REFUGEES", 2006-08-08) reported that the ROK seems to be actively discouraging defections from the DPRK. Under new rules, resettlement

payments are reduced by two-thirds. Defectors are scrupulously investigated to help "weed out criminals, spies and ethnic Koreans from China". About 2,500 DPR Koreans, largely construction workers, work in the Maritime Territory, which includes Vladivostok, and attitudes toward them seem to be souring. In September, five teenage Russians shouting white-pride slogans attacked two groups of workers, killing one and injuring another. The attacks seem to be the tip of an iceberg of racial fears that a collapse of the DPRK could bring an uncontrolled flood of refugees to this region, historically an area of Korean migration. Civil defense and military authorities have been drilled on stopping DPR Koreans from crossing the border.

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5. US-ROK Security Alliance

Agence France-Presse ("NEW PLAN WOULD LEAD TO US TROOP CUTS IN SOUTH KOREA: OFFICIAL", 2006-08-08) reported that US force levels in the ROK will be reduced under proposed command arrangements that would move the US military from the lead to a supporting role in the defense of the ROK in time of war, a senior US defense official said. The official said the troop reductions would involve headquarters and support elements, and would not result in a cut in US combat capabilities on the Korean peninsula, which he said would be increased.

[\(return to top\)](#) Asia Pulse ("S. KOREA, US TO SHIFT TO JOINT DEFENSE SYSTEM IN WARTIME COMMAND", 2006-08-08) reported that the ROK and the US will create a joint defense system in place of the existing combined forces command when the ROK regains wartime operational control of its military, a top ROK defense official said. The new system will operate a body to address joint military operations during both peacetime and wartime, and it will be designed to be stronger than the US-Japan alliance model, Kwon An-do, assistant minister for policy at the Defense Ministry, said.

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6. ROK on Mongolia-US Joint Drill

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA TO OBSERVE U.S.-MONGOLIA JOINT DRILLS", 2006-08-08) reported that five ROK military officers will observe and participate in this year's Khaan Quest, joint military exercises between Mongolia and the US, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said. The exercise, which runs from Aug. 10 to 18, puts the focus on humanitarian activities and is billed as a "peace preservation" drill.

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7. ROK-Japan Relations

Kyodo ("S. KOREA CITES NEED TO REMOVE 'OBSTACLE' TO RELATIONS WITH JAPAN", 2006-0-08) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki Moon said it is important to remove an obstacle hindering improved relations between his country and Japan in an apparent reference to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's repeated visits to Yasukuni Shrine, a Japanese official said. In a meeting with his Japanese counterpart Taro Aso, Ban noted that Japan and the ROK have not held summits for a while and that the situation needs to be "normalized."

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8. Japan Military Role

Kyodo ("JAPAN NOT TO CHANGE DEFENSE POLICIES AFTER N. KOREA TESTS: NUKAGA", 2006-

08-08) reported that Japan's Defense Agency Director General Fukushima Nukaga said his country will not change its defense policies to counter an imminent missile threat following the DPRK's missile launches last month, saying attacking a foreign enemy base is not in line with its Constitution. "In principle, the policies of Japan's Self-Defense Forces will not change, particularly because Japan's Constitution does not allow them to stage a war against other countries and to play a military role overseas," Nukaga said.

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9. Japan Military Reform

Kyodo ("DEFENSE AGENCY TO SET UP QUICK RESPONSE REGIMENT IN FY 2007", 2006-08-08) reported that Japan's Defense Agency plans to set up a 700-member quick response regiment within the Ground Self-Defense Force in fiscal 2007 to reinforce the country's capability to counter possible terrorist and guerrilla attacks, Defense Agency Director General Fukushima Nukaga said. Designed also to enhance Japanese participation in international peacekeeping efforts, the envisaged unit will be formed under the GSDF's so-called central quick response team to be set up by March next year.

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10. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PM HINTS AT SHRINE VISIT ON EMOTIONAL DATE", 2006-08-08) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi hinted he would go to a war shrine next week on the anniversary of Japan's World War II surrender, despite strong warnings from neighboring countries. Koizumi has never gone on that emotional date, when war veterans and nationalists congregate at the shrine -- including historical revisionists who believe Japan has been too apologetic since its surrender.

[\(return to top\)](#) Agence France-Presse ("JAPANESE FM WANTS SECULAR, STATE-RUN WAR SHRINE", 2006-08-08) reported that Foreign Minister Taro Aso, seeking to become Japan's next prime minister, has called for a controversial war shrine to be put under control of the state, which would decide whether it should continue to honour war criminals. Aso, usually known as a conservative hawk, said the Yasukuni shrine should be stripped of its Shinto religious affiliation and voiced hope the emperor would one day be able to visit it. [\(return to top\)](#)

11. Cross Strait Relations

Bloomberg ("CHINA EXECUTES OFFICIAL AS TAIWAN SPY, 1ST SINCE 1999", 2006-08-08) reported that Tong Daning, who helped manage the PRC's \$26 billion pension fund, has been executed on a charge of spying for Taiwan, the highest-ranking official to be punished for espionage since 1999, according to military analysts. Tong, formerly a director of the PRC's National Council for Social Security Fund, was executed on April 21, after the Beijing Intermediate Court found him guilty of spying.

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12. PRC Bird Flu

Reuters ("CHINA CONFIRMS HUMAN BIRD FLU CASE FROM 2003", 2006-08-08) reported that the PRC confirmed on Tuesday that the country's first human case of the H5N1 bird flu virus was in late

2003, two years earlier than originally reported, prompting the U.N.'s health agency to call for greater transparency. The case had spurred questions about whether there might have been other human H5N1 infections in the PRC prior to what had been its first reported human case, near the end of 2005.

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