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I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The Associated Press ("US: LIBYA IS EXAMPLE FOR RESOLVING N KOREA NUCLEAR ISSUE", 2004-07-20) reported that a senior U.S. official Tuesday said lessons learned from Libya's pledge to eliminate weapons of mass destruction could be used to help resolve a dispute over the DPRK's nuclear bomb program. "We've had some successes in that area in the case of Libya renouncing the pursuit of weapons of mass destruction," Undersecretary of State John Bolton said in a meeting with ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon. "I think as we prepare for the next round of six-party talks, it's important to keep all those lessons in mind." Bolton arrived Monday for talks with ROK officials on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. "Consultations, I think, help us understand our positions and formulate a very coordinated approach to dealing with the North Korean pursuit of weapons of mass destruction," Bolton said.

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2. DPRK on US Proposal

Chosun Ilbo ("PYONGYANG SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING U.S. PROPOSAL OF DE-NUCLEARIZATION", 2004-07-20) reported that in an apparent shift of stance, DPRK says it is currently studying the U.S. proposal, aimed at ending the nuclear impasse. Speaking to reporters at Ronald Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C. DPRK Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Han Sung-ryol said, Pyongyang is seriously considering the U.S. proposal, presented at the six-nation talks in Beijing late last month. When asked if he thinks the proposal has any favorable conditions for Pyongyang he nodded in acknowledgment. Han and DPRK Ambassador to the U.N. Pak Gil-yon, are currently visiting Washington D.C. to take part in the Korean Peninsula Peace Forum. Their visit is considered exceptional as the U.S. rarely allows senior DPRK officials to visit its capital.

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3. US on DPRK Human Rights

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. HOUSE TO VOTE ON NORTH KOREA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT", 2004-07-20) reported that the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 will be placed before the U.S. House of Representatives for a vote on Wednesday at the earliest. The House announced Monday that the bill, which passed through the House Committee on International Relations but has floundered in the Committee on the Judiciary, must be put up for a vote as its time limitation is set to expire. No date on the vote has been announced, but a House official said it would probably be voted on Tuesday. As the Republican Party forms a House majority, it is likely that the bill would be passed should it be voted upon. The bill only recommends active measures to improve human rights and democratization in the DPRK, but it would have a great influence if it legislated by the U.S. Congress. It calls for DPRK human rights to be a major issue of discussion in negotiations with the DPRK and other Northeast Asian states, generous financial support for DPRK human rights groups, increasing broadcasts to the DPRK and the expansion of radio to the DPRK, transparency in

humanitarian aid distribution and strengthening of inspections, recognition of DPRK refugee's refugee status and the construction of DPRK refugee camps, and permitting DPRK defectors to apply for asylum in the US.

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4. Inter - Korean Relations

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA BEGINS SENDING RICE AID TO NORTH KOREA", 2004-0-19) reported that a convoy of 40 ROK trucks rumbled across the heavily fortified border between the two Koreas Tuesday, carrying the first batch of 400,000 tons of rice aid for the DPRK in a mission to sow "seeds for peace." The ROK trucks carried 1,000 tons of rice on a road the two Koreas have built across the western sector of their mine-infested border following a historic 2000 summit. A separate convoy of 40 trucks carried another 1,000 tons of rice on a similar road on the eastern border. The ROK trucks will unload the rice in two DPRK towns just north of the border and will return home later Tuesday. "The shipment you are carrying is more than rice aid," Park Heung-ryol, an official of the South's Unification Ministry, was quoted as saying by domestic media while speaking to the truck drivers during a ceremony in this border train station. "You are also carrying the warm hearts of the South Korean people and your efforts will help sow seeds for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula," he added.

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5. Inter - Korean Border Dispute

Joongang Ilbo ("NAVAL CLASH CALLED TEST OF NERVE; RIFTS IN SOUTH APPEAR ", 2004-07-20) reported that maritime border disputes between the two Koreas expanded into a wider conflict as the DPRK abruptly called off agreed military talks yesterday. ROK experts said the DPRK is testing the Roh administration's nerve. On Wednesday, a DPRK boat crossed the border, and was chased back after a ROK vessel fired two warning shots. Following the incident, the ROK's naval command was criticized for failing to report that the DPRK had contacted the ROK at the time, using a radio hotline set up for the purpose. The ROK's Joint Chiefs of Staff, uninformed by the Navy about the contact, had announced that the DPRK had not used the hotline, thus the Navy fired warning shots. The DPRK complained, and the Defense Ministry was forced to apologize Friday for misrepresenting events. Experts in the ROK said the DPRK is testing the Roh administration's defense stance. "The North is not only trying to stir up border disputes, but also attempting to create internal conflict in the South," said Jeong Yeong-tae, a researcher at the Korea Institute for National Unification.

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6. Pyongyang Population Growth

Yonhap ("REPORT SHOWS POPULATION OF PYONGYANG SURGED IN 2003", 2004-07-20) reported that the population of the DPRK's capital, Pyongyang, rose significantly last year to over 3 million, according to a recent report by a pro-DPRK organization in Japan. Pyongyang's population reached 3.08 million at the end of 2003, the Choson Sinbo, the official paper of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, said in its edition, published last week. The figures suggest the city's population was about 500,000 more than a year and a half ago, as the association reported in June 2002 that the figure was 2.5 million.

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7. ROK Defense Budget

Yonhap ("SLUGGISH DEFENSE BUDGET LEADS TO CURTAILMENT OF PROCUREMENT PLANS ", 2004-07-20) reported that the ROK has delayed or curtailed a set of arms buildup projects due to a slower increase in military spending, a government report showed Tuesday. The ROK's national budget rose 77 percent during the 1997-2003 period, but its defense budget increased only 26.9 percent, according to a booklet published by the Defense Ministry's planning and management bureau.

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8. ROK - Japanese Relations

The Associated Press ("N KOREA'S NUCLEAR AMBITIONS TOP JAPAN, S KOREA MEET AGENDA ", 2004-07-20) reported that the standoff over the DPRK's nuclear ambitions will top the agenda when President Roh Moo-hyun meets Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in the southern resort island of Jeju this week. "The talks are taking place at a time when there is momentum in the North Korean nuclear issue, and there is some strategic goal to further develop this through further cooperation between South Korea and Japan," the ROK's Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon told reporters Tuesday, according to the ROK's Yonhap news agency. Koizumi is scheduled to make a two-day visit to Jeju Island beginning Wednesday. "I would like to exchange honest views (with President Roh) as we see how the talks go," said Koizumi, who met Roh in Tokyo in June 2003.

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9. Japan on Abductees

Kyodo News Service ("JAPAN TO PRESS NORTH KOREA FOR INFORMATION ON MISSING ABDUCTEES", 2004-07-20) reported that Japan will press the DPRK to quickly clarify what happened to eight abductees Pyongyang says are dead and two others it says never entered the country now that the family of repatriated abductee Hitomi Soga has come to Japan, top government spokesman Hiroyuki Hosoda said Tuesday 20 July . The chief cabinet secretary said Japan expects the DPRK will provide information on each of the 10. Japan has demanded the DPRK resolve the issue as well as the DPRK's nuclear and missile issues as part of bilateral talks to normalize ties. Pyongyang had admitted to having abducted eight of the Japanese but said they are dead and the two others never entered the DPRK, but has agreed to re-investigate them from scratch as Tokyo demanded.

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10. Japanese - DPRK Relations

The Associated Press ("JAPAN: NORMALIZATION TALKS WITH N KOREA GETTING CLOSER", 2004-07-20) reported that the DPRK's cooperation in settling the standoff over kidnappings of Japanese citizens has increased the chances of normalization talks between Tokyo and Pyongyang, a top Japanese official said Tuesday. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda cited the DPRK's willingness to let accused U.S. Army deserter Charles Jenkins leave the DPRK to be reunited with his Japanese wife. The family arrived in Japan on Sunday. "North Korea has acted positively toward Mr. Jenkins and his family's visit and also toward the issue of the missing Japanese nationals," Hosoda said. "I think that conditions are being met to start negotiations." Hosoda said no timetable had been

set for the talks. Establishment of ties would bring impoverished DPRK much-needed economic aid, while Japan is eager to neutralize Pyongyang's aggressive military stance, which Tokyo considers its No. 1 security threat.

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11. US on Abductee Reunion

The Associated Press ("U.S. WON'T DROP JENKINS DESERTION CHARGE ", 2004-07-20) reported that the US may be willing to defer prosecution of a former U.S. soldier accused of defecting to DPRK nearly 40 years ago but is not willing to give up on seeking his return from Japan to face charges, the State Department spokesman said Monday. The former soldier, Charles Jenkins, 64, was resting in a Tokyo hospital while many Japanese hoped the US would be lenient in its desertion case against him so he may resettle there with his Japanese wife. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said "we are considerate of the humanitarian situation" and of Jenkins' medical condition. So, Boucher said, "while we do expect to present a legal request for custody at the appropriate time, we won't be doing that right away."

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12. DPRK Defectors in the ROK

Chosun Ilbo ("BOARDING SCHOOL TO HELP N. KOREAN DEFECTORS TO BE BUILT ", 2004-07-20) reported that a boarding school that integrates all levels of education from middle school to high school will be built in Icheon, Gyeonggi Province in March 2006 to help young DPRK defectors living in the South to adapt to the education system. The Ministry of Education said Tuesday that they will open an alternative school (tentatively named Hangyeore School) in Icheon, Gyeonggi Province in March 2006 to help young DPRK defectors. The school will hold some 280 students. Students can attend the school as long as they want for up to two years and then transfer to an ordinary school when they choose. The courses will consist of 40 percent regular subjects, 30 percent computer and foreign languages, and 30 percent vocational trainings. In addition, if students graduate from the school, it will be recognized as the equivalent of finishing middle or high schools.

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13. Japanese Troops in Iraq

The Associated Press ("AL-ZARQAWI'S GROUP WARNS JAPAN TO WITHDRAW", 2004-07-20) reported that the Islamic militant group blamed for deadly attacks on foreign and local interests in Iraq threatened Japan on Tuesday that car bombs would strike its troops if they were not withdrawn. "To the government of Japan: do what the Philippines has done. By God, nobody will protect you and we are not going to tolerate anybody," said an online statement signed by the Khalid bin al-Waleed Brigade, the military wing of the Tawhid and Jihad group. "Queues of cars laden with explosives are awaiting you; we will not stop, God willing," said the statement, carried by an Islamic forum, known as a clearinghouse for statements by extremist groups. Japan has dispatched about 500 troops to southern Iraq for non-combat duty to rebuild local schools, provide medical supplies and supply clean water.

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14. Japanese - US Trade Relations

The Associated Press ("U.S. SEEKS RETALIATORY TARIFFS ON APPLES ", 2004-07-20) reported that the US is seeking authorization from the World Trade Organization to impose \$143.4 million in trade sanctions against Japan over restrictions that Japan has placed on imports of U.S. apples. Japan said it imposed the restrictions to prevent fire blight, a bacterial disease found in the US that can reduce yields and kill trees, from reaching Japan. But a WTO trade panel ruled in December 2003 that the Japanese restrictions were illegal after the US argued that the disease could not be carried on mature, symptomless apples, which are the only types allowed for export. "American apple growers have been blocked from the Japanese market - that's wrong," Zoellick said in a statement.

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15. Japan FM to Visit Central Asia

Yomiuri Shimbun ("KAWAGUCHI EYES VISIT TO C. ASIA IN AUG", 2004-07-20) reported that Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi plans to visit Mongolia, Uzbekistan and several other Central Asian nations from late August to early September, according to ministry sources. Kawaguchi is expected to exchange views with the leaders of these nations on issues including the DPRK's nuclear development programs and the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan. Kawaguchi plans to ask Mongolia, which has diplomatic relations with the DPRK, to extend its support for the resolution of the nuclear and abduction issues. She reportedly wants to confirm the solidarity of international society regarding international efforts to rebuild Iraq, to which Mongolia has sent about 180 personnel.

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16. Japan on Whaling Ban

The Associated Press ("JAPAN LOOKING TO OVERTURN WHALING BAN ", 2004-07-20) reported that when the International Whaling Commission convenes its annual meeting in Italy next week, Japan will make a familiar ?and perhaps final ?plea. Delegation officials say Japan, the world's prime consumer of whale meat, will once again call for an end to the commission's 1986 moratorium on commercial whaling. But this year, Japan has attached a warning it may quit the commission if it doesn't get results. "We may have to consider pulling out, but we will have to see how the meeting goes," said Akira Nakamae, an alternate member of the Japanese delegation to the meeting that starts Monday in Sorrento, Italy. "We see that as a last resort, however." Tokyo has never publicly said whether it would resume commercial whaling if it withdraws from the commission, but nothing would stop it from doing so.

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17. Cross Straights Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN READY TO HOLD RARE MILITARY DRILL", 2004-07-20) reported that Taiwan's military will close part of a popular freeway Wednesday so jet fighters can practice using it as an emergency runway - a rare drill to prepare pilots for the possible bombing of air bases by the PRC, officials said. The island hasn't held such an exercise in 26 years, and it comes as the PRC conducts war games that Beijing's state-controlled media have said are practice for a long-

threatened attack on Taiwan. The drills are partly about posturing, with the PRC trying to warn the Taiwanese against seeking a permanent split, and Taiwan - which has repeatedly rebuffed Beijing's demands to unify - wanting to show that it's ready to fend off any invasion. Also on Tuesday, Taiwan's military urged the public not to worry about the large-scale military exercises the PRC is holding this month on Dongshan Island, off the PRC's southern coast. The military dismissed them as routine annual drills. But the PRC's state-controlled media have warned that one purpose of the drills was to discourage Taiwan from seeking formal independence.

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18. PRC on US - Taiwan Relations

United Press International ("CHINA EDITORIAL RIPS U.S. TAIWAN POLICY", 2004-07-20) reported that in a signed editorial Tuesday, the flagship newspaper of the PRC's state-run media kept up the criticism of Congressional support for the Taiwan Relations Act. Gu Ping, a commentator at People's Daily, said the recent resolution by the House of Representatives reaffirming America's legal commitment to helping Taiwan defend itself against an attack by the mainland "constituted a wanton intervention in China's internal affairs and sparked strong indignation among the Chinese people." "As known to all, the so-called Taiwan Relations Act, enacted unilaterally by the United States in 1979, is a ridiculous law which empowers Washington to interfere in other countries' domestic affairs," Gu wrote. Gu further stated, "The enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act demonstrates the U.S. disregard of the United Nations Charter and other international laws, and fully exposes its hegemonic style of placing itself above international norms."

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19. Taiwan Cyberattacks

Agence France-Presse ("CHINESE HACKERS ATTACK TAIWAN MILITARY NEWS AGENCY AHEAD OF DRILL", 2004-07-20) reported that suspected PRC hackers have launched an offensive against the website of Taiwan's Military News Agency ahead of practice freeway landings by fighter jets on the island, the defense ministry said. The attack took place on Monday night and the agency affiliated with the ministry was forced to close down its website, the ministry said. The hackers replaced the agency's homepage with a slogan that said 'Reunification with Taiwan in 2021', it said. An identical attack occurred a month ago when suspected PRC hackers attacked the site of Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party.

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20. PRC Income Gap

United Press International ("INCOME DISPARITIES WIDEN IN CHINA", 2004-07-20) reported that The gap between rich and poor widened in the PRC with officials reporting Tuesday the number of Chinese below the poverty line grew in 2003. Liu Jian, director of the PRC's State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development was quoted by Xinhua as saying the number of Chinese earning less than 637 yuan (US\$77) per year, the benchmark for poverty, grew by 800,000 last year. Liu attributed the rising number of poor to natural disasters in Anhui, Heilongjiang, Henan and Shanxi during 2003. Each province topped the 2 million mark. This was the first time poverty figures increased since the country began its economic reform in the late 1970s, the senior PRC official said.

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21. PRC Nationals Abroad

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA STEPS UP SECURITY TO ENSURE SAFETY OF NATIONALS ABROAD", 2004-07-20) reported that the PRC is stepping up security measures to protect its nationals and institutions stationed abroad following the recent killings of 11 Chinese workers in Afghanistan. The State Council, the PRC's cabinet, has ordered increased security and the formation of an emergency response system to avoid incidents that endanger Chinese people and property, the state-run Xinhua news agency said. The terrorists stormed the camp of a Chinese road contractor in Kunduz province, 250 kilometers (155 miles) north of the capital Kabul, spraying the workers with gunfire as they slept in tents. Five other Chinese were injured in the attack, Xinhua said. State Councillor Zhou Yongkang was quoted by Xinhua saying the PRC would use political, economic, diplomatic and legal means to avoid or reduce the number of incidents jeopardizing its citizens' lives. Overseas-based offices were also ordered to beef up security measures.

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22. PRC World Heritage Site

Agence France-Presse ("ANCIENT PALACE AT RISK OF BEING SUBMERGED IN CHINA WATER PROJECT", 2004-07-20) reported that a 600-year-old palace located in a World Heritage site considered the capital of Taoism is at risk of being submerged by an ambitious water diversion project in the PRC, state media said. The Yuzhenggong Palace, located in the forests of Wudangshan Mountain in central Hubei province, sits on the path of the South-North Water Diversion Project -- a 136.5 billion yuan (16.5 billion dollar) scheme to divert water from the PRC's rainy south to its parched north. Hubei's cultural relics managers recently revealed the palace will likely be enveloped into an expanded reservoir after the water project is completed, the Beijing Times said. Experts are proposing methods to save the palace, including elevating it, moving it to another location or building dikes around it, but all the proposals are problematic and a solution has not been found, the report said. The palace is part of about 210 cultural heritage sites in the PRC that could be affected by the project and is believed to be one of the most valuable.

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23. PRC SARS Whistleblower

Reuters ("CHINA SARS HERO FREED AFTER WEEKS IN CUSTODY", 2004-07-20) reported that Jiang Yanyong, the military doctor who exposed the PRC's SARS cover-up last year, was released on Tuesday after seven weeks in custody during which he was forced to undergo "study sessions," family members said. Jiang upset the authorities after writing to the PRC's top leaders in February asking for a politically sensitive reappraisal of the Tiananmen Square protests. Jiang, who had been taken into custody on June 1 on the eve of the 15th anniversary of the massacre, returned to his Beijing home but was under a gag order not to talk to reporters, his wife Hua Zhongwei said by telephone. Military authorities made clear the case against the 72-year-old semi-retired surgeon had not been closed and it was unclear how much freedom he would be given, a source with close ties to the family said. "There seems to be a conviction on the part of the military authorities that he has violated an unspecified military rule, and they have made clear that 'the case is not over'," the source told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

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