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I. Unites States

1. PRC on First Day of Six Party Talks

Washington Post ("U.S., N. KOREA FOCUS ON BILATERAL TALKS", 2005-07-26) reported that PRC spokesman, Qin Gang, said opening speeches by delegation heads from the six nations involved in the negotiations displayed increased flexibility and determination to make progress that augured well for the new round of talks. In their remarks, he noted, officials from the DPRK and the US both sought to emphasize their willingness to meet demands from the other side and seek common ground in the negotiations.

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2. ROK on Six Party Talks, US-DPRK Relations

Forbes ("S. KOREA URGES US TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH NKOREA ", 2005-07-26) reported that the ROK's Deputy Foreign Minister Song Min-Soon has urged the DPRK to give up its nuclear weapons ambitions and called on the US to normalize relations with Pyongyang. "With our proposal as the starting point, I hope that the DPRK will make a clear commitment to give up its nuclear ambitions and the other countries will also make a clear commitment to take corresponding measures such as the normalization of relations and security assurances."

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3. Russia on Six Party Talks

Interfax ("RUSSIA WANTS N. KOREA, U.S. TO SHOW MORE FLEXIBILITY", 2005-07-26) reported that Russia has called on the DPRK and the US to show greater flexibility during the fourth round of six-party talks, Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Alexeyev, Russia's top negotiator said. "Russia's goal at bilateral consultations is to convince the US and to show a higher level of flexibility," Alexeyev said.

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4. US Will Address DPRK Energy Needs at Six Party Talks

Korea Times ("US READY TO HELP NK ENERGY NEEDS", 2005-07-26) reported that according to Christopher Hill, the US is ready to address concerns about the DPRK's energy needs. "We've made it clear that were prepared to address the DPRK's energy needs. When the DPRK makes the decision to dismantle its nuclear program permanently, fully, verifiably, other parties including my country are prepared to take corresponding measures consistent with the principle of words for words and actions for actions," he said.

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5. Expert on Russian Energy Aid to DPRK

Interfax ("RUSSIA CAN PLAY ACTIVE ROLE IN N. KOREA TALKS - EXPERT", 2005-07-26) reported that Russia could actively assist the DPRK in solving its energy problem, a Russian expert said. "Russia's energy potential is well-known and is appealing to the Korean Peninsula. There is a field here for intensive diplomacy. Hopefully, the Russian delegation currently in Beijing will try to put this potential to use," Alexander Vorontsov, head of the Institute of Oriental Studies' Korea

Department said.

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6. Japan on Abductee Issue at Six Party Talks

Kyodo News ("JAPAN MENTIONS N. KOREA ABDUCTIONS IN 6-WAY TALKS ", 2005-07-26) reported that Japan's chief delegate at the six-party talks reiterated Tokyo's call for a resolution to the abductee issue in his opening remarks on Tuesday.

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7. PRC on Abductee Issue at Six Party Talks

Kyodo News ("CHINA WANTS JAPAN, N. KOREA TO RESOLVE ABDUCTION ISSUE BILATERALLY ", 2005-07-26) reported that the PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang expressed hope that Japan and the DPRK will resolve the abduction issue bilaterally, suggesting the matter should not be taken up in the ongoing six-party nuclear talks.

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8. DPRK Food Crisis and Six Party Talks

Reuters ("FOOD CRISIS IN NORTH KOREA WORSENS, REFUGEES IN CHINA SWELL", 2005-0--26) reported that according to aid workers, the DPRK's food crisis has worsened and neighbouring PRC is bracing for more refugees. Asked if the DPRK's return to six-party nuclear talks would convince donors such as the US to make new aid pledges, WFP spokesman Gerald Bourke said, "anything which improves the atmosphere we hope will be conducive to the supply of additional contributions."

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9. ROK Food Aid to DPRK

China Daily ("SOUTH KOREA BEGINS SENDING NORTH KOREA 500,000 TONS IN PROMISED RICE", 2005-07-26) reported that the ROK said it began transporting rice overland to the DPRK on Tuesday, the first installment of a total of 500,000 tons. A hundred trucks carried the first 100,000 tons of the promised aid. Sea shipments were to begin Saturday, with the entire 500,000 tons scheduled to be delivered by the end of December, the ROK Unification Ministry said.

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10. Inter-Korean Fisheries Talks

Korea.net ("TWO KOREAS DISCUSS FISHERIES COOPERATION", 2005-07-26) reported that the ROK and the DPRK opened their three-day fisheries talks in the DPRK border town of Gaeseong on Monday to discuss ways of cooperation along the disputed western sea border. The negotiators discussed prevention of poaching by third-country fishermen in the Yellow Sea, the establishment of fish farms in the area and the exchange of fisheries-related knowledge, said ROK officials.

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11. Russian Space Program

RIA Novosti ("RUSSIA OFFERS $100-MILLION LUNAR TOUR", 2005-07-26) reported that the Russian space-shuttle maker Energia has submitted a proposal for would-be space tourists to the Federal Space Agency Roskosmos to charter a flight to the moon, the daily newspaper Izvestia reported. Spacecraft have already been selected, a flight route worked out and a business plan compiled. All that is left to do is find someone wanting to take a 2-week trip to the Moon for $100 million.

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12. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo ("JAPANESE, KOREANS LOSE APPEAL OVER KOIZUMI'S YASUKUNI VISIT", 2005-07-26) reported that the Osaka High Court rejected on Tuesday an appeal by 338 Japanese and Korean plaintiffs against a lower court ruling that dismissed their suit for damages for claimed psychological stress caused by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's August 2001 visit to war-related Yasukuni Shrine.

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13. PRC Currency Revaluation

Washington Post ("CHINA DOWNPLAYS FURTHER CURRENCY MOVES", 2005-07-26) reported that the PRC's central bank on Tuesday declared that last week's slight increase in the value of the country's currency, the yuan, was a one-time event and not the beginning of a gradual climb, as officials sought to diminish speculative pressures for a substantial revaluation. In a written statement, the People's Bank of China said the change to the country's currency regime was primarily aimed at altering how it sets the exchange rate for the yuan by severing its direct link to the US dollar, and not a signal of any willingness to allow its value to float upward.

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14. PRC Streptococcus Outbreak

BBC News ("CHINA NAMES FATAL SICHUAN ILLNESS", 2005-07-26) reported that the PRC believes the mystery illness that has killed 19 farmers in western PRC is streptococcus suis, a disease common in pigs. The PRC's health ministry said people had contracted the disease by slaughtering and processing infected pigs. Sixty-seven confirmed cases and 13 suspected cases of the disease had been reported as of noon on Sunday, it said.

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15. PRC Renewable Energy

The New York Times ("IN SEARCH OF A NEW ENERGY SOURCE, CHINA RIDES THE WIND", 2005-07-26) reported that by 2020, starting from a minuscule base that it has established only recently, the PRC expects to supply 10 percent of its needs from so-called renewable energy sources, including wind, solar energy, small hydroelectric dams and biomass like plant fibers and animal wastes. So far, wind power is making the most impressive strides. Already, large wind farms are

sprouting up in much more heavily populated provinces, like Guangdong, Fujian and Hebei, and with PRC and foreign turbine manufacturers competing furiously for this fast-expanding market, the cost per kilowatt is becoming increasingly competitive with China's abundant coal.

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16. PRC Media Freedom

Agence France-Presse ("WIFE OF DETAINED REPORTER IN CHINA DENIES REMARKS ON HIS RELEASE", 2005-07-26) reported that the wife of a Hong Kong reporter under house arrest in the PRC on spying charges denied a report that her husband could be released this week. Mary Lau, quoted in the Sunday Morning Post here saying she was cautiously optimistic that Ching Cheong will be freed next Saturday, denied she had made such remarks and said she has been misquoted. "It was wrong, I didn't say that," Lau told AFP, adding there were no concrete developments in the case and that she was still awaiting news.

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17. PRC Space Program

Reuters ("CHINA SET TO SUIT UP WOMEN FOR SPACE TRAVEL", 2005-07-26) reported that the PRC will put a woman in space no later than 2010, the China Daily reported on Tuesday. The world's third country to put a man into space would start choosing pilots, scientists and engineers for its first wave of female astronauts next year, the newspaper said.

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