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I. NAPSNet

1. US Presidential Candidates on DPRK

Council of Foreign Relations ("THE CANDIDATES ON NORTH KOREA POLICY", 2007-06-11) reported on the DPRK stance of each US Presidential candidate.

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2. Inter-Korean Religious Exchange

Reuters ("PILGRIMAGE, WITH U.S. DOLLARS, TO NORTH KOREA TEMPLE", 2007-06-11) reported that the DPRK has welcomed 500 ROK Buddhist monks and followers to a temple dating from the 11th century when Kaesong was capital of a unified peninsula.

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3. US-ROK Trade Relations and Kaesong Project

Korea Times ("KAESONG IS TARGET OF U.S. FTA LETTER", 2007-06-12) reported that a US congressman demanded changes to a tentative free trade agreement with the ROK, which he said could allow the Asian trading partner to export DPRK-made goods to the US. Rep. Sander Levin (D-Michigan) sent a letter to US Trade Representative Susan Schwab raising questions about a draft FTA annex that deals with "outward processing zones" on the Korean Peninsula. Levin, who has already vowed opposition to the FTA, citing unsatisfactory provisions in the auto sector, said Annex 22-C on the zones applies labor standards different from those agreed on between the Congress and the U.S. administration.

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4. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFULS PLEDGE CHINA HARMONY", 2007-06-12) reported that Taiwan's two presidential hopefuls made peaceful gestures to the PRC, with both pledging to ease the political standoff with Beijing if elected. Frank Hsieh, a former premier nominated by the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) for the 2008 presidential race, called for the calming of tensions between Taipei and Beijing. Meanwhile, Hsieh's presidential competitor Ma Ying-jeou of the opposition KMT pledged to end the decades-old hostility across the Strait.

[\(return to top\)](#) Agence France-Presse ("OUTCRY AT PLAN TO RESTRICT TAIWAN-CHINA MARRIAGES", 2007-06-12) reported that Taiwan's controversial plans to restrict PRC women from marrying its men sparked strong criticism from the island's leading opposition party Tuesday. Tsai Ming-chang, of National Taipei University, said he was uncomfortable with with the large number of cross-Strait marriages, given Beijing's repeated threats to invade Taiwan should the island declare formal independence. Yang Tu, a spokesman for the island's major opposition Kuomintang (KMT) party, said if the drafted white paper was enacted it would strip people of "fundamental human rights entitled by the constitution and Taiwan's international image as a country respecting human rights would be marred." [\(return to top\)](#)

5. Tourism in DPRK

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA OPENS NEW TOURIST TRAIL", 2007-06-12) reported that the DPRK is allowing tourists a rare glimpse of the hardscrabble rural life en route to a new hiking trail that opened this month at the Kungang Mountain resort. The new trail is also aimed at drumming up more business for the tourism venture run by a subsidiary of ROK's Hyundai conglomerate.

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6. PRC Secrecy

The Los Angeles Times ("GROUP CALLS ON CHINA TO DEFINE 'STATE SECRET'", 2007-06-12) reported that in a report released today, New York-based Human Rights in China calls on Beijing to create a clear definition of what constitutes a state secret. This, the civic group believes, will help narrow laws that in effect allow Beijing to prosecute anyone it decides is a troublemaker. The group has called on Beijing to heed the PRC's Constitution, which guarantees freedom of expression and other basic rights. The PRC, it said, should create an independent review mechanism for secrecy cases, end political interference in the court system and halt the deep-seated culture of secrecy.

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7. PRC Cultural Heritage and Development

China Daily ("HISTORICAL SITES RUINED IN RENOVATIONS", 2007-06-12) reported that a large number of historical architecture and cultural heritage sites have been destroyed during the country's rapid urbanization, a top official lamented yesterday. Qiu Baoxing, vice-minister of construction, hit out at some local officials for their "senseless actions" that have "devastated" historical sites and cultural relics in the name of renovation. Tong Mingkang, deputy director of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, agreed. He lashed out at some local governments for their "reckless decision" to dismantle valuable historical sites which were in poor repair and erecting fake cultural relics at the site.

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8. PRC Environment

China Daily ("60% OF CHINESE CITIES SUFFER FROM AIR POLLUTION: REPORT", 2007-06-12) reported that about 60 percent of PRC cities still suffer from air pollution and have no centralized sewage treatment facilities, according to a report by the State environment watchdog. The air quality in only 37.6 percent of the cities was above Grade II, a national standard indicating a clean and healthy environment. The figure was 7.3 percentage points lower than for 2005. The report also found that the ratio of quality water in the major urban areas, either for drinking or industrial use, had dropped by 7.24 percent.

[\(return to top\)](#) Xinhua ("CHINA SETS DEADLINE FOR CLEANING UP TAIHU LAKE ", 2007-06-12) reported that the PRC has ordered all towns around Taihu, the lake that was covered with a foul-smelling algae last month, to establish sewage treatment plants and insisted that chemical factories meet a new water emission standard by the end of June 2008. The plan was announced at a meeting here on Monday, after freshwater was shut off for more than 2 million people in Wuxi due to the blue-algae infestation of the lake. [\(return to top\)](#)

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