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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Floods

Associated Press ("GROUP: 54, 700 DEAD, MISSING IN N. KOREA", 2006-08-16) reported that the ROK aid group Good Friends revised their death toll, saying the massive floods last month left about 54,700 people dead or missing and some 2.5 million homeless. The figure is by far the highest so far reported. The group claims "many sources" inside the DPRK, but the figures could not be independently confirmed and some figures have been disputed. The DPRK's official media have reported that "hundreds" were killed in the floods, without giving specific numbers. Representatives of Good Friends refused to elaborate on their report, saying they feared their sources would face government reprisal. The agency said the floods destroyed more than 230 bridges and inundated hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland, further straining the country's ability to feed its population.

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2. Aid to DPRK Flood Victims

Chosun Ilbo ("THIRD S. KOREAN FLOOD RELIEF SHIPMENT HEADS FOR N.KOREA", 2006-08-15) reported that the third batch of civilian flood relief from the ROK is on its way to flood victims. A cargo ship carrying goods left Incheon port on Wednesday morning and is due to arrive at the North's Nampo port on Thursday. Officials at the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation say they sent 40 tons of wheat flour, clothing and cooking stoves worth about US$300,000 to the DPRK. Other civic groups have also taken part in the shipment. The Korean Foundation for World Aid sent 13 tons of dextrose powder, while the Korea Food for the Hungry International shipped food and medicine.

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3. US Democrats On Bush's DPRK Policy

Yonhap News Agency ("U.S. DEMOCRAT CAMPAIGN AD SAYS N.K. IS ONE OF BUSH'S SECURITY POLICY FAILURES", 2006-08-15) reported that the newest Internet campaign ad by US Democrats claims the DPRK is one of the failed national security policies by President George W. Bush. The web video footage, on the website of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC), says there have been four times as many terror attacks in 2005 and millions more illegal immigrants breaking through US borders.

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4. Indonesia on Six Party Talks

Yonhap News Agency ("INDONESIA WANTS TO HELP RESOLVE N. K. NUCLEAR ISSUE: ENVOY", 2006-08-16) reported that Amb. Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat, speaking at the National Press Center, says Indonesia wants to help resolve the DPRK nuclear issue and revive stalled disarmament talks using its ties with Pyongyang. He said his government believes there are "still rooms for negotiations beyond the Security Council."

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5. US-ROK Security Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("ROH TO MEET BUSH AMID TENSE TIMES FOR ALLIANCE", 2006-08-16) reported that President George W. Bush in Washington on Sept. 14, Cheong Wa Dae spokesman Jung Tae-ho said Wednesday. It will be the sixth summit between the two. The summit will play a key role in determining the future of the ROK-US alliance as observers worry over signs of a deep rift in relations. Choeng Wa Dae cited "developing the alliance" as one of two main points on the agenda at the meeting, along with ways of resolving the DPRK nuclear and missile issues.

(return to top) Chosun Ilbo ("EX-DEFENSE CHIEF SPEAKS OUT AGAINST WARTIME CONTROL", 2006-08-16) reported that former defense minister Chun Yong-taek on Wednesday denounced President Roh Moo-hyun and the government's plan to take over sole wartime operational control of ROK forces from the US. "It was the US' capability to reinforce its troops in case of war on the Korean Peninsula that helped Korea achieve economic development and deterred a war here," the former minister said. (return to top)

6. Japan-Russia Territorial Dispute

BBC News ("JAPAN FISHERMAN KILLED BY RUSSIA", 2006-08-16) reported that a Japanese fisherman has been shot dead by a Russian patrol boat near a chain of disputed islands, the first fatality in 50 years, media reports said. Russia expressed regret but said the boat had entered its territory and said such breaches should not happen again.

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7. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

The Associated Press ("JAPAN DEALS WITH FALLOUT OVER WAR SHRINE", 2006-08-16) reported that Japan grappled Wednesday with the fallout from Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to a Tokyo war shrine, as diplomats reportedly worked to mend frayed ties with the PRC and ROK. A report said Japan's Foreign Ministry was trying to arrange a summit with the PRC and ROK by year's end to improve strained relations.

(return to top) Reuters ("NORTH KOREA SLAMS KOIZUMI'S TOKYO WAR SHRINE VISIT", 2006-08-16) reported that the DPRK on Wednesday called a visit by Japan's prime minister to a Tokyo war shrine "a grave insult," in its first official reaction to the pilgrimage. "The reality goes to clearly prove that Japan is a cancer-like entity in preserving regional peace," the North's KCNA news agency said, adding Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni were "a grave insult and challenge to the peoples of Asian countries that fell victim to Japan's invasion." (return to top) The Washington Post ("BEIJING RALLY TARGETS JAPAN'S LEADER", 2006-08-16) reported that as uniformed and plainclothes police looked on, PRC protesters incensed at the Japanese prime minister for visiting a controversial war shrine gathered Tuesday in front of the Japanese Embassy in Beijing, chanting "Down with Japanese imperialism!" and "An eye for an eye, blood for blood!" The demonstration outside the Japanese Embassy appeared small and lasted only 20 minutes. (return to top) Kyodo ("HALF OF JAPANESE BACK KOIZUMI'S LATEST YASUKUNI VISIT: POLL", 2006-08-16) reported that just over half of Japanese people responding to a survey supported Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to the war-linked Yasukuni Shrine on the 61st anniversary of the end of World War II on Tuesday, but nearly 45 percent were opposed to a future Yasukuni visit by his successor, a Kyodo poll showed. (return to top)

8. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN DENIES USING CHEQUEBOOK DIPLOMACY IN PACIFIC", 2006-08-16) reported that Taiwan rejected charges that it has resorted to chequebook diplomacy to woo allies in its long-running diplomatic battle with rival PRC in the Pacific. "Taiwan does not play 'dollar diplomacy' and we do not engage in such competition with China," said foreign ministry spokesman Michel Lu. Lu was reacting to comment by New Zealand Foreign Minister Winston Peters, who cited Taiwan's alleged role in this year's Solomon Islands riots as an example of the dangers of chequebook diplomacy in the Pacific.

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9. PRC AIDS Issue

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA PLEDGES STEELY FIGHT AGAINST AIDS PROBLEMS", 2006-08-16) reported that outlining its strategic shift in the combat against AIDS, the PRC has vowed to fight the disease at its source, using innovative measures that just a few years ago would have been taboo or illegal. Zunyu Wu, director of the National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention at the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said that the PRC currently had a low rate of HIV infection when compared to other countries.

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II. CanKor

10. Report #258

CanKor ("DPRK DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION", 2006-08-11) The University of North Korean Studies at Kyungnam University and the Export-Import Bank of Korea co-organized the 2nd international symposium on "North Korean Development and International Cooperation," in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on 6-7 July 2006. This issue of CanKor presents abridged versions of two papers presented at the symposium by Ruediger Frank, Professor, Korea University and University of Vienna, and by Erich Weingartner, Editor of CanKor. Abstracts of other papers are appended. Full texts may be requested from the Center for International Cooperation for North Korean Development (ICNK), University of North Korean Studies at http://nk.ac.kr/eng/default.asp. Frank's paper, "The Impact of Economic Sanctions on North Korea's Transformation and Alternative Approaches," examines the relative merits of sanctions vs. development assistance in promoting transformation in the DPRK. Weingartner's paper, "Equipping Potential Reformers -- Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building as Interim Steps toward DPR Korean Development," argues that DPRK development must ultimately be implemented by North Koreans themselves, rather than imposed from the outside. What outsiders can do to further the process of reform is to provide education and knowledge transfer. Abstracts of other papers presented at the symposium deal with the prerequisites for the DPRK's membership in the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, lessons of Chinese special economic zones for the DPRK, the Kaesong Industrial Complex, including issues affecting the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement, and the role of foreign investment and financial markets.

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