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I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. POURS COLD WATER ON N.KOREA'S REACTOR DEMAND", 2007-07-25) reported that the US rejected the DPRK's request for a light-water reactor if Pyongyang is to dismantle its existing nuclear facilities. At a press conference held in Beijing, Christopher Hill reiterated the US position that discussions on the provision of a light-water reactor will happen only when the DPRK returns to NPT and gives up all weapons of mass destruction.

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2. ROK Fuel Shipment to DPRK

RIA Novosti ("S. KOREA TO COMPLETE FUEL OIL DELIVERY TO NORTH JULY 29", 2007-07-24) reported that the ROK is expected to complete a fuel oil shipment to the DPRK on Sunday. "The ship, carrying 22,600 tons of heavy fuel oil, will leave the southeastern port of Ulsan for North Korea's Sonbong at 1 a.m. [local time] on July 29," Yonhap news agency quoted Kim Nam-sik, spokesman for the Unification Ministry, as saying.

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3. US-DPRK Talks on Family Reunions

Associated Press ("U.S. LAWMAKERS WANT TALKS WITH NORTH KOREA ON REUNIONS FOR SEPARATED FAMILIES", 2007-07-24) reported that two U.S. lawmakers said they will head a commission that will try to talk directly with the DPRK on behalf of the estimated 100,000 other Korean-Americans who have family members living in there. The goal, they say, is to urge reunions for people who, in some cases, have not seen their relatives for more than five decades. Republican Rep. Mark Kirk and Democratic Rep. Jim Matheson said they would go in September to North Korea's U.N. offices in New York City to try to present a list of Korean-American families who wanted to contact relatives.

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4. Inter-Korean Military Talks

BBC ("BORDER ROW DOMINATES KOREAN TALKS", 2007-07-24) reported that inter-Korean discussions ended early, after the DPRK restated its demand that a sea border west of the Korean Peninsula be redrawn further south. The area has been a trigger for clashes in the past. Six RO Korean sailors were killed in one incident in June 2002.

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5. DPRK Smoking Ban

UK Telegraph ("NORTH KOREA'S KIM JONG-IL BANS SMOKING", 2007-07-25) reported that a smoking ban has allegedly been ordered in the DPRK as Kim Jong-il's health has deteriorated recently. Kim is said to have given up cigarettes - and brandy - on doctor's orders back in 2000. He is rumored to have had heart surgery in May 2007. The DPRK is said to have one of the highest smoking rates in the world, with one estimate saying 40 per cent, or nine million of its 22 million people, are smokers. One of its few major foreign investors is British American Tobacco, which

jointly runs a cigarette factory in the country.

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6. ROK Hostages in Afghanistan

Joongang Ilbo ("PASTOR KILLED WHILE EIGHT ARE FREED", 2007-07-25) reported that the pastor who led a group of 23 church volunteers held hostage by the Taliban in Afghanistan was killed yesterday, while eight others were freed. The lives of the remaining hostages hang in the balance. Reuters said that the Taliban had set a "final" deadline on the fate of the remaining hostages of 5:30 a.m. today, ROK time, demanding that a list of Taliban prisoners be released.

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7. Japan Defense

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("DEFENSE MINISTRY EYES DOMESTIC FIGHTER JET", 2007-07-25) reported that the Defense Ministry will include in its fiscal 2008 budgetary request funds to develop a manned prototype fifth-generation fighter jet equipped with stealth capabilities and other advanced technologies, sources said. The sources also said the ministry, by showing interest in developing jet fighters domestically, hopes to gain an edge in negotiations with the US next summer when it selects Japan's next main fighter jets (F-X fighters).

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8. Japan Environment

Kyodo ("JAPAN FACES 'SEVERE' PROGRESS IN ANTI-GLOBAL WARMING MEASURES ", 2007-0--25) reported that a government panel suggested Wednesday it has become "extremely difficult" for Japan to attain the Kyoto Protocol target. Referring to additional measures to achieve the target, the panel's draft interim report features requiring industry sectors with no emissions-cut target -- such as pachinko parlors, hospitals, schools and newspapers -- to set a target, and to reinforce energy-saving measures on buildings and other steps against the growing emissions from offices and homes.

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9. Japan Nuclear Plant

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("N-PLANT LIKELY TO STAY SHUT FOR LONG TIME", 2007-07-25) reported that the revelations of the extent of the damage to the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant have made it impossible for Tokyo Electric Power Co. to draw up a specific schedule for the resumption of operations at the plant. Sixty-three problems have been discovered so far at the plant, and the nuclear reactor cores, which are the most important part of a nuclear reactor, have not been inspected yet. However, the inspection can only be undertaken next month at the earliest.

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10. Cross Strait Relations

Channel News Asia ("TAIWAN MUST NOT WAIT FOR DEATH: PRESIDENT", 2007-07-25) reported that President Chen Shui-bian said that Taiwan must not sit idly by and wait for its doom in the face

of the PRC's attempts to suffocate the country with diplomatic suppression and military threat. Chen likened the PRC's approach toward Taiwan to "a man pointing a gun at his rival with one hand while pushing him into the corner with the other." "We must not surrender, wait for death or commit a slow suicide. It would be impossible to forbid Taiwan's people from making no move," Chen said.

(return to top) Agence France-Presse ("US CAPABLE OF DEFENDING TAIWAN: TOP US COMMANDER", 2007-07-25) reported that the US has the capability to swiftly move military forces to defend Taiwan against a potential attack from the PRC, the top US military commander in the Asia-Pacific region said. Although the US has fewer troops in the "area of responsibility" now than about two decades ago, "We are also capable of moving people around fairly quickly," Admiral Timothy Keating pointed out. "We have ways of watching developments and doing better analyses -- much better than before. So in the Strait of Taiwan, in particular, we could get a large number of forces there in relatively short order," he said. (return to top)

11. PRC Ethics

Washington Post ("CONFUCIUS MAKING A COMEBACK IN MONEY-DRIVEN MODERN CHINA", 2007-07-25) reported that Confucianism is enjoying a resurgence in the PRC, as more and more Chinese seek ways to adapt to a culture in which corruption has spread and materialism has become a driving value. For many Chinese, a system of ethical teachings that stresses the importance of avoiding conflict and respecting hierarchy makes perfect sense, even if it was first in vogue centuries ago. State-supported commemorations of Confucius have become more common, and the number of people studying his works has increased.

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II. CanKor

12. Report # 289

CanKor ("FULL FOCUS EDITION: INSIDE DPRK Part 4", 2007-07-23) Subscribers consistently name stories about life inside the DPRK as their top interest when reading CanKor. This is the fourth in a series of special editions of CanKor assembling "Inside DPRK" stories. This full-edition FOCUS, "Inside DPRK Part 4" presents eight reports by a nine-member delegation of Canadians who visited Pyongyang from 22-30 May 2007. It was the third in a series of delegations representing the Canada-DPR Korea Association. Previous visits have been featured in CanKor Report #91 (the 2002 delegation that celebrated Canada Day in Pyongyang, together with representatives of the Canadian Embassy in Beijing) and CanKor Report #189 (the 2004 delegation that led to a cooperative venture between the DPRK Ministry of Land and Environment Protection and Canada's International Institute for Sustainable Development). A journalistic account of this year's visit by the Globe and Mail's Geoffrey York appeared in CanKor Report #286. Leading the delegation was the Rev. Glen Davis, Presbyterian Director of Denominational Formation at the Vancouver School of Theology, University of British Columbia. Accompanying him were two undergraduate students, two graduate students, two professors, one surgeon and one schoolteacher. This was the first exposure to the DPRK for eight of the delegates, although all of them have an extensive knowledge base on matters Korean. Captured in these articles are the impressions and reactions -- both professional and personal -- of a group of people who have looked "Inside DPRK" with fresh eyes.

(return to top) CanKor ("WHAT READERS SAY ABOUT THE CANKOR REPORT", 2007-07-23) "Glad

that CanKor keeps going - I draw on it quite a lot and always find it useful." Dr. Jim Hoare, retired diplomat, opened the first British Embassy in Pyongyang and was its Chargé d'Affaires from 2001-2003. (return to top)

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