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MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. US-DPRK Talks

Yonhap (Tony Chang, "U.S. WANTS TO CLOSE DIALOGUE WITH N. KOREA IN SINGLE PHASE: OFFICIAL", Seoul, 2009/11/30) reported that the U.S., which is set to hold direct bilateral talks with DPRK next week to lure the country back to denuclearization talks, wants the contact to be a one-off event but DPRK is expected to attempt to drag out the two-way dialogue, a senior Seoul official said Monday. U.S. special envoy on DPRK, Stephen Bosworth, is scheduled to fly to Pyongyang on Dec. 8 on a mission to persuade Pyongyang to return to the six-party nuclear disarmament forum it quit earlier this year.

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2. Sino-DPRK Relations

Xinhua ("DPRK, CHINESE SENIOR LEGISLATORS HOLD TALKS", Pyongyang, 2009/11/30) reported that Choe Thae Bok, chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly of DPRK, met and held talks with senior PRC legislator Chen Zhili, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall on Monday. Chen, vice-chairwoman of the Standing Committee of PRC's National People's Congress (NPC), was invited by the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK. Chen said exchanges between the legislatures was an important part of the bilateral relationship and the NPC would continue to strengthen cooperation with DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly, in order to boost mutual friendship. This is PRC's consistent position, she said.

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3. Russo-DPRK Relations

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA, RUSSIA AGREE TO COOPERATE IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH: REPORT", 2009/11/30) reported that the DPRK and Russia have signed a "protocol" to cooperate in the field of science through the end of 2011, the DPRK's media said. The "protocol" was signed at the Siberian city of Novosibirsk between Ri Song-uk, vice president of DPRK's State Academy of Science and his Russian counterpart, Valerii Kuleshov, from the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Science, the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency said in a report.

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4. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Yonhap News ("RUSSIAN LAWMAKER SAYS NOT SURE OF N. KOREA'S RETURN TO NUCLEAR TALKS ", 2009/11/30) reported that Sergei Mikhailovich Mironov, chairman of the Federation Council of Russia, was quoted as telling a Russian news outlet that it was difficult to say whether the DPRK was ready to resume the negotiations on ending its atomic weapons program. He said he could not get any definite answers from DPRK officials on the issue during his visit, Voice of America reported.

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5. DPRK on Food Aid

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA CALLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INT'L AID COMMITMENTS", 2009/11/30) reported that the DPRK has urged the United Nations' food and agriculture agency to take steps to ensure that developed nations implement their proclaimed aid commitments, amid reports of chronic food shortages in the communist country. The DPRK's Korea Central News Agency said that a DPRK representative gave a speech on Nov. 20 in Rome at the Food and Agriculture Organization's 36th general assembly, urging the FAO to "take a positive step to ensure that the developed countries unconditionally and sincerely implement the internationally proclaimed aid commitments."

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6. DPRK Economy

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA REVALUES CURRENCY: YONHAP", Seoul, 2009/12/01) reported that DPRK has revalued its currency, Yonhap news agency reported Tuesday, quoting sources close to DPRK traders in PRC. The old currency started being exchanged for a new one Monday afternoon, Yonhap said. Daily NK, an online newspaper on DPRK affairs, said the exchange rate for the new currency is 100 to 1 with old 1,000 won bills being replaced by new 10 won bills. "It looks like an attempt to control inflation, but it may have the side effect of making consumer reliance on dollars or Yuan rise due to a loss of confidence in the value of the DPRK currency," Daily NK said.

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7. DPRK Military Inspection

Xinhua ("TOP DPRK LEADER INSPECTS ARMY UNIT", 2009/11/30) reported that Kim Jong Il, the top leader of DPRK, called for doing well on military training during an inspection tour to an army unit, the official KCNA news agency reported on Sunday. Kim expressed great satisfaction about the unit's successful soldiers training and stressed the importance of improving its combat capability every way. The report said Kim visited Korean People's Army Unit 109 without mentioning the specific date and location. Kim said the soldiers of the DPRK have to grow into fighters with strong ideology and faith.

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8. ROK Cyber Defense

JoongAng Ilbo (Kim Min-seok, "CYBER DEFENSE TO BE UNDER NATIONAL DEFENSE MINISTRY", 2009/12/01) reported that the Ministry of National Defense will form a new unit on cyber defense under its auspices next January, the JoongAng Ilbo has learned. A high-ranking military source said yesterday that Defense Minister Kim Tae-young decided on Sunday to establish the new Cyber Defense Command under the ministry's intelligence headquarters to protect the nation's military networks against computer attacks following cyber attacks from DPRK in October.

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9. US on ROK's Role in Afghanistan

Yonhap (Hwang Doo-hyong, "CLINTON CALLS MINISTER YU ON S. KOREA'S CONTRIBUTION TO AFGHANISTAN: STATE DEPT.", Washington, 2009/11/30) reported that U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had phone conversations with ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan and her counterparts from several other countries last week to seek support for the war on terror in Afghanistan, the State Department said Monday. The phone calls aim to complement a flurry of summit diplomacy by U.S. President Barack Obama, either in person or through phone calls, seeking an enhanced military presence by U.S. allies in the war-torn Central Asian state.

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10. ROK Food Security

Circle of BlueWaterNews ("WATER SCARCITY, FOOD SECURITY CONCERNS PROMPT GLOBAL LAND GRAB", 2009/11/17) reported that the ROK announced it will spend nearly \$26 million to buy land in Paraguay and Uruguay. ROK investment companies have rented 94,000 hectares in Mindoro in the Philippines to produce corn. And Gaeunpam, a ROK agricultural corporation, is planning to develop 52,000 acres of farmland for Korean farmers to use in the Bulgan province of Mongolia, according to news reports. "Governments pushing these deals, such as Saudi Arabia or South Korea, see outsourced food production as a new strategy to feed their own people without relying on international trade," said La via Campesina in a statement this month.

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11. Japan Missile Defense

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN FM SAYS GOVT MUST JUSTIFY MISSILE DEFENCE SPENDING", 2009/11/24) reported that Japan 's Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada said his centre-left government must justify the expense of the country's US-developed missile defence system to the public. "I told (a cabinet committee) that the PAC-3 is a very expensive system and that it accounts for a majority of the defence budget," Okada told reporters. "Therefore we should thoroughly explain to the public its effectiveness." Tsuyoshi Yamaguchi, the shadow deputy defence spokesman when the DPJ was in opposition, has told AFP that "missile defence is useless."

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12. US Military Bases in Japan

Mainichi Shimbun ("OSAKA GOVERNOR OPENS DOOR TO MOVING FUTENMA BASE TO KANSAI AIRPORT", 2009/11/30) reported that Osaka Gov. Toru Hashimoto said Monday morning that he would consider accepting the relocation of U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Okinawa to Kansai International Airport in Osaka Prefecture if requested by the national government. The governor said he would consider accepting joint use of Kansai International Airport by civilian airlines and U.S. forces, and move some of the drills conducted at Kadena Air Base to Kansai to reduce noise pollution around the base.

Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "US ENVOY URGES OKINAWA BASE ISSUE RESOLVED SOON", Tokyo, 2009/11/03) reported that U.S. Ambassador John Roos, making his first trip to the southern island of Okinawa , urged Japan on Monday to honor an agreement in 2006 to relocate a major Futenma airbase to a site farther north on Okinawa in the city of Nago. If the Futenma issue isn't resolved soon, U.S. defense officials warn it could delay the timeline of the entire reorganization, and create mistrust between the two countries. During the three-day visit to Okinawa, Roos was also to observe key U.S. bases and meet top military officials there.

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13. US-Japan Alliance

Kyodo ("EX-DIPLOMAT ADMITS TO EXISTENCE OF SECRET PACT OVER OKINAWA REVERSION ", Tokyo, 2009/12/01) reported that Bunroku Yoshino, who was the Japanese Foreign Ministry's American Bureau chief at the time of the 1972 reversion of Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty, on Tuesday admitted for the first time in Tokyo District Court court that Japan and the United States concluded a secret agreement on the cost burden for the reversion. "The words in the Okinawa reversion accord and the facts are different," Yoshino said. Yoshino said, "We heard of voices in the U.S. Congress arguing that Okinawa should not be returned if money is offered to Japan, which is making money through trade with the United States."

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14. Japan's GSDF UN Mission in Sudan

Yomiuri Shimbun ("GSDF LIKELY TO JOIN U.N. MISSION IN SUDAN", 2009/12/01) reported that the government likely will send a Ground Self-Defense Force unit comprising several hundred personnel to join a U.N. peacekeeping mission in Sudan in May or June at the earliest, according to government sources. The government plans to dispatch a GSDF unit to southern Sudan to construct roads, transport supplies and personnel by helicopter and provide medical assistance, among other tasks, the sources said.

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15. Japan-Russia Territorial Talks

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, RUSSIA TO CONTINUE TERRITORIAL TALKS IN 'CONSTRUCTIVE' WAY", Tokyo, 2009/11/30) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and a visiting senior Russian government official agreed Monday that the two countries will continue their dialogue on the sovereignty dispute over four Russian- held islands off Hokkaido in a quiet and constructive manner, according to the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

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16. Sino-Japanese Relations

Reuters ("CHINA, JAPAN PLAN FIRST JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE", 2009/11/27) reported that Japan and the PRC agreed to conduct their first joint military training exercise. But Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa maintained the pressure on the PRC's visiting defense minister, Liang Guanglie, for more openness about ballooning military spending. Kitazawa and Liang agreed that their countries' armed forces would hold a joint search and rescue exercise at sea -- their first joint exercise. The two sides would also discuss further joint training in humanitarian assistance and disaster rescue.

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17. Sino-Indian Relations

Times of India ("CHINA BLOCKS INDIA'S PLAN FOR LADAKH ROAD", 2009/11/30) reported that even as the PRC objects to the construction of a road in the Ladakh region, India's external intelligence agency RAW has conveyed to the government that the PRC is simultaneously building and repairing as many as 27 airstrips in the Tibet region. According to the agency, these airstrips would be of use for the PRC only in the case of a conflict with India as New Delhi is the only potential adversary in the region. "Many of these 27 military strips have been newly built. Others which have been expanded too are seeing increasing Chinese activities. Like the intermediate range missiles stationed in the Delingha region, these airfields can be of strategic use for China only against India," said a senior official.

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18. Sino-Australian Trade

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA AUSTRALIA'S TOP TRADING PARTNER: DATA", 2009/11/30) reported that Asian powerhouse the PRC is Australia's biggest trading partner, while exports to India have also soared in the past year, official figures released Monday showed. Two-way trade with the PRC jumped to 83 billion dollars (76.1 billion US) in 2008-09 on the back of increased iron ore and coal exports and the PRC's status as the number one source of Australia's imports. Japan was Australia's second trading partner with deals worth 75.3 billion dollars, followed by the United States with 53.1 billion dollars.

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19. Cross Strait Relations

The China Post ("CHINESE OFFICIAL SUGGESTS CROSS-STRAIT INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION", Taipei, 2009/11/30) reported that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait can further enhance cooperation in five of the industries that play an important role in modern life, a PRC official said Monday. PRC's Vice Minister of Industry and Information Technology Lou Qinjian, who concluded a weeklong visit to Taiwan that day, said before his departure that the cooperation could also include the semiconductor, communications, green energy and cloud computing industries. "The two sides can strengthen their cooperation to create new trade opportunities in these industries," Lou told reporters.

Taiwan News ("TAIWAN CULTURE MINISTER PROMISES "EQUALITY AND RESPECT" FOR OFFICES IN CHINA", Taipei, 2009/11/30) reported that New Council for Cultural Affairs Minister Emile Sheng told lawmakers Monday he would only open offices in PRC if the principles of equality and respect were met. Last week, the Cabinet's newest minister launched the idea to open semi-official CCA offices in PRC, but on Monday opposition Democratic Progressive Party lawmakers attacked the plan as a step back for Taiwan's sovereignty.

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20. PRC Climate Change

Associated Press ("EU LEADERS WANT DETAILS ON CHINA EMISSIONS PLAN", Beijing, 2009/12/01) reported that the PRC should provide details on how it will implement its greenhouse gas limits and offer further proposals commensurate with its status as the world's largest emitter, European leaders said Tuesday. Following a meeting with PRC President Hu Jintao, Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt said the Europeans wanted to analyze the figures and find out precisely what measures Beijing plans to put into place and "how it will differ from their business as usual pathway in regards to emissions."

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21. PRC AIDS Issue

United Press International ("HIV/AIDS HITS 740,000 NATIONWIDE", 2009/11/25) reported that the number of HIV positive people in the PRC probably stands at around 740,000, up from the estimated 700,000 who had the virus in 2007, the country's health minister said Tuesday. Of the new infections, sexual transmissions will account for more than 70 percent of cases.

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22. PRC Space Program

China Daily ("CHINA TO TAKE NEXT LEAP IN MOON PROBE", 2009/11/30) reported that the PRC's second lunar probe, Chang'e-2, will be launched in October 2010, a top space scientist said Thursday. Ye Peijian, chief designer of the nation's first moon probe, told the third International Conference on Space Information Technology in Beijing yesterday that the country's lunar lander and rover, Chang'e-3, is also well on the way toward liftoff -- the project is in the prototype stage and its launch is set for before 2013. Ye said the second lunar orbiter will carry different payloads and orbit the moon in a different way.

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II. PRC Report

23. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net ("ANHUI TO INVEST 1.1 BILL RMB ON SMALL AND MEDIUM RIVER REGULATION", 2009/11/30) reported that according to Anhui Department of Water Resource, Anhui province will invest 1.1 billion RMB on 44 projects of small and medium river regulation from the end of 2009 to 2011. Anhui is rich in water resources, but suffers from it as well. These projects will help prevent flooding a lot.

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24. PRC Public Health

Beijing Times ("OFFICIAL GAY BAR TO OPEN IN DALI", 2009/11/30) reported that local authorities in Yunnan Province are to convert a bar into a "common room for partner education" for the gay community, as part of the official initiative to break social stigma against gay men. Yunnan has the highest number of HIV/AIDS cases in the country, official data indicates.

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25. PRC Civil Society and Public Health

Sina.com ("BREAST SCREENING FEDERATION FOUND IN BEIJING", 2009/11/29) reported in order to further arouse the society's concerns on women's breast health and enhance female friends' understandings about breast cancer, National Breast Screening Federation was established by China

Social Work Association in Beijing on November 26.

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Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org