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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters ("CHINA URGES "BIG PICTURE" VIEW IN NORTH KOREA TALKS", Beijing, 2009/04/30) reported that the PRC said the possibility of the DPRK conducting a second nuclear test was "hypothetical," so it could not say how it would affect relations. "We hope that all sides will pay attention to the big picture and appropriately resolve the relevant problems and together protect the progress of the six-party talks process," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said.

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2. PRC on Six Party Talks

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA CALLS FOR RESTART OF N KOREA NUCLEAR TALKS", Beijing, 2009/04/30) reported that the PRC called for a restart of six-nation talks aimed at ending the DPRK's nuclear programs. "China is willing to work with other parties and continue to play a constructive role in realizing denuclearization on the Korean peninsula and peace and stability in northeast Asia," foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told journalists. The PRC is the DPRK's closest political and economic ally. But analysts have said the DPRK's recent actions show the PRC's influence on its communist neighbor is waning.

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3. Japan on Six Party Talks

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PM SAYS N KOREA'S NUCLEAR THREAT 'NOT CONSTRUCTIVE'", Beijing, 2009/04/30) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso Thursday said that the DPRK's threat to conduct a nuclear test was "not constructive" and urged the resumption of six-party

disarmament talks. The visiting Japanese premier told journalists after he met PRC leaders during his two-day trip here that "North Korea's behaviour is aimed at heightening international tensions." "The six-party talks is the most realistic framework for resolving North Korea's problem. We want to keep close cooperation with the chair of the six- party talks, China, and ... work towards the resumption of talks."

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4. US on Six Party Talks

The Associated Press ("CLINTON: NORTH KOREAN RETURN TO TALKS IMPLAUSIBLE", 2009/04/30) reported that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says it is "implausible, if not impossible" that the DPRK will return to international talks on ending its nuclear ambitions. Clinton's pessimistic response came during a Senate hearing as she was asked why the Obama administration is requesting money for aid to the DPRK.

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5. US on DPRK Human Rights

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "STATE DEPT. PLEDGES TO HELP N. KOREAN REFUGEES RESETTLE IN U.S.", Washington, 2009/04/30) reported that the US pledged to make efforts to improve human rights conditions in the DPRK and help DPRK defectors settle in the U.S. "The United States cares deeply about the plight of North Koreans who flee their homeland and will continue to work with international organizations and foreign governments to ensure their protection, including through resettlement in the United States," State Department spokesman Robert Wood said to mark "North Korea Freedom Week" sponsored by the Defense Forum Foundation and several other human rights groups.

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6. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA WARNS S. KOREA NOT TO PERSECUTE PRO-PYONGYANG GROUPS", Seoul, 2009/04/30) reported that the DPRK warned the ROK not to persecute ROK civic groups that have maintained a conciliatory stance toward the DPRK. The spokesman of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland said in a statement carried by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) that if the conservative government continues to clamp down on people who support rapprochement with the DPRK, it can lead to grave consequences.

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL TO TAKE ISSUE OF CITIZEN DETAINED IN N.KOREA TO UN", 2009/04/30) reported that the issue of a ROK national who has been detained in the DPRK for almost a month now may be taken to the UN Human Rights Council as early as this week. A Foreign Ministry official says the government is in talks with the relatives of the detainee because they are the ones who must take this issue to the UN. The family is expected to send a letter that says the DPRK has committed a clear human rights violation by holding the man without allowing visitation rights.

Associated Press ("NKOREA INTENSIFIES PROBE OF DETAINED SKOREAN", Seoul, 2009/05/01) reported that the DPRK said Friday it is intensifying its investigation into a detained ROK worker. The worker, identified as Yu Song-jin, "malignantly slandered the dignified system," said a statement from the DPRK's agency in charge of the complex. "A competent institution is now carrying on a deep-going investigation into the case," it said.

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7. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Korea Herald ("EXPERTS SEE GRIM PROSPECTS FOR INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS", 2009/04/30) reported that Pyongyang's continued nuclear threats cast a shadow over prospects for inter-Korean relations as Seoul prepares for talks on the last remaining reconciliatory project in Gaeseong. "The talks won't happen easily," said a high-ranking official of the ROK's Unification Ministry. "The North is unlikely to agree on the agenda prior to the meeting as the South demands."

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8. ROK Military

Korea Herald ("MILITARY REFORMS IN NEED OF REVISION, SAYS THINK TANK", 2009/04/30) reported that plans to downsize the military to 500,000 personnel from the current 680,000 need to be revised because the military would be unable to cope with instabilities in the DPRK, a state-run think tank said in a recent report. "Military plans led by the South Korean troops would be a huge driving force to spearheading reunification with North Korea should the situation arise. But to fulfill that goal, the troop reductions stipulated in the defense reform plans must be revised," said the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses.

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9. ROK Politics

JoongAng Ilbo ("GNP SUFFERS BY-ELECTION SHUTOUT", 2009/04/30) reported that Chung Dong-young, a former presidential candidate, was all but assured of a legislative post in by-elections held across ROK yesterday, and the ruling Grand National Party was shut out. In Deokjin District in Jeonju, North Jeolla, Chung, an independent candidate, held a commanding lead over Kim Keun-sik of the main opposition Democratic Party as of 10 p.m. Final results were not yet available as of press time. By-elections for legislative seats also took place in four other districts. As of 10 p.m., Shin Kuhn, also running independently, appeared to secure a seat in Wansan District, Jeonju. In Buk District of Ulsan, Cho Seung-soo of the progressive New Jinbo Party held a lead. The city of Gyeongju in North Gyeongsang saw an independent Jeong Soo-seong with a lead.

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10. Comfort Women Issue

The Los Angeles Times (John M. Glionna , "SOUTH KOREA'S WARTIME SEX SLAVES: HOPING FOR

CLOSURE AT THE END OF THEIR LIVES", 2009/04/30) reported that time is running out for the *halmoni*, or Korean grandmothers. About 150,000 to 200,000 Korean women served as Japanese sex slaves, most living out their lives in humiliated silence. When activists brought the issue to light in the early 1990s, officials sought out survivors. While many were too ashamed to come forward, officials registered 234 women. Ninety-three are still alive, according to a nonprofit group that looks after them. Holding out hope for closure before they die, they are waging a battle to persuade the world to acknowledge their ordeal. They are seeking reparations and a formal apology from the Japanese government.

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11. ROK Swine Flu Outbreak

Yonhap ("S.KOREA REPORTS TWO 'PROBABLE' CASES OF TYPE-A FLU VIRUS", Seoul, 2009/05/01) reported that the ROK's Korea Center for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) on Friday reported two additional "probable" cases of type-A influenza, raising. KCDC said in a statement that a female patient in her 40s is suspected of having contracted the new flu virus from another woman who was recently reported as the country's first probable type-A influenza case on Tuesday. The other new patient has no ties with the first probable flu case, but the patient, who is in his 50s, didn't travel overseas, according to a senior official at the disease control center.

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12. Japan Swine Flu Outbreak

Kyodo News ("JAPAN'S 1ST SUSPECTED CASE OF SWINE FLU DETECTED", Tokyo, 2009/04/30) reported that the first suspected case in Japan of swine flu, the rapidly spreading new type of influenza, has been detected, the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry said. The patient is a different person from the Japanese woman who tested positive for the type A influenza in a preliminary examination after arriving at Narita international airport from Los Angeles on a Northwest Airlines flight, according to the ministry.

Kyodo ("YOKOHAMA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT TESTS NEGATIVE FOR NEW FLU", Tokyo, 2009/05/01) reported that a high school student in Yokohama suspected of being Japan's first case of infection from the rapidly spreading new influenza strain tested negative Friday. Test results showed that the 17-year-old boy has been infected only with a seasonal strain of the influenza A virus, a health ministry official said.

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13. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Kyodo News ("RUSSIA'S RULING PARTY TO CAMPAIGN AGAINST JAPAN'S TERRITORIAL CLAIM", Moscow, 2009/04/30) reported that a youths organization under Russia's ruling party is preparing to open chapters at two of the four Russian-administered islands also claimed by Japan and launch a campaign against the return of the islands to Japan, one of its officials said Wednesday. The move to set up chapters on Kunashiri and Shikotan islands comes prior to the visit of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, also chair of the ruling United Russia party, to Japan from May 11.

Xinhua News ("HU CALLS ON JOINT EFFORTS TO SETTLE CHINA-JAPAN DISPUTES", 2009/04/30) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao called for joint efforts from Japan to properly settle existing problems and disputes between the two countries, especially historical issues. Hu told visiting Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso it is a set policy of the PRC government to push forward PRC-Japan bilateral strategic mutual-beneficial ties in an all-round way.

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14. Sino-Japanese Relations

Bloomberg News (Takashi Hirokawa and Toko Sekiguchi, "JAPAN AND CHINA SHOULD START FREE TRADE DISCUSSION, ASO SAYS ", 2009/04/30) reported that Japan's Prime Minister Taro Aso called for talks on free trade with the PRC, the first time a Japanese leader has raised the prospect of an agreement with its biggest trading partner. "Japan and China make up about half of East Asia trade, which itself counts for a quarter of global trade," Aso said in a speech to a group of young Chinese and Japanese business leaders in Beijing. "How about we begin talks about further bilateral economic cooperation, and perhaps the possibility of a Japan-China EPA?"

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15. Cross Strait Relations

Bloomberg News ("CHINA MAKES FIRST TAIWAN INVESTMENT AS RELATIONS THAW", 2009/04/30) reported that China Mobile Ltd. agreed to buy 12 percent of Far EastTone Telecommunications Co., the first investment by a PRC state-owned company in Taiwan since a civil war ended six decades ago. All 692 members of the Taiex rose today, sending Taiwan's benchmark stock index to its biggest gain since 1991 on speculation more PRC companies will invest on the island. The NT\$17.8 billion (\$529 million) purchase, announced by China Mobile yesterday, underscores how warming political relations between the two sides are leading to closer economic ties.

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16. Sino-Indian Trade Relations

IANAS ("INDIA-CHINA TRADE TO REOPEN THROUGH NATHU LA ON FRIDAY", Gangtok, 2009/04/30) reported that bilateral trade between Asian giants India and the PRC will resume through the Nathu La pass in Sikkim on the famed Silk Route Friday, with the government promising traders a new mart near the border, officials said. Nathu La is one of the three trading border posts between India and the PRC, the other two being Shipkila in Himachal Pradesh and Lipulekh in Uttarakhand. While the list of items allowed for the border trade will remain unchanged this season, traders can expect a new trade mart at the border, work on which has already been started, said Sikkim Industries Secretary M.G. Kiran.

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17. PRC Human Rights

Time ("IN CHINA, SUSPICIOUS JAIL DEATHS ON THE RISE", 2009/04/30) reported that as the improbable explanations for deaths of prisoners in the PRC's criminal justice system grows, so have the doubts of legal experts and average citizens alike. The government has pledged open investigations into the deaths, but critics question its will to change the infamously opaque system. Beijing has launched a training program to improve the conditions of the country's jails, but legal experts argue that deeper reforms are needed to stem the violence.

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18. PRC on Swine Flu

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA WARNS OF SWINE FLU AHEAD OF MAJOR HOLIDAY", 2009/04/30) reported that the likelihood of swine flu spreading to the PRC is very high, a senior health official said, as millions of people prepare to travel around the country for a long-weekend public holiday. "It is very hard for me to predict exactly when the first case of swine flu will appear in China," said Yang Weizhong, deputy director of the PRC's Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, in comments broadcast on state television. "But I can say that the risk of swine flu spreading to China is very high."

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19. PRC Economy

CCTV.com ("CHINA TO DEEPEN ECONOMIC AND SYSTEM REFORMS", 2009/04/30) reported that Premier Wen Jiabao presided over a regular executive meeting of the State Council on Wednesday. Members discussed and approved a plan to deepen economic reforms to boost domestic demand. The executive decided to raise the threshold in terms of capital pooled into the projects for investment in high energy-consuming, high-polluting and resource-intensive industries, including electrolytic aluminum.

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20. PRC Environment

Xinhua News ("CHINA ALLOCATES \$3.4B ON ENERGY SAVING, ECOLOGICAL PROJECTS", 2009/04/30) reported that the PRC has allocated 23 billion yuan (\$3.37 billion) for energy saving, anti-pollution, ecological and environmental protection projects since the fourth quarter of last year, a senior official told Xinhua Wednesday. Han Yongwen, secretary-general of the National Development and Reform Commission, said investment in these sectors accounted for 10 percent of the 230 billion yuan government spending to date on infrastructure, ecological and environmental sectors, quake relief and other areas.

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III. ROK Report

21. DPRK Nuclear Program

Kyunghyang Shinmun ("DPRK SHOULD STOP THREATENING GLOBE", 2009/04/30) said in a column that the DPRK's nuclear experiment and announcement about missile firing is highly disappointing. In order to be treated as one of the members of the global society, the DPRK should stop threatening by taking such actions and think rationally. Whether through six-party talks, or dialog with the US, they should return to the negotiation table.

Ohmynews ("THIRD NUCLEAR CRISIS? ", 2009/04/29) reported that the DPRK has been making more provocative remarks toward the ROK gradually until they revealed their will to conduct a nuclear experiment through an official announcement. Experts analyzed the DPRK's statement was to solicit the US to continue the negotiations. One expert pointed out that there is still room for negotiation because the DPRK had done so to show their will to stand against UN Security Council's presidential statement.

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22. ROK Policy toward DPRK

PRESSian (Chung Young-chul, "PRESIDENT AGAINST MILITARY ACTION, FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRY PUSHING PSI, MB'S DPRK POLICY IN TOTAL CONFUSION", 2009/04/29) said in a column that the DPRK's Gaesong announcement's function was to ask the ROK whether they are to return to the 6.15 joint statement or to confront one another. The DPRK has required a confirmative answer and has shown that they would take any appropriate actions according to the answers given. This means that there is still a possibility for the ROK government to recover the inter-Korean relationship. That is to stick to the DPRK policy that is based on the 6.15 joint statement, and to show realness by taking appropriate actions. That would be the last way to prevent the DPRK policies from becoming more confused.

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