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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I.NAPSNet

1. US Sanctions on the DPRK

The Associated Press ("US TIGHTENS FINANCIAL NOOSE ON NORTH KOREA", 2009/08/12) reported that the United States moved to freeze the assets of a DPRK bank accused of providing financial services to companies involved in Pyongyang's missile programs. The Treasury Department's action against Korea Kwangson Banking Corp., or KKBC, means any bank accounts or other financial assets found in the United States that belong to the firm are blocked. Americans also are prohibited from doing business with the bank. It is based in the DPRK and has operated at least one overseas branch in Dandong, PRC.

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2. DPRK Nuclear Talks

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "U.S. HAS ONLY 3 YEARS FOR NUKE TALKS WITH N. KOREA: GREGG", Jeju, 2009/08/12) reported that the United States has only three years left to negotiate the "verifiable dismantlement" of the DPRK nuclear arsenal, former US Ambassador Donald Gregg said Wednesday. Gregg said the Bush administration wasted six years before seeking dialogue with the DPRK in the final two years during which the DPRK "never had full confidence in dialogue with the Bush administration," owing to the influence of many neoconservatives such as Dick Cheney and John Bolton. "My suggestion would be that during the next three years before the 100th anniversary of Kim Il-sung's birth we have perhaps the last opportunity to get North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons," he said. "For that to happen it is going to take a sustained and sincere dialogue between U.S. and Pyongyang, in conjunction with Pyongyang's return to the six-party talks."

Yonhap ("U.N. CHIEF SAYS READY FOR DIRECT CONTACT WITH N. KOREA", Seoul, 2009/08/12) reported that U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon vowed Wednesday to mobilize all available means

to help restart denuclearization dialogue with the DPRK. Ban said his organization "will work to find a breakthrough by any means necessary, and it has plans to directly contact North Korea if it needs to." Ban earlier said in New York that he was willing to do anything as the secretary general of the U.N. to help restart the stalled negotiations, including making a personal trip to Pyongyang.

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3. US-DPRK Relations

Morris News Service (Lee Shearer , "UGA PROF HELPED TO FREE JOURNALISTS FROM NORTH KOREA", Athens, Georgia, 2009/08/11) reported that a University of Georgia professor played an important role in the release of two American journalists convicted of spying in the DPRK. But Han Park says he would rather talk about foreign policy than what he did to help free Laura Ling and Euna Lee. Park helped set the stage for Clinton's trip when Park went to the DPRK on July 4. He already had scheduled the trip to organize an informal meeting in October in Athens among ROK, DPRK and U.S. officials to discuss issues affecting the three nations. But shortly before he left on his latest trip, Park got a call from U.S. State Department officials. Diplomats wanted Park to check on the conditions the women were being held in and find out what U.S. diplomats could do to obtain their release. Park asked DPRK officials to allow the women to telephone their families, a request they granted before Park left the country. He also told State Department officials what to do to get the women released.

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4. Inter-Korea Relations

Yonhap (Kim Hyun, "HYUNDAI CHIEF IN PYONGYANG SEEKING RELEASE OF DETAINED EMPLOYEE ", Seoul, 2009/08/11) reported that the chairwoman of Hyundai Group was in Pyongyang for a second day Tuesday as she sought to bring a detained employee home, but progress in the negotiations appeared to be delayed. Hyun Jung-eun’s visit raised hopes that the Hyundai employee, identified only by his family name of Yu, would be released after a detention of nearly four-and-a-half months. Seoul officials said they had no information about Yu's release as of 5 p.m., the last window of time when ROK Koreans regularly return home across the border from the DPRK.

Joong-Ang Ilbo (Ser Myo-ja, Lee Young-jong, "OPTIMISM SPREADS THAT TRIP MAY THAW RELATIONS", 2009/08/12) reported that optimism prevailed in ROK yesterday that Hyundai Group Chairwoman Hyun Jeong-eun will meet with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il, win the release of a detained worker and untangle inter-Korean relations.

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "NK LIKELY TO FREE S.KOREAN DETAINEE", 2009/09/11) reported that a ROK Korean detained in the DPRK for 135 days is expected to return home soon following a visit by Hyundai Group chief Hyun Jung-eun to Pyongyang, according to observers here Tuesday. If Hyun successfully secures his release, it could signal an advancement in inter-Korean relations that have soured due to the Lee Myung-bak administration's tougher stance toward the DPRK regime, they said. But he said whether or not further advancements are made will depend on the ROK government.

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5. Japan-DPRK Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun ("GOVT 'EYED SENDING ENVOY TO NORTH KOREA'", 2009/08/11) reported that the government considered sending a special envoy representing Prime Minister Taro Aso to DPRK early this year and was holding talks with Pyongyang for that purpose, sources close to Japan-DPRK affairs said Monday. The aborted plan was intended to break the impasse in the relationship between the two countries by, for example, urging the DPRK to honor its promise to conduct a fresh investigation into the fate of Japanese abducted by the reclusive state. But the negotiations were discontinued in early March because the DPRK was reportedly preparing to fire a ballistic missile in addition to other actions considered hostile toward the international community, the sources said.

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6. ROK Space Program

Yonhap (Lee Joon-seung, "S. KOREA TO LAUNCH FIRST SPACE ROCKET ON AUG. 19", Seoul, 2009/08/11) reported that the ROK's first space rocket will be launched on Aug. 19 following repeated delays caused by the Russian-made first stage booster, the government said. "The date was reached after close consultation between South Korean and Russian engineers and approved by a local review panel," said Lee Sang-mok, deputy minister of science and technology policy. He noted, however, that depending on weather conditions, the launch date could be set back to Aug. 26. He said Seoul notified both the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization of the proposed launch.

Agence-France Presse ("NKOREA SAYS IT WAS PUNISHED UNFAIRLY FOR ROCKET LAUNCH", Seoul, 2009/08/10) reported that the DPRK insisted Monday it was unfairly punished for its long-range rocket launch in April, noting that ROK also plans a blast-off this month. The foreign ministry said it would watch closely to see whether world powers would also refer the ROK's launch to the United Nations Security Council. "Their reaction and attitude towards South Korea's satellite launch will once again clearly prove whether the principle of equality exists or has collapsed," said a statement on the official news agency.

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7. ROK Climate Change

Chosun Ilbo ("LEE CALLS FOR GREEN LIFESTYLE TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE", 2009/08/11) reported that President Lee Myung-bak urged the public to join government efforts to fight climate change by adopting a more environmentally-friendly lifestyle. In his bi-weekly radio address on Monday the President stressed the importance of reducing carbon gas emissions, saying that the erection of so-called "carbon trade barriers" could be a critical blow to the export-driven ROK economy. This environment protectionist measure is under consideration by some major economies, including the U.S., to levy on imported emission-extensive goods. While stressing the need to develop eco-friendly technologies to better adapt to the changing international market, the president claimed that a "green" lifestyle is more important than the time and money-consuming development of green technology as people can start changing their life patterns immediately.

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8. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo News ("ASO, 15 OF 17 CABINET MINISTERS SAY WON'T VISIT YASUKUNI ON AUG. 15 ", Tokyo, 2009/08/11) reported that Prime Minister Taro Aso and 15 ministers in his 17-member Cabinet will likely refrain from visiting Yasukuni Shrine on Saturday, the 64th anniversary of the end of World War II, to avoid repercussions from neighboring countries. Consumer affairs minister Seiko Noda was the only member of the Cabinet to clearly announce Tuesday her intention to visit the controversial shrine for the war dead, which is seen by some Asian countries as a symbol of Japan's wartime military aggression. But she added that she would do so ''in a private capacity.''

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9. Japan Politics

Bloomberg (Stuart Biggs, "JAPAN'S ELECTION NO FOREGONE CONCLUSION FOR DPJ, HIRANUMA SAYS ", 2009/08/11) reported that Japan's opposition will struggle to win a majority in this month's election as voters fall back on established politicians from a ruling party that has held power for half a century, an independent lawmaker said. Media predictions of an easy Aug. 30 victory for the Democratic Party of Japan are based on big gains in local elections, including Tokyo, Takeo Hiranuma, __ a former Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry, said today. These won't be easy to repeat in a national vote where ruling Liberal Democratic Party candidates have entrenched constituencies, he said.

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10. Japan Nuclear Energy

Kyodo News ("JAPAN EARTHQUAKE FORCES SHUTDOWN OF NUCLEAR PLANTS", 2009/08/11) reported that Japan's Tuesday morning earthquake prompted an emergency shutdown of two nuclear reactors in Shizuoka prefecture, southwest of Tokyo, the Kyodo news agency reported. It cited Chubu Electric Power Co. as saying operations at the facilities were suspended automatically, and the radioactive level at one of the reactors "temporarily went up, although there was no radioactive leakage."

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11. Japan Climate Change

Japan for Sustainability ("JAPANESE ACCOUNTANTS PROPOSE THAT COMPANIES DISCLOSE CLIMATE IMPACTS TO INVESTORS", 2009/08/12) reported that the Japanese Institute of Certified Public Accountants (JICPA) released on January 14, 2009, a proposal that companies should include climate change-related information in their disclosure documents for investors. Since the importance of climate change is becoming a bigger part of corporate management concerns, the disclosure of company information that would include reporting on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would be useful for investors in decision-making.

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12. Sino-Japanese Relations

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PM FRONT RUNNER SAYS HE WANTS TO PROMOTE CHINA TIES", 2009/08/12) reported that Japan's opposition leader Yukio Hatoyama , seen as the likely next prime minister , said Tuesday he would seek to boost ties with the PRC and would refrain from visiting a controversial Tokyo war shrine . Hatoyama, who leads the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), said he would look to the future in building diplomatic ties in Asia while acknowledging the past, alluding to Japan's aggression during World War II . "We will have the courage to squarely look at what Japan did in the past and will work by focusing on the future," the US-trained engineering scholar and grandson of a former premier told a press conference.

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13. Sino-Indian Relations

UNI ("VIEWS ON INDIA-CHINA TIES SHOULD BE BASED ON CAREFUL JUDGMENT:INDIA", 2009/08/12) reported that India today stressed the need for expressing opinions on its relations with the PRC after careful judgment based on long-term interests of building a stable partnership between the two countries. It also said relations between the two countries were based on cooperative partnership and sensitivity to each other's concerns, including the boundary question. ''We continue to maintain that opinions and assessment on the state of India-China relations should be expressed after careful judgment based on long-term interests of building a stable relationship between the two countries,'' the spokesman added.

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14. Sino-Indian Environmental Cooperation

Business Standard ("INDIA TO ROPE IN CHINA FOR CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE", 2009/08/12) reported that while it fights the pressure of the Western countries over the issue of climate change, India now wants to rope in the PRC in its efforts. Minister of State (independent charge) for Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh today said the two countries would set up a joint mechanism to study the Himalayan glaciers. “We will talk to the Chinese authorities on issues related to environment cooperation, especially in the forestry sector. While India is adding 1 million hectares of forests every year, China adds four million hectares. We also want to work together in the field of Himalayan glaciology,” Ramesh said.

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15. PRC-Australia Relations

Associated Press (Rohan Sullivan, "RIO TINTO 'STILL UNAWARE' OF CHINA CASE EVIDENCE", Sydney, 2009/08/11) reported that Rio Tinto Ltd. said Tuesday it was still unaware of any evidence to justify the PRC's detention of four employees on spying allegations, as the Australian government urged Beijing to speed up the case. Sam Walsh, Rio Tinto's chief executive for iron ore, said in the

statement that the company remained surprised and concerned about the detentions, and had not been informed of any charges against the employees.

Agence-France Presse ("AUSTRALIAN OFFICIALS MEET RIO 'SPY' HELD IN CHINA", Sydney, 2009/08/11) reported that Australia said diplomats in Shanghai had met a detained Rio Tinto executive for a second time and dismissed a report accusing the company of industrial espionage costing the PRC 100 billion dollars. The foreign affairs department said consular staff were last week permitted their second monthly prison visit with Rio Tinto executive Stern Hu since he was arrested on July 5 and accused of spying and stealing state secrets.

Agence France-Press (Amy Coopes, "RIO TINTO SAYS CHINA HAS NO CASE AGAINST EXECT", Sydney, 2009/08/12) reported that Rio Tinto chief executive of iron ore , Sam Walsh, on Wednesday said the PRC's move charged Stern Hu with industrial espionage, rather than spying, showed there was no evidence against him. "The charges have been downgraded and I think that reflects what we've been saying all along -- that we don't, in fact, believe there's any evidence of wrongdoing," Rio's told reporters. "From what we understand this is a normal commercial market situation. I don't believe that our employees have, in fact, done what has been inferred by (the) charges," he said.

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16. PRC Military

Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINA'S MILITARY LAUNCHES LONG-RANGE WAR GAMES", Beijing, 2009/08/11) reported that the PRC's military launched war games Tuesday aimed at deploying forces at long distances, reflecting moves to ensure security in the restive western regions of Tibet and Xinjiang. The exercises will send 50,000 armored troops — the People's Liberation Army's "largest-ever tactical military exercise" — to unfamiliar areas far from their bases for two months of live-fire drills, state media reported. Long-distance deployment is also aimed at dealing with natural disasters such as last year's devastating Sichuan earthquake, which left almost 90,000 people dead or missing, according to Ni Lexiong, a military expert at Shanghai University of Political Science and Law.

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17. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Associated Press ("CHINA SAYS SEPARATISTS THREATENED AFGHAN FLIGHT", Beijing, 2009/08/11) reported that the PRC refused an Afghan airliner permission to land after intelligence indicated a possible threat from separatists seeking independence for the restive western region of Xinjiang, an official Communist Party newspaper said Tuesday. The Global Times said authorities in Xinjiang received a report Sunday that a Kam Air flight that evening to Urumqi, the regional capital, could "possibly be threatened" by a group or groups seeking independence for the region, known as East Turkestan by the separatists. Following takeoff, separate officials in Urumqi received further information claiming a bomb was on board, prompting them to refuse permission for it to land, the newspaper said, citing an unidentified regional official.

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18. PRC Plague Outbreak

Agence-France Presse ("MARMOT AT SOURCE OF CHINA PLAGUE: WHO", Geneva, 2009/08/11) reported that a marmot was at the root of a pneumonic plague outbreak in northwest PRC that has claimed three lives, the World Health Organisation said Tuesday. According to the epidemiological investigation, the source of this outbreak was a wild marmot," which later came into contact with a dog, said the UN health agency in a statement.

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19. PRC Nuclear Power

Caijing Magazine ("GUANGDONG TO INCREASE NUCLEAR POWER CAPACITY ", 2009/08/12) reported that Guangdong, the southern PRC province with the most nuclear plants, will build more nuclear power facilities and increase its installed nuclear capacity to 24,000 megawatts by 2020, a government official said. The official said two more plants are under construction, which have a combined installed capacity of more than 8,000 MW.

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20. US Nuclear Forces

Agence French Presse ("US AIR FORCE SETS UP NEW COMMAND FOR NUCLEAR FORCES", 2009/08/12) reported that the US Air Force launches a new Global Strike Command responsible for nuclear forces after two major mishaps raised doubts about the supervision of the country's atomic weapons. The opening of the command marks a shake-up that followed the botched handling of nuclear weapons and the subsequent sacking of the air force's top civilian and military leaders last year. The command, located at Barksdale Air Force base in the southern state of Louisiana, will combine nuclear-capable B-52 and B-2 bombers as well as the intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force -- which had previously been under the Air Force Space Command in Colorado.

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II. PRC Report

21. Sino-US Energy Cooperation

Xinhua Net ("CHINA US COOPERATE ON CLEAN ENERGY DEVELOPMENT", 2009/08/12) reported that two great power generation companies – China Huaneng Group and US Duke Energy Corporation have signed a cooperation memorandum in Beijing on August 10. The two companies plan to develop various renewable energy and clean energy technology, in order to improve the ability of addressing climate change.

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22. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net ("HENAN ECOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT BEEN IMPROVED", 2009/08/11) reported that according to Henan provincial forestry department, with the gradual improvement of Henan ecological environment, the number of some endangered and nationally protected animals has started to rise. Leopards and other wild animals are also frequently “seen”.

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