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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Peace Treaty

Agence France-Presse ("US REBUFFS NORTH KOREAN CALL FOR PEACE TREATY", 2010/01/11) reported that the White House dismissed the DPRK's call for talks on a treaty to formally end the Korean war before the issue of dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear program is put on the table. "The North Koreans are well aware of what they need to do... to come back to six-party talks in dealing with this issue... that is give up the idea of a nuclear state on the peninsula," White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said. "If they're willing to live up to those obligations, then we will make progress in those talks."

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2. ROK on DPRK Peace Treaty Proposal

Xinhua News ("DPRK'S PROPOSAL ON DISCUSSING PEACE TREATY NOT WELCOME: S.KOREAN OFFICIAL ", Seoul, 2010/01/11) reported that the DPRK's latest proposal on discussing a peace treaty on the Korean Peninsula in the framework of the six-party talks is not welcome, an ROK foreign ministry official told Xinhua, based on Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan's recent statement. The Joint Statement proposed launching separate talks on such issue when there is certain progress in the denuclearization of the DPRK, Yu said, noting that Pyongyang's proposal only can be seen as a "tactics to stall its denuclearization process." An unnamed government official on Monday was quoted by Yonhap as saying that the DPRK made the proposal as an attempt to "dilute the six-party negotiations' theme of denuclearization."

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "SKOREA, US DISMISS NKOREA'S PEACE TALKS PROPOSAL", Seoul, 2010/01/12) reported that the ROK said Tuesday that peace talks to formally end the Korean War can happen only after the DPRK rejoins the six-party talks and reports progress in denuclearization. "I think it's an issue that we can probably move forward with after the six-party are reopened and there is progress in North Korea's denuclearization process," Defense Minister Kim Tae-young told reporters. Kim said his military is ready to deter any possible DPRK aggression, saying the DPRK "many times in the past offered peace gestures with one hand while on the other committed provocations."

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3. ROK on Six-Party Talks

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "RESUMPTION OF SIX-PARTY TALKS NOT IMMINENT: SEOUL OFFICIAL", Seoul, 2010/01/12) reported that the six-party talks are unlikely to be reconvened anytime soon despite Pyongyang's affirmation of its conditional willingness to rejoin the forum, a senior ROK government official said Tuesday. "There has been no tangible progress yet", the official said. "There has been no move for such additional contact between the U.S. and North Korea," the official said, adding the PRC has not proposed a schedule for a new round of six-way talks. He noted that Beijing is in the process of replacing Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei, who chairs the talks, with a new envoy. "China has not officially informed us of Wu's successor," he said.

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4. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("NORTH KOREA BEGINS CLOSING WHOLESALE MARKETS", 2010/01/10) reported that DPRK authorities appear to be closing regional, large-scale wholesale markets, one after another. According to the latest newsletter from the DPRK human rights group Good Friends (January 6), "Based on a Cabinet measure passed on December 30 of last year, North Korean authorities will suspend operations management of the Sunam Market in Cheongjin from the end of this March, effectively deciding to close [the market]." Good Friends reported that provincial authorities from North Hamgyeong Province plan to raze the market, located between Chumok and Cheongnam neighborhoods, and build a modern park and residential housing.

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5. DPRK Arms Exports

Sydney Morning Herald ("NZ LINK TO IRAN ARMS SALE ALLEGED", 2010/01/08) reported that US authorities plan to indict a New Zealand company allegedly involved in selling DPRK arms to Iran, sources linked to the investigation say. International organisations fear New Zealand's casual company registration system makes laundering money and financing terrorism easy. "Indictments are coming and they will be big," a source said. The issue surfaced when one of GT's creations, SP Trading, chartered a Georgia-registered cargo plane that was seized by Thai police on December 12. It was carrying 35 tonnes of explosives and anti-aircraft missiles from the DPRK bound, sources say, for Iran.

RIA Novosti ("THAILAND FILES NEW CHARGES AGAINST ARMS PLANE CREW", 2010/01/10) reported that new charges have been filed against the crew of an arms-laden cargo plane seized in Bangkok in mid-December, the Bangkok Post newspaper has said citing police sources. Officials said the weapons included portable anti-aircraft missile systems and spare parts for ground-to-air missiles shipped from the DPRK to an unknown destination. "The group has been additionally charged with carrying weapons in the plane without permission, illegally taking them to Thailand, and failing to inform officials of the items," the newspaper said, citing Crime Suppression Division (CSD) chief Supisal Pakdinarunart, who heads an investigation into the case.

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6. Separated Families

Yonhap ("S. KOREA'S RED CROSS PROPOSES TALKS WITH N. KOREA ON FAMILY REUNIONS", Seoul, 2010/01/12) reported that ROK Red Cross chief Yoo Chong-ha proposed Tuesday that his organization and its DPRK counterpart quickly hold talks on resuming reunions of families separated by the Korean War. "It is important to help aging people who are part of separated families to realize their dream of reunion," Yoo said. "I will make my best effort to have this issue discussed even before the governments of the two Koreas restart dialogue. The issue of family reunions is something to be pursued separately from political and governmental talks," he said at his Seoul office.

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7. ROK Space Program

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA POISED TO LAUNCH 3 SATELLITES", 2010/01/09) reported that three ROK satellites will be sent into orbit this year: a weather satellite called the Communication, Ocean and Meteorological Satellite (COMS), the Arirang-5 multi-purpose satellite which can capture images of objects on the ground even through cloud cover, and the Mugungwha-6 satellite that will handle digital broadcast transmissions. COMS will make the ROK the seventh country to develop a weather satellite using its own technology. The trio of satellites will fly into space to perform a wide range of missions, including meteorological data gathering, terrestrial observation and Internet connection service.

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8. ROK-Japan Security Relations

Xinhua News ("SEOUL NOT CONSIDERING S KOREA-JAPAN JOINT DECLARATION ON SECURITY: MEDIA", Seoul, 2010/01/11) reported that the ROK is not considering a joint declaration on security cooperation with Japan, following media reports in Japan that the two countries are mulling over a summit-level declaration, a government official told local media. "Japan might be in need of such a declaration, but I have never heard of it and don't think it's appropriate at this point," an official at the presidential office Cheong Wa Dae was quoted as saying. The remarks followed Japanese daily Yomiuri Shimbun's report on Friday that Seoul and Tokyo are discussing strengthening security cooperation, especially on potential nuclear threats and other terrorist attacks in East Asia and beyond.

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9. US-Japan Security Alliance

Kyodo News ("PANEL TO POSTPONE FILING REPORT ON SECRET U.S.-JAPAN PACTS", Tokyo, 2010/01/11) reported that a Japanese government panel decided Monday to postpone filing a report on its investigations into four Japan -U.S. pacts involving the 1960 revision of the bilateral security treaty and the 1972 reversion of Okinawa to Japan from U.S. control, whose existence had long been denied, government officials said. The panel, headed by University of Tokyo professor Shinichi Kitaoka, had earlier planned to complete the report by the end of January, but it now sees the need to conduct more investigations before filing its findings with Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, the officials said.

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10. Sino-US Relations

The New York Times ("CHINA'S LOBBYING EFFORTS YIELD NEW INFLUENCE, OPENNESS ON CAPITOL HILL", 2010/01/09) reported that members of Congress, lobbyists and other observers said the PRC's new prominence is largely the result of Beijing's increasingly sophisticated efforts to influence events at the center of U.S. power -- and a growing realization among U.S. lawmakers that the PRC has become a critical economic player across America. The PRC has launched a multimillion-dollar lobbying effort so effective that it is challenging the heralded efforts of nemesis Taiwan. "People in Congress are not stupid," said Minxin Pei, a professor of politics at Claremont McKenna College. "A few years ago, China-bashing was costless. Now they will get phone calls from worried CEOs. China is creating jobs in their congressional districts."

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11. Sino-Indian Anti-Piracy Operations

Indo-Asian News Service ("ANTI-PIRACY OPERATIONS: INDIA, CHINA DISCUSS INFORMATION SHARING", 2010/01/11) reported that with their energy interests coinciding in the piracy-infested Gulf of Aden, India and the PRC are now deliberating joining hands to combat pirates on the high seas. Both the countries, whose bulk of trade and energy supplies pass through the Gulf of Aden, have already deployed warships in the region to thwart pirates. "The two countries have been discussing information sharing on anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden," a senior defence ministry official said, requesting anonymity.

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12. Sino-Indian Territorial Dispute

Economic Times ("INDIA LOSES 'SUBSTANTIAL LAND' IN 20-25 YEARS ALONG LAC TO CHINA", 2010/01/11) reported that government officials may have so far denied claims of violations committed by the PRC across its borders with India, but it has been confirmed now that the latter has lost "substantial" amount of land along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the last two decades

to Beijing. The report said officials at the meeting agreed that India is “withdrawing from LAC” and that though the process was slow, the country, it was pointed out, “had lost substantial amount of land in 20-25 years” to China.

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13. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN RULING PARTY LAWMAKERS BLAME ELECTION LOSS ON FAILURE OF PRESIDENT'S PRO-CHINA POLICIES", 2010/01/10) reported that Taiwan's ruling Nationalist lawmakers blamed the party's second major electoral setback in a month on President Ma Ying-jeou's failure to jump start Taiwan's economy with his policy of pursuing closer ties to the PRC. The statement by Nationalist caucus whip Justin Chou and his colleagues followed his party's defeat by the opposition Democratic Progressive Party in three legislative byelections. The results underscore the pro-independence DPP's strong showing in local elections last December, and signal sagging popular support for the Nationalist party following growing anxiety over stronger economic ties with Beijing and a string of domestic gaffes.

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14. US and Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN PLANS TO BUY US FRIGATES DESPITE CHINA THAW", 2010/01/11) reported that Taiwan plans to buy eight second-hand Perry-class frigates from the United States despite improved ties with once-bitter foe the PRC, a local newspaper reported. The island hopes to arm them with a version of the advanced Aegis Combat System, which uses computers and radar to take out multiple targets, as well as sophisticated missile launch technology, the Taipei-based China Times said. The defence ministry said in a reaction to the report that ageing frigates now serving the navy needed to be phased out, but that it had not yet decided on the type of vessels that would replace them.

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15. PRC Missile Defense

The Associated Press ("CHINA SAYS MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM TEST SUCCESSFUL", Beijing, 2010/01/11) reported that the PRC announced that its military intercepted a missile in mid-flight Monday in a test of new technology that comes amid heightened tensions over Taiwan and increased willingness by the Asian giant to show off its advanced military capabilities. The official Xinhua News Agency reported late Monday that "ground-based midcourse missile interception technology" was tested within PRC territory. "The test has achieved the expected objective," the three-sentence report said. "The test is defensive in nature and is not targeted at any country."

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16. PRC Economy

The Washington Post ("CHINA SURPASSES GERMANY AS WORLD'S TOP EXPORTER", 2010/01/11) reported that the PRC overtook Germany in 2009 to become the world's top exporting nation, another milestone in the PRC's rapid rise and growing economic influence. But in a year of global economic turmoil and weakness, the PRC achieved the top ranking because its exports fell only 16 percent, while Germany's exports fell more steeply. "This is just one more step by China in attaining economic size commensurate with its population," said Arthur Kroeber, managing director of Dragonomics, an economic research firm in Beijing.

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17. PRC Protest

Agence France-Presse ("ACTIVISTS PROTEST AGAINST COSTLY HONG KONG-CHINA RAILWAY", 2010/01/09) reported that hundreds of Hong Kong activists surrounded government offices Friday to protest against an 8.6 billion-dollar railway that would connect the city with neighbouring Guangzhou in mainland PRC. The protesters chanted "no railway" as lawmakers met transport officials to decide whether to approve funding for the project. Critics said the public has not been properly consulted and questioned why it had to be so costly. They said it would benefit only developers while forcing villagers along the route to relocate.

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18. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Reuters ("UIGHUR MAN STABBED TO DEATH IN SOUTH CHINA: REPORT", 2010/01/10) reported that a Uighur man was stabbed to death in the southern PRC city of Shenzhen, a sign of lingering tensions after a factory brawl last summer sparked bloody ethnic riots in Xinjiang, a newspaper said. Seven Han Chinese men were arrested and reportedly fired from their jobs afterwards. Police in Guangzhou recently detained three people for spreading rumors that a group of Uighurs had been beaten up.

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19. PRC Tibet Issue

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA PLANS WORLD'S HIGHEST AIRPORT IN TIBET", Beijing, 2010/01/12) reported that the PRC plans to build the world's highest airport in its Himalayan region of Tibet, at an elevation of nearly 4,500 metres, Xinhua news agency said Tuesday. Construction of the airport is projected to start next year at a cost of 1.8 billion yuan (about 260 million dollars), it said, quoting a local planning official. The airport will be built in the Nagqu prefecture, which sits near the middle of the Tibet-Qinghai plateau and is home to a mostly ethnic Tibetan population of about 400,000, the report said. "With the airport, Nagqu, which is also on the Qinghai-Tibet railway line, is expected to become the centre of an economic hub in the plateau region," Xinhua quoted prefecture commissioner Tan Yongshou as saying.

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20. PRC Energy Supply

Xinhua News ("EAST CHINA'S FUJIAN BUILDS NEW NUCLEAR GENERATOR", Fuzhou, 2010/01/11) reported that Ningde nuclear plant, the first nuclear power station in east PRC's Fujian Province, started building its third generator Friday. With an investment of 50 billion yuan (6.8 billion U.S. dollars), the Ningde plant would be equipped with four one-million-kw generators in first phase construction. Its first generator would be installed in 2012, said Li Yinong, general manager of Ningde Nuclear Power Company Ltd. The PRC will have an installed nuclear power capacity of 40 million kw by 2020, accounting for 4 percent of the country's total power generation.

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21. PRC Gender Imbalance

BBC News ("CHINA FACES GROWING GENDER IMBALANCE", 2010/01/11) reported that more than 24 million PRC men of marrying age could find themselves without spouses by 2020, says the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The gender imbalance among newborns is the most serious demographic problem for the country's population of 1.3 billion, says the academy. It cites sex-specific abortions as a major factor, due to the PRC's traditional bias towards male children. The latest figures show that for every 100 girls born in the PRC, 119 boys are born, the academy says in a new book.

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II. PRC Report

22. PRC Environment

Chutian Urban Daily ("WUHAN APPLIES ISSUING ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION LOTTERY", 2010/01/11) reported that Wuhan has applied to the government's related sector for issuing environment protection lottery, in order to resolve the capital bottleneck of environment protection such as on developing electric vehicles, said Xu Jin, director of Wuhan Development and Reform Committee yesterday.

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23. PRC Economy

Chutian Urban Daily ("HUBEI BEST ENTERPRISE CITIZEN PRIZE UNVEILED", 2010/01/11) reported that the result of 2009 China (Hubei) Best Enterprise Citizen Prize was unveiled yesterday. Dongfeng Motor, Wuhan Iron and Steel, Hubei Mobile and other 16 enterprises are on the prize list. This prize is co-organized by 21 Century Economic News and 21 Century Business Review.

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24. PRC Energy Use

First Finance Daily ("NEW ENERGY ACCOUNTS FOR 12% OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION DURING 12TH FIVE-YEAR PLAN", 2010/01/11) reported that related government sectors are researching and making new energy development plan during the 12th five-year plan, and the plan requires that new energy should account for 12%-13% of the total energy consumption, said Han Wenke, director of energy research center of the National Development and Reform Committee recently.

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