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MARKTWO

I.NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Nuclear Program

Agence-France Presse ("NKOREA OFFICIAL, IN RARE INTERVIEW, DEFENDS NUCLEAR WEAPONS", Tokyo, 2009/08/12) reported that Ro Jong Su, a director-level researcher at the DPRK foreign ministry, gave a rare interview in Pyongyang to the Japanese news agency in which he reiterated the Stalinist nation's policies. "Nobody will believe the claim that Japan and South Korea are exposed to a 'nuclear threat' because they are under the 'nuclear umbrella' of the United States, which has the biggest number of nuclear weapons in the world," Ro said. "So we have no choice but to possess nuclear (weapons) to fill the nuclear vacuum in the region," he said. He also dismissed the view that the DPRK's nuclear weapons could lead to an arms race in East Asia, saying that "Japan and South Korea are effectively the same as nuclear powers" because of the US nuclear umbrella.

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2. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Korea Herald (Kim Ji-hyun, "SIX-PARTY TALKS VALID: EX-CHINESE DIPLOMAT", Jeju Island, 2009/08/14 17:00:00 GMT+0) reported that the six-party talks remain a valid tool for resolving a nuclear standoff involving the DPRK, a former PRC diplomat said yesterday, stressing that the United States and DPRK are unable to settle the matter bilaterally. "The nuclear issue cannot be settled between the United States and North Korea," said Wang Ying-fan, who served as PRC vice foreign minister at the start of the DPRK nuclear crisis in the early 1990s. Wang predicted that the United States would enlist diplomatic support from its other partners of the six-party talks; PRC, ROK, Japan and Russia. That is why, the former vice minister argued, the six-party dialogue stands valid and should continue to be implemented to achieve denuclearization.

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3. US-DPRK Relations

KBS News ("NK: US-NK RELATIONS TO SEE BIG DEVELOPMENT SOON", 2009/08/13) reported that a senior DPRK diplomat has reportedly said that US-DPRK relations will soon witness a significant development. According to a diplomatic source, Vice Foreign Minister Kim Yong-il made

the comment when he met with high-level officials of Mongolia's Foreign Ministry in Ulaanbaatar. The source added that Kim reiterated that Pyongyang has no intentions of returning to the stalled six-way nuclear talks, but that the DPRK wouldn't reject talks with the US if certain conditions are met.

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4. US on DPRK Sanctions

Reuters ("U.S. SEES GROWING BACKING FOR N.KOREA SANCTIONS", Washington, 2009/08/12) reported that US efforts to enforce UN sanctions imposed on the DPRK are gaining growing support from countries and banks, a senior American official said. Ambassador Phil Goldberg, the US coordinator for implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions, said efforts to inspect the DPRK vessels for illegal weapons and to curb financial transactions by Pyongyang entities suspected of proliferation were winning widespread backing. "We have found great support among the five parties in the six-party talks, the U.N. Security Council, the United Nations more generally, and regional organizations and fora," he told reporters in Washington.

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5. Inter-Korea Relations

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "SOUTH KOREAN HELD IN NORTH IS FREED, RETURNS HOME", Seoul, 2009/08/13) reported that Hyundai Group Chairwoman Hyun Jung-eun has been in the DPRK for the past few days, and she may have negotiated the release of Yoo, who is an employee for Hyundai's DPRK business arm, Hyundai Asan. But analysts said just as important may have been Clinton's reported urging that Yoo be freed. After months of antagonizing Seoul and Washington, the DPRK may be looking to turn things around, they said. Yang Moo-jin, a professor at Seoul's University of North Korean Studies, said the release of the ROK worker was meant to please Washington as much as Seoul, citing Clinton's request.

Yonhap (Byun Duk-kun, "INTER-KOREAN TIES UNLIKELY TO IMPROVE DESPITE WORKER'S RELEASE", Seoul, 2009/08/13) reported that ROK will not likely resume official dialogue with the DPRK in the near future, despite the release of a detained ROK worker Thursday, as it has long insisted the communist nation must first drop its hostility toward the ROK, as well as its nuclear ambitions, officials and experts here said. They noted the release of the worker certainly removed a large stumbling block between the two Koreas, but added there are many obstacles remaining.

Korea Times (Do Je-hae, "CHUNG URGES PRESIDENT TO MEND TIES WITH NK", 2009/08/13) reported that the opposition Democratic Party (DP) urged President Lee Myung-bak Thursday to take new policy approaches to pressing issues ahead of his address to mark the Aug. 15 Liberation Day. "The President must address personnel reform, the abolishment of the four-river restoration project, increased spending for people's livelihood and improvement in inter-Korean relations," DP Chairman Chung Sye-kyun said at a press conference at the National Assembly, Thursday. Chung stressed that moral standards and regional balance should be the most important considerations in any upcoming Cabinet appointments and warned against using them as a way of political reconciliation among rival GNP factions.

Yonhap ("HYUNDAI WORKER'S DETENTION CAUSED BY REMARKS ABOUT N.K. LEADER, FAMILY", Seoul, 2009/08/14) reported that Yu Seong-jin had talked about the DPRK's leader, Kim Jong-il, and Kim's family to locals, the worker's brother said Friday. "Talking about Kim Jong-il is forbidden in North Korea, but my brother said he had talked about Kim Jong-il, his sister and Kim Jong-un," his elder brother, Yu Seong-gwon, said over the telephone.

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6. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

KBS News ("EAGER TOURISTS AWAIT MT. GEUMGANG TOURS", 2009/08/13) reported that Hyundai Asan says over 30-thousand tourists are signed up to visit Mount Geumgang in the DPRK. Hyundai Asan, the operator of the tour program to the resort, said that it began selling tickets for the tours in February and that some 34-thousand people had signed up as of Tuesday. The tour operator plans to provide a 50 percent discount to such subscribers for trips booked in the month following the resumption of the tours.

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7. ROK Aid for DPRK

Associated Press (Kwang-tae Kim, "SOUTH KOREA TO RENEW ITS AID OFFER TO NORTH KOREA", Seoul, 2009/08/14) reported that the ROK plans to renew its offer to give aid to the DPRK if the country gives up its nuclear ambitions, the president's office said Friday. President Lee Myung-bak will also make a wide-range of proposals to help establish peace on the divided peninsula, his office said without elaborating. Lee's proposals will be announced Saturday, when he plans to deliver a speech marking the anniversary of the Korean peninsula's liberation from Japan's colonial rule.

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8. DPRK Politics

Yonhap ("N. KOREAN LEADER ON EXTENDED PROVINCIAL TOUR: REPORT", Seoul, 2009/08/13) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has inspected a theater in an east coast town, the DPRK's state media reported Thursday, raising speculation that chances are becoming slim that he will meet with the visiting head of ROK's Hyundai Group in Pyongyang. The DPRK's Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) said Kim inspected a recently renovated open-air theater in Wonsan, Kangwon Province. The report did not say when Kim made the visit.

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9. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("DPRK PREPARING FOR JUMP IN CONSTRUCTION DEMAND", 2009/08/12) reported that as the DPRK continues to pursue the creation of a Strong and Prosperous Nation by 2012, it is now reportedly building a large-scale construction materials facility to meet expected

growth in building demand. the DPRK authorities have designated the Daedong River Tile Factory, visited by DPRK leader Kim Jong Il on the 13th of last month, as a large-scale construction materials distribution center, and expect the second stage of its construction to be complete by April 2012.

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA PLANS TO BUILD 100,000 HOUSES IN PYONGYANG BY 2012", 2009/08/12) reported that the DPRK will build 100,000 houses for Pyongyang citizens by 2012, the centenary of former leader Kim Il-sung's death, state media said on Aug. 7. Constructors had a rally at a public square in Pyongyang that day to mark the start of the construction project, the DPRK's Central Television Broadcasting Station said. O Su-yong, a deputy premier, said leader Kim Jong-il has instructed officials to build apartments for 100,000 households in the capital city by 2012. By that year, the DPRK aims to construct Kangsong Taeguk, a great, prosperous and powerful country.

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10. ROK Military

Yonhap ("S. KOREA TO DEPLOY ADVANCED ANTI-SUB MISSILES ON DESTROYERS", 2009/08/13) reported that ROK's defense ministry said Thursday that newly developed anti-submarine guided missiles will be deployed on destroyers by 2012 to beef up the country's naval defense. ROK destroyers will begin to carry about 60 to 70 long-range anti-submarine missiles, nicknamed "Red Shark," in three years, said the ministry after a meeting on mid-term arms procurement plans. Red Sharks, which are capable of hitting underwater targets after first flying over water, were developed through a 100 billion won (US\$81 million) project in June. Each Red Shark missile is known to cost approximately 2 billion won.

Korea Times (Kang Hyun-kyung, "MILITARY POLICE HIT FOR SURVEILLANCE OF CIVILIANS", 2009/08/13) reported that Rep. Lee Jung-hee of the minor opposition Democratic Labor Party (DLP) accused military police Thursday of spying on civic group activists and opposition party personnel; an allegation the military denies. The Defense Security Command (DSC) contended that an investigator was on duty to find out whether eight soldiers had participated in a protest at the Ssangyong Plant in Pyeongtaekk, Gyeonggi Province on August 5, thus violating the National Security Law. It also said the DSC was allowed to investigate civilians when necessary. Rep. Lee said the statement was misleading. ``The command is not allowed to investigate civilians, except in a few cases that are clarified by law. The DSC has no jurisdiction to randomly investigate civilians." Lee urged the government to take legal action against the DSC investigator who conducted surveillance on civilians.

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11. ROK Energy Supply

JoongAng Daily ("KNOC, AUSSIE OIL FIRM TO DRILL IN EAST SEA", 2009/08/14) reported that the ROK's state-run oil company and an Australian energy firm will conduct exploratory drilling for oil and gas in the East Sea, the government said. The Ministry of Knowledge Economy said Korea National Oil Corp. and Woodside Energy Ltd. reported finding several promising undersea features that may hold fossil fuel. "Detailed analysis of features examined by the end of June showed there is a good chance that commercially viable reserves may be found off the east coast," a government official said.

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12. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Korea Times (Park Si-soo, "SUIT FILED AGAINST YOMIURI OVER MISREPORT ON DOKDO", 2009/08/13) reported that a group of ROK citizens has filed a suit against a major Japanese newspaper for what they claimed to be a misreport on ROK's sovereignty over Dokdo Island in the East Sea. A total of 1,886 people Thursday filed a suit against the Yomiuri Shimbun, a mass-circulated Japanese daily, for a report in July last year stating that President Lee Myung-bak did not strongly oppose Dokdo being called Takeshima during a summit with his Japanese counterpart. In the suit, they asked the daily to pay 4.11 million won in compensation and print a correction.

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13. Japan Politics

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S PM FACES UPHILL BATTLE EVEN ON HOME TURF", 2009/08/13) reported that shuttered store-fronts line the main street of the home district of Japan's Prime Minister Taro Aso , where some people speak in hushed tones about his prospects in elections this month. For decades Iizuka has been the solid heartland of the powerful Aso clan, which ran the coal mines that were the economic backbone of this town on southern Kyushu island before they closed down in the 1960s. But for many, the name of their generations-old benefactors now rings hollow in this town, which has had a forlorn feel since many of its young people have left to try their luck in the big cities.

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14. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA, TAIWAN OIL GIANTS TIE UP IN GAS DEAL: REPORT", Beijing, 2009/08/13) reported that Sinopec, the PRC's second largest oil producer, and Taiwan 's government-controlled energy giant CPC Corporation have agreed to jointly explore a gas block off northern Australia, state media said. This is the second time the companies have tied up to explore overseas energy blocks, amid rapidly improving ties between the PRC and Taiwan, the China Daily reported, citing a statement by the PRC company.

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15. PRC Climate Change

Reuters ("CHINA SAYS RICH UP PRESSURE ON POOR OVER CLIMATE", 2009/08/13) reported that the PRC accused rich nations at U.N. climate talks of increasing pressure on the poor to do more to combat global warming while shirking their own responsibility to lead. "There has been a general feeling of unhappiness about the level of efforts that (developed nations) say they will take," the PRC's climate ambassador Yu Qingtai told Reuters on the sidelines of August 10-14 climate talks in Bonn. "What is even more worrying is a continuation and even a strengthening of the tendency of trying to shift the burden to the developing countries," he said. "That must change."

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16. PRC Environment

Caijing Magazine ("HEAVY METAL WARFARE", 2009/08/13) reported that in Zhuzhou's Qingshuitang Industrial District, home of the country's largest zinc and lead producer, the monitoring agency found that the concentration of cadmium, mercury and lead in local vegetables is almost 65 times, 186 times and 66 times, respectively, the national safety standard for pollutants allowed in food. And indeed, Zhuzhou is just one location along the PRC's most infamous stream of heavy metal pollution, the Xiang River. Running from south to north, the Xiang drains 95,000 square kilometers and supplies drinking water for at least 20 million people.

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17. PRC Energy

EFE News Services ("CHINA OIL GIANT HUNTING FOR ASSETS IN LATAM, AFRICA", 2009/08/13) reported that after weeks of comments by PRC officials about a bid for the Argentine subsidiary of Spain's Repsol, state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation said Wednesday that it plans to accelerate acquisitions in Latin America and Africa. Speaking on condition of anonymity, a CNPC executive told the official China Daily that this year's "relatively low prices of foreign assets" offer his firm unprecedented opportunities. He said the firm was pursuing potential deals with several foreign partners as part of continuing efforts to ensure PRC's energy security.

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II. PRC Report

18. PRC Civil Society and Disaster Relief

Sina.com ("BEIJING RED CROSS OPENS HOTLINE TO HELP TYPHOON AFFECTED AREAS", 2009/08/13) reported that a super-typhoon "Morak" has seriously hit parts of both sides of the Taiwan strait recently. As to now, the total number of deaths in Taiwan has reached 110. In order to help compatriots at both sides of the strait, Beijing Municipal Red Cross Society has opened 999 hotline, to receive social donation.

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19. PRC Civil Society and Disaster Relief

Jinghua Times ("RED CROSS CALLS FOR PUBLIC DONATION FOR TYPHOON DISASTER RELIEF", 2009/08/13) reported that News Office of Ministry of Finance announced on 11th that the central finance will allocate 102 million RMB to help typhoon "Morak" hit areas of Fujian and Zhejiang. Director of China Red Cross Society appealed to the public to donate by way of bank, post office, internet and short message.

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20. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net ("HAINAN GARBAGE DISPOSAL RATE TO OVER 70% NEXT YEAR", 2009/08/13) reported that according to Hainan provincial Housing and Urban-Rural Construction Department, the 21 urban garbage disposal projects (totally cost 1.386 billion RMB) are under sound construction now. It is expected that when they are fully put into operation next year, the garbage disposal rate of Hainan province will exceed 70%.

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org