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MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Plane Interdiction

New York Times (Thomas Fuller and David Sanger, "THAIS SEIZE PLANE WITH WEAPONS FROM N. KOREA", Bangkok, 2009/12/12) reported that a cargo aircraft flying from the DPRK with tons of weapons has been seized by Thai authorities during a refueling stop in Bangkok, Thai officials said. A senior Obama administration official said the United States had tipped off the Thai authorities that the plane, which landed here Friday, might be carrying weapons. He said that beyond wanting to know what the plane was carrying, the administration was also signaling the DPRK that it intended to keep the pressure up. "From our visual inspection there seem to be several types of weapons, components and materials: long tubes, shoulder-fired missiles, certain types of rocket propelled grenades," Panitan Wattanayagorn, a government spokesman, said in an interview Sunday. The aircraft was on its way to Sri Lanka for another refueling stop but its final destination was unknown, Panitan said. The five-man crew included one man holding a Belarus passport and four men with Kazakhstan passports.

Associated Press (Jane Fugal, "CREW OF NKOREAN WEAPONS PLANE IN THAI COURT", Bangkok, 2009/12/14) reported that the crew of a cargo plane loaded with weapons from the DPRK was ordered Monday to remain in a Thai prison for 12 days for further investigations. The men, who declined comment to reporters at the courthouse, reportedly told investigators during a six-hour interrogation Sunday they believed they were carrying oil-drilling equipment and were not aware of any illicit cargo. Thailand's deputy Foreign Ministry spokesman Thani Thongphakdi said Monday he could not confirm conflicting local media reports about the plane's destination, with some saying it was headed to Sri Lanka and others saying Pakistan. "What I can say is that the actions that were taken were done pursuant to the U.N. Security Council resolution," Thani said. "We had reliable information which led to the act."

Korea Herald (Kim Ji-hyun, "'N.K. ARMS HEADED FOR MIDEAST'", Korea Herald, 2009/12/14) reported that a country in the Middle East -- possibly Iran -- was likely to have been the destination for the foreign aircraft detained in Thailand for allegedly carrying weapons from the DPRK,

diplomatic sources said. "Iran seems to be one of the strong candidates for the destination, considering the ties it has had in the past with North Korea, and also since other countries such as Pakistan are pro-Western and would not risk angering Western partners," said one high-ranking ROK Foreign Ministry official. The pilot on the seized aircraft had claimed that the plane was headed for Ukraine. Experts, however, said Ukraine had no interests in the DPRK and had little reason to be importing weapons from Pyongyang.

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2. US on Six-Party Talks

Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "US: TIME FOR 'STRATEGIC PATIENCE' WITH NKOREA", Tokyo, 2009/12/12) reported that U.S. special envoy to the DPRK Stephen Bosworth said Saturday there is no immediate plan for more talks. Bosworth, in Tokyo to brief Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada about his three-day meeting with DPRK officials this past week, said the situation remained "difficult" and members of stalled disarmament talks should stick together to make a breakthrough. He called his Pyongyang visit "very businesslike, very candid, forward-looking." But he said how and when the six-nation negotiations would resume is yet to be resolved. "We shouldn't expect things to start moving dramatically because of the latest development," Okada told reporters after meeting with Bosworth. "We still need to be patient."

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3. US-DPRK Peace Treaty

Dong-A Ilbo ("N. KOREA DEMANDS PEACE TREATY WITH US", Seoul, 2009/12/11) reported that DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok Ju reportedly repeatedly stressed the necessity of a peace treaty with the U.S. to U.S. special envoy Stephen Bosworth in Pyongyang. An ROK government official said Friday, "Issues on which the North demanded priority have been mostly to distract attention and diverge from the main points." The official said, "The North has already conducted nuclear tests twice so it's impossible to discuss other issues instead of denuclearization," adding, "The North must scrap its nuclear weapons first if it wants discussion on a peace treaty and nuclear disarmament."

Yonhap ("N.K.- U.S. AGREE TO RESUME 4-PARTY TALKS", Seoul, 2009/11/13) reported that the United States and DPRK generally agreed on resuming suspended four-way talks aimed at replacing the Korean War armistice with a peace treaty during a U.S. special envoy's recent trip to Pyongyang, Seoul officials said Sunday. "I believe the two sides agreed on resuming the four-party peace talks once an official agreement has been made on reviving the denuclearization talks," an ROK government official said. "It was North Korea that first requested the matter be discussed within the four-party framework," the official added.

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4. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Herald (Kim So-hyun, "N. KOREA DENOUNCES OFFER FOR ABDUCTEES", Seoul, 2009/12/14) reported that the DPRK denounced the ROK's idea of offering money or goods in

exchange for the release of ROK citizens held across the border against their will. The Rodong Sinmun said in its Friday issue, "There are no such things as South Korean prisoners of war or abductees (in the DPRK)." "The issue of POWs was settled by the Armistice Agreement (in 1953). There are people who voluntarily defected to the North, but no abductees in the first place." "We are petrified at the idea of bargaining like merchants to trade people for things as (the ROK) talks about some German method," the Rodong Sinmun said.

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5. DPRK Influenza

Yonhap ("N.K. HOLDS MEETINGS ON FLU PREVENTION", Seoul, 2009/12/14) reported that the DPRK has held open meetings nationwide to discuss preventive measures against the spread of Influenza A, Good Friends said in its online newsletter Sunday. "A council meeting was held in each city or province with participants from the health and education sectors, including municipal or provincial health officials, hospital workers, heads of rural health centers and school principals. It was an occasion to publicly discuss the new flu." It is "rare" for the DPRK to publicly discuss sensitive matters, Good Friends said. "It would normally hold secret meetings between a small number of officials."

Yonhap ("KOREAS IN TALKS ON DELIVERY OF ANTI-FLU AID", Seoul, 2009/11/14) reported that ROK Unification Ministry spokesman Chun Hae-sung said Monday that the ROK is in final consultations with Pyongyang on the terms for a shipment of medical aid to fight an H1N1 flu outbreak. "North Korea said that it doesn't oppose the proposed scope of the aid, but consultations are still under way on the details and technical issues of delivery," Chun said at a press briefing in Seoul. "The delivery will certainly be made within this year, and we are trying to make it as early as possible," Chun said.

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6. DPRK Leadership

Chosun Ilbo ("WHY THE SECRECY OVER KIM JONG-IL'S SUCCESSION? ", Seoul, 2009/12/12) reported that one high-ranking DPRK official who defected to the ROK said the Workers' Party has yet to launch an official propaganda campaign publicizing Kim Jong-un's selection because Kim Jong-il "has not officially recognized the succession." High-ranking sources in the DPRK say the selection of a successor by the ruling elite in the months after Kim suffered a stroke in August last year progressed without his approval. There is a strong possibility that he was out of action for six months. That is why close confidants, including his younger sister Kyong-hee and her husband Jang Song-taek, the first vice director of the Workers' Party, and Yi Je-kang, the first vice director of the Workers' Party Organization Guidance Department, may have rushed to choose a successor.

Korea Herald ("N.K. LEADER CONTINUES PROVINCIAL INSPECTION TOUR", Seoul, 2009/12/11) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has visited several factories in a northern town, state media the Korean Central News Agency said Friday. KCNA said Kim visited the Jangjagang Machine Tool Factory, the Kanggye Knitting Mill and the Kanggye Wine Factory in the city of Kanggye, a report that followed his visits to tractor and cattle farms in the same town a day earlier. At the knitting mill, Kim "stressed the need to steadily boost production, as solving the issue of clothing is as important

as settling the food problem," the report said. Kim also praised workers at the wine factory for enhancing productivity through technical innovation and called on them also to begin production of beer and raw rice wine, it said.

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7. ROK Politics

Korea Herald (Hwang Jang-jin, "MORE KOREANS MOVE TO POLITICAL CENTER: SURVEY", Seoul, 2009/12/11) reported that according to a survey released Thursday, among ROK citizens in their 30s, 41.3 percent claimed to be in the middle of the road, a 6.2 percentage-point increase from last year. Self-claimed conservatives and progressives were 22.9 percent and 26.5 percent, respectively, falling from last year's 31 percent in both categories. Those committed to centrism accounted for 40.1 percent of respondents in their 20s, 33.7 percent in their 40s and 32.4 percent in their 50s, marking increases of 2.2, 0.2 and 5 percentage points from 2008.

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8. Japan-ROK Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun (Hiroshi Tajima, "OZAWA: VISIT TO S. KOREA BY EMPEROR 'GOOD THING'", Seoul, 2009/12/13) reported that Democratic Party of Japan Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa said Saturday in Seoul that a proposed visit by the Japanese Emperor to the ROK would be a good thing if the ROK people accepted and welcomed such a visit. On Saturday evening, Ozawa dined with President Lee Myung Bak at the Blue House in Seoul. According to an announcement by the ROK presidential office, Ozawa and Lee agreed it was important for Japan and the ROK to build mutual friendship to ensure stability and prosperity in northeastern Asia and that they should vigorously promote human and cultural exchanges so the year 2010 would be a new starting point for both countries.

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPANESE FEEL FRIENDLIER THAN EVER TOWARD KOREA", Seoul, 2009/12/14) reported that according to an annual poll on foreign relations published by the Japanese Cabinet Office on Saturday, 63.1 percent of respondents said they feel friendly toward the ROK, up 6 percent from last year and the most since the first such poll was conducted in 1978. Some 66.5 percent said ties with Korea are smooth, up 17 percent since last year and the most since the question was added to the poll in 1986.

Korea Herald ("OZAWA APOLOGIZES FOR WARTIME ATROCITIES", Seoul, 2009/12/14) reported that Ichiro Ozawa, Secretary-General of the Democratic Party of Japan, apologized Saturday for wrongdoings his country committed during its colonization of Korea. He also said he expected his country's parliament to pass legislation next year that will give ethnic Koreans living in Japan the right to vote in local elections. "There was an unfortunate era in modern history involving the relations of the two countries. It is a historical fact that I, as a member of the Japanese nation and Japan, must apologize to you," he said speaking at Seoul's Kookmin University. "I believe everyone here thinks that Japan and Korea should pursue friendly relations and solidarity," he said. "If we remain fixated on the past history, no good results can come from the future of the two nations."

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9. US-Japan Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun ("ONLY 17% SAY HATOYAMA WILL IMPROVE TIES WITH U.S.", Tokyo, 2009/12/12) reported that the percentage of people in Japan who believe Japan-U.S. relations will improve under the administration of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama was almost the same as those who believed the relationship would deteriorate, with 17 percent of the respondents offering the former opinion while 16 percent took the latter view, according to the results of a joint poll conducted by The Yomiuri Shimbun and Gallup. In the United States, 30 percent of the respondents said the bilateral relationship would improve, while 12 percent said the relationship would worsen. The poll also asked the respondents to choose the issue they regard as the biggest challenge in Japan-U.S. relations. The issue chosen by the most Japanese respondents was the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan with 31 percent, followed by trade and economic matters with 18 percent. The issue most often chosen by Americans was trade and economic matters, cited by 27 percent of respondents, followed by 19 percent who mentioned problems related to the DPRK.

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10. US Military Bases in Japan

Yomiuri Shimbun (Satoshi Ogawa, "U.S. URGES FUTENMA DECISION BY FRIDAY", Washington, 2009/12/13) reported that Mikio Shimoji, the policy research committee head of the People's New Party, said the United States urged Japan on Friday to decide by the coming Friday whether it will implement the current plan to relocate the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa Prefecture, citing the need to compile its fiscal 2011 budget. Shimoji discussed the Futenma issue with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell and other U.S. officials at the State Department in Washington on Friday. During the meeting, the U.S. side reportedly told Shimoji that if Tokyo could not implement the current agreed on plan to relocate the Futenma base in Ginowan to Nago, Washington could not implement measures to alleviate the prefecture's burdens as a host of U.S. bases, such as the transfer of U.S. marines to Guam and the returning of the U.S. military facilities in the southern part of the prefecture.

Yomiuri Shimbun ("U.S. OFFERS TO EASE BURDEN ON OKINAWA", Tokyo, 2009/12/12) reported that the United States floated a proposal to incorporate an environmental clause into the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement, to lessen the burden born by residents of Ginowan, in return for Japan's implementing as originally planned a bilateral agreement to relocate the Futenma Air Station's functions to Nago, several Japanese and U.S. government sources said Friday. However, the administration of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has no intention of accepting the U.S. proposal, the sources said.

Kyodo ("JAPAN TO DECIDE U.S. BASE TRANSFER POLICY WITHIN DAYS: HATOYAMA ", Tokyo, 2009/12/14) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama said Monday he will decide within days Japan's policy on the issue of relocating a U.S. Marine air station in Okinawa Prefecture. Such a policy is likely to be fixed at a meeting planned Tuesday of the ministerial committee on basic policies involving the leaders of the three parties in Hatoyama's ruling coalition, coalition sources said. "I will determine a government policy soon, and do so by consulting with my Cabinet ministers, while I can't mention the date because it is sensitive," Hatoyama told reporters.

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11. Japan Climate Change

Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN REFUSES COP15 DEAL DRAFT", Copenhagen, 2009/12/13) reported that Japan on Friday informed the chairman of a special working group at the ongoing U.N. climate change conference that it would not accept the draft political agreement formally presented by the chairman. "[The draft agreement] cannot be called fair, as it lacks balance between developed and developing countries," Japan representatives said in the refusal. The draft calls for the extension past 2013 of the Kyoto Protocol, which required only industrialized countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 5 percent from 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012. Separate reduction rules would be applied to the United States, which never ratified the protocol, and developing countries, which have no obligations under the Kyoto Protocol.

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12. PRC Climate Change

Financial Times (Fiona Harvey, "CHINA SIGNALS CLIMATE FUNDS SHIFT", Copenhagen, 2009/12/13) reported that the PRC signalled on Sunday that it had abandoned its demand for funding from the developed world to combat climate change. He Yafei, Chinese vice-foreign minister, said financing from rich countries should be directed to poorer countries. "Financial resources for the efforts of developing countries [to combat climate change are] a legal obligation," he said. "That does not mean China will take a share - probably not. We do not expect money will flow from the US __ , UK [and others] to China."

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13. ROK, Japan, PRC Relations

Korea Herald ("CHINA URGES TIES WITH KOREA, JAPAN", Beijing, 2009/12/14) reported that PRC Vice President Xi Jinping on Saturday expressed hopes for deeper ties with the ROK and Japan. "Korea, China and Japan are neighboring countries that have exchanged culture and a shared history. This creates a favorable environment to push forward with cooperation," Xi said in a meeting here with ROK and Japanese journalists. "Trilateral cooperation could help join the East Asian community, which corresponds with the interests of Asians and the global community," he said. "We have to take this historic opportunity to expand cooperation."

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14. Sino-Indian Relations

Washington Post (Emily Wax, "AS TIES BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA GROW, SO DOES MISTRUST", New Delhi, 2009/12/14) reported that in many ways, cooperation between India and the PRC has never been better, officials and observers say. The PRC is India's biggest trading partner, and in the days before the climate summit taking place in Copenhagen, the two agreed on commitments to slow greenhouse gas emissions. But border disputes are occurring more frequently, analysts say, one sign that a fierce competition for regional dominance is heating up. "There is robust trade between the countries. But there is also the sort of tension that is like a series of

pinpricks," said Nawang Rigzin, minister of tourism and culture for the state of Jammu and Kashmir. "Both countries need to take these pinpricks seriously."

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15. Taiwan Export Controls

Associated Press (Peter Enav, "TAIWAN CHECKING REPORT OF IRAN NUKE EQUIPMENT SALE", Taipei, 2009/12/12) reported that Taiwan's government is investigating a report that local companies helped supply equipment to Iran that can be used to produce weapons-grade nuclear material. An official in the Bureau of Foreign Trade said the investigation would also examine whether there are loopholes in Taiwanese trade regulatory procedures. His comments Friday followed a report in the London Daily Telegraph that unidentified Taiwanese companies supplied Iran's Ministry of Defense with 100 pressure transducers, which can be used in the production of weapons-grade uranium.

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16. PRC Energy Security

BBC ("CHINA'S PRESIDENT HU JINTAO OPENS KAZAKH GAS PIPELINE", Astana, 2009/12/13) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao has unveiled the Kazakh section of a 7,000km (4,300 miles) natural gas pipeline joining Central Asia to the PRC. Hu was joined by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev during the inauguration in Astana on Saturday. On Monday, Hu is due to head to a commissioning ceremony in Turkmenistan where the pipeline actually begins.

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17. PRC Censorship

The Guardian (Tania Branigan, "TOP CHINESE EDITOR DEMOTED AFTER BARACK OBAMA INTERVIEW", Beijing, 2009/12/13) reported that Xiang Xi, the top editor of Southern Weekend, has been demoted weeks after an interview with US President Barack Obama due to censors' anger, industry sources have said. Usually, visiting leaders speak to official newspapers or the state broadcaster CCTV. "Xiang Xi was de facto top editor at Southern Weekend and in effect he has been shifted from number one to number two ... This could be a way to stave off more pressure from above," said Michael Anti, a Chinese blogger and media commentator based in Beijing. According to Reuters, the PRC foreign ministry approved the meeting, angering propaganda officials.

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18. PRC Demographics

Washington Post (Ariana Eunjung Chung, "IN AGING CHINA, A CHANGE OF COURSE", Shanghai, 2009/12/12) reported that more than 30 years after the PRC's one-child policy was introduced, creating two generations of notoriously chubby, spoiled only children affectionately nicknamed "little emperors," a population crisis is looming in the country. The average birthrate has plummeted to 1.8

children per couple as compared with six when the policy went into effect, according to the U.N. Population Division, while the number of residents 60 and older is predicted to explode from 16.7 percent of the population in 2020 to 31.1 percent by 2050. The imbalance is worse in wealthy coastal cities with highly educated populations. Last year, people 60 and older accounted for almost 22 percent of Shanghai's registered residents, while the birthrate was less than one child per couple.

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II. PRC Report

19. PRC Energy

Xinhua News Agency ("SHANGHAI RELEASE POLICIES TO SUPPORT NEW ENERGY INDUSTRY", 2009/12/11) reported that Shanghai government recently released a regulation saying that Shanghai will enlarge the scale of purchasing, demonstrating, and applying of new energy autocar in future. In the next three years, there will be 4,000 - 5,000 new energy autocar of all kinds servicing in public service field.

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20. PRC Civil Society

Xinhua News Agency ("GUANGZHOU TO HOLD CHARITY DAY ACTIVITY", 2009/12/11) reported that December 12 is Guangzhou's Charity Day. This evening, a large charity donation evening party will be held as a launching ceremony of tomorrow's Charity Day. 30 donation hotlines will be open, and donors can enjoy tax deduction according to related regulation.

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21. PRC Civil Society and Education

Xinhua News Agency ("1750 STUDENTS GET GRANTS FROM ZENGXIANZI FOUNDATION", 2009/12/11) reported that the third "Award Plan for Excellent University Students" of Zeng Xianzi Education Foundation was held today in Great Hall of the People. 1750 excellent students from 35 mainland universities have got a total of 5.4 million RMB grant by the Foundation.

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