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MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. US, ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Arirang News ("HILL MEETS S.KOREAN NUCLEAR ENVOY IN SEOUL", Seoul, 2009/02/16) reported that outgoing U.S. top nuclear envoy Christopher Hill met with his ROK counterpart Kim Sook in Seoul on Sunday. They discussed the DPRK nuclear issue as part of preparations for U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit to Seoul later this week. Hill told reporters he regretted not having been able to achieve DPRK denuclearization during his tenure over the past four years.

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2. DPRK Missile Program

Associated Press (Jae-Soon Chang, "NKOREA HINTS AT MISSILE LAUNCH AS KIM TURNS 67", Seoul, 2009/02/16) reported that the Korean Central News Agency said the DPRK has the right to "space development". "One will come to know later what will be launched" from the DPRK, KCNA said, claiming that "hostile forces spread the rumor about" the country's "preparations for launching a long-distance missile."

JoongAng Ilbo ("ALL SIGNS POINT TO AN EARLY LAUNCH OF MISSILE BY NORTH", Seoul, 2009/02/16) reported that the DPRK has moved all materials needed to test-fire a long-range missile to a missile base in Musudan-ri, a senior military official said Sunday. The ROK military now believes that the missile can be assembled faster than initially expected. However, the official said the missile was not yet positioned on the launchpad. An arm to fasten the missile on the launchpad has not yet been installed.

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3. US-DPRK Relations

New York Times (Mark Landler, "CLINTON, HEADING ABROAD, TAKES SOFTER TONE ON NORTH KOREA", Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, 2009/02/15) reported that US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the United States would have a "great openness" to the DPRK if it gave up its nuclear ambitions. "It's not only on the diplomatic front," she said, adding that the United States had a "willingness to help the people of North Korea, not just in narrow ways with food and fuel but with energy assistance."

Associated Press (Jae-Soon Chang, "NORTH KOREA OFFERS POSSIBLE OLIVE BRANCH TO US", Seoul, 2009/02/15) reported that Kim Yong-nam, the DPRK's No. 2 leader, said Sunday Pyongyang is ready to improve relations with "friendly" countries. "We will develop relations with countries that are friendly toward us," Kim told a national meeting held as part of celebrations on the eve of the 67th birthday of leader Kim Jong Il.

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4. Inter-Korean Naval Clashes

Chosun Ilbo ("FEARS OF NAVAL CLASH GROWING", Seoul, 2009/02/16) reported that there are growing fears that the two Koreas could clash again near the Northern Limit Line. An ROK military source said the DPRK's attack in 2002 succeeded, "but they suffered more casualties than us. They may want to wipe out the stain of that defeat." An ROK official said, "If two Koreas' navies clash again, the situation could escalate. If the North should provoke us, we'll punish them, but we'll have to do our best to prevent such a clash."

JoongAng Ilbo ("THE NORTH DEPLOYS ARTILLERY ON COAST OF YELLOW SEA", Seoul, 2009/02/14) reported that the ROK military has recently upgraded its manuals to counter increased threats by DPRK's coastal artillery systems on the western side of the peninsula, military sources said Friday. "Coastal artillery pieces are normally hidden in caves, but the North's military has recently brought them outside along the western coastal line," an ROK military source said. "When the artillery systems are moved out from the underground position, it is possible for the North to shoot without warning," said another military official. "And that will be a threat to South Korean vessels on patrol."

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5. Inter-Korea Relations

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "GROUPS TO SEND ANTI-N. KOREA FLIERS TODAY", Seoul, 2009/02/15) reported that conservative civic groups reaffirmed Sunday that they would send anti-DPRK leaflets on Monday, the 67th birthday of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. "We will fly 100,000 leaflets attached with North Korean banknotes at the Imjingak pavilion near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) at 11 a.m.," President Choi Sung-yong of the Abductees' Family Union said. The Ministry of Unification urged them to withdraw the plan, saying it would request the police to investigate a possible violation of the law governing inter-Korean cooperation.

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6. DPRK Population

Chosun Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA CENSUS RESULTS ANNOUNCED", Seoul, 2009/02/16) reported that the population of the DPRK totaled 24.05 million as of Oct. 2008, reported Radio Free Asia on Saturday, citing the preliminary census by the United Nations Population Fund. There were 11.72 million men and 12.33 million women. South Pyeongan Province was the most populated province, with 4.05 million and the capital city Pyongyang had 3.26 million people.

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7. ROK Missile Defense

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "ISRAELI RADAR TO TRACK N. KOREAN MISSILES", Seoul, 2009/02/15) reported that the ROK's Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) is likely to select Israel's Green Pine radar systems for the country's independent low-tier missile shield to enter service by 2012, a source said Sunday. The ballistic missile early warning radars, part of the Air and Missile Defense-Cell (AMD-Cell), a missile defense command-and-control center to be built by the same year, will play a key role in monitoring, tracking and intercepting incoming cruise and ballistic missiles from the DPRK, said the source. The agency plans to buy two sets of the radar systems by 2010.

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8. ROK on Somali Piracy

Korea Times (Kang Hyun-kyung, "KOREANS KIDNAPPED BY SOMALI PIRATES RELEASED", Seoul, 2009/02/13) reported that five ROK citizens kidnapped by Somali pirates last November were released after having been held captive for 90 days, confirmed an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Friday. ``They are now on their way to the open seas and all of them are known to be in good health," said the source.

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9. ROK Environment

Yonhap (Byun Duk-kun, "SEOUL ANNOUNCES AMBITIOUS PLANS FOR 'GREEN GROWTH'", Seoul, 2009/02/16) reported that the ROK will spend over 1.2 trillion won (US\$852 million) in the next 10 years to build a nationwide network of bicycle paths, the presidential office said Monday. The government also unveiled other green projects, which include increasing the use of renewable energy such as solar and wind power, and replacing all incandescent light bulbs at public facilities with more energy-efficient LED bulbs by 2012. "The country will boost its energy independence and green technology levels to those of the world's top 10 advanced nations by 2030 to help establish an image of Green Korea," Cheong Wa Dae said in a press release.

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10. US-Japanese Relations

Asahi Shimbun ("OZAWA TO MEET WITH CLINTON AFTER ALL", Tokyo, 2009/02/16) reported that Ichiro Ozawa, the president of Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan), agreed to meet with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton at a Tokyo hotel Tuesday night after senior party members made last-minute negotiations with U.S. officials to work out a schedule. Ozawa had told Minshuto top brass that he had no intention of meeting with U.S. President Barack Obama until Minshuto gained power. Sources said Ozawa's intention was to avoid being bound to any statements made prior to a change of government.

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11. US on PRC Human Rights

Los Angeles Times (Paul Richter, "HILLARY CLINTON PROMISES TO PRESS RIGHTS ISSUE WITH CHINA", Anchorage, 2009/02/16) reported that US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton promised Sunday to engage PRC leaders on the topic of human rights, even though she will not be meeting with rights activists during her visit. Clinton told reporters on her plane that she would "not be shying away" from human rights issues. "But we have a very broad agenda to deal with," she said.

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12. Cross-Strait Relations

New York Times (Keith Bradsher, "TAIWAN'S LOW PROFILE MAY AID ITS GOALS", Taipei, 2009/02/12) reported that Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou said Thursday that he was glad to have reduced tensions with the PRC. The lessening of tensions "is good news for everyone, we are not dissatisfied with the fact [US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton] did not mention Taiwan," Ma said. Ma stated, "America can play a constructive role in encouraging the status quo." Ma also said he planned to push further this year for close economic relations with the PRC.

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13. Sino-Pakistani Relations

Associated Press ("OFFICIAL: CAPTIVE CHINESE MAN FREED IN PAKISTAN", Islamabad, 2009/02/14) reported that Yao Jing, the deputy head of the PRC's mission in Islamabad, said Long Xiaowei, a Chinese engineer held captive by militants for six months in Pakistan, was set free Saturday. Xinhua news service reported that Long arrived at the Chinese embassy in Islamabad early Sunday and met with the ambassador. A Pakistani Taliban spokesman also confirmed his release.

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14. Sino-African Relations

BBC ("CHINA'S HU GRANTS AID TO TANZANIA", 2009/02/15) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao has granted US\$22m in aid to Tanzania as he continues his tour of Africa. Hu has visited Mali and Senegal and will end his tour in Mauritius. The PRC wants to show that it is not only interested in Africa because of its oil and mineral wealth, say analysts.

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15. PRC Military

Asahi Shimbun (Kenji Minemura, "CHINA UPS ANTE WITH NEW FLATTOPS", Beijing, 2009/02/14) reported that the PRC plans to greatly expand the reach and firepower of its navy by building at least two nuclear-powered aircraft carriers. Military sources said the first nuclear-powered flattops would be constructed in 2020 or later. A high-ranking military officer said the navy would begin construction of two conventional aircraft carriers this year. Production of parts for the electricity control system has already begun and plans call for completing the two conventional carriers by around 2015.

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II. PRC Report

16. PRC Business Associations

People's Daily (Zuo Ya, "CHINA EXPRESS DELIVERY ASSOCIATION ESTABLISHED IN BEIJING", 2009/02/13) reported that China Express Delivery Association was formally established in Beijing today. Newly elected President Hong Shanxinag said the Association will organize member enterprises to actively respond to the financial crisis, vigorously create a market with fair competition and promote stable and rapid development of the industry. At present, there are over 5000 registered express delivery enterprises in PRC.

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17. PRC Economy

Hulunbeier Daily (Li Ang, "HULUNBEIER YOUTH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION TO SUPPORT 50 PROJECTS", 2009/02/13) reported that Hulunbeier Youth Business Association was established recently, and an YBC (Youth Business China) Hulunbeier Office was simultaneously established by cooperation with YBC. Accordingly, the Association will provide funds to youth who know technology, have projects and want to start a business, and help them achieve their business dreams. 50 young persons will get funding in the near future.

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18. PRC Environment

People's Daily online ("NETIZENS VOTE 2008 GREEN CHINA FOCUS PERSON", 2009/02/13) reported that "2008 Green China Focus Person" Vote, which is co-hosted by People's Daily online and Green China Agency, has aroused wide concern across the country. As at 9:30 on February 12th, there are 33 candidates and the voting has broke through 10 million. The candidates are people who made outstanding contributions in ecological construction and environmental protection. During the voting, the touching stories of the candidates impressed the public tremendously and educated them a lot.

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III. ROK Report

19. US-ROK Relations

Hankyoreh (Jongwon Lee, "STRATEGIC TRIANGLE OF THE US, CHINA, AND JAPAN", 2009/02/16) wrote that establishing cooperative relations between the US, China, and Japan through the US-Japan alliance is the keyword of the Obama administration's East Asia diplomacy. Clinton will first drop by Japan to strengthen the alliance between US and Japan, then move to China to consolidate the strategic cooperation between US and China. With the ROK's diplomatic power weakened in the area due to economic crisis and blockage in North-South relations, serious groping and consideration on how to deal with such moves seem necessary.

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20. DPRK Nuclear Program

Donga Ilbo ("HILLARY'S DPRK POLICIES MUST BE FOLLOWED BY DENUCLEARIZATION", 2009/02/16) wrote that the Obama administration's DPRK policies clarified by Hillary Clinton are very welcome. However, more clarification is called for on Hillary's statement, "If DPRK is genuinely prepared to completely and verifiably eliminate their nuclear weapons program." This expression is very different from Bush administration's "to dismantle." Clinton's statement could be interpreted that the relationship will be improved if DPRK is ready to actually eliminate their nuclear program. From this, DPRK might fantasize normalization of relations between the US and DPRK by threatening ROK even without giving up their nuclear program.

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21. Inter-Korea Relations

Kyunghyang Shinmun ("NO MORE SCATTERING OF LEAFLETS", 2009/02/16) wrote that it is wrong for anti-DPRK organizations to use balloons to scatter leaflets above the DPRK sky today. The government must take all measures to stop what they're doing before the situation worsens since it will be the government who will be responsible for the aftermath. Also, there must be strict punishment on those organizations that violated the law.

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