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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA TO EXTEND MANDATE OF TASK FORCE ON N. KOREAN NUKE CRISIS", 2010/03/15) reported that the ROK's foreign ministry plans to extend the mandate of its provisional task force on the DPRK nuclear crisis by another year before seeking to turn it into a permanent organization, a ministry official said. "The operating term of the Office of Korean Peninsula Peace and Security Affairs is slated to end on March 28," the official said. "To begin with, we plan to extend it until March next year." He added the ministry will push to turn the office into a standing body, citing the complex characteristics of the nuclear issue and the time and effort required to create strategies for peace.

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2. DPRK Human Rights

Xinhua News ("DPRK'S MEDIA REQUIRES U.S. TO STOP HATCHING HUMAN RIGHTS PLOTS AGAINST DPRK ", Pyongyang, 2010/03/15) reported that the official KCNA news agency of the DPRK released a comment, urging the US to stop hatching plots on the human rights problem against DPRK and solve their own problems about human rights first. The comment said that the US was using the meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Council now under way in Geneva as a platform for "hatching a politically motivated sinister plot" against the DPRK. "The U.S. is running the whole gamut of cynical ploys to gather together its followers in a bid to cook up an anti-DPRK resolution which calls for keeping the 'special rapporteur on human rights issue in north Korea' as he is, etc. at the meeting," KCNA said.

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3. US-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("U.S. SAYS NORTH KOREA ALLOWS VISIT TO DETAINED CITIZEN", Washington, 2010/03/15) reported that the DPRK has allowed Swedish diplomats to visit a US citizen detained nearly two months ago after allegedly entering the country from the PRC, the US State Department said. "We can confirm that on March 14 the DPRK (Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea) granted the Swedish embassy, our protecting power, consular access to a detained U.S. citizen," said State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley. Crowley declined to provide any further information about the U.S. citizen.

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4. DPRK-Japan Relations

Mainichi Shimbun ("ABDUCTION MINISTER BLASTS HATOYAMA FOR 'FRIENDLY' STANCE TOWARD N. KOREAN STUDENTS", 2010/03/15) reported that Hiroshi Nakai, minister of state for the abduction issue, criticized Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama as "too good-natured" for suggesting a meeting with students of DPRK schools in Japan over whether to cover them under new high school tuition-free measures. "That guy (Hatoyama) is super easygoing and too good-natured," Nakai said. "The prime minister is giving the impression that he is running about in confusion, but he is not aware of it himself. That's the hardest part," said Nakai.

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5. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("DPRK BAN ON YUAN KEEPS DRIVING EXCHANGE RATE HIGHER", 2010/03/13) reported that as the spring lean season approaches, the black market exchange rate for DPRK Won continues to grow, while the prices of rice and other necessities are increasing proportionately. The online magazine Daily NK reported, "In the North Pyongan Province area of Sinuiju, a kilogram of rice, which cost 400 Won at the end of last month, cost 800 Won on the 2nd, and 1000 Won on the 3rd. It is being said that the in the end, the price of rice will rise to pre-reform prices (of 2,500 Won per Kg)." The shortwave radio broadcaster Open Radio for North Korea reported similarly, stating, "North Korea's rice prices, which were around 400 Won per kilogram at the end of February, shot up to 1000 Won on the 3rd of this month."

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6. DPRK Food Supply

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA'S FOOD IMPORTS FROM CHINA MORE THAN TRIPLE IN JANUARY: EXPERT", 2010/03/15) reported that the DPRK's food imports from the PRC more than tripled in January from a year earlier, an indication the impoverished nation is bracing for serious food shortages, an agricultural expert said. The DPRK brought in 13,834 tons of grain from the neighboring ally in January, a 3.6-fold increase from 3,869 tons in January last year, said Kwon Tae-

jin, a senior researcher on the DPRK's agricultural sector at the ROK's Korea Rural Economic Institute in a posting on his blog.

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7. DPRK Labor Exports

Yonhap ("S. KOREA TRYING TO CONFIRM N. KOREANS IN S. AFRICA FOR WORLD CUP PREPARATIONS", Seoul, 2010/03/16) reported that the ROK is trying to confirm its intelligence that DPRK workers are in South Africa to help put the final touches on World Cup stadiums there, after organizers in Johannesburg denied such involvement, an official here said Tuesday. "We're trying to confirm what the facts are," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "But until we come up with a final confirmation, our intelligence stands."

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8. ROK Peacekeeping Operations

KBS News ("GOV'T TO CREATE UNIT OF TROOPS FOR OVERSEAS DISPATCH ", 2010/03/15) reported that Defense Minister Kim Tae-young says the government will create a 1,000-strong unit of troops for overseas dispatch by July first. Kim told KTV that the nation needs such a unit in order to be capable of responding within one month to any possible U.N. request for troops. Kim added that the government will spend 16-and-a-half trillion won by 2012 to improve army barracks and will increase pay for Air Force pilots to 85 percent of wages paid to commercial airline pilots in order to prevent pilot outflow.

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9. ROK Climate Change

Korea Herald ("SEOUL TO INTRODUCE GREEN CARS THIS YEAR", Seoul, 2010/03/13) reported that Seoul City plans to introduce 35 low-speed electric vehicles in fire stations and public parks this year as part of its campaign to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The cars can run up to 60 kilometers per hour and use a lithium polymer battery or a lead-acid battery. They will be used for safety checks, patrolling and parking management, officials said.

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10. US-ROK Trade Relations

Yonhap News ("OBAMA NOT LIKELY TO MOVE FOR KOREA FTA'S RATIFICATION THIS YEAR: SCHOLAR", 2010/03/15) reported that the Obama administration will not likely move for ratification of the pending free trade deal with the ROK this year due to other more pressing issues, a scholar said. The question is "where it will rank in priority compared to health care, climate change, education reform and stimulus packages," said Michael Green, senior adviser and Japan chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, at a forum here. "I think probably the conventional wisdom in town is that the administration is not going to try to do much, frankly, on the legislative

side, before the midterm elections."

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11. US-ROK Security Alliance

Donga-Ilbo ("THINK TANK GAUGING OPINIONS ON COMMAND TRANSFER DELAY", 2010/03/15) reported that the US has hired a leading American think tank to gauge public opinion in the ROK on the proposed delay of Washington's wartime operational control to Seoul, a Korean government official said. The official said Abraham M. Denmark, a senior researcher at the Center for a New American Security, visited Seoul last month to listen to officials from the Korean presidential office and Defense Ministry, lawmakers, reserve generals and private security experts. "I understand that the center's survey was conducted on behalf of the U.S. State Department," the official said.

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12. ROK-Japan Security Relations

KBS News ("S.KOREA, JAPAN AGREE ON SECURITY COOPERATION AHEAD OF SUMMIT WRITE", 2010/03/15) reported that the police chiefs of the ROK and Japan have signed an agreement on bilateral cooperation and information exchanges ahead of large-scale international summits in the two countries. The ROK's National Police Agency chief Kang Hee-rak met with his Japanese counterpart Takaharu Ando in Seoul on Monday. The two sides agreed to establish a bilateral hotline to share information on potential terrorists and violent protesters, who may try to disturb the summit events. The two police chiefs also agreed to hold a regular working-level meeting to cope with telephone scams and organized crimes.

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13. ROK-Japan Relations

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "S. KOREA, JAPAN IN TUG-OF-WAR OVER PRESIDENTIAL TRIP REQUEST", Seoul, 2010/03/16) reported that the Japanese administration of Yukio Hatoyama has invited Lee President Lee Myung-bak to visit Japan in April. But Lee wants a meaningful gesture from Japan compatible with a 1995 statement by then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama offering an apology for Japan's wartime atrocities, according to ROK officials Tuesday. "We should consider the weight of this year, the centennial of Japan's colonization of Korea," a senior official at the presidential office, Cheong Wa Dae, said on the condition of anonymity. Lee, hoping to use this year to open a new chapter in Seoul's ties with Tokyo, would not waste his Japan trip "card" without guarantees for a symbolic and political step toward future-oriented relations between the two sides, added the official.

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14. US-Japan Nuclear Pact

Kyodo News ("MINISTRY TO SET UP PANEL ON DISCLOSURE OF DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTS",

2010/03/15) reported that Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada plans to set up an ad hoc committee of experts in his ministry to promote the disclosure of diplomatic documents in the wake of a probe into Japan-US secret pacts, sources familiar with the matter said. The creation of the committee will be decided at the first meeting this week of a task force headed by Okada to better preserve ministry documents and declassify diplomatic records, the sources said. The move to create the committee is aimed at demonstrating an "open Foreign Ministry" through thorough disclosure of diplomatic documents unhampered by bureaucratic interference.

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15. USFJ Base Relocation

Kyodo News ("HIRANO SAYS HE IS CONSIDERING AREA OFF URUMA FOR FUTENMA RELOCATION", 2010/03/15) reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano has said he is considering relocating the US Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture, to an area to be reclaimed off a US Navy facility at White Beach in Uruma in the prefecture, a lawmaker said. It is the first time that Hirano has clearly mentioned a new relocation plan, though several Japanese-U.S. sources said earlier this month that Tokyo had begun mulling the location as an alternative to an existing plan crafted by Japan and the United States.

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16. US-Japan Relations

Kyodo ("CAMPBELL CANCELS TRIP TO JAPAN AS BASE RELOCATION ON THE ROCKS", Washington, 2010/03/15) reported that the U.S. government said Monday that Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell has cancelled his planned visit to Japan on Wednesday during his ongoing Asian trip. Campbell's trip to Japan will be rescheduled in the future, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Philip Crowley told a press briefing. A senior State Department official said that Campbell also cancelled his second visit to Thailand following his first one last week, due apparently to unrest in the country. A fresh travel schedule left him with little time for meetings with government officials in stopover in Japan en route to Washington, the official added. Another U.S. official said there were no political implications to the cancellation. But such an explanation fueled speculation that the U.S. government wants to avoid high-level talks with the Japanese side at this time, as canceling his visit to Thailand potentially leaves Campbell more time to spend in Tokyo for talks with Japanese officials, observers said.

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17. Japan Politics

Bloomberg News ("HATOYAMA'S BROTHER QUILTS JAPAN'S OPPOSITION PARTY ", 2010/03/15) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's younger brother left the opposition Liberal Democratic Party, the latest sign of disarray in the party that until September governed for half a century. Former Internal Affairs Minister Kunio Hatoyama submitted a letter of resignation today, his office said. Yesterday he said he will form a new party and hopes to enlist former Welfare Minister Yoichi Masuzoe and ex-Finance Minister Kaoru Yosano, who have criticized LDP head Sadakazu Tanigaki for a lack of leadership. "I've made up my mind to leave the LDP," Hatoyama

said yesterday on Fuji Television. "Of course, I would like Yosano and Masuzoe to be with me."

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18. Japan Climate Change

Bloomberg News ("JAPAN'S CABINET ENDORSES CAP-AND-TRADE CLIMATE BILL", 2010/03/15) reported that Japan's Cabinet has endorsed a climate-protection draft law today that would cap industrial emissions and thrust the second-biggest economy into the \$125 billion market for trading carbon credits. Some polluters will be subject to a flat ceiling on emissions while others may face a limit per unit of production, according to a copy of the bill, distributed to reporters by the Environment Ministry today. The draft leaves open which industries will be affected.

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19. Sino-US Relations

The Associated Press ("US LAWMAKERS ATTACK CHINA AHEAD OF NOV. ELECTIONS", 2010/03/15) reported that after a lull last year, U.S. politicians jockeying ahead of November elections have stepped up attacks on the PRC as a way to win support from voters worried that the country is taking American jobs. Lawmakers want tough action against what manufacturers say is a PRC currency policy that hurts millions of American workers by making PRC products cheaper and US products more expensive. In the latest example of seeking a more forceful approach, four senators on Monday sent President Barak Obama a letter urging him against giving Beijing special treatment in Iran sanctions legislation that the House and Senate are now putting together.

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20. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN SAYS IT WON'T LOAN HALF OF FAMOUS PAINTING TO CHINA", 2010/03/15) reported that Taiwan's national museum said it would not lend its half of a famous ancient painting to the PRC for an exhibition because it feared it would not be returned. The announcement came a day after PRC Premier Wen Jiabao said he hoped one day to visit Taiwan. Wen had also voiced hope of "piecing together" parts of the 14th century Yuan Dynasty painting now separately held by the two sides. But Chou Kung-shin, director of the National Palace Museum in Taipei, told parliament: "At this moment loaning the painting 'Dwelling in the Fu-ch'un Mountains' to the mainland for an exhibition is impossible due to the lack of an agreement that can ensure it will not be retained by the mainland."

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21. Sino-Russian Relations

Xinhua News ("CHINA, RUSSIA PLEDGE JOINT EFFORTS TO FIGHT DRUG TRAFFICKING", 2010/03/15) reported that the PRC and Russia agreed Friday to strengthen cooperation in combatting drug trafficking in order to protect people in both countries and safeguard social

stability. The agreement was reached during a meeting between Viktor Ivanov, head of Russia's drug control agency, and PRC Ambassador to Russia Li Hui. Ivanov and Li agreed drugs were a common threat faced by the international community and cooperation in fighting trafficking was part of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership of cooperation.

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22. PRC Social Welfare

The Guardian ("MILLIONS OF CHINESE RURAL MIGRANTS DENIED EDUCATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN", 2010/03/15) reported that PRC children are entitled to a state education, but not all of them get one. And the tens of millions born to migrant workers are among the most vulnerable, owing to a registration system that divides the country's citizens into rural and urban dwellers, and dictates their rights accordingly. State schools receive no funding for migrant pupils, so often claim to be full. Others charge illicit "donations" of as much as 6,000 yuan (£590) a term, said Zhang Zhiquan, from the Friends of Migrant Workers group. Many families do not qualify anyway, because they lack the right documents. Scrap collectors and street vendors have no employment contracts.

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II. PRC Report

23. PRC on ASEAN

China News Net ("CONFERENCE SYSTEM OF CHINA - ASEAN COOPERATIVE INDUSTRY ESTABLISHED", 2010/03/15) reported that Conference System of China - ASEAN Cooperative Industry was formally established Thursday in Beijing. Regular meeting will be held for the exchange of experience of the two sides. China's 18 industrial associations become the first members.

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24. PRC Environment

Xinhua News ("OVER 3 MILLION PEOPLE FACE WATER SHORTAGE IN SOUTHWEST CHINA PROVINCE", 2010/03/15) reported that a total of 3.48 million people faced drinking water shortage as of Thursday in southwest China's Guizhou Province, according to the Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters of Guizhou. The drought had affected 8.96 million ares of crops, including 2.97 million ares in serious damage and 5.21 million slightly damaged as of Thursday.

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