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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. ROK, US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL, WASHINGTON SHOW SIGNS OF MODERATION ON N.KOREA DIALOGUE", 2009/08/17) reported that the ROK and the US both called for renewed dialogue with the DPRK over the weekend, with the threshold apparently set marginally lower than only a week or two ago. Such loosening of terms gives not only the ROK and the US but also the DPRK some legroom in behind-the-scenes negotiations even as sanctions continue. "There's a consensus that we can exercise some flexibility in rhetoric instead of worsening a situation by emphasizing excessive firmness," a government official said.

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2. US on DPRK Sanctions

Bloomberg News ("NORTH KOREA MOVES MAY SHOW SANCTIONS PRESSURE REGIME, U.S. SAYS", 2009/08/17) reported that DPRK overtures to resume tourism and family reunions with the ROK may be a sign that international sanctions are putting pressure on Kim Jong Il's regime, the US envoy working on enforcing the measures said. If "this is a signal" that United Nations sanctions on financial transactions and illicit trade are forcing the DPRK to reconsider its belligerent actions and return to diplomacy, "it would be welcome, and the door is open," Ambassador Philip Goldberg said. State Department spokesman Philip J. Crowley said that based on the DPRK's decision to resume tours and reunions and release foreign detainees, "one might infer that North Korea's feeling some

pressure, whether it's political pressure, economic pressure or a combination of the two."

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3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Times ("PRESIDENT LINKING N. KOREA AID TO DENUCLEARIZATION", 2009/08/17) reported that President Lee Myung-bak said that the government's DPRK policy linking assistance to denuclearization remains unchanged. Lee emphasized that the DPRK should give up its nuclear ambitions and move to reduce arms before receiving assistance from the ROK and other nations. "Our unshakable North Korea policy will eventually make North Korea change and invite support from the international community,'' the president said.

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4. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

JoongAng Ilbo ("CHINESE NUKE ENVOY VISITS PYONGYANG", 2009/08/17) reported that the PRC 's top nuclear negotiator was expected in the DPRK late yesterday as part of Beijing's efforts to restart six-way talks on Pyongyang's nuclear program, a diplomatic source said. His trip is aimed at tempting the DPRK to reverse its months-long refusal to join the six-party talks, added the source.

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap ("NO SIGNS OF NORMALIZED TRAFFIC AT N.K. BORDER DESPITE AGREEMENT", Seoul, 2009/08/18) reported that the DPRK had not normalized the flow of border traffic with the ROK despite a recent promise from its leader Kim Jong-il to do so, the ROK government said Tuesday. "The North has not contacted us regarding the lifting of the traffic limitation," Lee Jong-joo, spokesperson for the Unification Ministry, said at a press briefing. "We expect for Hyundai to submit a written report (on the chairwoman's visit to the DPRK) within the week," said Lee.

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6. Japan-DPRK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPAN TO SET UP MORE PATRIOT MISSILES AGAINST N.KOREA", 2009/08/17) reported that the Japanese government has decided to deploy Patriot Advanced Capability 3 surface-to-air interceptor missiles at all six antiaircraft artillery units across Japan against the threat of the DPRK ballistic missiles, the Sankei Shimbun reported. The three new units are Hokkaido, Okinawa, and Aomori in Tohoku. The country's Defense Ministry plans to ask for money from next year's budget for the plan.

Telegraph ("JAPAN'S HAPPINESS PARTY PLANS TO ATTACK NORTH KOREA", 2009/08/17) reported that Kyoko Okawa, founder of Japan's new Happiness Realization Party, has pledged to attack the DPRK if elected. Mrs Okawa, has also pledged to amend the nation's pacifist constitution

and prepare for an invasion from the PRC. Urging the "immediate" amendment of the pacifist article 9 of the constitution, Mrs Okawa, 43, said: "So-called pacifism in Japan will let other countries easily kill Japanese people. We believe that we have a responsibility to protect the lives of the people in Japan."

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7. Death of Former ROK President

Associated Press (Kwang-tae Kim, "EX-S. KOREAN PRESIDENT KIM DAE-JUNG DEAD AT 85", Seoul, 2009/08/18) reported that f ormer ROK President Kim Dae-jung died Tuesday. He was 85. Kim, who had been hospitalized with pneumonia since last month, died shortly after 1:40 p.m., said Park Chang-il, chief of Severance Hospital in Seoul . He said Kim suffered respiratory distress, a pulmonary embolism and multiple organ failure. "We lost a great political leader," President Lee Myung-bak said in a statement. "His accomplishments and aspirations to achieve democratization and inter- Korean reconciliation will long be remembered by the people."

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8. ROK Missile Program

Korea Times ("S. KOREA DEPLOYING 1,000-KILOMETER CRUISE MISSILES", 2009/08/17) reported that the ROK began deploying 1,000-kilometer-range surface-to-surface cruise missiles in the field earlier this year, according to missile developers and military sources. The missile, a modified variant of the Hyunmoo missile, is capable of reaching as far as Beijing and Tokyo, as well as hitting key targets in the entire DPRK territory, they said. The ROK restricted its missile range to 300 kilometers in a 2001 agreement with the US, which declared at the same time it would support the ROK's membership in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). The regime, however, only applies to high-velocity, free flight ballistic missiles, excluding the slower, surface-skimming cruise weapons.

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9. ROK Satellite Launch

Xinhau News ("S. KOREA'S ROCKET LAUNCH DIFFERENT FROM DPRK'S: FOREIGN MINISTRY", 2009/08/17) reported that the ROK's foreign ministry said that it is not appropriate to compare the country's rocket launch due on Wednesday with that of the DPRK. According to Moon Tae-young, spokesman for the foreign ministry, the ROK respects the international regulation related to arms reduction, anti-proliferation, and peaceful use of the space as it plans for the rocket launch. "The rocket will be launched in a clear, safe way for a peaceful purpose," Moon said.

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10. US-Japan Relations

San Francisco Chronicle ("JAPAN OPPOSITION HEAD SEEKS ECONOMIC TIES WITH US",

2009/08/13) reported that Japan's opposition leader, a strong contender to become the next prime minister, said that Japan's ties with the United States are biased too heavily toward defense and said the focus should be shifted to the economy. Yukio Hatoyama, the leader of the Democratic Party of Japan, made the comments at a debate among the leaders of six major political parties. "Japan's relations with the U.S. have been heavily biased toward defense," Hatoyama said. "Now it's time to shift our focus to economic ties. We will strengthen our economic ties and promote free trade while protecting our national interests."

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11. Japanese Elections

Associated Press (Eric Talmadge, "CAMPAIGNS BEGIN FOR HOTLY CONTESTED JAPAN ELECTION", Tokyo, 2009/08/18) reported that Japanese poitical leaders took to the streets Tuesday as campaigning kicked off for elections for the lower house of parliament, to be held August 30. "We will press ahead," Prime Minister Taro Aso said in his kickoff speech. "We are not finished with our efforts to see economic recovery. Recovery is our foremost priority." Yukio Hatoyama, head of the Democratic Party of Japan , said, "The day has come to change the history of Japan . Let's step into a new era with courage."

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12. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Mainichi Shimbun ("HATOYAMA ENDORSES PLAN FOR NEW WAR MEMORIAL TO REPLACE YASUKUNI SHRINE", 2009/08/17) reported that opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) leader Yukio Hatoyama has endorsed the construction of non-religious war memorial to replace the controversial Yasukuni Shrine for official visits. "I believe it is inappropriate for Japan's prime minister or Cabinet members to visit Yasukuni as it honors Class-A war criminals (of World War II), along with the war dead," Hatoyama said. The opposition leader also told reporters that if his party takes over the reins of government, he will order the construction of a non-religious national war memorial.

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13. Japan Nuclear Safety

Bloomberg News ("CHUBU ELEC SAYS JAPAN NUCLEAR RESTART TO TAKE AT LEAST 3 WEEKS", 2009/08/17) reported that Chubu Electric Power Co., which halted its sole functioning nuclear reactors after an earthquake shook Japan last week, said it will take at least three to four weeks to restart the two units. The No. 4 Hamaoka reactor will likely be restarted first, Takahiro Kawai, an official at the company's nuclear power group, told reporters in Tokyo today. The No. 5 unit at the plant in central Japan also shut down after the quake.

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14. Cross Strait Relations

China Daily ("AIR CHINA TO START REGULAR FLIGHTS TO TAIWAN", 2009/08/17) reported that Air China will begin regular scheduled flights between the PRC mainland and Taiwan from Aug 31, Air China President Cai Jianjiang said. The carrier will operate 27 return flights each week across the Taiwan Straits on six routes from Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Chongqing, Hangzhou and Tianjin to Taipei Taoyuan Airport, he said. He said Taiwan's civil aviation authority granted Air China a business license on Aug 13, and Air China's Taiwan branch was established.

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15. Sino-Indian Relations

The Financial Times ("CHINESE ESSAY SPARKS OUTCRY IN INDIA", 2009/08/17) reported that Indian academics are up in arms over what they regard as provocative incitement of the country's demise by a PRC essayist. "China can dismember the so-called 'Indian Union' with one little move!" claimed the essay posted last week on China International Strategy Net, a patriotic website focused on strategic issues. The writer, under the pseudonym Zhanlue (strategy in Chinese), argued that India's sense of national unity was weak and Beijing's best option to remove an emerging rival and security threat would be to support separatist forces, like those in Assam, to bring about a collapse of the Indian federal state. Such was the outcry about the article that the Indian government issued a statement reassuring the country that relations with the PRC were calm.

IANS ("INDIA TO FINANCE 'SENSITIVE' AREAS' PROJECTS ITSELF: KRISHNA", 2009/08/17) reported that after clashing with the PRC at Asian Development Bank (ADB) over funding for a project in Arunachal Pradesh, India has decided not to approach international agencies to finance schemes in 'sensitive' areas, External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna said. "It is a conscious decision taken by government of India that all projects in sensitive areas will be funded by our own internal resources," Krishna told reporters. His remarks come in the background of the PRC raising objections to ADB funding for Arunachal Pradesh's flood management project.

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16. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "REPORT: 8 TIBETANS JAILED OVER PROTESTS IN CHINA", Beijing, 2009/08/18) reported that a group of Tibetan Buddhist monks and lay people have been sentenced to up to seven years in prison over a March attack on a police station in western PRC, a Tibetan human rights monitoring group said. The eight were sentenced Thursday by a court in Qinghai province's Machen county, according to a report received Tuesday from the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy, a group based in the Indian town of Dharamsala .

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17. PRC Labor Unrest

The New York Times ("BOWING TO PROTESTS, CHINA HALTS SALE OF STEEL MILL", 2009/08/17) reported that a PRC provincial government halted the privatization of a state-owned steel mill, apparently capitulating to thousands of workers who protested last week and took an official as hostage. The protests, in Henan Province in central PRC , were the latest sign of increasing labor

activism in the PRC's steel industry. Three weeks earlier, rioting workers beat to death an executive who had been overseeing the sale of another state-owned steel company, Tonghua Iron and Steel, in northeast PRC's Jilin Province, to a private business. The official Xinhua news agency said that the workers had decided on Saturday to halt their protests, which had attracted up to 3,000 participants at a time, after a government mediation team agreed to reconsider the takeover.

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18. PRC Civil Rights

The Associated Press ("A RAPE CLAIM PUTS FOCUS ON BEIJING'S 'BLACK JAILS'", Beijing, 2009/08/17) reported that the 20-year-old student spoke softly but firmly as she described how a dispute over grades led to her rape at an unofficial jail. The student's case has put a spotlight on the PRC's "black jails," where rights groups say growing numbers of people seeking justice from the government end up. Hong Kong-based advocacy group Chinese Human Rights Defenders has documented more than a dozen black jails in Beijing. The black jails mushroomed in the capital ahead of the 2008 Olympics last year because local officials were particularly anxious about petitioners using the high-profile event to publicize their grievances. It has continued and apparently expanded since then, she said, amid pressure from Beijing on provinces to handle grievances themselves.

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19. PRC Energy Supply

Bloomberg News ("CHINA POWER CAPACITY REACHES 800 MILLION KILOWATTS, XINHUA SAYS", 2009/08/17) reported that the PRC's installed power generation capacity has exceeded 800 million kilowatts, the state-run Xinhua News Agency said, citing Zhang Guobao, the vice minister of the National Development and Reform Commission. By the end of July, the nation's hydropower capacity increased to 182 million kilowatts, nuclear-power capacity rose to 9.1 million kilowatts and wind-power capacity was 14.7 million kilowatts, Xinhua said, citing Zhang .

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20. PRC Climate Change

The Financial Times ("CHINA SETS DATE FOR CO2 CUT", 2009/08/17) reported that the PRC's carbon emissions will start falling by 2050, its top climate change policymaker said, the first time the world's largest emitter has given such a time-frame. The comments by Su Wei, director-general of the climate change department at the PRC's planning body - the National Development and Reform Commission - signal not only increasing flexibility in Beijing's approach but also continued unreadiness to accept an emissions ceiling in the short term.

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21. PRC Media

BBC News ("CHINA TO IMPROVE ACCESS FOR MEDIA", 2009/08/17) reported that the PRC says it will become more open to foreign journalists by dealing with requests within 24 hours, reports say. A senior government official said ministries must designate people to deal with overseas reporters as part of this "zero refusal" policy. The new policy was laid out by Guo Weimin, from the government's State Council Information Office, in an article in the China Daily, the main state-run English-language newspaper. Mr Guo said government departments had to act faster when dealing with calls and interview requests from foreign journalists.

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22. PRC Space Program

Caijing Magazine ("ALL SYSTEMS GO FOR CHINA'S BLASTOFF TO MARS", 2009/08/17) reported that more than 50 researchers from the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Center for Space Science and Applied Research (CSSAR), the National Astronomical Observatory, the Shanghai Astronomical Observatory, and universities across the country are participating in the project to launch the PRC's first Mars probe, the Yinghuo-1, aboard a Russian Zenith rocket. The blastoff scheduled for October from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan is expected to be an important step toward future PRC expeditions to the moon and, possibly, a solo journey to Mars. If the international scientific venture succeeds, the PRC hopes to move forward with plans for its own Mars probe in 2012.

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II. PRC Report

23. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction

Sichuan Daily ("NEAR 1.2 MILLION RURAL HOUSES IN DISASTER AREAS BEEN COMPLETED", 2009/08/17) reported that according to Sichuan provincial Department of Construction, as at August 14 th , 1.27 million rural houses have been started reconstruction, and 1.19 million houses have been completed, accounting for 93.7% of the total number.

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24. PRC Security

Beijing Times ("BEIJING TO AROUSE 800,000 VOLUNTEERS FOR SAFEGUARDING 60TH NATIONAL DAY", 2009/08/17) reported that in order to ensure this year's celebration of 60 th National Day under way, Beijing police will arouse 800,000 volunteers from all the communities to safeguard the ceremony.

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25. PRC Environmental Regulations

Xinhua Net ("ENERGY-SAVING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IS UNDER DRAFTING", 2009/08/17) reported that according to National Development and Reform Commission, in order to address the international financial crisis and cultivate new industry, the Commission is stepping up efforts to make “Energy-saving and Environmental Protection Industry Development Planning” and “Advice on Development of Semiconductor Lighting Industry”.

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