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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Nuclear Program

JoongAng Ilbo ("NORTH SAYS NUCLEAR NEGOTIATION BALL IN U.S. COURT", 2009/10/01) reported that the DPRK has thrown the ball into the United States' court in the ongoing nuclear standoff, saying the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula depends on Washington's willingness to change its "hostile" nuclear stance. Speaking at the United Nations General Assembly yesterday, Pak Kil-yon, the DPRK's vice foreign minister, called on the US to alter its policy toward Pyongyang. "The U.S. administration must discard the old concept of confrontation and show a change in practice, as it recently stated on several occasions," he said.

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Dong-A Ilbo ("`SEOUL MUST TAKE LEAD IN GLOBAL MATTERS, N. KOREAN ISSUES` ", 2009/10/01) reported that President Lee Myung-bak yesterday said the country should take the lead in resolving global issues as well as those involving the DPRK. He said, "North Korea's nuclear ambition affects countries around the world, including the U.S. and China. Though it's also an issue between Seoul and Pyongyang, we've lacked our own voice in simply following proposals from Washington and Beijing."

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

The Associated Press ("11 NORTH KOREANS DEFECT BY SEA TO SOUTH KOREA", 2009/10/01) reported that the ROK's military says a group of 11 North Koreans have defected by sea. An official at the Joint Chiefs of Staff says the North Koreans crossed into southern waters off the divided peninsula's east coast aboard a small barge early Thursday evening.

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4. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

IFES NK Brief ("KAESONG FACTORY RECOGNIZED FOR QUALITY", 2009/10/01) reported that DPRK laborers in the Kaesong Industrial Complex are gaining attention as they are awarded with the government's certificate of high quality, a certification difficult for even ROK companies to earn. It is very rare for the DPRK to earn in only about one year what it takes ROK small and mid-sized businesses 2~3 years to get. When the factory first opened, the skill level of the workers was considerably lower than counterparts elsewhere, and this was reflected in the dissatisfaction of customers and large number of defective products. However, as the workers became more loyal to the company, their efficiency improved as well, and employees even began repairing their own equipment in the event of a failure.

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5. ROK-Russian Energy Cooperation and the DPRK

Asia Pulse ("S KOREAN PLAN TO IMPORT RUSSIAN NATURAL GAS VIA N KOREA ON HOLD", 2009/10/01) reported that plans to import Russian natural gas through a DPRK pipeline have been shelved due to strained inter-Korean relations, the head of the ROK's state-run energy company said. Korea Gas Corp president Choo Kang-soo said unless the DPRK specifically asks for the pipeline to be built on its soil, Seoul will not pursue the piped natural gas (PNG) project but opt to import liquefied natural gas (LNG) directly from Russia by ship.

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6. Sino-DPRK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("CHINA HINTS AT SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC AID TO N.KOREA", 2009/10/01) reported that the PRC is apparently poised to give substantial economic aid to the DPRK when Premier Wen Jiabao visits the impoverished country on Oct. 4-6. PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told reporters that several agreements will be signed with the DPRK in areas including economy, trade, education and tourism. She made the remarks in reply to a question whether Wen plans to conclude a cooperation agreement on food and energy with the DPRK.

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7. DPRK Economy

Xinhua News ("DPRK TOP LEADER CALLS FOR SELF-RELIANCE TO BOOST ECONOMY", Pyongyang, 2009/10/01) reported that Kim Jong Il, top leader of the DPRK, urged to boost the country's economy through self-reliance, the official Rodong Sinmun daily said on Thursday. Kim made the remark while inspecting several places in the DPRK capital Pyongyang, including a fish farm, a factory and a university, the newspaper reported, without giving the date of the inspections. The nation's self-supporting economy is now making rapid progress, fully demonstrating its tremendous potential, Kim said.

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8. US on DPRK Refugees

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S.' N.KOREAN REFUGEE POLICY UNDER SCRUTINY", 2009/10/01) reported that bipartisan group of U.S. congressmen have called for a reexamination of the issue of DPRK defectors. According to the source, U.S. Congress instructed the GAO to inspect the U.S. administration, in the belief that there has been no significant change in the U.S. administration's policy on DPRK refugees even after Congress passed the North Korean Human Rights Act in 2004.

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9. DPRK Workers in Russia

Voice of America ("N. KOREAN WORKERS EARN DOLLARS FOR CONSTRUCTION WORK IN RUSSIA", 2009/10/01) reported that in Vladivostok North Koreans sent out by their government to earn much-needed foreign currency for the country. The estimated 5,000 North Koreans in Vladivostok come from various backgrounds and even include doctors. Despite the stress of living and working in a foreign country, the North Koreans have come to appreciate the culture of capitalism. Choi Jong-kun, an assistant professor of political science at Yonsei University in Seoul, says money is just one reason to leave home. The other is improving one's status among the DPRK's political elite.

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10. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

Kyodo News ("CABINET MINISTERS REVEAL RIFT OVER PROSPECTS FOR REFUELING MISSION", 2009/10/01) reported that Cabinet ministers revealed a rift Thursday over the prospects for Japan's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, with some disturbed by Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada's remarks that left room for extending it despite the new government's plan of not doing so. "The Democratic Party of Japan has taken power and the DPJ's stance is not to extend (the mission). We have won the election by saying so," Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa said, responding to Okada's remarks on Wednesday that he "basically doesn't want to extend the mission, but it's not a complete 'No.'"

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11. Japan Nuclear Power

Kyodo News ("LOADING OF MOX FUEL POSTPONED", 2009/10/01) reported that Kyushu Electric Power Co. said it has decided to put off the planned Saturday start of feeding plutonium-uranium mixed oxide, or MOX fuel, into the No. 3 nuclear reactor of its Genkai nuclear plant in Saga Prefecture.

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12. Japan Space Program

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("MAEHARA EYES MANNED ROCKET DEVELOPMENT", 2009/10/01) reported that Construction and Transport Minister Seiji Maehara, who is also in charge of space development, has indicated he is considering launching a national project to develop a manned space rocket of Japan's design. It is the first time that a minister in charge of space development has clearly referred to a space development plan involving a manned spacecraft.

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13. Japan-Australia Energy Cooperation

The Japan Times ("NATURAL GAS DOWN UNDER BOUND FOR JAPAN BY 2014", 2009/10/01) reported that resources-rich Australia has signed on to provide Japanese households and industries a reliable source of natural gas for decades to come. As this country's biggest, most respected market for resources, Japan is first up for gas supplies from a newly approved undersea gas field off Western Australia called Gorgon. Tokyo Gas and Osaka Gas, will take at least 2.5 million tons of liquefied natural (LNG) a year for 25 years starting in 2014.

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14. Sino-Indian Relations

Express India ("INDIA BUILDING DEFENCE CAPABILITIES LIKE CHINA: ANTONY", 2009/10/01) reported that Defence Minister A K Antony said India was building its defence capabilities just as the PRC did. Antony added that India's policy was to "find a solution (for its issues with China) through negotiations and on the same hand, we have increased our effective deterrent strength."

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15. Sino-Russian Relations

Itar-Tass ("RUSSIA-CHINA RELATIONS TURN INTO NEW TYPE OF INTERSTATE RELATIONS", 2009/10/01) reported that the relations between the PRC and Russia turned into “a new type of interstate relations,” PRC President Hu Jintao said in a telegram sent to his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev on occasion of the 60th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between the countries. “For the past 60 years Chinese-Russian relations have passed an extraordinary way and turned in a new type of interstate relations matching the tendencies of the new times. The countries are building up bilateral political mutual trust, are expanding all-round business cooperation and enhance cultural exchanges,” the PRC leader said. He noted that “both sides are maintaining close cooperation in international and regional affairs.”

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16. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("PREMIER: TAIWAN NEEDS STRONG DEFENSE AGAINST CHINA", 2009/10/01) reported that Taiwan needs to maintain its defense against the PRC while pursuing peaceful cross-strait relations , the island's premier said. Wu Den-yih's statement came on the same day the PRC showed off its advanced military hardware in a parade with over 100,000 people. PRC President Hu Jintao also reiterated the country's resolution to be unified with Taiwan. Wu said Taiwan's efforts to seek peaceful ties with Beijing cannot rely on PRC goodwill alone, but they have to be backed by a strong defense.

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA TO SIGN TAIWAN PACT AFTER KADEER BAN: REPORT", 2009/10/01) reported that the PRC plans to sign a key financial pact with Taiwan later this month as a reward for the island barring a visit by Uighur leader Rebiya Kadeer , a report here said. The two sides are likely to ink the memorandum of understanding on financial cooperation by the end of October, allowing closer ties in the banking, insurance and securities industries, the Commercial Times reported.

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17. PRC Anniversary Celebration

The Associated Press ("HONG KONGERS PROTEST ON CHINA'S NATIONAL DAY", 2009/10/01) reported that with the rest of the PRC awash in red flags and cheering crowds for National Day , hundreds of Hong Kongers — many wearing black — protested, denouncing the country's human rights record during 60 years of Communist rule. The former British colony was allowed to deviate from the nationwide celebrations because it enjoys Western-style civil liberties as part of its special semiautonomous status. About 200 people marched through Hong Kong's downtown financial district, chanting, "We want human rights. We don't want a sanitized National Day."

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18. PRC Military

Xinhua News ("CHINA EYES DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY IN BUILDING UP MILITARY", 2009/10/01) reported that while displaying sophisticated weapons at the 60th National Day parade Thursday, the PRC insists that the glittering military accomplishments are mainly to serve the country's "active defense" strategy. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) showcased 52 types of new home-grown weapon systems, at the grand military parade marking the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Defense Minister Liang Guanglie told Xinhua the PLA had achieved leaping upgrades in its defensive combat abilities to realize that the armed forces could effectively safeguard the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

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19. PRC Rural Poverty

Bloomberg News (Lee J. Miller and Daniel Ten Kate, "CHINA'S RURAL POOR THREATEN POST-PARTY HANGOVER: CHART OF DAY ", 2009/10/01) reported that the PRC, marking its 60th anniversary, faces a widening wealth gap between farmers and city dwellers that may threaten stability, even as the economy is poised to pass Japan's as the world's second largest. "The basic

thing is still jobs, and most of those are in the cities," Willy Wo-Lap Lam, an adjunct professor of history at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said by telephone. "At the best of times they have to create 25 million new jobs a year." "Politically it's a threat because the bulk of social unrest and riots come from these unsettled rural migrant workers and peasants," he said. "They would pose a big threat to the regime if they had free movement."

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20. PRC Energy Supply

Caijing Magazine ("VAST QUANTITIES OF METHANE HYDRATE DISCOVERED IN NORTHWESTERN CHINA", 2009/10/01) reported that methane hydrate, also known as flammable ice, has been found for the first time on land in the PRC, below the country's northwestern tundra, said Zhang Hongtao, director-general of the China Geological Survey. The frozen gas is being contemplated as a possible replacement to fossil fuels such as coal, petroleum and natural gas.

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21. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

Caijing Magazine ("CHINA'S FIRST ENVIRONMENTAL CIVIL CASE ENDS IN MEDIATION", 2009/10/01) reported that the All-China Environment Federation and Zhu Zhengmao, a resident of Jiangyin city, filed a court appeal on July 6 challenging a cargo logistics company's iron ore unloading operations without an environmental impact assessment and approval from authorities. The Intermediate People's Court of Wuxi City reviewed the case, marking the first civil environmental lawsuit with a civil society organization named as plaintiff accepted by a court in the PRC. The court ruled on July 7 that Jiangyin Container should immediately terminate actions related to the negative environmental impacts cited in the case.

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