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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

BBC ("US NUCLEAR MONITORS LEAVE N KOREA", 2009/04/17) reported that four American nuclear monitors have left the DPRK. Their departure, following UN nuclear inspectors who were also expelled, leaves no on-site means to monitor the DPRK' nuclear facilities.

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2. IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("UN WATCHDOG URGES RESTART OF NKOREA NUCLEAR TALKS", Beijing, 2009/04/20) reported that International Atomic Energy chief Mohamed ElBaradei said Monday he hoped DPRK nuclear disarmament talks would restart quickly. "Maybe we will have to go through a period of confrontation, if you like, but I hope that will be short and I hope that the six-party (talks) will be resumed and the IAEA can return," he said.

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3. US-DPRK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. GETTING ANGRY WITH N.KOREA", 2009/04/20) reported that during a recent meeting, the U.S. National Security Council Principals Committee, led by White House National Security Adviser James Jones, resulted in a U.S. decision not to pursue direct talks with the DPRK as long as it remains uncooperative, diplomatic sources in Washington D.C. said. Instead, the committee decided to strengthen cooperation with the ROK and Japan and win the help of the PRC to resume the stalled six-country talks. Regarding the detention of the two U.S. journalists, many U.S. officials are said to support a strategy of sticking to principles and stressing human rights to deal with the problem but reject the DPRK's plan to use the captives as bargaining chips.

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4. DPRK on US-ROK Alliance

Yonhap ("N. KOREA SAYS NUCLEAR WAR ONLY MATTER OF TIME", Seoul, 2009/04/18) reported that the DPRK said Friday the outbreak of a nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula is only a matter of time. "When a nuclear war will break out due to the war chariot of the 'South Korea-U.S. military alliance' is a matter of time," the DPRK said in an information bulletin carried by the Korean Central News Agency. The bulletin was issued by the Secretariat of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea, a state organization that handles inter-Korean relations.

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA AGREES TO A CALL FOR TALKS FROM NORTH KOREA ", Seoul, 2009/04/19) reported that the ROK on Sunday accepted the DPRK's proposal for talks on Kaesong. A Unification Ministry spokeswoman said officials of the two nations would meet Tuesday. the ROK said Saturday that the DPRK had made the surprise call for a meeting.

Agence France-Presse ("SKOREA SEEKS TO CALM TENSIONS AT NKOREA MEETING", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that the ROK said Monday it would try to calm cross-border tensions at an upcoming meeting with the DPRK. "The government will try to make the inter-Korean contact helpful to the safety of our citizens... and the stable development of the Kaesong industrial complex ," said Kim Ho-Nyoun, spokesman for Seoul's unification ministry.

Dong-A Ilbo ("N. KOREA THREATENS MILITARY STRIKE ON SEOUL", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that a spokesman for the DPRK People`s Army general staff said Saturday, “We will consider any

pressure on us, including sanctions condemning our rocket launch or South Korea's full participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative, as a declaration of undisguised confrontation and war against us." Saying its army has no limitations on conducting a military attack, the spokesman said, "(The ROK government) must not forget that Seoul is 50 kilometers away from the Military Demarcation Line."

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6. DPRK Leadership

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA RELEASES PHOTOS OF MILITARY HIGH COMMAND", Seoul, 2009/04/17) reported that official DPRK newspapers released photos of all 12 members of the National Defense Commission. An ROK government official said the publication of photos of the entire commission shows that the Kim Jong-il regime "has strengthened the role and status of the Defense Commission."

Yonhap ("N. KOREAN LEADER CONFESSES FATIGUE DUE TO ECONOMIC DRIVE", Seoul, 2009/04/17) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il confessed he's struggling with the grinding pace of his activities Rodong Sinmun said Friday. "A man is not made of iron and ought to take care his own body. But I have no time to do so," Kim was quoted as saying. "Why wouldn't I be tired and need more sleep?" Kim said. "Even though I'm tired, I'm pushing myself to keep going. What drives me to keep going despite the fatigue and distress? The profound sense of duty of bearing the fate of our homeland -- our people -- on my shoulders."

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7. ROK Participation in PSI

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL DELAYS DECISION ON WMD INITIATIVE AGAIN", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that the ROK government once again delayed joining the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative, which was planned for Sunday. Cheong Wa Dae spokesman Lee Dong-kwan stated, "For the first time in a year and two months, North Korea expressed willingness to meet to tell us about an important matter. Shouldn't we hear what's going on? The government has to be flexible to deal with this." He urged the press to accept the new delay "as the result of the government thinking hard."

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8. ROK Anti-Piracy Dispatch

Arirang News ("KOREAN NAVY BEGINS ANTI-PIRACY OPERATIONS", Seoul, 2009/04/17) reported that the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff said the warship Munmu the Great began escorting a 12 ton chemical transporter named the Pine Galaxy in the Gulf of Aden off the coast of Djibouti. Earlier this week the unit responded to a possible case of piracy reported by a Marshall Islands-registered ship and tracked down the suspected vessel until it fled the area.

Yonhap ("S. KOREAN NAVAL UNIT CHASES AWAY SUSPECTED SOMALI PIRATES: OFFICIAL",

Seoul, 2009/04/17) reported that the ROK said Friday its naval unit drove away suspected pirates attempting to clamber aboard a Denmark-registered ship in Somali waters. The incident took place Thursday morning (Somali time) about 110km off the coast of Yemen, a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) official said.

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9. ROK Role in South Asia

Yonhap ("S. KOREA VOWS US$200 MILLION IN AID FOR PAKISTAN", Seoul, 2009/04/17) reported that the ROK pledged Friday to provide Pakistan with US$200 million in aid over the next four years as part of international efforts to support the country's fight against terrorism. Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan announced the pledge at the Pakistan Donors Conference held in Tokyo. ROK aid will concentrate on developing human resources, upgrading the governmental system, and constructing infrastructure, according to the ministry.

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10. ROK Environment

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA TAKES CHARGE OF ANTARCTIC PENGUIN SANCTUARY", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that a habitat for penguins at the northernmost tip of Antarctica has been designated as a special protected area by the ROK government. Dubbed "Penguin Village," the habitat measures around 1 sq. km and is located around 2 km southeast of the ROK's King Sejong Antarctic research station. The Environment Ministry said an application submitted by the government to designate Penguin Village as a special protected area was accepted during the 32nd Antarctic Treaty Talks in the U.S. on Friday.

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11. ROK-New Zealand Military Relations

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "KOREA-NEW ZEALAND ANTI-SUB DRILLS BEGIN", Seoul, 2009/04/17) reported that the ROK and New Zealand Navies Friday kicked off a week-long joint anti-submarine training exercise in the waters off Pohang, the Navy said. The biennial drill, initiated in 1997, is designed to help hone joint anti-submarine operational skills and improve bilateral ties, it said in a news release.

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12. ROK-U.S Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("WHY HOLBROOKE, NOT BOSWORTH?", Seoul, 2009/04/17) reported that Richard Holbrooke, the special U.S. envoy on Afghanistan and Pakistan, met President Lee Myung-bak and Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan in Seoul on Thursday. The government said Holbrooke was in Seoul to pay his respects on his way to a Pakistan donors conference in Japan on Friday. A diplomatic source said, "The fact that the special U.S. envoy on Afghanistan, not Stephen Bosworth,

the special U.S. envoy on North Korea, is visiting Seoul at this time is highly symbolic. It means we have to show sincerity in the Afghan issue before we can expect solid cooperation from the U.S. to solve the North Korean nuclear issue."

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13. US-ROK FTA

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. SECURITY COUNCIL 'WANTS FTA WITH KOREA RATIFIED'", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that Inside U.S. Trade, an American magazine, last Saturday quoted sources as saying that officials at the U.S. National Security Council want to see the ROK-U.S. free trade agreement ratified by Congress this fall. It said NSC officials believe that the passage of the FTA bill will cement the Korea-U.S. alliance at a time when tension is mounting on the Korean Peninsula. The magazine also said that prior to President Lee Myung-bak's scheduled visit to the U.S. on June 16, working-level officials from the two countries will meet in May to review things to make sure that there is progress in the FTA ratification.

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14. ROK Nuclear Exports

Yonhap ("S. KOREA SEEKS NUCLEAR REACTOR SALES TO JORDAN", Seoul, 2009/04/19) reported that the ROK will seek to sell Jordan its commercial nuclear reactors by highlighting its technological prowess and proven track record in safety at an upcoming conference, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology said Sunday. Minister Ahn Byong-man will explain the country's technological capability in the designing and construction of nuclear reactors to Khalid Toukan, chairman of Jordan's Atomic Energy Commission in Beijing.

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15. ROK Climate Change

Yonhap ("LEE SAYS BICYCLE ONLY SOLUTION FOR ENERGY-DEPENDENT KOREA", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak vowed to continue his drive for green growth Monday, saying increased use of bicycles for transportation is the only option for the country. "Green way of life is the call of our times. Bringing back pollution-free bicycles as a key means of transportation is a path we must take," the president said in his bi-weekly national address.

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16. ROK Politics

Chosun Ilbo ("PROSECUTORS TO SEEK ARREST WARRANT FOR ROH", Seoul, 2009/04/17) reported that the Supreme Prosecutors' Office wants to question former president Roh Moo-hyun in connection with a widening cash-for-favors scandal involving the CEO of Taekwang Industry. Prosecutors say they will seek an arrest warrant for Roh on charges of taking a US$6 million bribe from Park Yeon-cha. A prosecution spokesman said, "We have made progress in our investigation

that could substantiate charges against Roh, and our duty as the top prosecutors' office is to do our job according to the principles. The decision whether to arrest Roh is up to the court."

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17. ROK Civil Society

Hankyoreh ("SUBSIDIES CUT TO CIVIC GROUPS WHO PARTICIPATED IN CANDLELIGHT VIGIL DEMONSTRATIONS", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that the government has both cut off and delayed disbursing subsidies to civic organizations that participated in the 2008 candlelight vigil demonstrations. The Ministry of Gender Equality has demanded that organizations recognize demonstrations as a form of illegal protest activity as a precondition to receiving subsidies or grants. On Sunday, the Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOPAS) confirmed the postponement of their selection results of organizations to receive public subsidies. After the police designated 1,842 civic and social groups that participated in last year‘s candlelight vigil demonstrations as “illegal and/or violent protest groups,” MOPAS announced a new rule excluding these groups from subsidy consideration.

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18. ROK Internet Censorship

Korea Herald (Bae Hyun-jung, "COURT FREES BLOGGER FROM CHARGES", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that the Seoul Central District Court ruled that Park Dae-sung, better known by the blogger alias Minerva, did not violate the telecommunication law and released him from jail. Prosecutors last Monday demanded he serve an 18-month sentence for deliberately raising public fear on the economy. "Though Park's contended postings contained some false facts about the government policy and the local economy, he cannot be seen as having intended to spread false rumors," said the ruling judge in the verdict. "Even if he were aware that his postings were partially wrong, he has not been proven to have planned to harm public interests."

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19. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Asahi Shimbun ("KAWAMURA: STANCE ON ISLES IS FIRM", Tokyo, 2009/04/18) reported that in an interview with The Mainichi Shimbun newspaper, government representative Shotaro Yachi said Japan could settle for the return of three islands and groups of islets along with part of the island of Etorofu, if such a concession would help break a stalemate in talks with Russia. Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura said Friday, "the government has never taken the stand mentioned in the interview article." Yachi, a former vice foreign minister, was named negotiator for key diplomatic issues in January.

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20. Japanese Nuclear Option

Agence France-Presse ("EX-MINISTER SEEKS JAPAN NUKES DISCUSSIONS", Tokyo, 2009/04/20) reported that former Japanese finance minister Shoichi Nakagawa said Japan should discuss getting nuclear weapons to deter DPRK threats. "It is common sense worldwide that in a purely military sense it is nuclear that can counteract nuclear," Nakagawa was quoted as saying by Kyodo News in a speech in his constituency. "North Korea has taken a step toward a system whereby it could shoot without prior notice," Nakagawa said. "We have to discuss countermeasures."

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21. Japanese SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

Asahi Shimbun ("PLANES TO JOIN ANTI-PIRACY MISSION", Tokyo, 2009/04/18) reported that Japanese Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada instructed the Self-Defense Forces on Friday to begin preparations to dispatch members for surveillance off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. Two P3C surveillance aircraft will be based in neighboring Djibouti. About 100 members of the Maritime SDF will be dispatched to maintain the P3C aircraft and prepare the apron. About 50 members of the Ground SDF will also be sent to provide security.

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22. Japanese Nuclear Energy

Yomiuri Shimbun ("INTERNAL REPORT BLAMES MONJU TROUBLES ON POOR DISCIPLINE", Tokyo, 2009/04/20) reported that the delay in the resumption of operations at the Monju fast-breeder reactor following a series of problems should be blamed on a lack of discipline by the operator, the Japan Atomic Energy Agency, according to an internal agency report. The report will be presented at the Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry's advisory panel meeting Wednesday and is expected to affect the resumption of operations scheduled for within this year. According to the report, the shortcomings led to "low morale among workers at the reactor, who were not fully aware of the significance and importance of running the advanced fast-breeder reactor." The report added that this resulted in the JAEA's internal committee becoming dysfunctional. The committee is tasked with final verification of the agency's checks and reports, and this in turn created a number of problems.

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23. Japanese Politics

Associated Press (Eric Talmadge, "COMMUNIST PARTY SURGES AS JAPAN'S ECONOMY WITHERS", Tokyo, 2009/04/19) reported that the Communist Party of Japan has 24,000 branch offices and more than a million people read its newspaper. Tomoaki Iwai, a Nihon University political science professor , said "I don't see a bright future for the communist party, despite the current expansion. They are not going to gain decision-making status in Japanese politics." But Koichi Nakano , a political science professor at Sophia University in Tokyo, stated, "Their ideological stance stands out in a political scene dominated by the conservatives, and it's good to have diversity. Despite their marginal presence in parliament, the communists' views are often considered commonsense among the public."

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24. Japanese Diplomacy

Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN SEEKS ROLE IN ARCTIC COUNCIL", Tokyo, 2009/04/20) reported that the Japanese government has applied to join the Arctic Council as an observer. The Arctic Council, an international body comprising coastal countries in the region, recently has gained a higher international profile as a new shipping route that will be known as the Northwest Passage becomes more likely as the Arctic Ocean ice melts due to global warming. The government has submitted its membership bid to the chair of the Arctic Council, Norway, and is considering the dispatch of Foreign Ministry officials to the council's ministerial meeting to be held in Tromso, Norway, on April 29.

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25. Japanese Demographics

Asahi Shimbun (Hisanori Imamura, "75% OF POPULATION BORN AFTER THE WAR", Tokyo, 2009/04/18) reported that the number of people born in Japan after the nation's defeat in World War II exceeded 75 percent of the population for the first time last year, government statistics show. The statistics also show that seven of the nation's 47 prefectures registered population increases compared with the previous year. It was the first time that the figure has fallen to below 10. Japan's population stood at 127,692,000 as of Oct. 1 last year, down 79,000 from the previous year, marking the first drop in three years.

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26. Japanese Climate Change

Yomiuri Shimbun ("PANEL DECIDES 6 OPTIONS FOR EMISSIONS-CUT TARGET", Tokyo, 2009/04/18) reported that a government panel looking into measures to combat global warming decided Friday on six options for the nation's 2020 midterm greenhouse gas emissions target--from a 4 percent increase to a 25 percent decrease. On the same day, the options were posted on the Prime Minister's Office's Web site, which is soliciting opinions from the public for about one month. The government will set a national midterm emissions reduction target by June by choosing one of the options.

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27. PRC Nuclear Program

The Sunday Times (Michael Sheridan, "REVOLT STIRS AMONG CHINA'S NUCLEAR GHOSTS", 2009/04/19) reported that nw research suggests the PRC nuclear tests from 1964 to 1996 claimed more lives than those of any other nation. Professor Jun Takada, a Japanese physicist, has calculated that up to 1.48m people were exposed to fallout and 190,000 of them may have died from diseases linked to radiation. “Nuclear sands” - a mixture of dust and fission products - were blown by prevailing winds from Lop Nur towards towns and villages along the ancient Silk Road. One group

of Chinese veterans has published letters to the state council and the central military commission demanding compensation.

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28. PRC Anti-Piracy Operations

Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "US ADMIRAL HAILS CHINA ANTI-PIRACY COOPERATION", Beijing, 2009/04/19) reported that Admiral Gary Roughead, chief of U.S. Naval Operations, said Sunday that anti-piracy operations off Somalia are producing an unprecedented degree of cooperation. Roughead said he would discuss further boosting ties through base visits and joint search and rescue exercises during talks this week with his PRC counterpart, Wu Shengli. "This is the first time we have operated together so far from China with a real-world mission," Roughead told reporters.

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29. PRC Military

BBC ("CHINA 'TO INCREASE NAVAL POWER' ", Beijing, 2009/04/17) reported that Admiral Wu Shengli, head of the PRC navy, told Xinhua the PRC is planning to boost the size and sophistication of its naval power. Wu said the communist party leadership had made naval preparedness a priority. Admiral Wu said that the navy would focus on speeding up the development of large warships as part of its efforts develop an oceangoing fleet.

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30. Cross Strait Relations

Associated Press ("TAIWAN TO DISCUSS TRADE AGREEMENT WITH CHINA", Taipei, 2009/04/18) reported that Ma Shao-chang, deputy secretary-general of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation, said that Taiwan will discuss a partial free trade agreement with the PRC during high-level talks April 26 in Nanjing . The agreement would permit the free flow of many goods, services and capital across the Taiwan Strait . However, key items such as agricultural produce would be exempt, largely as a concession to Taiwanese farmers. Kao Koong-lian, the foundation's vice chairman, said the two sides would also sign pacts to increase the number of regular airplane flights, allow banks to establish branches on both sides, and cooperate on cross-border criminal investigations .

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31. Foreign Students in PRC

Vladivostock Times ("NUMBER OF FOREIGN STUDENTS INCREASES IN CHINA", Vladivostock, 2009/04/18) reported that in 2008 the number of foreign students studying in the PRC reached 223,499 people, passing 200,000 for the first time. In comparison with 2007 the number of foreign students increased by 14.32%. Russian students made up the fifth highest number, after the ROK, Japan, USA and Vietnam.

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II. PRC Report

32. PRC Energy Supply

Securities Daily (Zhao Ruidong, "SHANXI TO INVEST 180 BILLION ON COAL INDUSTRY", 2009/04/17) reported that the whole coal industry of Shanxi province will complete an investment of 180 billion yuan this and next year, to boost domestic demand, upgrade industrial level, optimize industrial structure and further enhance development strength for future progress. According to planning of Shanxi government, by 2010, the number of mines in Shanxi will be controlled around 1000, and the mine production capacity will reach over 0.9 million ton per year.

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33. PRC Asia Games

South Daily (Xie Miaofeng, "OVER 90% GUANGZHOU CITIZENS WANT TO BE VOLUNTEERS OF ASIA SPORTS GAMES", 2009/04/17) reported that according to a survey conducted by Guangzhou municipal Youth League Committee, Guangzhou Asia Sports Games Organizing Committee Volunteer Office and Guangzhou Youth Volunteers Association, over 90% respondents said they want to be volunteers of Asia Sports Game. Among them, over 50% want to provide voluntary service in venues, thus to feel the atmosphere of the game.

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34. PRC Civil Society

Zhongyuan Net (Xu Keke, Li Xin, "ZHENGZHOU LEUKEMIA AID FUND ACCEPTS DONATION OVER 100,000 YUAN ON THE FIRST DAY", 2009/04/17) reported that Leukemia Aid Fund, which is set up by Zhengzhou Red Cross Society, Greencity Social Worker Service Center and Jinshui District Youth League Committee, has raised money over 100,000 yuan at the first day of funding-raising in Zhengzhou of Henan province. A Leukemia Aid Voluntary Service Team was also found that day, to further help aid leukemia.

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