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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Chosun Ilbo ("WHAT TO DO WITH N.KOREA'S NUCLEAR PERSONNEL?", 2009/01/19) reported that a primary concern in the DPRK after denuclearization is what to do with its nuclear scientists and workers, according Kang Jung-min, a visiting scholar at Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. Once the DPRK abandons its nuclear program, it will take billions of dollars and decades to dismantle the nuclear facilities, the article said, and the challenge is to redirect thousands of DPRK nuclear personnel to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

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2. Energy Aid to the DPRK

RIA Novosti ("RUSSIA TO COMPLETE FUEL SUPPLIES TO N.KOREA IN JAN.", Moscow, 2009/01/19) reported that Russia will complete later in January its fuel shipments to the DPRK under international agreements, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said. Russia is to supply a total of 200,000 metric tons of fuel to the DPRK.

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

Associated Press (Jean Lee, "HARD-LINER TO LEAD SEOUL'S DPRK POLICY", Seoul, 2009/01/18) reported that ROK's hard-line president tapped a hawkish security expert to head the ministry in charge of relations with Pyongyang on Monday, a move bound to ratchet up already heightened tensions with the DPRK. Hyun In-taek, a UCLA-educated professor who helped shape Lee's campaign platform in 2007, was nominated to head the Unification Ministry as part of a Cabinet reshuffle. The international diplomacy expert is known to be critical of the reconciliatory "Sunshine Policy" espoused by Seoul's previous liberal leadership, noting that pouring aid into the DPRK unconditionally did not stop the regime from testing a nuclear bomb in 2006.

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA'S JEJU ISLAND TO BUILD 'BLACK PIG' FARM IN PYONGYANG", Seoul, 2009/01/19) reported that the ROK 's Jeju Island will send equipment to build a pig farm in Pyongyang to raise the island's local specialty, black pigs, officials said. Jeju will send farm equipment worth 220 million won (US$159,190), such as pens, feeders, heat lamps and ventilators, later on Friday aboard a ship also carrying tangerines and carrots as part of the island's annual aid to the DPRK. "We expect this will help provide nutrition for children and the elderly in the North and pass down our breeding expertise. Jeju Island is a clean area free from animal infectious diseases," Kang Won-myoung, a provincial official handling the pig project, said over the telephone.

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4. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News ("GLOBAL ECONOMIC SLUMP FORCING FIRMS TO REDUCE WORKFORCE AT KAESONG", Seoul, 2009/01/19) reported that t he global economic slowdown has forced local companies to cut jobs for DPRK workers at the Kaesong Industrial Complex, the head of a business umbrella group said. Kim Ki-mun, head of the Korea Federation of Small and Medium Business, told Yonhap News Agency that companies operating in the complex have been hit hard by falling orders from large conglomerates and tightened border controls that went into effect Dec. 1.

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5. US DPRK Policy

Agence France Press ("US SAYS DPRK WILL FACE TOUGH OBAMA", Washington, 2009/01/19) reported that the White House warned DPRK on Monday that Barack Obama will stand firm in opposing the DPRK's nuclear programs and dismissed Pyongyang's atomic defiance as a childish tantrum. "It's not surprising that they would bang their spoons on their high chair to try to get attention," spokeswoman Dana Perino said after the DPRK said it may keep its nuclear arms and threatened confrontation with ROK. "I think that the North Koreans will find that they (Obama's team) will be just as against North Korea's nuclear weapons programs as the Bush administration has been," said Perino.

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6. Sino-DPRK Trade Relations

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA'S TRADE WITH CHINA ON STEADY RISE, DEFICIT GROWING", Beijing, 2009/01/19) reported that the DPRK's trade with the PRC has shown steady growth in recent years, surpassing US$2 billion last year, while its deficit has grown in tandem, customs officials in Beijing said. Cumulative trade volume from 2003-2007 reached $7.6 billion, with DPRK exports valued at $2.5 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of $2.6 billion on the DPRK side, they said.

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7. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("DPRK WON EXCHANGE RATE CONTINUES TO CLIMB", 2009/01/19) reported that the exchange rate for the DPRK won shot up approximately 13-15 percent at the end of last year, and has maintained this high rate into January, according to an article in the on-line newsletter, "Open News for North Korea," on January 12. According to the inaugural edition of the newsletter, the exchange rate last year was around 3,200 won per USD, or 460 won per Yuan, with only slight fluctuations, but shot up to 3,630 won per USD and 530 won per Yuan in December.

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8. ROK Environment

JoongAng Ilbo (Lee Ho-jeong, "WATER SUPPLY DRYING UP WITH PROLONGED DROUGHT", 2009/01/20) reported that ROK 's supply of drinking water is entering a critical phase as the country sees a continuing drought. In particular, reservoirs across the country are drying up quickly. The water storage rate at 14 dams exclusively built for water supply, including drinking water and industrial water, was 80 percent of what it was a year ago. But the nation's water consumption has grown continuously over the years. To prevent a shortage in the water supply, the government is drawing up a long-term plan, which includes building small and midsized dams such as the one on Nakdong River scheduled to begin construction in 2010.

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9. ROK-Japan Space Cooperation

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA, JAPAN LOOKING AT SPACE COOPERATION", 2009/01/19) reported that Korea and Japan could be conducting joint space experiments starting in 2012 at the International Space Station. The ROK Aerospace Research Institute says it is talking with its Japanese counterpart about building equipment for Japan's Kibo science module. The ROK 's state-run aerospace agency says both countries would share the results of experiments to be conducted by Japan.

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10. US-Japan Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN WILL SEEK TO STRENGTHEN ALLIANCE UNDER OBAMA ADMINISTRATION: ASO", Tokyo, 2009/01/19) reported that Japan will seek to enhance its alliance with the United States under the incoming administration of President-elect Barack Obama, Prime Minister Taro Aso told parliament. ''Strengthening the alliance with the new administration is obvious. Robustly formulating it would benefit the national interest of both countries,'' he said during a session of the House of Councillors Budget Committee.

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11. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

Yomiburi Shimbun ("SPECIAL UNIT TO ADD SOME STEEL TO MSDF MISSION AGAINST PIRATES", Tokyo, 2009/01/20) reported that the government is considering deploying the special boarding unit of the Maritime Self-Defense Force on MSDF destroyers should the vessels be dispatched to Somalia to protect Japan-related ships from pirates, sources said Monday. Any pirates that committed serious crimes such as a murder on the Japan-related ships could be taken to Japan for indictment, the sources added.

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12. Japan Missile Defense Program

Kyodo News ("DEFENSE MINISTRY MAY DEVELOP EARLY WARNING SATELLITE", 2009/01/19) reported that the Defense Ministry is thinking of developing an early warning satellite that can detect ballistic missiles in their boost phase to increase the effectiveness of the m issile shield i t is building, the ministry's recently released policy on development and use of space says. A man-made orbiter would be the first step in Japan developing a satellite-based missile detection system of its own. Japan currently relies on the US for information on ballistic missile launches.

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13. Japan-Russian Nuclear Cooperation

Kyodo News ("JAPAN SEEKS NUKE DEAL WITH RUSSIA", 2009/01/18) reported that the government plans to send senior officials to Moscow for final-stage negotiations on concluding a bilateral civil nuclear cooperation agreement with Russia, government sources said Saturday. The plan expected to pave the way exporting a modern nuclear power plant to Russia. Japan is demanding the International Atomic Energy Agency conduct a "strict examination" of Russia's nuclear facilities to confirm the plant will be used for peaceful purposes.

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14. Japan-UAE Nuclear Cooperation

Bloomberg ("JAPAN TO HELP UAE BUILD NUCLEAR PLANTS, TRAIN ITS WORKERS ", 2009/01/19) reported that Japan will help the United Arab Emirates (UAE) develop nuclear power to meet growing electricity demand in the Middle Eastern country. Takamori Yoshikawa, senior vice minister at Japan's trade ministry, signed an agreement on Monday with his counterpart Saif Sultan Al Aryani, undersecretary at the foreign ministry, to help the emirates develop legal frameworks and train workers for a civilian nuclear program, the ministry said.

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15. Japan Government

Japan Times (Masami Ito, "LDP PLEDGES TO UNITE BEHIND ASO", 2009/01/19) reported that the ruling Liberal Democratic Party held its annual convention Sunday to gear up for the upcoming Lower House general election, vowing to unite under Prime Minister Taro Aso and win one of the toughest battles it has ever faced. Aso, who is president of the LDP, expressed his determination to lead the party to victory in the election that must be held this year because the terms of Lower House members end in September.

Japan Times (Kazuaki Nagata, "OZAWA TELLS CONVENTION DPJ WILL WIN", 2009/01/19) reported that Democratic Party of Japan members gathered at their annual convention Sunday to show their resolution to defeat the LDP-New Komeito coalition's government in this year's general election. Ozawa said that under the global financial crisis and declining domestic economy, Prime Minister Taro Aso and his Cabinet have not called an election to seek public judgment nor have they carried out effective economic measures, resulting in a political vacuum that has lasted months.

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16. Sino-Japanese Joint History Project

Agence France Press ("JAPAN-CHINA JOINT HISTORY STUDY DELAYED: PROJECT HEAD", Tokyo, 2009/01/19) reported that a joint history study between Japan and the PRC has been delayed due to differences of opinion, according to its head, amid a report Beijing was upset at a reference to the Tiananmen Square massacre. The report was delayed "because of difficulties in adjusting opinions over a few issues," said Shinichi Kitaoka, the head of the joint study. "But we aim to finish our task by the end of this fiscal year" in March.

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17. Cross-Strait Relations

Associated Press ("TAIWAN TO CUT TROOPS AMID WARMING PRC TIES", 2009/01/19) reported that Taiwan's military will proceed with a plan to slash the number of troops as relations with PRC improve and modern weapons technologies are introduced, an official said Monday. The Defense Ministry will cut the island's 275,000 troops over the next four years, but has yet to decide on the

level of cuts, ministry spokeswoman Lisa Chih said.

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18. Sino-Indian Relations

Times of India ("CHINA WAY AHEAD ON BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE", 2009/01/19)

reported that first India is having difficulty countering the PRC's massive buildup of military infrastructure all along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). "The plan is to construct the 73 roads in a time-bound manner by 2012 to counter the rapid pace of military development in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR). But there are huge delays due to pending mandatory clearances from the ministry of environment and forests as well as inadequate funding," said a source.

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19. PRC-Africa Economic Cooperation

Xinhua News (Dai Adi, "OFFICIAL: PRC REAFFIRMS TO EXPAND PRC-AFRICAN ECONOMIC, TRADE COOPERATION", Luanda, 2009/01/19) reported that PRC will continuously expand PRC-African economic relations and trade to reach a new higher level , said PRC Commerce Minister Chen Deming . Efforts will be made to continuously expand PRC-Africa trade scale, extend zero custom tariffs to more African countries, tap potentials in expanding PRC-Africa cooperation sectors, make full use of the PRC-Africa Fund and the establishment of free trade zones in African countries, and support PRC companies and factories to invest more in Africa. PRC will try its best to provide African countries more aid without any political conditions attached and help them build more public infrastructural facilities such as hospitals, health centers, schools and stadiums and gymnasiums.

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20. PRC Bird Flu

Xinhua News ("FOURTH BIRD FLU PATIENT CONFIRMED IN CENTRAL PRC", Changsha, 2009/01/19) reported that a 16-year-old male student had been confirmed as infected with bird flu in central PRC's Hunan Province, the fourth case of human bird flu found in PRC in 2009, said a provincial government official on Monday.

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21. PRC Environment

China Daily (Sun Xiaohua, "POLLUTION PROBLEM SERIOUS: SURVEY", 2009/01/19) reported that the environmental problem in the country is "very serious" or "relatively serious", according to more than three-fourths of the 10,000 people surveyed in 31 provinces and municipalities. Results of the study, conducted by the PRC Environment Culture Promotion Association (CECPA), were announced on Friday.

China Daily (Li Jing, "POLLUTION CHECKS SET TO INTENSIFY", 2009/01/19) reported that at the national conference on environmental protection held in Beijing last week, Minister of Environmental Protection Zhou Shengxian told his staff to strengthen inspections for heavy-polluting companies. Zhou warned that there are signs that the smog belchers "will stage a comeback" in some areas, and factories with backward facilities "would revive", using the excuse of the country's massive investment plan to boost domestic demand. The country also needs to be alert to the risk of increased pollution during the economic downturn, as firms running at a loss could suspend the operation of pollution-treatment facilities to reduce costs, Zhou said.

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22. PRC Economy

Associated Press (Anita Change, "JOBLESS MIGRANTS FLOOD BACK TO PRC'S VILLAGES", Beiya Village, 2009/01/19) reported that slumping global demand has forced tens of millions of rural migrants who power PRC's factories into an early vacation, sending them back to their villages and turning what is usually a festive break from grinding work into a period of gnawing uncertainty. Migrant workers have an average annual income of about 8,000 yuan ($1,170), while farmers make about 4,800 ($700), said Zhang Jianping, an economist at Minzu University of PRC.

Journal of Commerce (Bill DiBenedetto, "PRC ROLLS OUT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR PEARL RIVER DELTA", 2009/01/19) reported that PRC unveiled a 12-year development plan for the southern Pearl River Delta designed to boost the economic and trade ties with the Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions. The 2008-20 plan released by the National Development and Reform Commission would position the pan-Pearl River Delta as a “center of advanced manufacturing and modern service industries,” and as a “center for international shipping, logistics, trade, conferences and exhibitions and tourism.” Equipment manufacturing in the region will focus on nuclear power facilities, wind power equipment, power transmission and distribution facilities, machine tools and ocean engineering equipment.

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23. PRC Food Safety

Associated Press (Gillian Wong, "213 PRC FAMILIES TAKE MILK CASE TO HIGHEST COURT", Beijing, 2009/01/19) reported that more than 200 families whose babies fell ill after drinking tainted infant formula said Monday they are taking their case to PRC's highest court after being repeatedly ignored by lower courts.

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24. PRC Space Program

TG Daily (Rick C. Hodgin , "CHINA PLANNING ITS OWN FULL EARTH GPS SYSTEM BY 2015", Beijing, 2009/01/19) reported that the PRC's state media announced today that it plans to introduce its own set of orbiting satellites for a PRC GPS system by the year 2015. The Beidou Navigation System (BNS) will enable its military and civilian users to find their way anywhere in the world

without relying on the U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS). According to Zhang Xiaojin, director of astronautics at China's Aerospace Science and Technology Corp, "The system will shake off the dependence on foreign systems."

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25. PRC AIDS Issue

Xinhua News ("FIGHTING AIDS WITH ETHNIC FOLK FIGURES", 2009/01/17) reported that Jihuoheigare has expanded his authority as a degu, an ancient role of folk mediator in his ethnic Yi community in southwest PRC, to a new role in the local combat against the modern demon of AIDS: admonishing drug users to shed the addiction. Building on a traditional post revered for representing wisdom and honesty, the man in his 60s uses clan dispute mediation as a platform to alert people to the threat of HIV.

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II. PRC Report

26. PRC Civil Society

Morning News (Chen Liyu, "20,000 SHANGHAI VOLUNTEERS GO ON STREETS TO RAISE FUND", 2009/01/19) reported that the large-scale charity movement “Love Under the Blue Sky” was held at all districts and counties around Shanghai city yesterday. The residents can see the information about the movement both on the streets and on mobile short messages. 20,000 volunteers went on the streets wearing uniform clothes for raising money. Director of Shanghai Charity Foundation said that the fund amount raised that day and its use would be told to the public in a timely manner and be made subject to social supervision.

China News Net ("CONSTANT LOVE MOVEMENT BECOMES THE WINDOW FOR CIVILIAN’S CHARITABLE EXPRESSION", 2009/01/19) reported that the Constant Love Movement was introduced by PRC Children and Teenagers Fund and Hengyuanxiang Group, to find volunteer parents nationwide to knit sweaters for orphans and disabled children. The wool was donated by Hengyuanxing Group for free. After three years, the movement was launched all around the country with tens of thousands of people participating in it. It was awarded “the most influential charity project” by 2008 China Charity Award yesterday in Beijing.

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27. PRC Environment

The First Finance Daily (Zhang Ke, "OVER 70% PEOPLE BELIEVE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE SERIOUS", 2009/01/19) reported that the national Ministry of Environmental Protection announced “China Public Environmental Protection Index (2008)” yesterday. According to the survey, environmental pollution issue ranks third in “the social issues of most concern to Chinese people”,

with 37.7%. 76.4% of the public believe the current environmental situation is “very serious” and “serious”, increasing by almost 10% from last year, which demonstrates that the public’s common concerns about the environment has not been lifted and their awareness of crisis is enhanced.

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III. ROK Report

28. Inter-Korea Relations

PRESSian (Jaechun Choi, "SMART POWER NOW, THE WORLD IS CHANGING, WHAT ‘2008 TOP TEN DPRK NEWS’ MEANS", 2009/01/19) wrote that Chosun Shinbo selected ‘2008 top ten news,’ commemorating the 60 th anniversary of the paper on December 24 th . “Execution of 12.1 Agreement” was the last and the only ROK-related news. Regarding the DPRK and U.S. relationship, a positive event, and regarding DPRK and ROK relationship, a negative event was chosen. There needs to be a change in our policy measures toward DPRK to one that is well-matched with U.S.’s smart power style foreign policies, and it must start with acknowledging the 6.15 Agreement and 10.4 Declaration instead of hoping to cooperate with Japan. Next, a policy change through entirely reforming the diplomacy for national security sector is necessary. Lastly, the ROK-U.S. alliance must be changed to more future-oriented and comprehensive one rather than focusing only on the conservation of powers. Now is the best time to change the direction for such a big change.

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