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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Program

The Associated Press (Jae-Soon Chang, "UN SAYS N. KOREA COULD RESTART NUCLEAR FACILITIES", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that International Atomic Energy Agency chief Mohamed El-Baradei said in Beijing on Monday "it could be a question of months" when asked how soon the DPRK could restart its nuclear facilities. However, El-Baradei also said he was hopeful that openness shown by the United States would help resume international talks with the DPRK.

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "S. KOREA QUIZZES IAEA ON STANCE OVER N. KOREA NUCLEAR STATUS", Seoul, 2009/04/21) reported that Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said Monday that the DPRK is a nuclear power, according to the German news agency DPA. "North Korea has nuclear weapons, which is a matter of fact," he was quoted as saying on the sidelines of a ministerial meeting on nuclear energy in Beijing. "I don't like to accept any country as a nuclear weapons state. We have to face reality." "We have instructed our embassy in Vienna to find out whether his comments reflect the IAEA's official position," an ROK foreign ministry official said. "Under the current NPT regime, North Korea cannot become a nuclear state," he added.

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2. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA SAYS NEVER HELPED N KOREA DEVELOP NUCLEAR ABILITY", 2009/04/20) reported that Wang Yiren, head of the PRC's Atomic Energy Authority, said in response to a reporter's question, "China has never had any cooperation with the DPRK in nuclear energy development." Trade between the two hit a record $2.79 billion in 2008, up 41% from the year before, according to PRC figures, with exports from the PRC to its neighbor accounting for about $2 billion of that.

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3. DPRK Missile Program

Kyodo News ("NORTH 'MISSILE FACTORY' USED JAPAN PARTS", New Delhi, 2009/04/20) reported that Japanese precision tools and steel were found in missile-making equipment taken from a DPRK freighter detained at an Indian port in June 1999 while en route to Pakistan, a former senior Indian official said Saturday. While the DPRK is known to have provided missile know how to Pakistan in return for nuclear weapons technology, this is the first concrete example of how Japanese equipment has played a part in the DPRK's proliferation of missile technology.

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4. Japan on DPRK Missile Test

Kyodo News ("ATTEMPT TO RETRIEVE NORTH'S ROCKET FROM SEAFLOOR UNLIKELY", 2009/04/20) reported that the Defense Ministry w ill probably not attempt to retrieve DPRK rocket components that fell into the seas off Japan because of the difficulties involved in such work, Vice Defense Minister Kohei Masuda said. "The drop locations have not been pinpointed," the ministry's top bureaucrat told reporters, adding that any deep-sea retrieval work would entail untold technical difficulties. Masuda said the government must first assess the costs and benefits of any retrieval effort, as well as the possible legal repercussions, before embarking on such an endeavor.

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5. DPRK Leadership

Joong-Ang Ilbo ("NORTH'S MILITARY STRENGTHENS ITS GRIP", 2009/04/20) reported that the DPRK's military has bolstered its authority over several key policy-making issues after a major restructuring of the country's ruling Workers' Party, ROK intelligence sources told the JoongAng Ilbo. The moves, experts say, create a bit of a power shift by eroding the influence of the DPRK's ruling party in several areas, including matters involving the ROK. The restructuring also diminishes the roles of some party members who have taken a more conciliatory stance on affairs with the ROK. "This has led to a hard-line policy that the North has adopted on South Korea of late," the source said.

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6. DPRK Sanctions and Economy

Reuters (Lucy Hornby and Tom Miles, "LITTLE LEVERAGE LEFT FOR NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS", Beijing, 2009/04/20) reported that lower commodity prices may prove more painful to the DPRK than the tightened sanctions. Trade between the DPRK and PRC has slipped in recent months, as a plunge in metals prices closed one of the DPRK's few channels of export revenues. The value of trade between the two countries dropped 3 percent in the first two months of 2009. The DPRK profited from strong prices for minerals and ores over the last few years, ramping up exports of zinc, lead and iron ore. Most of those exports have dropped again since last summer, in line with sharp decreases in metals prices buffeted by the global economic crisis.

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7. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA CAPABLE OF COUNTERATTACK AGAINST N. KOREA: DEFENSE CHIEF ", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that the ROK 's top defense official said his country has the ability to retaliate in kind should the DPRK provoke by assaulting Seoul with its artillery. The comments by Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee came after the DPRK warned that "Seoul is just 50 km away" from the border, apparently highlighting its capability to threaten the densely populated ROK capital with its frontline armory. "Even though Pyongyang is 150 km from us, it is only a number, and numbers do not mean much," Lee told a parliamentary hearing. "Our military is ready to immediately retaliate under the combined readiness with the United States against any provocation."

Yonhap (Kim Hyun, "TALKS DELAYED AS SEOUL, PYONGYANG DISAGREE ON FORMAT", Seoul, 2009/04/21) reported that inter-Korean government talks on Tuesday were being delayed because of differences over the agenda and procedural matters, Seoul officials said. Seoul's delegation crossed the military demarcation line at around 8:45 a.m., but nine hours later still had not sat down at the table with its DPRK counterpart, said Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Ho-nyoun. "We don't want to act against our principles," Kim said. "This meeting concerns the life of our citizen."

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8. US on Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "U.S. HOPES TWO KOREAS TO PRODUCE FRUITFUL OUTCOME IN RARE TALKS", Washington, 2009/04/20) reported that the US expressed hope that the rare

inter-Korean dialogue slated for Tuesday will help ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula that have been mounting since the DPRK's recent rocket launch. "The only thing I can say is that, as you know, for a long time we've encouraged dialogue between North Korea and South Korea," State Department spokesman Robert Wood said. "And we hope that the North will take advantage of this opportunity to have a fruitful dialogue with the Republic of Korea."

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9. US-DPRK Relations

The Korea Times ("DIPLOMACY AT WORK TO FREE US JOURNALISTS", 2009/04/20) reported that amid rising concerns that the DPRK is seeking to capitalize on the case of two U.S. journalists detained in the DPRK for illegal entry, the U.S. State Department said that a vigorous diplomatic work is under way to free the pair. Some analysts say the DPRK aims to contact the U.S. bilaterally rather than through the six-party talks amid escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula as a result of the DPRK's rocket launch last week. Talks on the journalists' release could conceivably broaden to include nuclear and missile issues.

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10. DPRK Energy Supply

Xinhua News ("DPRK LEADER CALLS FOR BUILDING MORE HYDROPOWER STATIONS", 2009/04/20) reported that Kim Jong Il, top leader of the DPRK, has called for building more hydropower stations as they are more economical for the energy-starving country, the official KCNA news agency said. It is difficult to build hydropower stations, but once they are built, they become not only edifices of eternal value but also more beneficial than thermal power stations and atomic power plants in various aspects, Kim said when inspecting the newly-built Nyongwon Hydropower Station.

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11. US-ROK Security Alliance

Hankyoreh ("SOUTH KOREA, U.S. DISAGREE ON MILITARY BASE RELOCATION TIMETABLE ", 2009/04/20) reported that Chang Soo-man, vice minister of national defense and General Walter Sharp, the head of the US Forces Korea (USFK), will be engaged in high-level discussions on the final details of the time table and expenses for the relocation of USFK bases to Pyeongtaek. The ROK has suggested that the Yongsan Army Garrison relocation should be complete by 2014 and the U.S. Second Infantry Division bases in Dongducheon and Uijeongbu by 2015. Meanwhile, the US is citing a lack of money and is countering that the base moves should be put off until 2016 or later.

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12. ROK Nuclear Power

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA SEEKING MARKETS FOR ITS NUCLEAR REACTORS: OFFICIAL ", Seoul, 2009/04/20) reported that the ROK is seeking export markets for its commercial nuclear reactors that have a proven track record and enjoy technological competitiveness, the country's education, science and technology minister said. Minister Ahn Byong-man said in a keynote address at the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Energy in the 21st Century in Beijing that the country has been committed to research and development (R&D) of nuclear reactors for the past 50 years.

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13. Japanese Nuclear Option

Bloomberg News (Takashi Hirokawa and Toko Sekiguchi, "NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE 'NOT AN OPTION' FOR JAPAN, KAWAMURA SAYS", 2009/04/20) reported that Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura said possessing nuclear weapons "is not an option" a day after a ruling party legislator suggested it should be considered. "Japan's policy has always been the three non-nuclear principles of no production, no introduction and no possession."

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14. Japan Economy and the Environment

Kyodo News ("GOV'T REVEALS 'GREEN NEW DEAL' POLICY TO BOOST ECO-MARKET ", Tokyo, 2009/04/20) reported that the government officially unveiled ambitious plans to bolster economic growth by promoting measures to tackle global warming and other environmental issues. The ''Green New Deal'' policy is designed to expand Japan's environment-linked market 1.7-fold from the 2006 level to 120 trillion yen by 2020 and double the employment in the market to 2.8 million in the same period. As one of the main features of the new policy, the government will provide interest of up to 3 percent on loans to be taken by business corporations for the purposes of introducing natural energy and equipment with low carbon dioxide emissions.

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15. Japan Environment

Mainichi Shimbun ("MILLIONS OF TONS OF YELLOW SAND LANDING IN JAPAN", 2009/04/20) reported that as much as 5 million tons of yellow sand from the PRC blow over Japan every year, with as much as half landing on the archipelago, a research team of the National Institute for Environment Studies has revealed. The team hopes that the research will lead more detailed forecasts of the phenomenon, and help clarify how yellow sand affects human health. There are concerns that it can aggravate hay fever and other respiratory problems.

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16. Sino-Russian Military Exercise

Agence France-Presse ("RUSSIA, CHINA WAR GAMES BEGIN IN TAJIKISTAN - MINISTRY",

2009/04/20) reported that more than one thousand soldiers from Russia, the PRC and Central Asia have arrived in Tajikistan for three days of joint military exercises, the country's defence ministry said. The war games are being held under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a regional group dominated by the PRC and Russia. The other members are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. "These exercises are aimed at perfecting the coordination of our countries in different anti-terrorism operations and preparing for the fight against international terror," ministry spokesman Faridun Makhmadaliev told AFP.

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17. PRC Military

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA PARLIAMENT TO DEBATE LAW ON DEFENSE MOBILIZATION-XINHUA", Beijing, 2009/04/20) reported that the PRC's parliament will debate a law that will give the legislative body the power to mobilize the military in times of war or emergency, state press reported Monday. The draft law on national defense mobilization was placed before the National People's Congress standing committee that opened a bimonthly session Monday, Xinhua news agency said. The document, should it get approval, would place the mobilization of the military under legal guidelines for the first time.

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18. PRC Public Diplomacy

The Financial Times ("NEW DAILY AIMS TO IMPROVE CHINA'S IMAGE", 2009/04/20) reported that the PRC's most successful tabloid launched an English-language newspaper, the first concrete step in a global media push aimed at improving the PRC's image abroad. The English edition of Global Times, an affiliate of People's Daily, the Communist party's mouthpiece, is set to become a test case for whether the PRC media can win the trust of a foreign audience. Beijing is pushing its main state-owned media including Xinhua, the official news agency, and China Central Television, to set up English-language news channels to bypass western media, which are perceived as being biased against the PRC. But media experts have cautioned that propaganda mouthpieces will struggle to appeal to western audiences.

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19. PRC Political Reform

Washington Post ("FOR CHINA'S NEW LEFT, OLD VALUES", 2009/04/20) reported that f or a growing number of Chinese, the solutions to the problems of the country's present -- including the income gap between rich and poor and the manipulation of the court system by state officials and company executives -- lie in its past, with the teachings of Mao Zedong. A nostalgia for the old days has increased amid the global financial crisis. The most influential critics, known collectively as the New Left, are not like the dissidents or political exiles of a previous generation. They are not calling for an overthrow of the Communist regime. Their recommendations and criticisms are, instead, based on a belief that state power can redress the injustices created by free markets, privatization and globalization. Their views are also characterized by a fierce nationalism and criticism of the

West.

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20. PRC AIDS Issue

The National ("YOUNG CHINA'S DESPERATE AIDS BATTLE", 2009/04/20) reported that according to a report made public today by Asia Catalyst, a New York-based non-governmental organisation, although the PRC has made strides in the fight against Aids, thousands of HIV-positive children are not getting the care and treatment they need. The report, I Will Fight to My Last Breath: Barriers to Aids Treatment for Children in China, describes how HIV-infected children face challenges getting the help that they are entitled to, including gaps in the government treatment programme, poverty, the refusal or inability of some hospitals to offer treatment, and local government inertia and even interference.

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21. PRC Energy

Peope's Daily ("N. CHINA REGION STRIVES TO BUILD MORE WIND POWER PLANTS ", 2009/04/20) reported that the wind power, once used only by herdsmen for cooking and lighting, will spread from remote cottages to the vast countryside in north PRC's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. An official of the regional government said Monday that wind power installed capacity of Inner Mongolia will reach 5 million kilowatts by 2010. "Wind power-installed capacity reached 3 million kilowatts in 2008 in the Inner Mongolia, accounting for one-third of that of the country's total," said Zhao Shuanglian, vice chairman of the autonomous region, at a ceremony for the region's first 850-kW wind power generator was successfully produced in Hohhot, capital of Inner Mongolia.

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22. PRC Nuclear Power

United Press International ("CHINA LAUNCHES NEW NUCLEAR POWER PLANT", Beijing, 2009/04/20) reported that the PRC says it has begun construction on a nuclear power plant that will use new technologies developed by U.S. firm Westinghouse. Officials kicked off construction Sunday on the Sanmen plant in eastern PRC's Zhejiang Province. The plant will feature the world's first use of new AP 1000 reactors, the state-run news agency Xinhua reported. "It is the biggest energy cooperation project between China and the United States," Zhang Guobao , vice minister in charge of the PRC's National Development and Reform Commission, told Xinhua. "It will contribute to the humankind's peaceful use of nuclear power."

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23. PRC Public Health

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA REPORTS 7 NEW DEATHS FROM CHILD VIRUS", 2009/04/16) reported that seven more children have died in an especially virulent outbreak of hand, foot and

mouth disease in central PRC, bringing this year's death toll from the virus to 57, state media reported Thursday. About 126,000 cases have been reported this year — nearly 55,000 in March alone, 31 of which were fatal. Almost all patients were children under age 5. Health officials have said this year's strain is especially strong. In the PRC's central Henan province alone, 25 deaths have been reported among about 31,000 cases, up 50 percent from figures released last week, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

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24. PRC Bird Flu

Xinhua News ("CHINA CONFIRMS BIRD FLU OUTBREAK IN LHASA", Beijing, 2009/04/20) reported that the PRC 's Ministry of Agriculture confirmed Sunday a new outbreak of bird flu in Lhasa. The national bird flu laboratory confirmed that the H5N1 virus was found in poultry sold on a poultry wholesale market in Chengguan District of Lhasa on April 12.

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25. PRC Environment

China Daily ("CLIMATE RISK FOR YANGTZE RIVER: REPORT", 2009/04/20) reported that climate change and major water conservation projects are a major risk to the long-term "health" of the Yangtze River, claimed a report released at the weekend. The Yangtze Conservation and Development Report 2009, compiled by the China Academy of Science (CAS), states the basin of the PRC's longest waterway has been hit by a yearly reduction in rain since 2006, brought on by global warming. The research also estimated that by 2030 the glacial area at the source of the Yangtze River will be reduced by 6.9 percent from the level recorded in 1970. "Long-tem observation and multi-disciplinary studies on possible impacts are needed to better understand what climate change will do to the river," said Yang Guishan, a CAS researcher and an author of the report.

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II. PRC Report

26. PRC Local Government

Beijing Daily (Wang Hao, "RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE INVOLVES IN DAILY COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT", 2009/04/20) reported that starting from this year, resident representative has become a permanent position in Heping Street, Dongcheng District, Beijing. The resident representative was only in use during the neighborhood committee election held once every three years in the past. But now, the new resident representative can participate in the regular community management and service for the community residents.

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27. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net (Yang Chengjun, "FIVE CITIES IN LIAONING PAY 4.75 MILLION YUAN ON ECOLOGICAL COMPENSATION", 2009/04/19) reported that according to Liaoning government, five cities in Liaoning have been monitored to over discharge sewage. According to related regulation, they have to pay a total of 4.75 million yuan of ecological compensation. The fine will be mainly used on water pollution control, ecological restoration and pollution reduction projects.

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III. ROK Report

28. DPRK-US Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("OBAMA-CHAVEZ HANDSHAKE, AND DPRK", 2009/04/21) writes that it is pity that Hugo Chavez, the anti-US leader, and President Barack Obama have shaken hands, but relations with the DPRK is going the other direction. The Obama administration is reaching out into the world and listening to what others have to say, with smart diplomacy, a combination of military-based hard power and soft power, at its base. The DPRK seems to have wrong calculations that they can make Obama put the DPRK on top of his diplomatic agenda.

Hankyoreh ("OBAMA'S SMART DIPLOMACY CHANGES WORLD CONFIGURATION", 2009/04/21) writes that President Obama has succeeded in starting talks with many nations that it formerly had conflicts with. Of course, it is too early to judge the long-term effects of the US new diplomatic strategies. However, the Obama administration's diplomatic strategy of admitting its faults and pursuing win-win situations and cooperation is definitely raising hopes for a new world with dialogue rather than monologues. The ROK should not be left out in the world with talks. The DPRK must come out to the tables right away, and ROK must strive to make it happen. It is time that ROK become smart and use the US smart diplomacy.

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29. ROK-PRC Relations

Seoul Economy ("CHINA SETS DRIVE TO INTERNATIONALIZE YUAN", 2009/04/21) writes that China is pushing to follow the US and become a superpower 'G2.' It remains just a saying, but in preparation of the yuan's internationalization and Pax Sinica, research is necessary on restructuring ROK-China relations in various areas such as economy, finance, and culture.

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30. PRC and Global Financial Crisis

Segyo Institute (Lee, Ilyoung, "EAST ASIA AFTER THE CRISIS", 2009/04/21) writes that the abuses of uncontrolled financial capital has been revealed, and while there are still no drastic measure to the situation, the game is still going on. The US is still in control, but such framework could no longer be respected. In unofficial places, people often mention of G2 system of US and China, or G1 system with China in the lead. China is comparatively better in the leadership of central government. China quickly dealt with the crisis. More importantly, the main Chinese elites are penetrating into the limits of accumulation method that not only worsens inequality but also depends too much on foreign countries. After the crisis, who will first take step into the new world?

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31. Missile Defense

PSPD ("2009 SEOUL INT'L CONFERENCE JOINT DECLARATION AGAINST MISSILE DEFENSE AND ARMS RACE", 2009/04/21) writes that from April 16 th to 18 th , 2009 Seoul International Conference against Asia Pacific Missile Defense and Arms Race was held with 50 foreign activists. At the conference, a joint declaration was passed to stop formation of missile defense and arms race in order to protect peace in the Korean peninsula, East Asia, and the international society. They promised to work to make a new peace mechanism for preventing confrontation and peaceful coexistence, and to inform the public of the shortcomings of missile defense and arms race and confrontation caused by it.

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IV. Briefing Book Update

32. Global Nuclear Futures Briefing Book

("GLOBAL NUCLEAR FUTURES BRIEFING BOOK UPDATED", 2009/04/21) Three new pages have been added to the Global Nuclear Futures Briefing Book. In the Technical area, a page on "New Nuclear Reactors" looks at whether new reactor designs can help solve problems of safety and proliferation; the Policy area has a page looking at the relationship between nuclear weapons and energy security; and the Country area has a new page on Indonesia. In addition, new items have been added to existing pages on US Global Nuclear Policy and Japan. The briefing book can be found at: http://www.globalcollab.org/Nautilus/programs/energy-security/nuclear-briefing-book

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