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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. Alleged DPRK-Myanmar Cooperation

Associated Press (Denis D. Gray, "IS MYANMAR GOING NUCLEAR?", Bangkok, 2009/07/21) reported that the recent aborted voyage of a DPRK ship, photographs of massive tunnels and a top secret meeting have raised alarm bells that Myanmar may be aspiring to join the nuclear club — with help from Pyongyang. There's suspicion that something is going on, and increasingly that cooperation with North Korea may have a nuclear undercurrent. We are very much looking into it," says David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security. An ROK intelligence expert, citing satellite imagery , says the ship's mission appeared to be related to a Myanmar nuclear program and also carried Scud-type missiles. The expert said the DPRK is helping Myanmar set up uranium- and nuclear-related facilities, echoing similar reports that have long circulated in Myanmar's exile community and media.

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2. DPRK on UN Sanctions

KBS News ("NK REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE UN SANCTIONS ", 2009/07/20) reported that a DPRK diplomat says his country will not recognize any sanctions placed on the DPRK by the U.N. Security Council. The deputy chief of the DPRK's permanent mission to the U.N., Pak Duk-hoon, told reporters in New York that Pyongyang remains firm in its stance not to comply with the new U.N. sanctions. He accused the U.N. of attempting to use the sanctions to alter the DPRK's system and principles. Pak said the DPRK will continue to function as it always has, with or without sanctions, as

Pyongyang has dealt with similar restrictions for more than half a century.

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3. US on US-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("CLINTON LIKENS NORTH KOREA TO UNRULY CHILDREN", 2009/07/20) reported that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the DPRK should not receive the attention it is seeking through behavior like missile launches and likened Pyongyang 's behavior to that of unruly children . "What we've seen is this constant demand for attention," Clinton said in an interview. "And maybe it's the mother in me or the experience that I've had with small children and unruly teenagers and people who are demanding attention -- don't give it to them, they don't deserve it, they are acting out," she said.

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4. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

KBS News ("'NK MAY BE SEEKING TO RETURN TO NEGOTIATIONS'", 2009/07/20) reported that a top aide of US President Barack Obama says the DPRK may be seeking to return to negotiations after heightening regional tension with its recent missile and nuclear tests. Speaking at London-based think tank International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), Gary Samore said Pyongyang seems to be seeking a way to ease tension. The US government-wide coordinator on the prevention of weapons of mass destruction terrorism and proliferation pointed out that Pyongyang's recent statement in response to the United Nations sanctions was considerably mild. Samore said it is typical for the DPRK to follow its aggressive behavior with a peaceful gesture after it believes some benefit has been achieved.

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5. US on Detained Journalists

KBS News ("'CONGRESS POSTPONES RESOLUTION ON IMPRISONED JOURNALISTS' ", 2009/07/20) reported that U.S.-based broadcaster Radio Free Asia reports the U.S. Congress has postponed its voting on the resolution calling on Pyongyang to release two U.S. journalists detained by the DPRK for almost four months. The report said the U.S. State Department requested Congress postpone the voting because Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has asked Pyongyang for the women's release and University of Georgia Professor Park Han-sik recently visited the DPRK to discuss the issue on behalf of the department. RFA speculated that the State Department believes there is no need to provoke Pyongyang with a Congressional resolution while Washington is negotiating under the table for the journalists' release.

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6. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

The Financial Times (Christian Oliver, "SEOUL PLANS $40BN AID FUND FOR NORTH KOREA",

2009/07/20) reported that the ROK has drawn up an enhanced package of incentives for the international community to entice the DPRK back to talks on denuclearisation, putting hard figures on previously vague promises of aid. The carrots would include a $40bn (£24bn, €28bn) aid fund with input from the Asian Development Bank, World Bank and governments. There would be five free trade zones and 100 exporting companies generating $3m each. The international community would help build railways, motorways and telecom networks and train a modern industrial workforce of 300,000. Forests would be replanted. Wi Sung-lac, the ROK's nuclear negotiator, also told Goldman Sachs that Pyongyang would gain security guarantees and restored diplomatic relations if it gave up its atomic weapons programme.

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7. Inter-Korean Economic Relations

KBS News ("JUNE INTER-KOREAN TRADE DOWN 20% ", 2009/07/20) reported that the volume of inter-Korean trade shrank 20 percent in June compared to the same month last year. The Unification Ministry said the trade volume fell to 118 million U.S. dollars from 147 million dollars posted in June of 2008. In particular, aid to the DPRK plunged nearly 83 percent from almost five-point-seven million dollars to less than one million dollars year on year.

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8. ROK Military

Korea Times ("NAVY TO CREATE MOBILE FLEET IN FEB.", 2009/07/20) reported that t he ROK Navy plans to establish a strategic mobile fleet of two Aegis destroyer-led squadrons by next February in a bid to develop blue-water operational capability beyond coastal defense against a DPRK invasion, a Navy source said. The fleet will participate in combined or multinational maritime exercises, including the annual Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) held in waters off Hawaii, from next year. During RIMPAC, in particular, the Sejong the Great KDX-III destroyer will test-fire ship-to-air SM-2 Block IIIA/B Tactical Standard Missiles for the first time as part of Aegis combat system ship qualification trails (CSSQT) with allied nations, he said.

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9. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("NORTH KOREA STRENGHTENS LABOR DISCIPLINE FOR THE 150-DAY BATTLE", 2009/07/20) reported that DPRK Labor Vice-minister Kim Hyeong Jo has emphasized that the "revolutionary labor spirit" will be further emphasized in order to ensure the success of the '150-day Battle' to rebuild the economy, which got underway on April 20. The article quoted Kim as stating, "The most important thing in establishing the revolutionary labor spirit is firmly establishing Juche's perspective on labor," and in order to do so, to instill "a deep understanding of the meaning and goals of socialist labor," to include a "sense of honor and responsibility regarding one's job." Furthermore, the vice-minister ordered labor training to be carried out, "closely linking education on devotion, collectivism, and socialist patriotism."

Xinhua News ("DPRK LAUNCHES 150-DAY CAMPAIGN TO BOOST NATIONAL ECONOMY",

Pyongyang, 2009/07/20) reported that the DPRK is striving to boost the national economy by redoubling efforts in all sectors of the economy in a campaign called the "150-day battle." Thousands of factories have completed production ahead of schedule, and the production of coal, machinery, electrical locomotives and electromotors has increased by a big margin. The sectors of coal mining and railway transportation have exceeded their production targets by 25 percent and 1 percent respectively. The "150-day battle" has also sped up the construction of hydroelectric power plants across the country.

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10. ROK Space Program

JoongAng Daily ("NARO-1 WILL MISS ITS LAUNCH DATE DUE TO TECHNOLOGICAL HITCHES", 2009/07/20) reported that the ROK will postpone its first space rocket launch due to technical complications, the Education Ministry said yesterday. The Korea Satellite Launch Vehicle-1, or Naro-1, was scheduled to take off on July 30. “The center was scheduled to perform a combustion test on July 23 but the center notified us that the test would have to be delayed until after July 27 because of technical problems,” said Lee Sang-mok, an official of the ministry on Thursday. “This means we will have to put off the launch for four days or more.”

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11. Japanese Politics

Reuters (Yoko Kubota and Yoko Nishikawa, "JAPAN PM ASO CALLS ELECTION, RISKS HISTORIC DEFEAT", Tokyo, 2009/07/21) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso dissolved parliament's lower house on Tuesday for an election on August 30. Aso apologized for his failings and admitted that the party's internal chaos had contributed to recent local election losses. "I am firmly resolved that we will sincerely accept the people's feelings, will and criticism and start afresh," he said, vowing to stay in his post until the economy recovered. "This is a major, revolutionary election to allow politicians to take the lead in Japanese government," Democratic Party leader Yukio Hatoyama told party members. "We should face it with a sense of historic mission."

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12. Japan Swine Flu Outbreak

Agence France-Presse ("SWINE FLU SPREADING RAPIDLY IN JAPAN: GOVT", Tokyo, 2009/07/20) reported that the number of swine flu cases in Japan has topped 4,000, the health ministry said, marking a rise of roughly 1,000 cases in four days. As of 6:00 am (2100 GMT Saturday), the ministry confirmed there had been 4,027 infections of the A(H1N1) virus since it was first reported in Japan in early May. In the 24-hour period to Sunday morning, the ministry counted 150 new cases. From Friday morning to Saturday morning , 209 new cases were recorded.

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13. Japan Defense

Agence France Press ("NKOREA, CHINA TOP JAPAN'S SECURITY CONCERNS", 2009/07/20) reported that the DPRK is an increasing threat to regional security and may be capable of building a nuclear device small enough to launch on a missile sooner than expected, Japan's Defense Ministry said. The report also said the PRC's military development is also a major concern to Tokyo. It said the PRC navy is reinforcing its submarines and surface combat ships with upgraded air defense and anti-ship missile capabilities. Further, the PRC has intensified maritime activities near Japan and appears to be seeking to add an aircraft carrier to its fleet, the report said.

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14. Sino-Indian Relations

Times of India ("INTEL CENTRES TO KEEP TABS ON CHINA'S MISSILES, NAVY", 2009/07/20) reported that stung by the PRC's aggressive posturing, including its deployment of missiles in Delingha near Tibet, and other increasingly hostile activities in India's neighbourhood, the Cabinet Committee on Security is considering a proposal to set up separate centres for nuclear or missile intelligence and maritime security. In fact, with strong backing by National Security Advisor M K Narayanan, the CCS, which is still smarting under the PRC`aggression', is all set to give the go-ahead to the proposal. The inability of central intelligence agencies like RAW, DIA and IB in keeping a tab on recent deployment of intermediate range missiles like DF-4 and reports that Beijing might station ICBMs in the Delingha region seem to have alarmed authorities into action.

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15. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France Press ("TAIWAN, CHINA TO OPEN TOURIST LIAISON OFFICES", 2009/07/20) reported that Taiwan and the PRC will open up semi-official tourist liaison offices, in yet another sign of fast-warming ties between the onetime fierce rivals, an official said. Representatives from the Taiwan Strait Tourism Association and the PRC's Cross-Straits Tourism Exchange Association made the decision during talks in Hong Kong in early July, a Taiwanese official said on condition of anonymity.

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16. PRC on US Espionage Allegations

Agence France Press ("CHINA DISMISSES US SPY CHARGES AS FABRICATION", 2009/07/20) reported that Beijing said that a PRC-born former Boeing engineer convicted by a US court of spying for the PRC had been set up, and insisted it had no links to the espionage case. "The allegation that a so-called Chinese person stole trade secrets in the United States and gave them to China is purely a fabrication made up out of ulterior motives," the foreign ministry said in a short statement. The ministry refused further comment on the case. The former Boeing engineer, Dongfan 'Greg' Chung, was convicted by a US court last week of stealing technology and trade secrets for the PRC for decades, including data on NASA's space shuttle programme.

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17. Sino-Australian Relations

The New York Times ("CHINA MAY EASE CHARGES OF RIO TINTO WORKERS", Shanghai, 2009/07/20) reported that the PRC _ 's investigation into whether four employees of the British-Australian mining giant Rio Tinto stole state documents may be treated as a commercial case rather than an espionage case, Australia's foreign affairs minister said. In an interview with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the minister, Stephen Smith, suggested that the four employees, including one Australian, could be spared the more serious spying charges.

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18. Sino-Russian Military Exercise

China Daily ("JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE TARGETS SPREAD OF TERRORISM", 2009/07/20) reported that the Sino-Russia joint military exercise codenamed Peace "Mission 2009" will help guard the countries against terrorists, particularly after the July 5 Xinjiang riot. Major General Wang Haiyun, a former military attache to Russia and an expert in international strategy, said in Beijing that as members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), PRC and Russia's joint drill will help both countries protect core security interests against terrorists, separatists and extremists. "To some extent, the July 5 Xinjiang riot pushed forward anti-terrorism cooperation between China and Russia," he said.

People's Daily Online ("CHINA'S FIGHTER BOMBER CRASHES DURING CHINA-RUSSIA JOINT MILITARY DRILL", 2009/07/20) reported that a People's Liberation Army's (PLA) fighter bomber crashed during the China-Russia Peace Mission 2009 joint military exercise on the morning of July 19, according to Shanghai-based Dragon TV. The report said that the fighter bomber crashed above Taonan tactical training base in Jilin Province. It is still unknown whether the two pilots aboard the fighter had escaped. The military is investigating the cause behind the plane crash.

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19. PRC Human Rights

The Associated Press ("CHINA SHUTS DOWN LEGAL CENTER, REVOKES LICENSES", 2009/07/20) reported that Beijing officials shut down a legal research center led by activist lawyers, while the PRC revoked the licenses of more than 50 lawyers, many known for their human rights cases. The moves appear to be a new government push to oversee PRC activist lawyers, who run the risk of being detained, harassed, attacked and threatened with disbarment for their work. About 20 officials from Beijing's Civil Affairs Bureau showed up Friday morning at the offices of the Gongmeng rights group's legal research center and confiscated computers and other equipment, said office manager Tian Qizhuang. They also questioned researchers and other employees on the nature of their work.

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20. PRC Environment

Reuters ("CHINA DUST CLOUD CIRCLED GLOBE IN 13 DAYS", Hong Kong, 2009/07/20) reported that dust clouds generated by a huge dust storm in the PRC's Taklimakan desert in 2007 made more than one full circle around the globe in just 13 days, a Japanese study using a NASA satellite has found. " Asian dust is usually deposited near the Yellow Sea , around the Japan area, while Sahara dust ends up around the Atlantic Ocean and coast of Africa," said Itsushi Uno of Kyushu University's Research Institute for Applied Mechanics. "But this study shows that China dust can be deposited into the (Pacific Ocean)," he told Reuters by telephone. "Dust clouds contain 5 percent iron, that is important for the ocean."

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21. PRC Energy Use

China Daily ("MORE RURAL AREAS TURN TO BIOGAS", 2009/07/20) reported that Wu Ailing, a 45-year-old farmer living in the village of Xiguan in Qixian county, near Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi province, has been using self-generated biogas for cooking for eight years. She is among many of the PRC's farmers who are benefiting from the government's initiative to develop biogas projects in rural PRC. The goal is to combat pollution and improve the living conditions of farmers.

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22. PRC Energy Supply

China Daily ("CNOOC, SINOPEC TO BUY ANGOLA OIL STAKE", 2009/07/20) reported that CNOOC and Sinopec have agreed to buy a stake in an Angolan oil block from US oil major Marathon Oil, as the PRC state-owned oil companies continue to buy up overseas energy assets. The companies said in statements that the PRC companies would form a 50-50 venture and pay $1.3 billion for a 20 percent stake in the highly prospective block, which has already yielded 12 discoveries. In recent years, PRC oil companies have been pacing the globe to secure energy assets to fuel the fast-growing Asian powerhouse's economy.

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II. PRC Report

23. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction

Xinhua Net ("BOSIDENG GROUP DONATES TEN MILLION RMB FOR CONSTRUCTION OF BEICHUAN MIDDLE SCHOOL", 2009/07/20) reported that Bosideng Group, a down wear producer, has donated ten million RMB for the construction of Beichuan Middle School. Beichuan Middle School was totally destroyed during 512 earthquake last year. The newly constructed School can provide board and lodging for 5200 students.

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24. PRC Civil Society and Public Health

China News Net ("VILLAGE HEALTH STATIONS FUNDED BY HUO YINGDONG FOUNDATION TO BE FINISHED", 2009/07/20) reported that 20 standard village health stations in Jingyuan County, Gansu Province, funded by Huo Yingdong Foundation with 1 million RMB, will finish construction by the end of July. These health stations will play an active role in further improving rural health and medical environment, and facilitating medical service for residents.

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25. PRC Environment

Legal Evening News ("BEIJING TO START FIRST AGED REFUSE TREATMENT PROJECT", 2009/07/20) reported that Beitiantang Aged Refuse Treatment Project, Beijing's first aged refuse treatment project, is planned to start in August, sources with City Planning Committee of Fengtai District of Beijing this morning. The area to be treated is 4.6 million cubic meters, and the total project will be completed by June 2010.

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