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MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Donga Ilbo ("US: NK LIKELY TO ACCEPT CONDITIONS FOR NUKE TALKS", Seoul, 2009/09/21) reported that Kurt Campbell, U.S. assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, said in Tokyo Friday that the DPRK will apparently accept conditions to return to the six-way nuclear talks. "If I understood that report correctly, and I haven't seen it, it sounds as if North Korea is underscoring that it will accept those conditions," Campbell said.

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "SEOUL SCRUTINIZES NK'S SINCERITY OVER NUKES", Seoul, 2009/09/20) reported that the DPRK dispatched a delegation led by Vice Foreign Minister Pak Kil-yon to New York, Friday, to take part in the 64th session of the U.N. General Assembly. "I think the delegates may say that Pyongyang is willing to have bilateral talks with Washington and rejoin the six-party denuclearization talks if the United States stops its hostile policies toward North Korea," Prof. Yang Moo-jin at Seoul's University of North Korean Studies said. He continued, "There is a possibility that the delegation would clarify North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's recent positive remarks toward talks with other countries."

Korea Times (Kim Se-jeong, "FOREIGN MINISTER WARNS OF N. KOREAN NUCLEAR THREAT", Seoul, 2009/09/18) reported that ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Yu Myung-hwan said Friday, "It's naive to believe that the North Korean nuclear weapons are a mere bargaining chip." "The North aims at the South," he said. "It used to be the case that the inter-Korean relations were dealt with more seriousness than denuclearization of North Korea. But, I think, denuclearization can no longer take the back seat," he said. Yu said the multilateral approach would be the best means to resolve the DPRK nuclear issue and that "South Korea and the U.S. see eye to eye on that."

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3. ROK on US-DPRK Relations

Korea Times ("EX-UNIFICATION MINISTER URGES OBAMA TO MEET KIM", Seoul, 2009/09/19) reported that former ROK Unification Minister Chung Dong-young Friday called on U.S. President Barack Obama to hold a one-on-one meeting with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. "I propose that President Obama invite Chairman Kim Jong-il to Washington if negotiations on the North Korean nuclear issue make some progress," Rep. Chung of the major opposition Democratic Party said. He added: "If Chairman Kim Jong-il's visit to Washington is difficult, President Obama will be able to meet him in a third country."

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4. US on DPRK Leadership

Yonhap ("OBAMA SAYS KIM JONG-IL IS HEALTHY AND IN FIRM CONTROL", 2009/09/21) reported that U.S. President Barack Obama said Sunday that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is healthy and in firm control of state affairs. Obama stated, "That's important to know, because we don't have a lot of interaction with the North Koreans. And, you know, President Clinton had a chance to see him close up and have conversations with him." Obama said he would "not go into any more details than that," but added, "There's no doubt that this is somebody who, you know, I think for a while people thought was slipping away. He's reasserted himself. It does appear ... he was more concerned about succession when he was sick, maybe less so now that he's well."

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap ("HALF OF S. KOREANS ACCEPT DIVIDED PENINSULA UNDER PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE", Seoul, 2009/09/20) reported that the Korea Peace Institute carried out a poll in early June on 1,078 people aged between 19 and 59. Answers to a question on attitudes towards the peninsula remaining divided if the two Koreas coexist peacefully averaged 5.54 points on a scale of zero-to-10. Female respondents averaged 5.95 points, while male respondents averaged 5.15 points. Those in their 20s averaged 3.9 points regarding interest in issues related to defectors from the DPRK. Respondents averaged 3.87 points regarding their willingness to contribute 30 percent of personal income to costs stemming from unification.

Yonhap ("N.K. TIGHTENS CONTROL OF FISHING VESSELS NEAR BORDER", Seoul, 2009/09/20) reported that the DPRK was reportedly tightening control of fishing boats operating near the inter-

Korean maritime border in the West Sea, informed sources said Sunday. "The North's patrol vessels are controlling the activities of fishing boats near the Northern Limit Line (NLL). They are regulating boats that intrude into the NLL," a government source said, requesting anonymity.

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6. Reunions of Separated Families

Korea Times ("ADVANCE TEAM FOR FAMILY REUNIONS HEAD TO NK", Seoul, 2009/09/21) reported that an advance team from the ROK left for the DPRK Monday to consult details concerning the upcoming reunions of families separated by the Korean War. The 10-member team comprising ROK Red Cross and government officials departed for Mt. Geumgang, where they will engage in administrative and technical preparations, the Unification Ministry said.

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7. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("THE CLOSING OF PYONGSONG WHOLESALE MARKET", Seoul, 2009/09/18) reported that the Network for North Korean Democracy and Human Rights (Nknet) said that the wholesale market near Pyongsong Plaza and the provincial committee building completely closed its doors in mid-June. The reported reason behind the closure was "triggered by the North Hwanghae Provincial Secretary's proposal to close down Pyongsong jangmadang. He stated that 'there is no use for such market although it is the most profitable market in North Korea. Since the profits are embezzled by individuals and not utilized towards the beautification of the city, it serves no benefit to society.'"

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8. DPRK Internal Situation

Yonhap ("N.K. EXTENDS LABOR DRIVE BY 100 DAYS", Seoul, 2009/09/21) reported that the DPRK touted its just-ended 150-day labor campaign a "shining success" but ordered its citizens to continue their efforts for another 100 days. "This campaign is the final charge," the Rodong Shinmun said, adding it will lay "a springboard from which to achieve greater success next year, the 65th anniversary of the founding of the party," and lead the country through "the gate to a great prosperous and powerful nation in 2012." "Through the above-said triumphant campaign the Korean people clearly showed the world that no force on earth can break the indomitable faith (of the regime)... and no 'sanctions' on the part of the imperialists can affect us."

Donga Ilbo ("N. KOREA GROWING MORE TOLERANT OF FOREIGN MOVIES", Seoul, 2009/09/19) reported that the DPRK is slowly but steadily opening up its market for foreign movies and shows. The Central Broadcasting Station, the nation's sole TV channel, on July 3 aired a commercial for Taedonggang Beer, the DPRK's first. Since then, the station has launched a series of commercials for hawking products like Kaesong Ginseng, Cosmos Hairpin and a quail dish of the restaurant Okryukwan. The latest programs include those on science and technology and culture of other nations. In prime time, the station even televised a Russian ballet performance of Swan Lake for one hour.

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9. ROK Defense

Korea Times (Lee Tae-hoon, "SEOUL CAPABLE OF STRIKING NK NUCLEAR SITES", Seoul, 2009/09/18) reported that Kim Tae-young, chairman of the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff and defense minister-designate, said Friday the military has confirmed the location of the DPRK's nuclear sites. Asked about a possible preemptive strike on the DPRK, Lee said the ROK is capable of striking target sites before the DPRK uses nuclear weapons.

Yonhap ("NEW ARMY CHIEF VOWS TO COUNTER DIVERSIONARY N.K. MOVES", Seoul, 2009/09/21) reported that ROK Army Chief of Staff General Han Min-gu, sworn in on Monday, vowed to back his country's resolve not to fall for what he termed the DPRK's diversionary tactics of alternate dialogue and hostility. "North Korea is wielding the double tactics of appeasement and provocation while continuing to pose a direct and grave threat," Han said in a speech made available through email by the Army. "It is of the utmost necessity that the Army maintains caution and readiness."

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10. ROK Anti-Piracy Activities

Associated Press ("SKOREAN DESTROYER RESCUES 5 YEMENI FISHERMEN", Seoul, 2009/09/20) reported that the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff said an ROK destroyer repelled pirates pursuing cargo ships off the coast of Yemen and rescued five Yemeni fishermen. They said the destroyer dispatched a helicopter Saturday after learning that pirates were chasing the three cargo ships.

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11. ROK National Intelligence Service

Korea Times ("SPY AGENCY'S BALLOONING BUDGET UNDER SCRUTINY", Seoul, 2009/09/19) reported that amid the unfolding controversy over the alleged use of the nation's top spy agency fund to snoop on civic organizations, the large sum of unexplained expense used by the National Intelligence Service is increasingly becoming under scrutiny, Kyunghyang Ilbo said Saturday. According to a National Assembly report released on Friday, the amount of special activities fee, which doesn't require receipts that show where the money is spent took up 56.4 percent or 486 billion won, which is much larger than, for example, that for the Defense Ministry that tallied at 164 billion won.

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12. ROK Politics

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "72% BACK REVISION OF CONSTITUTION", Seoul, 2009/09/20) reported that about 72.2 percent of ROK citizens support a revision of the Constitution, according to

a Hankook Ilbo-Korea Times survey of 1,000 adults across the country conducted by Media Research last week. Thirty-six percent wanted the ROK to introduce the U.S.-style two-term, four-year presidential system, while 30.6 percent back the current five-year single-term presidency. About 16.2 percent stood behind a power sharing system between the president and the prime minister.

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13. Imjin River Flooding Incident

Korea Herald (Kim So-hyun, "CHARGES PRESSED OVER IMJIN FLOOD DEATHS", Seoul, 2009/09/21) reported that the ROK police requested arrest warrants for two people for the Imjin River flooding disaster that killed six campers early this month. An employee of the Korea Water Resources Corp., surnamed Song, and an employee of the Yeoncheon county office, surnamed Koh, face charges of dereliction of duty and professional negligence that resulted in deaths.

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14. ROK Energy

Yonhap ("GOV'T TO LOWER CUSTOMS DUTIES ON ECO-FRIENDLY ENERGY PRODUCTS", Seoul, 2009/09/21) reported that the Ministry of Strategy and Finance said Monday the ROK will lower customs duties on eco-friendly energy products from Wednesday to bolster efforts to promote the use of clean, usable resources. The measures call for a reduction of 50 percent in duties on 31 new products and components. "Importers of eco-friendly products will pay 10.8 billion won less on customs duties, which will help expand local use," a ministry official said.

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15. ROK in IAEA

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "KOREA ELECTED MEMBER OF IAEA'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS", Seoul, 2009/09/18) reported that the ROK as been elected as a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s governing body, a two-year post. Shim Yoon-joe, ROK ambassador to Austria, will represent the ROK at the organization. So far, the ROK has been elected 13 times to the same post.

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16. Sino-ROK Relations

Yonhap ("EXILED UIGHUR ACTIVIST HELD AT KOREAN AIRPORT", Seoul, 2009/09/18) reported that an exiled Uighur activist who was to attend an international forum was being held at an ROK airport for the third day after having been barred from entering the country, forum organizers said Thursday. Dolkun Isa, 42, arrived at Incheon International Airport Tuesday night to attend the World Forum for Democratization in Asia (WFDA) in Seoul, but he has been stopped from entering the country and held at an immigration office since then, they said. "We don't know exact reasons yet, but it seems like being on a blacklist by Chinese government could be a problem in South Korea," Bo

Tedards, an organizer of WFDA, said.

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17. ROK-Japan Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("JAPAN HOPES FOR 'FRESH START' IN SEOUL RELATIONS", Tokyo, 2009/09/19) reported that Japanese foreign minister Katsuya Okada is "optimistic" about the state of Japan-ROK relations. "With a new century of Japan-South Korea relations in mind, I believe we should develop deep and future-oriented relations between the two countries," Okada said. Okada stressed that he and Prime Minister Hatoyama both believe Japan "must have the courage to face our history."

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18. US-Japan Nuclear Agreement

Asahi Shimbun ("NUKE PACT PROBE WON'T 'HURT' TIES", Tokyo, 2009/09/21) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada discussed the government's investigation into a secret nuclear weapons pact with the United States with visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell on Friday. They both agreed that the probe will not have any bearing on bilateral relations. Campbell noted that documents disclosed in the United States have already confirmed the pact existed.

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19. US-Japan Status of Forces Agreement

Yomiuri Shimbun (Hidemichi Katsumata, "PREINDICTMENT TRANSFERS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN GOVT'S SIGHTS", Tokyo, 2009/09/19) reported that a revision draft on the US-Japan Status of Forces Agreement worked out by the three ruling coalition parties in the spring of last year consists of two main points. One is to revise criminal jurisdiction so that all suspects can be transferred to Japanese custody before indictment if so requested by the Japanese side. Currently, preindictment transfer is limited to suspects in murders and other very serious crimes. The other point is an "environmental clause" that would allow the central and local governments to conduct on-the-spot inspections when environmental pollution is suspected at U.S. military bases and exercise ranges and make it mandatory for the U.S. military to restore the damaged areas to their original condition.

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20. Japanese Role in Afghanistan

Associated Press (Jay Alabaster, "JAPAN MAY PROVIDE MORE AID TO AFGHANISTAN", Tokyo, 2009/09/20) reported that Japan is considering sending more financial aid to Afghanistan after its current naval refueling mission ends next January, but has no intention of sending ground troops to

the region, Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada said Sunday. "In the current situation we can't guarantee the safety of our civilians, so it may be the case that we provide funding instead," Okada said.

Yomiuri Shimbun ("U.S. 'SEEKING ALTERNATIVE TO REFUELING' BEFORE OBAMA'S VISIT", Tokyo, 2009/09/20) reported that the U.S. government has called on Tokyo to present an alternative to the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean before President Barack Obama visits Japan in mid-November. Asked about the prodding from the United States, a senior Japanese government official indicated Tokyo would strive to reach an agreement with Washington on an alternative assistance plan. "We'd like to make the president's visit meaningful," the official said. "It would be better to reach various agreements."

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21. Japan-Australia Defense Cooperation

Kyodo ("JAPAN EYES DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGREEMENT WITH AUSTRALIA", Tokyo, 2009/09/21) reported that Japan is considering signing a defense logistics agreement with Australia that would enable the two countries to share food, fuel and other supplies and services, according to government sources. Such an agreement would likely help Japan's Self-Defense Forces expand their scope of international cooperation, but could face resistance from a ruling coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party.

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22. Japanese Defense Spending

Asahi Shimbun (Kuniichi Tanida, "CUTBACKS PUT DEFENSE INDUSTRY UNDER THE GUN", Tokyo, 2009/09/19) reported that since fiscal 2003, 20 Japanese subcontractors involved in the manufacture of fuel tanks or landing gear for fighter jets are either in the process of leaving the defense field or have already left. A Defense Ministry study has found that among companies that were involved in ground military equipment, including tanks, 13 have gone bankrupt and 35 have either gone out of business or left the defense industry. Those involved in the production of defense equipment warn that the entire foundation of defense manufacturing and technology in Japan is on the verge of collapse.

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23. Japan Climate Change

Kyodo ("HATOYAMA TO SEND 'STRONG MESSAGE' ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING ON U.S. VISIT", Tokyo, 2009/09/20) reported that prior to his scheduled speech at a U.N. climate change summit in New York on Tuesday, new Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and other ministers agreed Sunday that he should send a "strong message" to international society regarding Tokyo's efforts to tackle global warming, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano told reporters. Hatoyama is expected to declare at the U.N. summit that Japan will aim to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020 from 1990 levels and offer energy-saving technologies and funds to developing nations under the "Hatoyama Initiative" as part of his efforts to tackle global warming, according to

a government source.

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24. Japanese Space Program

Asahi Shimbun ("JAPANESE CARGO VEHICLE DOCKS AT INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION", Tokyo, 2009/09/19) reported that Japan's first unmanned space transportation vehicle on Friday completed a successful berth with the International Space Station, where it will unload observation equipment and supplies. Koji Yamanaka, HTV flight director at the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, stated, "I believe this is a success that will contribute not only to Japan's space exploration, but the world's."

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25. Cross Strait Relations

BBC ("TAIWAN CITY TO SCREEN KADEER FILM", Kaoshiung, 2009/09/20) reported that officials in Kaoshiung said a documentary about exiled Uighur activist Rebiya Kadeer would be shown this week, not during a festival next month as originally planned. On Friday, a spokesman from Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Office said it opposed the screening and urged the city "not to stir up trouble" in cross-strait ties, Xinhua news agency reported.

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26. PRC Social Unrest

Agence France-Presse ("HU SAYS CHINA DEVELOPMENT FACES 'NEW PROBLEMS'", Beijing, 2009/09/20) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao said Sunday that the country's rapid development faced "a series of new problems" including maintaining social stability. He called on members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference to "assist the party and the government in doing its ethnic and religious work well, promote national unity, religious harmony and social stability." "We must refer to the fruits of mankind's political civilisation to develop socialist democracy , but we must by no means imitate the Western political system 's method," he added.

Associated Press (Gillian Wong, "BEIJING STUDENTS PROTEST TEACHER'S DETENTION", Beijing, 2009/09/20) reported that nearly a hundred university students gathered outside a Beijing district police bureau Sunday to demand the release of Ding Xiaoping, a lecturer and former leader of 1989 Tiananmen pro-democracy demonstrations whom they believe is being held unfairly by authorities. "He was taken away for political reasons. The police want to limit his activity," said Yu Zhiwei, a former student of Ding. "The students will not tolerate seeing their teacher being bullied by police," he said.

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27. PRC Ethnic Unrest

BBC ("CHINA VOWS SEPARATISM CRACKDOWN", Beijing, 2009/09/18) reported that the PRC's ruling Communist Party (CPC) vowed to take tough action on ethnic separatist activity at its annual conference. The CPC announced it intended to "effectively prevent and resolutely crack down on ethnicity-related separatist activities". "Under the new circumstances, we should continue to promote the progress of ethnic unity to ensure the country's long-term social stability and harmony," it said.

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28. PRC Leadership

Bloomberg ("CHINA'S XI NOT NAMED TO PARTY'S MILITARY COMMISSION", Beijing, 2009/09/19) reported that PRC Vice President Xi Jinping wasn't named a vice chairman of the ruling Communist Party's Central Military Commission, signaling President Hu Jintao may want to hold on to some power after his scheduled retirement in 2013. Ten years ago, Hu, then vice president, was named a commission vice chairman at a similar party meeting. Xi may still be named to the post in coming days or weeks or at a party meeting next year.

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