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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Kyodo News ("CHINA TO CONTINUE TRYING TO BRING N. KOREA BACK TO TALKS", 2009/05/21) reported that the PRC expressed Thursday its plan to continue trying to bring Pyongyang back to the six-party talks, former Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said. "We were told that China, as the chair of the six-party talks, will continue trying to bring North Korea back to the meeting," Kawaguchi told reporters.

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2. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News ("UNIFICATION MINISTER URGES NORTH TO RESPOND TO DIALOGUE PROPOSAL", 2009/05/21) reported that the ROK's unification minister urged the DPRK to respond to Seoul's dialogue proposal over a troubled joint industrial park as tensions linger after Pyongyang canceled wage and land contracts there. Hyun In-taek said efforts are underway to resume government-level talks with Pyongyang. "What matters is North Korea's attitude, whether it is willing to resolve the problem, and now is the time for North Korea to answer," Hyun told a student audience at Cheju National University.

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Times ("WEST GERMANY'S ENGAGEMENT POLICY LED TO GERMAN UNITY", 2009/05/21) reported that the ROK 's engagement with the DPRK, dubbed the Sunshine Policy, will eventually pay off, just as the rapprochement-oriented Ostpolitik policy played a pivotal role in changing East Germans' attitude toward West Germans, former President Kim Dae-jung asserted Thursday. ``Both the Sunshine Policy and Ostpolitik preach unification, never endorsing permanent division of respective peoples. Unification should come only in a peaceful and phased manner, not through armed or violent force," emphasized the 2000 Nobel laureate Kim.

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4. DPRK Military

Xinhua News ("KIM JONG IL INSPECTS AIR FORCE UNIT ", Pyongyang, 2009/05/21) reported that Kim Jong Il, top leader of the DPRK, has inspected the Korean People's Army Air Force Unit 814, the official news agency KCNA reported on Thursday. Kim watched the pilots' training and expressed satisfaction with the unit's preparation, it said. Kim also urged the air force to increase its combat capability and encouraged the pilots to "become heroes in the sacred struggle to defend the country."

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5. DPRK Economy

Xinhua News ("KIM JONG IL INSPECTS MINES IN SOUTH HAMGYONG PROVINCE", 2009/05/21) reported that Kim Jong Il, the top leader of the DPRK, inspected mines in Komdok area in South Hamgyong Province, the Korean Central News Agency reported. Kim inspected Taehung Youth Hero Mine, Ryongyang Mine, and Komdok Mining Complex, a nonferrous mineral production base. Kim expressed satisfaction that the mines in the Komdok area have undergone great changes in recent years.

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6. ROK Swine Flu Outbreak

Yonhap News ("GOV'T TO INTENSIFY NEW FLU-MONITORING PROCESS ", Seoul, 2009/05/21) reported that the government said it will intensify local monitoring of the new type-A influenza in the coming weeks to prevent the spread of the outbreak that has hit 40 countries worldwide. The Prime Minister's Office said concerted efforts to detect and isolate flu cases will be carried out until June 11. "The measures take into account developments taking place in the United States and Japan, which are struggling to deal with a spike in person-to-person infections," said Kwon Tae-shin, head of the government policy coordination office.

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7. US-ROK Trade Relations

Korea Herald ("OBAMA BACKS FREE TRADE WITH KOREA ", 2009/05/21) reported that US President Barack Obama has expressed support for a long-delayed ROK-US free trade agreement, Seoul diplomats in Washington said. Obama was quoted as saying Wednesday that the FTA would enhance and promote bilateral ties and prosperity between the two allies, when he received credentials from new ROK Ambassador to Washington Han Duck-soo.

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8. Japan on Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

The Japan Times ("HIRAOKA CALLS FOR NUKE-FREE ZONES", 2009/05/21) reported that Hideo Hiraoka pushes to persuade leaders at the United Nations to advocate a nuclear-free Northeast Asia. The plan calls for the DPRK , Japan and the ROK to conclude a treaty to establish nuclear weapons-free zones, which would ban the development and possession of nuclear weapons by the three nations. It also calls on the United States, PRC and Russia not to launch or threaten to launch nuclear attacks against the three Northeast Asian countries. He unveiled details of a draft treaty at the international body last week.

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9. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Kyodo News ("YACHI DENIES REPORTED REMARKS ON DISPUTED ISLANDS, BUT APOLOGIZES", 2009/05/21) reported that Former Vice Foreign Minister Shotaro Yachi denied that he suggested he backs the idea of returning to Japan "three and a half" instead of all four Russian-held islands off Hokkaido, while apologizing for causing confusion. "I did not make any comments suggesting that I personally think it is OK that three-and-a-half islands be returned to Japan (instead of the four)," Yachi, who is now a special government envoy, told a session of the House of Councillors Budget Committee.

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10. Japan Politics

Kyodo News ("LDP MAY PUT BRAKE ON HEREDITARY CANDIDACY FROM NEXT GENERAL ELECTION ", 2009/05/21) reported that the ruling Liberal Democratic Party will likely put some sort of a limit on so-called hereditary candidates for the next general election for the House of Representatives and beyond, party lawmakers said Thursday. The ruling party is one step behind the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan, which already decided last month not to grant its endorsements to Diet members' children or relatives who plan to inherit their electoral districts and run from there.

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11. Japan Swine Flu Outbreak

The New York Times ("WITH FLU FEARS RISING, JAPAN IN FULL-BLOWN CRISIS MODE", 2009/05/21) reported that on Thursday, confirmed cases of the H1N1 flu virus in Japan hit 279, centered on Kobe and the neighboring city of Osaka, both in western Japan. As in most other places in the world, the bouts of flu here have been mild, and there have been no deaths. Still, Japan is in full-blown crisis mode: more than 4,800 schools have been shut down in the region, medical services are swamped, and testing labs are working round the clock.

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12. Japan Whaling Issue

Agence France-Presse ("WHALE CHIEF SAYS JAPAN MUST COMPROMISE", Washington, 2009/05/21) reported that the outgoing head of the International Whaling Commission voiced regret Wednesday that his controversial drive to reach a compromise had failed, and said Japan needed to cede more ground. William Hogarth steps down as both US delegate and the head of the deeply divided world whaling body after a meeting next month in Portugal, where he doubted any major progress would be reached. "I think that if Japan is not willing to discuss (further), then I do not see any future for any resolution to this issue."

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13. Sino-Indian Relations

India Express ("PORT IN CHINA'S 'STRING OF PEARLS' WORRIES INDIA", 2009/05/21) reported that after the recent uprising of the Taliban in Pakistan, the focus has now shifted on Sino-Indian ties. Several Indian strategic analysts believe the biggest hindrance to comprehensive Sino-Indian ties is the close relationship between Beijing and Islamabad. The major concern for Indian authorities is the PRC's interest in the Pakistani port of Gwadar. The PRC claims its interest is only commercial as the port will help transform the economy of the landlocked and under-developed PRC province of Xinjiang. The port is said to be the westernmost 'pearl' in the PRC's "String of Pearls" strategy, which envisages building strategic relations with several countries along the sea lanes from the Middle East to the South China Sea. The purpose: to protect China's energy interests and other security objectives.

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14. Sino-Russian Trade Relations

Xinhua News ("MEDVEDEV: RUSSIA SHOULD INTEREST CHINA IN INVESTING IN FAR EAST", 2009/05/21) reported that Russia should do what it can to interest the PRC in investing in its vast Far East regions, President Dmitry Medvedev said. "China remains one of the pivotal economic and trade partners of Russia," Medvedev said during a meeting on cooperation between Russia, the PRC and Mongolia that was attended by federal and regional officials. The fact that Russia's foreign trade has contracted by one third since January should not affect any major projects in the Far East,

Medvedev said.

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15. Cross Strait Relations

Bloomberg News ("CHINA TO LEND IMPERIAL TREASURES TO TAIWAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM", 2009/05/21) reported that Taiwan's National Palace Museum will hold an exhibition in October on the Qing Dynasty's Yongzheng Emperor, incorporating more than 38 artifacts on loan from the PRC in the first such cooperation in six decades. "This wouldn't have been possible a few years ago," Chou Kung-shin, director at the Taipei-based museum told reporters yesterday. The visit to the museum was part of celebrations to commemorate Ma Ying-jeou's first year as Taiwan's president. "Ma's less confrontational stance helped make this kind of cooperation happen," said Chou, 62.

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN LEADER HAILS IMPROVEMENTS IN CHINA TIES", 2009/05/21) reported that Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou said that his efforts to improve relations with the PRC had helped bring peace to both the island and the region, as he marked his first year in office. He said at a press conference marking his first year in office that the PRC had been "responsive" to his government's initiatives, hailing what he called a "fruitful year" in relations across the Taiwan Strait. "In one year, we have transformed the Strait from a dangerous flashpoint to a conduit of peace and prosperity," he told reporters packed into a hall at the presidential office in Taipei.

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16. PRC Swine Flu Outbreak

Bloomberg News ("CHINA DAY AHEAD: MAN IN BEIJING CONFIRMED FIFTH SWINE FLU CASE ", 2009/05/21) reported that the PRC confirmed the nation's fifth swine-flu infection in Beijing. The 21-year-old Canadian man of Chinese descent arrived in the PRC capital from Toronto on May 16, the Ministry of Health said.

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17. PRC Unrest

Bloomberg News ("HUNDREDS RALLY IN CHINA OVER POLICE BEATING", 2009/05/21) reported that as many as 1,000 protestors took to the streets in northwestern PRC after police officers allegedly beat a cyclist for running a red light, state media reported Thursday. The angry mob in Huining county, Gansu province, overturned a police car late Tuesday before around 100 backup police arrived, the Global Times daily newspaper said, citing witnesses. Ten police officers and government officials were injured as the crowd threw bricks at them, according to a statement posted on the local government's website Wednesday.

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18. PRC Climate Change

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA SAYS RICH NATIONS MUST CUT EMISSIONS BY 40 PCT", Beijing, 2009/05/21) reported that the PRC confirmed that it will demand rich nations cut greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent from 1990 levels by 2020 in upcoming global climate change negotiations. In a position paper published for negotiations to be held in Copenhagen in December, the PRC did not commit to any legally binding reductions. "Developed countries shall undertake to reduce their GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions in aggregate by at least 40 percent below their 1990 level by 2020," said the paper, posted on the PRC's planning agency's website.

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19. PRC Energy Supply

Bloomberg News ("CHINA PLANS MORE CLEAN-ENERGY USE TO PROTECT CLIMATE", 2009/05/21) reported that the PRC will boost its ability to produce power from clean energy sources to about 35 percent of total capacity by 2020 to counter climate change, State Grid Corp. said. The capacity to generate power from low-emissions sources will reach 570 gigawatts by then, Liu Zhenya, president of the electricity-network operator, said in a speech at a conference in Beijing today.

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20. PRC Environment

Bloomberg News ("CHINA PREMIER WEN ORDERS HALT TO YUNNAN LIUKU DAM, POST SAYS ", 2009/05/21) reported that PRC Premier Wen Jiabao ordered a halt to work on the Liuku hydropower station in Yunnan province last month, the South China Morning Post said, citing people it didn't name. Wen called for more careful environmental assessment before China Huadian Corp. starts building the dam on the Nu River, Hong Kong-based, English-language newspaper said. Preparation work on the Liuku project has already started and many residents have been relocated, according to the report.

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II. PRC Report

21. ROK-PRC Environmental Cooperation

People's Daily online ("CHINA-SOUTH KOREA DESERTIFICATION PREVENTION YOUTH COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED", 2009/05/21) reported that the opening ceremony of the PRC-ROK Desertification Prevention Youth Committee was formally held in Inner Mongolia. The Committee is

co-sponsored by Central Communist Youth League, All-China Youth Federation and South Korea-China Cultural Association of Young People. It aims at integrating various resources, enhancing supervision of regional environment management, and better prevention desertification.

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22. PRC Energy

Science Times (He Gensheng, Lu Mei, "CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL NON-FOOD BIOENERGY PROJECT CENTER STARTS", 2009/05/21) reported that construction coordination meeting of National Non-food Bioenergy Project Center was held in Guagnxi Zhuang autonomous region May 18th, signing that the construction of the Center was fully started. The Center will introduce foreign talents in order to improve construction of innovative system, and will follow the latest development of domestic and foreign bioenergy technology. The total investment on the Center reaches 320 million yuan.

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23. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction

People's Daily online ("CIVIC ACTION FOR HOUSING IN DISASTER AREAS LAUNCHED", 2009/05/21) reported that a public welfare project aiming at repairing dangerous houses in disaster areas was formally launched in Beijing. The Action will collect individual volunteers and enterprises who want to carry out civic responsibility to the whole public. They will go to 512 earthquake disaster areas to test housing security, provide repair suggestions and fund to needy people.

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III. ROK Report

24. Inter-Korea Relations

Ohmynews ("DJ, 'DPRK BEING ANXIOUS, US-DPRK TALK, TO RESUME IN FALL'", 2009/05/22) reported that former president Kim Dae-jung said at an international symposium held at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies that the DPRK is currently being anxious because they did not get the expected result from the U.S. He added that the US has no complete policy line about Northeast Asia., and that makes the DPRK far more impatient. He also introduced several comments he received from the PRC leaders that they want Kim to talk closely with the U.S., so that they hopefully sends positive messages toward the DPRK. He said that he believes that the current tension on the Korean peninsula to be temporary. He urged the Lee Myung-bak Administration to implement the 6. 15 and 10.4 joint statements, resume Mt. Kumkang tourism, and construct dormitories for the DPRK workers of Gaesong Complex.

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25. Six-Party Talks

Yonhap News ("PRC, TO SEND ENVOY TO DPRK FOR SIX-PARTY TALKS?", 2009/05/22) reported that PRC is now trying from many different dimensions to resume six-party talks. Their plan to send an envoy to the DPRK is one such effort. Yang Jie-chi, the Foreign Affairs Minister of the PRC, stated during a meeting with former Foreign Affairs Ministers of Japan and Australia that the PRC would constantly endeavor to resume the six-party talks. Though Yang did not reveal details on how to persuade the DPRK, his remarks imply that they will send an envoy shortly. On the other hand, they also implicitly expressed dissatisfaction toward Japan, who became one of the barrier factors of the talks by keeping on mentioning the 'kidnap' issue during the talks.

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