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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Internal Situation

Washington Post Foreign Service ("RESISTANCE AGAINST N. KOREAN REGIME TAKING ROOT, SURVEY SUGGESTS", 2010/03/24) reported that there is mounting evidence that Kim Jong Il is losing the propaganda war inside the DPRK with more than half the population now listening to foreign news, grass-roots cynicism undercutting state myths and discontent rising even among elites. A survey of refugees has found that "everyday forms of resistance" in the DPRK are taking root as large swaths of the population believe that pervasive corruption, rising inequity and chronic food shortages are the fault of the government in Pyongyang -- and not of the United States, the ROK or other foreign forces. The report will be released this week by the East-West Center, a research group established by Congress.

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2. DPRK Economy

Institute for Far Eastern Studies ("ECONOMY STABILIZES BEFORE SUPREME PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY MEETING", 2010/03/24) reported that it has been reported that food prices in the DPRK have leveled out in the latter half of March. An informant from North Hamgyeong Province told Daily NK on March 21 that "nonglutinous rice is 950 Won (per kilogram), corn is 220 Won (per kilogram), and pork is 1,800 Won (per kilogram)." The same source stated that prices in the Onseong town market, Namyang Market, prices were similar. It appears that the prices have dropped because of the increase in overseas food assistance to the DPRK and the fact that emergency rations are now being sold on markets.

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3. DPRK-Japan Relations

Xinhua News Agency ("DPRK PAPER ACCUSES JAPAN OF DISRUPTING DENUCLEARIZATION PROCESS ", 2010/03/24) reported that the official Minju Joson daily of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on Wednesday blasted Japan for linking the abduction of Japanese citizens decades ago with denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula. Japan's intention is to "deter the international community from focusing attention on solving the issue of denuclearization and furthermore create conditions favorable for attaining its sinister political aim," the paper said. For Japan, the only way to improve the relationship between the DPRK and Japan was to make an apology and reparation for its war crimes, the newspaper said.

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA SLAMS 'NAZIS' REMARK BY OSAKA GOV. HASHIMOTO", 2010/03/24) reported that the DPRK slammed Osaka Gov. Toru Hashimoto for calling the DPRK's state system "illegal" and comparing it to the Nazis. "His way of thinking and manner of speaking cannot be regarded as normal," KCNA said, criticizing the governor's remarks as "inciting racial discrimination." "Hashimoto will never be able to escape a stern punishment by history if he persists in his criminal acts of hurting the inviolable dignity of the DPRK and antagonizing Chongryon and the Koreans in Japan in defiance of the domestic and foreign public opinion," it said.

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4. DPRK Leadership

United Press International ("N.KOREAN LEADER MAY HAVE RENAL PROBLEMS", 2010/03/24) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong Il, 68, may be suffering from renal problems, a ROK official said Wednesday. The leader of the Communist country also appeared to be suffering from diabetes and high-blood pressure, the Korea Times reported, quoting Nam Sung-wook, director of the Institute for National Security Strategy, an affiliate of the National Intelligence Service.

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5. DPRK Defector Issue

Korea Times ("NORTH KOREAN LOGGER IN RUSSIA FACES REPATRIATION", 2010/03/24) reported that a DPRK logger arrested last Thursday in Russia could be repatriated for having illegal documentation, the head of a Seoul-based group advocating DPRK human rights said Wednesday. "A source in Russia told us that Vladivostok police are saying he is being detained for reasons regarding illegal documentation, perhaps an illegal passport," said Rev. Peter Jung, head of the group Justice for the DPRK, during a phone interview with The Korea Times. The 51-year-old logger, surnamed Kim, was arrested while seeking asylum from the U.S. consulate in the eastern city of Vladivostok and taken to Nakhodka, the eastern coast town where it had been speculated that he would be handed over to DPRK authorities, Jung said.

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6. DPRK Human Rights

Daily NK ("SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN: A COMMON PROBLEM IN NK", 2010/03/24) reported that defector testimony is consistent regarding the issue of sexual abuse of minors: due to the closed nature of DPRK society, they say, disclosure of such incidents is the exception, not the rule. Kim Soon Hee (42), a former school teacher from the DPRK, agreed, "Sexual abuse of minors is really common, but everyone is very hush-hush about it." Article 295, regarding "sexual relations with minors," stipulates that anyone who has sexual relations with someone under the age of fifteen should be sentenced to a period in a labor reeducation camp not to exceed five years. Seoul National University professor Lee Hyo Won commented on Article 295 in an interview with The Daily NK, saying, "Given that penal codes reflect existing conditions in a society, the fact that sexual abuse against minors is outlined in the law suggests that it occurs fairly frequently."

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7. ROK-US Security Cooperation

Yonhap News ("U.S. FBI TO HELP S. KOREA WITH SECURITY STRATEGY AHEAD OF G-20", 2010/03/24) reported that the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will provide the ROK with information on anti-terrorism and other security measures ahead of Seoul's hosting of the G-20 economic summit in November, the ROK's police chief said Tuesday. FBI Director Robert Mueller made the pledge when he met with Kang Hee-rak, head of the National Police Agency, at his office here earlier in the day, Kang told a group of ROK correspondents.

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8. ROK Military Procurements

Korea Times ("S. KOREAN ARMY TO DEPLOY UAVS FOR DIVISION MISSIONS ", 2010/03/24) reported that the ROK Army will deploy 33 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in its division-level units by 2014 in an effort to boost the country's intelligence-gathering, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capability in line with the planned transition of wartime operational control from the U.S. military to the ROK in 2012. The Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) will approve the plan next Monday to purchase the UAVs, officials of the agency said Wednesday. The agency will spend 430 billion won (\$378 million) to acquire the UAVs, they said.

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9. ROK Human Rights Commission

International Justice Tribune ("SOUTH KOREA'S TRC TO FOLD", 2010/03/24) reported that the ROK's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), founded in 2005 as an independent agency with a broad mandate to cover a century of abuse, faces dissolution by the country's conservative government. The TRC is likely to last another few months wrapping up investigations and then fade away, a relic of the decade of liberal leadership that began with the inauguration of President Kim Dae-jung in February 1998. "The massive body of research and reports it leaves behind is significant," says journalist Choe Sang-hun, who has written extensively on the commission's findings. "The nation has never done this kind of work on this scale."

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10. Japan-US Relations

Daily News Transcript ("CONSUL GENERAL: JAPAN AND THE US 'SHARE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES'", 2010/03/24) reported that Japan and the United States do not have the same history or culture, but they do share fundamental beliefs in democracy, the free market and human rights, Consul General Masaru Tsuji said in a speech. In a poll, Americans said they felt their country shares the most bedrock values with Great Britain, with Japan second, said Tsuji, who heads the Consulate-General of Japan in Boston. "Japan and the United States are the world's two largest economies, we share fundamental values, and also we have a very important security alliance," he said, and cooperation between the two countries is key for stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

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11. Japan, Australia on Nonproliferation

The Age (Daniel Flitton, "AUSTRALIA, JAPAN SUBMIT DISARMAMENT PROPOSALS FOR NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE", 2010/03/24) reported that Australia and Japan have put together a proposal of 16 nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation measures for consideration at the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference in May, the Australian Foreign Ministry announced. The two nations will now concentrate on gaining backing for their proposal ahead of and during the monthlong meeting in New York, according to a release from Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith. "The joint package reaffirms Japan and Australia's shared commitment to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons and a successful outcome at the NPT review conference," the release states.

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12. Japan-Kazakhstan Nuclear Cooperation

Ria Novosti ("KAZAKHSTAN PLANS TO CAPTURE 40% OF JAPAN'S URANIUM MARKET ", 2010/03/24) reported that Kazakhstan is planning to boost its uranium exports to Japan and increase its share on the Japanese uranium market from the current 4% to 40%, the Kazakh foreign minister said on Wednesday. Kanat Saudabayev said in an interview with Japan's Nikkei news agency that the basic principles and areas of bilateral cooperation in civilian nuclear power engineering were defined in an intergovernmental agreement signed between the two countries in Tokyo on March 2, 2010. "It [the agreement] allows for the expansion of the sphere of interaction. In particular, Kazakhstan is interested in obtaining nuclear power technologies from Japan," he said.

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13. Japan Self-Defense Force

United Press International ("JAPAN TO REPLENISH MILITARY JETS", 2010/03/24) reported that budgetary complaints, political bickering and financial scandals kept Japan's competition for a new combat aircraft delayed for nearly three years. But now, after seemingly endless delays, the government in Japan is poised to forge ahead with its competition for the F-X multirole fighter, Defense News reports. The competition calls for the purchase of an estimated 40 to 50 aircraft in a

bid to replenish Japan's ageing fleet of F-4EJ Kai Phantoms. A request for proposals could be announced by as early as next month, Defense News reported, with delivery of the aircraft anticipated by 2015 if a decision is taken by the end of the year.

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14. USFJ Base Relocation

Financial Times ("OKINAWA DPJ MEMBERS CONDEMN BASE PLAN", 2010/03/24) reported that Okinawan members of Japan's ruling Democratic party on Wednesday demanded the government abandon efforts to find a new site for a controversial US Marine base on the southern island, raising the political temperature of a dispute that has shaken public confidence in the government. In petitions delivered on Wednesday to government cabinet members and Ichiro Ozawa, DPJ secretary general, a delegation of ruling party members from Okinawa insisted local public opinion was clearly against construction of yet another military base on the already overcrowded island. "We strongly call on the Japanese and US governments ... to quickly close Futenma, return the land and abandon any relocation of the base within the prefecture," the DPJ members said.

Kyodo News ("HATOYAMA SAYS MOVING FUTEMMA BASE OUTSIDE OF OKINAWA STILL OPTION ", 2010/03/24) reported that Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama said Wednesday that he has not given up on the option of moving the U.S. Marines' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa outside of the southernmost prefecture. "We are not in a situation in which we have given up on (moving the base) outside of the prefecture," Hatoyama said at a session of the House of Councillors Budget Committee. "That's included in our options."

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15. Japan-US Security Relations

Kyodo News ("U.S. NUKE POLICY CHANGE WOULD NOT LEAD TO NUCLEAR JAPAN: SCIENTISTS' REPORT", 2010/03/24) reported that Japan would not consider going nuclear even if the United States adopts a "no first use" policy for nuclear weapons, a scientists' advocacy group concluded in a report released Tuesday. The Union of Concerned Scientists released the report, titled "Japan and America's nuclear posture," in response to fears by some U.S. conservative officials and experts that such a change by Washington in nuclear policy would prompt Japan to consider developing its own nuclear weapons. "The conventional wisdom in Washington is wrong," said the report's author, Gregory Kulacki, . "We found strong support in Japan for a U.S. sole purpose declaration. Such a declaration would not undermine Japanese confidence in the U.S. nuclear umbrella," he said.

Kyodo News ("U.S. MILITARY IN OKINAWA DISCUSSES MEASURES TO PREVENT MISCONDUCT", 2010/03/24) reported that senior commanders of the U.S. military in Okinawa Prefecture discussed on Tuesday measures to prevent misconduct by military personnel following a number of recent incidents including an alleged hit-and-run accident involving a service member. Okinawa Area Coordinator Lt. Gen. Terry Robling has directed the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps to hold an educational review and a comprehensive internal examination of policies and procedures that govern conduct and discipline on and off duty, according to the U.S. military in Okinawa. The Okinawa prefectural assembly, meanwhile, plans to adopt on Thursday a resolution demanding that

the U.S. military in Okinawa strengthen discipline and hand over a 25-year-old female petty officer third class suspected of being involved in the hit-and-run accident.

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16. Japan Climate Change

Bloomberg ("JAPAN PROPOSES WIND, GEOTHERMAL POWER FEED-IN TARIFF", 2010/03/24) reported that a Japanese trade ministry panel today proposed expanding the feed-in tariff to require utilities to buy electricity at a premium from hydropower stations, wind turbine and geothermal operators. Utilities may have to buy renewable power at between 15 yen (17 cents) and 20 yen a kilowatt hour, according to a report released in Tokyo. The incentive program would run for between 10 and 20 years, it said

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17. Sino-Afghanistan Relations

Agence France Presse ("AFGHANISTAN, CHINA VOW CLOSER TIES", 2010/03/24) reported that the presidents of Afghanistan and the PRC Wednesday pledged to work more closely together, during a visit by Afghan leader Hamid Karzai, who is seeking investment for his war-torn nation. "I am confident that... your visit will definitely help promote practical cooperation between China and Afghanistan, and take our comprehensive and cooperative partnership to a new level," the PRC's Hu Jintao told Karzai. The meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing came ahead of a ceremony at which the two countries were due to sign three economic agreements.

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18. PRC, Russia on Iran Nuclear Issue

New York Times ("RUSSIA AND CHINA PRESSED IRAN TO ACCEPT U.N. NUCLEAR DEAL", 2010/03/24) reported that Russia disclosed on Wednesday that Russian and PRC envoys pressed Iran's government to accept a United Nations plan on uranium enrichment during meetings in Tehran early this month but that Iran refused, leaving "less and less room for diplomatic maneuvering." "The clouds are piling up," said a top Russian Foreign Ministry official, briefing reporters on the condition of anonymity. He said Russia would consider supporting sanctions tailored to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, though it "is certainly against any paralyzing sanctions that are aimed not at nonproliferation but at punishing Iran or, God forbid, regime change."

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19. PRC Civil Unrest

New York Times ("CHINA: 2 PROTESTS BY STUDENTS IN TIBETAN AREAS", 2010/03/24) reported that groups of students in two Tibetan areas of Gansu Province, in western PRC have held separate protests after Chinese security forces imposed lockdowns at boarding schools according to

a report by the International Campaign for Tibet, an advocacy group. The report, based on information obtained by Tibetans in exile with ties to people in Gansu, confirmed an earlier report of the protests by Radio Free Asia.

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20. PRC Internet

Washington Post ("GODADDY.COM PLANS TO STOP REGISTERING DOMAIN NAMES IN CHINA", 2010/03/24) reported that GoDaddy.com Inc., the world's largest domain name registration company, plans to tell lawmakers Wednesday that it will cease registering Web sites in the PRC in response to intrusive new government rules that require applicants to provide extensive personal data, including photographs of themselves. The rules, the company believes, are an effort by the PRC to increase monitoring and surveillance of Web site content and could put individuals who register their sites with the firm at risk. The company also believes the rules will have a "chilling effect" on new domain name registrations.

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21. Taiwan International Aid

Reuters ("TAIWAN: HELP FOR A TINY NATION FACING RISING WATERS", 2010/03/24) reported that Taiwan pledged Tuesday to rescue Kiribati, a tiny South Pacific ally, from rising sea levels in a move intended to raise Taiwan's international profile. After President Ma Ying-jeou of Taiwan offered to help rescue Kiribati, the Foreign Ministry said it would look into offering the small nation, a chain of atolls, expertise accumulated from post-typhoon relief work. President Anote Tong of Kiribati told Mr. Ma, who was visiting in the South Pacific, that the people of Kiribati might one day have to evacuate to Taiwan if sea levels continued to rise, the news media reported.

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II. PRC Report

22. PRC Public Health

Xinhua News Agency ("HEAVY METAL POLLUTION CONTROL PLAN TO BE COMPLETED", 2010/03/24) reported that as of March 22nd, 45 children in Chenzhou city of Hunan province have been found to have excessive levels of lead in their blood, because of some factories' illegal discharges of heavy metal pollution into drinking water sources. The Ministry of Environmental Protection has pledged to complete a heavy metal pollution control plan by June of this year, to avoid such tragedy happening again.

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23. PRC Environment

People's Daily ("FIRST FOOD WASTE TREATMENT PLANT OPERATED IN GUANGZHOU", 2010/03/24) reported that Guangzhou's first food waste treatment plant began trial operations yesterday. Processed food waste can produce microorganisms high in energy and protein and makes ideal bio-feed.

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