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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. US-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("U.S. UNMOVED BY NORTH KOREA CHARM OFFENSIVE", Washington, 2009/08/25) reported that the DPRK is waxing conciliatory after months of military provocations -- but experts say now is no time for the US to relent on sanctions aimed at ending Pyongyang's nuclear programs. Korea expert Bruce Klingner at the Heritage Foundation think tank in Washington says Pyongyang is trying to "get the US and South Korean governments to water down their approach towards North Korea, generate differences between the allies and to undermine the effectiveness of international sanctions." Jack Pritchard, a former US negotiator with the DPRK, said Pyongyang has "run into a buzzsaw" of an Obama administration that is more firm than it had expected, a Lee administration in Seoul that has shrugged off war threats and UN sanctions that are starting to hurt. "They're not collapsing now, they're not going to fold now, but they've taken a look and said 'This path is not sustainable. We've got to fix it and how can we do this?'" said Pritchard.

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2. US, Japan on DPRK Sanctions

Agence France-Presse ("US, JAPAN SAY SANCTIONS HAVING 'GREAT IMPACT' ON NKOREA", Tokyo, 2009/08/25) reported that the United States and Japan believe UN sanctions against the DPRK over its recent nuclear test are having a "great impact" on the regime, officials said after talks between the allies. Philip Goldberg, the US diplomat tasked with enforcing the United Nations

sanctions, met with Akitaka Saiki, Japan's chief negotiator. "We evaluate that the UN Security Council sanctions , which have been implemented strictly by the international community, are having a significantly great impact on North Korea," Saiki told reporters.

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA NORMALIZES DIRECT PHONE CHANNEL WITH SOUTH", 2009/08/25) reported that the DPRK has normalized a key inter-Korean communication channel after suspending it for months to protest Seoul's hardline policy, an official said. "The North's side told us it has begun normal operations. We view this as the normalization of communications between the Red Cross offices," Unification Ministry spokesman Chun Hae-sung said. "We made a call this morning, and a North Korean liaison officer answered," Chun said.

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREAN PRESS STRIKES POLITE NOTE ON LEE", 2009/08/25) reported that the DPRK state media for the first time gave President Lee Myung-bak his official title when they reported on a DPRK delegation's visit to Cheong Wa Dae on Sunday, the Unification Ministry said. According to a ministry official, the DPRK state media reported the delegates met "South Korean President Lee Myung-bak." So far they had used a battery of epithets like "traitor," "lackey," and "sycophant" to describe his administration.

Chosun Ilbo ("SHIFTING TIES WITH N.KOREA WILL BE A LONG GAME", 2009/08/25) reported that Cheong Wa Dae spokesman Lee Dong-kwan said the government believes that the old ways in inter-Korean summits or dialogue "are no longer permissible." "Inter-Korean relations must not be viewed as a special relationship and remain trapped in that framework, but must be subject to international principles in order to progress," he said. Previous administrations allowed visiting DPRK officials to meet government officials at their convenience. But this time, Lee included the meeting in a string of similar encounters with officials from other countries who had come to pay their respects to Kim.

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4. ROK Abductee Issue

Yonhap News ("ABDUCTEE FAMILIES GROUP FILES PETITION WITH RIGHTS WATCHDOG", 2009/08/25) reported that f amilies of ROK abductees and prisoners of war in the DPRK lodged a petition with the ROK's rights watchdog, arguing that the DPRK violated the captives' human rights by refusing to disclose information on their fate. "North Korea's refusal to reveal information as to whether the abductees and war prisoners are alive since the inter-Korean summit talks in 2000 infringed on their human rights," said Choi Seong-yong, chairman of the Abductees' Family Union. "We demand that the National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) urge the North to disclose the fate of our families," he said.

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5. Reunions of Separated Families

Reuters (Jack Kim, "TWO KOREA HOLD RARE TALKS ON SPLIT FAMILIES", Seoul, 2009/08/26) reported that Red Cross officials from the ROK arrived in the DPRK for three days of talks on Wednesday to discuss families separated by the Korean War . "The key issue on the agenda for this meeting is the reunion of separated families," ROK chief delegate to the talks, Kim Young-chel, told reporters before leaving Seoul .

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6. DPRK Telecommunications

Yonhap ("N. KOREA EXPANDING TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK NATIONWIDE: REPORT", Seoul, 2009/08/26) reported that the DPRK is expanding the nation's telecom networks and modernizing its broadcasting sector, the Korean Central Broadcasting Station said Wednesday. It said fiber-optic cables have been laid in all provinces to "upgrade communication capability and quality" and enhance the flow of information throughout the country. The report said automation and digital capacity has increased some seven fold from 16 years ago, citing the "realization of fiber-optic technology" in provinces and small towns.

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7. ROK Space Program

Christian Science Monitor ("SOUTH KOREA LAUNCHES FIRST ROCKET, SATELLITE MISSES ORBIT", 2009/08/25) reported that the ROK launched its first rocket, just months after rival DPRK's launch drew international anger, but space officials said the satellite it carried failed to enter its intended orbit. ROK President Lee Myung-bak said though the satellite failed to enter its planned orbit, it was a "half success." "We must further strive to realize the dream of becoming a space power," Lee said after a Cabinet meeting, according to his office.

Agence France-Presse (Park Chan-Kyong, "S.KOREA SATELLITE LOST AFTER LAUNCH: OFFICIALS", Seoul, 2009/08/26) reported that a satellite launched by the ROK's first space rocket is thought to have burnt up in the Earth's atmosphere after missing its designated orbit, officials said Wednesday. The science and technology ministry said one of the two aerodynamic fairings covering the rocket's tip failed to fall away, after opening in preparation for the satellite's release. Because of the fairing's weight the second stage of the rocket could not achieve enough thrust to place the satellite in orbit.

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8. ROK-PRC Relations

Korea Herald ("KOREAN, CHINESE COUNTIES INK PACT ON SISTER RELATIONSHIP", 2009/08/25) reported that a coastal county in the ROK said it has established a sister relationship with the PRC's Wulong, in another sign of growing economic ties between the two nations. Buan

County, which sits opposite the PRC on the Yellow Sea, and Wulong County, which is home to a UNESCO heritage site, agreed to enhance cooperation through student exchanges, investment and tourism promotion.

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9. US-Japan Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN PROPOSES TO U.S. TO HAVE BILATERAL SUMMIT IN LATE SEPT. IN N.Y.", Tokyo, 2009/08/25) reported that Japan is trying to arrange with the United States to hold a bilateral summit in late September in New York on the sidelines of a UN General Assembly meeting, diplomatic sources said. The meeting the Japanese side hopes to hold around Sept. 23 would be the first after Japan's general election that could allow the opposition Democratic Party of Japan to take power and make Yukio Hatoyama Japan's new prime minister. The sources added, however, the proposed Japan-US summit, even if realized, would mainly be aimed at reconfirming the importance of the US-Japan alliance and cooperation on various other issues.

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10. US-Japan Nuclear Pact

The Asahi Shimbun ("VICE FOREIGN MINISTER ACKNOWLEDGES TALKS ON BRINGING U.S. NUKES INTO JAPAN", 2009/08/25) reported that with the election-favorite Democratic Party of Japan promising an investigation into a secret Japan-US nuclear weapons deal, the Foreign Ministry is somewhat easing its decades-long stance that the agreement never existed. Vice Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka repeated the ministry's denial of the existence of the agreement. But he told reporters that Japanese and US officials occasionally discussed the definition of "bringing nuclear weapons into Japan," for which the United States needed to consult Japan in advance.

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11. Sino-Japanese Relations

The Financial Times ("DPJ LANDSLIDE RISKS UNRAVELLING BEIJING'S CLOSER TIES WITH TOKYO", 2009/08/25) reported that Yukio Hatoyama, the DPJ leader, has visited the PRC many times, addressed the central Communist party school in Beijing and, most importantly, promised not to visit the controversial Yasukuni Shrine, which honours Japan's war dead. At the other end of the spectrum, sceptical reports point to the DPJ's more liberal attitudes as a potential source of trouble. "The DPJ puts more emphasis on 'liberty', 'democracy' and 'human rights' and this could become a focal point in Sino-Japanese relations," said Xinhua news agency. It went on to note that Mr Hatoyama has even had the temerity to meet the Dalai Lama. This sort of impudence will not contribute to the new Sino-Japanese paradigm the DPJ has been hinting at in the run-up to this election.

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12. Sino-Japanese East Sea Gas Dispute

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("CHINESE VESSEL SPOTTED IN SHIRAKABA GAS FIELD AREA", 2009/08/25) reported that a PRC ship has been spotted conducting activities in the Shirakaba gas field area of the East China Sea, which Japan and the PRC have agreed to jointly develop, government sources said. The government has asked the PRC to explain what the ship was doing in the area. According to the sources, the ship was spotted in mid-August. The government said the ship did not appear to be carrying out activities linked to preparations for drilling or other unilateral exploration around the gas field.

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13. Japan SDF Nepal Dispatch

Xinhua News ("JAPAN TO EXTEND PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN NEPAL BY 6 MONTHS", 2009/08/25) reported that Japan decided Tuesday to extend the peacekeeping mission in Nepal by an additional six months until next March 31. The extension beyond the scheduled Sept. 30 expiry is in response to a UN Security Council decision in July to extend a military observer mission to Nepal until Jan. 23.

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14. Japan Energy Supply

Agence-France-Presse ("JAPAN CLOSE TO OIL DEAL IN IRAQ, SAY OFFICIALS", 2009/08/25) reported that resource-poor Japan is close to signing a deal with Iraq on the right to develop a huge oil field in the Middle Eastern country , corporate officials said. Talks between Baghdad and three Japanese oil developers "are in progress toward an agreement" to develop the Nasiriyah oil field in southern Iraq, a spokesman for Nippon Oil Corp , one of the three energy firms, said. If the deal is reached, the Nasiriyah oil field will be the biggest in production volume that Japanese companies have developed, he said. The Nasiriyah field is expected to produce 600,000 barrels a day, about 10 percent of Japan's whole crude consumption, Jiji Press reported.

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15. Japan Climate Change

Japan for Sustainability ("JAPAN RECORDS RECORD HIGH GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: 9% INCREASE FROM 1990 LEVELS", 2009/08/25) reported that the Japanese Ministry of the Environment announced on April 30, 2009, that total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in FY 2007 had increased by 2.4% from the previous year to 1,374 billion tons of carbon dioxide (CO2) equivalent. This represents the highest level ever, and exceeds by 9.0% the 1990 base year level under the Kyoto Protocol of 1,261 billion tons. Japan has to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 9.6% to achieve its goal for reducing emissions by 6% from base year levels as agreed to under the Protocol, even if it attains reductions of 3.8% through forest absorption and to 1.6% through the Kyoto Mechanism (Clean Development Mechanism).

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16. Japanese Influenza Response

Kyodo (77 KINDERGARTENS, SCHOOLS CLOSED DUE TO H1N1 FLU OUTBREAK, "", Tokyo, 2009/08/26) reported that a total of 77 kindergartens, primary schools and junior and senior high schools in eight Japanese prefectures were closed entirely or partly due to an influenza outbreak between Aug. 16 and 22, the health ministry said Wednesday. During the reporting one-week period, 72 schools in six prefectures, including Okinawa, were closed entirely, while five schools in three prefectures, such as Shizuoka, closed some classes, according to the ministry.

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17. Sino-Indian Relations

Central Chronicle ("INDIA CAN OPEN CONSULATE IN LHASA: CHINESE OFFICIAL", 2009/08/25) reported that more than 40 years after bad blood between India and the PRC closed down the Indian consulate in Tibetan capital Lhasa, a PRC foreign ministry official says New Delhi can re-open it any time it wants. 'India can set up a consulate in Lhasa,' said Jujian Hua, director at Tibet's Foreign Affairs Office. 'That depends on India.' 'The (resumption of) cross-border talks between China and India represents a great step in the relationship between the two countries,' Jujian said.

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18. Sino-Indian Climate Change Collaboration

The Hindu (Ananth Krishnan , "INDIA AND CHINA HAVE “COMPLETE CONVERGENCE” ON CLIMATE ISSUES", Beijing, 2009/08/25) reported that India and the PRC have a “complete convergence” of views heading into the climate change summit in Copenhagen in December, and the the PRC has assured India that they will not strike any deal with the United States that could undermine India’s negotiating position at the climate talks, Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh said. In Beijing for the first ever ministerial-level talks between India and the PRC on climate change, Mr. Ramesh said India and the PRC had agreed to “co-ordinate their positions before every major international gathering on climate change,” a move that reaffirms the convergence of the two countries’ positions.

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19. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA MOBILE TO DEVELOP SMARTPHONES WITH TAIWAN", Taipei, 2009/08/25) reported that Taiwan's High Tech Computer Corp. signed a memorandum with China Mobile Ltd., the world's largest mobile carrier, to jointly develop smartphones and tap the mainland's rapidly growing telecoms market. Wang Jianzhou, China Mobile's chairman, said the PRC carrier will invest 47 million yuan ($6.9 million) in the joint project and expects to develop at least seven models by 2010. HTC, as the Taiwanese company is known, will design and develop the models, while China Mobile will provide customer service and support, Wang said.

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20. PRC Security

China Daily ("FIRST ARMED POLICE LAW SET TO PASS", 2009/08/25) reported that armed police, a major force to maintain State security and social stability, are set to get legal backing to help them handle riots. The legislature is expected to pass the country's first law on armed police to make that possible. It makes clear that the armed police would be responsible for handling public security incidents such as "riots, unrest, large-scale violent crimes and terrorist attacks". The first draft only stated the team helps handle "public security incidents and terrorist attacks".

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21. PRC Ethnic Unrest

The New York Times ("CHINESE OFFICIALS DENY REPORTS ABOUT ETHNIC RIOTING TRIALS", 2009/08/25) reported that as reporters gathered in the western region of Xinjiang this week in anticipation of the start of trials related to ethnic riots in July, an official with the news media office of the local Communist Party headquarters said that he had no information that any such trials would take place this week. The official, Li Hua, said in a telephone interview that a report Monday in China Daily, a state-run English-language newspaper, had carried wrong information on the timeline for the trials. “Of course they have to be tried, just not according to the timeline of the China Daily story,” Mr. Li said. Mr. Li said he had no information on exactly when the trials would start.

Associated Press (Tini Tran, "CHINESE PRESIDENT VISITS RESTIVE XINJIANG REGION", Beijing, 2009/08/26) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao made his first trip to Xinjiang since last month's riots. "You should make upholding social stability the most urgent task and maintain great strength to ensure triumph in the struggle to maintain stability in Xinjiang," Hu said.

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22. PRC Energy Supply

The New York Times ("CHINA RACING AHEAD OF U.S. IN THE DRIVE TO GO SOLAR", Wuxi, 2009/08/25) reported that President Obama wants to make the United States “the world’s leading exporter of renewable energy,” but in his seven months in office, it is the PRC that has stepped on the gas in an effort to become the dominant player in green energy — especially in solar power, and even in the United States. PRC companies have already played a leading role in pushing down the price of solar panels by almost half over the last year. Backed by lavish government support, the PRC are preparing to build plants to assemble their products in the United States to bypass protectionist legislation.

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23. Russo-Mongolian Energy Cooperation

Agence France-Presse ("RUSSIA, MONGOLIA CREATE URANIUM JOINT VENTURE", Ulan Bator ,

2009/08/25) reported that Russia and Mongolia agreed to form a joint venture to exploit the Dornod uranium deposit in the resource-rich former Soviet satellite, at the start of a visit by President Dmitry Medvedev . The agreement between Russia's state-owned nuclear energy giant Rosatom and Mongolia's Mon-Atom was signed in the presence of Medvedev and his Mongolian counterpart Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj , after the pair held talks. Rosatom chief Sergei Kiriyenko said the deal marked the first time Mongolia had agreed to create a joint venture with a foreign company to mine and process uranium.

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II. PRC Report

24. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net ("ALXA DESERT NATIONAL GEOLOGICAL PARK BECOMES THE WORLD'S ONLY", 2009/08/25) reported that director of Network Office of World Geological Palk of UNESCO announced on 23th that Alxa Desert National Geological Park is formally promoted to world geological park. Thus, Alxa Desert National Geological Palk becomes China's 22 world geological park and the world's only desert world geological park.

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25. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

Xinhua Net ("MOON FUND ESTABLISHED", 2009/08/25) reported that Moon Fund, aimed at promoting China's environmental protection career, was formally found on August 23th in Beijing. The first seed fund was offered by General Mills.

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26. PRC Civil Society

Xinhua Net ("MOTHER HEALTH EXPRESS HELP 300,000 PEOPLE", 2009/08/25) reported that the fourth session of Mother Health Express was launched on Xining of Qinghai province. It is understood that this large public welfare project has help over 300,000 people in four years. The project mainly promotes health care knowledge to women and trains medical technicians.

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