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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK-US Relations

Voice of America ("U.S. RESISTS DIRECT TALKS WITH N.KOREA", 2009/08/26) reported that the Obama administration reaffirmed it is not interested in talks with the DPRK outside the framework of PRC-sponsored six-party negotiations on that country's nuclear program. ROK news reports say Pyongyang has invited two U.S. senior diplomats to visit next month. The State Department says the United States wants talks with the DPRK but only in the framework of nuclear negotiations Pyongyang quit earlier this year.

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "BOSWORTH HAS NO IMMEDIATE PLANS TO VISIT N. KOREA: STATE DEPT. ", Washington, 2009/08/25) reported that the U.S. Ambassador Stephen Bosworth has no immediate plans to visit Pyongyang to discuss ending the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, the State Department said, but hinted he may fly to the DPRK capital sooner or later. Earlier reports said that Bosworth and Sung Kim, special envoy for six-party talks, will visit Pyongyang next month at the invitation of the DPRK to discuss the six-party talks on the the DPRK's denuclearization.

JoongAng Ilbo (Yoo Jee-ho , "U.S. HINTS AT A CHANGE IN TACK ON BILATERAL TALKS", 2009/08/27) reported that in a press briefing, State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said the US would meet with the DPRK if it agreed to return to the six-party table. "We are fully aware that the DPRK would like to have bilateral talks but they are also fully aware of our position on this: that we will not have bilateral talks until they agree to return to the six-party talks," Kelly said. Previously, U.S. officials have insisted that any bilateral talks with the DPRK would come only within the six-party setting, and only if DPRK began to prove its commitment to nuclear disarmament.

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2. Sino-DPRK Relations

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA SETS UP CONSULAR OFFICE IN CHINESE BORDER TOWN: SOURCES ", Shenyang, 2009/08/26) reported that the DPRK has opened a consulate office in a PRC border town and has begun issuing visas, sources said Wednesday. DPRK diplomats in the PRC, accompanied by regional PRC officials, on Tuesday held an opening ceremony for the office in Dandong, as a branch of the DPRK's consulate in Shenyang.

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3. Russia on DPRK Missile Program

Agence France Presse ("RUSSIA DEPLOYS AIR DEFENCE OVER N.KOREA MISSILE TESTS", Ulanbator, 2009/08/26) reported that Russia is worried about the DPRK's missile and nuclear tests and has deployed sophisticated air defences in its Far East region to protect against any potential test mishap, Russia's top general said. "We have an S-400 division there," said General Nikolai Makarov, chief of staff of the Russian armed forces, confirming that Russia had deployed its most advanced anti-missile defence system near the border with the DPRK.

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4. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News (Tony Chang, "SEOUL OKAYS N.K. VISITS SELECTIVELY, CITING SAFETY CONCERNS ", Seoul, 2009/08/26) reported that the ROK government approved only two of nine requests submitted this week to visit the DPRK for humanitarian and other projects, citing safety concerns stemming from the detention of several ROK citizens by Pyongyang. The Unification Ministry authorized representatives from Gyeongam, a foundation run by bed manufacturer AceBed Co., and Korean Sharing Movement, a civic group, to visit the DPRK, officials said.

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "100 ELDERS TO BE SELECTED FOR S-N FAMILY REUNION", 2009/08/26) reported that a ROK delegation proposed having 100 ROK citizens meet with their families in the DPRK between Sept. 27 and 29 and 100 DPRK citizens meet families in the ROK between Oct. 6 and 8. The DPRK suggested the reunion date of Oct. 3-5 for ROK citizens and Oct. 6-8 for DPRK citizens, respectively. "We will have further discussions on details including one-on-one meetings of separated families," the ROK's chief delegate Kim Young-chel said after the talks. The ROK chief delegate Kim indicated that his three-member delegation would bring up as many humanitarian issues as they can, including the repatriation of prisoners of war (POWs) and abductees. "We will discuss a reunion of separated families which many people are looking forward to hearing," he said. "We will also make an effort to talk about many other humanitarian issues."

Associated Press (Hyung-jin Kim, "SKOREA WANTS REGULAR REUNIONS OF DIVIDED FAMILIES", Seoul, 2009/08/27) reported that is proposing regular reunions of families separated by the Korean War, a spokesman said Thursday. The pool reports said the differences of opinion between the two Koreas "were not big." "I think we can return home with a good achievement," one unidentified ROK delegate was quoted as saying.

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5. DPRK Economy

Xinhua News ("DPRK TOP LEADER CALLS FOR IT RENOVATION", 2009/08/26) reported that Kim Jong Il, top leader of the DPRK, had called for an information technology renovation, the official Rodong Sinmun daily said. Kim made the remarks when he visited the May 11 Smeltery plant, the Rodong Sinmun newspaper said without mentioning the date and location. He urged the smeltery to focus on improving its technology in the production processes in a bid to increase productivity.

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6. US on ROK Space Program

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "U.S. SEES S. KOREA'S ROCKET LAUNCH AS PEACEFUL SPACE PROGRAM: STATE DEPT. ", Washington, 2009/08/25) reported that the United States said the ROK's rocket launch is part of a peaceful, commercial space program that has been pursued in a transparent manner, unlike the DPRK's, which Washington sees as a cover for long-range missile development. "The Republic of Korea developed its space launch vehicle program in a responsible manner," State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said in a daily news briefing. "We have no information at all that this launch was conducted in any way inconsistent with its international obligations and international commitments."

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7. ROK Defense

JoongAng Ilbo (Yoo Jee-ho, "MINISTER SAYS DEFENSE BUDGET CUTS UNWISE", 2009/08/27) reported that the ROK 's top-ranked defense official protested proposed cuts to an increase in the defense budget for the next fiscal year, military sources said. The Defense Ministry has proposed a 7.9 percent hike in the defense budget to 30.8 trillion won (\$24.7 billion). But the government has instead suggested the budget be raised by only 3.8 percent. Lee wrote that if the defense budget falls short of the ministry's target, then it will be "quite difficult" to prepare the blueprint for defense reforms.

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8. ROK Energy Use

Korea Times (Kim Hyun-cheol, "KOREA WASTEFUL IN ENERGY USE", 2009/08/26) reported that the ROK still uses more energy and depends more on petroleum than most advanced countries. Among the 20 member countries of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the ROK had the highest rates of energy use for added-value industrial output, according to Hyundai Economic Research Institute (HERI). The report also showed the ROK has higher dependency on oil as its primary energy source. Petroleum accounted for 43 percent of the ROK's consumption last year. Other than oil, nuclear energy had a prominent role in ROK's energy consumption compared with the global average.

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9. Japan-US Security Alliance

Kyodo News ("DPJ TO PROPOSE REVISING SOFA TO INCLUDE ENVIRONMENT CLAUSE ", Tokyo, 2009/08/27) reported that if the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan gains power in Sunday's general election it plans to propose to the United States revising the bilateral Status of Forces Agreement to include a clause on dealing with environmental pollution or destruction at U.S. military bases in Japan, party members said Wednesday.

Asahi Shimbun ("ROOS, ASO DISCUSS NORTH KOREA", 2009/08/26) reported that Prime Minister Taro Aso and John Roos, the new U.S. ambassador to Japan, met for the first time Tuesday and agreed to work together closely on issues in the Asia-Pacific region, including the DPRK. During the meeting at the prime minister's office, Roos told Aso he would seek to strengthen bilateral ties so that they flourish in the half-century following the 50th anniversary next year of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura said Roos showed keen interest in the abduction issue involving the DPRK during a separate meeting.

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10. US-Japan Nuclear Pact

Asahi Shimbun ("JAPAN ASKED U.S. TO RECLASSIFY DOCUMENTS ON SECRET NUCLEAR DEAL", 2009/08/26) reported that Japan asked the US in 1999 to reclassify key documents that exposed a secret nuclear weapons agreement that Tokyo continues to deny, a former government official said. The US State Department reclassified the documents immediately after the Japanese government's request. "As soon as we learned that the documents were disclosed, we asked Washington (through diplomatic channels) to cancel the declassification," the former government official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

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11. Japan Nuclear Disarmament

Kyodo News ("U.N. DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE OPENS IN NIIGATA", Niigata, 2009/08/26) reported that participants called for taking major steps toward creating a world without nuclear weapons as a U.N. disarmament conference opened in Niigata. The 21st U.N. Conference on Disarmament Issues is being attended by about 90 people from 21 countries, including government officials and researchers, who organizers say are debating ways to "translate visions of a nuclear-weapon-free world into concrete actions." Former Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, a co-chair of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, said mutual trust among nuclear states is important to advance nuclear disarmament.

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12. Japan Politics

Bloomberg News ("DPJ MAY WIN TWO-THIRDS OF LOWER HOUSE SEATS, ASAHI SAYS", 2009/08/26) reported that the Democratic Party of Japan may win more than 320 of the 480 seats in the Aug. 30 lower house election, the Asahi newspaper reported, citing its own telephone survey taken Aug. 22-25. The number of seats held by the Liberal Democratic Party may fall to about 100 from 300, the newspaper said.

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13. Sino-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Kyodo News ("CHINA OPPOSES JAPAN'S ISLAND CLAIM TO EXTEND CONTINENTAL SHELF", 2009/08/26) reported that the PRC has lodged opposition with a U.N. panel to Japan's bid to extend its continental shelf in the western Pacific, arguing that what Japan claims is an island is merely a rock, according to a letter sent to the panel. "Since the rock of Okinotori does not have any ground to claim continental shelf, it is not within the mandate of the commission to make any recommendation," the PRC said. Japanese diplomatic sources said a subcommission of the panel will take up the issue in September considering both Japan's application and the PRC opposition to it.

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14. Sino-Australian Energy Trade

Agence France Presse ("AUSTRALIA APPROVES CHINA, INDIA GAS PROJECT", Sydney, 2009/08/26) reported that Australia approved a massive energy project that will supply natural gas worth tens of billions of dollars to the PRC and India, giving new impetus to its resources boom. Environment Minister Peter Garrett imposed 28 conditions to protect wildlife but said he saw no reason to block the Gorgon liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant off Western Australia, allowing it to clear the final regulatory hurdle. The project is a joint venture by Chevron, Shell and ExxonMobil, which has signed a record 41 billion US dollar contract with PRC giant PetroChina and another worth 21 billion dollars with India's Petronet.

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15. Sino-India Relations

PR Newswire ("CHINA TELECOM LAUNCHES FIRST CHINA-INDIA TERRESTRIAL CABLE TRANSMISSION SYSTEM ", 2009/08/26) reported that China Telecom Americas announced that it has launched the first terrestrial broadband cable transmission system between the PRC and India. The cable system is connected through Tibet to India. The total cable capacity is thousands times more than what had been the existing bandwidth between the PRC and India. "The launch of the China-India Cable System will change the communications status quo" says Donald Tan, president of China Telecom Americas.

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16. Cross-Strait Relations

Bloomberg ("DALAI LAMA INVITE MAY HURT TAIWAN'S TIES WITH CHINA (UPDATE1)", 2009/08/26) reported that Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou faces a new challenge after opposition politicians invited the Dalai Lama to visit typhoon- hit areas . "This is no different from blackmail," said Yang Tai- shuenn, a political scientist at Chinese Culture University in Taipei. "A Dalai Lama visit can never be a purely religious event."

Associated Press (Annie Huang, "TAIWAN'S GOVERNMENT APPROVES VISIT BY DALAI LAMA", Taipei, 2009/08/27) reported that Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou announced Thursday that he has agreed to let the Dalai Lama visit the island to comfort survivors of Typhoon Morakot. "The Dalai Lama could come to Taiwan to help rest the souls of the dead and also pray for the well-being of the survivors," he said.

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17. PRC Human Rights

Cable News Network ("CHINA HOPES ORGAN DONOR SYSTEM STOPS TRAFFICKING", 2009/08/26) reported that the PRC has launched an organ donation system that it hopes will eliminate illegal organ trading and encourage people to become donors, according to reports in the state-run media. The PRC's Deputy Health Minister says only 10 people in the PRC donated an organ this year. Health officials will start promoting the system in 10 provinces and cities, including Shanghai and the prosperous southern region of Guangdong. The organ donation program -- which was unveiled on Tuesday -- will be "in line with the national conditions and international ethics," Deputy Health Minister Huang Jiefu said.

Agence France Presse ("MOST CHINA TRANSPLANTS FROM PRISONERS: STATE MEDIA", Beijing, 2009/08/26) reported that more than 65 percent of all transplanted organs in the PRC come from executed prisoners, a situation that a senior health official has condemned as improper, state media reported Wednesday. The report, which attributed the figure to health experts, was a rare acknowledgement of the role played by death row prisoners in the country's transplant industry. Executed inmates "are definitely not a proper source for organ transplants", the paper quoted Vice Minister of Health Huang Jiefu as saying. In order to curb the country's "long-time dependence" on using organs from executed prisoners, the Red Cross Society of China on Tuesday launched a national organ donation system. The new system will aim to end the widespread illegal trafficking of organs.

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18. PRC Civil Unrest

Associated Press ("PRESIDENT: CHINA NEEDS STABILITY IN RESTIVE WEST", Beijing, 2009/08/26) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao has pledged new reforms to help accelerate economic growth in Xinjiang, saying that stability there matters to the whole country. "Doing a good job in Xinjiang concerns not just the Xinjiang region, but in fact is a matter for the whole country," Hu said, adding the central government plans to "take major steps" to improve the quality of life in

Xinjiang and promote the region so it can "leap forward" economically.

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19. Myanmar Refugees in PRC

Reuters (Martin Petty and Chris Buckley , "THOUSANDS FLOOD INTO CHINA AFTER MYANMAR ARMY STANDOFF", Bangkok, 2009/08/26) reported that tension between Myanmar government troops and an armed ethnic group has sparked an exodus of thousands of people into the PRC from northeastern Myanmar. Large groups crossed the border on from Kokang in Myanmar's Shan State, a town in the PRC's southern Yunnan province. About 10,000 people have fled Kokang, the PRC's Chongqing Evening News reported.

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20. Sino-Pakistani Relations

Times of India ("INVEST IN PAKISTAN, ZARDARI TELLS CHINA", 2009/08/26) reported that keen to become a gateway for the PRC's global exports, Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari has offered the country's port facilities to the communist trading giant. "Pakistan can be a transit to all trade to and from China. Your strength is our strength and our strength is your strength," Zardari said during a seminar at Hangzhou, capital of east PRC's Zhejiang Province, a major trading centre. Pointing out that that from some PRC cities, it takes over three weeks for the export material to reach the nearest port, Zardari said "his country's ports were nearer than China's own water fronts."

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II. PRC Report

21. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction

WestChina Urban Daily ("SICHUAN RECOMMENDS 98 POST DISASTER RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS", 2009/08/26) reported that Meeting of Aiding Sichuan Reconstruction Cooperation Projects, sponsored by China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, was held in Chengdu of Sichuan on August 24. 98 projects in Sichuan have been recommended on the meeting by Sichuan provincial trade promotion council. The total investment may reach 223.7 billion RMB.

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22. PRC Public Health

Guangzhou Daily ("SMOKING TO BE BANNED IN INDOOR PUBLIC PLACES OF GUANGZHOU", 2009/08/26) reported that Deputy Secretary-General of Guangzhou city, Guangdong province Ran Shende said yesterday that indoor public places of Guangzhou should establish absolutely a non-smoking environment. This proposal has been written into Guangzhou Smoking Control Regulation

(Draft).

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