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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Kyodo News ("U.S. AGAIN URGES N. KOREA TO RETURN TO 6-WAY NUCLEAR TALKS", 2009/10/26) reported that the United States reiterated its call on the DPRK to rejoin the six-party talks on ridding Pyongyang __ of its nuclear arsenals, following the direct contact between the two nations over the weekend. "Ambassador Kim took the opportunity to once again lay out what our position is on the way forward with the ultimate goal of the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and that we believe that the best way forward on that is through the resumption of the six-party talks," State Department Spokesman Kelly said.

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2. DPRK-US Relations

Yonhap News ("FORMER HEAD OF N. KOREAN MISSION TO U.N. LIKELY TO RETURN: SOURCES", 2009/10/26) reported that a former deputy head of the DPRK mission to the United Nations in New York has applied for a visa to come back to his previous post, apparently to buttress improving relations between the DPRK and the United States, sources said. The sources said former Deputy Chief Han Song-ryol will replace the current deputy, Kim Myong-kil, who will return to Pyongyang. "I understand that Kim Myong-kil will soon go back home, but I have no idea of when," a diplomatic source here said.

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3. US Financial Sanctions on the DPRK

Agence France-Presse ("US FREEZES ASSETS OF N.KOREAN BANK", 2009/10/26) reported that the United States froze Friday the assets of a DPRK bank after the Treasury designated it a proliferator of weapons of mass destruction, officials said. The Amroggang Development Bank was in fact controlled by the DPRK's Tanchon Commercial Bank, an institution already blacklisted and sanctioned by Washington, the Treasury Department said. It also designated Tanchon bank president Kim Tong Myong a proliferator of weapons of mass destruction and froze his assets.

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4. PRC-DPRK Relations

Xinhua ("CHINESE COMPANY DONATES SOLAR LAMPS FOR FRIENDSHIP TOWER IN PYONGYANG", Pyongyang, 2009/10/26) reported that a PRC company has donated solar road lamps for the Friendship Tower in Pyongyang, one of the symbols of the friendship between PRC and DPRK. A total of 26 solar powered road lamps provided by PRC's Wanxiang Group have been installed around the Friendship Tower. During a ceremony held at the tower, Kim Jong Sik, vice chairman of the People's Committee of Pyongyang, hailed the donation, and proved that PRC would continue to develop bilateral relations, he said.

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5. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

IFES NK Brief ("CAMPAIGN TO SELL KAESONG GOODS IN PYONGYANG", 2009/10/26) reported that companies in the Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) are pushing for permission to transport goods manufactured within the complex along the railway running from Kaesong to Sinuiju and the highways connecting Kaesong, Pyongyang, Sinuiju and the PRC city of Dandong. Currently, the majority of goods exported from the KIC flow through the ROK port of Incheon. They are then distributed elsewhere after arriving at the PRC port of Dalian. This route is expensive and slow. It appears that DPRK authorities have been receptive to these ideas, but questions still remain on the logistics of the project.

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6. ROK Defectors

Agence France-Presse ("NKOREA SAYS SKOREAN DEFECTED ACROSS LAND BORDER", Seoul, 2009/10/27) reported that an ROK pig farmer has defected to the DPRK after crossing the DMZ, the Korean Central News Agency said Tuesday. KCNA identified the man as Kang Tong-Rim, 30. Kang is now under the "warm care" of authorities, the news agency said, and "is pleased with the accomplishment of his desire for defection."

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7. DPRK Military

Yonhap News ("N. KOREAN LEADER WATCHES MILITARY ART SHOW ", Seoul, 2009/10/26) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has watched a performance by soldiers at a Korean People's Army (KPA) art festival, state media said. The report of Kim's visit to a military event came two days after his trip to industrial and tourism facilities in Jagang Province. Kim praised the soldiers, saying, "The best socialist system centered on the popular masses in the DPRK is invincible as its defense line is guarded by these elite armed forces like an invulnerable iron wall."

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8. DPRK Economy

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA TARGETS WOMEN IN CLAMPDOWN: UN INVESTIGATOR", 2009/10/26) reported that the DPRK's regime has targeted women in a crackdown on private markets, depriving families of a vital source of food and income at a time of growing food shortages, a UN human rights rapporteur said. Vitit Muntarbhorn, who last week denounced human rights conditions in the DPRK as "abysmal" in a scathing report to the UN General Assembly, said the plight of women "has gotten worse and worse during these years." He said women under the age of 49 have been prohibited from engaging in trading, and the regime has gone so far as to ban them from wearing pants or riding bicycles to make it more difficult for them to engage in marketing activities.

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9. DPRK Human Rights

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA LISTED AS EIGHT WORST ABUSERS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: STATE DEPT.", 2009/10/26) reported that the United States listed the DPRK as among the eight worst offenders of religious freedom, saying the reclusive state severely restricts religious activity. The 2009 Report on International Religious Freedom put the DPRK on the list of "countries of specific concern" for the ninth consecutive year since 2001.

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10. DPRK Leadership

Yonhap News (Sam Kim, "N. KOREA LIKELY TO COMPLETE POWER SUCCESSION NEXT YEAR: OFFICIAL", Seoul, 2009/10/26) reported that ROK expects DPRK will complete its father-to-son power succession as early as next year if its leader Kim Jong-il remains healthy enough to oversee it, an intelligence official said Monday. Kim, 67, suffered a stroke last year but has recovered enough to reassert his power over his country and the ailment prompted Kim to hasten a power succession to his third son, Jong-un, a process which has slowed since the recovery but not been terminated by any means, the official said.

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11. East Asian Summits

JoongAng Ilbo (Ser Myo-ja, "THREE SUMMITS AIM FOR BETTER ASIAN RELATIONSHIP", Hua Hin, 2009/10/26) reported that ROK cemented ties with Asian neighbors over two days of regional summits here, promising to better represent the region's interests in the international community and pushing for a pan-Asian trade bloc. President Lee Myung-bak attended the East Asia Summit yesterday and the Korea-Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit and the Asean Plus Three summit on Saturday. At the East Asia Summit, Lee urged the nations to further efforts to create an economic community and to gather support for his "grand bargain" nuclear approach. At the ROK-Asean summit on Saturday morning, Lee and 10 Southeast Asian leaders discussed follow-up measures for the agreements made at the June special summit on Jeju Island in ROK. A report by the ROK-Asean eminent persons group was submitted, recommending that the ROK-Asean relation be elevated to a strategic partnership, and the leaders agreed to explore the vision.

Sina ("E. ASIA, ASEAN COOPERATE FOR COMMON GOOD", 2009/10/26) reported that at a weekend meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Premier Wen Jiabao said PRC said it would provide $15 billion in credit to other ASEAN countries and 270 million yuan ($40 million) in special aid to less developed members of the group. Leaders also said they would jointly fight other major challenges such as global warming, food and energy crises, and disaster relief. Analysts say deepening regionalization would empower Asia and Pacific countries at a critical time when the economic recession has yet to end.

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12. US-ROK Security Alliance

JoongAng Ilbo ("SEOUL SAYS U.S. FORCES NOT LEAVING FOR AFGHANISTAN", 2009/10/26) reported that the ROK denied a top American military commander's remarks that Seoul and Washington are discussing the possibility of redeploying some U.S. troops stationed here to Afghanistan. At the National Assembly hearing yesterday, Seoul's Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said stabilization of Afghanistan is also directly linked to the stable stationing of U.S. troops in the ROK. He, however, said what Mullen said about the possible relocation of U.S. troops from the ROK to the Middle East was not discussed between Washington and Seoul recently.

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13. US on Japan Missile Defense Program

United Press International ("GATES URGES JAPAN TO RELAX ARMS POLICY ", 2009/10/26) reported that U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates has asked Japan to relax its ban on arms exports and ship advanced missile interceptors to allies, sources say. Citing unnamed sources, the Kyodo News service reported Gates made the request last week during talks with Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa, presumably meant to pave the way for Tokyo to supply European countries with the latest SM-3 missile defense interceptors.

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14. Japan Afghanistan Support

Kyodo news ("JAPAN TO MAP OUT ALTERNATIVE AFGHAN SUPPORT PLAN BY OBAMA VISIT", Tokyo, 2009/10/26) reported that Japan will map out an aid plan for Afghanistan by U.S. President Barack Obama's visit to Japan next month, which will replace Tokyo's ongoing refueling mission in support of U.S.-led antiterrorism operations in and around the war-torn country, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Tetsuro Fukuyama said Monday. The premier specifically said Tokyo is considering providing farming assistance, vocational training for former Afghan soldiers and aid to bolster functions of local police.

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15. Japanese Anti-Piracy Operations

Kyodo ("KITAZAWA EYES REFUELING SUPPORT FOR ANTIPIRACY MISSION OFF SOMALIA", Tokyo, 2009/10/26) reported that Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa said Tuesday he is considering having Japanese vessels engage in a refueling mission to support international antipiracy operations off Somalia after their current mission in the Indian Ocean ends in January. ''It would be better if we could utilize the techniques and experience of refueling accumulated so far,'' Kitazawa said.

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16. Japan on Climate Change

Reuters ("JAPAN CALLS ON INDIA TO MAKE CLIMATE COMMITMENT ", 2009/10/26) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama called on his Indian counterpart on Saturday to make an international commitment on climate change, saying it was vital for a U.N. deal due in Copenhagen in December. "India's commitment is indispensable for the success of Copenhagen and I hope it will make an international commitment based on their steps taken domestically," Hatoyama told Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

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17. Japan Politics

The Financial Times ("JAPANESE PM VOWS ASSAULT ON BUREAUCRACY ", 2009/10/26) reported that Yukio Hatoyama has vowed to revolutionise the way Japan’s economy is governed by ending bureaucratic control of budgets and cracking down on waste, in his first policy address to parliament as prime minister of Japan. But he made clear he has much higher goals, promising a “180-degree turn” away from bureaucratically controlled policymaking to politician-led politics. “The first thing we must do under this new system is conduct a great clean-up of the postwar administration,” Mr Hatoyama said, blaming officials’ influence over government for the waste of public funds.

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18. Sino-Mongolian Energy Trade

Bloomberg News ("CHINA NUCLEAR MAY START MINING MONGOLIA URANIUM IN TWO YEARS ", 2009/10/28) reported that China National Nuclear Corp., the nation’s biggest operator of reactors, plans to start mining uranium from the Gurvanbulag deposit in eastern Mongolia within two years. China Nuclear’s stake in the mining venture will be decided soon, Tsogtsaikhan Gombo, a director at MonAtom, Mongolia’s state-owned company in charge of uranium, said in Beijing. The Mongolian government must own more than 51 percent of any uranium project, he said. The world’s second-largest energy consumer wants to increase the use of nuclear power by about 10 times by 2030 to cut reliance on oil and coal, the government-owned China Institute of Atomic Energy said.

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19. Cross Strait Relations

Associated Press (Annie Huang, "TAIWAN, CHINA TO NEGOTIATE SIGNING TRADE AGREEMENT", Taipei, 2009/10/26) reported that Taiwan and PRC are expected to begin formal talks on signing a wide-ranging trade agreement by next spring or earlier after Beijing publicly sanctioned the negotiations, officials said Monday. Liu Teh-hsiun, a vice chairman of Taiwan's Cabinet-level Mainland Affairs Council, said Beijing's "positive attitude" could help smooth discussions for the trade pact, which would deepen economic ties between the two countries. On Sunday, PRC's Taiwan Affairs Office chief Wang Yi said the two sides could begin talks on the trade pact, known as the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement, during a new round of bilateral talks later this year.

Xinhua ("TAIWAN LEADER MA CALLS FOR LASTING CROSS-STRAIT PEACE", Taipei, 2009/10/25) reported that Taiwan leader Ma Ying-jeou on Sunday called for both sides across the Taiwan Strait to resolve hatred through communication and negotiation and make peace an eternity. Ma made the remarks in a ceremony to unveil a memorial square, which was constructed on the site of the Kuningtou battle in Kinmen of Taiwan, according to local media reports.

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20. PRC Military

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA MILITARY GROWTH THE 'MINIMUM REQUIREMENT': GENERAL", Washington, 2009/10/26) reported that a top PRC general Monday defended Beijing 's rapid military modernization, including the development of advanced weapons that threaten US forces in the Pacific, as aimed at meeting its minimum defense requirements. General Xu Caihou, vice chairman of PRC's military commission, sought to allay US suspicions over the growing might of the Asian superpower by insisting that Beijing harbored no expansionist ambitions and wanted collaborative international relations . "We will never seek hegemony, military expansion or an arms race," he told an audience of foreign policy experts at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank.

Xinhua ("CHINESE NAVY VESSEL SETS SAIL FOR ROK, JAPAN", Dalian, 2009/10/26) reported that

the "Zhenghe" training vessel of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy left Dalian, northeast PRC's Liaoning Province, Monday for visits to ROK and Japan. At the invitation of the ROK's navy and Japan's maritime self-defense force, the vessel is scheduled to visit the ROK's port of Chinhae and Japan's port of Kure from Oct. 29 to Nov. 2, and Nov. 5 to 9 respectively, according to the schedule.

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21. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Agence France Presse ("CHINA'S XINJIANG 'ISOLATED' BY EMAIL, PHONE BLOCKS", Beijing, 2009/10/24) reported that residents in PRC's restive Xinjiang region remain isolated from the outside world with long-lasting Internet and phone cuts that have prompted some businesses to relocate, locals said Saturday. Emails are still blocked nearly four months after deadly ethnic unrest erupted in the regional capital Urumqi, as are text messages and international phone calls, residents told AFP.

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22. PRC Tibet Issue

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA URGES PUSH FOR TIBET STABILITY: STATE MEDIA", Beijing, 2009/10/27) reported that Zhang Qingli, the top Communist Party leader in Tibet, said the fight against separatism remains "very serious", the Tibet Daily reportedTuesday. In a speech in Lhasa , Zhang urged all levels of government, as well as the military, to step up efforts to ensure public order. "Since 2005, we have made important contributions to safeguard overall social stability... by hitting hard and preventing (separatism) and by building a solid line of defence to strike at hostile people," Zhang said. A PRC foreign ministry spokesman on Tuesday confirmed two executions for last year's riots, telling reporters that the cases had been handled "in strict accordance with the law".

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23. PRC Energy Supply

Bloomberg News ("SINOPEC INVESTIGATES REPORT OF CHINA GAS DISCOVERY IN CHONGQING ", 2009/10/26) reported that China Petroleum & Chemical Corp. said it is investigating a newspaper report that the company has discovered Asia’s biggest natural gas field in the country. Sinopec, Asia’s biggest refiner, discovered a field with 120 billion cubic meters of gas reserves in the southwestern municipality of Chongqing, the Chengdu Commercial News reported today, citing an unidentified Chongqing government official. The newspaper cited the government official as saying that a Sinopec official called the field Asia’s biggest.

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24. PRC Environment

The New York Times ("CHINA'S WATER NEEDS CREATE OPPORTUNITIES", 2009/10/26) reported that the staggering economic growth in the PRC has come at a heavy cost, paid in severe contamination of the country's air, soil and water. But now the PRC government is aggressively pursuing more stringent environmental regulation, with a particular focus on water distribution and wastewater treatment. The trade service division of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce recently announced a plan to build 10,000 green hotels by the year 2012 — hotels that will need to be outfitted with the latest in water treatment technology. Since 2006, the clean technology market in the PRC has "gone from niche to mainstream," and it is growing at an annual rate of more than 20 percent, according to Tsing Capital, one of the country's first clean-technology venture capital firms.

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II. PRC Report

25. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

Xinhua News ("FIRST YOUNG EARTH SCIENTIST CONFERENCE HELD IN BEIJING", 2009/10/26) reported that the first Young Earth Scientist Conference was conducted in Beijing on the 25-28 of October. The conference will focus on global climate, environmental as well as geological challenges facing today's society, and aims to establish an interdisciplinary global network of individuals committed to solving these challenges.

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26. PRC Environment

Xinhua News ("GUANGDONG CLOSES A THOUSAND POLLUTING ENTERPRISES", 2009/10/26) reported that according to Guangdong Bureau of Environmental Protection, Guangdong has checked 397,000 pollution enterprises, closed 1093 and rectified 11386 with time limit since last year.

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