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MARKTWO

I. Napsnet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap ("CLINTON CALLS FOR ENHANCED EFFORTS AGAINST NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION BY N. K.", Washington, 2010/03/27) reported that U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Friday that a nuclear deal between the U.S. and Russia will help buttress ongoing global efforts against nuclear proliferation by states like the DPRK and Iran. "The treaty also shows the world, particularly states like Iran and North Korea, that one of our top priorities is to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime and keep nuclear materials out of the wrong hands," Clinton told reporters at the White House.

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2. Sino-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("SEOUL WATCHING FOR SIGNS OF N. K. LEADER'S POSSIBLE VISIT TO CHINA ", Seoul, 2010/03/29) reported that the ROK is watching closely for signs of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's possible visit to the PRC, an official said Monday. DPRK watchers say this week is the best time if Kim intends to visit the PRC in the near future because Pyongyang's legislature is scheduled to convene late next week. "There are still no definitive signs that Chairman Kim will visit China," a senior government official said. "However, the government is maintaining a close watch with all possibilities open."

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3. ROK on Sino-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("KOREA HOPES FOR GREATER CHINESE ROLE IN INTER-KOREAN DIALOGUE", Seoul, 2010/03/26) reported that Chung Mong-joon, chairman of the ROK's ruling Grand National Party, called for the PRC to play a greater role in promoting dialogue between the divided Koreas in his talks Friday with Wang Jiarui, head of the Chinese Communist Party's international liaison department. Chung told Wang that the PRC can play the role of a mediator when and if the DPRK misunderstands the ROK's intentions in seeking dialogue with it, his spokesman Representative Cho Hae-jin said. "He said it in the sense that China can play an active part as Kim may visit China soon,

while contact between China and North Korea is taking place on many levels," Cho said.

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4. ROK on Six-Party Talks

Korea Herald (Kim Ji-hyun, "SIX-PARTY TALKS MAY RESUME WITH KIM JONG-IL'S CHINA TRIP: YU ", Seoul, 2010/03/26) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said Thursday that a visit by DPRK leader Kim Jong-il to the PRC could lead to a resumption of the six-way talks. "It seems only natural to (believe that Kim's visit would lead to the six-way talks)," Yu said. "I believe the six-nation talks are a significant platform for discussion for North Korea, since it can get in touch with all five concerned nations. Further, the five parties are prepared to help North Korea as soon as the North manifests its willingness for irreversible and verifiable denuclearization," the foreign minister said. "The ball is in the North Korean court. Timing of the next round of six-nation talks are solely up to the North," Yu said.

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5. Inter-Korea Economic Cooperation

Yonhap ("N.K. INSPECTS S. KOREAN PROPERTIES AT MOUNTAIN RESORT", Seoul, 2010/03/26) reported that the DPRK conducted a second day of its unilateral inspection of ROK-owned amenities at the Mt. Kumgang resort Friday, business officials said. A group of 20 DPRK officials, including military officers, visited a hot spring facility, a duty free shop and a cultural center that the ROK's state-run Korea Tourism Organization has at the resort, ROK company officials who attended the inspection said. Kim In-hoe, a company official, said, "No menacing language was used, and we were asked when we could begin operations if the tours resumed." He and others said the survey took place in a business-like atmosphere.

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6. Inter-Korean Relations

New York Times (Choe Sang-hun, "NORTH KOREA WARNS SOUTH OVER BUFFER ZONE", Seoul, 2010/03/29) reported that the DPRK accused the United States and the ROK on Monday of creating provocations by allowing tourists and journalists into the Demilitarized Zone. The DPRK demanded an end to the tours, calling them part of a pattern of “psychological warfare” and warning of “unpredictable incidents including the loss of human lives in this area for which the U.S. side will be wholly to blame.”

Korea Times ("SEOUL CALLS FOR IDENTIFICATION OF 4 IN NK", Seoul, 2010/03/26) reported that the ROK government called on the DPRK Friday to immediately identify the four ROK citizens it has been holding for illegally entering the state. Chun Hae-sung, spokesman of the Ministry of Unification, urged the DPRK to reveal the facts regarding the current situation as soon as possible.

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7. DPRK Defectors

Asahi Shimbun ("N. KOREAN DEFECTOR SET TO VISIT IN APRIL", Tokyo, 2010/03/28) reported that Hwang Jang Yop, the most senior official to defect from the DPRK, will likely visit Japan in early April, Japanese and ROK sources said over the weekend. Hiroshi Nakai, state minister in charge of abduction issues, said he had asked the ROK government to allow Hwang to travel to Japan as part of efforts to raise awareness of the issue.

Yonhap ("CONGRESSMAN INTRODUCES BILL FOR INT'L ADOPTION OF N. K. ORPHANS ", Seoul, 2010/03/28) reported that U.S. Representative Edward Royce (R-California) introduced a bill Friday calling on his government to help US citizens adopt stateless and orphaned DPRK children adrift in other countries. The bill urges the U.S. government to "establish pilot programs that identify and provide for the immediate care of, and assist in the international adoption of, orphaned North Korean children living within South Korea" and surrounding countries, according to Young Kim, an aide to Royce.

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8. DPRK Economy

Korea Times (Kang Hyun-kyung, "SOME N. KOREAN OFFICIALS TAKE ON 2 JOBS", Seoul, 2010/03/26) reported that in the wake of the DPRK allowing its people to buy and sell products at markets again in February, some workers in the public sector are working day and night to make more cash, according to the Daily NK. Some of them play a facilitating role in ``a market economy'' as middlemen. They purchase products from nearby state-run factories and re-sell them to small wholesalers. The latter, who are called ``Mr. or Ms. Runner'' because they travel from one city to another across country in search of higher profits, sell what they bought from the government employees to market vendors who directly deal with consumers.

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9. DPRK Internal Situation

Asahi Shimbun (Daisuke Nishimura , "WATCHING '2012' A NO-NO IN N. KOREA", Shenyang, 2010/03/26) reported that for the DPRK, the year 2012 has a significance as it marks the centennial of the birth of the country's founder, Kim Il Sung. That a Hollywood director has come out with a disaster flick titled "2012" has apparently made Pyongyang very antsy. According to sources with good contacts on daily activities in the country, citizens caught viewing pirated copies of the apocalyptic science fiction movie directed by Roland Emmerich have been arrested. Numerous arrests have occurred across the country, the sources say.

Korea Herald (Kim So-hyun, "DVDs NEW MEDIUM TO ENLIGHTEN N.K.", Seoul, 2010/03/27) reported that Lee Min-bok, a defector from the DPRK who leads a group that started a leaflet campaign using balloons, said his group began sending propaganda DVDs along with paper leaflets this year. "We have flown off about 400 DVDs from Baekryeong and Ganghwa islands in the West Sea and Cheolwon since February," Lee said. Like the leaflets, the DVDs describe DPRK leader Kim Jong-il as a dictator indulging in western luxuries or show DPR Koreans that their government may

not be telling them the truth. "According to people who have recently fled the North, about 70 to 80 percent of households in cities have DVD players now and many have computers with DVD drives," said Kim Seung-chul, chief of the broadcaster North Korea Reform Radio. "They say that even the military has a DVD player for each platoon."

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10. ROK Naval Ship Sinking

Associated Press (Si-young Lee and Hyung-jin Kim, "SKOREAN DIVERS GEAR UP TO HEAD DOWN TO SUNKEN SHIP", Baengnyong Island, 2010/03/29) reported that fifty-eight men were rescued in the hours after the Cheonan split apart late Friday near the maritime border with the DPRK and sank after suffering an explosion in the rear hull, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said. ROK President Lee Myung-bak convened security-related ministers again Monday and he urged authorities to focus on the rescue mission. The exact cause of the explosion remained unclear, and officials said it could take weeks to determine. The DPRK did not appear to be involved, and the country's official news agency has not made any mention of the ship. "We have detected 'no special movements' by North Korean forces; however, we, as a command, continue to monitor the situation and remain prepared for any contingency," Gen. Walter Sharp, commander of U.S. troops in the ROK, said in a statement Sunday.

Chosun Ilbo ("WHAT CAUSED THE CHEONAN TO SINK? ", Seoul, 2010/03/29) reported that ROK government and military officials have reportedly ruled out that an accident or collision with a reef caused the 1,200-ton Navy corvette Cheonan to sink in waters 1.8 km southwest of Baeknyeong Island on Friday. They say the explosion that sank the ship was strong enough to rip it in half. "The tragedy may have been caused by a floating mine, judging by the explosion in the rear of the ship as well as the situation inside the vessel before it sank and geographic conditions," a government official said. "But we cannot guess the possible cause until we are able to investigate the vessel."

Korea Herald (Kim So-hyun, "'LOW POSSIBILITY OF INTERNAL EXPLOSION'", Seoul, 2010/03/27) reported that the possibility of an internal cause such as an explosion of parts near the rear bottom of the vessel as the cause of the sinking of the Cheonan appears to be very low, Kim Tae-woo, vice president of Korea Institute for Defense Analyses, told The Korea Herald. "I have never heard of any navy vessel explode by itself so far, although it is too early to make presumptions when the government is still looking into possible causes."

Yonhap ("DEFENSE CHIEF CITES N.K. MINE AS POSSIBLE CAUSE OF SHIP EXPLOSION", Seoul, 2010/03/29) reported that ROK Defense Minister Kim Tae-young suggested Monday that one of the many DPRK sea mines placed during the Korean War could have sparked the explosion that sunk the Cheonan. "It is possible that a North Korean sea mine could have drifted into our area," Kim told a meeting of the parliamentary defense committee. Kim said the DPRK brought in about 4,000 sea mines from the Soviet Union during the war and placed about 3,000 of them in the Yellow Sea and the East Sea. "Though many sea mines were removed, it must have been impossible to retrieve them 100 percent," Kim said. "One was found in 1959, and another was removed in 1984." Kim also told the parliamentary committee that there were no signs of a torpedo attack ahead of the explosion, citing accounts of rescued sailors who handled the ship's radar.

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11. US on ROK Naval Ship Sinking

Yonhap ("'U.S. HAS NO EVIDENCE ON N.K.'S INVOLVEMENT' ", Washington, 2010/03/27) reported that the United States Friday said it has no evidence that DPRK is involved in the sinking of an ROK warship in waters near the sea border with the DPRK. "Let's not jump to conclusions here," State Department spokesman Philip Crowley said. "I'm not aware of any evidence to that effect. But I think the authoritative source here would be the South Korean government."

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12. US-ROK Military Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("DELAYING TROOP CONTROL HANDOVER 'SENDS WRONG MESSAGE' ", Washington, 2010/03/29) reported that U.S. Forces Korea Commander General Walter Sharp suggested discussions at the "highest levels" of the ROK and U.S. governments over delaying the handover of full control of ROK troops to Seoul in 2012 at a hearing of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services on Friday, AFP reported Saturday. "Both governments agreed to this timeline of April 17, 2012. And to change that timeline, both governments will have to agree to change that," he said. He also said, "It also sends a very strong message to North Korea and to other people in the region that the [South] Korean military is so strong that the U.S. is willing to go in a supportive relationship." A delay in the transfer would send "exactly the opposite signal, which is not the right thing to do," he added.

Yonhap ("U.S. COMMANDERS LEAVE OPEN POSSIBILITY OF OPCON TRANSITION DELAY", Washington, 2010/03/27) reported that Admiral Robert Willard, commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, said Friday that the US is ready to transfer the wartime command control of the ROK troops to Seoul as scheduled in 2012. "To the extent that the government would question that, I think then it becomes a government to government decision between the United States and the Republic of Korea," Willard told a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing. "This is a government of Korea decision, or certainly OPCON transition will be considered by the government of Korea for its import and its impact on the region."

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13. DMZ Environment

Joongang Ilbo ("FORUM LOOKS TO DMZ AS ECO-TOUR SITE", Seoul, 2010/03/27) reported that the Ministry of Public Administration and Security said it held the first Korean DMZ Policy Forum at the central government complex in central Seoul Friday. Eighty-four experts in ecology, the environment and culture are members of the forum," Oh Dong-ho, a senior official at the ministry's regional development bureau, said. The ROK government last year set out basic plans for the new development, which covers 15 areas around the DMZ and Mintongseon, the civilian control line, in Goseong. The grand total for the project, which begins next year and will last through 2030, is 19.7 trillion won ($17.2 billion). Some of the government plans include designating DMZ areas as biosphere reserves under Unesco's Man and the Biosphere Program and building a bike path that links Gwangwon County in Incheon, Gyeonggi, and the CCZ in Goseong, Gangwon, the ministry said.

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14. ROK Climate Change

Korea Herald ("SPORTS CIRCLES JOIN CAMPAIGN TO CUT EMISSIONS", Seoul, 2010/03/27) reported that the government and major pro-sports federations of football, baseball, basketball and volleyball signed a memorandum of understanding Friday to work together to save energy in the sport sectors. The country can cut 15,185 tons of carbon dioxide gas per year if effective energy conservation measures are implemented in four popular sporting events, the Ministry of Knowledge Economy said. They agreed to change stadium lighting and incorporate more insulation and encourage spectators to use mass transportation.

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15. USFJ Base Relocation

Asahi Shimbun ("TOKUNOSHIMA EYED FOR U.S. HELICOPERRS", Tokyo, 2010/03/29) reported that more than 4,000 people attended a rally on Tokunoshima island in Kagoshima Prefecture on Sunday to protest its possible use as a relocation site for some of the functions of the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. Sources said Tokunoshima was mentioned by Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada and Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa in their respective discussions Friday with U.S. and Okinawa prefectural government officials in which the central government's proposal was explained. In a speech Saturday in Nagano, Kitazawa said: "There is no location willing to accept all 60 of the helicopters at Futenma. We may need to redistribute this number to at least two different locations."

Asahi Shimbun ("2-PHASE FUTENMA PLAN PROPOSED, OPPOSED", Tokyo, 2010/03/27) reported that the Japanese government on Friday informed the United States and Okinawa Prefecture of a possible two-phase plan to relocate the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma within the prefecture. The plan envisions shifting Futenma functions in Ginowan first to U.S. Camp Schwab in Nago, and later to a new man-made island off Katsuren Peninsula in Uruma, according to sources. Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada explained the progress of the government's discussions to U.S. Ambassador John Roos in Tokyo Friday morning. "The government of Japan shared its current thinking with regard to the Futenma issue, which we will carefully consider," Roos later said in a statement. In Naha, Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa explained the government plan to Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima on Friday morning. "The current plan to totally shift (Futenma) to Henoko has come extremely close to zero (in possibility)," Kitazawa told the governor. "We are studying a plan to disperse (functions), hoping to reduce the burden on Okinawa as a result."

Kyodo ("JAPAN STILL SEEKING AN AGREEMENT BY MAY WITH U.S. ON FUTENMA: OKADA", Washington, 2010/03/28) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, on a visit to the United States, reiterated Sunday Japan's resolve to seek an agreement with the United States by the end of May on where to relocate a U.S. Marine base in Okinawa. Okada showed reluctance to narrow down Japan's relocation proposals to a single plan before making arrangements with the United States and the local people concerned. His stance appears different from that of Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, who told a press conference Friday in Tokyo that he thinks negotiations ''wouldn't work'' unless the various options being considered by the government are eventually compiled into a single plan.

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16. Japanese Foreign Aid

Asahi Shimbun (Makoto Igarashi and Takeshi Fujitani , "OKADA: NO EXTRA AID WITHOUT FREE POLL", Tokyo, 2010/03/29) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada has put Myanmar (Burma) on notice that unless it holds free elections this year and allows pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi to participate, it will withhold increased aid. In Yangon (Rangoon), Burmese government officials have told Japan's ambassador, Yasuaki Nogawa, that new election laws enacted March 8 prohibit Suu Kyi and other activists from being members of political parties or voting in or contesting a national election. Okada said, "This is obviously different from what our country expects."

Asahi Shimbun ("TOKYO WEIGHS ASSISTANCE FOR SRI LANKA", Tokyo, 2010/03/29) reported that the Japanese government is weighing how to help police in Sri Lanka overcome ethnic differences that are hindering reconciliation in the aftermath of a civil war that ended last year. A former high-ranking official from the Fukui prefectural police will join a delegation from the Foreign Ministry and the Japan International Cooperation Agency that will visit Sri Lanka from Monday to assess ways assistance could be provided.

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17. Sino-Japanese Relations

Yomiuri Shimbun (Satoshi Saeki, "CHINA WANTS GYOZA CASE CLOSED", Beijing, 2010/03/29) reported that PRC police announced the arrest of a suspect in the case of food poisoning incidents caused by PRC-made frozen gyoza. The timing of the action seems to point to the desire of PRC President Hu Jintao's administration for Japan to finalize Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's visit to the country as soon as possible. A diplomatic source said, "[The announcement] was due to the Hu administration's strong desire for Hatoyama to visit China during the Shanghai Expo, on which Beijing has staked its national pride."

Kyodo ("CHINA'S PATIENT PROBE LEADS TO DETENTION OF DUMPLING SUSPECT: HIRANO ", Tokyo, 2010/03/29) reported that Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano on Monday praised the PRC for ''patiently'' pursuing a probe into a dumpling poisoning case that led to the detention over the weekend of a Chinese suspect. ''It is true that it took as long as two years, but the Chinese government worked on this case patiently for the two years,'' the top government spokesman said in a press conference. ''It is a fruit of the Chinese side's efforts and Japan's consistent pursuit over the case.'' ''It is necessary to establish cooperative relations between the two countries through which we can quickly deal with similar cases,'' Hirano said.

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18. PRC Censorship

Asahi Shimbun (Kenji Minemura , "CHINA BANS REPORTING ON 18 SUBJECTS", Beijing, 2010/03/26) reported that the PRC has prohibited the media from reporting on 18 subjects,

including yuan revaluation, corruption and problems in Tibet and the Xinjiang Uighur autonomous region. Liu Yunshan, director of the publicity department of China's Communist Party, faxed notifications about the bans to major newspaper companies, television and radio stations and Internet news companies on Sunday. According to a senior official of a PRC media company, the current censorship is "among the largest ever" and exceeds that imposed before the 2008 Beijing Olympics. "Most of the subjects that people are interested in have been banned. We don't know what to report on," said an official at a newspaper.

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19. PRC Human Rights

New York Times (Andrew Jacobs, "CHINA BARS NOTED SCHOLAR FROM PLANNED TRIP TO U.S.", Beijing, 2010/03/26) reported that Cui Weiping, 54, a poet and professor at the Beijing Film Academy who was scheduled to speak at an academic conference in the United States this week, said Friday that she had been barred from leaving the PRC as punishment for her commentary on human rights and free speech. “I was told I had classes to teach and that the lecture I was giving was not my specialty, but those were just excuses,” said Ms. Cui, who was to have left on Wednesday. “The real reason is that they want to put pressure on me, and they want to punish me.”

Associated Press (Scott McDonald, "WIFE CONFIRMS DISSIDENT CHINESE LAWYER IS ALIVE", Beijing, 2010/03/29) reported that dissident PRC lawyer Gao Zhisheng, who missing for more than a year, resurfaced suddenly Sunday, saying he is now living in the northern PRC, but it was not clear under what conditions. "I am tremendously relieved that my husband is alive," Gao's wife Geng He said in a statement issued by Freedom Now , a non-governmental organization that represents prisoners of conscience . "I am so happy that my children were able to speak to him. My children and I have not seen their father since January 2009. We urge the Chinese government to allow Zhisheng to leave the country and be reunited with us in the United States."

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