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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Nuclear Program

The New York Times (Choe Sang-Hun, "NORTH KOREA THREATENS TO ENRICH URANIUM", Seoul, 2009/04/29) reported that the DPRK said that it would start an uranium enrichment program, declaring for the first time that it intended to pursue a second project unless the United Nations lifted sanctions. The DPRK “will make a decision to build a light-water reactor power plant and start the technological development for ensuring self-production of nuclear fuel as its first process without delay,” the spokesman said, an apparent threat to enrich uranium.

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2. UN on DPRK Nuclear Program

Kyodo News ("U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL NOT TO APOLOGIZE FOR STATEMENT OVER N. KOREA: SOURCE ", 2009/04/29) reported that the U.N. Security Council does not either retract its adoption of a presidential statement over the DPRK's rocket launch or apologize for the adoption, a U.N. diplomatic source said Wednesday. ''Basically it is impossible for the Security Council to retract or apologize'' for the adopted statement, the source said.

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3. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("NKOREA ISOLATES ITSELF FURTHER WITH NUCLEAR TEST THREAT",

Washington, 2009/04/29) reported that the United States warned the DPRK that it is deepening its international isolation with its threats to carry out a second nuclear test . "Let me just say very clearly that these threats only further isolate the North," State Department spokesman Robert Wood told reporters. "I don't think you'll see an apology from the Security Council ," Wood said.

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4. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Program

Xinhua News ("SPOKESMAN: RUSSIA TO STUDY INFORMATION ON DPRK'S NEW THREATS", Moscow, 2009/04/29) reported that Russia will closely study the new threats posed by the DPRK concerning nuclear and missile tests, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. "We received first news on the subject several hours ago, and we assume that it comes from reliable sources," the RIA news agency quoted Andrei Nesterenko as saying. "We will study this information and comment on it later," he said at a press conference.

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5. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Herald ("SEOUL SLAMS N.K. FOR NUCLEAR THREAT", 2009/04/29) reported that the Foreign Ministry yesterday issued a statement strongly rebuking the DPRK for its latest threats to carry out a second nuclear test. "All international responsibility for worsening situations lies completely with North Korea as it forsakes the international efforts exerted so far to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue and prevent nuclear proliferation," said Moon Tae-young, the ministry spokesman. The government called on the North to return to the six-party talks and "immediately halt" actions threatening international peace and to abide by the April 14 United Nations Security Council presidential statement denouncing the DPRK's rocket launch.

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6. Japan, PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Kyodo News ("ASO, WEN AGREE TO HANDLE N. KOREA NUCLEAR ISSUE AT 6-PARTY TALKS ", Beijing, 2009/04/29) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso and PRC Premier Wen Jiabao agreed Wednesday to deal with the DPRK nuclear issue within the framework of the six-party talks, officials familiar with their talks said.

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7. US on DPRK Sanctions

Kyodo News ("U.S. TO ABDUCTEES' KIN: NEW SANCTIONS CAN WAIT", Tokyo,) reported that the U.S. point man on DPRK policy told relatives of Japanese abducted by the DPRK that the United States has no immediate plan to tighten financial and other sanctions against Pyongyang. After talks with Stephen Bosworth at the State Department, Japanese participants said the U.S. special representative for DPRK policy turned down their call for sanctions to help resolve the abduction

issue. Bosworth was quoted as saying Washington has no intention at this moment of imposing sanctions because they are not expected to produce any change in Pyongyang's behavior.

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8. Sino-DPRK Relations

Xinhua News ("CHINA REOPENS BORDER TOURISM AFTER THREE YEARS' SUSPENSION OVER RAMPANT GAMBLING ", Dandong, 2009/04/29) reported that the PRC reopened its land border with the DPRK to tourism at Dandong, a city in the northeastern province of Liaoning, beginning Wednesday. A group of 71 tourists left Dandong for Sinuiju, the border city facing Dandong across the Yalu River for one-day tours early Wednesday. They were mostly Dandong locals. They were the first group of tourists to arrive in Sinuiju since February 2006 when the PRC suspended all of its border tour programs following rampant gambling by PRC tourists, according to the exit and reentry section of the Public Security Bureau in Dandong.

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9. Inter-Korean Relations

JoongAng Ilbo ("REUNITING FAMILIES ON PENINSULA A TOP PRIORITY", 2009/04/29) reported that h elping ROK families reunite with kin in the DPRK is a “top priority” in relations between the two countries, Hyun In-taek, the ROK’s Unification Minister, said. Hyun was speaking to 100 individuals who were separated from their relatives following the Korean War, which lasted from 1950 to 1953. “We clearly recognize that the issue of separated families must be addressed before any other issue in dealing with inter-Korean relations,” Hyun said. “As soon as our dialogue with the North resumes, we will tackle this issue.”

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10. DPRK Human Rights

Yonhap News (Kim Hyun, "N. KOREA RESPONDS TO INT'L CRITICISM ON HUMAN RIGHTS: REPORT ", Seoul, 2009/04/29) reported that the DPRK has reduced public executions and adjusted laws to better address human rights after years of international criticism, but cases of abuse are still widespread, a state-run think tank in Seoul said. Citing interviews with about 50 DPRK defectors who fled their homeland between 2007 and 2008, the Korea Institute for National Unification said in a report that the DPRK appears to be mindful of criticism from the international community about its human rights condition and has responded with limited changes.

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11. USFK Base Relocation

Korea Herald ("KOREA AND U.S. FAIL TO REACH NEW BASE DEAL ", 2009/04/29) reported that the ROK and the United States yesterday failed to agree on the date and cost-sharing for the relocation of US troops further south on the peninsula, the Defense Ministry said. They were unable

to agree on issues mostly concerning the infrastructure for the base relocation, sources said. The US side reportedly demanded the ROK government guarantee the 1.7 trillion won ($1.2 billion) project of building the rental homes for U.S. troops and their families, as an increasingly number of family members reside in Pyeongtaek on the US Department of Defense's latest decision to allow more accompanied tours.

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12. US-ROK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("USFK PERSONNEL TOLD TO BEHAVE", 2009/04/29) reported that the U.S. Forces Korea were under weekend curfew last Saturday, when personnel were required to attend a four-hour "Stand Down for Standards" training at their camps at the instruction of commander Gen. Walter Sharp. Sharp ordered the training early this month in efforts to curb a rise in crimes involving U.S. soldiers such as sexual assault and fistfights, chiefly in Itaewon, Seoul after a shorter weekend curfew was put into place last August.

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13. Sino-ROK Military Relations

Xinhua News ("CHINA, ROK VOW TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN MILITARY TIES", 2009/04/29) reported that the PRC and the Republic of Korea (ROK) agreed to further strengthen military ties. Since the PRC and the ROK forged diplomatic ties, their relations have experienced rapid development, and friendly bilateral military ties have expanded in a stable fashion, said Chen Bingde, Chief of the General Staff of the People's Liberation Army. Chen said more bilateral military exchanges would be conducive to the healthy development of PRC-ROK friendly relations and to regional peace, stability and prosperity.

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14. ROK Swine Flu Outbreak

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA TESTING 5 SUSPECTED SWINE FLU CASES ", Seoul, 2009/04/29) reported that ROK health authorities said that they are testing five more suspected cases of swine flu amid a heightening alert against the deadly virus that is rapidly spreading across the globe. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) said in a statement that the five individuals being tested, including a 15-month-old baby, recently returned from trips to Mexico or the United States and showed flu-like symptoms such as coughing and fever.

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15. Japan Politics

The Asahi Shimbun ("LONG KNIVES OUT FOR OZAWA", 2009/04/29) reported that calls are growing within opposition Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan) for the resignation of scandal-

tainted Ichiro Ozawa as party leader. Kozo Watanabe, a top-level party adviser, has called on Ozawa to go quietly. Watanabe was busy Monday, conferring with party members. Before the start of the Lower House plenary session, he met with Koichiro Genba, who is close to party Vice President Katsuya Okada, considered by many as the leading candidate to replace Ozawa as party leader should he step down.

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16. USFJ Base Relocation

Kyodo News ("GREGSON SEES JAPAN'S GUAM RELOCATION BURDEN AS 'APPROPRIATE'", 2009/04/29) reported that Wallace Gregson, nominee for assistant secretary of defense for Asia and the Pacific, said he sees the cost-sharing arrangement between the United States and Japan to pay for the relocation of U.S. forces in Okinawa to Guam as ''equitable and appropriate.'' Gregson, a retired Marine Corps lieutenant general, expressed the view in a prepared testimony for a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing to consider his nomination. He is expected to win Senate approval for the senior Pentagon post.

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17. Sino-Japanese Relations

Xinhua News ("PMS: CHINA, JAPAN TO BOOST CO-OP AMID FINANCIAL CRISIS", Beijing, 2009/04/29) reported that PRC Premier Wen Jiabao and his Japanese counterpart Taro Aso on Wednesday pledged to further cooperation in dealing with the global financial crisis and lead regional economic growth. Wen asked the two major world economies to stabilize bilateral trade and investment, expand cooperation in energy-saving and environmental sectors, information and communication technology, green economy and high-tech industries, as well as to cultivate new growth points.

Agence France-Presse (Kyoko Hasegawa, "ASO CALLS FOR JAPAN, CHINA TO UNITE", Beijing, 2009/04/30) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso called Thursday for Tokyo and Beijing to unite in facing the world's environmental and economic challenges. "Cooperation between Japan and China is a pre-condition for taking advantage of Asia's potential as the growth centre for the 21st century ," Aso told a gathering of business leaders from both nations. "I saw an admirable case of realising both an improvement in... energy conservation and steel production through a Japan-China joint project," he said. "China is the world's largest crude steel producer, while Japan has the world's most advanced environmental and energy-conservation technologies. Today I hardened my convictions that by uniting the two factors, Japan and China can make a great leap forward."

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18. Japan, US , Indian Joint Naval Exercise

Calcutta News ("INDIA, US, JAPAN NAVAL EXERCISE KICKS OFF WEDNESDAY", 2009/04/29) reported that the tri-nation naval exercise Malabar between Indian, US and Japanese navies will kick off Wednesday off the coast of Okinawa in Japan, a naval official said here Tuesday. Ships, aircraft

and submarines from the US, Japan and India will take part in the 2009 edition of the exercise from April 28 to May 3. 'After participating in the Chinese international fleet review, the Indian naval ships have reached Okinawa to participate in the Malabar exercise,' the official said. 'Malabar gives us the chance to build greater interoperability with two of our most important regional partners,' Commander of US 7th Fleet Vice Admiral John Bird said in an official statement.

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19. PRC on Swine Flu

Agence France Press ("BEIJING REJECTS REPORTS ON CHINA ORIGIN OF FLU", 2009/04/29) reported that a senior PRC health official said Wednesday that overseas media reports pointing to the PRC as the source of a swine flu outbreak were aimed at tarnishing his nation's image. "Driven by ulterior motives, some overseas media have ignored the facts of the epidemic and basic scientific knowledge and deliberately fabricated rumours that this epidemic came from China," health ministry spokesman Mao Qunan said. "(They) aim to muddle right and wrong, create disturbances and ruin China's image," he said in a statement.

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20. PRC Environment

Caijing Magazine (Deng Hai, "THREE GORGES TO-DO LIST: MUDSLIDES TO JOBS", 2009/04/29) reported that muddy misfortune has been commonplace along the banks of the central Yangtze River since the final impoundment stage for the Three Gorges Dam began last year. An official with the Chongqing Land Resources Bureau told Caijing that more than 150 dangerous geological events -- including landslides involving 45 million cubic square meters of earth -- have been reported in the reservoir area behind the dam since the water impoundment began last November. “More than 2,000 farmers have been deprived of their livelihoods,” the official said.

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21. PRC Economy

Reuters ("CHINA ECONOMY CAN'T RECOVER IN ISOLATION -OFFICIAL", 2009/04/29) reported that teh PRC cannot turn around its export-driven economy in isolation, and needs improvement in the rest of the world, especially the United States, in order to return to growth, a top PRC official said. Aggressive monetary and fiscal policies put in place over the past few months are being "effective" in supporting the PRC's economy but the "current improvement is not solid," said Chen Deming, China's minister of commerce. Still, "without the world economy, without the U.S. economy improving, it's impossible for the Chinese economy to improve on its own," Chen said.

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II. PRC Report

22. PRC Economy

Business News ("CHINA HAS NO INTENTION OF GIVING UP SETTING IRON ORE BENCHMARK PRICE", 2009/04/29) reported that Luo Bingsheng, vice chairman of China Steel Industry Association, said Tuesday that China had no intention of giving up the “initial pricing power” of the ongoing iron ore price negotiations. “If the iron ore price was in line with our requirements, we would accept it. If others' agreements are not in line with our requirements, we will stick to our own claim," Luo said.

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23. PRC Government

China Daily ("MORE PEOPLE'S VOICES IN GOVT EVALUATION", 2009/04/29) reported that a new evaluation system for government performance proposed by a group of experts over the weekend has asked for a more scientific and transparent mechanism which includes more views from the general public. Some of the pioneering practices of local governments could be borrowed. For instance, the government of Nanjing in Jiangsu province randomly selects about 10,000 people every year and asks them to grade the city's 88 bureau-level organs. The one that ends up on the bottom of the list will have its director sacked or punished.

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24. PRC and the SCO

Xinhua ("CHINESE FOLK ARTS SHINE AT SCO ARTWORKS EXHIBITION", 2009/04/29) reported that Chinese folk arts and crafts were popular with visitors at an exhibition of applied arts sponsored by member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the central Russian city of Kazan on Monday. Pieces of Chinese folk arts and crafts, including wood engraving, stone carving, paper-weaving and folk paper-cutting, attracted crowds of visitors at the exhibition in the Hazine national gallery in Kazan, the capital city of the Republic of Tatarstan.

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