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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Wall St. Journal (Evan Ramstad, "U.S. TIGHTENS SOUTH KOREAN TIES ", Seoul, 2009/09/29) reported that the long-running DPRK nuclear standoff appears to be inching toward a return to the multilateral disarmament process, U.S. Ambassador to the ROK Kathleen Stephens said in a wide-ranging interview Tuesday. "It is up to the DPRK," Ms. Stephens said in an interview. "What we have been trying to do over the last few weeks and longer is to relay to the leaders in Pyongyang a consistent and united message ... that they're on the wrong track." She said she hopes DPRK leaders will re-assess their self-interest and "see the path to real security does lie in a return to the six-party talks."

Agence France-Presse ("NKOREA SHOULD SEIZE 'TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY' US ENVOY", Seoul, 2009/09/29) reported that US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg urged the DPRK Wednesday to return to six-party nuclear disarmament talks . "There is a tremendous opportunity now for them to take a constructive measure," Steinberg said. "They've certainly given some indications that they understand the value of re-engagement," Steinberg said. "We would like to see them take advantage of that."

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2. US, ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong and Tony Chang, "SEOUL, WASHINGTON IN SYNC ON 'GRAND BARGAIN' APPROACH TO NK NUKE: STEINBERG", Seoul, 2009/09/30) reported that U.S. Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg said Wednesday that his country is in sync with the ROK on a "comprehensive approach" to the DPRK's denuclearization. "What we all agree is that we've lived through the history before of partial measures and reversible measures. What we need is a comprehensive and definitive resolution of the nuclear question," Steinberg said. "And in that context, as we've said in the 2005 joint statement, we are prepared to make significant improvements in our relationships with North Korea," he added.

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3. US on PRC, DPRK Talks

Agence France Presse ("US ENVOY WELCOMES WEN'S NKOREA VISIT", Kuala Lumpur, 2009/09/29) reported that PRC Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to the DPRK next week is sending Pyongyang "a clear message" on the need to return to nuclear talks, a top US envoy said. US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg welcomed the trip announced by the DPRK state media as an emphatic push towards the "six-nation" talks. "We are quite appreciative of the fact that the PRC, like other countries involved, has sent a very clear message to the DPRK that there is unanimity among all countries in the region about the need for them to return to the six-party talks and to resume the path of denuclearisation," he said

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4. US on DPRK-Myanmar Relations

Associated Press (Foster Klug, "US LINKS TALKS WITH MYANMAR TO NKOREA", Washington, 2009/09/28) reported that the top U.S. diplomat for East Asia said that direct U.S. engagement with Myanmar's military leaders could provide crucial answers on the junta's dealings with the DPRK. Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell told reporters that the U.S. policy change on the country is a recognition that neither isolation nor engagement had improved miserable living conditions or political freedoms in Myanmar. He also highlighted the ability to look into what he said were recent U.S. concerns about military ties between Myanmar and the DPRK that "require greater focus and dialogue." When asked about those links, Campbell would not provide specifics.

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5. DPRK-UN Relations

JoongAng Daily ("UN CHIEF DISCUSSES NUCLEAR ISSUE WITH TOP NORTH ENVOY ", 2009/09/29) reported that UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Park Kil-yon discussed "matters of mutual interests and concerns," including the inter-Korean relations, nuclear, humanitarian and human rights issues, according to a UN statement. "Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reiterated his hope that the nuclear and other outstanding issues faced by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will be resolved through dialogue," the statement read. The

statement also added that Ban “took note of” the recent overtures from Pyongyang that it was open to engage in bilateral and multilateral dialogue regarding the nuclear question.

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6. DPRK Military

Associated Press (Lara Jakes, "GEN: IEDS ARE NKOREA'S LATEST WEAPON", Washington, 2009/09/29) reported that U.S. Forces Korea commander Army Gen. Walter L. "Skip" Sharp said Tuesday missiles and long-range artillery that could hit the ROK capital remain the top threat posed by the DPRK. But he said Pyongyang is turning to newer military means, such as improvised explosive devices left on roadsides, that have forced U.S. troops to "make sure we're learning the lessons out of Iraq and Afghanistan with IEDs and other types of devices." He did not elaborate on where the devices might be used by the DPRK. "I'm confident that they will use those capabilities," Sharp told military reporters on Tuesday.

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7. Inter-Korea Relations

Agence France Presse ("MANY SOUTH KOREANS IGNORANT ABOUT KOREAN WAR: POLL", Seoul, 2009/09/29) reported that about a third of ROK adults do not know when the Korean War began and almost 15 percent are unaware who started it, according to a survey released Tuesday by the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs. The ministry said 14.6 percent of all respondents either denied the DPRK started the war or were unsure whether it did. Of those aged 19-29, 21 percent said they did not know which side was the aggressor.

United Press International ("SEOUL ABANDONS NORTH KOREAN PIPELINE PLANS", Seoul, 2009/09/29) reported that rising tensions on the Korean peninsula have put ROK plans to import Russian natural gas through a DPRK pipeline on hold. Yonhap reported Tuesday that the ROK's state-run energy company Korea Gas Corp. (KOGAS) President Choo Kang-soo said that the increasingly strained relations between the DPRK and ROK have changed the situation and that unless the DPRK now specifically requests that the piped natural gas pipeline be constructed across its territory, Seoul will shift to importing liquified natural gas — directly from Russia by tanker.

Yonhap News (Sam Kim, "N. KOREAN MEDIA RAISE WARNING AGAINST NEW S. KOREAN DEFENSE LEADERS ", Seoul, 2009/09/29) reported that the DPRK media lashed out Tuesday at the ROK's top defense officials, warning their recent comments suggesting a quick strike on DPRK nuclear bases in the event of war could put a brake on warming ties between the two countries. Minju Josen said in a commentary that ROK Defense Minister Kim Tae-young revealed "his crazy and warlike nature".

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8. ROK Diplomacy

Yonhap (Byun Duk-kun, "LEE SAYS S. KOREA WILL PUT FORTH ITS VOICE ON N. KOREA, OTHER GLOBAL ISSUES", Seoul, 2009/09/30) reported that President Lee Myung-bak said Wednesday the ROK will assume greater leadership in resolving global issues. "We are now facing a historic turning point. We must take the opportunity to upgrade the country's status and advance with the rest of the world by successfully hosting the G-20 summit," Lee said. "We have now become a country that sets the frame and format of the world from a country that was content with passive roles within the framework of international orders set by others," the president said. "We are now at a time when we should start offering our own visions and solutions for not only inter-Korean issues but global issues," he said, adding his recent proposal for a "grand bargain" with the DPRK was a part of such efforts.

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9. ROK-US Military Relations

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "KOREA TO PICK WHOLESALER FOR M1 RIFLE SALE", 2009/09/28) reported that the planned exports of aging U.S. combat rifles will begin this year when two successful wholesalers are selected by the governments of the ROK and the United States, an official at the Ministry of National Defense said. The Seoul government has already selected six preferred bidders to export the rifles, while the U.S. government has picked four domestic bidders after it recently approved a proposal made by the ROK in 2006 to sell the weapons back to the United States, the official said.

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10. ROK Military

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "FIGHTER, ATTACK HELICOPTER PLANS DELAYED", 2009/09/29) reported that the ROK has cut its indigenous fighter and attack helicopter development efforts, originally scheduled for next year, as part of general defense-spending reductions. The military spending readjustment to 29.6 trillion won marks the smallest increase in defense expenditure since 1999, ministry officials said. "Economic difficulties have put pressure on the government budget across the board," Vice Defense Minister Chang Soo-man, who spearheaded efforts to streamline the budget spending plans, said in a briefing.

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11. ROK International Relations

Korea Herald (Song Sang-ho, "GLOBAL E-GOVERNMENT BODY TO BE FORMED IN SEOUL NEXT YEAR", 2009/09/30) reported that the World e-Governments Organization, a body aimed at bridging the information divide between cities worldwide and fostering their cooperation, will be launched in Seoul next year, officials said. The ROK's capital is expected to play a central role in managing the organization as its secretariat will be placed there. The Seoul mayor will take up the temporary chairmanship at the first general conference. The formation of the global organization was first suggested at the World e-Government Mayors Forum last July in Seoul. At the close of the forum, 35 city representatives adopted the "Seoul e-Government Declaration," in which they agreed to strengthen cooperation among electronic governments worldwide.

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12. Japan-ROK Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, S. KOREA AGREE TO 'CAREFULLY' ASSESS N. KOREA'S NEXT MOVES ", Tokyo, 2009/09/30) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada and his ROK counterpart Yu Myung Hwan on Tuesday agreed to "carefully" assess whether future moves by Pyongyang would lead to a resolution of the DPRK nuclear standoff and affirmed their cooperation over the issue, Okada said. During a joint press conference after their talks in Tokyo, they also said a proposed visit by Japanese Emperor Akihito to the ROK has "not been discussed in detail" by the two countries, with Okada saying Japan will "carefully" study the matter by considering "various situations."

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13. Japan on DPRK Abductions

Kyodo News ("HATOYAMA VOWS EFFORTS TO GET BACK ABDUCTION VICTIMS ", Tokyo, 2009/09/29) reported that Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama vowed Tuesday to make efforts to have Japanese citizens who were abducted by the DPRK in the 1970s and 1980s and are believed to be still living in the reclusive state returned to Japan, according to relatives of the abduction victims who visited the new Japanese leader at his office.

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14. Japan on East Asian Community

Kyodo News ("OKADA SAYS SPECIFICS OF 'E. ASIAN COMMUNITY' DIFFICULT TO WORK OUT", Tokyo, 2009/09/29) reported that Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada indicated Tuesday that it would be difficult to quickly work out details of an "East Asian community" concept for closer regional cooperation, apparently trying to lower the attention the concept is drawing. "I don't think we can fully work out the specifics of an East Asian community, even if we try to," Okada said. "A situation like the European Union cannot be quickly created. What we can do now is to uphold the big vision of an East Asian community and work on what we have in front of us step by step," Okada said.

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15. PRC on Iranian Nukes

Reuters ("CHINA URGES ALL SIDES TO EASE TENSIONS OVER IRAN", Beijing, 2009/09/29) reported that the PRC's foreign ministry on Tuesday urged all sides to try to ease mounting tensions over Iran's nuclear plans, as the United States and Western European powers seek greater force behind demands that Tehran come clean. "We believe that all sides should take more steps to ease tensions and resolve problems, and not the opposite," PRC foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said. "We support protecting the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and also advocate appropriately resolving the Iran nuclear issue through negotiations."

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16. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Xinhua News Agency ("CHINA HONORS ROLE MODELS OF ETHNIC HARMONY, STRESSES COMMON PROSPERITY", Beijing, 2009/09/29) reported that the PRC government honored role models who had made major contributions to ethnic harmony at a ceremony Tuesday, at which President Hu Jintao urged the promotion of harmony and prosperity among all ethnic groups. At the ceremony, 739 organizations and 749 individuals received awards from the State Council. The PRC would work hard to promote equal and harmonious relations of mutual help among all ethnic groups and improve social security and livelihoods in ethnic minority areas, said Hu in his keynote speech. "We will ensure people from all ethnic groups to benefit from the reform and development," he said.

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17. PRC Anniversary Celebration

Agence France-Presse (Dan Martin, "BEIJING SHUTS DOWN AHEAD OF NATIONAL DAY", Beijing, 2009/09/30) reported that the PRC launched a massive shutdown of central Beijing Wednesday on the eve of a celebration of 60 years of Communist rule. The Forbidden City and other key landmarks around the Chinese capital's Tiananmen Square were closed and city residents hurried to tie up loose ends at work before a wide swathe of the capital was completely blocked off.

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18. PRC Internet

Agence France Presse ("'PARANOID' CHINA RAMPS UP FIREWALL ON ANNIVERSARY", Paris, 2009/09/29) reported that press rights group Reporters Without Borders said Tuesday that a "paranoid" PRC had blocked tens of thousands of websites ahead of the 60th anniversary of the People's Republic. The Paris-based group said that PRC authorities had targeted Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) and other ways that residents, including foreign reporters, used to circumvent controls on the Internet.

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19. PRC Public Health

Associated Press ("FOOD POISONING SICKENS 76 STUDENTS, TEACHERS AT KINDERGARTEN IN NORTHERN CHINA", Beijing, 2009/09/29) reported that food poisoning sickened 76 students and teachers at a kindergarten in northern PRC, state media reported Tuesday. The students and teachers at Elfin Kindergarten in Inner Mongolia's city of Baotou suffered fever and vomiting after lunching at the school last week, and were treated at a local hospital, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

China Daily (Shan Juan , "CHINA GEARS UP FOR MASS H1N1 INOCULATIONS ", 2009/09/30)

reported that the PRC's capital Beijing is gearing up for a mass H1N1 flu inoculation of young students as its previous vaccination of hundreds of thousands of Chinese nationwide proved to be safe. No "serious adverse reactions" were detected among the recipients, the country's health minister, Chen Zhu, said Monday at a press conference. After the National Day holiday, Beijing will vaccinate all primary and middle school students against the H1N1 flu, said local health authorities yesterday. The mass inoculation, which is free and voluntary, will be carried out from Oct 8 to 30 in the capital, according to a joint notice by the municipal health and education bureaus.

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20. PRC Space Program

Agence France Presse ("CHINA COMPLETES 3D MOON MAP: STATE MEDIA", Beijing, 2009/09/29) reported that the PRC has completed a high-resolution, three-dimensional map of the entire surface of the moon, state media reported, in an important step towards a future lunar landing. The map was made using image data obtained by a camera on the PRC's first lunar probe -- the Chang'e 1 -- launched in October 2007, the official Xinhua news agency said late Monday. Quoting Liu Xianlin, an academic at the Chinese Academy of Surveying and Mapping, the report said the map would help scientists study the features of the moon's surface and deepen understanding of lunar geology and its evolution. "It is an important stage for the later lunar landing, a selection of the landing site, and to better understand the lunar structure," he told AFP.

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21. Sino-US Military Relations

Reuters ("CHINA SAYS WILLING TO IMPROVE U.S. DEFENSE TIES", Beijing, 2009/09/29) reported that the PRC on Tuesday said that it was willing to improve military relations with the United States, but also called on Washington to handle arms sales to self-ruled Taiwan cautiously. "The PRC takes a positive attitude on improving military exchanges with the U.S., and will expand common interests and cooperation to push forward military ties," Xinhua news agency quoted Ma Xiaotian, Deputy Chief of General Staff of the People's Liberation Army, as saying. Ma told visiting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg that both countries should "respect each other's core interests" and "properly handle differences and sensitive issues," adding that military relations "had shown positive signs."

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22. Sino-Myanmar Relations

Reuters ("MYANMAR SAYS RESTIVE CHINA BORDER AREA NOW STABLE", Beijing, 2009/09/29) reported that peace has now more or less returned to a part of Myanmar which erupted in violence last month, pushing thousands of refugees into the PRC, the country's ambassador to Beijing was quoted as saying on Tuesday. Last week, the PRC rapped the former Burma over the violence, demanding the government protect PRC citizens and make sure such an incident did not happen again. Myanmar's ambassador to the PRC, Thein Lwin, told the official China News Service that he had "sympathy" for residents' losses caused by the clashes.

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23. Sino-India Border Dispute

Christian Science Monitor (Ben Arnoldy , "GROWING NUMBER OF CHINA INCURSIONS INTO INDIA LEAD TO A STRATEGY CHANGE", Leh, 2009/09/29) reported that villagers told an Indian delegation recently that the two PRC choppers buzzed the village in August and flew several miles into Indian territory, according to Tsering Mutp. In the past, India has deliberately neglected the roads and other infrastructure in such border regions to slow down any possible invasion, says Brahma Chellaney, a security expert at the Center for Policy Research in New Delhi. But in response to a major spike in cross-border incursions by the PRC in the past few years, the Indian approach is changing. "Now the PRC is basically doing so much damage on the Tibetan plateau, and given these PRC border incidents and provocations, the Indians have been left with no choice but to begin infrastructure development along the Himalayas," says Mr. Chellaney.

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24. Cross-Strait Relations

EarthTimes ("TAIWAN GROUPS PROTEST CHINA'S NATIONAL DAY WITH DISSIDENT FILMS ", Taipei, 2009/09/29) reported that Taiwan activists plan to snub the PRC's National Day celebrations Thursday by showing two films on Beijing's suppression of freedom, the organizers said Tuesday. The groups plan to screen one documentary about the Rebiya Kadeer, a dissident leader of the PRC's Uighur ethnic group, and another on Beijing's suppression of freedom in Tibet, in five cities Thursday evening, the Movement magazine and the Friends of Tibet said in a statement. "When the PRC celebrates the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic and displays its economic and military power, we will screen the films to show how the PRC suppresses ethnic groups and human rights," the statement said.

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II. PRC Report

25. PRC Energy

Xinhua Net (Liu Baosen, "CHINA BECOMES THE WORLD'S FIRST ENERGY PRODUCING COUNTRY", 2009/09/29) reported that the energy self-sufficiency rate of China is 91.2%, and it's the world's top energy-producing country, said Zhang Guobao, Director of National Energy Bureau, in Qingdao on September 28th .

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26. PRC Civil Society

Sina.com ("BAZAAR STAR CHARITY NIGHT HELD IN BEIJING", 2009/09/29) reported that the 7th

Bazaar Star Charity Night was held in Beijing yesterday evening. Most of the domestic famous stars attended the party, and a total of 31 million RMB charity funds were raised.

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27. PRC Education

Financial Daily (Jin Honglei, "QINGDAO TO LAUNCH COMMUNITY EDUCATION ACTIVITY", 2009/09/29) reported that a new form of community education is to be implemented in Qingdao of Shandong province. Residents will establish a self-education association and carry out self-education activities such as lectures, group activities, communication and discussions.

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