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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. Inter-Korean Maritime Incident

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA SEIZES S. KOREAN FISHING BOAT", Seoul, 2009/07/30) reported that early Thursday morning, a DPRK patrol boat took the 29-ton ROK fishing boat "800 Yeonan" into custody after it crossed into the DPRK's eastern waters, apparently because its satellite navigation system malfunctioned, an official at the ROK's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. The official, who spoke on customary condition of anonymity, said the boat was taken to DPRK's eastern port of Jangjon, just north of the border. The ROK asked the DPRK to quickly release the vessel and crew, Seoul's Unification Ministry said, citing Seoul's repatriation of DPRK fishing boats in recent years. An unidentified DPRK maritime official told a ROK counterpart by telephone that "a related agency is investigating" the incident, the ministry said.

The Associated Press ("NKOREA FEARED TO USE SEIZED FISHERMEN AS LEVERAGE", 2009/07/30) reported that DPRK's seizure of a ROK fishing boat and its four crew members raised fears that the communist nation could use the incident to exert pressure on Seoul amid badly strained ties between the rival countries. "In similar cases in the past, the North returned fishermen after four to five days of investigation," said Yang Moo-jin, a professor at Seoul's University of North Korean Studies. "But considering the current tension between the two sides, it is possible for the North to hold them much longer, citing its investigation." Kim Yong-hyun, a DPRK expert at Seoul's Dongguk University, said Pyongyang may choose to hold the boat's crew for a while, but the case is too minor to be used for political purposes.

Associated Press (Kwang-tae Kim, "KOREA HOLDS ONTO SEIZED SKOREAN FISHERMEN", Seoul,

2009/07/31) reported that the DPRK military said Friday that four ROK fishermen seized a day earlier remained under investigation, government officials in Seoul said. It said in a written message to the ROK that "the issue of crew members and the vessel will be dealt with according to the outcome of the investigation," according to the Unification Ministry in Seoul.

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2. ROK-Russian Energy Cooperation and the DPRK

RIA Novosti ("S.KOREA, RUSSIA TO DISCUSS LAYING GAS PIPELINE ACROSS N.KOREA", 2009/07/30) reported that the ROK's economics minister along with oil and gas executives will visit Russia in August to discuss the possibility of laying a gas pipeline across the DPRK, the Maeil business daily said. During his visit, Lee Youn-Ho will meet with Russian Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko. The talks will involve the heads of the Korea Gas Corporation and Korea National Oil Corporation. The countries hope to be able to pump natural gas from Yakutia in the Russian Far East to the ROK directly via the DPRK.

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3. US Sanctions on the DPRK

Agence France-Presse ("US SLAPS SANCTIONS ON NORTH KOREAN FIRM", Washington , 2009/07/30) reported that the US imposed economic sanctions on a DPRK firm that according to US officials was involved in Pyongyang's weapons of mass destruction development. The Treasury Department said that Korea Hyoksin Trading Corporation (Hyoksin) was sanctioned for being owned or controlled by a DPRK entity, the Korea Ryonbong General Corporation (Ryonbong). "The world community is taking forceful action against the arms and agencies of North Korea's WMD and missile programs, prohibiting dealings with them and banning them from participation in the global financial system," said Adam Szubin, head of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

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4. Sino-DPRK Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA HALTS JOINT VENTURE WITH N. KOREA", 2009/07/30) reported that a PRC investment company has abruptly suspended a joint project with a DPRK firm that has been targeted under U.N. sanctions. Zhongkuang International Investment signed a deal with DPRK's Mining Development Trading Corporation, or KOMID, in 2006 to develop a bronze mine in the DPRK and commissioned NHI Shenyang Mining Machinery, another PRC company, to build facilities for the mine. The investment company, however, sent a letter to NHI earlier this month demanding it stop construction of the facilities, the newspaper reported, citing PRC steel industry officials it did not identify. But the PRC government appeared to have exercised influence on the investment company to stop the project, the newspaper said, citing the industry official.

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5. Japan Abduction Issue

Kyodo News ("ABDUCTEE SUPPORT MAY BE EXTENDED", 2009/07/30) reported that a government panel dealing with the five repatriated abductees from the DPRK recommended in an interim report that financial support be extended for five years for them, their offspring and any other victims who manage to come home, officials said. Government allowances for the five and their family members, including their DPRK-born offspring, will expire in March. A Liberal Democratic Party panel has made a similar recommendation, and there appears to be little opposition to the measure by the Democratic Party of Japan.

Kyodo News ("ASO TO VISIT ABDUCTION SITE IN NIIGATA SAT.", Tokyo, 2009/07/30) reported that Prime Minister Taro Aso is set to visit a site in Niigata Prefecture where a Japanese national was abducted by DPRK agents in 1977, making him the first premier to do so. He will visit the Sea of Japan coastal prefecture as president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party as part of his campaign tour that he is set to start on Saturday in the run-up to the Aug. 30 general election.

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6. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA'S WORST PROVOCATIONS 'OVER'", 2009/07/30) reported that the state-funded Korea Institute for National Unification on Wednesday claimed the DPRK's "total offensive phase" came to an end with the firing of seven medium- and short-range missiles on July 4. "Now the counterattack phase by the U.S. and other countries has begun," it said. Although both Washington and Pyongyang are talking about dialogue, "North Korea currently cannot accept U.S. demands for irreversible denuclearization and the U.S. refuses to acknowledge the North's possession of nuclear weapons," KINU said. "While the phase of confrontation continues, there is now a tiny chance of significant dialogue or negotiations."

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7. Inter-Korean Relations

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREAN TV AIMS TO SHOW DARK SIDE OF SOUTH", 2009/07/30) reported that DPRK state TV has aired ROK footage edited to highlight social and economic problems in the far richer ROK in a rare move apparently aimed at quashing rumors among the DPRK's impoverished people that the rival country is better off. "The South Korean economy is now miserably crumbling," said a DPRK narrator with gloomy music playing in the background. She accused the ROK's conservative, pro-US President Lee Myung-bak of seeking "anti-people economic policies" and called him a "traitor."

Yonhap (Kim Hyun, "S. KOREA GIVES NOD FOR FIRST AID GROUP TO NORTH SINCE NUKE TEST", Seoul, 2009/07/31) reported that the ROK on Friday greenlighted a request by aid workers from World Vision to visit the DPRK. "The decision was made based on the government's position that humanitarian assistance to North Korea should be continued," Unification Ministry spokesman Chun Hae-sung said in a briefing. A group of seven World Vision staff and agricultural experts will begin an eight-day trip on Saturday, during which they plan to visit potato seedling farms the organization operates in Pyongyang and several provincial towns, said Kim Hye-young, a member of the team.

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8. DPRK Economy

Xinhua News ("DPRK TOP LEADER CALLS FOR PRODUCTION BOOST", Pyongyang, 2009/07/30) reported that Kim Jong Il, top leader of the DPRK called for a boost in production to build a prosperous and powerful country, the official KCNA news agency reported. All sectors of the country had been "launching a revolutionary upsurge" and the economy was "increasing rapidly," Kim said when visiting a textile mill in Pyongyang on the 63th anniversary of the promulgation of the Law on Sex Equality. He stressed that the date for building a "great prosperous and powerful nation" was drawing nearer.

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA PLANS TO OPEN MORE FAST-FOOD RESTAURANTS", 2009/07/30) reported that DPRK's first fast-food restaurant has quickly become popular among local residents and foreigners and plans to open branches in the future, a restaurant manager said Thursday.

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9. DPRK Leadership

Agence France Press ("N KOREA'S KIM UNDERGOING KIDNEY DIALYSIS - S KOREAN ACTIVIST", 2009/07/30) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong Il is undergoing kidney dialysis twice a week as a result of his diabetes, a ROK activist said Thursday, quoting unidentified sources in Pyongyang.

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10. UN on Detained ROK Worker

Bee News Services ("UN CHIEF SAYS HE IS WORKING FOR RELEASE OF IMPRISONED REPORTERS IN N. KOREA", 2009/07/30) reported that United Nations chief Ban Ki-moon said Wednesday he had launched an initiative to secure the release of two U.S. journalists detained in the DPRK. "I have taken my own initiative, even though I am not able to disclose (details)," he told reporters.

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11. US-ROK Security Alliance

KBS News ("US COMMITTED TO OPCON TRANSFER IN 2012", 2009/07/30) reported that a top U.S. military official has reiterated that the ROK and the US have no intentions of revising a timetable for the transfer of wartime operational command to Seoul. US Pacific Commander Timothy Keating told reporters in Washington that the US president and secretary of defense remain committed to the planned transfer in April of 2012, despite the DPRK's recent nuclear test.

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12. ROK Environment

Yonhap News ("S. KOREAN SCIENTISTS, U.S. FIRM COOPERATE ON CO2 RECAPTURE TECHNOLOGY", 2009/07/30) reported that a team of ROK researchers have secured a deal with a U.S. firm to commercialize their carbon dioxide (CO2) recapture technology, government officials said. Led by Lee Young-moo, a chemical engineering professor at Hanyang University, the team will cooperate with U.S.-based Air Products and Chemicals Inc., according to ROK's science ministry.

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13. DPJ on Historical Issues

Yonhap ("JAPAN'S OPPOSITION PARTY SAYS IT WILL RESPECT ATONEMENTS FOR IMPERIAL PAST", Tokyo, 2009/07/31) reported that Katsuya Okada, secretary general of the opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), said Friday that his party will live up to the Japanese government's 1995 apology for its past aggressions against Asian neighbors. "We will inherit the Murayama statement," Okada said. "There is no concrete plan for issuing a new statement (on the past), but we will maintain Japan-South Korea relations for a better future on the basis of the existing positions of the two nations' governments," he said.

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14. Japan Politics

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S DPJ REVISES ITS FOREIGN POLICY STANCE", Tokyo, 2009/07/30) reported that the party widely tipped to take power in Japan soon has been struggling to define its foreign policy, torn between its pacifist roots and the real-world challenges of government. The DPJ this month quietly withdrew its past vows for a "radical revision" of the US security alliance or of quickly pushing for a reduction of the 40,000 US forces based in Japan, mainly on southern Okinawa island. Nonetheless, on Wednesday the man who would be prime minister, Yukio Hatoyama, also signalled that not everything will be business as usual and that his DPJ would back away from the current government's more hawkish stance. The approach would be a return to the traditional "soft power" emphasis of post-war Japan, which has focused much more on generous aid than boots on the ground, sometimes drawing charges of "chequebook diplomacy."

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15. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN TO BUILD BASE FACILITIES IN DJIBOUTI FOR ANTIPIRACY MISSION ", Tokyo, 2009/07/30) reported that Japan will construct its own base facilities in Djibouti to accommodate Self-Defense Forces personnel and patrol planes engaged in antipiracy operations off Somalia, government sources said. Tokyo plans to complete the construction of a tarmac for P-3C surveillance planes and housing for SDF members in the eastern African country next year, the sources said. Japanese forces currently rent facilities owned by the private sector and U.S. military. The plan signals Tokyo's deeper commitment to the antipiracy mission under a new law that took effect last Friday to expand the scope of commercial ships to be escorted by the SDF.

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16. Sino-Pakistani Security Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA DELIVERS WARSHIP TO PAKISTAN: NAVY", Karachi, 2009/07/30) reported that the PRC on Thursday delivered the first of four state-of-the-art frigates commissioned by nuclear-armed Pakistan from top ally Beijing, a naval spokesman said. In keeping with contracts signed between PRC and Pakistan in 2005, the frigates will be equipped with anti-submarine helicopters, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles and other defence systems.

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17. Sino-US Trade Relations

The Associated Press ("US SEEKS CHINA OFFICE TO ENSURE EXPORT SAFETY", 2009/07/30) reported that U.S. regulators announced plans Thursday to set up a Beijing office to help ensure PRC exports are safe for Americans following a slew of recalls involving everything from pet food to children's toys. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission was seeking to establish a permanent presence overseas for the first time to better cooperate with PRC regulators and companies so the country's products are up to U.S. standards, the agency's chairwoman Inez Tenenbaum said. The office is ready to open in October but still requires PRC's final approval, according to commission officials.

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18. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Reuters ("CHINA NEEDS NEW POLICIES AFTER XINJIANG: OFFICIAL", 2009/07/30) reported that a senior Chinese official made a rare admission on Thursday that the country had to change its policies toward ethnic minorities in light of deadly riots in far western Xinjiang this month. Wang Yang, Guangdong's powerful Communist Party boss who has close ties to President Hu Jintao, said it was time for a rethink on ethnic policies, though he did not say specifically what was wrong or offer solutions. "The policies themselves will definitely need adjustments," Wang told foreign reporters in Guangdong's capital, Guangzhou. "We have to adjust to the actual situation. China is a multi-ethnic society... If adjustments are not made promptly, there will be some problems."

The Associated Press ("CHINA ISSUES MOST-WANTED LIST FOR XINJIANG RIOTS", 2009/07/30) reported that the PRC government said more than 1,600 people suspected of being involved in the Xinjiang riots have been detained, and the official Xinhua News Agency said the Urumqi Public Security Bureau issued a notice Thursday with the names and photos of 15 more. All but one of the names on the list appeared to be Uighur. The other was a Han Chinese name. The notice urged the suspects to turn themselves in. Those who did so within 10 days would "be dealt with leniently. ... The ones who refuse to turn themselves in will be dealt with severely according to the law."

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19. PRC Civil Society

The New York Times ("CHINESE OFFICIALS HARASS GROUP THAT FIGHTS HEPATITIS BIAS", 2009/07/30) reported that in the realm of potential threats to the PRC's stability, an organization that advocates on behalf of people infected with hepatitis B would seem to be low risk. But on Wednesday, the group's director, Lu Jun, found himself squaring off against four security officials who were trying to cart away stacks of literature they claimed was printed without official permission. The raid on Mr. Lu's organization, the Yi Ren Ping Center, comes at a precarious time for the PRC's nongovernmental organizations, many of which operate in a kind of legal gray zone. "The pattern of harassment, surveillance and detentions we're seeing suggests the government isn't satisfied with the extremely restrictive policies it already places on N.G.O.s," said Phelim Kine, an Asia researcher for Human Rights Watch.

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20. PRC Environment

Agence-France-Presse ("SOUTHERN CHINA OIL REFINERY MOVED OVER ENVIRONMENT CONCERN", Guangzhou, 2009/07/30) reported that a controversial oil refinery project in southern PRC will be relocated after it was criticised by environmental groups, a senior PRC official said Thursday. Wang Yang, Communist Party secretary of Guangdong province, said the joint venture between China's Sinopec and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation will be moved from its original location in Nansha. Wang would not say where the refinery would be relocated to, but reports have said it would be moved to more remote locations in Guangdong such as Zhanjiang or Maoming.

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21. PRC Environment and Unrest

Agence France-Presse ("1,000 PROTEST OVER CHINA CHEMICAL PLANT POLLUTION: RESIDENTS", 2009/07/30) reported that more than 1,000 people protested for a second day in central PRC on Thursday over pollution from a chemical plant that they say has sickened locals and poisoned surrounding farmlands, residents said. Residents of the town of Zhentou in Hunan province demonstrated outside local government headquarters and a police station, demanding greater compensation for pollution from the Xianhe Chemical Plant, protesters said.

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22. PRC Environment and Public Health

The New York Times ("CHINESE WORKERS SAY ILLNESS IS REAL, NOT HYSTERIA ", 2009/07/30) reported that as soon as the Jilin Connell Chemical Plant started production this spring, local hospitals began receiving stricken workers from the acrylic yarn factory 100 yards downwind from Connell's exhaust stacks. On some days, doctors were overwhelmed and patients were put two to a bed. A clear case of chemical contamination? Not so, say Chinese health officials who contend that the episode is a communal outbreak of psychogenic illness, also called mass hysteria.

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23. PRC Climate Change

The Associated Press ("UN CHIEF SAYS CHINA WANTS CLIMATE DEAL", 2009/07/30) reported that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says PRC leaders have assured him they want to seal a deal on a new U.N. climate treaty at a conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December. The U.N. chief says President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao told him during his recent visit to Beijing that the PRC will play an active and constructive role in the negotiations to reach agreement on a treaty to replace the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012.

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II. PRC Report

24. PRC Industrial Associations

Guilin Evening News ("PROPERTY SERVICE ASSOCIATION FOUND IN GUILIN", 2009/07/30) reported that in order to further enhance industrial self-discipline, Guilin Property Service Association was formally established on July 24th in Guilin city of Guangxi province. 65 property service enterprises have become the first members of the Association.

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25. PRC Environment

Sina.com ("CHINA ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY ENTERPRISE AWARD CEREMONY HELD", 2009/07/30) reported that China Environmental Friendly Enterprise Award Ceremony was held on July 30th in Great Hall of the People, Beijing. Ten enterprises were awarded as environmental-friendly enterprise. These enterprises are good examples of practicing environmental protection idea, promoting energy saving and emission reduction, properly using resource, etc.

China Environmental Protection Association ("CHINA'S FIRST ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION BEEN FILED", 2009/07/30) reported that on July 28th, China's first environmental public interest administrative litigation was placed on file in Wuxi Intermediate People's Court of Jiangsu province. The litigation was instituted by China Environmental Protection Association and marked an important breakthrough in the practice of environmental public interest litigation in China.

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