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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Artillery Exercise

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA DESIGNATES 'NAVAL FIRING ZONES' ALONG SEA BORDER WITH S. KOREA", Seoul, 2010/02/04) reported that DPRK has raised the possibility of a further show of force in the East and Yellow seas by temporarily designating five regions along the eastern and western maritime borders with ROK as "naval firing zones," a government source said Thursday. The source said the DPRK unilaterally designated four areas in the Yellow Sea and one in the East Sea earlier in the day. He added that the areas overlap firing zones set by the DPRK from last Sunday through Tuesday.

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Xinhua News Agency ("S KOREAN FM: INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH SIX-PARTY TALKS NATIONS", 2010/02/03) reported that the ROK's top diplomat said Wednesday the foreign ministry in Seoul is discussing a possible summit between the ROK and the DPRK with nations involved in multilateral talks over the DPRK's denuclearization, local media reported. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is discussing a summit with the six-party talks nations, as it's important to fine-tune opinions among countries concerned," foreign minister Yu Myung-hwan told a local news channel YTN. "The government's position is that we can hold a summit anytime if it is to be based on certain principles and help resolve nuclear issues of the DPRK," Yu added.

Yonhap News ("NEGOTIATING PARTNERS HOLD N. KOREA'S 'OXYGEN MASK': S. KOREAN DIPLOMAT", Seoul, 2010/02/04) reported that ROK and other members of the stalled international talks on denuclearizing DPRK hold "the oxygen mask" for the communist state and will press

Pyongyang until it disarms or faces collapse, a top diplomat here said Thursday. "The five parties hold the oxygen mask for DPRK," Vice Foreign Minister Chun Yung-woo said in a speech at a forum in Seoul, referring to his country, the U.S., PRC, Japan and Russia.

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3. Sino-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("CHINESE OFFICIAL TO VISIT N. KOREA ON MISSION TO RESUME NUCLEAR TALKS ", Seoul, 2010/02/05) reported that Wang Jiarui, the head of the Chinese Communist Party's international department, is expected to visit Pyongyang and meet with DPRK Korean leader Kim Jong-il next week, sources in Beijing said Friday. "Wang's trip to Pyongyang can be seen as part of a regular exchange of visits for New Year's greetings, but it may bring significant changes to the six-party talks," a source said. Wang may also speak with Kim about the possibility of the DPRK leader visiting China.

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4. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News (Byun Duk-kun, "SEOUL DENIES DIFFERENCES WITH U.S. OVER INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT", Seoul, 2010/02/04) reported that ROK rejected Thursday reports of a possible schism with the United States over the timing of a potential inter-Korean summit, saying that a senior U.S. diplomat made clear that Washington supports Seoul's efforts for any dialogue with Pyongyang. Speculation about differences between Seoul and Washington came after U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell emphatically stressed Wednesday that DPRK's return to the stalled international nuclear talks is the "essential next step." His remark was seen by some as suggesting that Washington might be opposed to an inter-Korean summit before six-nation nuclear talks resume.

Yonhap News (Lee Chi-dong, "KOREAS SHOWED 'ALL CARDS' FOR SUMMIT AND BALL IS IN PYONGYANG'S COURT: OFFICIAL", Seoul, 2010/02/04) reported that both ROK and DPRK have put "all cards" on the table when it comes to conditions for another round of summit talks and it is now Pyongyang's turn to make a strategic decision, a senior ROK government official said Thursday. He said Seoul has lowered the bar to the minimum level and there is no way back in terms of prerequisites for the possible summit between President Lee Myung-bak and the DPRK's leader Kim Jong-il. "That is why we say the ball is in ROK's court," the official told Yonhap News Agency, requesting anonymity.

Korea Times ("4,000 BUDDHISTS TO VISIT NK IN MARCH", 2010/02/04) reported that a mid discussions over the possible resumption of cross-border trips to the DPRK's Mt. Geumgang, thousands of ROK Buddhists are expected to visit a temple located in the scenic park next month, an organizer of the planned trip said. Some 4,000 adherents of the Jogye Order, the largest Buddhist sect in ROK, will visit Singye Temple as part of a pilgrimage. Ven. Ja Seung, head of the order, said in a press meeting Wednesday after returning from Pyongyang. During the four-day trip to the DPRK he met with his monastic counterparts to finalize plans for the trip.

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5. DPRK Detention of Americans

Associated Press (Jean H. Lee, "NKOREA SAYS IT WILL FREE DETAINED US MISSIONARY", Seoul, 2010/02/05) reported that US missionary Robert Park said he was ashamed of the "biased" view he once held of the DPRK, he Korean Central News Agency said Friday. The DPRK announced Friday that he would be released from custody after admitting to entering the country illegally and showing "sincere repentance" for the transgression. The government "decided to leniently forgive and release him, taking his admission and sincere repentance of his wrong doings into consideration," Korean Central Agency said.

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6. US Role in DPRK Contingency Plan

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "EXTRA U.S. TROOPS NOT LIKELY TO ARRIVE IN TIME IN CASE OF N.K. CRISIS: GATES", Washington, 2010/02/04) reported that additional U.S. ground forces may not be able to arrive in ROK in time in case of an emergency situation in DPRK due to America's heavy commitment in Iraq and Afghanistan, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said on Wednesday at a hearing of the House Armed Services Committee. The United States, however, will be able to send extra ground troops to ROK in time after the completion of the proposed drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq in 2011, Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said.

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "U.S. TO MOBILIZE MORE TROOPS IN CASE OF N. KOREAN CONTINGENCY: OFFICIAL", Washington, 2010/02/04) reported that the United States will mobilize additional forces to send to ROK in case of a DPRK regime collapse or other contingency, senior defense officials said Thursday. But the initial response would be naval and air forces, not ground troops, the officials told a hearing of the House Armed Services Committee.

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7. US on DPRK Terror List Status

Yonhap News ("U.S. TO CONTINUE MONITORING N. KOREA'S PROLIFERATION FOR POSSIBLE RELISTING: STATE DEPT.", 2010/02/04) reported that the United States Thursday expressed concerns about the DPRK's proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, warning of a possible relisting of it as a state sponsor of terrorism. "We will continue to look at the evidence surrounding North Korea's activities," State Department spokesman Philip Crowley said. "And if it eventually meets the criterion of the law, then we'll consider a different judgment."

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8. US on DPRK Human Rights

Agence France-Presse ("US ENVOY SAYS HUMAN RIGHTS CRUCIAL IN TIES WITH N.KOREA", 2010/02/04) reported that the DPRK must respect human rights if it wants to improve relations with the United States and end its international isolation, a US envoy said. Robert King, special

envoy for DPRK human rights, said in a message to a Seoul seminar that the US government remains "deeply concerned" about the issue and the plight of DPRK refugees. "Respect for human rights by the DPRK will have significant impact on the prospect of closer ties with the US and will be necessary for North Korea to fully participate in the international community," King said.

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9. DPRK Economy

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA EASES CONTROL OVER TRADERS, USE OF FOREIGN CURRENCIES", Beijing, 2010/02/04) reported that DPRK has eased control over market trading and use of foreign currencies in an apparent reversal of a tighter economy-control policy adopted in line with currency reform last November, diplomatic sources said Thursday. Relaxing control over the economy is aimed at curbing the sharp increase in prices and social unrest that followed redenomination of the country's currency, the won, the sources said. Pyongyang has said the redenomination was designed to curb inflation, while DPRK watchers said the move was aimed at strengthening state control over market activities and the overall economy.

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10. ROK on US Missile Defense

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL DENIES PLAN TO JOIN U.S. MISSILE DEFENSE SCHEME", 2010/02/04) reported that the US Defense Department claims the ROK is interested in participating in a US-led ballistic missile defense system, but Seoul officials deny that any concrete commitment has been made. In a report, the department said Seoul "is also an important U.S. BMD partner" and "has indicated interest in acquiring a missile defense capability that includes land- and sea-based systems, early warning radars, and a command and control system." But ROK military authorities dismissed the claims, saying the report does not represent an official expression of the US government views. They say there has been no formal request through diplomatic channels, nor has Seoul expressed such an interest.

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11. US-ROK Security Alliance

Korea Herald ("GNP HEAD URGES OPCON TRANSFER REVIEW", 2010/02/04) reported that Grand National Party leader Chung Mong-joon said there may be room to renegotiate the scheduled transfer of wartime operational control to Seoul from Washington. "A review would not be easy considering (the transfer) was a country-to-country pledge, but it may be possible even under the current agreement as there is a clause for assessing the transfer," Chung said in an executive meeting with fellow GNP lawmakers.

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12. US-Japan Security Alliance

Yomiuri Shimbun ("DETERRENCE PART OF FUTENMA ISSUE", 2010/02/04) reported that relocating Futenma accomplishes the goal of reducing the burden on a local government of hosting bases and is supposed to be on par with maintaining deterrence from foreign threats. The biggest deterrent that Japan can present is to show its ties with the United States are close and firm. Without such ties, it is impossible to deter threats from the DPRK and PRC. Few ways are left to remove the burden imposed by the Futenma base as soon as possible while filling the gap between Japan and the US.

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13. Japan SDF Medical Operations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN TO SEND SDF BOAT FOR U.S. NAVAL MEDICAL AID MISSION IN ASIA", 2010/02/04) reported that Japan will send a Self-Defense Force ship to Vietnam and Cambodia from May to July to take part in the U.S. Navy's annual medical aid mission aimed at enhancing Asia-Pacific countries' capabilities on disaster relief, Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa said. The move is the first step under Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's so-called "fraternity boat" initiative, announced last November, to deploy an SDF vessel that would carry civilians and nongovernmental members as well for extending medical support and carrying out cultural exchanges.

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14. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Mainichi Shimbun ("FIRED ON JAPANESE FISHING VESSELS MAY HAVE INTENTIONALLY TRESPASSED INTO RUSSIAN WATERS", Rausu, 2010/02/04) reported that two fishing vessels that were fired upon by a Russian border patrol last month may have intentionally trespassed into Russian waters, a Japan Coast Guard investigation has found. Investigators have found that the vessel monitoring systems (VMS) on both trawlers, which monitor a ship's position and relays it to a station back on land, were disabled for at least four hours. Investigators believe that the crews may have turned them off on purpose. "It's too artificial. There's a chance they could be habitually turning it off and operating outside the permitted areas," says an investigation insider.

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15. Japan Politics

Kyodo News ("OZAWA NOT CHARGED, LAWMAKER ISHIKAWA INDICTED OVER FUND MISREPORT", Tokyo, 2010/02/04) Prosecutors dropped a case against Democratic Party of Japan Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa over the alleged false reporting of his political funds Thursday, while indicting DPJ lawmaker Tomohiro Ishikawa for misreporting the funds when he served as Ozawa's secretary in 2004. But the office decided not to seek criminal charges against the ruling party kingpin after questioning him twice last month because "there was not enough evidence to convict him at trial as a conspirator," he said. Ozawa told reporters that he regards the prosecutors' decision as being the result of a fair investigation and that he will stay in his current post.

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16. Sino-Russian Economic Cooperation

Xinhua News ("CHUBAIS: RUSSIA HOPES FOR HIGH-TECH CO-OP WITH CHINA", 2010/02/04) reported that Russia and the PRC have great cooperation potential in the high-tech sector, and enhanced cooperation will create new opportunities for both sides, the head of the Russian Nanotechnology Corp. said. Russia is closely following the PRC's achievements in the high-tech sector, particularly in nanotechnology, said Anatoly Chubais. Chubais hailed the PRC's big investment in innovation and expressed the hope that Russia and the PRC will reach consensus on cooperation projects.

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17. Sino-US Relations

Agence France-Presse ("US OFFICIAL WARNS CHINA ON PUNISHING FIRMS", Washington, 2010/02/04) reported that a US official called Thursday on PRC not to punish companies over arms sales to Taiwan, and said it was too early to determine the extent of the rift between the two nations. David Shear, the State Department pointman on PRC, said the US government was consulting with companies which are being threatened with sanctions by Beijing for involvement in the 6.4 billion-dollar arms package to Taiwan. "We would certainly regret any PRC effort to restrict American business practices," Shear, the deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs, told a hearing in Congress. But he noted that PRC had not yet acted on its threats.

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18. PRC Ethnic Unrest

China Daily ("XINJIANG SET TO BEEF UP POLICE FORCES", Urumqi, 2010/02/04) reported that the government has approved a plan to recruit 5,000 special police officers in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region to help prevent unrests such as the devastating riot on July 5 last year. The new recruits will be civil servants under the Xinjiang regional public security bureau and their area of operations will cover the entire region. It will be the largest recruitment campaign of its kind in Xinjiang and all new recruits, said Zhu Changjie, director of the regional public security bureau. "We expect them to be on patrol independently at the end of March," Zhu said.

Agence France-Presse (said it will press on with a crackdown on separatism in the western region of Xinjiang in a battle that could last years, state media reported Friday., "CHINA SAYS TROUBLED XINJIANG FACES LONG CLAMPDOWN", Beijing, 2010/02/05) reported that the Xinhua news agency reported Friday that Jerla Isamudinhe, mayor of Urumqi, said the PRC will press on with a crackdown on separatism in Xinjiang. "Urumqi faces an arduous fight against separatism now and for years to come after last year's riots," he was quoted as saying Thursday in a report to the city's municipal congress. "We should be vigilant and high-handed in our fight against terrorism, separatism, and extremism. We should stop all sabotage activities and attempts beforehand," he said.

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19. PRC Urban-Rural Disparity

The Wall Street Journal ("OECD: INEQUALITY IN CHINA LEVELING OFF", 2010/02/04) reported that the increase in inequality in PRC has leveled off in recent years and could be less severe than previously thought, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development says, suggesting that Beijing is starting to make progress in tackling one of its biggest social problems. The OECD, in its economic survey of the PRC published Tuesday, said more welfare spending in rural areas and increased migration to cities helped arrest a widening of the income gap. The Paris-based organization urged the PRC to lower what is still a fairly high level of inequality by further boosting social programs and eliminating discrimination against rural residents.

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20. Mongolia Energy Supply

The Financial Times (William MacNamara, "MONGOLIA SIGNALS SHIFT ON COAL INVESTMENT", London, 2010/02/05) reported that Mongolia's government appears to be backing away from plans to auction a stake in a gigantic coal deposit near the PRC border in a move that could signal a shift away from its policy of inviting foreign investors to take stakes in local projects. A spokesman for the government in Ulan Bator told Reuters on Thursday that Mongolia's prime minister was leaning towards the option of having the Tavan Tolgoi deposit 100 per cent owned by Mongolia rather than selling a 49 per cent stake to foreign investors.

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II. PRC Report

21. Taiwan Energy

Xinhua Net ("GREEN ENERGY INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT VALUE TO BE OVER ONE TRILLION", 2010/02/05) reported that by 2015, green energy industrial output value in Taiwan will reach 1.15 trillion Taiwan dollars, which can promote civil investment of 200 billion Taiwan dollars and give employment chance to 110,000 people, said Wang Yunming, director of Taiwan energy institution yesterday.

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22. PRC Social Welfare

Beijing Youth Daily ("RETIREES OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND SELF-EMPLOYED BUSINESS TO BE BRING INTO COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT", 2010/02/04) reported that retirees from private enterprise, self-employed business, and other non-public sectors of economy will be bring into community management in Beijing, according to director of Beijing Municipal Labor Service Center yesterday.

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23. PRC Civil Society and Cross Strait Relations

Sina.com ("HOPE PROJECT HELPS SCHOOL DROPOUT IN TAIWAN MINORITY AREAS", 2010/02/04) reported that general-director of China Youth Development Foundation Tu Meng led a delegation to Taiwan from February 1 to 5, 2010. They donated 3 million RMB to Waiwan Ethnic Minority Culture Exchange Association, to help school dropout in Taiwan minority areas.

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