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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK-US Relations

Agence France Presse ("US SAYS N.KOREA SOLDIERS' REMAINS 'HUMANITARIAN ISSUE'", 2010/04/05) reported that the United States said Monday it wanted to cooperate with the DPRK on returning the remains of US servicemen killed in the 1950-1953 war, saying the issue should be separate from other disputes. The DPRK's military has urged a resumption of joint recovery efforts, warning that if the United States did not agree it would be wholly responsible if "thousands of US remains buried in our country are washed off and lost." State Department spokesman Philip Crowley disputed the DPRK's assertions that United States had turned a humanitarian issue into a political one. "We have an abiding interest in the return of remains of Americans in North Korea. We think that cooperation should continue on its own merits as a humanitarian issue," Crowley told reporters.

Yonhap News ("U.S. TO RESUME DIGGING REMAINS OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN N. KOREA AFTER 6-WAY TALKS REOPENING: STATE DEPT.", 2010/04/05) reported that the United States Monday hinted it will restart excavation of the remains of American soldiers in the DPRK after Pyongyang returns to the six-party talks on its nuclear dismantlement. "We have an abiding interest in the return of the remains of Americans in North Korea," said Philip Crowley, assistant secretary of state for public affairs. Crowley, however, added, "In terms of a broader bilateral relationship, clearly we've told them that a strong and more diverse bilateral relationship is related to the six-party talks."

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2. Sino-DPRK Relations

JoongAng Ilbo ("KIM'S TRIP TO CHINA APPEARS DELAYED", 2010/04/05) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's much-anticipated trip to the PRC may be delayed until late April, sources here

said yesterday. "There is a possibility that Kim may delay his visit to sometime later in April as Chinese President Hu Jintao will visit Washington to attend the nuclear security summit and tour three South American nations, including Brazil," the source said. "Kim's trip will likely take place sometime after April 18 when Hu finishes his overseas trips."

Yonhap News ("SEOUL STILL KEEPING CLOSE WATCH ON N.K. LEADER'S POSSIBLE TRIP TO CHINA", 2010/04/05) reported that the ROK continues to closely watch DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's movement as signs still point to his imminent trip to the PRC, a spokesman for Seoul's foreign ministry said Monday. "There is circumstantial evidence (of Kim's imminent trip to China)," ministry spokesman Kim Young-sun told a press briefing. "(The government) is closely following the possibility," he added. "We believe all the preparations have been completed, but they appear to be still waiting for the right timing," the official said without elaborating, asking not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the issue.

Yonhap ("S. KOREA BELIEVES N. KOREAN LEADER MAY VISIT CHINA AROUND APRIL 25: SOURCE", Seoul, 2010/04/06) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il could make a trip to the DPRK late this month. Won Se-hoon, head of the National Intelligence Service, was quoted as telling the parliament's intelligence committee that Kim could travel to the PRC around April 25, considering his likely attendance in his late father's birthday ceremony on April 15 and the overseas travel schedule of PRC President Hu Jintao, according to a lawmaker who was present in the meeting.

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3. DPRK Defector Issue

Agence France Presse ("N.KOREA WEBSITE THREATENS TOP DEFECTOR WITH DEATH", 2010/04/05) reported that the DPRK's official website Monday threatened a top-ranking defector with death over his criticism of Pyongyang's regime during trips to the United States and Japan. Hwang Jang-Yop "will not be safe anywhere", the Uriminzokkiri website warned in a commentary. The commentary described Hwang as a "traitor and human scum" and said he had "viciously slandered our dignity and system" during his trips.

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4. DPRK Economy

Institute for Far Eastern Studies ("DPRK LEGAL EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN PLANNED ECONOMY FOLLOW CURRENCY REFORMS ", 2010/04/05) reported that it has recently been verified that following the currency reforms at the end of last year, the DPRK passed 11 laws revising and reforming the system of government control over the economy. Among these measures is a law banning the black market sales of grain. The DPRK's food administration law, revised last November 3, clearly bans the black market trade and smuggling of grains, and sets the punishment for such activities as the confiscation of the grains in question. In addition, an order was passed down stating that when food supplies are rationed to a labor management office, they are to be distributed in accordance with a worker's efforts, position, and productivity. On the same day, a new agricultural law was passed that stated if organizations and groups that were granted land for private plots failed to meet state-set harvest quotas, the plots could be confiscated.

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5. DPRK Information Technology

Korea Times ("NK GOES FOR LINUX-BASED OPERATING SYSTEM", 2010/04/05) reported that according to researchers at the ROK Science and Technology Policy Institute (STEPI), the DPRK's Linux-based "RED Star" software is mainly designed to monitor the Web behavior of its citizens and control information made available to them. However, the computer operating system does represent DPRK efforts to advance its computer technology, which lags as a result of the country's isolation, relying on Linux and other open-source software, said Kim Jong-seon, a STEPI researcher. "The fact that North Korea established a computer operating system to control the flow of information within the country is meaningful in itself. By improving its ability to develop Linux-based programs, North Korea seems to be looking to expand the use of its computer programs in more areas," he said.

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6. Inter-Korea Relations

Reuters (Jon Herskovitz And Christine Kim , "WAR STILL RAGING FOR SOUTH KOREAN POWS IN NORTH", 2010/04/05) reported that somewhere in the DPRK, more than 500 ROK prisoners of war have been held for more than half a century, all but certain to spend their final days in the secretive state without a chance of returning home. The 560 are all who remain alive of what Seoul estimates were about 80,000 ROK soldiers who were left when a ceasefire ended the 1950-53 Korean War. Pyongyang has denied for decades it has been holding any ROK POWs, saying the tens of thousands stayed on their own accord. Now it is nearly impossible for the DPRK to let any POWs leave because it does not want to risk being exposed in a falsehood it has maintained for decades, analysts said. President Lee Myung-bak has pressed the DPRK to return the POWs and wants to use the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the war to launch a joint effort with Pyongyang for the recovery of soldiers left on the other side of the border.

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7. ROK Naval Ship Sinking

Christian Science Monitor ("SOUTH KOREA'S LEE CALLS FOR PATIENCE IN CHEONAN SHIP SINKING INVESTIGATION", 2010/04/05) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak today called for patience in the Cheonan ship sinking investigation. "I believe accuracy is more important than speed in determining the cause of this kind of disaster," said Mr. Lee in a biweekly address broadcast on radio and the Internet. "We should wait patiently, although it will be painful, as a joint investigation team from the government, military, and civilians are already looking into the case." Lee added that the investigation "shouldn't be hasty conjecture or obscure prediction" but instead "based on stern facts and concrete evidence."

Yonhap News ("US ASKED TO SEND EXPLOSIVES EXPERTS ", 2010/04/05) reported that Gen. Walter Sharp, commander of the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command (CFC), visited the JCS headquarters in Seoul for talks with Chairman Gen. Lee Sang-eui on the disaster that occurred

March 26. Gen. Lee expressed thanks to Sharp for the ongoing U.S. military support and asked the U.S. to dispatch experts on explosives and naval accidents to help determine what caused the 1,200-ton ship to break into two and sink near the tense sea border with the DPRK, the spokesman said. The request is aimed at ensuring the objectivity and neutrality of the ROK government's investigation, he said.

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8. ROK-Russia Space Cooperation

Bernamea ("RUSSIA'S FIRST STAGE FOR SOUTH KOREAN SPACECRAFT BROUGHT TO PUSAN", 2010/04/05) reported that the Russian-made first stage for the ROK space launching system Naro-1 has been brought to the ROK airport of Pusan, the Chief of Information Services of the Polyot Corporation Leonid Shirobokov told Russia's Itar-Tass news agency Monday. On April 4 the Ruslan heavy transport plane safely brought the precious space cargo to Pusan airport. Itar-Tass had earlier reported from Seoul that the first stage of the carrier rocket will be shipped from Pusan to Naro space center in the southwest of the Korean peninsula, where the rocket will be launched.

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9. ROK Aid to Afghanistan

Yonhap News ("SEOUL TO OPEN NEW HOSPITAL, JOB TRAINING SCHOOL IN AFGHANISTAN", 2010/04/05) reported that the ROK will open a new hospital and a vocational training center in Afghanistan this week, part of its direct and humanitarian assistance for the war-torn nation, the foreign ministry said Monday. A ceremony will be held in Bagram, where both the hospital and training center are located, on Sunday (local time), to mark the opening of the facilities, according to ministry spokesman Kim Young-sun.

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10. ROK Anti-Piracy

Associated Press (Sangwon Yoon, "SKOREAN WARSHIP CATCHES UP WITH HIJACKED TANKER", Seoul, 2010/04/06) reported that an ROK navy destroyer caught up with a hijacked supertanker carrying about \$160 million of crude oil and was maneuvering nearby in the Indian Ocean, the ROK Foreign Ministry said Tuesday. The tanker was sailing toward Somalia's coast, the ministry said. It declined to offer further details, including the exact location of the tanker and destroyer, citing operational security and safety concerns. "It looks like negotiations might happen, but we can't confirm anything because the hostages as well as the oil tanker are at risk," said Lim Jeong-taek, a Foreign Ministry spokesman.

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11. USFJ Base Relocation

Kyodo News ("TOKYO TELLS OKINAWA ON PLAN TO MOVE FUTENMA OUTSIDE FIRST",

2010/04/05) reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano has told Okinawa Gov Hirokazu Nakaima that the government plans to transfer a U.S. Marine base in Okinawa Prefecture first to Tokunoshima Island in Kagoshima Prefecture, in line with his pledge to move it outside Okinawa, several government sources said Monday. The top government spokesman, who has headed a government panel aimed at finding a relocation site, conveyed the plan to Nakaima when they met at a Tokyo hotel last Thursday, the sources said. After transferring the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station to the island, the government of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama then plans to construct a heliport on the Marines' Camp Schwab in Nago, also in Okinawa, and eventually relocate the facility to an artificial island to be built in waters off the Katsuren Peninsula in eastern Okinawa, according to the sources.

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12. Japan Politics

Reuters ("NEARLY HALF OF JAPAN'S VOTERS SUPPORT NO PARTY", 2010/04/05) reported that nearly half of Japan's voters support no political party, according to a poll released on Monday, a sign of mounting frustration with both ruling and opposition parties ahead of an election expected in July. Hoping to attract some of these dissatisfied voters, former finance minister Kaoru Yosano and other opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) rebels are aiming to start a new party this week. The survey by the Yomiuri newspaper showed voter support for the ruling Democrats fell to 24 percent and that for the main opposition LDP dropped to 16 percent.

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13. Japan Abductee Issue

Kyodo News ("N. KOREAN DEFECTOR SAYS HE HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF ABDUCTEE YOKOTA ", 2010/04/05) reported that Hwang Jang Yop, a former high-ranking DPRK official who defected to the ROK in 1997, told Japanese lawmakers in Tokyo on Monday he has no knowledge of Megumi Yokota, who was abducted to the DPRK from Japan as a teenager and who Pyongyang claims to have died. "I don't know Megumi Yokota. I have heard that a Japanese was abducted and involved in teaching the Japanese language to agents," Hwang was quoted as saying by several lawmakers who attended a meeting with him. Hwang also said if any abductees are alive and remaining in the reclusive state, it could be because "they do not want to go back as they receive good treatment" or because the country "keeps them from returning as they are in an important position and know secrets."

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14. Japan-Taiwan Relations

Agence France Presse ("EX-JAPAN PM ASO TO MEET TAIWAN PRESIDENT: REPORT", 2010/04/05) reported that former Japan premier Taro Aso, who angered the PRC when he hailed Taiwan as a law-abiding "country", is expected to meet the island's President Ma Ying-jeou, local media reported Monday. Aso arrived in Taiwan Monday at the invitation of Jeffrey Koo, chairman of Chinatrust Financial Holding, Taiwan's leading commercial bank. "The visit will be helpful to the strengthening of Taipei and Tokyo ties, considering Aso's political influence in Japan," foreign ministry spokesman

Henry Chen told AFP. Another foreign ministry official said "while the government attaches great importance on the visit, we certainly hope that it won't cause negative impacts on the Taipei-Beijing ties.

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15. Sino-Japanese Relations

Kyodo ("CHINA EXECUTES CONVICTED JAPANESE DRUG SMUGGLER", Beijing, 2010/04/06) reported that the PRC executed convicted Japanese drug smuggler Mitsunobu Akano on Tuesday. Akano, 65, was executed around 9:30 a.m. at a facility in Dalian, Liaoning Province, Japanese diplomats said, the first time the PRC has executed a Japanese national since the two countries normalized diplomatic relations in 1972. "The courts had clear and irrefutable evidence of drug smuggling and the death sentence was handed down and carried out in line with Chinese law," Xinhua quoted the Supreme People's Court as saying.

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16. PRC Arms Procurements

Agence France Presse ("RUSSIA SHIPS CHINA 15 S-300 MISSILE SYSTEMS: REPORT", 2010/04/05) reported that Russia has shipped the PRC 15 advanced surface-to-air missile systems, the director of the Russian plant which produces the weapons was cited by news agencies as saying. The truck-mounted air defence S-300 batteries, known by NATO as SA-20 Gargoyles, can target aircraft and ballistic missiles at a range of over 15 kilometres. "We just fulfilled a large contract for the delivery to China of 15 batteries of the new S-300 missile defence systems," Igor Ashurbeili, director of the Almaz-Antei plant was quoted as saying. The contract included the supply of a total of 15 batteries, each usually consisting of four S-300 missiles, he said.

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17. PRC on Iranian Nuclear Program

Global Times ("CHINA READIES FOR NUKE CONFERENCE IN IRAN ",) reported that the PRC has displayed its increasingly mature diplomacy strategy in tackling the complex Iran issues, experts said after Iran claimed Sunday that the PRC would attend a nuclear disarmament conference in Tehran later this month, several days after a US-hosted nuclear security summit. The two-day conference, scheduled to start April 17, primarily serves to demonstrate that Iran's nuclear plans are for civilian ends rather than military strength, according to the country's nuclear agency, as Western powers ratchet up pressure to impose more sanctions on Iran. "The Chinese have welcomed the Islamic Republic's initiative, and the idea of calling on the world to disarm, and will take part in the Tehran conference," chief Iranian nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili said.

Reuters ("CHINA SAYS CONSIDERS ATTENDING IRAN NUCLEAR MEETING", Beijing, 2010/04/06) reported that the PRC said on Tuesday it was considering whether or not to attend a nuclear disarmament conference in Tehran later this month. "We have received the invitation and are now studying it," PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told a news briefing without elaborating.

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18. Sino-US Relations

Associated Press ("WHITE HOUSE: IRAN NUCLEAR ISSUE ISN'T WHY US DELAYING REPORT ON CHINA'S CURRENCY POLICIES", 2010/04/05) reported that the White House denies any connection between delaying a report on the PRC's currency policies and seeking the PRC's cooperation on new penalties against Iran for its nuclear program. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said Saturday he was delaying publication because several high-level international meetings in the coming months would be a better way to advance the U.S. position. White House economic adviser Lawrence Summers tells ABC's "This Week" that the Iran matter isn't causing the delay and that those meetings are a good way to have a direct dialogue with the PRC.

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19. Sino-US Trade Relations

Reuters ("CHINA QUIET ON U.S. CURRENCY REPORT DELAY", 2010/04/05) reported that a PRC central bank adviser said Beijing could ease pressure over the yuan by buying more from recession-hit U.S. states, but the PRC had no official reaction on Monday to the Obama administration's delay of a contentious currency report.

Reuters ("CHINA ECONOMIST SEES "ROOM FOR TALK" ON CURRENCY ROW", 2010/04/05) reported that a PRC government economist said on Monday that the U.S. decision to delay a contentious currency report did not mean Beijing will change the value of its currency any time soon. "I believe this is a positive signal. At least the U.S. side has created some room for further consultations and negotiations," said Huo Jianguo, head of the Commerce Ministry's think-tank, of the U.S. decision. "But I don't think there will be a yuan adjustment in the near-term. We need to see whether China's export recovery will be sustained and need to see whether companies can cope with a stronger yuan."

United Press International ("CHINA MAY START REVALUING CURRENCY", 2010/04/05) reported that the PRC may start revaluing its yuan as early as the second half of this year because of its own needs and not due to U.S. pressure, a PRC analyst said. China Daily Monday quoted Jin Canrong, a leading U.S. studies expert at Renmin University of China, as saying the PRC may start revaluing its currency this year, with the move not "yielding to U.S. pressure, but seeing to China's own needs."

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20. PRC Tibet Issue

Agence France Presse ("CHINA TIGHTENING BORDER CONTROL IN TIBET: DALAI LAMA ENVOY", 2010/04/05) reported that the number of exiles from Tibet has declined because the PRC is stepping up border control in the region, a senior envoy to the Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama said. "Normally until 2008, every year we had on average between 2,500 and 3,000 people who escaped from Tibet. But since the demonstration in March 2008, that number has fallen," said Tempa Tsering, the chief representative of the Buddhist monk who has been based in India since fleeing his

Himalayan homeland in 1959. "Last year about 600 have come out," he said. "That's (because) firstly, the restriction in Tibet" by the PRC authorities became tougher and "secondly, in all the mountain paths guarding is strengthened," he said.

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21. PRC Cyber Security

Financial Times ("CYBERCRIME CONCERNS GROW IN CHINA ", 2010/04/05) reported that cybersecurity specialists say China, with the world's biggest internet population with about 400m users , probably boasts the planet's largest group of hackers. The PRC last month became the biggest source of targeted hacking attacks, according to a report by MessageLabs , a research arm of Symantec . The security company says just over a quarter of malicious e-mails sent to gain access to sensitive data came from the PRC. "There are probably no more than 1,000 people in China who are capable of producing genuinely new tools," says Eagle Wan, a veteran PRC hacker who now works for IBM. "But those with basic training who can tweak and use tools are in their hundreds of thousands."

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22. PRC Environment

Reuters ("CHINA SAYS DAMS NOT TO BLAME FOR LOW MEKONG LEVELS", 2010/04/05) reported that the PRC on Monday denied that its dams were reducing water levels on the Mekong River and blamed problems along the river on unusually dry weather, but it also offered to share more data with its neighbors. Leaders of Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos, badly hit by the Mekong's biggest drop in water levels in decades, met to discuss management of Southeast Asia's longest waterway. The PRC sent vice foreign minister Song Tao to rebut criticism of the eight hydropower dams it has built or is building in its south. "Statistics show the recent drought that hit the whole river basin is attributable to the extreme dry weather, and the water level decline of the Mekong River has nothing to do with the hydropower development," Song said in an official statement after the meeting.

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II. PRC Report

23. PRC Civil Society

China Daily ("CHINA EASTERN AIRLINES DONATES 2 MLN FOR YUNAN DROUGHT", 2010/04/05) reported that China Eastern Airlines donated 2 million RMB to Yunan provincial department of civil affairs for aiding the serious drought disaster in Yunnan province on a disaster relief evening party held on April 2nd.

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24. PRC Environment

China Environment ("BEIJING RESIDENTS CAN CHANGE REFUSE FOR PRESENT", 2010/04/05) reported that starting in March 2010, Beijing residents can give old newspapers, used batteries and other renewable refuse at appointed sites and get score cards, which they can trade in to get soaps, detergent and other items in return.

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