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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK-US Relations

Associated Press ("FREED JOURNALISTS HOME IN U.S. AFTER N. KOREA PARDON", 2009/08/05) reported that two American journalists freed by the DPRK returned home to the US on Wednesday for a jubilant, emotional reunion with family members and friends they hadn't seen in nearly five months. The jet carrying Euna Lee and Laura Ling and former President Bill Clinton arrived at Burbank's Bob Hope Airport at dawn.

Associated Press ("RICHARDSON: FREED JOURNALISTS A WIN FOR BOTH SIDES", Washington, 2009/08/05) reported that Gov. Bill Richardson says both the United States and the DPRK can cite victory from the high-level talks that sprang two American journalists from jail. Richardson said Wednesday that "it's equal right now" in terms of public relations one-upmanship between Washington and Pyongyang as a result of former President Bill Clinton's successful mission.

Guardian (Ewen MacAskill , "RELEASE OF JOURNALISTS RENEWS HOPES FOR THAW IN US-NORTH KOREAN RELATIONS", Washington, 2009/08/05) reported that hopes of a thaw in US-DPRK relations were raised today with the release of two American journalists. US secretary of state Hillary Clinton, said it was up to the DPRK to determine what happens next. "Perhaps they will now

be willing to start talking to us within the context of the six-party talks about the international desire to see them denuclearise," she said on NBC's Today show.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREA MUST STOP PROVOCATIVE BEHAVIOR: OBAMA", Wakarusa, 2009/08/05) reported that President Barack Obama said Wednesday the DPRK must stop its nuclear program and provocative behavior. Obama reiterated that former president Bill Clinton's mercy mission to free the two female reporters was purely a private initiative and not a sign of easing international diplomatic pressure on the DPRK. "We were very clear this was a humanitarian mission," Obama said.

Financial Times (Daniel?Dombey , "US WARNS N KOREA THAT IT STILL FACES ISOLATION", Washington, 2009/08/05) reported that the Obama administration insisted on Wednesday that the DPRK still faced isolation even as it emerged that the White House was deeply involved in Bill Clinton’s trip to Pyongyang this week, which secured the release of two US journalists. Hillary Clinton, US secretary of state, said the DPRK still faced a choice between entering into international negotiations on its nuclear programme or “a path that is filled with provocative actions which further isolates them from the international community”.

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3. US on DPRK Abductions, Detainees

Kyodo News ("CLINTON URGES N. KOREA TO RELEASE JAPANESE, S. KOREAN NATIONALS: REPORT ", Tokyo, 2009/08/05) reported that former U.S. President Bill Clinton urged DPRK officials to release Japanese and ROK nationals as well, CBS said. The U.S. TV station quoted in its online edition a U.S. government official as saying that Clinton "pressed very hard" on positive developments that could occur if the DPRK released ROK detainees and people abducted from Japan.

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4. Sino-DPRK Trade Relations

China Daily ("TOURISM AND FISHING INDUSTRIES SUFFERING FROM CROSS-BORDER TENSIONS", 2009/08/05) reported that the nuclear test carried out in the DPRK in May set the world on edge, so it is little wonder the tourism industries in the PRC's border cities have been one of the worst affected by the following tension. "The revenues from four-day tours and business trips to the DPRK have plunged at least 50 percent compared to last year," said Li Peng, general manager of the Dandong branch of the State-owned China International Travel Service (CITS). The lives of those in the fishing industry in Dandong have also been affected, while security forces worry they could be dragged into a dispute between Pyongyang and Seoul.

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5. DPRK Weapons Sales

Reuters ("SOUTH AFRICA ARMS BODY ALLOWS NORTH KOREA EXHIBIT", 2009/08/05) reported that South Africa's arms control body has authorised an arms exhibit for the DPRK and the possible sale of weapons to Iran, Syria and Libya which should be investigated, the main opposition party said. David Maynier, a Democratic Alliance MP and shadow defence minister, said the NCACC had authorised a marketing permit for a South African-based company in the past three years to demonstrate and exhibit military support equipment for the DPRK. "The military support equipment was radar warning receivers used on antennae for submarines," he told Reuters.

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6. ROK-US Relations

Korea Times (Na Jeong-ju, "'SEOUL INFORMED OF CLINTON'S NORTH KOREA VISIT LAST WEEK'", 2009/08/05) reported that Cheong Wa Dae denied reports Wednesday that the United States failed to discuss former U.S. President Bill Clinton's visit to Pyongyang with the ROK, saying it had the information last week.``It is not true that the United States failed to inform us of Clinton's DPRK visit,'' a presidential office official said on condition of anonymity. ``Seoul and Washington have discussed sending a senior U.S. diplomat to Pyongyang for the past few weeks. The allies shared the information about Clinton's visit last week.'' The official said ROK officials explained the DPRK's detention of a ROK worker and a fishing boat to Clinton prior to his Pyongyang visit, adding the issues may have been raised at talks between Clinton and DPRK leader Kim Jong-il.

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7. ROK-US Military

Yonhap News ("U.S. TO REPLACE F-16S WITH F-15ES IN ROUTINE ROTATION ", Seoul, 2009/08/05) reported that the U.S. Air Force said Wednesday it will replace a squadron of F-16 fighter jets in the ROK with a dozen F-15Es later this month. The jets will be stationed in Gunsan, 274km south of Seoul, for five months, replacing the F-16s scheduled to be relocated out of the ROK in a routine rotation, it said. A group of 400 technical personnel will arrive in the ROK along with the F-15Es, according to the release. "The 400 soldiers and the 12 F-15E jets will help maintain stability and peace" the release said.

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8. ROK Anti-Piracy Operations

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "S. KOREAN NAVAL FORCES CAPTURE PIRATES OFF SOMALIA", 2009/08/05) reported that ROK naval forces deployed off the coast of Somalia rescued a Bahaman commercial ship from pirates Wednesday, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) in Seoul said. In the seventh operation of its kind, a group of 30 UDT/SEAL forces aboard rigid inflatable speedboats, backed by a Lynx attack helicopter, seized seven pirates trying to hijack the cargo ship in the Gulf of Aden. They conducted the operation at the request of the Combined Task Force (CTF) 151, a multinational naval

task force to combat piracy in the Somalia littorals.

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9. Russo-ROK Military Exercise

Vostok -Media ("RUSSIA-KOREA JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE TO TAKE PLACE OFF SAKHALIN COAST ", 2009/08/05) reported that combined maneuvers with the participation of the Russian Border Guard Cruisers, air fleet and patrol vessel of the Korea National Maritime Police Agency will take place off Sakhalin coast. The ROK vessel has already arrived at the port of Korsakov, Sakhalin. According to the scenario of the military exercise the efforts of criminal groups to redistribute the spheres of influence at the Aniva bay became more frequent. What is more, they made an attempt to assault a Russian ship.

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10. ROK Civil Unrest

Yonhap ("AT LEAST 50 INJURED AS POLICE STORM OCCUPIED SSANGYONG FACILITY ", Pyeongtaek, 2009/08/05) reported that police said at least 50 people were injured in violent clashes on Wednesday as they attempted to force out hundreds of fired Ssangyong Motor Co. workers from the carmaker's only assembly plant. In a dramatic raid earlier in the day, about 100 police commandos were lifted by cranes and helicopters onto the roof of the painting shop where the unionists have been holding out for more than two months, demanding their jobs back. The protesters fought back with metal pipes and firebombs, and some 500 remained inside another painting facility that was packed with flammable material.

Yonhap ("SSANGYONG'S FIRED WORKERS END PLANT OCCUPATION", Pyeongtaek, 2009/08/06) reported that hundreds of fired workers Thursday voluntarily ended their 77-day seizure of a painting shop of Ssangyong Motor Co. after union leaders and management agreed on a broad framework for a layoff plan, police said. The union proposed to accept a plan to save 48 percent of some 1,000 laid-off workers by giving them unpaid long-term leaves of absence, according to a source close to the talks.

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11. Japan-US Relations

Mainichi ("AS DPJ SOFTENS STANCE, POSSIBLE CHANGES TO JAPAN-U.S. ALLIANCE REMAIN UNCLEAR", 2009/08/04) reported that how the Japan-U.S. alliance will change if the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) takes over the reins of government remains unclear as it has softened its stance toward the bilateral status-of-forces agreement and other aspects of bilateral ties. The shift in the DPJ's stance is despite the fact that the party states in its manifesto that it will seek Japan-U.S. relations on an equal footing.

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12. Japan Politics

New York Times (Martin Fackler, "RULING PARTY'S RURAL BASE ERODES IN JAPAN ", Matsuyama, 2009/08/05) reported that the LDP's once formidable patronage and vote-gathering machine appears to be breaking down. If opinion polls are correct, the Liberal Democrats are heading for a humiliating loss in the Aug. 30 national elections, which would knock them out of power for only the second time since the party's founding in 1955. One big reason has been the collapse of the party's traditional base in the countryside. "The countryside is angry," said Takayuki Miyauchi, a retired postmaster. "We want anyone but the Liberal Democratic Party."

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13. US-Japan Security Alliance

Mainichi Shimbun ("NON-NUCLEAR PRINCIPLES BECOME FOCAL POINT OF PLANNED DPJ-SDP COALITION", 2009/08/05) reported that the three non-nuclear principles of "nonpossession, nonproduction, and nonintroduction" have sparked a controversy between the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP), who are eyeing a coalition government after the upcoming general election. The DPJ has vowed to release the secret pact said to have existed between Japan and the U.S. regarding port calls by U.S. vessels carrying nuclear weapons, if it takes over the government. In such a case, however, there is a great possibility that "nonintroduction" will no longer be considered applicable, and the SDP has warned that this may lead to a revision of the non-nuclear principles. "Japan has two options," explained SDP chief Mizuho Fukushima during a meeting with U.N. General Assembly President Miguel d'Escoto on Tuesday. "When the secret pact is made public, we can either (eliminate "nonintroduction" and) switch to the two non-nuclear principles in alignment with the pact, or continue to adhere to the three non-nuclear principles."

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14. Japan on Nuclear Weapons

Associated Press (Shizuo Kambayashi, "HIROSHIMA MAYOR CALLS FOR ABOLISHING NUKE WEAPONS", Hiroshima, 2009/08/06) reported that Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba urged global leaders on Thursday to back US President Barack Obama 's call to abolish nuclear weapons as Japan marked the 64th anniversary of the world's first atomic bomb attack. "We refer to ourselves, the great global majority, as the 'Obamajority,' and we call on the rest of the world to join forces with us to eliminate all nuclear weapons by 2020," Akiba said. Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso also spoke at Thursday's ceremony. "Japan will continue to uphold its three non-nuclear principles and lead the international community toward the abolishment of nuclear weapons and lasting peace," he said.

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15. Japan Textbook Issue

Kyodo News ("YOKOHAMA ADOPTS NATIONALISTIC JUNIOR HIGH HISTORY TEXTBOOK", 2009/08/05) reported that the Yokohama board of education on Tuesday adopted a disputed history

textbook with a nationalist bent for use in many of the city's public junior high schools, municipal officials said. The textbook was mainly authored by a group of nationalistic scholars called the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, popularly known as Tsukurukai. The book has drawn international criticism chiefly from the PRC and ROK for allegedly playing down Japan's militarist past and justifying its wartime role.

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16. US-Japan, PRC Relations

Agence France Presse ("SENATE PANEL APPROVES OBAMA AMBASSADORS TO JAPAN, CHINA", Washington, 2009/08/04) reported that the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Tuesday approved President Barack Obama's nominees for ambassadors to key allies Japan and the PRC. The panel approved longtime Internet and biotechnology lawyer John Roos as ambassador to Japan and Republican Utah Governor Jon Huntsman to be Obama's eyes in Beijing. During a confirmation hearing in July, Roos said the Obama administration's early focus on US-Japan relations "emphasizes the special bond between our two countries." Huntsman, who also speaks Taiwanese, vowed in a confirmation hearing last month that he would bring a "hard-headed realist" approach to Sino-US relations and said he felt personally invested in the fate of Taiwan.

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17. Sino-Indian Territorial Dispute

Xinhua News ("AMBASSADOR URGES UTMOST POLITICAL WISDOM TO SETTLE CHINA-INDIA BORDER DISPUTES", 2009/08/05) reported that the PRC 's ambassador to India Zhang Yan on Tuesday urged the PRC and India to settle existing border disputes properly, calling into play the greatest possible political wisdom. Zhang made the proposal in an interview with Xinhua ahead of the 13th bilateral meeting on border issues set down for August 7-8 in India. "Despite the twists and turns in China-India ties and border disputes, the two countries share the same historical responsibilities of developing economies, improving people's lives and safeguarding world peace and development, which requires them to properly handle existing problems with the utmost political wisdom," he said.

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18. Sino-Russian Relations

RIA Novosti ("RUSSIA TIGHTENS CONTROLS ON CHINESE BORDER OVER PLAGUE OUTBREAK ", 2009/08/05) reported that Russia has tightened security on part of the border with the PRC due to an outbreak of pneumonic plague in the Qinghai province. A spokesperson for the customs service in the Transbaikal area, to the east of Siberia's Lake Baikal, told RIA Novosti that no signs of infection have so far been detected near the border. Russia's chief sanitary official Gennady Onishchenko advised Russians on Tuesday to avoid travelling to the PRC's "problem regions."

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19. Sino-Australia Trade Relations

Financial Times (Vivian Wai-Yin Kwok, "CHINA TAKES ITS IRON ORE BUY TO BRAZIL", Hong Kong, 2009/08/05) reported that tensions between the PRC and Australia are heating up. PRC steel mills, at an impasse over ore prices with Australian suppliers, plan to turn to Brazilian suppliers instead for the iron ore imports that feed economic growth in the PRC, China Daily reported Wednesday. According to shipping data provider AXSMarine, spot iron ore vessel bookings from Brazil to China surged to a record 39 in July after the PRC government detained four Rio Tinto employees. By contrast, vessel bookings from Australia's main iron ore ports to the PRC dropped to 31 in July, the lowest level since February.

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20. PRC Civil Unrest

Agence France Presse (Amy Coopes , "UIGHUR LEADER KADEER FEARS FOR HER CHILDREN IN CHINA", Melbourne, 2009/08/05) reported that exiled Uighur leader Rebiya Kadeer Wednesday accused the PRC of carrying out "psychological torture" on her children by forcing them to appear on state television to blame her for deadly unrest. Kadeer said her daughter Roxingul and jailed son Alim had taken part "against their will" in the CCTV news report, in which they said she incited last month's violence in the Xinjiang region. "What the PRC government did was probably one of the worst kinds of violence, I would say, against my children to force them to speak up against me," Kadeer, speaking through a translator, told journalists in Melbourne.

Associated Press ("UIGHUR ACCUSES CHINA OF INFLAMING ETHNIC TENSION", Melbourne, 2009/08/05) reported that the PRC is inflaming ethnic tensions by deceiving its own people about last month's riots in Xinjiang province, Rebiya Kadeer said Wednesday. "The Chinese people should be very careful with the PRC government's versions of the events and the ways and means the PRC government employ ... to deceive, to some extent, the Chinese people, to create this kind of terrible relationship between two groups," Kadeer said.

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21. PRC Civil Society

Christian Science Monitor ("CHINA SNARES NGOS WITH FOREIGN FUNDING", 2009/08/05) reported that the harassment of foreign-funded NGOs in Beijing has raised fears of a Russian-style squeeze on civil society. An alternate view in Beijing is that the groups targeted had pushed too aggressively into forbidden political zones, setting off a reaction. NGO workers and experts on civil society say the investigations into taxes and licenses are a smokescreen for a clampdown on legal activism, including the recent disbarring of 20 civil rights lawyers in Beijing. "It's what you do with the money that matters," says a researcher on PRC NGOs, who declined to be named. He says investigations into foreign funding provide a "post hoc excuse" for authorities.

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22. PRC Nuclear Power

Agence French Presse ("CHINA PROBES TOP NUCLEAR CHIEF FOR WRONGDOING: REPORT", Beijing, 2009/04/05) reported that a top official in charge of the PRC's civilian and military nuclear programmes has been placed under investigation, state media said Wednesday, in what appeared to be another case of high-level graft. Kang Rixin, party secretary and general manager of state-owned China National Nuclear Corporation, is being probed for possible involvement in "grave violations of discipline", the Xinhua news agency said. The term "discipline violations" often means acts of corruption in the language of PRC officialdom.

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23. PRC Climate Change

New York Times (Michael Wines, "CHINA SEES CLIMATE ACCORD, WITHOUT STRICT LIMITS", Beijing, 2009/08/05) reported that the PRC's envoy to global negotiations on climate change expressed optimism on Wednesday that a new agreement to reduce greenhouse gases would be reached this year, and he said that his nation's efforts to curb carbon pollution already had produced results that he called "second to none." But the envoy, Yu Qingtai, also underscored the PRC's opposition to placing a ceiling on its emissions of greenhouse gases, a step that some experts have called crucial to efforts to slow global warming.

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24. PRC Environment

Reuters ("TROUBLE-PRONE CHINESE CITY SUFFERS AMMONIA LEAK", Beijing, 2009/08/05) reported that dozens of people were poisoned by an ammonia leak in a PRC city that has already been hit by a spate of problems over the last 10 days, including a mass poisoning due to polluted water and a mayoral corruption scandal, state media reported. The ammonia leak at Chifeng Pharmaceutical Group occurred on Wednesday morning, as workers tried to transfer it from a truck to a plant run by Chifeng Pharmaceutical Group. The count of those sickened ranges from 30 to 141 in PRC media reports.

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25. PRC Plague Outbreak

Bloomberg News ("CHINA'S PLAGUE-AFFECTED TOWN GETS HANDBOOKS TO STEM OUTBREAK ", 2009/08/05) reported that PRC officials trying to stop pneumonic plague spreading in northwestern Qinghai province have distributed more than 40,000 handbooks and other material to educate residents and prevent panic. Authorities also quarantined a 3,500-square-kilometer (1,350-square-mile) area to contain the pneumonia-causing disease in the remote town of Ziketan, the provincial health department said in a statement today. Three people have died of the disease in the past week, one is in serious condition, one is recovering and seven others are stable, the

department said.

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II. PRC Report

26. PRC Civil Society and Poverty Alleviation

Beijng Youth News ("LOVE SHOP" PROJECT LAUNCHED", 2009/08/05) reported that "Love Shop" Project, sponsored by China Poverty Alleviation Foundation, was formally launched in Beijing yesterday. This project aims at advocating more people participating in public welfare activities by a model of "Shopping Charity", which means everyone can buy products from disaster areas, and thus to build a market platform for people in disaster areas to support their self-development.

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27. Civil Society and the Environment in the PRC

China News Agency ("TAIWAN TZU CHI FOUNDATION HELPS GANSU CONSTRUCT CISTERNS", 2009/08/05) reported that Taiwan Tzu Chi Foundation has donated fund to construct over ten hundred cisterns in Gansu province, in order to solve drinking water problem for people in draft areas. The Foundation will also cooperate with Gansu in environmental protection in future, according to a director of the Foundation during a visit in Gansu recently.

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28. PRC Civil Society and Public Education

Wenhui Daily ("SHANGHAI ESTABLISHES CHINA'S FIRST SECURITIES LOVE FUND", 2009/08/05) reported that China's first Securities Love Fund was formally found in Shanghai yesterday. The original Fund is 1.5 million RMB, donated by nearly ten thousand staff of securities industry. The Fund aims at encouraging excellent teachers in Dujiangyan city of Sichuan province and constructing Hope School there.

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