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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Associated Press ("DEFENSE SECRETARY WARNS IRAN AND NORTH KOREA", 2010/04/06) reported that Defense Secretary Robert Gates says the U.S. will not limit its options under a new nuclear strategy if Iran or the DPRK decides to launch a nuclear attack. Gates told a Pentagon briefing that a new policy restricting the use of nuclear weapons did not apply to countries such as Iran and the DPRK, which are pursuing nuclear weapons in defiance of the international community. Gates said "all options are on the table when it comes to countries in that category."

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2. ROK, PRC on Six Party Talks

Xinhua News Agency ("CHINA, S. KOREA DISCUSS BILATERAL TIES, DPRK'S NUCLEAR ISSUES ", 2010/04/06) reported that senior PRC and ROK diplomats met Tuesday to discuss bolstering bilateral ties and cooperation on nuclear issues of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Seoul's foreign ministry said. PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wang Guangya met with his ROK counterpart Shin Kak-soo in Seoul for what is called "strategic talks," the second of such meeting since December 2008, the ministry said. The two leaders renewed their vow to make efforts to bring the DPRK back to the stalled six-party talks aimed at ending its nuclear arms programs. The talks will help consolidate the "strategic partnership" between the two countries, the ministry said.

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3. US on Six Party Talks

Korea Times ("US READY TO OFFER AID FOR NK RETURN TO 6-WAY TALKS", 2010/04/06) reported that the United States appears to be preparing a "food-for-talks" exchange with the DPRK if the communist country decides to return to the six-party talks on its denuclearization, a U.S. think tank expert said Tuesday. Under the scenario, the impoverished DPRK would receive renewed food aid in return for rejoining the stalled talks, Marcus Noland, deputy director of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said. "My expectation is that China will extract from North Korea a commitment to rejoin the six-party talks and in return will provide them with economic assistance," Noland said.

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4. US on DPRK Military

Agence France Presse ("NO UNUSUAL N.KOREA ACTIVITY AFTER WARSHIP SINKS: US GENERAL", 2010/04/06) reported that US forces have detected no unusual activity by the DPRK following the mysterious sinking of a ROK warship near the disputed border, the US military commander in the ROK said Tuesday. US and ROK forces "watch North Korea very closely every single day of the year and will continue to do that", General Walter Sharp said.

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5. DPRK Detention of Americans

Agence France-Presse (Simon Martin, "NORTH KOREA SENTENCES AMERICAN TO 8 YRS HARD LABOUR", Seoul, 2010/04/07) reported that the DPRK announced Wednesday it has sentenced an Aijalon Mahli Gomes to eight years' hard labour and a 70 million won fine for an illegal border crossing. Gomes "admitted all the facts" when he appeared at the central court in Pyongyang on Tuesday, the Korean Central News Agency reported. Representatives from the Swedish embassy, which represents US interests in the DPRK, were allowed "as an exception" to attend the trial, the agency said.

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6. DPRK Government

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA UPGRADES POLICE ORGAN IN APPARENT BID TO TIGHTEN GRIP ON ECONOMY", 2010/04/06) reported that the DPRK has upgraded its top police organ to a full ministry, a television report monitored in Seoul showed, a move analysts said Tuesday is aimed at tightening internal control as the country moves to reinforce its socialist economic planning. Footage from the official Korean Central TV Broadcasting Station showed on Monday evening that the Ministry of People's Security was recently renamed to indicate that its status within the state has been elevated.

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7. ROK Aid to the DPRK

Agence France Presse ("S.KOREAN AID GROUP TO SEND FOOD TO NORTH", 2010/04/06) reported that a ROK aid group said Tuesday it would send 300 tons of flour and other supplies to needy DPR Koreans this week amid reports that dire food shortages are worsening. A ship carrying 60 containers of food, daily supplies and educational needs such as pencils will leave the western port of Incheon Saturday, said the Join Together Society. "The shipment will benefit some 12,000 marginalised people at 50 orphanages and other institutions across the country," society spokesman Seo Dong-Woo told AFP.

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8. DPRK Information Technology

Christian Science Monitor ("THE E-BOOK REVOLUTION HITS NORTH KOREA", 2010/04/06) reported that according to the Korea Times, ROK activist Kim Seong-min has reported that Electronic Library Mirae (Future) 2.0, a DPRK e-book computer program, is allowing readers in the DPRK to choose among a "wealth" of e-book titles. Kim, a DPRK defector and founder of Free North Korea Radio, says that DPRK citizens are digging into e-books that range well beyond government propaganda. According to Kim, Mirae 2.0 provides access to the electronic versions of "about 1,500 books and 350,000 kinds of other documents."

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9. Regional Maritime Security

Agence France Presse ("MALAYSIA BANS WMD SHIPMENTS TO ROGUE STATES: REPORTS", 2010/04/06) reported that Malaysia has outlawed the shipment through its waters of weapons of mass destruction which could end up in the hands of rogue states, reports said on Tuesday. Activists say the country's lack of export controls meant fugitive arms dealers were able to ship nuclear weapons to pariah states like the DPRK and Iran, a charge the government denies. But Malaysia will now control the shipment of military hardware through its waters and the "designing, development and production of WMD and its delivery", law minister Nazri Abdul Aziz was quoted as saying by the Star daily.

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10. Inter-Korea Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA 'COULD ATTACK SOUTH TO COVER INTERNAL CRISIS'", 2010/04/06) reported that the DPRK could attempt to provoke the the ROK prior to the G20 summit in Seoul in November in an effort to divert attention from its deepening domestic crisis, experts speculated Monday at a seminar on the G20 summit and security in the Korean Peninsula organized by the Institute for National Security Strategy. Brian Myers, a professor at Dogseo University in Busan, said the DPRK is unlikely to sabotage the G20 summit or commit a provocation disgracing the host, but recalled that Pyongyang bombed KAL flight No. 858 just prior to the 1988 Seoul Olympics and killed four ROK sailors in a naval skirmish during the 2002 football World Cup. "The North will pursue the contradictory paths of improving relations with the U.S. on the one hand and threatening the South on the other."

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11. ROK-US Defense Relations

Xinhua News Agency ("U.S. REAFFIRMS NUCLEAR DETERRENCE COMMITMENT TO S. KOREA", 2010/04/06) reported that U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton reaffirmed Tuesday that the ROK will remain under the nuclear umbrella of the United States, prior to the Washington's latest release of the Nuclear Posture Review, Seoul's foreign ministry said Tuesday. In a phone conversation earlier Tuesday with ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan, the secretary said the U.S. will continue to provide expanded nuclear deterrence for the ROK, its ally, the ministry said.

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12. ROK Naval Ship Sinking

JoongAng Ilbo ("INTELLIGENCE RELEASE DRAWS FIRE FROM THE GOVERNMENT", 2010/04/06) reported that Grand National Representative Kim Hak-song, who heads the National Assembly's Defense Committee, faced fierce denunciations yesterday following his revelations of key military intelligence before the media. Kim met with reporters Monday afternoon and discussed the March 26 sinking of the Navy corvette Cheonan after he received personal briefings from the Defense Ministry and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Kim gave reporters detailed information he had obtained from the military, linking the Cheonan's sinking to a possible torpedo or mine attack. His revelations prompted concerns that the release of confidential military information could lay bare American and ROK methods of gathering intelligence on the DPRK.

Korea Herald ("MINISTRY UNDECIDED ON ACCESS TO BREACH", 2010/04/06) reported that the military has yet to decide whether to reveal to the press the breached section of the sunken naval ship after it is pulled to the surface, a Defense Ministry official said yesterday. On Monday, an unidentified Navy official reportedly said on a naval ship deployed in the salvage operations that the military would barricade the breached hull to block the media from photographing it. Calls have mounted to reveal the section as it would offer critical evidence in determining what caused the explosion.

Associated Press (Sangwon Yoon, "SURVIVORS OF SUNKEN SKOREAN SHIP DESCRIBE ORDEAL", Seoul, 2010/04/07) reported that survivors from the Cheonan publicly recounted their ordeal for the first time Wednesday, describing how the deafening blast interrupted a routine patrol. Sailors said the blast felt like it came from outside the ship, but did not comment on speculation of possible DPRK involvement.

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13. ROK Politics

Yonhap News ("MAIN OPPOSITION DEMANDS PRESIDENT SACK DEFENSE, NAVY CHIEFS OVER WARSHIP SINKING", 2010/04/06) reported that the main opposition again demanded Tuesday for top military leaders to be fired for last month's naval disaster and pressed the government to resume dialogue and humanitarian aid with the DPRK. Song Young-gil of the Democratic Party (DP),

addressing the National Assembly plenary session, said the March 26 sinking of the 1,200-ton corvette Cheonan was a "grave national security disaster". "Fire the defense minister and the Navy chief of staff immediately. This is not a demand made as a typical political offense," Song said.

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14. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Xinhua News Agency ("S KOREA CONDEMNS JAPAN'S LATEST TERRITORIAL CLAIM OVER DISPUTED ISLETS", 2010/04/06) reported that the ROK government expressed Tuesday strong regret over Japan's latest territorial claim over a set of disputed islets lying halfway between the two countries, calling it "disappointing." "Let me make it clear to you: Territorial matters are not the kind of issues we can make concessions on," the presidential office Cheong Wa Dae spokesman Park Sun-kyu said in a press briefing. The remark came after the Japanese government recently renewed its decades-long sovereignty claim to a set of outcroppings in the East Sea (Sea of Japan), known as Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan, by listing them as Japan's territory in its diplomatic bluebook, an annual foreign policy report. Seoul's foreign ministry immediately summoned a Japanese diplomat to officially protest the latest reassertion.

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15. ROK, Japan on US Nuclear Posture

Associated Press (Eric Talmadge, "ASIAN ALLIES WELCOME NEW US NUCLEAR STANCE", Tokyo, 2010/04/07) reported that U.S. allies in Asia on Wednesday welcomed President Barack Obama 's new nuclear posture. "This is a first step toward a nuclear-free world," said Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama . "Deterrence is important, but so is reducing nuclear arsenals. We highly regard his stance." Katsuya Okada , Japan's foreign minister , noted that Japan was concerned about how the policy will affect its security. "The United States had assured its allies that this position will not endanger them," he said. "This is important." In the ROK, the foreign and defense ministries issued a joint statement saying the new U.S. stance would strengthen Washington's commitment to its allies and pressure the DPRK to give up its nuclear weapons development . "The government welcomes and supports" Obama's announcement, they said.

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16. Japan-US Security Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN EYES DEEPER ALLIANCE WITH U.S., NUKE DISARMAMENT: PAPER", 2010/04/06) reported that Japan will seek to further deepen its security alliance with the United States this year, which marks the 50th anniversary of the current bilateral security pact, and actively promote a worldwide movement for the abolition of nuclear weapons, the Foreign Ministry said Tuesday in its annual report on Japanese diplomacy. The Diplomatic Blue Book 2010 said it is "an important task" to strengthen the Japan-U.S. security arrangement when there remain "uncertain elements surrounding Japan," saying the alliance has "effectively served as a basic framework to secure the stability and development of the Asia-Pacific region in the postwar period."

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17. Japan-US Secret Nuclear Pact

Kyodo News ("PANEL SET UP OVER POSSIBLE SCRAPPING OF SECRET-PACT DOCUMENTS", 2010/04/06) reported that the Japanese Foreign Ministry said Tuesday that it has launched a panel to look into the issue of whether key documents related to the so-called Japan -U.S. secret pact on the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan have been discarded. The ministry also decided to establish, possibly in April, a new ordinance to enable diplomatic documents that have remained undisclosed for 30 years or more to be released to the public in principle, according to ministry sources.

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18. USFJ Base Relocation

Stars and Stripes ("OKINAWA MAYORS UNANIMOUSLY PASS ANTI-FUTENMA RESOLUTION ", 2010/04/06) reported that Okinawa mayors met Monday and unanimously passed a resolution calling for the immediate closure of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma and moving the air units outside Japan. "It is significant that all 11 mayors united to express the voice of the people of Okinawa," Naha Mayor Takeshi Onaga said. The mayors plan to deliver their resolution to Tokyo sometime before an anti-base rally April 25 on Okinawa, he said. In March, the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly unanimously passed a similar resolution.

Kyodo News ("OKINAWA PEOPLE URGE TOKYO NOT TO CONSTRUCT ISLAND FOR FUTEMMA", 2010/04/06) reported that people from Uruma, a city in eastern Okinawa prefecture that has been floated as a possible site for the transfer of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station, demanded Tuesday that Tokyo drop the area from its reported plan for the relocation. If an artificial island is constructed off the city's coast as reported by the media, seaweed growers and fishermen in the area will "lose a place to live," Yoshiyasu Iha, head of a group of Uruma residents opposed to the construction, said in a meeting held in a Diet members' building in Tokyo.

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19. US on PRC Nuclear Program

Reuters ("U.S. SAYS CHINA NUCLEAR PROGRAMS LACK TRANSPARENCY", 2010/04/06) reported that lack of transparency surrounding the PRC's nuclear programs raises questions about its strategic intentions, the United States said on Tuesday. "China's nuclear arsenal remains much smaller than the arsenals of Russia and the United States," the administration said in a nuclear policy document published on Tuesday. "But the lack of transparency surrounding its nuclear programs -- their pace and scope, as well as the strategy and doctrine that guides them -- raises questions about China's future strategic intentions." "The United States and China's Asian neighbors remain concerned about the pace and scope of China's current military modernization efforts, including its quantitative and qualitative modernization of its nuclear capabilities," it said.

Kyodo ("CHINA SAYS THERE SHOULD BE 'NO SUSPICIONS' OF ITS NUCLEAR STRATEGY", Beijing, 2010/04/07) reported that the PRC's nuclear strategy has remained unchanged over the past five decades and there should not be any suspicions about it, Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai said

Wednesday. "Regarding China's nuclear strategy, China's strategic significance has all along been very important," Cui said. "We have since the 1960s repeatedly stressed our position on this issue, it has not changed." "If we are to objectively and fairly look at this, there should not be any suspicions," he added.

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20. Sino-India Relations

Reuters ("CHINA-BASED CYBER-SPIES TARGETED INDIA: RESEARCHERS", 2010/04/06) reported that cyber-espionage group based in southwest PRC stole documents from the Indian Defense Ministry and emails from the Dalai Lama's office, a group of Canadian researchers said in a report released Tuesday. The cyber-spies used popular online services, including Twitter, Google's Google Groups and Yahoo mail, to access infected computers, ultimately directing them to communicate with command and control servers in the PRC, according to the report, "Shadows in the Cloud." "We have no evidence in this report of the involvement of the People's Republic of China (PRC) or any other government in the Shadow network," wrote the authors, who are researchers based at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs.

Associated Press ("INDIAN FM CALLS FOR CLOSER TIES WITH CHINA", 2010/04/06) reported that the PRC and India need to stop viewing each other as competitors and start working together to influence global issues such as climate change and trade, Indian Foreign Minister S. M. Krishna said Tuesday. Krishna said the neighboring countries can leverage one another's strengths to influence global issues through participation in world and regional groups such as the rich countries' G-20 and BRIC, which groups Brazil, Russia, India and the PRC.

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21. Sino-US Trade Relations

Reuters ("YUAN REVALUATION "CHINA'S CHOICE": GEITHNER", 2010/04/06) reported that U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said he was confident that the PRC would see that it is in its own interest to make the yuan more flexible. Geithner, who said global economic recovery "looks quite strong now," also said on Tuesday it was "China's choice" whether or not it revalues the yuan. "I am confident that China will decide it's in their interest to resume the move to a more flexible exchange rate that they began some years ago and suspended in the midst of the crisis," he told India's NDTV.

Agence France Presse ("CHINA DEFENDS YUAN POLICY", 2010/04/06) reported that the PRC on Tuesday reiterated that its exchange rate policy was not to blame for a ballooning trade imbalance with the United States, and warned Washington against labeling it a currency manipulator. "The RMB (yuan) exchange rate is not the reason for the trade deficit between China and the United States and the appreciation of the RMB is not the way to address the trade imbalance," foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said. "China has never used this so-called currency manipulation in an effort to benefit from international trade -- we hope the US side can view this question in an objective way," she said.

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22. PRC Tibet Issue

Agence France Presse ("SHORT-TERM SOLUTION ON TIBET UNLIKELY, SAYS DALAI LAMA",) reported that the Dalai Lama praised Tuesday PRC citizens' increasing criticism of Beijing's policy on Tibet , but saw little chance for a short-term solution on the region. "Things are hopeful in the long run, very hopeful, but in the short term, (it is) very difficult," the Tibetan spiritual leader said when asked by journalists about a possible solution that would allow him to return to Tibet. "Among the Chinese people , many intellectuals, many professors, many educated young people are really showing a critical view about their government's policy towards Tibet," the Nobel peace prize laureate added.

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23. Cross-Strait Relations

Kyodo News ("SHANGHAI TO ALLOW TRADE IN TAIWANESE CURRENCY", 2010/04/06) reported that the city of Shanghai will permit trading of Taiwan's currency starting May, Shanghai Mayor Han Zheng said in Taipei on Tuesday. During groundbreaking talks between the governments of Taipei and Shanghai, Han and Taipei Mayor Hau Lung-bin signed four memorandums of understanding on city-to-city relations comprising culture, tourism, the environment and high-tech industries. But it was the currency exchange announcement that broke both symbolic and practical ground in Taiwan - PRC financial relations. The PRC continues to impose widespread restrictions on buying and selling the New Taiwan dollar, with formal trade of the currency restricted to Fujian Province, which contains a large number of Taiwanese businesses.

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II. PRC Report

24. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net ("SHORT-LIVED BUILDINGS CREATE HUGE WASTE", 2010/04/06) reported that the life span of the average residential building in China, the largest cement consumer in the world, is only 25-30 years and is causing tremendous waste, said Qiu Baoxing, vice-minister of housing and urban-rural development at a recent international forum on green and energy-efficient building. This means the average life span of China's residential buildings is shorter than their intended life span of 50 years at the blueprint stage.

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25. PRC Civil Society

People's Daily Online ("FUNDRAISER RAISES 270M YUAN FOR THIRSTY SW CHINA", 2010/04/06) reported that a star-studded television fundraiser raised money and goods totaling more than 270 million yuan on Saturday evening for people in the drought-hit regions in southwestern China. The

drought has left 19.4 million people with water shortages and affected 97.2 million mu of farmland in provinces of Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan as well as Guangxi.

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org