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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("US URGES INDIA, ISRAEL, PAKISTAN, NORTH KOREA TO JOIN NPT", United Nations, 2009/05/05) reported that a top U.S. arms control negotiator at the U.N. on Tuesday urged presumed atomic powers India, Israel, Pakistan and DPRK to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. "Universal adherence to the NPT itself, including by India, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea...remains a fundamental objective of the United States," said Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller.

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2. DPRK-US Relations

The Associated Press ("NKOREA CRITICIZES US FOR DEFENSE SPENDING", 2009/05/06) reported that the DPRK criticized the US for seeking to increase its military spending, vowing to bolster its own defense capabilities to cope with what it calls increasing American threats. Early last month, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates proposed a $534 billion defense budget for 2010, which would be an increase over the $513 billion for 2009. The DPRK's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper said in a commentary that the proposed budget would intensify an international arms race and parts of the money would be spent to "militarily threaten and invade" the DPRK. It's essential for the DPRK to "continue to strengthen its self-defense power to cope with increasing US military threats," said the commentary.

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3. DPRK Leadership

KBS News ("JIJI: FEUD OVER LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION INTENSIFYING IN NK", 2009/05/05) reported that Japan's Jiji Press says an internal feud is intensifying in the DPRK over who should succeed leader Kim Jong-il. Quoting diplomatic sources, the report says Kim's brother-in-law, Jang Song-thaek, is pushing for Kim's eldest son, Jong-nam, to succeed his father while top military officials are seeking to have Kim's second or third son take over the top leader's place. According to the report that came out on Monday, such internal conflict is likely to have led to the DPRK's recent rocket launch and Pyongyang's hard-line stances on inter-Korean and international affairs.

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4. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press ("NO QUICK SOLUTION SEEN ON N. KOREA", 2009/05/05) reported that t he five nations negotiating to eliminate the DPRK's nuclear program are prepared to "very patiently and consistently" pursue the resumption of talks with the nation, Russia's UN envoy said. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was the first high-level foreign official to visit North Korea after Pyongyang and Russia's UN ambassador, Vitaly Churkin, said Lavrov "was certainly bringing a message there in favor of resumption of six-party talks." "I can say that it is the position of at least five of the six participants in the six-party talks that it's crucially important to return to the six-party talks," Churkin told a news conference Monday.

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5. ROK on PRC-DPRK Relations

JoongAng Ilbo ("KIM: CHINA CAN HELP JUMP-START TALKS WITH NORTH", 2009/05/05) reported that f ormer ROK President Kim Dae-jung said at a university lecture that the PRC should play the role of mediator between the DPRK and the United States to resolve the stalemate in the six-party nuclear disarmament talks. Speaking to students and faculty at Peking University, Kim said the ROK has "high expectations" for the PRC, which chairs the talks. "China should take a leading role in persuading North Korea and the United States to resolve the nuclear problems in accordance with existing agreements and also in bringing peace to the Korean Peninsula," Kim said.

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6. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News (Kim Hyun, "N. KOREA COMPLAINS AS SOUTH DELAYS REPLY OVER JOINT PARK: THINK TANK CHIEF", Seoul, 2009/05/05) reported that the DPRK has urged the ROK to quickly respond to its proposal to open negotiations over a joint industrial park, saying otherwise the situation will become "complicated," the head of a state-run think tank said. Pyongyang sent a three-page document to Seoul on Monday, complaining that Seoul is procrastinating in responding to its April 21 proposal, said Nam Sung-wook, director of the Institute for National Security Strategy, an arm of the National Intelligence Service. "The tone of the document was, 'All issues will get complicated if the South doesn't reply quickly,'" Nam said in a local forum on inter-Korean relations

in Seoul.

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7. Inter-Korean Relations

Agence France-Presse ("N KOREAN ESCAPEES TRIED TO BLACKMAIL SKOREA EMBASSY-OFFICIALS", Seoul, 2009/05/05) reported that two DPRK refugees who took refuge in the ROK embassy in Beijing attempted to blackmail the mission after stealing information, officials said. The pair absconded from the embassy with a USB computer memory device in December, according to ROK's foreign ministry. The refugees had demanded "a huge sum" for returning the memory device. The agency said the drive contained a list of refugees from the DPRK and other data. The embassy managed to locate them and quickly retrieve the information, Yonhap said.

Chosun Ilbo ("SEOUL IN A FIX OVER N.KOREA DETENTION", 2009/05/05) reported that a Hyundai Asan staffer at the joint Kaesong Industrial Complex has been held incommunicado for 37 days by the DPRK, an effective hostage to strained inter-Korean ties. Unification Minister Hyun In-taek has officially only said the detention "is intrinsically related to the operation of the Kaesong industrial park." But the government lacks any means of its own to pressure the North for further talks. A Unification Ministry official on Tuesday told the Yonhap news agency discussions "are ongoing.

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8. Japan on DPRK-US Relations

Kyodo News (Takehiko Kajita , "ABDUCTEE KIN HOPE OBAMA TAKES HARD LINE ON NORTH", Washington , 2009/05/05) reported that relatives of Japanese abducted by the DPRK w ere not surprised that US officials were reluctant to immediately assume a tougher stance against Pyongyang. They had anticipated that the administration of President Barack Obama, a Democrat, would not be as aggressive about the abduction issue as his Republican predecessor, George W. Bush, a ppeared to be. Tsutomu Nishioka, acting chairman of the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea, or NARKN, said the Obama administration's DPRK policy is a continuation of the soft stance seen during Bush's last two years in office.

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9. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("NORTH KOREANS SUBJECT TO HARSHER MARKET CONTROLS", 2009/05/05) reported that Good Friends, a non-profit organization working for human rights in the DPRK, reported recently that DPRK residents are becoming increasingly discontent due to the government’s strengthening of restrictions on markets. Party propaganda officials were dispatched to markets in broadcasting trucks in order to announce the new measure, blaring that the selling of goods on the list of banned items would be considered “anti-socialist” activity, and would be punished accordingly. Other sources report that the ban has resulted in an increase of door-to-door sales, and that those in the market are still willing to take individual orders for goods on the banned

list, and then meet outside of the market to complete the deal.

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10. DPRK on Swine Flu

Korea Herald ("N. KOREA ON HIGH ALERT TO DETER INFLUX OF NEW FLU", 2009/05/05) reported that the DPRK said there are no cases of influenza A in the country, but it is on "high alert" to prevent the inflow of the highly infectious virus spreading across the world. The DPRK's state media have been quick to report the global epidemic since it was first reported in Mexico late last month. The official Korean Central News Agency said the country is "intensifying preventive actions against swine flu on high alert" and carried an interview with an official of the State Emergency Anti-epidemic Commission, an organization established in 2008 to cope with bird flu.

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11. ROK on Swine Flu

Yonhap ("S. KOREA CONFIRMS 3RD CASE OF INFLUENZA A", Seoul, 2009/05/07) reported that the Korea Center for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) confirmed the country's third case of Influenza A Thursday about a week after the first confirmed infection was identified. The latest flu patient, reportedly on the same plane as the first patient, will be discharged from the hospital Thursday since she is no longer showing symptoms of the illness. She has been quarantined and treated with anti-viral drugs at a state-designated hospital since Sunday, the KCDC said.

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12. ROK Military

JoongAng Ilbo ("MINISTRY REDUCES DEFENSE BUDGET, DELAYS TROOP CUTS", 2009/05/05) reported that t he Ministry of National Defense in Seoul has adjusted plans for an overhaul of national defense, citing the worsening economy and changing security environment, the JoongAng Ilbo has learned. Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee reported changes to the Defense Reform 2020 project at a meeting of the National Assembly's National Defense Committee on April 30. Lee has also made changes to plans to reduce manpower, sources claim. The ministry was to cut the number of soldiers from the current level of 680,000 to 500,000 by 2020, but the target has been pushed up to 517,000, sources said.

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13. ROK Anti-Piracy Operations

Yonhap News (Sam Kim, "S. KOREA RESCUES OIL TANKER IN PIRATE-INFESTED SOMALI WATERS", Seoul, 2009/05/05) reported that the ROK said its naval unit rescued a Panama-registered oil tanker from being hijacked in Somali waters on Wednesday in its latest operation under a U.S.-led anti-piracy campaign. The incident took place at 11:50 a.m. (Somali time) about 100 km south of the Yemeni port city of Mukallah, Col. Lee Hyoung-kook, a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS)

official, said in Seoul. After a distress call was received from the 2,000-ton Nepheli that was traveling westward, the ROK destroyer deployed a helicopter, which arrived at the scene in 15 minutes. Lee said the helicopter performed maneuvers to signal a warning, also threatening to fire. "The pirate boats then started scattering about, eventually turning away from the tanker," he said.

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14. Japan on SDF Role

Yomiuri Shimbun (Shozo Nakayama, "DROP LEGAL BARRIER TO GLOBAL ROLE FOR SDF", 2009/05/05) reported that the activities of the Self-Defense Forces have again been called into question in light of the war-renouncing Article 9 of the Constitution. Diet debate continues on an antipiracy bill that would call for expanding the scope of the MSDF's use of weapons. During a House of Representatives session, Seiken Akamine of the Japanese Communist Party criticized the bill, saying: "The bill would open up the way for the SDF to exercise force overseas, thereby bringing about a possibility of the SDF killing or injuring people for the first time since the end of the war." The biggest opposition party, the Democratic Party of Japan, is not calling for revising provisions on the use of arms during negotiations with the ruling coalition parties on amendment of the bill.

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15. Japan Demographics

The Asahi Shimbun ("ONLY 13.4 PERCENT OF POPULATION 14 OR UNDER", 2009/05/05) reported that children 14 years or younger now account for a record-low 13.4 percent of the Japanese population, the lowest among countries with 30 million people or more, the internal affairs ministry said. There were an estimated 17.14 million such children as of April 1, down 110,000 from a year earlier, marking the 28th consecutive year of decline.

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16. PRC on US-PRC Maritime Incident

Reuters (Ben Blanchard, "CHINA SAYS "CONCERNED" BY U.S. NAVAL INCIDENT", Beijing, 2009/05/05) reported that the PRC said on Wednesday it was "concerned" after a standoff in the Yellow Sea between a U.S. Navy surveillance ship and two PRC fishing vessels , accusing the U.S. vessel of contravening international laws. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxu said in a statement the ship was operating in the PRC's exclusive economic zone without permission and had violated PRC and international rules and laws. "We express our concern about this and demand the U.S. side take effective measures to ensure a similar incident does not happen again," Ma said in a brief statement posted on the ministry's website.

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17. Sino-Indian Relations

Times of India ("CHINA INROADS INTO NEPAL ARMY GIVES INDIA THE JITTERS", 2009/05/05)

reported that much more than the recruitment of Nepalese in its Gorkha Rifles, the Indian Army is actually worried about the deft PRC strategic inroads into Nepal and the possible 'Maoisation' of the Himalayan country's small but relatively professional army. Though the official line is that the developments in Nepal are purely its ''internal matter'', as enunciated by foreign minister Pranab Mukherjee, India obviously does not want its ''interests" to be ''subsumed" by PRC ones in Kathmandu .

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18. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France Press ("TAIWAN EXPECTS REVENUE FROM CHINA TOURISM TO EXCEED NT$60 BILLION/YEAR", Taipei, 2009/05/05) reported that increases in direct flights to and from the PRC will boost Taiwan's revenue from Chinese tourists to more than NT$60 billion (US$1.81 billion) a year, the Mainland Affairs Council said in a report presented to lawmakers Wednesday. The Mainland Affairs Council, the island's top PRC-policy maker, also reiterated Taiwan plans to open up its manufacturing, services and real-estate sectors, as well as 12 government-led infrastructure projects, to mainland investment. He didn't give any details, however.

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19. PRC Climate Change

Agence France-Presse ("TIBET THREATENED BY GLOBAL WARMING: STATE MEDIA", Beijing, 2009/05/05) reported that the PRC 's top weather official warned that Tibet was threatened by global warming , which could cause floods and droughts endangering millions in the nation's west, state media reported. "The impact of global warming has accelerated glacial shrinkage, and the melting glaciers have swollen Tibet's lakes," Zheng Guoguang, head of the China Meteorological Bureau, was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua news agency. "If the warming continues, millions of people in western China will face floods in the short term and drought in the long run."

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20. PRC Energy Supply

Xinhua News ("CNOOC IN 30 BLN YUAN COAL-TO-GAS VENTURE ", Beijing, 2009/05/05) reported that the PRC's top offshore oil and gas producer is in cooperation with a coal mine group to invest 30 billion yuan (about 4.4 billion U.S. dollars) in a coal-to-gas project in Shanxi province of central PRC, Wednesday's China Daily reported. The project would also include the construction of supporting projects including two coal mines, each with an annual output of 10 million tonnes, relevant coal washing mills and coal gangue-fired power plants, said CNOOC.

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21. PRC Earthquake

China Daily (Song Wei, "BAYER'S ONGOING CARE TO SICHUAN QUAKE ZONE", 2009/05/05)

reported that a German-based chemical and pharmaceutical giant best known for inventing aspirin has shown the world that they do more than just help cure headaches. They also help reconstruct quake-stricken areas on a long-term basis. Bayer has been steadfastly helping with relief efforts in Sichuan after the powerful earthquake struck the province in May 2008. The third largest pharmaceutical company in the world is now trying to create something that "sustainably helps these societies to be successful and to improve their living standard", Michael Koenig, president of Bayer Greater China Group, said.

BBC News ("CHINA QUAKE PARENTS 'HARASSED'", 2009/05/05) reported that parents who lost their children in the PRC's earthquake fear they will not be allowed to properly commemorate the disaster's first anniversary. Many parents want to return to the site of the schools in Sichuan that killed their children when they collapsed. But the authorities have previously stopped them going to the schools on sensitive occasions, and are said to be monitoring the parents ahead of 12 May. Across Dujiangyan, parents at another collapsed school detailed some of the methods used by the authorities to prevent them from staging public displays of grief. These includes stopping them from leaving their homes and taking them away from the city during sensitive times.

Associated Press (Audra Ang, "REPORT: 5,335 STUDENTS DEAD OR MISSING IN CHINA QUAKE", Beijing, 2009/05/07) reported that said Thursday that 5,335 students died or remain missing in last year's Sichuan earthquake. The overall death toll was unchanged at 68,712 and almost 18,000 people are still listed as missing, Huang Mingquan, head of Sichuan civil affairs department, said at a news conference in the provincial capital of Chengdu .

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II. PRC Report

22. PRC Environment

China Quality News Net (Wang Yali, "MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PLANS ACTIVITIES FOR WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY", 2009/05/05) reported that the theme of World Environment Day 2009 is “Your planet needs you, join together to address climate change”. To echo the theme, combined with the central task of China's environmental protection work and focus, the Ministry of Environmental Protection determines to carry out a series of activities such as holding commemorating conference, high-level forum and so on, to guide the public concern of pollution prevention and energy-saving.

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23. PRC Civil Society

Xinhua Net (Liu Weiwei, "CHARITY CAN HAVE ITS TITLE SPONSORSHIP", 2009/05/05) reported that according to Nanjing Charity Federation, since the starting of individual title charity fund on March, nearly a hundred citizens have adopted this kind of donation. The seed donation fund is 10,000 RMB at the minimum, and the donor can keep this seed fund and donates only the annual

interest of this seed fund, then the donor can have a fund titled by his own name. It is understood that many parents name after their children, in order to cultivate the children's charitable heart.

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