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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA MAY SEE NO U.S. NUCLEAR THREAT: ADVISER", Washington, 2009/01/08) reported that the DPRK may have begun developing nuclear arms after deciding the US was unlikely to use nuclear weapons to eliminate its development program, a senior Pentagon adviser said. "It probably is today's situation that they have developed the confidence -- perhaps misplaced confidence -- that the United States, if it were to go after their nuclear capability, likely would do so with conventional forces," said former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger. "But as the decades have gone on, and as we have not reacted in the way they might have anticipated to their development of nuclear capabilities, they might have been encouraged to believe that they were reasonably safe from a nuclear response," he said.

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2. Inter-Korean Relations

Agence France Press ("S KOREA GROUPS TO SEND LEAFLETS WITH N KOREAN BILLS", Seoul, 2009/01/08) reported that ROK activists said they would attach DPRK money to the anti-Pyongyang leaflets they float across the border next month. "I heard from my informants in the North that those carrying our leaflets or dollar bills have been jailed. So we will start sending leaflets stuffed with 5,000 North Korean won notes next month," he told AFP. A 5,000 won note is enough to buy 5 kg (11 pounds) of rice, he said, adding he would acquire DPRK bills through the PRC.

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3. Inter-Korean Cultural Exchange

JoongAng Ilbo ("POP CULTURE FROM SEOUL MAKES INROADS IN NORTH", 2009/01/08) reported that a growing number of people in the DPRK are embracing ROK pop culture through both a prospering black market and direct exposure in state-run media, according to sources and experts in Seoul. About three weeks ago, Kim Yong-chul, the DPRK lieutenant general in charge of senior-level military talks with the South, quoted a famous line from "Lee San," a popular ROK TV drama based on the Joseon Dynasty. Hwang Sang-min, a psychology professor at Yonsei University, said the proliferation of ROK pop culture can have a "far greater impact" than any of Seoul's political messages toward the DPRK. "The issue must be quite a sensitive one in the North, so it may be desirable for Seoul just to stand back and let it develop naturally," he said.

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4. ROK Military Readiness

Yonhap News (Sam Kim, "TOP BRASS SHARE VIEWS ON COMBAT READINESS AGAINST N. KOREA: COMMANDER", Gyeryongdae, 2009/01/08) reported that the ROK's top brass traded a barrage of views and suggestions during a high-profile gathering at a joint military command here, a commander said. "It is our clear judgment that aggression by North Korea remains a threat as always," Kwon Oh-sung, a lieutenant general who oversees policy planning at the Ministry of National Defense, said. "But it is something we need to prepare for internally and quietly," he told reporters, declining to elaborate on specific suggestions. Citing the report that calls for improved operational readiness against the DPRK and closer ties with the United States, minister Lee said "reshaping" armed units remains a key priority.

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5. PRC-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("CHINESE DIPLOMAT VISITS PYONGYANG TO SEEK CLOSER ALLIANCE", Beijing, 2009/01/09) reported that PRC Assistant Foreign Minister Hu Zhengyue, in charge of Asian affairs and disarmament, headed to the DPRK Friday ahead of the 60th anniversary commemoration of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries, an informed source said. He plans to discuss anniversary-related events and visits by higher-level officials later this year, the source added. "He will stay in Pyongyang until Jan. 11, leading a Chinese government delegation composed of about 10 officials," the source said.

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6. DPRK Education

Agence France Press ("NKOREA'S 1ST FOREIGN UNI DELAYED", 2009/01/07) reported that the DPRK's first foreign-funded university is finally expected to open next year the North-east Asia Foundation for Education and Culture (NAFEC) said Tuesday. NAFEC said it has now set April 2009

as the target date after delays caused by disputes over the DPRK's nuclear programme and by inter-Korean tensions. The original plan was to open the Pyongyang University of Science and Technology (PUST) as early as September 2007.

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7. DPRK-Taiwan Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN EX-LEADER ACCUSED OF EMBEZZLING FUNDS MEANT FOR NKOREA", Taipei, 2009/01/08) reported that a Taiwanese ruling party lawmaker accused ex-president Chen Shui-bian of embezzling diplomatic funds meant to go to the DPRK. The Apple Daily reported that prosecutors had begun investigating claims that Chen might have pocketed 300 million Taiwan dollars of financial aid in 2004 and 2005 that was set aside in exchange for the DPRK handling the island's nuclear wastes. However, Taiwan did not establish any form of contact with the DPRK nor send its nuclear waste to the state after the foreign ministry paid the money, the report said.

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8. ROK Textbook Issue

Yonhap News ("COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF HISTORY TEXTBOOK REVISION", Seoul, 2009/01/08) reported that a Seoul court rejected a request by the authors of a history textbook to prevent their publisher from distributing a revised version of their text, whose original the government says is "left-leaning." The Seoul Central District Court turned down the petition from the co-authors of the history textbook released by Kumsung Publishing Co., ruling that the company's discretionary revision does not violate the terms of contract.

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9. ROK Energy Security

Korea Times (Kim Sue-young, "KOREA NEEDS ENERGY SAVING", Seoul, 2009/01/09) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak stressed the need to save energy Friday in a bid to overcome the current economic downturn. Lee also said the nation should map out plans to cut carbon dioxide emission by the year-end, claiming the nation is facing a serious problem regarding the energy issue. "Even when government buildings are constructed, there are neither blueprints nor self-regulations to save energy," Lee said. He continued, "Japan has already put (in place) regulations regarding energy. By lowering a ceiling, it saves energy for air-conditioning and heating but there is no such public awareness of energy saving in Korea."

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10. US-ROK Relations

The New York Times ("EX-PROSTITUTES SAY SOUTH KOREA AND U.S. ENABLED SEX TRADE NEAR BASES", Seoul, 2009/01/08) reported that a group of former prostitutes in the ROK have

accused some of their country's former leaders of encouraging them to have sex with American soldiers. They also accuse past ROK governments, and the US military, of taking a direct hand in the sex trade from the 1960s through the 1980s, working together to build a testing and treatment system to ensure that prostitutes were disease-free for American troops. "Our government was one big pimp for the U.S. military," one of the women, Kim Ae-ran, 58, said in a recent interview.

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11. ROK-PRC Economic Relations

Korea Times (Kim Hyun-cheol, "SSANGYONG MOTOR TO TEST KOREA-CHINA TIES", Seoul, 2009/01/09) reported that Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC), the major shareholder of the the ROK's smallest carmaker, Ssangyong Motors announced Friday that it filed an application with the Seoul Central District Court to protect Ssangyong from creditors and normalize its operations after a board meeting in Shanghai. A researcher of a state-funded institute predicted ROK-PRC ties may go sour unless the Korean government bails out Ssangyong as SAIC is de facto owned by the PRC government.

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12. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPAN DENIES EXCLUDING DOKDO IN NEWLY FOUND PAPERS", 2009/01/08) reported that Japan has denied that recently uncovered documents it apparently sought to suppress exclude Dokdo from Japanese territory and therefore invalidate its claims to the Korean islets. Tokyo on Wednesday claimed the 1951 legislation only excludes Dokdo from areas under Japanese administration. Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman Akamatsu Takeshi said, "The two 1951 documents were revision of the relevant legislation of 1949 according to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers Instruction Notes (SCAPIN) No. 677 of the allied forces. The sphere of administrative authority and territorial space do not always match."

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13. US-Japan Relations

The Asahi Shimbun (Yoichi Kato, "JOSEPH NYE TO BE NEXT U.S. ENVOY TO JAPAN", 2009/01/08) reported that Joseph S. Nye, a Harvard professor who has authored several influential reports on Japan-US relations, is tipped to be the next ambassador to Japan, sources said. Sources said Nye, 71, has already been offered the ambassador's post and that he was leaning toward accepting it. Nye is known for proposing the use of "smart power" in diplomacy, an extension of his "soft power" concept that emphasizes a nation's values and culture as important diplomatic tools. Nye's emphasis on soft power could mean that efforts would be made for a broader range of bilateral ties that is not overly dependent on the security relationship.

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14. Japan Politics

Kyodo News ("WATANABE TO MAKE FINAL DECISION ON LEAVING LDP", 2009/01/08) reported that former administrative reform minister Yoshimi Watanabe suggested he will make a decision soon on whether to leave the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Speaking to reporters, Watanabe expressed his intention to oppose a government-proposed secondary supplementary budget for this fiscal year, while a government source said Watanabe will be expelled from the LDP if he opposes it.

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15. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

The Asahi Shimbun ("ANTI-PIRACY BILL COULD EASE RESTRICTIONS ON SDF WEAPONS USE", 2009/01/09) reported that the government is considering relaxing constraints on the use of weapons by the Self-Defense Forces so they can protect Japanese and foreign vessels from pirates abroad. If passed, the government's bill, an outline of which was shown to ruling coalition lawmakers, would enable SDF personnel for the first time to use their weapons to crack down on pirates.

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16. Sino-US Economic Relations

The New York Times (Keith Bradsher, "CHINA LOSING TASTE FOR DEBT FROM U.S", Hong Kong, 2009/01/07) reported that the PRC has bought more than \$1 trillion of American debt, but as the global downturn has intensified, Beijing is starting to keep more of its money at home, a move that could have painful effects for American borrowers. In the last five years, the PRC has spent as much as one-seventh of its entire economic output buying foreign debt, mostly American. But now Beijing is seeking to pay for its own \$600 billion stimulus — just as tax revenue is falling sharply as the PRC economy slows.

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17. Sino-US Military Relations

Xinhua News ("CHINA CALLS FOR US TO MEND MILITARY TIES", Beijing, 2009/01/08) reported that the PRC is urging the US to take actions to repair military ties seriously damaged by a US arms sale to Taiwan. "China-US military ties lag far behind overall relations. The US should take concrete measures to repair them," Ma Xiaotian, deputy chief of general staff of the PRC People's Liberation Army, told the visiting US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte. "I think it will take a long time to restore military relations," Ma said.

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18. PRC Anti-Piracy Operations

China Daily (Bao Daozu, "NAVY ESCORTS 4 VESSELS OFF SOMALIA ON DAY ONE", 2009/01/08) reported that the PRC navy joined its counterparts from other countries to fight Somali pirates and successfully escorted the first fleet of ships through the Gulf of Aden. Two navy destroyers and a large supply vessel escorted four PRC merchant ships, one of which was from the Hong Kong special

administrative region, off the coast of Somalia. Liu Jianzhong, political commissar of the Haikou, told China Daily that the navy fleet would fulfill its responsibility of safeguarding the PRC's civilian vessels.

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19. PRC Space Program

Xinhua News ("CHINA'S 1ST LUNAR PROBE TO IMPACT MOON AT PROPER TIME", 2009/01/08) reported that Chang'e-1, the PRC's first lunar probe, will impact the moon at a proper time, said an unidentified official with the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense. But the official did not reveal any details about the impact timing. According to the commission, the PRC would launch its second lunar probe, Chang'e-2, in 2010 or 2011.

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20. PRC Energy Supply

China Daily ("CHINA TO DOUBLE NATURAL GAS OUTPUT BY 2015", 2009/01/08) reported that the country aims to more than double its annual natural gas output to 160 billion cu m by 2015, and produce about 6 billion tons of oil in the next 30 years, or 200 million tons a year. The PRC wants to increase its annual production of coal, too, to more than 3.3 billion tons, said Hu Cunzhi, chief planner of the Ministry of Land and Resources, at a press conference. That represents an increase of about 30 percent and 7 percent for coal and oil from 2007.

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21. PRC Press Freedoms

Reuters ("CHINA OFFICIALS APOLOGIZE FOR ATTACK ON JOURNALISTS", Beijing, 2009/01/09) reported that five local officials in Henan province have sent a handwritten letter and 150 euros in compensation to Tom van de Weghe, a Belgian journalist who was beaten while trying to report on AIDS . Van de Weghe said he was forced from a car at night and hit over the head by people who stole tapes, cell phones and money in the November assault. The officials had initially denied the attack happened.

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II. PRC Report

22. PRC Internet Use

Zhengzhou Evening News ("INTERNET SOCIETY OF CHINA DETERMINES SEPTEMBER 14 AS THE FESTIVAL OF CHINESE NETIZENS", 2009/01/08) reported that Internet Society of the PRC announced yesterday morning at the first Chinese Netizens' Cultural Festival that September 14 is

set to be Chinese Netizens' Day. It is understood that this day is voted by near 500,000 netizens, for on September 14, 1987, the first email was sent in the PRC. Many netizens choose this historic day as the festival of the PRC's 290 millions netizens.

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23. PRC Merchant Associations

Xinkuai News (Wang Huaping, "ASSOCIATION FOR WENZHOU MERCHANTS IN DONGGUAN PROMISES NOT TO REDUCE STAFF AND WITHDRAWAL FUND", 2009/01/08) reported that according to Association for Wenzhou Merchants in Dongguan, its 300 member enterprises promise not to reduce staff and withdrawal fund in the new year, to better support the economic development of Dongguan city, even Guangdong province. The Association registered in Dongguan Municipal Management Bureau of Civil Organizations on December 22, 2008, and is the only approved legal organization of Wenzhou merchants in Dongguan city. So far, not a single member enterprise closes or reduces staff at a large scale.

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24. PRC Civil Society

Xinhua Daily (Jiang Yanyu, "JIANGSU PROVINCIAL RED CROSS SOCIETY LAUNCHES LOVE MOVEMENT", 2009/01/08) reported that on January 6, Jiangsu Provincial Red Cross Society launched a "Sending Love Movement", giving rice, edible oil, cotton dresses, quilts and other goods worth of 6.2 million yuan to the hands of needy people. President of the Society Wu Ruilin awarded medals and certificates to those enterprises that supported the love movement. He also hoped more people of insight can positively participate in Red Cross activities.

Shenzhen Special Zone News (Zheng Xiangpeng, Chen Jinhui, "SHENZHEN TO INCREASE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT", 2009/01/08) reported that Shenzhen city is to issue three documents for cultivating social organizations this year, and also increase the financial input to social organizations participating in social service, according to Ma Hong, vice director of Shenzhen Management Bureau of Civil Organizations. The government will also promote the construction of social organizations, said Ma.

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25. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

Sohu.com ("WWF APPEALS FOR A LOW CARBON SPRING FESTIVAL", 2009/01/07) reported that as the PRC traditional Spring Festival is coming, World Wild Fund for Nature appeals to the public for having a low carbon and green Spring Festival. Spring Festival is a happy family time, but also a comparatively high energy consumption period. In the holiday, if people can decrease brightness of TV, not forget to unplug the power socket, reuse paper, glass, and plastic, refuse disposable tableware, choose public transport, and so on, energy can be saved a lot.

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26. PRC Economy

Liaoning Employment network ("LIAONING LABOR UNION FINDS WORK FOR 1.07 MILLION PEOPLE IN FIVE YEARS", 2009/01/08) reported that on the Liaoning provincial Labor Union's Commendatory Meeting of Employment Promotion Work held recently, it was reported that a total of 1.07 million people have been helped by Labor Union for finding new jobs. With the deepening of reform, the reemployment issue of the 1.78 million laid-off state-owned workers is more and more prominent. Liaoning provincial Labor Union has contributed a lot on this issue, and safeguarded the interests of workers.

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