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I. United States

1. Japan-DPRK Sunken Mystery Ship

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN FINDS BODIES IN SUNKEN BOAT," Tokyo, 03/31/02) reported that an underwater probe located the corpses of crew members inside a suspected DPRK spy ship that sank after a gunfight with Japan's Coast Guard, officials said Monday. Last month's five-day search with an underwater camera found "several bodies," said Coast Guard spokesperson Yutaka Oshita. Oshita refused to provide other details. The investigation was conducted from February 25 to March 1. Japan has retrieved 500 pieces of flotsam from the area where the vessel sank after exchanging fire with Japanese Coast Guard vessels on December 22. Japanese government officials have said they want to raise the vessel in order to identify the boat's nationality. Japan also has said that the PRC will be consulted before any attempt is made to lift the hulk from the East China Sea. Only two bodies were recovered after the incident, although all 15 people on board are believed to have died.

2. ROK-DPRK-US Relations

Reuters ("S.KOREA SEES ENVOY PAVING WAY FOR NORTH-U.S. TALKS," Seoul, 04/01/02) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said on Monday he expects special envoy Lim Dong-won's three-day trip to the DPRK this week will pave the way for dialogue between the DPRK and the US. Kim's adviser on security and foreign affairs, Lim, will lead a small delegation to Pyongyang on Wednesday with a personal message from Kim to DPRK leader Kim Jong-il in the first public contact between the two Koreas since November. On Saturday the ROK president heard from visiting Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri that Kim Jong-il had responded positively to calls for dialogue in a message she carried to the DPRK last week on the ROK's behalf.

3. DPRK Canberra Embassy

Reuters ("PYONGYANG TO OPEN EMBASSY IN CANBERRA," Canberra, 03/31/02) reported that the DPRK will open an embassy in the Australian capital of Canberra within weeks, a government spokesperson said Monday. Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and DPRK Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun agreed last year to open embassies in one another's capitals. "The development of these links will facilitate our dialogue on the critical security and humanitarian issues which continue to afflict the Korean Peninsula," they said in a joint statement last June. "We expect it to open in April or May," the spokesperson also stated. Australia hopes to have an embassy open in Pyongyang by the middle of 2003.

4. Indonesia's View of DPRK-ROK Relations

The Associated Press (Yoo Jae-suk, "REPORT: MEGAWATI URGED KIM JONG IL TO VISIT SOUTH KOREA," Seoul, 03/31/02) reported that Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri urged DPRK leader Kim Jong-il to visit Seoul for a second inter- Korean summit, as he had promised at a historic summit with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung in 2000. Megawati did not say how the DPRK leader responded to her suggestion. She also reiterated that Kim Jong Il had expressed hope for an early resumption of talks with the ROK, but she did not allude to whether he commented on his country's troubled relations with the US.

5. Japan-DPRK Kidnapping Allegations

Reuters ("KOIZUMI: JAPAN TO PRESS NORTH KOREA OVER ALLEGED KIDNAPPINGS," Tokyo, 03/30/02) reported that Japan Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Saturday he will keep up pressure on the DPRK regarding the issue of its alleged kidnapping of Japanese citizens. "We're working from various angles to get North Korea to understand the need for dialogue and negotiation," Koizumi said. "As we continue to apply the greatest effort possible to bring it to the negotiating table we will also raise the issue of the kidnappings." Despite its denials, the DPRK recently agreed to resume searching for any Japanese it says may have gone "missing."

Reuters ("N.KOREA SLAMS JAPAN'S STANCE ON KIDNAP CASES," Tokyo, 03/30/02) reported that the DPRK criticized on Saturday Japan's stance on the issue of Japanese nationals Tokyo believes were abducted in the 1970s and 1980s, a dispute that has hampered efforts to normalize ties. The DPRK's official Rodong Sinmun newspaper said the abductions were "invented" by Japan, adding that Tokyo was using the issue as a bargaining chip. "It is childish and maladroit of Japan to raise the 'kidnapping' issue as a 'bargaining chip'," Rodong Sinmun said. The criticism of Japan comes after the DPRK's Red Cross Society said on March 22 that it would resume the investigation into "those missing" although it denied Tokyo's long-standing charge that the DPRK was behind the

kidnapping of at least 11 Japanese citizens. The DPRK has repeatedly denied the kidnapping charges, but has agreed to investigate the case.

6. PRC Domestic Immigration

The Associated Press (Margaret Wong, "DEADLINE PASSES FOR CHINA MIGRANTS," Hong Kong, 04/01/02) reported that Hong Kong officials said Monday night they are searching the streets for migrants from mainland PRC who lack residency rights, promising to kick them out. "Our plan is to repatriate them in batches," Deputy Security Secretary Michael Wong told a news conference. "We don't see the need to remove them en masse." On Monday night, about 800 parents had gathered outside an Immigration Department office, demanding that their children be allowed to stay here. "This is a government without conscience," said Kao Chin- sheng, 51, who is lobbying authorities to let his 18-year-old daughter, Kao Lai- sha, remain with the family. Kao, his wife and three other daughters have residency rights. "I'm not asking for sympathy," Kao said, shaking with rage as he spoke to reporters. "Hong Kong is my home and my daughter has to stay here. They can arrest me if they want. I won't let her go."

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Intention

Joongang Ilbo (Chun Young-gi, "MEGAWATI SAYS NORTH IS READY FOR 'FRANK TALK,'" Seoul, 04/01/02) reported that Indonesia's President Megawati Sukarnoputri visited the Demilitarized Zone between DPRK and ROK Sunday after holding separate meetings with both DPRK and ROK leaders. President Megawati arrived in Seoul on Saturday after a three-day visit to DPRK. In her meeting with President Kim Dae-jung in Seoul on Saturday, Megawati said that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il on Friday had expressed his desire for "frank talks."

Lim Dong-won, the ROK's special presidential adviser for unification, diplomacy and national security, will travel to the DPRK as a special envoy Wednesday. During his three-day visit he will meet President Kim Jong-il and will discuss issues such as preventing the creation of tension on the Korean Peninsula and international concern over DPRK missile exports.

2. Japan-DPRK Relations

Joongnag Ilbo ("KOIZUMI TO PURSUE TIES TO PYEONGYANG," Seoul, 04/01/02) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Sunday that he would "persistently and repeatedly" try to establish diplomatic ties between his country and the DPRK. Koizumi said he would pursue his purpose through both official and unofficial channels. Koizumi added that the issue of the disappeared Japanese citizens suspected to have been abducted by DPRK agents would be dealt with separately, and that he would urge the DPRK to give its utmost cooperation.

3. Inter Korean Railway

The Korea Herald (Seo Hyun-jin, "RAILWAY CONNECTION ONE OF ENVOY'S PRIORITY," Seoul, 04/01/02) reported that as the restoration of the cross-border railway is believed to be a crucial step toward national reunification, ROK officials and experts expect presidential envoy Lim Dong-won will attempt to persuade the DPRK to implement its prior agreement on this issue. Reconnecting the 24-

km rail section across the 4-km-wide DMZ, severed shortly before the outbreak of the Korean War (1950-1953), is one of the five major inter-Korean projects the ROK has been promoting since the ROK-DPRK summit in 2000.

III. Japan

1. Japan-DPRK Relations

The Japan Times ("JAKARTA, SEOUL ASKED TO SPEAK WITH NORTH," 03/28/02) reported that Japan has asked Indonesia and the ROK to tell the DPRK that the issue of Japanese nationals allegedly abducted by DPRK agents must be resolved before Japan and the DPRK can normalize diplomatic ties, a senior official of Japan's Foreign Ministry said Wednesday. Japan made the requests because Indonesian president Megawati Sukarnoputri is scheduled to visit the reclusive country later this week, and the ROK is set to send a presidential envoy, Lim Dong Won, to the DPRK next week.

2. Japan-PRC Relations

The Japan Times ("NAKATANI TO VISIT CHINA IN APRIL," 03/28/02) reported that Japan's Defense Agency Director General Gen Nakatani told a visiting PRC military official Wednesday he is looking forward to visiting PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian in Beijing in late April. Nakatani would be a first defense agency chief to visit the PRC counterpart in Beijing since 1998. Nakatani and the PRC People's Liberation Army general agreed that the two countries should promote bilateral exchanges as Japan-PRC friendship is vital to the security environment of the region.

3. DPRK Economic Situations

The Japan Times ("N.KOREA KEEN ON CLOSER INTERNATIONAL TIES, TRADE," Seoul, 03/28/02) reported that the DPRK called for "readjusting the country's economic foundations" Wednesday, saying it will open the isolated, hunger-stricken country for joint ventures and cooperation with foreign countries and international organization. DPRK Premier Hong Song Nam said in the new policy statement the DPRK needs to improve trade and economic cooperation and widely conduct joint ventures and collaboration with different countries and international organizations.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of other NAPSNet resources.
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