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I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Missiles

Reuters ("US FEARS NUCLEAR-TIPPED N. KOREAN MISSILES," Washington DC, 07/02/03) reported that US intelligence officials believe that the DPRK is developing technology that could make nuclear warheads small enough to be placed atop the country's missiles, which could put Japan at risk, the New York Times reported on Tuesday. Officials who have received US Central Intelligence Agency reports told the newspaper that US satellites had identified an advanced nuclear testing site in an area of the DPRK called Youngdoktong. Equipment at the site is set up to test explosives that could set off compact nuclear explosions when detonated. The information has been shared with Japan, the ROK, and other allies in recent weeks, the newspaper said. Intelligence officials cited by the newspaper believed the testing facility suggests that the DPRK wants to make sophisticated weapons that would be light enough to attach to medium- and long-range missiles. North Korea's arsenal of such missiles is growing, the Times said, and the test facility indicates that the country may be looking to combine its nuclear and missile technologies. A top PRC diplomat was due to head to the US on Tuesday for talks on the DPRK nuclear standoff, the Foreign Ministry said. Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi, the ministry's point man on the DPRK, would be in the US until 4 July, spokesman Kong Quan said. Wang's trip precedes ROK President Roh Moo-hyun's visit to

Beijing next week.

2. DPRK on Weapons Proliferation

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "N.KOREA ASSERTS RIGHT TO MAKE AND SELL MISSILES," Seoul, 07/02/03) reported that the DPRK's ruling party newspaper on Wednesday dismissed US criticism of its missile exports as interference in the DPRK's internal affairs, saying the arms sales were legitimate commerce. The commentary by the Rodong Sinmun daily came amid renewed focus on the DPRK's sales of weapons of mass production and a fresh flurry of diplomatic consultations aimed at halting Pyongyang's attempts to build nuclear weapons. Also on Wednesday, the ROK confirmed it would host ministerial talks with the DPRK next week, but said the eleventh round of cabinet-level talks since 2000 would be scaled down in view of the lack of progress on the nuclear dispute. And the DPRK's army announced that despite the tensions, it had accepted a US proposal for working-level talks on excavating and repatriating the remains of some of the 8,000 American soldiers missing since the 1950-53 Korean War. The Rodong Sinmun, mouthpiece of the ruling Workers Party, rejected US calls to curb sales of ballistic missiles as a "dangerous attempt to bring the DPRK under its control by the allied imperialist forces and international reactionaries." A Korean-language version of the commentary, published by Seoul's Yonhap news agency, said: "It is recognized as thoroughly legal commerce that meets the legitimate security needs of other countries."

3. Multilateral DPRK Talks

Reuters ("US HOSTING THREE-WAY TALKS ON NORTH KOREA," Washington, 07/02/03)a and Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA TALKS TO CONTINUE FOR A SECOND DAY," Washington, 07/02/03) reported that Senior diplomats from the US, Japan and South Korea will meet for a second day of informal talks on the DPRK and efforts to end the stalemate over its nuclear weapons programs, officials said. "They decided it would be useful to continue talking, so they will meet again tomorrow," said an official from the US State Department, where the talks are being held. A South Korean official also said the talks would resume on Thursday but there was no indication from any of the sides as to what the reason for the extension was. The State Department had earlier gone to great lengths to play down the importance of the discussions, stressing that they did not constitute a formal meeting of the so-called Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) which comprises US, Japanese and South Korean diplomats. "These are informal consultations among the members of the group that does meet more formally sometimes on North Korea," spokesman Richard Boucher said. "The principal subject of discussion obviously will be the situation with regard to North Korea (and) how to continue to pursue a peaceful and diplomatic solution that we have sought that results in the verifiable and irreversible end to North Korea's nuclear weapons programs," he said. Despite the continuation of the talks, the trio was not expected to come to any new decisions on approaches to the DPRK and the participants still do not plan to issue a statement at the conclusion, officials said. "It's an ongoing consultation and not intended to adopt or approve some new initiative," one senior State Department official said. "They just want to talk about the situation," a second official said. The delegations to the talks were led by US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs James Kelly, South Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Hyuck and Mitoji Yabunaka, the director general of the Japanese foreign ministry's Asian affairs section. The Tuesday meetings came as the DPRK's military threatened "strong and merciless" retaliation if the US and its allies imposed sanctions or a blockade against the Stalinist state. The Korean People's Army (KPA) said in a statement that such steps would breach the armistice agreement (AA) that ended the 1950-1953 Korean War. US officials deny they intend to set up a blockade around the country but have been examining ways to step up interdiction of DPRK vessels believed to be carrying missiles or weapons on the high seas.

4. US-Russia on the DPRK

Reuters ("BUSH, PUTIN DISCUSS IRAN, NORTH KOREA," Washington, 07/02/03) reported that US President Bush reported progress with Russia on Wednesday in his efforts to bring diplomatic pressure to bear against Iran and North Korea to dismantle nuclear programs. Bush spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin for 15 minutes. Bush told reporters Iran and the DPRK were two key subjects. Putin has been cool to US demands that Russia stop assisting Iran's civilian nuclear program. But Putin has agreed that Iran should cooperate with demands from the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency for more intrusive inspections to determine if Tehran is trying to build a nuclear weapon. "I thanked him for keeping the pressure on the Iranian government to dismantle any notions they might have of building a nuclear weapon," Bush said. "And we're making progress on that front." Bush said Putin also agreed that the best way to deal with North Korea is to do so in a multinational forum. North Korea wants to negotiate directly with the US over its nuclear weapons program but Washington wants to include China, Japan, South Korea and possibly Russia in any talks. "It's helpful to be able to cooperate with Russia in dealing with matters of international security," Bush said.

5. Hong Kong Anti-Subversion Law

Agence France-Presse ("HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TO PASS ANTI-SUBVERSION LAW DESPITE MASS PROTESTS," 07/02/03) reported that Hong Kong's government indicated it would press ahead with controversial anti-subversion legislation, one day after massive demonstrations in the city against the new laws. More than 500,000 protestors took to Hong Kong's streets on Tuesday in an unprecedented display of public discontent against the new law. The protest -- the biggest in Hong Kong since more than one million rallied after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre -- was portrayed by media and analysts Wednesday as a warning to the government of chief executive Tung Chee-hwa. Critics of the government say the legislation, being considered under Under Article 23 of the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, could erode political freedom six years after the territory's return to PRC rule. Several newspapers said Wednesday Tung's administration should postpone the legislation's passage into the statute books and seek further public consultation. The bill is due to become law on July 9. However Hong Kong justice secretary Elsie Leung said Wednesday she was unaware of any moves to postpone the bill's implemenation. "Up to now, there is not any news the legislation will be delayed," Leung told local Cable TV in an interview. "The legislation of the law is completely a decision of the government." Tung was tight-lipped after a meeting with his cabinet on Wednesday. However he said in a statement late Tuesday that enactment of national security legislation was a constitutional duty for Hong Kong. Arthur Li, secretary of education and manpower, said Wednesday he understood the protestors concerns, but insisted the new laws "will not affect all freedoms and rights of the people." "However, the government must act according to what the constitution calls for it to do," Li said.

6. PRC Hong Kong Protest Media Coverage

Agence France-Presse ("CHINESE NEWSPAPERS FAIL TO REPORT MASS PROTESTS IN HONG KONG," 07/02/03) reported that the PRC's major newspapers ignored massive demonstrations over anti-subversion legislation in Hong Kong that many fear could erode political freedom six years after its return to PRC rule. Instead, the state-controlled press focused on comments by Premier Wen Jiabao supporting Hong Kong's leaders and the need for "understanding, trust and unity" as well as "confidence, courage and action". "Hong Kong's future will be shaped by the people of Hong Kong," Wen said at a Hong Kong cocktail party, the English-language China Daily reported Wednesday. "I hope our Hong Kong compatriots will cherish the hard-won position as masters of their own affairs,

and make efforts to fulfill the popular aspiration for social stability and seize precious opportunities for development." But there was no mention of the controversial Article 23 legislation nor the 500,000 people opposed to it who took to the streets in the territory's biggest protest since more than one million people rallied after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing. There is mounting fear the law could stifle freedom of speech and the free flow of information.

7. Japan Maritime Accident

Agence France-Presse ("ONE DEAD, SIX MISSING IN SHIP COLLISION OFF JAPAN," 07/02/03) reported that a Panamanian-flagged freighter slammed into a Japanese fishing boat off Japan's southern island of Kyushu leaving at least one person dead and six missing, coastguard officials said. The 135-tonne round-haul netter Koyo-Maru No. 18 sank immediately after the collision at 2:25 am (1725 GM Tuesday), the Moji Coast Guard branch said in a statement. Six of its 21 crew members were missing, it said. The 3,372-tonne freighter Heung-A Jupiter did not appear to have sustained major damage and all its 16 crew members were safe, a spokesman said. "There was no information on the ship taking water or leaking oil." Its crew was reported to be South Koreans and Chinese. Fifteen of the fishing boat's crew were rescued by other boats, but one of them died after he was airlifted to a hospital in Fukuoka, the main city on Kyushu. Two sustained broken bones, the statement said. Seven coastguard patrols and three aircraft were searching the area. The accident occurred some 120 kilometers (75 miles) northeast of Fukuoka. The area, located in the strait between Kyushu and the Korean peninsula, is rich in fishery resources. The Koyo-Maru No. 18 was catching fish when the Heung-A Jupiter "collided into its central port side at a right angle," the statement said. A crewman of the boat told the Japan Broadcasting Corp. network, "The freighter came crashing from the portside. We had sent all kinds of signal, blowing the whistle and blinking the lights before it hit us." "We sank in a minute or two," he said.

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.
We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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