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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. DPRK Special Economic Zone Chief
2. DPRK-US Relations
4. US Congress on PRC Human Rights
5. DPRK Japanese Abduction Victims
II. Republic of Korea 1. Japanese Abductees in DPRK
2. Kelly's Visit to DPRK
3. DPRK Defector getting US Residency

I. United States

1. DPRK Special Economic Zone Chief

Reuters (John Ruwitch, "N.KOREAN ZONE CHIEF BUMPS INTO LIMITS OF AUTHORITY," Shenyang, 10/03/02) reported that the PRC-based Yang Bin may be the new governor of the DPRK's fledgling capitalist zone, but already there appear to be clear limits to his authority -- on both sides of the border. After promising at first unfettered access, and then temporary visas to visit the DPRK's showcase-to-be Sinuiju enclave, Yang's bid to promote the new zone to the international community ran into another hitch on Thursday. The DPRK, Yang said, was taking longer with the visas than expected, and it could be several weeks before foreign reporters were allowed into the new special administrative region just across from the PRC border city of Dandong. And his efforts to host the reporters at his corporate base in the northeastern PRC city of Shenyang ran into trouble as well -- provincial police declared his news conference "illegal reporting" and ordered all journalists to leave the area. The tycoon took it all in stride -- saying it was best to be patient for a little longer while he himself prepared to depart for Sinuiju early on Friday morning without the international media. "The problem is that it is hard to handle (visas) for journalists," he told an impromptu news conference on Thursday at the headquarters of his Euro-Asia Agriculture (Holdings). "They're worried that reporters will go into the interior."

2. DPRK-US Relations

Reuters (Kim Kyoung-wha, "U.S. ENVOY ARRIVES IN NORTH KOREA FOR TALKS," Seoul, 10/03/02) reported that US Special envoy James Kelly arrived in Pyongyang on Thursday to restart high-level talks with the DPRK, the most senior US official to visit since President George W. Bush said the country was part of an "axis of evil". Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, and his nine-member delegation made the short flight out over the Yellow Sea and on to the DPRK capital from the ROK. The DPRK's official KCNA news agency reported Kelly's arrival and outlined the purpose of his mission to Pyongyang, which has launched tentative economic reforms and pushed ajar its long-closed diplomatic door. "The special envoy will explain the present U.S. administration's Korea policy and its stand on the resumption of dialogue with the DPRK and exchange views of issues of bilateral concern," the agency said. "I believe he will start talks today," U.S. embassy spokeswoman Maureen Cormack said in Seoul. "And I believe the whole time he's in Pyongyang he will continue his consultations." ROK newspapers were doubtful about swift progress but did not rule out the possibility of an upbeat outcome. "It is hard to expect the US to extend financial aid without any positive action from the North on pending military issues," the daily Chosun Ilbo said in a commentary. "But the North may decide to make small concessions on US demands and take a maximum advantage of US channels," it said.

3. Japan DPRK Mystery Vessel

The Associated Press ("JAPAN SAYS MYSTERY SHIP WAS NORTH KOREAN SPY VESSEL," Tokyo, 10/03/02) reported that Japan has determined that the mystery ship salvaged from the East China Sea last month was a DPRK spy vessel and intends to ask the DPRK for an explanation. Japan's Coast Guard sank the ship last December during a gun battle after the vessel entered Japan's territorial waters. Japan had suspected the boat was spying for the DPRK after it found personal belongings suggesting it came from the DPRK. On Thursday, Tokyo said the boat contained weapons with DPRK markings, Kyodo News agency quoted unidentified government sources as saying. The report gave no further details. Japan will ask for an explanation of the boat's purpose in talks with the DPRK that were agreed to at a September 17 meeting between DPRK leader Kim Jong Ill and Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. Kim acknowledged at the summit meeting that DPRK spy ships have periodically shown up in Japanese waters and has vowed to stop the incursions. The meeting was aimed at paving the way for talks toward establishing diplomatic ties between the two countries. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said Thursday that Japan hoped to resume talks later this month.

4. US Congress on PRC Human Rights

Agence France-Presse ("US CONGRESS WEIGHS IN ON CHINA, RIGHTS GROUP DISMISS REPORT," 10/03/02) reported that the US Congress urged President George W. Bush to impose new pressure on the PRC over its human rights record, in a new report which top senators claimed pulled no punches. The report was the first issued by the Congressional Executive Commission on the PRC, established under legislation passed two years ago which de-linked the PRC's trade privileges from its human rights performance. "This is the most comprehensive document produced by Congress on human rights in China," commission chairman Senator Max Baucus said at a press conference. "It pulls no punches in describing current human rights conditions in China. Yet it also sets out an action plan for Congress and the administration to help improve the rule of law in China." Human rights activists have decried the commission as nothing more than a smokescreen set up to smother questions on the issue during the debate over granting permanent normal trade relations to China. "I think they have ducked some of the core issues," said Mike Jendrzejczyk of Human Rights Watch. "The commission report does have a useful analysis, but it is very weak on recommendations, it

doesn't propose the kind of strategic action needed to make an impact on China's human rights problems." The commission report contains a wide-ranging survey of human rights in China and more than 40 recommendations for US policymakers. It calls on the US government, starting with Bush's summit with President Jiang Zemin later this month, to persistently raise US concern over human rights in China at a high-level. It also wants Congress to approve granting of financial and technical assistance to help establish a functioning legal system in the PRC and calls on the administration to fund programs to promote the concept of religious freedom in the PRC.

5. DPRK Japanese Abduction Victims

The Associated Press (Natalie Obiko Pearson, "FAMILIES DEMAND JAPANESE KIDNAPPING VICTIMS RETURN FROM NORTH KOREA," Tokyo, 10/03/02) reported that the families of Japanese kidnapped by the DPRK demanded Thursday their loved ones return to Japan - despite their videotaped claims that they are happy in the DPRK and do not want to come home. The families spoke after watching videotapes of five surviving kidnap victims and the daughter of one who the DPRK says has died. A Japanese government mission brought back the videotape earlier this week. The mission visited Pyongyang to discover the fate of 13 Japanese nationals that the DPRK admitted last month to abducting in the 1970s and 1980s to train spies in Japanese language and customs and to allow agents to take on their identities. All the victims said on the videotape that they were leading happy lives and expressed reluctance about returning to Japan. But families in Tokyo said they doubted the DPRK would allow their relatives to speak their minds. "My position has always been that if she is alive, give her back. Bring her home immediately," said Yuko Hamamoto, the older brother of Fukie Hamamoto, who went missing from a beach 24 years ago and was found last month to be among the survivors. "She was speaking following a North Korean script. She can't say what she wants to say," he told reporters. "She can't say she wants to come home." The DPRK claims that eight of the kidnap victims are dead and that all but one of their graves had been washed away in floods. Officials in Pyongyang said that only two of the victims had died of sickness. The others died of suicide, car crashes, gas poisoning and drowning. Family members have dismissed the claims, saying they refuse to believe their relatives are dead. "We want Japan to kidnap our family back," said Tamotsu Chimura, whose son Yasushi has been confirmed as alive in Pyongyang. Despite the mounting public anger, Japan wants to push ahead with forging diplomatic relations.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Japanese Abductees in DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Oh Day-yong, "JAPAN-NORTH TALKS TO PROCEED DESPITE KIDNAPPINGS FUROR," Tokyo, 10/03/020 reported that tragic tales about the deaths of Japanese citizens abducted by DPRK agents emerged as Japan released the results of its initial fact-finding survey Wednesday. DPRK leader Kim Jong-il admitted at a September 17 meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi that DPRK had abducted the Japanese in the 1970s and 80s. Japan dispatched a fact-finding team to DPRK on Saturday. Eight of the 13 abductees are dead, DPRK told Japan, an admission that enraged the victims' families and the Japanese public. Shinzo Abe, the deputy cabinet spokesman, briefed reporters on the Japanese team's findings. He said the team was told that one of the five survivors is married to a US defector in DPRK. DPRK officials also told the Japanese investigators that it had punished two persons responsible for the kidnappings. Japan emphasized that the investigation would continue, saying that the initial findings were based almost entirely on DPRK assertions.

2. Kelly's Visit to DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Oh Young-hwan, "KELLY CONSULTS HERE, THURSDAY FOR NORTH," Seoul, 10/03/02) reported that US and DPRK teams will sit across the negotiating table from each other Thursday for the first time in the two years of the Bush administration. US delegation led by James Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, leaves Seoul for DPRK on Thursday. US delegation arrived in Seoul from Japan on Wednesday en route to DPRK. Kelly met with Foreign Minister Choi Sung-hong and Lim Dong-won, the president's special adviser on foreign policy and national security. No statement about the meetings in Seoul will be issued, an official here said. After visiting Pyongyang, Kelly and his delegation will fly back to Seoul to discuss follow-up measures. Kelly's team has tried to dampen expectations of any breakthrough in this round of talks, saying both sides will lay out their positions on how to improve relations.

3. DPRK Defector getting US Residency

Joongang Ilbo ("3D NORTH DEFECTOR GETS US RESIDENCY," Seoul, 10/03/02) reported that another DPRK defector has been given refugee status in US, the third defector from DPRK to obtain US residency rights. Kim Soon-hee, 39, who had been arrested near the border crossing at San Diego, California in April 2001, was approved for resettlement in US by a federal immigration court in San Diego on Monday, US time. She will be given permanent residency in US, one year from the day of the hearing. Kim, who had been released after her detention as an illegal immigrant into the custody of a former English teacher in ROK, obtained a job with the help of the Korean-American community in San Diego and joined a Catholic church there.

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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