NAPSNet Daily Report 09 July, 2002

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 09 July, 2002", NAPSNet Daily Report, July 09, 2002, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-09-july-2002/

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I. United States

1. DPRK-ROK Relations

The Associated Press (Choe Sang-Hun, "NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA TRADE THREATS OVER SALVAGING OF SUNKEN BOAT," Seoul, 07/09/02) and Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA CALLS ON SOUTH TO INFORM OF SHIP SALVAGE PLAN IN ADVANCE," 07/09/02) reported that the DPRK demanded the ROK give prior notice "to avoid a new clash" when the ROK starts salvaging a warship sunk in last month's naval skirmish between the two countries. Tuesday's demand was seen here as an outright rejection of the ROK's call for an apology for the June 29 attack on the ROK patrol boat. The ROK plans to salvage the "Chamsuri 357" which went down off Yeonpyeong island in the Yellow Sea, possibly with the body of the missing sailor. "The Korean People's Army (KPA) does not oppose the South's plan to pull up the sunken ship," a spokesman for KPA representatives at the border truce village of Panmunjom said in a statement. "But the South should inform us in advance of a date, a time, vessels and equipment to be employed and an area for the salvage in order to avoid a new clash," he said. The spokesman asserted that the place where the ROK boat

sank belongs to the DPRK's "military controlled" waters.

2. DPRK-ROK Sea Border

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "N.KOREA DEMANDS REDRAWING OF SEA BORDER WITH SOUTH," Seoul, 07/09/02) reported that the DPRK ratcheted up its verbal attacks on the ROK on Tuesday by demanding a 50-year-old sea border be redrawn. A statement by the DPRK military at the border truce village of Panmunjom, issued by the Korea Central News Agency, reiterated a demand the DPRK first made in 1973 to redraw the line far to the south of the current sea border. "The 'Northern Limit Line' is a brigandish line unilaterally drawn by the US and the South Korean military in the inviolable territorial waters of the DPRK," it said. "In the wake of the recent incident in the west sea, the KPA (Korean People's Army) side clarified that the issue can be solved only when the military demarcation line in the sea is discussed and fixed," it said.

3. Japan Foreign Aid Reform

The Associated Press ("JAPAN TO REFORM ADMINISTRATION OF FOREIGN AID PROJECTS," Tokyo, 07/09/02) reported that the world's second biggest aid donor, Japan, will reform its foreign aid program in response to mounting calls for more efficiency and transparency, Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said Tuesday. The Foreign Ministry has faced increasing pressure to do this since two officials were arrested in May on suspicion of misusing aid funds earmarked for Russia. Kawaguchi outlined a 15-point plan for overhauling the ministry's Official Development Aid program, including surprise inspections, outside assessment of how aid is being used and external audits, said a ministry official on condition of anonymity. The reforms, beginning this fiscal year - that began April 1 - will introduce more transparency into the system, said the official. Use of outside evaluation experts and closer cooperation with non-governmental organizations will ensure aid is used more efficiently, the official said. The overhaul comes at a time when economically struggling Japan is looking for ways to stretch its resources after a slump. The ODA budget was slashed by a record 10 percent to 910.6 billion yen (US$7.7 billion) for the 2002 fiscal year. Japan was the world's top aid donor for 10 years but fell into second place behind the United States last year after the yen dropped in value against the dollar.

4. PRC-US Relations

The Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINA TO LET US SEARCH FOR REMAINS," Beijing, 07/09/02) reported that the PRC will permit the US Defense Department to search a site in northeastern PRC for the remains of two US pilots who died 50 years ago on a Korean War-era mission, the Foreign Ministry said Tuesday. It marks the first time the PRC has cooperated on a search for the remains of US soldiers who died in the PRC during the Cold War. Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao told a news briefing that the PRC decided to permit the search to promote "friendship between the two peoples and in a humanitarian spirit." The Pentagon and advocates for the missing hope the PRC will provide more information about the fate of others, including US soldiers captured by PRC troops during the 1950-53 Korean War. An eight-member search team from the US Army's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii is scheduled to leave July 15 and investigate the crash site near the town of Antu in Jilin province. The two pilots, Robert C. Snoddy of Eugene, Oregon, and Norman A. Schwartz of Louisville, Kentucky, were about to pick up an anti-communist Chinese spy in the Manchurian foothills when their C-47 was shot down on November 29, 1952. The PRC has told the Pentagon only that their charred bodies were buried at the snow-covered crash site. Two CIA agents traveling aboard the plane were captured and imprisoned by the PRC for two decades.

5. Taiwan Three Links Talks

Asia Pulse ("TAIWAN IS READY FOR 'THREE LINKS' TALKS: PREMIER," Taipei, 07/08/02) reported that the Taiwan government is ready to engage in talks with Chinese authorities on matters pertaining to the "three links," Premier Yu Shyi-kun said Monday. The two sides, however, need to make a breakthrough in efforts to resume the long-stalled cross-strait dialogue before real communications on the "three links" -- referring to direct trade, postal and transportation links between Taiwan and the PRC -- are restarted, Yu noted. Yu, meanwhile, praised the performance of the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) -- Taiwan's intermediary body established in 1991 to handle cross-strait exchanges in the absence of formal contacts with the PRC -- over the past decade in accelerating exchanges across the Taiwan Strait. He added that it is hoped that the SEF will continue to carry out its authorized mission and make contributions to efforts in facilitating cross-strait interactions. Yu said he could not speculate on when the "three links" will officially come into being as this hinges on how the authorities from the two sides will interact.

6. PRC-Japan War Time Forced Labor

Agence France-Presse ("CHINESE LOSE SUIT AGAINST JAPANESE FIRM FOR WARTIME FORCED LABOUR," 07/09/02) reported that a Japanese court has rejected compensation claims by Chinese who were forced to work here during World War II, running counter to another court's landmark ruling in April ordering redress for forced labor. The Hiroshima District Court in western Japan turned down the suit brought in January 1998 by five Chinese -- 81-year-old Lu Xuewen from Shandong province and two other former forced laborers as well as two relatives of deceased former laborers. They had demanded Nishimatsu Construction Co. Ltd. pay a total of 27.5 million yen (US$231,290 dollars) and apologize for their mental and physical suffering. "It's an unfair ruling," Lu told a press conference in Hiroshima, according to Jiji Press news agency Tuesday. "I will fight Nishimatsu Construction and judges as long as I am alive," Lu was quoted as saying.

II. Republic of Korea

1. North Korean Defectors

Joongang Ilbo (Oh Young-hwan, "DEFECTORS TO BE SENT FROM CHINA," Seoul, 07/09/02) reported that two DPRK defectors who sought asylum at the ROK Embassy in Beijing on June 29 and last week, will leave the PRC as early as Tuesday and come to ROK via a third country, diplomatic sources announced Monday. The sources said that a recent agreement between ROK and PRC on the handling of North Korean asylum-seekers had contributed to a prompt decision on the defectors' fate. The two governments agreed last month to handle defectors' cases based on PRC national law, international law and humanitarian principles.

2. ROK-Japan Relations

The Korea Herald (S. KOREAN, JAPANESE MINISTERS TO MEET IN SEOUL THIS WEEKEND," Seoul, 07/09/02) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi will visit Seoul July 12 for talks with her South Korean counterpart, Choi Sung-hong, officials in Seoul said Monday. On July 13, Kawaguchi is scheduled to meet Choi and pay a courtesy call on President Kim Dae-jung. It has yet to be determined, however, whether she will return home later in the day or the next day, according to the officials. They said the Japanese minister's trip to ROK is aimed at reaffirming the two nations' determination to make another reap in their relations. The two neighbors' relationship

gained momentum last month, when they successfully co-hosted the World Cup soccer tournaments. President Kim held summit talks with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi July 1 in Tokyo. The two leaders agreed on a number of measures to step up bilateral relations, including the opening of joint discussions on their free trade agreement, the first round of which is slated for today in Seoul.

3. ROK's Policy Dispute on DPRK

Chosun Ilbo(Hwang Jang-jin, "CHEONG WA DAE COUNTERS GNP'S CRITICISM OF SUNSHINE POLICY," Seoul, 07/09/02) reported that ROK presidential office Monday rebuked the Grand National Party (GNP), which blamed President Kim Dae-jung's "sunshine policy" for last month's West Sea skirmish. "It would mislead the public to attribute the North's provocation to the government's reconciliation policy. The government has pushed the sunshine policy while maintaining a strong defense posture. The policy is based on our confidence in our military power," presidential spokeswoman Park Sun-sook said. The GNP, the largest political force in the National Assembly, claimed the policy had left the ROK military vulnerable to DPRK attack. GNP lawmakers also raised suspicion that the pre-emptive attack June 29 by DPRK warships might have been ordered by its leader Kim Jong-il. "The government has been stressing Kim Jong-il's noninvolvement to gloss over the failure of the sunshine policy," the party said.

4. US Ambassador's Interview

Chosun Ilbo (Kwon Kyeong-bok, "US AMBASSADOR CALLS NK ATTACK PLANNED," Seoul, 07/09/02) reported that US Ambassador to Seoul, Thomas Hubbard, said Monday that he was sure the June 29 naval battle was a planned attack by the DPRK, although the investigation into the skirmish has yet to find where the order came from. Ambassador Hubbard added that the US stance to solve the DPRK problem with dialogue remained the same. Hubbard said with regard to the death of two middle schoolgirls run over by the US army vehicle, the USFK commander will take care of the tremendously tragic accident with full responsibility. He added the people involved will appear in court and be punished if they are found guilty. Hubbard said building a new US embassy in Seoul would be done implementing terms and requirements agreed with the government and its laws and regulations. He noted the building could reflect US and Korean values.

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.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

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