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I. United States

1. US View on PRC Intelligence

The Associated Press (Dirk Beveridge, "U.S.: CHINA COULD HELP WAR ON TERROR," Hong Kong, 04/18/02) and Reuters (Tan Ee Lyn, "U.S. URGES MORE INTELLIGENCE SHARING WITH CHINA," Hong Kong, 04/18/02) reported that the chief of US military forces in the Asia-Pacific Admiral Dennis Blair said Thursday the US and the PRC needed to share more intelligence to combat terrorism. "We're at the position right now where we have to go...down to some of these very specific details. Who's getting on that plane, what name the person is using, when are they arriving here," Blair said in a speech to a business audience in Hong Kong. "We haven't achieved really that level of intelligence exchange with China which we have with other countries," he said. Blair conceded that more open exchanges between the US and the PRC were hindered by too much "historical baggage," but said: "That's where we have to go in the interests of both countries if we're going to beat this common enemy." Blair met earlier in the day with government officials to discuss ways of cutting off

financial resources to militants in the wake of the September 11 attacks in the US.

2. Russia Nuclear Reactor Developments

The Associated Press ("REPORT: RUSSIA TO BUILD 10 NUCLEAR REACTORS ABROAD IN NEXT DECADE," Moscow, 04/18/02) reported that Russia plans to build 10 nuclear reactors in foreign countries over the next decade, Deputy Atomic Energy Minister Bulat Nigmatulin told Interfax news agency on Thursday. "Russia is already building five nuclear reactors abroad, including in China, Iran and India," he was quoted as saying. "In the future, we can expect to build another five nuclear reactors." He did not name which other countries might be interested. The cost of building a nuclear reactor is about dlrs 800 million to dlrs 900 million, Nigmatulin said.

3. PRC Missile Buildup

The Associated Press ("U.S. PACIFIC COMMANDER: CHINESE MISSILE BUILDUP COULD START HARMFUL ARMS RACE WITH TAIWAN," Hong Kong, 04/18/02) reported that the PRC lacks the military muscle to occupy Taiwan by force, but its accelerating deployment of missiles across the Taiwan Strait could prompt a worrisome arms buildup, US commander for the Pacific Admiral Dennis Blair said Thursday. "These missiles can cause a great deal of destruction to Taiwan," Blair told an audience of local business leaders. "They cannot make a decisive military difference yet, but if they continue to increase in number and accuracy there will come a time when they threaten the sufficient defense of Taiwan." That could prompt the US to further consider Taiwan's defense needs, Blair said. Blair told reporters earlier Thursday that worries of armed conflict between the two sides have been overblown. "I see far more stability and consistency in the underlying military relationships than perhaps you get by reading some of the accounts," Blair said.

4. DPRK-Japan Red Cross Talks

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "NORTH KOREA TO RESUME CONTACTS WITH JAPAN, U.S. WAITS," Seoul, 04/18/02) and Agence France-Presse ("N.KOREA, JAPAN TO HOLD TALKS IN BEIJING APRIL 29-30," 04/19/02) reported that Japan and the DPRK will hold Red Cross talks in Beijing at the end of this month in the first meeting between the two countries for more than two years. The meeting will take place on April 29 and 30, both nations said Thursday. "There are humanitarian issues between Japan and North Korea and we hope the meeting will become an important step towards settling them," Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a news conference. The DPRK's Korean Central News Agency said the talks would cover an "investigation into those missing and the home-visit of Japanese women in the DPRK." Japan's delegation, to be headed by Hiroshi Higashiura, the international division chief of the Red Cross, will also include officials from the foreign ministry. The last Red Cross meeting was in March 2000.

5. DPRK View of Inter-Korean Dialogue

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA ACCUSES WASHINGTON OF BLOCKING INTER-KOREAN DIALOGUE," Seoul, 04/18/02) reported that the DPRK said Thursday that inter-Korean relations could be at risk unless the US drops its hostile policy against the DPRK. On Thursday, the DPRK Korean Central News Agency accused the US of adopting a "policy of strength" and "policy of Cold War" designed to obstruct the reconciliation process on the divided Korean peninsula. "The inter-Korean relations may deteriorate again and independent reunification of the nation may be delayed, accordingly, unless that policy of the U.S. imperialists is frustrated," said the news agency.

6. DPRK-US Relations

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "U.S. AWAITS WORD ON TALKS FROM NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 04/18/02) reported that the US ambassador to the ROK Jack Pritchard said on Thursday that the US is still awaiting word from the DPRK on resuming dialogue. US President George W. Bush, during a February visit to Seoul, called for talks and said he had no intention of attacking the the DPRK. Thomas Hubbard, who has long experience negotiating with the DPRK, said the US hoped contacts would pave the way for talks on outstanding questions, including missile proliferation and a 1994 nuclear agreement. "Ambassador Pritchard will engage in talks with the North Koreans whenever they are ready. We have not heard from them yet directly on that subject, but as we've said we're prepared to meet any time, any place," Hubbard said. "What we're looking for is a first general meeting with the North Koreans and then hopefully was can agree on a formula for ongoing negotiations," he said.

7. Japanese Abduction Victims

Reuters ("PARENTS OF JAPANESE ALLEGEDLY KIDNAPPED BY NORTH KOREA MAKE APPEAL IN PARLIAMENT," Tokyo, 04/18/02) reported that the parents of two Japanese allegedly abducted by the DPRK appealed in Parliament on Thursday for stronger efforts to get back their loved-ones. The father of Keiko Arimoto - a 23-year-old believed to have been abducted in 1983 while studying in Britain - said he and his wife were getting old and wanted to see their daughter before they died. "We want to see our child's face while we're still healthy," said 73-year-old Akihiro Arimoto. "We want a review of the foreign ministry's diplomacy with North Korea, which has been neglected for so long."

8. Cross-strait Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN PLANS TO RESTRICT HIGH-TECH ENGINEERS FROM WORKING IN CHINA," Taipei, 04/18/02) reported that Taiwanese engineers who design semiconductors, missiles, jet fighters and submarines may be barred from working in the PRC, Taiwan's government said on Thursday. The restrictions are part of a plan to prevent the PRC from getting access to technologies developed in Taiwan, the National Science Council said in a statement. Taiwan has been particularly concerned about losing engineers from its vital semiconductor industry. Under the National Science Council's plan, engineers involved in computer chip design, or in some aspects of silicon wafer technology, could be barred from working in the PRC, the statement said. The Council will send the plan to the Cabinet next week for approval, the statement said.

II. Republic of Korea

1. China Air Crash Accident

Joongang Ilbo ("AFTER AIR DIASTER, KOREA FOCUSES ON PILOT ERROR," Seoul, 04/17/02) reported that US aviation officials joined ROK and PRC investigators Wednesday to seek the cause of Monday's Air China crash that killed 126 people. The ROK government's emergency countermeasure center and six investigators from the US National Transportation Safety Board and the US Federal Aviation Administration showed the black boxes of the downed airliner to reporters. Led by the Ministry of Construction and Transportation, investigators will begin decoding the recording devices Thursday. Investigating the cause of the accident, the ROK is focusing on possible pilot error. The PRC, in contrast, is suggesting that foul weather was the primary cause of the crash. The PRC's

Xinhua News Agency described Gimhae airport's facilities as outdated.

2. Inter-Korea Economic Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("INTER-KOREAN TRADE INCREASE 15% FOR FIRST QUARTER," Seoul, 04/18/02) reported that inter-Korean trade reached around US$88 million for the first quarter of this year, a 15% increase from last time. The volume of import was slightly over US$51 million, a 66.5% increase from last year but exports were reportedly down to US$37 million or a 19.7% decrease according to the Unification Ministry in Seoul on Wednesday. Processing trade and other commercial exchange increased by 42.9% recording US$62 million in total. Such trade makes up 70.6% of overall interaction. Non-transactional trade like the light water reactor project and inter-Korean Gumgang tours on the other hand decreased by 21.7% recording little less than US$26 million in volume. During this period inter-Korean trade balance recorded around US$14 million giving red marks to the ROK's side. The DPRK's side came out with the actual profits of around US$40 million, excluding non- transactional trade.

3. DPRK's ADB Participation

The Korea herald (Kim Ji-ho, "US OPPOSES N.KOREA'S ATTENDANCE AT ADB MEETING," Seoul, 04/18/02) reported that despite the ROK government's desire to invite the DPRK to the annual Asian Development Bank (ADB) assembly, the US, ADB's largest shareholder, is still opposed to the participation of what it labeled a terrorism-sponsoring state, officials said Wednesday. The ROK has hoped the ADB will arrange for the DPRK, which applied for ADB membership in 2000, to attend the meeting slated for early May in Shanghai, as an observer. The DPRK has wanted to receive soft loans from financial institutions like the ADB and the International Monetary Fund to help rebuild its moribund economy. But the US has limited the DPRK's access to them, labeling it as a country supporting international terrorism. Diplomatic watchers earlier said chances appeared higher this year for the DPRK to attend the ADB assembly, citing the fact that the meeting is scheduled to take place in the PRC, DPRK's closest ally, and that the DPRK recently agreed to resume dialogue with US.

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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