NAPSNet Daily Report 12 April, 1999

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 12 April, 1999", NAPSNet Daily Report, April 12, 1999, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-12-april-1999/

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I. United States

1. ROK Human Rights

The Associated Press ("RIGHTS GROUP CRITICIZES S. KOREA," Seoul, 04/10/99) reported that Amnesty International deputy secretary general, Patti Whaley, said in a statement on Saturday that the ROK government is trying to control a national human rights commission. Whaley said that the proposed commission lacks independence and has weak investigative powers. She said that the commission "does little to enhance human rights protection in South Korea and will not win the support of the international community." Whaley's statement came three days after 32 local human rights activists went on a hunger strike Wednesday at Myongdong Cathedral in Seoul to protest the government's draft bill for establishing the commission. The activists noted that provisions in the draft bill require the commission to report all its decisions to the justice minister, who will also have

the right to approve its annual budget. They also noted that the prime minister, chief justice, and National Assembly speaker will make recommendations to the president on appointing the commission members, while independent human rights groups have no input into the selections. ROK President Kim Dae-jung has promised more consolations with rights groups before the bill goes to the National Assembly.

2. Tokyo Gubernatorial Election

The New York Times (Nicholas Kristof, "NATIONALIST CRITICAL OF U.S. AIR BASE IS ELECTED GOVERNOR OF TOKYO," Tokyo, 04/12/99), the Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "AUTHOR WINS TOKYO'S GOVERNOR RACE," Tokyo, 04/12/99) and the Wall Street Journal (Norihiko Shirouzu, "TOUGH-TALKING ISHIHARA ELECTED TOKYO GOVERNOR," Tokyo, 04/12/99) reported that independent candidate Shintaro Ishihara defeated the ruling Liberal Democratic Party candidate on Sunday for election as governor of Tokyo. In his acceptance speech, Ishihara said that he will press the US to return the Yokota Air Base to Japan. He stated, "If the U.S. is truly an equal partner with us, it is obliged to consider my demand seriously." Ishihara said in an interview last week that unless the US agrees to defend the Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands, which are also claimed by the PRC and Taiwan, "Japan should throw the U.S. forces out the door." Ishihara, a former transport minister, is known as author of the book "The Japan That Can Say No." Taiwan's Liberty Times newspaper urged the government to distance itself from Ishihara's nationalism to avoid provoking the PRC. Singapore's Straits Times warned, "His habit of upsetting China with outrageous statements and his hard-line stance against Japan's security alliance with the United States could prove embarrassing for the [Prime Minister Keizo] Obuchi administration in future." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 12.]

3. Taiwanese Independence Movement

The Associated Press (Annie Huang, "TAIWANESE PROTEST FOR INDEPENDENCE," Taipei, 04/10/99) reported that about 100 Taiwanese independence activists went on a hunger strike Saturday to support a bill to allow a plebiscite on Taiwan's political status. Opposition lawmaker Trong Chai stated, "We have to let China know that Taiwanese are entitled to deciding their own future and that Beijing cannot impose its will on us."

4. PRC Premier's US Visit

The Associated Press (George Gedda, "LEADER SAYS CHINA NO THREAT TO U.S," Washington, 04/09/99) reported that PRC Premier Zhu Rongji on Friday dismissed suggestions that the PRC poses a danger to the US. Zhu stated, "There is no way China poses a threat to the US." He noted that US President Bill Clinton had said on Wednesday that the US had 6,000 nuclear weapons compared with only 20 to 30 for the PRC. He added, "I really truly and honestly don't know how many nuclear weapons China has and I'm not sure how President Clinton knows this number." Zhu also noted that the PRC's gross national product is only about one-tenth that of the US even though it has four times the population. He argued, "Americans should convert the theory of China as a threat into the theory of China as an opportunity."

5. Indian Missile Test

The New York Times (Barry Bearak, "INDIA TESTS MISSILE ABLE TO HIT DEEP INTO NEIGHBOR LANDS," New Delhi, 04/12/99), the Associated Press (Arthur Max, "INDIA TESTS NUCLEAR

MISSILE DESPITE PLEAS," New Delhi, 04/12/99, A16) and the Wall Street Journal (Jonathan Karp, "INDIA TESTS NUCLEAR- CAPABLE MISSILE, UPSETTING STATUS QUO AND THE U.S.," New Delhi, 04/12/99) reported that Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes announced that India on Sunday tested an intermediate-range Agni II missile that traveled more than 1,250 miles in 11 minutes. Fernandes stated, "With today's launch we have reached a point where no one from anywhere will dare to threaten us." He said that the missile burns solid fuel, uses state of the art navigation, carries a payload of more than a ton, and can be fired from mobile launchers. Asked whether the missile would be fitted with a nuclear warhead, he said, "Whatever we need to meet our security concerns will be done." Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee said that the missiles were for defensive purposes only. Uday Bhaskar, deputy director of the government supported Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis, stated, "This test was overdue and inevitable. If you are going to be a nuclear state, you have to test the weapons. And this is only the beginning. More tests have to be done, maybe 15 to 20 tests." Brahma Chellaney, an Indian expert on nuclear weapons, said, "With Agni II, India finally has a reliable nuclear delivery vehicle to deter China." He added, "You could reach Beijing and Shanghai for sure." Donna Roginski, a spokeswoman for the US Embassy in New Delhi, stated, "We regret very much India's decision to test. Its leaders had said they would take care of their military needs at a minimal level and that does not seem to be the case." White House spokesman Mike Hammer said that the missile test "appears to be out of step with positive developments in the political sphere." He added, "While we appreciate India's effort at transparency in its dialogue with us and with Pakistan, we regret the decision to test." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 12.]

The Associated Press (Arthur Max, "INDIA DEFLECTS CRITICISM OF LATEST MISSILE TEST," New Delhi, 04/12/99) reported that Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on Sunday reaffirmed India's no-first use policy. Vajpayee stated, "India remains committed to minimum deterrence, to no-first-use of nuclear weapons, and never to use them against non-nuclear weapons states." He added, "India cannot depend on others to defend her. We have to develop our own indigenous capabilities. Agni is a symbol of that resurgent India." However, Sitaram Yechury of the Communist Party of India-Marxist stated, "Now, when the government is about to leave, it clearly appears that the flight-tests have little to do with security concerns and more with political concerns."

6. PRC Response to Indian Missile Test

The Associated Press ("CHINA SAYS INDIAN MISSILE TEST MAY SPARK REGIONAL ARMS RACE," Beijing, 04/12/99) reported that the PRC Foreign Ministry said in a prepared statement on Monday that India's missile test violated a UN Security Council resolution that called on India to stop development of nuclear weapons and the means of delivery. The statement said, "This could initiate another round of arms races in South Asia. China expresses its regret and concern over this." It added, "The Chinese side hopes that the two countries can continue to use patient, sincere and meaningful dialogue to peacefully resolve disputes and problems."

7. Pakistan Response to Indian Missile Test

Reuters ("PAKISTAN TO ANSWER INDIA MISSILE TEST," Karachi, 04/12/99) reported that Pakistan army chief General Pervez Musharraf said Monday that Pakistan would respond to India's missile test. Musharraf stated, "No Indian should have a doubt that we cannot respond. We have all the capability, we have everything." He added, "We can react very soon." Pakistan Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz said that the government would decide in a day or two whether to give a "befitting response." Opposition leader Benazir Bhutto said in a statement that the Pakistani response "must be measured, mature and adequate to meet the new challenge." Liaqat Baluch, deputy chief of the

Jamaat-i-Islami party, stated, "It is necessary that the government should respond immediately, so that they can boost the morale of the people." Unnamed diplomats said that Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was under the same kind of pressure to respond as he was under last May following India's nuclear tests.

The Associated Press ("INDIA'S TEST SETS SOUTH ASIA ON NUCLEAR ARMS RACE -ANALYSTS," Islamabad, 04/12/99) reported that analysts said Monday that India's missile test is likely to prompt a South Asian nuclear arms race. Nishat Ahmed, director of the Pakistan Institute for Regional Studies, stated, "We tried hard to convince India not to go this route but now they have, and we will have to respond." He added, however, that the missile test appears aimed more at the PRC than at Pakistan. Tanvir Ahmed Khan, director of the Institute of Strategic Studies, stated, "The weapons already exist.... The decision is on deployment." He added, however, that Pakistan should base its decision on national defense requirements rather than a "tit-for-tat" with India, which would be "too simplistic." Pakistan reportedly has three missiles ready for testing: the Ghauri II, with a range of 2,000 kilometers; the Shaheen, with a range of 750 kilometers and a payload capability of 1,000 kilograms; and the Shaheen II, with a range of 2,300 kilometers and a payload capability of 1,000 kilograms. The independent news agency News Network International quoted leading nuclear scientist Dr. Samar Mubarak as saying, "Whenever the government takes a decision, we are ready."

8. US Spy Satellite

Reuters (Steven Young, "TITAN 4 ROCKET LAUNCHES MISSILE-WARNING SATELLITE," Cape Canaveral, 04/10/99) reported that a US Air Force Titan 4 rocket launched a missile-warning satellite on Friday. The launch was the first since an older Titan 4A model exploded soon after blast off last August. The launch carried into orbit a Defense Support Program missile-warning satellite that is designed to detect and pinpoint missile launches and nuclear detonations.

II. Republic of Korea

1. US Forces in ROK

Chosun Ilbo ("USFK STATUS DISPUTE COULD RESURFACE," Seoul, 04/11/99) said that the issue of the status of the US Forces in Korea (USFK) could resurface at any time. The National Security Committee stated that the status of the USFK is an issue to be discussed only between the ROK and the US with no other party; that discussion can take place only when there is practical progress in the formation of a peace structure on the peninsula; and that the USFK would remain in place even following unification. While this was meant to close the dispute, it is difficult to end the discussion as a thesis written by Kim Dae-jung in 1995 on his three-stage vision of unification addresses the question of USFK status. In it, Kim states; "If parallel political and military confidence is built between the US and North Korea, relations between South and North Korea can progress in tandem, as the North will no longer view the USFK as an obstacle. North Korea does not see the USFK as a block to arms reduction, but as a part of it, so the status of USFK can be linked to arms reduction in the North and South." He also said that the alliance between the US and the ROK should be changed so that the USFK role becomes one of support, with a gradual reduction in size.

Korea Herald ("SEOUL DENIES MEDIA REPORTS OF RUSSIA'S ROLE IN CONVEYING N.K.'S ATTITUDE ON U.S. TROOPS," Seoul, 04/12/99) reported that the ROK has denied media reports speculating that the ROK learned of a change in the DPRK's stance on US troops stationed here through Russia. Presidential spokesman Park Jie-won said Saturday that the information on the

DPRK's attitude toward US forces was in no way connected to recent talks between a top ROK official and Russian Vice Foreign Minister Grigori Karashin in Moscow. Park made the statement in response to ROK news reports speculating that Karashin informed Lim Dong-won, President Kim Dae-jung's chief security adviser, that the DPRK wants to change the status of US forces in ROK, instead of seeking their withdrawal. Lim visited Moscow last month. "Lim did not discuss the topic with the Russian vice foreign minister," the spokesman said. Park said he was responding to media speculation because the news may make relations between the ROK and Russia "uncomfortable." Reporting groundless speculation may harm national interests, he said.

2. Alleged DPRK Drug Smuggling

Chosun Ilbo ("NK SELLING TO DRUG RINGS," Seoul, 04/11/99) reported that on Sunday the ROK National Intelligence Service (NIS) issued a pamphlet titled, "The State and Expanding Trends of North Korean Narcotics." The report quotes US sources as saying that the DPRK has refined 50 tons of opium and 5 tons of morphine and heroin. According to the report, some of these drugs are being smuggled into the ROK via fishing vessels. The NIS believes that there is a high possibility that the DPRK has realized the limitations in distributing the drugs through its diplomats, and so has been allying itself with international criminal organizations that operate drug rings.

3. Egypt's Role for Korean Peninsula

Korea Times ("MUBARAK VOWS TO WORK AS IMPARTIAL MEDIATOR BETWEEN S-N KOREA," Seoul, 04/11/99) reported that Egyptian President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak on Saturday committed himself to working as an impartial mediator between the ROK and the DPRK to promote peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. Following a summit with ROK President Kim Dae-jung at Chong Wa Dae, the first Egyptian head of state ever to visit the ROK said, "I will do whatever I can for peace and stability here." Mubarak, who came here for a three-day visit as part of a swing through PRC and Japan, said he will convey President Kim's "peace message" to the DPRK in the expectation of a positive response from the DPRK, which would then in turn be conveyed to the ROK. He was not specific as to whether he would arrange a summit between President Kim and DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. The 71-year-old Egyptian president, who had maintained good relations with late DPRK leader Kim Il-sung, made the remarks when President Kim called on him to work as an impartial mediator between ROK and DPRK. Kim said, "I received a good piece of advice from President Mubarak that Seoul should build confidence with Pyongyang on a gradual, step-by-step basis." Mubarak suggested that ROK begin talks with DPRK on a goal that is "realizable" and practical to both sides.

4. ROK Fertilizer Aid to DPRK

Korea Herald ("KNRC TO SEND NEW FERTILIZER TO N.K.," Seoul, 04/12/99) reported that the ROK Red Cross plans to send various kinds of "single- ingredient" fertilizer to the DPRK after completing its ongoing delivery of composite fertilizer to DPRK. "We will expand the list of fertilizers supplied because the North wants single-ingredient fertilizers such as potassic and phosphoric fertilizer," an official at the Korean National Red Cross (KNRC) in Seoul said. He said that the ROK would be able to send more fertilizer to the DPRK because single-ingredient fertilizer is cheaper than composite fertilizer. The KNRC has so far shipped 15,000 tons of composite fertilizer worth 4.8 billion won to the DPRK since it started a nationwide fund-raising campaign to supply fertilizer in the middle of last month. A total of 50,000 tons of fertilizer was promised by the ROK government.

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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