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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. Inter-Korean Talks
2. DPRK on US Terrorism List
3. Chinese Muslim Links to Al Qaeda

II. Republic of Korea 1. DPRK Winter Drill
2. DPRK Chairman's Inspection
3. DPRK International Trade

I. United States

1. Inter-Korean Talks

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "KOREAS SET DEC. FAMILY REUNIONS, KEEP TALKING," Seoul, 11/13/01) and The Associated Press ("KOREAS AGREE TO HOLD MORE REUNIONS," Seoul, 11/13/01) reported that the ROK Unification Ministry said that the ROK and DPRK ministers agreed to hold a new round of family reunions between December 10 and 16. The ministry also said that the ROK delegation would stay until November 14, extending talks for a second time this week. An ROK official said, "Contacts will be continuing, but we won't know about the conclusion of talks until it happens. We will have to wait and see." ROK media pool described ministerial talks over the wording of a joint communique as on-again, off-again. The ROK media pool also reported that despite broad agreement on family reunions, negotiators were trying to find neutral language to mask differences on anti-terrorism that had earlier stalled talks. The ministry added that a joint statement to conclude the talks would also include an agreement on more ministerial and economic talks in the ROK at a date to be set later.

2. DPRK on US Terrorism List

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA URGES U.S. MOVE ON TERROR SPONSOR LIST," Seoul, 11/13/01)

reported that the DPRK's official Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) called on the US to drop the DPRK from the list of state sponsors of terrorism in response to the DPRK's decision to sign two anti-terrorism treaties. KCNA said that the decision "clearly shows the principled and consistent opposition of the DPRK to all forms of terrorism and its financing." KCNA called for "a single practical measure" after the US welcomed the DPRK's plan to sign the UN International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages. KCNA said that the US was "undisguisedly inciting mistrust and antagonism towards the DPRK by still keeping it on the 'list of sponsors of terrorism'. If the US has a true will to drop its unreasonably hostile policy towards the DPRK and improve the DPRK-US relations, it should not only repeat empty words."

3. Chinese Muslim Links to Al Qaeda

The Washington Post (Philip P. Pan and John Pomfret, "BIN LADEN'S CHINESE CONNECTION BEIJING SAYS 1,000 MUSLIMS TRAINED IN AL QAEDA CAMPS," Beijing, 11/09/01) reported that PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen estimated that 1,000 Chinese Muslims have trained in camps run by Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda network in Afghanistan. Qian's comments constituted the most specific disclosure yet by the PRC government about what it regards as part of the worldwide war on terrorism. Some analysts argue that the government is exaggerating the situation to justify a crackdown on Uighurs. Others say that the PRC for the first time is acknowledging the extent of Uighur violence, indicating that the government faces a greater threat than was previously believed. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson warned in meetings with both Qian and President Jiang Zemin that such a crackdown might lead to further terrorism. According to Robinson, Jiang "listened carefully" but did not offer a direct response, but Qian emphasized that the PRC draws a distinction between the majority of Chinese Muslims and "a very small population" that has been trained by bin Laden.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Winter Drill

Joongang Ilbo (Won-ki Choi, "WINTER DRILL IN THE AIR FOR NORTH KOREA, 11/12/01) reported that military sources said, "There are signs that the DPRK army has launched winter training exercises since early November." The DPRK's winter practice usually lasts from November through March. Lee Hang-gu, one of the experts, stated, "North Korea would intensify its exercise due to the ongoing US air raid against Afghanistan."

2. DPRK Chairman's Inspection

Joongang Ilbo ("KIM JONG-IL VISITS ARMY NO.397," Seoul, 11/12/01) reported that the state-run Korean Central Broadcasting Station (KCBS) said that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il conducted on-th--spot-guidance for military unit Number 397 on November 12. DPRK Army generals Ri Myong- su, Hyon Chol-hae and Pak Jae-kyong were among Kim's aides. After being apprised of the current situation and viewing the training of the troops, Kim directed the soldiers to put full efforts to bolster the combat skills. Kim has returned to his full schedule of nationwide on- spot-guidance tour of factories and army bases. This latest visit makes it the eighth of its kind for this month alone.

3. DPRK International Trade

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA MEMBER TO GLOBAL NETWORK SWIFT," Seoul, 11/12/01) reported that the DPRK became a new member of the global trade network called SWIFT, which establishes a system for settling transactions abroad. The DPRK's entrance into the SWIFT messaging service (which covers over 7,330 financial institutions in 194 countries) and its usage of SWIFT interface software indicates that the DPRK's major settlement dealings would be well exposed to the Western World. According to related institutions, DPRK authorities requested SWIFT's Hong Kong branch (SWIFT ASIA) this summer to aid its nation in establishing a settlement system, and an official from Hong Kong was dispatched to build a full system in Pyongyang. The DPRK is also expected to equip itself with a trade settlement system next year in accordance with the policy of SWIFT that calls for business-to-business settlement service via Internet.

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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