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I. United States

1. PRC DPRK Activist Conviction

Reuters ("CHINA TRIES US MAN FOR RAPE AND AIDING NKOREANS,") Beijing, 12/17/02) reported that a court in northeastern PRC has put a US citizen on trial on charges of rape and helping DPRK asylum seekers sneak across the porous border, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Tuesday. The intermediate court in Jilin Province bordering impoverished North Korea held hearings on the case of John Daniel Choi on December 4, ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao told a news conference. Choi, also known as Joseph Choi, was "suspected of having committed the crimes

of rape and organizing people to cross the border illegally," Liu said. "At the moment, the hearing of the case is still ongoing." The US embassy declined to comment. Choi, detained in May, is one of several foreigners who have been arrested for trying to help DPRK asylum seekers flee their staunchly Communist homeland via the PRC. Another, 46-year-old Chun Ki-won, was detained last December, found guilty in July of aiding at least 12 DPRK defectors trying to reach Mongolia and deported to ROK in August.

2. ROK Anti-DPRK Sentiments

The Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREANS RALLY AGAINST NORTH KOREA, BURN COMMUNIST FLAG," 12/17/02) reported that ROK demonstrators staged a rally against the DPRK, burning the DPRK flag and denouncing its suspected nuclear weapons program. Some 40 protesters, including war veterans in their 60s and 70s, called DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il "a murderer" and burned his portrait near a downtown park next to the US embassy in Seoul."Give up! (Because of the) North's nuclear development," read one banner as protesters Tuesday urged the ROK government to reverse its peaceful engagement policy towards the DPRK. The demonstrators also turned their anger on anti-US protesters who have taken to the streets in their thousands in recent weeks. "Down with the pro-North Korean leftist forces campaigning against the United States according to Pyongyang's instructions," they chanted. A few meters away from the demonstration, a group of activists were staging an anti-US rally denouncing the acquittal last month of two American soldiers involved in the accidental deaths of two local school girls.

3. Inter-Korean Family Reunions

The Agence France-Presse ("TWO KOREAS AGREE ON FAMILY REUNIONS IN FEBRUARY," 12/17/02) reported that the ROK and the DPRK agreed to arrange more reunions of families media reports said. The accord was reached at inter-Korean rapprochement talks at Mount Kumgang resort taking place amid rising tension over the DPRK's mothballed nuclear program. Negotiators agreed to allow 200 people -- 100 each from the DPRK and the ROK-- to meet long-lost relatives at Mount Kumgang around the lunar New Year holiday which falls on February 1, according to ROK pooled media reports from Kumgang Tuesday. But the two sides had yet to agree on when and how to set up a permanent family reunion center in the DPRK's mountain resort, one of the items on the talks agenda, the reports said. Two separate teams of ROK negotiators had been in Mount Kumgang since Sunday to discuss progress on arranging reunions of families split by the 1950-53 Korean War and on cross-border road and rail links. Troops from both Koreas have cleared landmines from the heavily-fortified border over the past three months to prepare two transportation corridors for the rail and road links. But a looming nuclear standoff has weighed heavily on the inter-Korean talks.

4. ROK Presidential Election

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREAN VOTERS FACE CLEAR CHOICE AT PRESIDENTIAL POLL," Seoul, 12/17/02) reported that ROK voters face a clear choice at the presidential poll Thursday: a left of center candidate who advocates a soft line on the DPRK, or a conservative who sees DPRK as a security threat. With two days left to choose the ROK's next president, rival parties agreed that liberal candidate Roh Moo-Hyun maintained a narrow edge over his conservative opponent, Lee Hoi-Chang. But one in five voters said they had yet to make up their minds, making the race still too close to call. Analysts said it was also hard to predict how much impact the escalating standoff over the DPRK's nuclear weapons ambitions would have on the outcome of the election. Lee's camp, however, insisted the nuclear standoff could tip the balance, as the conservative candidate worked

hard to secure support from those who remained undecided. "With the help of widening support from those who wish for stability, we are now trailing by a margin of less than 300,000 votes," said Choi Byong-Ryul, the conservative party's campaign manager. Roh's aides acknowledge that Pyongyang's shock decision last week to revive a mothballed nuclear program frozen under a 1994 accord with the United States may hurt their candidate.

5. Japan and US on DPRK Nuclear Policy

The New York Times (Steven R. Weisman, "JAPAN SAYS NUCLEAR EFFORT IN KOREA MERITS HARD LINE," Washington, 12/17/02), Reuters (Jonathan Wright, "US, JAPAN SHARE LABOR IN APPROACH TO N KOREA," Washington, 12/16/02) and Washington File ("US, JAPAN COOPERATING CLOSELY ON SECURITY MATTERS," Washington, 12/16/02) reported that the US won a commitment from Japan today to continue taking a hard line toward the DPRK that would bar any bargaining or talk of economic incentives until they agreed to shut its nuclear weapons program. Taking a break from their meeting at the State Department with Japan's senior Defense and Foreign Ministry officials, both Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz repeated the dministration's policy of last week, that it was up to the DPRK to ease tensions in the region. The US and Japanese comments amounted to the latest rebuff to appeals by the DPRK for negotiation on the nuclear issue. Today the DPRK again called for a nonaggression treaty with the United States, saying it was the only way to prevent war on the Korean Peninsula. Secretary Powell dismissed the plea.

6. US Missile Defense

The Associated Press (Pauline Jelinek, "BUSH TO DEPLOY MISSILE DEFENSE BY 2004," Washington, 12/17/02) and Reuters ("BUSH ORDERS MILITARY TO BUILD LIMITED MISSILE DEFENSE BY 2004," Washington, 12/17/02) reported that US President Bush on Tuesday ordered the military to begin deploying a national missile defense system with land- and sea-based interceptor rockets to be operational starting in 2004. The decision came despite last week's failure of an anti-missile test over the Pacific Ocean. In a statement, Bush said his goal was to "protect our citizens against what is perhaps the greatest danger of all -- catastrophic harm that may result from hostile states or terrorist groups armed with weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them." Defense officials, who asked not to be identified, said Bush was going ahead with an ambitious schedule to field 10 ground-based interceptors at Fort Greeley, Alaska, by 2004 and an additional 10 interceptors by 2005 or 2006. The initial defense is also expected to include Aegis warship-based missiles, and another Bush administration official said ground-based interceptors could also possibly be deployed at Vandenberg Air Force base in California. "Today I am pleased to announce that we will take another important step in countering these threats by beginning to field missile defense capabilities to protect the United States as well as our friends and allies," Bush said. "While modest, these capabilities will add to American security and serve as a starting point for improved and expanded capabilities later as further progress is made in researching and developing missile defense technologies and in light of changes in the threat," he added.

7. PRC UN Human Rights Inspectors

The Associated Press (Joe McDonald, "UN INVESTIGATORS TO BE INVITED TO CHINA," Beijing, 12/17/02) and The Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINA SAYS HUMAN RIGHTS TALKS WITH US PRODUCTIVE; NO INDICATION WHETHER SENSITIVE ISSUES WERE RAISED," Beijing, 12/17/02) reported that the PRC has agreed to issue unconditional invitations to UN investigators to

come and study issues of torture, religious freedom and arbitrary detention, a US envoy said Tuesday after two days of human rights talks. The officials also said they will invite leaders of a US government-financed commission on religious freedom to visit China, according to Assistant Secretary of State Lorne Craner, the State Department's top human rights official. Craner said he took the promise of invitations to UN investigators as a sign that the PRC is serious about trying to improve its human rights record. "You usually don't invite those people unless you're serious about addressing the issues they will raise," he stated. No date was set for the UN visits, Craner said, but "they said they would issue the invitations immediately." The PRC had promised earlier this year to arrange a visit by the UN torture investigator. But the UN human rights commissioner, Mary Robinson, said they had not agreed to UN demands that he be allowed to visit prisons of his choice and talk in private with inmates. "What is important about this renewed invitation is that it is unconditional," Craner said. In addition, he said the PRC had promised to invite UN investigators to look into issues of religious freedom and arbitrary detention.

8. PRC-US Military Relations

Reuters ("US LAUDS WARMER TIES WITH CHINA MILITARY," Shanghai, 12/17/02) reported that a senior US military officer closed a five-day visit to the PRC, hailing progress in closer military ties and expressing hope that the PRC can help resolve the crisis over the DPRK's nuclear program. Admiral Thomas Fargo, the highest-ranking US military official to visit the PRC since the spy plane crisis of April 2001, also stressed shared interests in the US-led war on terror but gave few details of his talks with the PRC officials. "First and foremost, I worry about conflict on the Korean peninsula," Fargo, head of the US Pacific Command, said in a speech delivered earlier Tuesday to students at Shanghai's prestigious Fudan University. "China ... is in a unique position to positively influence the outcome of this crisis. We look to China's strong and proactive assistance," he said.

9. Japan DPRK Abduction Victims

The Associated Press (Kenji Hall, "JAPANESE ABDUCTION VICTIMS MEET TO DISCUSS THEIR FATE, NORTH KOREA," Tokyo, 12/17/02) reported that for the first time since their homecoming in October, five Japanese kidnapped by DPRK agents decades ago are gathering this week to talk freely about a future they can hardly decide on their own. The five meeting in the northern coastal city of Niigata from Wednesday have been getting reacquainted with long-lost relatives and friends since returning to their hometowns two months ago. But with their fate still undecided, they have been reluctant to share their thoughts. "The two-day meeting is mostly designed to give them a chance to talk alone. They had requested time to do so," said Kazuhiro Araki, an official at a private support group for the abduction victims. Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe and special Cabinet representative Kyoko Nakayama are also scheduled to sit down with the five in Niigata - about 255 kilometers (160 miles) northwest of Tokyo - to discuss a financial assistance program for their families and the government's stance on stalled talks on normalizing relations with the DPRK, the Cabinet Office said.

10. Russia Role in DPRK Stand-off

The Associated Press ("RUSSIA OFFERS TO HELP SOOTHE TENSION OVER NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR INTENTIONS," Moscow, 12/17/02) reported that Russia is offering to use its good contacts with the DPRK leadership to help ease international tension caused by the DPRK moving forward with its nuclear program, a top diplomat said Tuesday. "We are prepared to make such steps and we have instruments no other country has - our rather strong contacts with the North

Korean leadership," Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov told Interfax news agency ahead of a planned visit by Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov to Japan, where the issue is expected to be raised. Still, Losyukov stressed the offer wasn't intended to be a form of mediation. "We wouldn't like to cruise between the parties with ultimatums and ask them who blames whom for what," he said. "Our job is to create an atmosphere in which these problems could be settled and, using the instruments available to us, to help the parties in the dispute settle mutual claims and concerns."

11. DMZ Machine Guns

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA PROTESTS NORTH KOREAN DEPLOYMENT OF SIX MACHINE GUNS IN BUFFER ZONE," Seoul, 12/17/02) reported that the DPRK has deployed six heavy machine guns inside a border buffer zone with the ROK in violation of the armistice that ended the Korean War, the ROK military said Tuesday. The DPRK smuggled four 7.62-millimeter caliber machine guns into the Demilitarized Zone, or DMZ, on Friday and two more on Monday, said 1st Lt. Yoon Won-jae, a Defense Ministry spokesman. Yoon had said the guns were withdrawn, but he later said they were still there. "The North will be responsible for any unfavorable incident," the ROK said in protest letters that were delivered to the DPRK at the border village of Panmunjom on Monday. The ROK is awaiting the DPRK's response.

II. Japan

1. Japanese Logistic Support for US

The Japan Times ("JAPAN MAY SEND SDF TO IRAQ IF HUSSEIN OUSTED," 12/07/02) reported that Japan is considering deploying Self-Defense Forces (SDF) troops in Iraq to help rebuild the country if US-led forces remove President Saddam Hussein from power, Cabinet ministers said. Japan is mulling "all kinds of options," Defense Agency chief Shigeru Ishiba says. Speaking at the Japan National Press Club, Ishiba said the government would have to establish a new law to enable such an SDF deployment because the assumed reconstruction support may not be carried out as a peacekeeping operation under the auspices of the UN. Ishiba also suggested that, if the SDF dispatch is to take place, measures should be considered to ease conditions for use of weapons by SDF members in order to ensure their safety. "(The assumed dispatch of the SDF) is not likely to be at sea," he said. "(The SDF) can flee (from danger if they are engaged in a naval mission) but they cannot do so on the ground. I believe it is important to ensure that (SDF troops) can use arms and move to safe places." Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda, meanwhile, told a regular news conference that "Assistance to (postwar) rehabilitation is important," adding, "Legislation will need to be drafted for that purpose." The government has reportedly set up a special task force under Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to draft a new law that would allow the deployment of troops in Iraq and nearby regions to help the US with postwar transport and logistic operations.

Kyodo ("AEGIS SHIP LEAVES ON SECURITY MISSION," Yokosuka, 12/17/02) reported that a Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) destroyer equipped with the advanced Aegis missile-defense system departed Monday for the Indian Ocean to step up Japan's logistic support for the US-led military operations now centered on Afghanistan. The destroyer Kirishima departs the MSDF Yokosuka base for the Indian Ocean. The vessel is dispatched upon the government's decision earlier this month based on the special antiterrorism law enacted last year. Government officials said the Kirishima will basically be used to provide security for the MSDF's refueling of US and British ships in the Arabian Sea. But Japan is reportedly also considering having the Kirishima protect Japanese tankers in the Persian Gulf if the US attacks Iraq. Critics, including some in the ruling coalition, said sending a destroyer with such high-tech air-defense capabilities goes beyond what Japan is allowed

to do under its antiwar Constitution. "It is very unfortunate," former Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Secretary General Hiromu Nonaka said. "My opposition (to the decision) will not change." Takenori Kanzaki, head of New Komeito, a coalition partner of the ruling LDP, said the dispatch of an Aegis ship is "regrettable." The Japan Federation of Bar Associations issued a statement protesting the dispatch of the Kirishima, saying it may be deviating from the basic principles of the special antiterrorism law, which bans the exercise of force. Defense Agency officials say Japan will not share with the US military any information that would directly lead to the use of force and it will carry out its own confirmation of information provided by the US.

2. Japan-US Military Cooperation

Kyodo ("ARMITAGE PUSHES FOR MISSILE SHIELD," Washington, 12/06/02) reported that US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage voiced hope that Japan will move beyond the current joint study phase to the development stage of a bilateral missile defense initiative. "Japan will have to make a developmental decision. That's one that she'll have to make," Armitage said in a telephone interview with Kyodo News. "The research phase that Japan has been involved in has been very helpful," said Armitage.

3. Armitage's Asian Tour

The Japan Times ("NO IMMEDIATE THREAT OF WAR, ARMITAGE TELLS JAPAN," 12/10/02) reported that US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage told Japanese officials that an Iraqi report on its weapons programs, submitted to UN headquarters in New York, will not immediately lead to war. During talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda at Tokyo, however, Armitage indicated that the US will retain its military strike option against Iraq, Fukuda said. "I think I made it clear that President (George W.) Bush has patience. He much prefers to have Iraq disarm herself," Armitage told reporters after the meeting. Armitage did not make any specific requests during the talks, saying it is entirely up to Japan what steps it will take, Fukuda said. Armitage strongly welcomed Japan's decision to dispatch one of its Aegis-equipped destroyers to the Indian Ocean this month to support US-led antiterrorism operations, Fukuda said. At a separate meeting, Vice Foreign Minister Yukio Takeuchi told Armitage that in the event of military strikes on Iraq, Japan will extend assistance for postwar reconstruction of the country, and will help with refugees in neighboring countries, a Foreign Ministry official said. In his meeting with Fukuda, meanwhile, Armitage said the US will seriously consider whether former US Army Sgt. Charles Robert Jenkins, who allegedly deserted to the DPRK in 1965 and were married to Hitomi Soga, one of the five known surviving Japanese abductees to the DPRK who came back to Japan, would face a court-martial if the DPRK allows him to come to Japan, Fukuda said. Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, in her meeting with Armitage, said it was regrettable that the US turned down Japan's recent request to hand over a US Marine Corps major suspected of trying to rape a Filipino woman in Okinawa, according to a Foreign Ministry official.

4. US View on Japanese Nuclear Armament

Kyodo (Todd Miller, "U.S. EXPERTS WEIGH ODDS OF JAPAN GOING NUCLEAR," Washington, 12/06/02) reported that under perceived growing threats from neighboring countries, including nuclear weapons-seeking DPRK and a rising China, the possibility of Japan building an atomic arsenal is gaining more attention by US experts. At a conference in November hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on nuclear nonproliferation issues, US experts on Asian security held a panel discussion on the potential of Japan and other Asian countries acquiring

nuclear weapons. It included Kurt M. Campbell, former deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asia and the Pacific, and Leonard S. Spector, former deputy secretary of energy for arms control and nonproliferation. Campbell said there is no reason for immediate alarm over nuclear arms issues in Asia but noted more discussion should take a higher priority in the US government. He outlined "10 potential triggers" that might lead countries to re-evaluate their nonnuclear status. Near the top of the list and of key concern for Japan were "rogue states," like DPRK. Another on the list was "regime pessimism," in which a country that once had a dynamic future now faces economic stagnation and the rise of nearby countries. "Obviously the country in Asia that all of us are concerned about would be Japan," Campbell said. He also said the "most worrisome" relationship in Asia is between Japan and the PRC. Japan is "extraordinarily anxious about China's rise," he said. The panelists agreed that the near-term problem is the relationship between Japan and the PRC, as opposed to between the US and the PRC. Benjamin L. Self, a senior associate at the Henry L. Stimson Center, said he is "not concerned" about Japan regarding nuclear weapons, and he feels "particularly sanguine" compared with Campbell's analysis. Spector, deputy director of the Center for Nonproliferation Studies of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, said the debate about a nuclear Japan is nothing new, noting that in 1976, Japan mulled joining the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Spector said the "most serious challenges" might come in the ROK and Taiwan, where the threats are more immediate and the commitments to nonproliferation are "perhaps less ingrained than in Japan." Takehiro Funakoshi, first secretary at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, said at another panel discussion that there are two reasons why Japan has no interest in arming itself with nuclear weapons. "Japan is quite totally, economically interdependent with the international community," Funakoshi said. "So if we receive economic sanctions, that very weight will fall into a very difficult situation. "The second reason is that now if you look at the security environment in Asia compared with other regions, the security infrastructure in Asia is working," Funakoshi said. "So the security infrastructure in Asia is kind of maintained by the division of labor between the U.S. and other allies."

5. Japan-US Soldier Rape Case

The Japan Times ("JAPAN WON'T PRESS FOR MARINE RAPE SUSPECT," 12/07/02) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said that Japan will not make further requests that a US Marine Corps major suspected of attempted rape be handed over. Koizumi made the comment after the US, during a bilateral Joint Committee meeting in Tokyo, rejected Japan's request for Maj. Michael Brown, 39, to be handed over in connection with the alleged incident in early November involving a Philippine woman in Okinawa. "Now that the US side has promised to cooperate in investigating the case, the two sides should do their utmost to move the case forward," Koizumi said. Commenting on the matter, Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said she will discuss steps to improve implementation of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) during upcoming foreign and defense ministers' talks in Washington. "The (US) response was regrettable," Kawaguchi told a news conference. Kawaguchi emphasized, however, that Japan's demand will be limited to improving the implementation of the SOFA, not for a revision of the agreement itself. On the other hand, Okinawa Gov. Keiichi Inamine reiterated his demand that the SOFA be revised to ensure suspects are handed over before indictment.

Kyodo ("U.S. SUSPECT IN RAPE CASE 'INTOXICATED'," Naha, 12/08/02) reported that a senior US Marine Corps serviceman suspected of attempting to rape a Philippine woman in Okinawa was allegedly at least slightly intoxicated with alcohol during the incident, police sources said. According to police investigations, Brown, who had been drinking alcohol at the base on Nov. 2, demanded that the woman, whom he had only met that day, drive him to his home, which was off the base. Shortly after they left, he instructed her to park on a deserted road and allegedly attempted to rape her, the

police said. The woman fought back and fled from the vehicle, but returned shortly afterward, only for Brown to once again attempt to rape her. Brown also destroyed the woman's cellular phone in what the police believe was an effort to prevent her from reporting the incident, according to the police.

Kyodo ("PROSECUTORS GIVEN CASE AGAINST MARINE RAPE SUSPECT," Naha, 12/10/02) reported that Okinawa Prefectural Police turned over to prosecutors their case against a US Marine Corps major suspected of attempting to rape a Philippine woman in Okinawa last month and destroying her mobile phone so she couldn't report the assault. Police obtained an arrest warrant for Brown on Dec. 3 and asked the US military to hand him over. But two days later, the US refused to hand him over before indictment. Brown will be transferred to the custody of the Japanese authorities should the Naha District Public Prosecutor's Office charge him.

6. Conference on Non-nuclear Proliferation

The Japan Times ("ANTIPROLIFERATION MEETING KICKS OFF," 12/10/02) reported that a two-day international conference opened in Tokyo on safeguard measures against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, with about 35 countries taking part. The meeting, hosted by the Japanese government with the cooperation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), will focus on issues related to the IAEA's so-called Additional Protocol, which aims to strengthen IAEA's capability to detect undeclared nuclear materials and activities. IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei and Senior Vice Foreign Minister Tetsuro Yano are also taking part in the International Conference for Wider Adherence to Strengthened IAEA Safeguards. ElBaradei said IAEA weapons inspections in Iraq have gotten off to a good start and he hopes Iraq continues to cooperate. On the report concerning DPRK's uranium enrichment program, he said, "The existence of such a program would be a concern to all. I sincerely hope North Korea will rethink its possession."

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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