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I. United States

1. Cross-Straits Military Relations

Agence France-Presse ("RARE TAIPEI-BEIJING MILITARY DIALOGUE HELD," 07/17/02) and the Associated Press ("TAIWAN, CHINA MILITARY OFFICIALS MEET," Taipei, 07/17/02) Taiwanese lawmakers and retired generals met secretly with high-ranking PRC military officers last month in Beijing and discussed defense issues, an organizer of the meeting said. The gathering was the first time in recent years that retired Taiwanese generals met face to face with other PRC military officers on the mainland, said Chou Chih-cheng, head of the Asian-Pacific Security Studies Foundation. Three Taiwanese lawmakers, six retired military officers and six scholars participated in the exchange, which might be followed by other meetings in the future, he said. Chou, a retired lieutenant general and former lawmaker, would not name the PRC officers who attended the conference. He said that ruling Democratic Progressive Party lawmakers Lee Wen-chung and Chen Chung-shin went to the meeting. The third legislator was Chen Shei-saint of the Nationalist Party. During the conference, the two sides discussed military issues and "steered clear of politics," said Chou, who declined to provide details of the discussion. "It was a good opportunity to open the door, to sit down and have some tea and just chat," Chou said.

2. Russia on DPRK-ROK Dialogue

The Associated Press (Anatoly Medetsky, "NORTH KOREA READY FOR DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH KOREA," Vladivostok, 07/17/02) reported that a Russian presidential envoy said Wednesday that DPRK leader Kim Jong Il is ready for renewed dialogue with the ROK but remains wary of the US. "Pyongyang today is an enterprising partner engaged in a search for ways out of the crisis situation and wanting to establish good neighborly relations," said Konstantin Pulikovsky, Russian President Vladimir Putin's special envoy to the Russian Far East. "The North Korean leadership however treats outside intervention with suspicion and believes that the United States plays a negative role in inter-Korean relations," he said.

3. ROK Visas Policy

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA TO ALLOW ETHNIC KOREANS IN CHINA, RUSSIA TO LIVE AND WORK IN KOREA," Seoul, 07/17/02) reported the ROK government said Wednesday it will allow some ethnic Koreans living in the PRC and Russia to live and work in the ROK. An estimated 1.9 million ethnic Koreans live in the PRC and 520,000 in Russia, after millions emigrated last century to avoid Japan's colonial rule of Korea from 1910-45. Until now, they were barred from living, working or buying property in the ROK and were treated like other foreigners when applying for visas. However, from November, those aged 40 or older with relatives in the ROK will be allowed to stay for up to two years, the government said Wednesday in a news release. They will only be allowed to work in restaurants, factories and manual jobs. The government estimates tens of thousands of Korean-Chinese are already working illegally in the ROK, where they can earn up to 10 times more than in the PRC.

4. PRC-US Cold War Missing Search

Reuters ("U.S. TEAM IN CHINA TO LOOK FOR COLD WAR MISSING," Beijing, 07/17/02) reported that a US Army team arrived in the PRC on Wednesday on the first mission allowed by the PRC to search for the remains of US soldiers who went missing in action during the Cold War, the US embassy said. The eight-member team from the US Army Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI) will look for the remains of two pilots whose plane crashed in northeastern PRC on a CIA spying mission in 1952. "The U.S. government is pleased that the Chinese government has allowed the CILHI team to search for the remains of Robert Snoddy and Norman Schwartz," the U.S. embassy statement said. "The U.S. government is hopeful that this search will yield results that bring comfort and closure to the families of these two brave Americans." The pilots' charred bodies were believed to have been buried at the crash site.

5. Japan Development Aid Budget

Asia Pulse, "JAPAN FOREIGN MINISTER CALLS FOR AID BUDGET INCREASE," Tokyo, 07/17/02) reported that Japan Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said Wednesday that the fiscal 2003 official development assistance (ODA) budget should be increased. "ODA is important for humanitarian reasons and its budget should increase in line with Japan's reform plans," Kawaguchi told the Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee. Regarding the idea to separate the bureau from the ministry and create an independent aid agency, Kawaguchi said, "the ODA constitutes an important diplomatic tool. I doubt if it is appropriate to have a separate cabinet minister handle it." Kawaguchi also said her plan to appoint an official of the Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry as the head of the Economic Cooperation Bureau is part of the ministry's reform. The bureau at the Foreign Ministry is in charge of Japan's ODA operations. "The ministry needs to promote further reforms in terms of transparency and efficiency, and I want to make new personnel plans taking that into account,"

Kawaguchi said.

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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