NAPSNet Daily Report 19 June, 2002

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 19 June, 2002", NAPSNet Daily Report, June 19, 2002, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-19-june-2002/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. Cross-Straits Relations
2. ROK, Japan, and US at TCOG
3. ROK Domestic Politics
4. ROK DPRK Refugee Preparation
5. PRC-ROK DPRK Asylum Seekers
6. The UN on Media Coverage of DPRK Asylum-Seekers
7. DPRK KEDO Training

II. Republic of Korea 1. Nuclear Technique Transfer to DPRK
2. ROK on DPRK Aid
3. PRC-DPRK Relations
4. Asylum Seekers in ROK

III. Japan 2. Misuse of Personal Data by SDF
3. Japan Nuclear Policy

I. United States

1. Cross-Straits Relations

Reuters ("TAIWAN'S TOP SCIENTIST VISITS CHINA," Taipei, 06/17/02) reported that Taiwan's top scientist, Nobel laureate Lee Yuan-tseh, is in Beijing for a visit billed by Taiwanese media as a major breakthrough in political ties with the PRC. Lee, who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1986, flew from Taipei to Beijing on Sunday to attend a seminar on frontiers of science organized by Qinghua University in honour of a fellow Nobel laureate, his spokeswoman said on Monday. Lee, who last visited Beijing five years ago, is due to return on June 22. "His trip is purely academic. It has nothing to do with politics," the spokeswoman said by telephone. But Taiwan's China Times said it was a "major breakthrough" because the PRC had considered Lee "persona non grata" after his support for President Chen Shui-bian of the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

2. ROK, Japan, and US at TCOG

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA WELCOME US OFFER OF "SERIOUS" DIALOGUE WITH NORTH KOREA," 06/17/02) reported that the US said that Japan and the ROK had welcomed its offer to conduct a "serious" dialogue with the DPRK, and pledged to conduct their own parallel engagement with the DPRK. The comments followed talks here in which senior US officials briefed Japan and the ROK on their plans to reinvigorate dialogue with the DPRK. "The three delegations shared the view that they are now facing a critical opportunity to improve relations with North Korea," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said in a statement released here. "They reconfirmed the importance of engaging North Korea in the international community through constructive dialogue, which would greatly enhance prospects for peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia." Boucher said delegates at the talks also affirmed the importance of "comprehensive and flexible talks" with the DPRK and called on the DPRK to adopt a "constructive attitude." The US delegation at the talks, which are known as the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) was led by Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly. South Korea was represented by Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Lee Tae-sik, and Japan sent Director-General of Asian and Oceanian Affairs Hitoshi Tanaka.

3. ROK Domestic Politics

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN OPPOSITION GAINS POPULARITY AFTER ELECTION VICTORY," 06/17/02) reported that ROK opposition leader Lee Hoi-Chang has surged into a significant lead in opinion polls as his presidential election rival Roh Moo-Hyun saw the ruling party plunge. Lee of the Grand National Party (GNP) won 41.4 percent of public support in a poll published Monday by the Dong-A Ilbo newspaper. Roh of the Millennium Democratic Party won just 26.8 percent. Other newspaper surveys showed the former Supreme Court judge maintaining a comfortable lead over Roh, a former labor activist, ahead of the December election. The two had been running neck-and-neck before last week's local elections in which Lee's party scored a landslide victory over the MDP which was founded by President Kim Dae-Jung. Roh said Monday he was ready to hold a new election for a presidential candidate if there was a stronger contender. "I am willing to give up all my powers, to have anyone join the party and run in the nomination race," Roh said. Reformists have blamed the scandals involving Kim's aides and sons for the election defeat. And Roh has promised to change the MDP which experts predicted would mean renaming the MDP and moving further away from President Kim, who quit the party last month saying he wanted to be above politics in his final months in office. Some MDP lawmakers have proposed the party bring in Chung Mong-Joon, the ROK's main organizer of the World Cup, an event which has sparked a wave of patriotism. Chung's public ratings have doubled to 15 percent as the ROK has reached the second round of the World Cup tournament. Chung, a son of the late Hyundai group patriarch Chung Ju-Yong, has not yet said whether he will stand in the presidential election in December.

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT'S SECOND SON APPEARS BEFORE PROSECUTORS," 06/19/02) reported that ROK prosecutors questioned the second son of President Kim Dae-Jung over accusations that he took bribes and laundered money through his father's peace foundation. Kim Hong-Up, 52, denied the allegations to journalists as he entered the Seoul prosecutors' office but made no other comment. The second of the president's three sons is accused of receiving at least 1.1 billion won (895,000 dollars) in bribes from businessmen through his friends. Hong-Up can be held for 48 hours after which prosecutors must decide whether to arrest or release him. His 38-year-old brother, Kim Hong-Gul, is in jail awaiting trial on charges of bribery, influence peddling and tax evasion. The second son has denied influence-peddling charges. But Hong-Up's associates have been arrested and charged with accepting money from businessmen, and

prosecutors have traced his financial transactions. "Our investigation will focus on whether Mr. Kim Hong-Up exterted influence after taking bribes," prosecutor Park Mahn told reporters. Hong-Up also faces accusations of laundering 2.8 billion won through the Peace Foundation for the Asia-Pacific Region, a private think-tank founded by Kim Dae-Jung to promote ways of ending conflict in the region.

4. ROK DPRK Refugee Preparation

Reuters (Oh Jung-hwa, "S.KOREA PREPARES FOR INFLUX OF ESCAPEES FROM NORTH," Seoul, 06/17/02) reported that the ROK said Monday it planned to expand a special reception center and find more premises for a rising number of defectors fleeing the DPRK. So far this year 479 DPRK asylum seekers have fled to the ROK compared with 583 in the whole of last year and 312 in 2000 -- a trend that has prompted ROK officials to draw up contingency plans for possible larger-scale refugee flows. The ROK's Unification Ministry said its reception center in Kyonggi province outside Seoul already held more than the 150 people it was designed for and more room was needed. "The number will surely increase. North Koreans have no food and they have now found many ways to get to South Korea," a ministry official said by telephone.

5. PRC-ROK DPRK Asylum Seekers

Reuters (Kim Myong-hwan, "S.KOREA CAN SHOW CHINA CAUSED EMBASSY SCUFFLE," Seoul, 06/18/02) reported that the ROK has "decisive" evidence showing the PRC was responsible for violent scuffles last week at the ROK's consulate in Beijing, which sparked a row over DPRK refugees, a foreign ministry source in Seoul said. But while the ROK wants to make it clear that the PRC sparked the scuffle, it also wants to avoid getting drawn into a blaming game with the PRC, the official, who declined to be identified, said. We have witnesses and other proof," said the official. "But we can't resolve the issue by blaming each other." He said the two governments were talking through diplomatic channels to try to find a solution to the dispute. Two women entered the South Korean consulate on Monday taking to 20 the number of people seeking refuge from the DPRK, the latest in a stream of asylum seekers entering diplomatic missions in Beijing this year. There was no word on the fate of two other DPRK asylum seekers holed up at the nearby Canadian embassy for more than a week. The PRC tightened security sharply at the ROK consulate on Tuesday. So far this year, 479 DPRK defectors have fled to the ROK, compared with 583 in the whole of last year and 312 in 2000.

The Associated Press (Joe McDonald, "CHINA SAYS DETAINED ASYLUM-SEEKER TREATED HUMANELY, SOUTH KOREA SAYS NO PROGRESS ON WINNING HIS RELEASE," Beijing, 06/18/02) reported that the PRC said Tuesday that a DPRK asylum-seeker seized by PRC guards at an ROK visa office is being treated humanely, but an ROK official reported no progress in talks on winning his release. Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said PRC authorities are investigating the identity of the man. "I can assure you that he is being treated in a humanitarian manner," Liu said at a regular press briefing. He said the PRC would try to resolve the situation "in accordance with international law and China's domestic laws." An ROK official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there has been "no progress at all" in talks on winning the release of the man or other asylum-seekers. The man's son, who entered the visa office with him, is still there.

6. The UN on Media Coverage of DPRK Asylum-Seekers

Agence France-Presse ("SPOTLIGHT PUTS NORTH KOREAN ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN DANGER: UN

OFFICIAL," UN, 06/17/02) reported that publicity for DPRK asylum seekers who are fleeing their country and seeking asylum in embassies in the PRC is putting them in danger, a senior UN refugee official has warned. "Publicity is not in the interest of the North Koreans. It's not productive either," said Anne Willem Bijleveld, communications director for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in an interview with the Korea Herald newspaper published Monday. Bijleveld said negotiating asylum for any nationality was a sensitive task. "You have to find your strategy to reach the objective. In these specific cases however discretion is probably a better weapon than publicity," the official said. "We always have to do that in cooperation with the host governments. So it's not always very easy." Groups helping DPRK defectors have tipped off the media before recent operations to get them into embassies, which has angered the PRC. Bijleveld highlighted the case of seven DPRK refugees who were detained in 2000 in Russia, which sent them back to the PRC which in turn repatriated the asylum seekers. "We had many discussions with Russia in order to find an arrangement for them," said the refugee official. "But Russia sent them back to China. The reason was because it came out in the newspapers."

7. DPRK KEDO Training

Reuters ("N.KOREA WORKERS TO TRAIN IN SOUTH ON NUCLEAR POWER," Seoul, 06/17/02) reported that about 300 DPRK power engineers are to be trained in the ROK on operating nuclear plants as part of a project being run by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO). The ROK's state-run Korea Electric Power Corp (KEPCO) will conduct the training from November until the end of 2004, a KEPCO spokesman told Reuters. KEPCO, whose nuclear power generation covers 40 percent of the ROK's total power consumption, is building the reactors in the form of a turnkey project, he said.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Nuclear Technique Transfer to DPRK

Joongang Ilbo ("500 N.K. TECHNICIANS EXPECTED IN SOUTH IN NOVEMBER," Seoul, 06/17/02) reported that the DPRK is to dispatch 500 technician to ROK to receive training for two- hree months by this coming November as disclosed by high-level official of Korea Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEPCO) last Monday in relation to light water reactor project taking place in DPRK. KEPCO has proceeded to training DPRK technicians at DPRK's Shinpo of South Hamgyeong region where industrial project is taking place nearly two weeks ago. As soon as the local workers are done with theoretical training, they would leave for the ROK for field training. The DPRK's technicians will be grouped into groups of around 20-30 people and visit nuclear power plants in Uljin and Kori in ROK. The latest selected technicians have reportedly passed written tests for nuclear power plant and English.

2. ROK on DPRK Aid

Joongang Ilbo ("SURVEY FINDS MOST BACK AID TO NORTH," Seoul, 06/17/02) reported that two out of three ROK citizens believe that the level of humanitarian aid to DPRK -- now 2,450 won per person ($1.90) -- should be maintained or raised. The Ministry of Unification surveyed 1,500 people over age 20. Some 21.3 percent said support to DPRK should be increased, 44.8 percent said it was adequate, 22.4 percent said it should be decreased and 8.8 percent said there was no need to support DPRK. The respondents split almost evenly when asked their overall impression of DPRK:

48.6 percent said it was positive and 47.5 percent were negative. The policy of reconciliation with DPRK was backed by 73 percent; 20.9 percent were against it. Asked what was most remarkable in inter-Korean relations since the 2000 summit, 59.3 percent named the family reunions.

3. PRC-DPRK Relations

Chosun Ilbo (Yeo Shi-dong, "NK TO DISPATCH INVESTIGATION TEAM TO BEIJING," Beijing, 06/17/02) reported that the DPRK is to dispatch an investigation team to Beijing in the near future with regard to the series of incidents of defectors entering foreign diplomatic missions in PRC, Hong Kong's Ming Pao Daily News reported Saturday. The daily said the team will discuss ways to cooperate with the PRC in order to keep DPRK residents from fleeing to other nations as well as probe and confirm the identities of some twenty DPRK defectors in foreign consulates in Beijing as of now; 18 in the ROK Consulate General and two in the Canadian Embassy. The paper quoted a diplomatic source in Beijing as saying the frequent incidents during the recent three months has made PRC-DPRK relations shaky.

4. Asylum Seekers in ROK

Chosun Ilbo ("NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS TOTAL 488 TO DATE," Seoul, 06/17/02) reported that findings by the National Intelligence Service show the numbers of North Korean defectors coming to ROK have been sharply on the rise since the late 1990s. The NIS reports, as of last Monday, a total of 488 asylum seekers entered ROK so far this year with 52 arriving in the first ten days of June alone. Since 1998, when 71 people defected from the Stalinist state, the number of DPRK defectors arrivals has been growing about twofold on a yearly basis, to reach 538 last year.

III. Japan

1. Japanese Armed Attack Situations Bill

The Asahi Shimbun ("MINSHUTO: SCRAP MILITARY LEGISLATION," Tokyo, 06/12/02) reported that Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan, DPJ) leaders made clear they would demand the scrapping of bills outlining the government response to a military threat, despite pleas from the ruling coalition. "There hasn't been adequate deliberation on the bills, and the content has several problems," Minshuto Secretary-General Naoto Kan said at a Minshuto meeting Tuesday. At Tuesday's meeting, Minshuto agreed to reject any requests by the ruling coalition to revise the bills during the current session. The opposition leaders also said they would oppose extending the current Diet session, scheduled to end on June 19.

2. Misuse of Personal Data by SDF

The Asahi Shimbun ("AGENCY ADMITS BREAKING LAW," Tokyo, 06/12/02) and the Japan Times ("KEEPING DATA ON INFO SEEKERS OK: probe," Tokyo, 06/12/02) reported that the Defense Agency, which initially denied conducting personal background checks on citizens exercising their lawful right to request information, admitted in its in-house report that it broke the law. And it revealed yet another of its offices had taken part. The agency said a Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) officer's compilation of a list based on the background checks was illegal. It also said an Air SDF information officer had broken the law by adding information to the ASDF's version of the list and passing it on to another officer outside his office. The report also implicated for the first time that the Defense Facilities Administration Agency (DFAA) ---a part of the Defense Agency that

manages bases and other SDF properties--- compiled a list that included the names and occupations of information seekers and posted it on its local area network (LAN) computer system. The report said the Defense Agency as a whole was not sufficiently aware of privacy rights, and pledged to correct the situation with an in-house training program. However, the report fails to answer the fundamental question of why the agency had to sort out information seekers by such categories as "the media" and "(voluntary) ombudsman."

The Japan Times ("YAMASAKI SUPPRESSED DEFENSE REPORT," Tokyo, 06/13/02) reported that Taku Yamasaki, secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), effectively admitted Wednesday that he instructed the Defense Agency to withhold its full in-house report on how the agency systematically compiled private data on individuals seeking public information. The confusion began early in the afternoon, when senior members of three ruling parties reportedly ordered Defense Agency officials to release a four-page summary of the issue, instead of the more than 40-page report it originally compiled. The Defense Agency later released the full document after reporters criticized the summary for lacking depth. Yamasaki also admitted that the politicians tried to change the wording of the report. The passage in question says the agency's actions "may naturally be considered as an attempt to cover up the existence of the lists." "We told the Defense Agency to clarify the wording so as not to cause a misunderstanding with the public," Yamasaki said.

3. Japan Nuclear Policy

The Asahi Shimbun ("SHINZO ABE: JAPAN'S POLICY REMAINS: NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS," 06/12/02) reported that the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe denied in an interview with the Asahi Shimbun a report carried by a weekly magazine that he is an advocate of Japan's nuclear armament. A lecture that Abe gave at Waseda University believed to have led to the controversial remarks by Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda that the Constitution does not ban Japan from possessing nuclear weapons. Asked if it is true that Abe said the possession of nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) does not violate the Constitution, he said, "I presented the government view and explanations given by Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi in 1959 and 1960 to the effect that the Constitution does not necessarily ban the possession of nuclear weapons as long as they are kept to a minimum and are tactical. As a matter of course, I said, 'Japan stands by the three non-nuclear principles and possession of nuclear weapons is impossible.' Just to make sure, I also later affirmed once again that policy debate and interpretation of the Constitution are not the same." He also said, "I never said the possession of ICBM does not violate the Constitution. In answer to the question, 'What about ICBMs?' I tried to explain that it is OK to shoot down ICBMs above Japan but it is unacceptable for Japan to fire ICBMs to attack others. But my answer was cut off halfway. Later, I clearly said that ICBMs that attack cities are unacceptable."

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:

Ilmin Internationl Relations Institute
BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies

Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@online.ru
Moscow, Russian Federation

Wu Chunsi: cswu@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-1--june-2002/

Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org