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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. ROK Views of Kim Jong-il
2. DPRK Participation in ARF
3. PRC-Taiwan Talks
4. PRC Threat to Taiwan
II. Republic of Korea 1. DPRK-ROK Summit
2. Inter-Korean Cultural Exchange
3. Investment in DPRK
III. Japan 1. Japanese-DPRK Talks
2. Japanese-ROK Talks
3. Japanese-ROK Relations
4. Japanese Constitutional Revision
5. Japanese-Russian Relations
6. Japanese Nonproliferation Policy
IV. Announcements 1. DPRK Article

I. United States

1. ROK Views of Kim Jong-il

The Los Angeles Times (Sonni Efron, "SOUTH KOREA SEES A NEW SIDE OF NORTH'S KIM," Seoul, 4/21/00) reported that, in contrast to earlier portrayals in the ROK of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il as a "reckless playboy," ROK officials and analysts now describe Kim as pragmatic, prudent and knowledgeable. An unnamed senior ROK official said that Kim is believed to have a genius-level IQ of 150 or 160. The official stated, "Previous governments postulated Kim Jong Il as a wacko, but researchers tell us, 'No, Kim Jong Il is very talented.'" An unnamed intelligence source described him as a "computer wizard" who uses the Internet, is fascinated with new technologies, and is determined to develop the DPRK's software industry. An unnamed ROK scholar said that although

Kim has not left the DPRK since succeeding his father in 1994, he is extremely well-informed about world affairs and reportedly watches a satellite television system in his office tuned to ROK TV. [Ed. note: This article was included as a Top Story in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 21, 2000.]

2. DPRK Participation in ARF

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN WELCOMES NORTH KOREA'S ARF BID," Tokyo, 4/21/00) reported that Japan's Foreign Minister Yohei Kono on Friday welcomed the DPRK's bid to join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF). Kono said, "generally speaking, I feel it is welcome that North Korea comes to a multilateral forum, as the country has not had so many bilateral meetings either. However, it should meet the existing rules within the ASEAN and the ARF. But I don't think there are so many people who have negative feelings toward North Korea's participation." ASEAN is seen as likely to approve the DPRK's participation in ARF as an observer before the forum convenes in Bangkok on July 27.

3. PRC-Taiwan Talks

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT-ELECT CHEN OPEN FOR TALKS ON CONFEDERATION WITH CHINA," Taipei, 4/21/00) and the Associated Press (William Foreman, "TAIWAN LEADER MENTIONS REUNIFYING," Taipei, 4/21/00) reported that Taiwan president-elect Chen Shui-bian said on Friday that he is open for discussions on forming a confederation with the PRC, an idea first brought up by Sun Yun-suan, a senior adviser to retiring Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, last week. Chen said, "a confederation system is a breakthrough option. There is plenty of room for discussions -- whether it is feasible or whether a consensus can be reached here. As the country's new leader, I have no right to do things my way. I have to listen to different views." However, the new proposal was immediately dismissed by Yu Keli, deputy director of the Institute of Taiwan Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Yu said, "it does not comply with our 'one country, two systems' policy. Our principle is there is only one China (and Taiwan is part of it). I'm not optimistic on the development of bilateral ties if he (Chen) doesn't accept the one China principle. As Taiwan's new leader, he first has to say publicly that he is a Chinese. So far I haven't heard the new leader say he is."

4. PRC Threat to Taiwan

South China Morning Post (No Kwai-Yan, "60PC BELIEVE BEIJING WAR THREAT REAL," Hong Kong, 4/21/00) reported that the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at the Chinese University interviewed 809 Hong Kong residents April 18-19 and found that 6 out of 10 respondents believe that the PRC would go to war if Taiwan declared independence. 73 percent were opposed to Taiwan's independence and more than 63 percent feared any such move would threaten Hong Kong's economy. Some 72 percent and 58 percent respectively also feared that independence would harm cross-strait relations and regional stability. However, 54 percent did not feel that the cross-strait atmosphere was tense. 58 percent thought the relationship would not worsen in the next few months. Research officer Dr. Timothy Wong Ka-ying said that Hong Kong people were not nervous about the cross-strait relationship because they believed that the PRC's determination to use force would serve to deter Taiwan from further irritating the PRC government. 60 percent agreed that the Taiwan government should adopt the PRC policy. 65 percent recognized that the "one-China" policy was a precondition when handling cross-strait relationships. 72 percent of respondents also called on Taiwan to abide by the "one China" policy. However, Dr. Wong said that the findings did not

mean that Hong Kong people agreed with all of the PRC's policies on Taiwan and cited the policy on how Hong Kong media should deal with reports on Taiwan independence. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 21, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-ROK Summit

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "SEOUL TO SEND PYONGYANG THREE-MEMBER DELEGATE LIST FOR PRE- SUMMIT TALKS," Seoul, 04/21/00) reported that the ROK will send a final message to the DPRK on Friday regarding the preparatory talks for the inter-Korean summit in June. The ROK's message will include a list of the members of the ROK delegation and other procedural matters. The ROK is also expected to accept the DPRK's Wednesday counterproposal, which called for the size of each delegation to be adjusted to three official members and three assistants. These and other decisions were made at the inaugural meeting of the Summit Preparation Committee, an interagency panel responsible for preparations for the June 12-14 meeting. The ROK delegation list was not available prior to the committee meeting, but officials said that either Hwang Won-tak, senior presidential secretary on foreign affairs and national security, or Vice Unification Minister Yang Young-shik would lead the ROK team.

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "UNFOUNDED REPORTS COULD LEAD TO CANCELLATION OF SOUTH- NORTH SUMMIT, PRESIDENT'S SPOKESMAN SAYS," Seoul, 04/21/00) and Chosun Ilbo (Shin Jong-rok, "CHONG WA DAE DENIES RETURNING NK PRISONERS," Seoul, 04/20/00) reported that ROK government officials reacted angrily on April 20 to recent news reports about the inter-Korean summit talks. The officials said that most media reports on the planned meeting were "guesswork" and that they could impede the promotion of the talks. Chong Wa Dae spokesman Park Joon-young said, "a minor thing could cause the cancellation of the summit itself. These unfounded news reports may hamper the promotion of this grand national task." Park issued the statement shortly after the Munhwa Ilbo daily reported that the ROK government was considering releasing former Communists who are serving lengthy prison terms in the ROK. The Munhwa report came one day after government officials denied a Hankyoreh Shinmun article that claimed that the ROK government decided to grant 200,000 tons of fertilizer to the DPRK prior to the summit talks. Park and other senior administration officials flatly denied the report on the prisoners, saying that it was mere speculation. The newspaper claimed that the story was based on the comments of a senior ruling party official. Lee Bong-jo, the Chong Wa Dae secretary for unification affairs, said that ROK President Kim Dae-jung and DPRK leader Kim Jong-il would not touch on the release of Communist prisoners in the summit meeting. Park said he hoped that the media would handle the inter-Korean summit talks with more caution than other political and social issues

2. Inter-Korean Cultural Exchange

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Chang-kyu, "SOUTH-NORTH CYBER PADUK MATCH," Seoul, 04/20/00) reported that an Internet Paduk (Go) match will be held in June between ROK and DPRK web-surfers. The on-line game company Joy4You announced on April 19 that they will hold the first "South-North Korea Internet Go Championship" in Seoul and Pyongyang. A spokesman at Joy4You said that they contacted their DPRK partner, dpkorea.com, and confirmed details for the event.

3. Investment in DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Choi Won-gi, "AMCHAM, FKI TO ESTABLISH JOINT NK INVESTMENT COMMITTEE," Seoul, 04/20/00) reported that a "Joint Investment Committee for North Korea" (tentative title) will be established to help ROK and foreign companies discuss joint investments and business opportunities in the DPRK market. Jeffrey Jones, DPRK Committee Chairperson of the American Chamber of Commerce (Amcham), announced on April 20 that an organization to support companies seeking business opportunities in the DPRK market would be established in conjunction with the Federation of Korean Industries (FKI). Jones said that "it is important to establish a cooperative system between South Korean companies and foreign companies and organizations including Amcham and the European Union (EU) in order to succeed in the North Korean market. I have reached an agreement with Sohn Byung- doo, the vice chairman of the FKI, to establish a joint committee organized by Amcham and the FKI."

III. Japan

1. Japanese-DPRK Talks

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPANESE-DPRK TALKS TO BEGIN IN MAY," 04/18/2000) reported that according to governmental sources on April 17, the next round of the Japanese-DPRK normalization talks would be held from May 22 to 25. The talks would cover the issue of the DPRK's alleged abduction of Japanese civilians and the issue of compensation for Japanese colonization. Both Japanese and DPRK governments are now coordinating the issue of the homecoming of Japanese women married to DPRK men.

2. Japanese-ROK Talks

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Chiharu Mori, "JAPAN AND ROK AGREE ON IMPORTANCE OF JAPANESE-US-ROK INFORMATION EXCHANGE IN DEALING WITH DPRK," Seoul, 04/19/2000) reported that Kojiro Takano, Japanese Ambassador for Japanese-DPRK normalization talks, met with ROK Foreign and Trade Minister Lee Joung- binn in Seoul on April 19. Both sides agreed that given the future progress of Japanese-DPRK normalization talks and DPRK-ROK talks, information exchange among Japan, the US and the ROK would be even more important. Takano said, "(During my meeting with the DPRK side,) I felt their strong will to (successfully) conclude the (Japanese-DPRK) talks."

3. Japanese-ROK Relations

The Daily Yomiuri ("POLITICAL FLURRY DELAYS VISIT OF ROK'S KIM," 04/21/2000) reported that Japan and the ROK agreed to postpone an official visit to Japan by ROK President Kim Dae-jung that had been planned before July's summit of the Group of Eight (G8) in Okinawa Prefecture. Both governments are trying to reschedule Kim's visit, which is likely to be realized in the second half of the year.

4. Japanese Constitutional Revision

The Daily Yomiuri ("SURVEY: 60% SUPPORT REVISING CONSTITUTION," 04/15/2000) reported that the Yomiuri Shimbun conducted two surveys on March 18 and 19 about revising the Japanese Constitution. One survey indicated that 60 percent of 1,935 respondents support proposals to revise the constitution, while 27 percent are opposed. The report said that the latest findings point to a noticeable increase in the percentage of respondents over the age of 70 who support constitutional

revisions. The report also said that this was the first time that more than half of respondents from all age brackets said that they support constitutional reform. In another survey, the Yomiuri Shimbun conducted a similar poll of 95 lawmakers who sat on the Research Commission on the Constitution, a special panel set up in both Diet chambers in January to examine and discuss a wide range of issues related to the nation's highest legal system. The report said that among 80 legislators who responded, about 70 percent of them, including representatives from the Liberal Democratic Party and Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan), said that they favor constitutional reform. The report said that the March poll indicates that the number of respondents who support constitutional reform has increased 7 percentage points on a year-on-year basis since 1981. The report added that more than 60 percent of respondents in their 20s, 30s and 40s and 51 percent of respondents over the age of 70 said they support constitutional revisions.

5. Japanese-Russian Relations

The Asahi Shimbun ("RUSSIAN VICE PREMIER REAFFIRMS JAPANESE-RUSSIAN AGREEMTENS," 04/20/2000) reported that the Russian Vice Premier told a delegation from the Diet Members' Association of Japanese- Russian Friendship that the Vladimir Putin Administration would continue to maintain the existing agreements between Japan and Russia, including the Klasnoyalsk Agreement. According to Yoshio Sakurauchi, head of the Japanese delegation, the delegation also met with its Russian counterpart and agreed to facilitate exchange between Japanese and Russian policy-makers of the younger generation.

6. Japanese Nonproliferation Policy

The Asahi Shimbun ("FOREIGN MINISTER TO PROPOSE SETTING UP DEADLINE FOR CUTOFF TREARY AT NPT CONFERENCE," 04/21/2000) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono said on April 20 that the Japanese government would propose setting up a deadline for the conclusion of negotiations for the Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty at the upcoming conference to review the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), slated to start on April 24 in New York. Kono would propose that the negotiations for the Cut-off Treaty be concluded between 2003 and 2005. Kono said, "whether the NPT regime could maintain or not depends on (the outcome of) the conference especially now when nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is facing difficulties.... We should strive to reach agreement." In addition to the proposal, Kono would also suggest that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty be made effective as soon as possible. He added that in the meantime, the stoppage of nuclear tests be re-affirmed, that START 2 be implemented as soon as possible, and that the negotiations for START 3 be started as soon as possible.

IV. Announcements

1. DPRK Article

The Spring 2000 edition of the journal Strategic Review has an article entitled "The Cult that is North Korea." The article argues that world policymakers are puzzled by the DPRK's "erratic and violent" behavior because they fail to understand that the DPRK is not a traditional nation-state, but a cult that possesses territory. It maintains that as a cult, the DPRK needs to maintain tensions with the outside world and resist reforms that would seem to others as rationally necessary. It adds that the DPRK seems to be slipping more and more towards a totalistic cult model that mirrors the behavior of groups that have, in the past, used weapons of mass destruction, murdered outsiders

and committed group suicide. It argues that by viewing the DPRK not as a rational nation-state but as a religious cult, policymakers will have a better model to understand and predict the DPRK's behavior. The article concludes that while it is difficult to provide exact policy guidance since so little research as been done on creating an anti-cult foreign policy, some attributes of the ROK's Sunshine Policy appear to correctly focus on weakening Kim Jong-Il's absolute control over the DPRK population.

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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