

# NAPSNet Daily Report 22 July, 1997

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## **I. United States**

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conveyed US and ROK policies toward four-party peace talks, for which the first preparatory meeting will be held in New York August 5. Nunn, past head of the US Senate Armed Services Committee and a respected US voice on national security issues, said they told DPRK officials they stood at an important juncture between isolation and cooperation. "There's a new road that could be taken and that road would be based on cooperation and not on threats. That road would be based on a sincere, substantive four-party talks," he said. Asked if they saw signs that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il would take over as state president and general secretary of the ruling Workers Party soon, Laney said: "We could infer and this was just our surmise that it might well come this fall. There were certain indications but nothing conclusive and they did not mention that."

### **3. DPRK-Japan Relations**

United Press International ("JAPAN HOPES FOR PROGRESS N. KOREA TALKS," Tokyo, 7/22/97) reported that Seiroku Kajiyama, chief cabinet secretary in the Japanese government, said Tuesday that Japan hopes to upgrade diplomatic contacts with the DPRK as it seeks a breakthrough on visitation rights by Japanese women married to North Koreans. Speaking in the wake of two days of unofficial talks between DPRK and Japanese officials in Beijing, Kajiyama said, "We will upgrade working level-talks in hopes of seeing positive moves." Kajiyama declined to reveal the contents of the talks, but hinted that they are developing well, saying, "We wish to consolidate this direction." The Japanese government estimates that some 1,800 Japanese women traveled to the DPRK with their Korean husbands from 1959 to 1982. The DPRK does not permit the women to visit Japan, and a majority of relatives have not heard from the women. Japan has expressed reluctance to extend food aid to the DPRK due to this and other outstanding issues, including the DPRK's alleged involvement in the abduction of at least 10 Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s.

### **4. ROK Domestic Presidential Election**

Reuters ("FORMER JUDGE IS FRONT-RUNNER FOR SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENCY," Seoul, 7/21/97) reported that Lee Hoi-chang, nominated Monday by the ROK's ruling New Korea Party for presidential elections December 18, is the leading candidate in public opinion polls published Tuesday. All the public polls in local newspapers surveyed after Lee's nomination showed more than 30 percent of South Koreans supported him against the two opposition leaders, Kim Dae-jung of the main National Congress for New Politics and arch-conservative Kim Jong-pil of the smaller United Liberal Democrats. Ruling party candidates have always emerged victorious in such circumstances, and political analysts said that as long as Lee held the party together he would be the next president. The Dong-a Ilbo showed Lee Hoi-chang leading with 40.4 percent, while Kim Dae-jung had 26.6 percent and Kim Jong-pil 7.1 percent. Asked to choose between Lee and Kim Dae-jung, Lee led by only 34.2 percent to 33.3 percent, well within the poll's margin of error of three percent on a 95 percent accuracy level. However, another poll by Kookmin Ilbo showed Lee leading Kim Dae-jung 42.7 percent to 29.7 percent, a much larger difference. The two opposition parties have been negotiating to produce a single candidate to increase their chances for victory, but many political analysts said that even with a unified opposition Lee Hoi-chang would win. "The opposition has no chance without or with a unified candidate," said Moon Chung-in, a political science professor at Yonsei University. "People want new politics and a fresh leader, and Lee is who they want."

## **II. Republic of Korea**

### **1. Four-Party Peace Talks**

Working-level officials from the US, the PRC, and the two Koreas are scheduled to meet in New York early next week to discuss details of the preparatory meeting for the proposed four-party peace talks scheduled for August 5, an ROK Foreign Ministry official said yesterday. The working level meetings

are to settle logistics for the preparatory talks, including venue, interpretation, order of speech, and agenda items. Though the ROK and the US had planned to hold the working-level meeting before the end of this week, it was delayed because of procedural matters. Participants from the ROK, the DPRK, and the US have already been announced, while the PRC is expected to name its representatives to the working-level meeting and the preparatory peace talks sometime this week. The Foreign Ministry official said assistant minister-level officials from various ROK ministries will hold meetings to discuss Seoul's position ahead of the peace talks. Ban Ki-moon, the ROK's senior presidential secretary for foreign affairs and national security, will preside. (Korea Herald, "FOUR-WAY WORKING-LEVEL TALKS BEGIN NEXT WEEK," 07/22/97)

## **2. ROK-DPRK Mail Service for Reactor Project**

Mail service has been established for ROK officials sent to the DPRK nuclear reactor construction project, the ROK Ministry of Information and Communication said yesterday. The service is provided in accordance with the July 2 agreement in New York between the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) and the DPRK. "The service allows an exchange of letters and parcels between the officials and their companies or family members in the ROK," said a ministry official. Under the agreement, the mail exchange is limited to the construction site located in the Kumho area of South Hamkyong Province. Only KEDO's contractors and subcontractors, employees of these firms, KEDO officials, and others who stay at the construction site can send mail to the ROK. However, outgoing mail from the ROK is not limited, and anyone can send mail to the construction site from any national post office. As agreed by KEDO and the DPRK, the inter-Korea mail exchange is an air international mail service relayed through the PRC. Those who send mail do not use postage, but instead pay the service charges of 420 won for letters weighing 10 grams or less and 15,500 won for parcels weighing less than 5 kg. (Korea Herald, "INTER-KOREA MAIL SERVICE OPENS FOR REACTOR PROJECT," 07/22/97)

## **3. DPRK Drought**

The ROK's Korean Meteorological Office (KMO) announced Monday that the amount of precipitation in the DPRK, measured by analysis of data from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), reached between 70mm and 72mm as of June 15, approximately 80 percent of the common average rainfall for that time of year. The KMO said that, with the exception of Kaisong, Haegu and Soopung, all areas in the DPRK have fallen below seasonal averages for precipitation. The DPRK recently announced through its central radio station that due to the serious lack of rain, rice paddies and other arable land were short of necessary water for a good harvest. Moreover, the DPRK revealed that the extraordinarily high temperatures experienced by some parts of the country in June are expanding, increasing the damage from the drought. (Chosun Ilbo, "THE DPRK NOW FACES DROUGHT," 07/22/97) [Ed. note: See also "DPRK Drought" in the US section of the July 21 Daily Report.]

## **4. ROK to Import US Supercomputer**

The ROK will import a top-of-the-line "super computer" for development of military tactics and cutting-edge weaponry. The ROK's Agency for Defense Development (ADD) recently finalized a contract with the Cray Corporation to purchase a high-performance super computer. This latest T-916 model computer is capable of processing 1.6 billion operations per second. Its tremendous calculating power surpasses all of the civilian and military supercomputers that have been imported to the ROK. A source well informed in national defense issues said, "to my knowledge, the US government finally gave a green light last week on the T-916 deal after a lot of deliberations." The super computer will be brought to the ROK by the end of August when supplementary processes are expected to be completed. (Joong-ang Ilbo, "SUPER COMPUTER FOR MILITARY USE TO BE

IMPORTED FROM THE US," 07/22/97)

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We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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