

NAPSNet Daily Report 23 December, 1999

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 23 December, 1999", NAPSNet Daily Report, December 23, 1999,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-23-december-1999/>

CONTENTS

I. [United States](#)

1. [DPRK-Japan Normalization Talks](#)
2. [Light-Water Reactor Project](#)
3. [DPRK Defectors](#)
4. [ROK-DPRK Sports Exchanges](#)
5. [Taiwanese Elections](#)
6. [East Timor Tribunal](#)

II. [Republic of Korea](#)

1. [PRC View on DPRK](#)
2. [DPRK-Canada Relations](#)
3. [DPRK-Japan Talks](#)
4. [Mt. Kumgang Tours](#)
5. [Aid to DPRK](#)
6. [DPRK-ROK Cultural Exchanges](#)

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no Daily Report issued from Friday, December 24, to Friday, December 31, as the Nautilus office will be closed for the holidays. The Daily Report will return on Monday, January 3, 2000.

I. United States

1. DPRK-Japan Normalization Talks

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN'S COLONIALIST PAST LOOMS IN TALKS WITH NORTH KOREA," Beijing, 12/23/99) reported that the DPRK's demand for compensation for Japan's colonial rule is seen as the biggest obstacle to a deal for normalized relations. An unnamed senior Japanese official

who took part in the four days of talks in Beijing said, "the most basic theme is how to clear up problems of bygone days and create a new friendly relationship. There are various problems which cannot be avoided." A Japanese delegation source said that the DPRK did not directly raise the question of "compensation" for the colonization. However, analysts said that the DPRK is seeking compensation estimated at US\$5-10 billion before the establishment of diplomatic ties. Scott Snyder, an analyst at the US Institute of Peace, said, "North Korean demands for compensation will remain higher than what Japan is prepared to provide at this time." Katsumi Sato, head of Tokyo's Modern Korea Institute, said that Japanese leaders were committed to securing a deal on establishing diplomatic ties, partly because of the "political prestige" they will gain in the process.

2. Light-Water Reactor Project

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA SUPPORTS REACTOR CONTRACT," Seoul, 12/23/99) reported that the DPRK on Thursday welcomed the announcement of the signing of the Turnkey Contract between the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) and the Korea Electric Power Company (KEPCO). The official Korean Central News Agency quoted an unidentified spokesman for the DPRK Foreign Ministry as saying, "it is fortunate that the contract was signed, though belatedly." However, the DPRK official warned of "serious consequences" if there were to be a delay in construction, adding that it is already far behind schedule.

3. DPRK Defectors

The Associated Press ("2 N. KOREANS DEFECT TO S. KOREA," Seoul, 12/23/99) reported that ROK National Intelligence Service officials said Thursday that two DPRK Nationals arrived in the ROK seeking asylum. The intelligence officials identified them as Kim Kyong-suk, a 29-year old engineer, and Kwon Soon-ok, a 12-year old girl. They fled the DPRK between May and July in 1997. The agency said the two came via a third country, but gave no further details.

4. ROK-DPRK Sports Exchanges

Reuters ("SHOOTOUT MARKS RETURN OF KOREA SPORTS EXCHANGES," Seoul, 12/23/99) reported that the ROK hosted DPRK-ROK men's and women's basketball games on Thursday, the first time in eight years that the two Koreas have met in a sporting arena. The Tanhap (unity) women's team beat the Tankyul (solidarity) team 133 to 125, and the ROK's Tanhap men's team beat the DPRK's Tankyul 141-138. The games were the first inter- Korean sporting event to be held in the ROK since 1991.

5. Taiwanese Elections

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN TO IMPOSE MARTIAL LAW IF ATTACKED BY CHINA DURING POLLS," Beijing, 12/23/99) reported that Taiwan Defense Vice Minister Admiral Wu Shih-wen was quoted by the United Evening News as telling the Legislative Yuan on Thursday that the Taiwanese government will impose martial law if the island is attacked by the PRC during presidential elections in March. Wu stated, "martial law would be imposed to ensure social order is swiftly put onto the right track ... should intervention of foreign forces lead to massive riots here." However, Wu said the military would not heighten the level of alertness if the PRC held war games or even harassed Taiwan's supplies to front- line islands during the election. The paper said that it was the first such a statement was ever made by military authorities. Wu also added that preparations have been stepped up to deal with any increase in PRC infiltration and sabotage in the months ahead.

6. East Timor Tribunal

Associated Press (Edith M. Lederer, "UN MAY OPEN E.TIMOR CRIMES TRIBUNAL," United Nations, 12/22/99) reported that UN investigators released a report on December 22 which concluded that human rights violations were committed "on a scale that is widespread or systematic or both." The investigators said in the report that the crimes "include murder, torture, sexual violence, forcible transfer of population and other persecution and inhumane acts, including destruction of property." The report also said that "unless, in a matter of months, the steps taken by the government of Indonesia to investigate (army) involvement in the past year's atrocities bear fruit ... the Security Council should consider the establishment of an international criminal tribunal for the purpose." Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid said on December 22 that his government would not allow its top generals to be tried by an international tribunal, but that Indonesia's judicial system, not the United Nations, should bring those responsible for atrocities in East Timor to justice.

II. Republic of Korea

1. PRC View on DPRK

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "EXPERTS SAY KIM JONG-IL REGIME IS STABLE," Seoul, 12/23/99) reported that analysts from the PRC said on December 21 in a closed debate on the security of the Korean Peninsula that the DPRK may be plagued with economic difficulties, while Kim Jong-il's government maintains a steady grip on the country. The PRC experts said that most DPRK people see Kim Jong-il as the legitimate leader of the nation and the appropriate successor to his late father, Kim Il-sung. Other participants in the debate included a group of ROK experts and Professor Yu Suk-ryul, all from the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS), a government think tank. Yu said, "the Chinese told us that North Korean leader Kim has successfully completed the organization of his government and that no opposition forces exist in the North." Disputing the general belief that the military is the most influential force in the DPRK, the PRC experts claimed the DPRK's ruling Workers' Party is more powerful than the Army. They added that the National Defense Commission led by Kim Jong-il, which supervises all matters related to military affairs, has an independent organization similar to that of the cabinet.

2. DPRK-Canada Relations

The Korea Times ("N.KOREA SEEKS TO SEND SENIOR OFFICIAL TO CANADA," Seoul, 12/22/99) reported that an ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Ministry official said on December 21 that the DPRK is hoping to send a vice-minister level official to Canada to discuss ways to improve bilateral relations. The ministry official said that the DPRK's plan was conveyed to Canada when a six-member Canadian delegation, including three officials, visited the DPRK on December 6-11. However, the official said that as the two countries had not launched negotiations on details of the proposed visit, it was still too early to predict if the visit would be realized. During their recent visit to the DPRK, the Canadian delegation reportedly launched discussions with DPRK Foreign Ministry officials and a flood relief committee over humanitarian aid and the improvement of bilateral relations. This visit came after a three-member DPRK delegation traveled to Canada last October. The official said that the two countries have had routine contact since the late 1980s, but added that the Canadian government is not enthusiastic over dramatic improvements to bilateral ties with the DPRK as long as the DPRK regime maintains its policies hostile to Western countries on such issues as the buildup of weapons of mass destruction.

3. DPRK-Japan Talks

The Korea Times ("JAPAN, N.KOREA PREPARE TO ARRANGE RAPPROCHEMENT TALKS," Seoul, 12/22/99) reported that officials from Japan and the DPRK on December 22 began a second day of talks aimed at clearing the way for full-scale negotiations on establishing diplomatic ties between the two countries. They opened the meeting at the DPRK embassy in an upbeat mood following their initial contact on December 21 during which they reportedly stated their basic positions. Japan's chief delegate Koreshige Anami, the head of the Japanese ministry's Asian affairs bureau, said in opening remarks, "we had a very favorable meeting yesterday. I hope it will lead to a further step today." His DPRK counterpart O Ul-rok, who was in charge of Japanese affairs, replied, "we have stated our respective positions. I wish to have discussion today in a more forward-looking direction."

4. Mt. Kumgang Tours

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "HYUNDAI TO RESUME FOREIGNERS' MT. KUMGANG TOURS NEXT YEAR," Seoul, 12/23/99) reported that an ROK government official said on December 22 that the Hyundai Group plans to resume tours for foreigners to DPRK's Mount Kumgang early next year, beginning with hundreds of ethnic Chinese living in Southeast Asia. The official said that the ROK conglomerate originally planned to expand its programs to include foreigners in November, but was forced to back away from the plan when faced with the DPRK's recalcitrance and insufficient marketing abroad.

5. Aid to DPRK

The Korea Herald ("GROUP CALLS FOR APPLE TREE PLANTING IN N.K.," Seoul, 12/23/99) reported that the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) said on December 22 that US telecommunication company Mercy Corps International (MCI) will plant 10,000 apple seeds in DPRK's South Pyongan Province next spring. Quoting Kenneth Quinones, director of MCI's East Asia program, KOTRA said that MCI collected and donated US\$2.5 million in relief funds from Korean-Americans in 1996-1998.

Chosun Ilbo (Lee Chul-min, "INT'L AID AGENCIES CONDEMN NK AUTHORITIES," Seoul, 12/22/99) reported that the World Food Program (WFP) and 20 non-governmental organizations participating in aid activities in the DPRK released a joint statement condemning the DPRK authorities' methods of inspection and delivery of aid supplies. The statement was signed by UN-affiliated organizations such as WFP, UN Development Program, UNOCHA, groups from Germany, Switzerland, and Canada, and US groups such as CARE, Catholic Rescue Service, Mercy Corps International, and World Vision. A UN official said on December 21 that these groups had agreed on a consensus statement on December 11 in the DPRK. The statement said that they are working under adverse conditions where the execution of their relief programs are continually restricted by DPRK authorities and posed a serious hurdle in monitoring the correct allocation of their humanitarian efforts. The statement pinpointed severe problems such as malnutrition, lack of drinking water, sanitation and public health. It also pointed out that only if the principles of relief activities such as monitoring, access, and transparency are maintained in the DPRK, could the crisis of DPRK's people be alleviated with responsibility. The UN official also blamed the actions of DPRK authorities for the recall of the five-member team from England's main relief group, OXFAM, on December 10, which was preceded by the withdrawal of the French organization Doctors Without Borders in September 1998.

6. DPRK-ROK Cultural Exchanges

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "BASKETBALL HELPS UNOFFICIAL HIGH-LEVEL TALKS MATERIALIZE BETWEEN RIVAL KOREAS," Seoul, 12/23/99) and The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "NK BASKETBALL DELEGATION ARRIVES IN SEOUL," Seoul, 12/22/99) reported that ROK observers said on December 22 that the friendly inter-Korean basketball matches this week may have an unexpected side effect - unofficial contact between vice-ministerial officials from the ROK and the DPRK. A DPRK official is scheduled to attend a party later in the day to celebrate the second round of goodwill matches between the national basketball teams, taking place December 23-24. An anonymous ROK senior ministry official said, "our plans have yet to be finalized, but we have almost decided on attending." Hwang Ha-soo, director general at the ministry's Inter-Korean Exchanges and Cooperation Bureau, said, "on the occasion of these matches, we expect South and North Korea will promote further sports exchanges, eventually making them regular events."

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:
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