NAPSNet Daily Report 25 November, 2002

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 25 November, 2002", NAPSNet Daily Report, November 25, 2002, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-25-november-2002/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. Taiwan Domestic Politics
2. DPRK on Non-Aggression Pact
3. ROK US Soldier Trial
4. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program
6. Russia-PRC Relations
7. Japan Anti-Terror War SDF Participation
8. Japan-DPRK Relations
9. DPRK US Army Defector
10. ROK Presidential Elections
11. DPRK Mount Kumgang Special Tourism Zone
12. Pakistan-DPRK Nuclear Connection?
13. Inter-Korean Railway Project
14. DPRK Bans US Dollars

I. United States

1. Taiwan Domestic Politics

Reuters ("TAIWAN PREMIER TO STAY IN OFFICE BUT TWO MINISTERS TO GO," Taipei, 11/25/02) reported that Taiwan Premier Yu Shyi-kun said on Sunday he would stay in office two days after he offered to resign amid a row about delayed changes to the shaky farm credit system, but he agreed to let two of his cabinet members go. Yu accepted the resignation of Finance Minister Lee Yung-san and Fan Chen-tsung, chairman of the Council of Agriculture, one day after more than 100,000 farmers protested against plans to reform the farm credit co-operatives. "The premier simultaneously agreed to the two ministers' (resignations) tonight," cabinet secretary-general Liu Shih-fan told reporters waiting outside the premier's home after Yu met the two ministers individually. It was not immediately known who would replace the two men, who took office in

February.

2. DPRK on Non-Aggression Pact

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "NORTH KOREA ASKS SOUTH TO HELP PRESS US ON NONAGRESSION PACT," Tokyo, 11/23/02) and the Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA CALLS FOR NONAGGRESSION TREATY WITH WASHINGTON," Seoul, 11/23/02) and Reuters ("N KOREA APPEALS TO SOUTH TO HELP FEND OFF US," Seoul, 11/23/02) reported that the DPRK today asked the ROK to join it in pressing the US to sign a nonaggression treaty, in an unusual appeal apparently aimed at reducing its isolation. "At a time when the destiny of the nation is at stake, the ROK authorities should lodge a legitimate protest with the US against its infringement upon the fundamental interests of the nation," the DPRK's official Korea Central News Agency said today in its new appeal for ROK support. "Let the whole nation come out to firmly uphold the patriotic army-based policy," the agency said. The wording of the message, which repeatedly spoke of the DPRK and ROK as a single nation, was apparently intended to appeal to the strong and growing public sympathy toward the DPRK among ordinary South Koreans, based on the two peoples' common origins as well as mounting tensions between ROK and the United States.

3. ROK US Soldier Trial

The New York Times (Don Kirk, "2ND US SERGEANT IS CLEARED IN THE DEATH OF 2 KOREAN GIRLS," Camp Casey, South Korea, 11/22/02) reported that a US sergeant was acquitted tonight by a US Army court-martial of charges of negligent homicide in the deaths of two ROK teenage girls who were crushed under an armored vehicle he was driving. A jury of four Army officers and three sergeants found Sgt. Mark Walker not guilty after deliberating for four and a half hours. The trial began on Thursday, the day after a separate court-martial acquitted another Army sergeant, Fernando Nino, who had tried unsuccessfully to warn Walker by radio link inside the vehicle that the girls were on the right side of the road, where he was unable to see them. Sergeant Walker, 37, said he was "kind of stunned" by the verdict and was "terribly sorry that I was involved with anything that hurt anybody in Korea." The remarks did not soften the outrage of demonstrators outside the main gate of this post, 20 miles north of Seoul, where more than half of the 14,000 troops of the Army's Second Division are stationed.

4. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program

The Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINA SAID RECEPTIVE TO US CONCERNS ABOUT NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM," Beijing, 11/25/02) reported that the PRC has been sympathetic to US concerns over the DPRK's nuclear program and may have discussed the matter with its DPRK allies, the US ambassador to Beijing said Monday. The issue "presents China and the United States with an opportunity to work together toward a common, mutually beneficial goal," Clark T. Randt said in a speech to the American Chamber of Commerce's Beijing chapter. "They are very receptive to our suggestions and desires in this area and I think they've been in touch with the North Koreans," Randt said. He didn't say whether the PRC had briefed the US on those discussions.

5. PRC-US Military Ties

The Associated Press (Audra Ang, "US, CHINA RENEW MILITARY TIES," Qingdao, 11/24/02) and Reuters (Jonathan Ansfield, "US WARSHIP DOCKS IN CHINA IN SHOW TIES ON COURSE," Qingdao, 11/24/02) reported that the US and the PRC moved toward renewing strained military ties Sunday with a carefully staged visit by a US warship to a PRC port. With the two nations' flags

flapping from the mast and sailors standing at attention on deck, the USS Paul F. Foster churned into the eastern city of Qingdao on a crisp morning, beginning a five-day visit that will give its sailors a glimpse of the PRC. The port call was the first by US Navy vessel since last year. The USS Paul F. Foster's visit is the first in a slew of contacts in coming weeks aimed at cementing the recent warming of ties. "We are part of renewed relations, improved relations between our two countries. I'm excited about the prospects of the future," said Cmdr. Chuck Nygaard, captain of the Everett, Wash.-based warship. Guo Shouqian, deputy chief of staff for China's North Sea Naval Fleet, also stressed the need for the two militaries to stay friendly. "It is very important to provide mutual understanding between the two sides and reduce differences," Guo said. Next month, the United States will host nearly two dozen PRC generals while the admiral commanding all U.S. forces in the Pacific will visit the PRC.

6. Russia-PRC Relations

The Associated Press (Vladimir Isachenkov, "PUTIN EXPECTS HIS VISIT TO CHINA TO BOLSTER BILATERAL RELATIONS," Moscow, 11/23/02) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin said Saturday he expects his upcoming visit to the PRC to give a further boost to bilateral relations after the change of leadership in Beijing. Speaking at a meeting with PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, Putin said that Moscow had "closely followed" the PRC's Communist Party congress that elected Hu Jintao its new general secretary to replace Jiang Zemin. "Very important political events have taken place in China," Putin said. He added that he hopes his trip to China on Dec. 1-3 will help bring bilateral ties "to new levels." Earlier this week, Putin sent a message to Hu congratulating him on his new post and saying that Russia would "firmly move to deepen the strategic partnership" with the PRC. Tang met later Saturday with his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov to discuss preparations for Putin's trip to the PRC and to inform him about results of the Communist Party congress. "We welcome the confirmation of the continuity of China's foreign policy, including the course toward active development of relations with Russia," Ivanov told reporters after the meeting.

7. Japan Anti-Terror War SDF Participation

The Associated Press ("JAPAN SENDS SHIPS TO AID TERROR WAR," Tokyo, 11/25/02) reported that two Japanese naval ships carrying 350 sailors left port for the Indian Ocean on Monday to assist the US-led war on terror, Japan's Self-Defense Agency said. The supply ship Tokiwa and its escort Harusame are the first to set sail since the government decided last week to extend its non-combat logistical support of the US campaign for another six months, said an agency spokesman who asked not to be named. It is the ninth time overall navy ships have left for the Indian Ocean to support the US effort since Japan began providing rear support last November. The two ships will provide transport fuel and supplies to U.S. ships. The date of their return is undecided, the agency spokesman said.

8. Japan-DPRK Relations

The Associated Press ("JAPAN, N KOREA STILL APART ON TALKS," Tokyo, 11/24/02) reported that Japanese and DPRK officials met for unofficial talks over the weekend but failed to agree on how to proceed with negotiations to normalize relations, the government said Monday. Japan reiterated its demand that relatives of five Japanese kidnapped by the DPRK be sent to Japan, and reiterated its concerns over the DPRK's nuclear weapons development program. "As before, there is a difference of opinion between the two sides. We will continue to negotiate strongly," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said. Hitoshi Tanaka, head of the ministry's Asia bureau, led the group of Japanese

officials attending the talks held Saturday and Sunday. Fukuda added that no decision had been made on whether the two sides would meet for further unofficial talks this weekend. Japan reportedly has proposed holding the next round of formal normalization talks in early December, but the weekend meeting failed to produce an agreement on when talks might resume.

9. DPRK US Army Defector

The Associated Press (Hans Greimel, "US JAPAN ENVOY TO MEET MAN'S WIFE," 11/23/02) reported that the US ambassador to Tokyo is planning to meet the Japanese wife of an alleged US Army deserter living in the DPRK, an official said Saturday - a meeting that is expected to be an emotional plea for the man's amnesty from US prosecutors. The status of the woman's husband, Charles Robert Jenkins, has become a politically charged issue because the Japanese government wants him to come to Japan without risking arrest by U.S. officials on desertion charges. The wife, Hitomi Soga, is one of five Japanese abducted decades ago to the DPRK who is now in Japan for a reunion with long-lost relatives. The couple has been separated since Soga returned to Japan with the other abductees October 15. Soga petitioned US Ambassador Howard Baker for an audience earlier this week so she could make a personal appeal to be reunited with Jenkins. The Japanese government had earlier requested that Jenkins be given special immunity, but has not yet received a reply. Embassy spokesman Patrick Linehan said Saturday that officials were trying to arrange a meeting for Monday or Tuesday. But he said the meeting was unlikely to generate any immediate change in Jenkins' status. "It's clear there are issues that have to be resolved," Linehan said. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has firmly opposed a pardon. But the Pentagon has said "a final decision is pending."

10. ROK Presidential Elections

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "S KOREA PRESIDENTIAL RACE OFFERS CONTRAST ON NORTH," Seoul, 11/25/02) reported that ROK presidential candidates began the final run to next month's election on Monday after a weekend contest narrowed the field to two contenders divided over the DPRK and its nuclear weapons. The December 19 election pits a liberal candidate vowing to continue outgoing President Kim Dae-jung's "Sunshine Policy" of embracing the DPRK, despite its nuclear arms quest, against a conservative who, echoing stern U.S. views, has called for a tough stance against the DPRK. The ROK's 35 million voters will elect a successor to Kim in a contest expected to hinge mainly on taxes and other domestic economic issues but played out in the shadow of the DPRK's nuclear impasse with the US and its allies. Ruling party candidate Roh Moo-hyun prevailed in a weekend debate and poll competition over ROK soccer chief Chung Mong-joon. The two agreed to unite campaigns and run a single candidate against conservative opposition leader Lee Hoi-chang.

11. DPRK Mount Kumgang Special Tourism Zone

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "NORTH KOREA DESIGNATES DIAMOND MOUNTAIN RESORT AS A SPECIAL TOURISM ZONE," Seoul, 11/24/02) reported that in its latest effort to attract badly needed foreign investment, the DPRK said Monday that it has designated a prominent mountain resort as a "special tourism zone." The DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, adopted a decree on Saturday to create a Mt. Kumgang tourist zone where foreigners can invest freely, said the country's foreign news outlet, the Korean Central News Agency. The move is part of efforts by the DPRK to resuscitate its shattered economy. The DPRK launched economic reforms in July, but its efforts to attract foreign investment face difficulty partly because of tension over its nuclear weapons program. The decree says that the DPRK will retain sovereignty over the resort area and "permit

free investment of corporate bodies, individuals and economic organizations" and "protect their properties by law." Otherwise, it was short on details, saying only that relevant state agencies will take measures to implement its terms.

12. Pakistan-DPRK Nuclear Connection?

The New York Times (David E. Sanger, "IN NORTH KOREA AND PAKISTAN, DEEP ROOTS OF NUCLEAR BARTER," Seoul, 11/24/02) carried an article asserting that last July, US intelligence agencies tracked a Pakistani cargo aircraft as it landed at a North Korean airfield and took on a secret payload: ballistic missile parts, the chief export of DPRK's military. The shipment was brazen enough, in full view of US spy satellites. But intelligence officials who described the incident say even the mode of transport seemed a subtle slap at Washington: the Pakistani plane was an American-built C-130. It was part of the military force that President Pervez Musharraf had told President Bush last year would be devoted to hunting down the terrorists of Al Qaeda, one reason the administration was hailing its new cooperation with a country that only a year before it had labeled a rogue state. But several times since that new alliance was cemented, US intelligence agencies watched silently as Pakistan's air fleet conducted a deadly barter with the DPRK. In transactions intelligence agencies are still unraveling, the DPRK provided General Musharraf with missile parts he needs to build a nuclear arsenal capable of reaching every strategic site in India. In a perfect marriage of interests, Pakistan provided the DPRK with many of the designs for gas centrifuges and much of the machinery it needs to make highly enriched uranium for the country's latest nuclear weapons project, one intended to put at risk the ROK, Japan and 100,000 US troops in Northeast Asia.

13. Inter-Korean Railway Project

The Associated Press (Jae-Suk Yoo, "NORTH KOREA REFUSES INSPECTION OF DEMINING WORK FOR INTER-KOREAN RAIL PROJECT," Seoul, 11/24/02) reported that prolonging a dispute that has jeopardized a high-profile reconciliation project, the DPRK refused to send officials to inspect the removal of land mines by the ROK as the two nations prepare to reconnect rail and road links across their border, officials said Sunday. Under the terms of the project, agreed by the leaders of the Koreas at a landmark summit in 2000, military officers from the two countries are supposed to inspect demining work on each other's side of the heavily fortified buffer zone that separates them. A list of inspectors was approved Friday by the U.N. Command, but the DPRK refused to take part in the inspections because of the U.N. Command's involvement, ROK's Defense Ministry said in a news release Sunday. "We believe the North is trying to drive a wedge between the United States and South Korea by shifting responsibility for the delay to the U.N. Command," the release said.

14. DPRK Bans US Dollars

Xin Hua News Agency ("REPORT: NORTH KOREA TO BAN USE OF US DOLLARS FROM DECEMBER," Beijing, 11/23/02) reported that DPRK officials plan to ban the use of US dollars inside the DPRK beginning next month as a standoff with the US over its nuclear weapons program drags on, the PRC's official Xinhua News Agency reported Saturday. US Dollars will not be accepted in foreign exchange shops and foreign residents must convert US dollars in their bank accounts into Euros or other currencies, Xinhua said in a dispatch from Pyongyang. Bank accounts will be converted automatically if their owners don't make the switch by the end of November, it said, quoting a statement from the DPRK's Trade Bank on Friday. Similar requirements have been in place for DPRK citizens since last Monday, it said. The report could not be independently verified.

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-25-november-2002/

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