

# NAPSNet Daily Report 29 June, 2001

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## I. United States

### 1. DPRK Refugees in PRC

Agence France Presse ("SEVEN NORTH KOREAN REFUGEES HAVE LEFT CHINA: UN," Beijing, 6/29/01) reported that UNHCR regional representative Colin Mitchell said that seven DPRK Nationals who spent three days at the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Beijing left the PRC on Friday for a third country. Mitchell declined to say which country had accepted the family, or whether it was the ROK. The ROK had offered to give the group asylum.

### 2. ROK Defense Spending

The New York Times (Don Kirk, "SOUTH KOREA: A RECORD DEFENSE BUDGET," 6/29/01) reported that the cost of defense for the ROK is rising to new highs with another record budget proposed for next year and a five-year expansion plan lasting until 2006. The ROK Defense Ministry said that it would need US\$12.7 billion in 2002 to maintain its troops on permanent alert against the DPRK. The budget for 2002, up 7.6 percent from this year, covers the first year of a five-year plan totaling US\$70.6 billion. ROK defense officials are asking for fighter and reconnaissance planes, advanced electronic gear, helicopters and naval vessels. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for June 29, 2001.]

### **3. US Troops in Okinawa**

The Associate Press ("KOIZUMI AIMS TO 'LIGHTEN' TROOPS," Itoman, 6/29/01) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said at a ceremony honoring troops who died in the 1945 Battle of Okinawa that he wants to "lighten the burden" on residents of Okinawa who resent the heavy US military presence on the island. Koizumi said, "My Cabinet views this as a major issue. We are doing our utmost to find ways to lighten the burden on the people of Okinawa." Last week, US Secretary of State Colin L. Powell reportedly told Japanese Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka that the United States would keep only the minimum number of troops in Japan needed to ensure security in Asia. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for June 29, 2001.]

## **II. Republic of Korea**

### **1. DPRK Defectors in PRC**

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "CHINA COULD SEND N. KOREANS TO THIRD COUNTRY," Seoul, 06/29/01) reported that the seven DPRK citizens who took refuge in a UN office in Beijing will likely be deported to a third country before coming to the ROK, according to ROK officials and news reports Thursday. "Among several options, the scheme best serves the interests of the governments concerned and China is well aware of this," a Foreign Ministry official said, requesting not to be named. "The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Chinese government are currently discussing the plan," he said. Quoting PRC sources, the Yonhap News Agency also reported that the seven-member family of Jang Gil-su, 17, would be deported as early as next week or by July 13 at the latest. On that date, the International Olympic Committee is scheduled to select the host country of the 2008 Summer Olympics. Yonhap said that the PRC may deport the defectors to a third country in an effort to improve their chances of being awarded the 2008 Olympics.

### **2. ROK on Inter-Korean Talks**

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Hee-sung, "'TIME IS THE MAJOR VARIABLE' ADVISES KOREAN AMBASSADOR TO U.S.," Seoul, 06/28/01) reported that Yang Sung-chul, the Korean ambassador to the US, said that time is the major variable in negotiating with the DPRK and that it is crucial for the ROK and the US not to miss the chance. "Already six months have passed since the visit of North Korea's first deputy chairman of the National Defense Commission Jo Myong-rok to Washington," Ambassador Yang said in this speech at a symposium in Washington participated in by various military and security experts. "The sooner the North responds to U.S. proposal for resumption of dialogue the better things will turn out for both sides." Yang also pointed out that the DPRK is feeling threatened as much as it is outwardly threatening its neighboring nations, then stressed the need to practice patience so as to prevent the DPRK from falling back into its old isolated state.

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

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