

# NAPSNet Daily Report 31 July, 1998

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### **I. United States**

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#### **1. Light-Water Reactor Project**

State Department Spokesman James Rubin, "STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, JULY 30," Transcript, 07/30/98) said that, although the US has made clear that it wants to arrange the

necessary support for the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), it has not made a specific financial commitment. Rubin stated, "There is a gap, I believe, of several hundred million dollars out of several billion dollars; so under 10 percent of the financing still needs to be worked out. We want to work with other countries and our Congress to try to make sure that we've done all we can to provide the necessary financing, both for the heavy fuel oil and for the light water reactors."

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## **2. Comfort Women Issue**

Reuters ("JAPANESE OFFICIAL BACKTRACKS ON CONTROVERSIAL SEX SLAVE REMARKS," Tokyo, 07/31/98) reported that newly appointed Japanese Agriculture Minister Shoichi Nakagawa on Friday retracted statements he had made earlier in the day that it is not known whether Asian women had been forced to work as sex slaves in Japanese army brothels during World War II. A few hours after his original remarks, Nakagawa stated, "They were forcibly recruited." He added that his early remarks might have been misleading. Nakagawa said that he would withdraw from a group of lawmakers from the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) that is demanding that school textbooks delete references to the "comfort women" issue. New Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi stated, "I do not find that there are any problems since he (Nakagawa) denied his previous statements completely."

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## **3. Japanese Foreign Policy**

Dow Jones Newswires ("JAPAN FOREIGN MIN KOMURA PLANS TO VISIT RUSSIA IN SEP - KYODO," Tokyo, 07/31/98) reported that Kyodo news agency said that Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura announced Friday that he wants to visit Moscow, possibly in September, to pave the way for Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's official visit to Russia in November. Komura also said he would make further efforts to create a new partnership with the ROK toward the 21st century. He expressed hope that the two countries could settle the historical issues arising from Japan's colonization of the Korean Peninsula on the occasion of ROK President Kim Dae-jung's visit to Japan in early October. Komura said that Japan would file a resolution with the UN General Assembly in September calling for nuclear disarmament from the five declared nuclear powers as well as India and Pakistan. Earlier Friday, Komura told a news conference that he plans to visit the PRC in August to prepare for PRC President Jiang Zemin's official visit to Japan in early September for a summit with Obuchi. Also on Friday, Obuchi reaffirmed in a telephone conversation with Russian President Boris Yeltsin that he will make an official visit to Moscow for a summit aimed at pushing forward negotiations on concluding a peace treaty by the year 2000.

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## **4. US Naval Visit to PRC**

The Associated Press ("TWO U.S. NAVY SHIPS TO VISIT CHINA," Beijing, 07/30/98) reported that the US Embassy in Beijing announced Thursday that two US Navy ships are scheduled to visit the PRC port of Qingdao for four days beginning Sunday. It will be the fourth US Navy ship visit to the PRC since 1995, when port visits resumed after being frozen following the PRC suppression of pro-democracy protests in 1989.

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## **5. Taiwanese Politician Killed in PRC**

Agence France-Presse (H. Asher Bolande, "TAIWAN CITY COUNCIL MEMBER MURDERED BY CHINA KIDNAPPERS, OFFICIAL SAYS," 07/31/98) reported that Liaoning province officials said Friday that Lin Ti-chuan, a visiting city council member from Kaohsiung in Taiwan, has been murdered by her kidnappers. Lin was abducted at knifepoint together with her boyfriend late on Monday. An official identified the police's chief suspect in the kidnapping as a local business partner of the Taiwan politician Li Guangzhi. Li is the head of Haicheng Huamei Industrial Co. Ltd.'s representative office in Dalian city. Lin and her boyfriend owed the firm a total of US\$710,000. A total of 184 cases involving threats to Taiwanese businessmen in the PRC have been reported since January 1991. Lin's family and some members of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party with which she is affiliated were due to arrive in Dalian on Friday. Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation said it sent a letter Thursday to the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits, its PRC counterpart, to ask for assistance in rescuing Lin.

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## **6. Indian Nuclear Development**

Reuters (Carol Giacomo, "US OFFICIALS DIVIDED ON INDIA'S NUCLEAR STANCE," Sydney, 07/30/98) reported that US officials said that the Clinton administration is divided on whether India is moving to forsake testing and deployment of nuclear weapons. They said that US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott believed Indian leaders had moved significantly toward accepting criteria laid down by the US and other nations. However, sources described US Defense Department officials as less convinced, even pessimistic about India's intentions. PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan warned US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at a meeting in Manila this week to be wary of India's promises, officials said. One official said that the PRC feared that the US might prematurely ease its hard line on India for its nuclear explosions. He said that the PRC "want[s] to keep up the pressure overall." Another official stated, "We're not going to do anything until we've made absolutely sure the two governments will fulfill their commitments." Indian and Pakistani envoys are due in Washington next month for more talks. One US official said that the Indians are expected to come ready to "identify what they are prepared to do." Officials said talks are going much slower with Pakistan, which seems confused and uncertain about how to handle the situation.

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## **7. Indian-Pakistani Talks**

The Associated Press ("PAKISTAN-INDIA TALKS BREAK DOWN," Colombo, 07/31/98) and Reuters ("INDIA- PAKISTAN TALKS FAIL TO RESTART PEACE EFFORT," Colombo, 07/31/98) reported that talks between India and Pakistan aimed at reviving negotiations over Kashmir and other long-standing disputes broke down on Friday. Pakistan spokesman Tariq Altaf said discussions stalled after India refused to discuss Kashmir and the nuclear proliferation in South Asia unless those issues were raised in the context of broader relations between the two nations. He accused India of taking a "rigid and inflexible position" on Kashmir. Altaf stated, "No basis exists for resumption of dialogue." However, he added that Pakistan remains ready to hold "urgent, meaningful and result-oriented dialogue" to resolve the disputes. Altaf said that during the talks, Pakistan proposed several confidence-building measures for the two nations, including a greater role for UN military observers in Kashmir, release of detainees in Kashmir, and the removal of the Indian army from Srinagar and other Kashmir towns. India's senior diplomat, Foreign Secretary K. Raghunath, accused Pakistan of an "obsessive" focus on Kashmir to the neglect of other issues.

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## **8. Fighting in Kashmir**

The Associated Press ("DOZENS OF INDIANS, PAKISTANIS DIE IN FIGHTING OVER KASHMIR," Jammu, 07/31/98) reported that Indian and Pakistani officials said Friday that 46 people were killed on both sides during fighting between Indian and Pakistani soldiers across the disputed frontier of Kashmir. India said that Pakistani mortars slammed into a military hospital, killing 10 civilians in the town of Tangdhar. India said that its overall toll was 16 dead and five wounded. Pakistan said that a total of 26 civilians and four soldiers died from firing Thursday, and that 100 people, mostly civilians, were wounded. The latest round of shooting has been going on for four days in India's Kupwara district, opposite Pakistan's Muzaffarabad region, said an Indian spokesman.

## **II. Republic of Korea**

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### **1. DPRK Pest Control Aid**

The DPRK was learned Friday to have requested the assistance of the ROK government to eradicate an insect infestation that is destroying pine tree forests around Kumkang mountain. Sources in Seoul revealed that the government is positively viewing this request and is studying sending an observation team to the area. Om Dae-woo, head of the National Parks Management Corporation, said that he had met with DPRK officials and discussed the damage to the forests and relayed the request to the government. He added that he is planning to visit the area accompanied by six field workers to assess the damage. A high-ranking ROK government official said that aerial photographs had confirmed that 20 percent of the trees in the area had been devastated and that the administration has earmarked ROK Won 4.8 billion to pay for an extermination team to clear the area. (Chosun Ilbo, "NK ASKS FOR HELP TO ERADICATE INSECT INFESTATION," 07/31/98)

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### **2. ROK-Russia Relations**

The opposition Grand National Party (GNP) claimed that the ROK's recent pro-US stance has emboldened Russia to adopt a hard-line policy toward the ROK. The Yoido Institute, the research arm of the GNP, said in a report Thursday that Russia appears to be concerned over its dwindling influence on the Korean Peninsula. It noted that Russia seemed to be harboring discontent with the ROK as it is being excluded from the four-party Korean peace talks. In addition, Russia appears to be displeased over a dispute involving its repayment of a US\$3 billion loan package to the ROK, the institute added. "Against this background, the government has been neglecting Russia in its heavy dependency upon the U.S. and the IMF amid the financial crisis, a circumstance which eventually provoked Russia's involvement in the diplomatic row," the report said. The Yoido Institute also cited the government's concession to US pressure to procure US weapons, instead of Russian products, as one of the causes of the conflict with Russia. (Korea Times, "SEOUL'S PRO US STANCE FRUSTRATES RUSSIA," 07/31/98)

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### **3. ROK Prepares for DPRK Infiltration**

A high-ranking military source in Seoul warned Thursday that the DPRK may make another limited

infiltration attempt in August, pending the anniversary of the foundation of the DPRK on September 9. The possible infiltration could include another submarine intrusion on the East Coast, kidnapping of ROK fishing boats, or violation of the sea border in the West Sea by DPRK naval ships, said the source, who demanded anonymity. "The DPRK military may attempt to do 'something' in token of their loyalty to their leader Kim Jong-il before the anniversary," he said, echoing a recent warning by ROK national intelligence chief Lee Jong-chan. The source said that the two recent DPRK incursions were intended in part to demonstrate their loyalty to their leader Kim. The official said that frequent redeployment and movement of DPRK ships and submarines have recently been detected, adding to fears that the DPRK is preparing for another infiltration attempt. (Korea Herald, "GOVERNMENT PREPARING FOR POSSIBLE NORTH KOREAN INFILTRATION," 07/31/98)

### **III. Japan**

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#### **1. New Japanese Cabinet**

The Daily Yomiuri ("OBUCHI ELECTED PREMIER, FORMS CABINET: DISPOSAL OF BAD DEBTS HIGH ON AGENDA TO RESUSCITATE NATIONAL ECONOMY, 07/31/98) reported that after being elected Japan's 54th prime minister by the Diet on July 30, Liberal Democratic Party President Keizo Obuchi inaugurated his government with a pledge to dispose of the bad loans that plague the nation's financial institutions and implement permanent tax cuts. The report also said that the former foreign minister would likely face an uphill battle from hostile opposition parties that are already demanding the dissolution of the Lower House for a general election. Obuchi immediately named his new Cabinet and tapped former Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa as finance minister. Miyazawa is the first former prime minister to become finance minister since 1927. Masahiko Komura, currently state secretary for foreign affairs, was named foreign minister, and will work closely with Obuchi, who has a busy diplomatic schedule this autumn. Komura said at a press conference that he would particularly like to strengthen Japan-US relations, join forces with other Asian nations to overcome the Asian economic and monetary crisis, and reinforce the framework of nuclear nonproliferation. With regard to the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests, Komura said that the international community should deal strictly with the two countries, adding, "I will take every opportunity to appeal to other countries concerning this point." According to the report, PRC President Jiang Zemin will visit Japan in early September for talks with Obuchi. Obuchi is scheduled to attend the UN General Assembly in late September for dialogue with US President Bill Clinton, and ROK President Kim Dae-jung is slated for a state visit to Japan in early October. Obuchi is due to visit Russia in November and attend an informal summit of leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Malaysia.

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#### **2. Taiwanese Views of PRC Defense White Paper**

The Sankei Shimbun ("PRC'S DEFENSE SPENDING IS THREE TIMES MORE THAN OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED," Taipei, 07/30/98) reported that Taiwan's defense authority said that the announced defense spending in the recently published defense paper of the PRC is only one-third of the actual defense spending. The report also said that many defense experts in the world have already pointed out that the white paper is still opaque. A Taiwanese defense authority spokesman said that what the PRC's reported \$US 980 million defense spending does not include is included in other budgets such as education, science, and police. According to the spokesman, the white paper aims to ease the international community's view of the PRC as a "threat" and satisfy other countries with the PRC's

transparency. However, the spokesman added, "The PRC has not abandoned the 'use of force' against Taiwan and it is still undoubtedly the largest threat to Taiwan's security. Taiwan can avoid military confrontation and put the peaceful unification of the two sides of the Taiwan Straits on the right track by striving for self-defense."

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### **3. Light-Water Reactor Project**

The Asahi Shimbun (Koichi Kosuge, "ROK HAILS US INITIATIVE," Manila, 07/30/98) reported that the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade announced that the parties involved reached an agreement on cost-sharing for the light-water reactor project on July 30. The Ministry said, "The US has expressed more will than ever to lead the construction (of the reactors), and the agreement is a meaningful one."

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### **4. Japanese-Russian Military Cooperation**

The Daily Yomiuri ("JAPAN, RUSSIA CONDUCT FIRST JOINT RESCUE EXERCISE," Vladivostok, 07/31/98) reported that Japan and Russia conducted their first joint marine rescue drill on July 29 in the Sea of Japan, about 400 kilometers off Vladivostok. Two Maritime Self-Defense Force escort ships and seven airplanes, along with two battleships and two helicopters from Russia's Pacific fleet, joined the exercises. The troops played out a rescue of a Japanese merchant ship that had caught fire. The report cited observers as saying that the joint exercise highlighted the fact that the Cold War was truly over.

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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