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Korean Peninsula

1. US Policy towards DPRK

DPRK negotiator Jang Chang-chon said that US-DPRK talks at the US Embassy in Malaysia were expected to last until Friday. Jang said, "We will discuss all issues, including our suspension of missile exports and the US launch of our satellites during the missile talks." A press statement released by Robert J. Einhorn, Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation, stated that the US-DPRK talks had ended, that they had been substantive, and that he would report back to President Clinton on the talks.

"Clinton's DPRK Visit" (Daily Report, November 6, US)

"US-DPRK Missile Talks

"US President's Visit to DPRK" (Daily Report, November 7, PRC)

"US-DPRK Missile Talks" (Daily Report, November 7, PRC)

According to the Voice of America (VOA), US experts argue that US President Bill Clinton has no reason at present to visit Pyongyang, given that the DPRK has yet to disclose its plans for the development of weapons of mass destruction or missiles, and neither has the DPRK has shown any moves to reduce its troops deployed along the Demilitarized Zone. An article in USA Today discussed expert's perspectives on a potential missile deal.

"US Policy towards DPRK" (Daily Report, November 9, ROK)

"Clinton's Visit to DPRK" (Daily Report, November 9, US)

"US-DPRK Missile Talks" (Daily Report, November 6, US)

Since 1990, the DPRK has returned to the US the remains of 285 US soldiers missing in action from the Korean War. The US paid the DPRK US\$6,277,000 in compensation for the joint search work.

"Remains of US Soldiers in DPRK" (Daily Report, November 8, ROK)

2. Inter-Korean Talks

ROK officials and analysts said that the ROK and the DPRK may not be able to hold their next round of defense ministers' talks by November 30 as scheduled due to insufficient time left for preparations. ROK officials are beginning to have concerns that the DPRK is returning to its old foreign policy of excluding the ROK on military issues.

"Inter-Korean Defense Talks" (Daily Report, November 9, ROK)

"ROK View of US-DPRK Relations" (Daily Report, November 8, ROK)

During a four-day meeting on economic cooperation between working-level officials from the ROK and the DPRK, the ROK will seek to boost investment in the DPRK with accords protecting investment and eliminating double taxation. The ROK called for the DPRK to allow ROK inspectors to monitor food aid distribution at grain warehouses near Pyongyang to ensure the 500,000 ton food loan from Seoul is used to feed DPRK civilians instead of its military.

"Inter-Korean Economic Talks" (Daily Report, November 8, ROK)

"Inter-Korean Economic Talks" (Daily Report, November 10, ROK)

Colonel Martin Glasser, secretary of the UNC Military Armistice Commission (MAC), and Colonel Kwak Chol- hee, senior liaison officer at the DPRK side of Panmunjom, met to discuss preparations for the construction of the inter-Korean railway. Russian Railway Ministry official Alexander Tzerinko revealed that Russia and the DPRK agreed to link the Siberia Railway to the one now under construction by the DPRK and the ROK.

"Inter-Korean Railway" (Daily Report, November 7, ROK)

"Russian-DPRK Railway Agreement" (Daily Report, November 10, Japan)

3. Reunion of Separated Families

ROK officials said that the DPRK's Red Cross sent a letter to its ROK office that proposed new regulations seeking to limit the amount of cash and gifts to be exchanged between relatives, a week after threatening to suspend the reunions. Siblings of ROK spies sent into the DPRK are confirmed to have applied for the inter-Korean family reunion; at least 77 of those dispatched in the 1950s were confirmed to be alive in the DPRK. Park Hyong-joon, a spokesman for the ROK Red Cross, said that the ROK and the DPRK on Friday exchanged lists for the next round of family reunions this month.

"Reunion of Separated Families" (Daily Report, November 9, US)

"Reunion of Separated Families" (Daily Report, November 10, ROK)

"Reunion of Separated Families" (Daily Report, November 7, ROK)

"Reunion of Separated Families" (Daily Report, November 10, US)

The DPRK Red Cross accused ROK Red Cross chief Chang Choong-shik of slandering the DPRK and rejected his apology. Chosun's October edition quoted Chang as saying that facilities in Pyongyang were decrepit and that reunions between separated families will let people from both Koreas compare their political systems.

"ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks" (Daily Report, November 8, US)

"Reunion of Separated Families" (Daily Report, November 10, ROK)

4. ROK Military

ROK Grand National Party Representative Kang Chang-sung called on the ROK Defense Ministry to withdraw the SAM (Surface to Air Missile)-X project for buying "outdated" US-made Patriot missile systems, and instead concentrate its efforts on developing long-range missiles to replace the US Nike missiles which have a high incidence of accidental launch.

"ROK Missile Purchases" (Daily Report, November 8, ROK)

5. US Troops in ROK

Representative Kim Won-ung of the ROK's opposition Grand National Party (GNP) published a white paper on the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) which argued that the ROK should seek ways to maximize its own national interests as opposed to only seeking security guarantees from the big powers. He also called for a wholesale revision of the SOFA agreement.

"US Troops in ROK" (Daily Report, November 8, ROK)

6. DPRK Foreign Relations: Australia

Australia's Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer said on Tuesday that security concerns, including missile and nuclear issues, would top the agenda during his three-day visit to the DPRK next week. Downer's visit would be the first by an Australian minister since it restored diplomatic relations with the DPRK in May.

"Australia-DPRK Relations" (Daily Report, November 7, US)

7. Alleged DPRK Smuggling

The Government of Bangladesh is investigating employees of several embassies, including the DPRK and Iraq, after they were caught smuggling large amounts of whiskey in ship containers into Bangladesh. Chosun Ilbo reported that the DPRK government is manufacturing drugs by directing individual rural households to grow poppies and then buying and refining the drugs, according to recent testimonies of two DPRK refugees who fled last year.

"Alleged DPRK Smuggling" (Daily Report, November 8, ROK)

China

1. PRC Military

During a meeting on the PRC's air defenses, both PRC President Jiang Zemin and Premier Zhu Rongji said that there must be no let-up in efforts to strengthen the military. The International Institute for Strategic Studies estimates that the PRC spent US\$40 billion on defense last year.

"PRC Military Spending" (Daily Report, November 9, US)

A US military expert said that a new supersonic anti-ship or anti-radar missile appeared at the Zhuhai airshow in southern PRC that could pose a threat to the defense of Taiwan if deployed.

"PRC Missile Development" (Daily Report, November 6, US)

2. PRC-Russian Arms Trade

Russia was the biggest foreign exhibitor at the PRC Zhuhai airshow, bringing around 20 planes. Negotiations were held on the sale of four A-50 Beriev advance radar systems, which can detect activity up to 300 kilometers (180 miles) compared to 1,000 kilometers for the Israeli AWACS. An anonymous Western military expert said that he doubted whether Russia would cede its technology to the PRC for fear that one day it might be used against it.

"Russian Arms Sales to PRC" (Daily Report, November 9, US)

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov is in Beijing to sign an arms deal that critics said will give the PRC a strategic edge over the Taiwanese by providing airborne early warning and control aircraft and advanced Russian destroyers with high-speed ship-to-ship missiles. Kasyanov met with PRC Premier Zhu Rongji and they signed eight trade agreements. They also stressed their willingness to cooperate in areas such as trade and military technology.

"PRC-Russian Arms Trade" (Daily Report, November 6, US)

"PRC-Russian Relations" (Daily Report, November 7, PRC)

3. PRC-US Relations

PRC President Jiang Zemin will hold talks with US President Bill Clinton on the sidelines of the November 14-15 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Brunei. They will exchange views on bilateral relations and major international and regional issues of mutual interest.

"PRC-US Relations" (Daily Report, November 7, US)

The PRC criticized a bill passed by the US Congress as containing anti-PRC provisions, raising the issues of Taiwan, Tibet and human rights, and urged the US government to make sure that it does not become law.

"PRC-US Relations" (Daily Report, November 7, US)

US Defense Secretary William Cohen said that no matter who is elected, the next US President will attach great importance to Sino-US relations. Cohen also said that both the Democratic and Republican Parties have reached a consensus on the development of friendly ties with PRC. US General Henry H. Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met with his PRC counterpart, General Fu Quanyou in Beijing to discuss the issue of Taiwan.

"PRC-US Relations" (Daily Report, November 7, PRC)

"US-PRC Talks on Taiwan" (Daily Report, November 6, US)

4. South China Sea

Michael Tay, director for ASEAN affairs at Singapore's foreign ministry, said that a code of conduct to ease tensions in the South China Sea was unlikely to be signed during a November summit of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders.

"South China Sea Code of Conduct" (Daily Report, November 8, US)

Japan

1. Japan-US Relations

China Daily reported that Japanese Defense Agency official said that Japan and the US began their first joint military exercises in line with the adoption of new security arrangements last year.

"Japan-US Relations" (Daily Report, November 7, PRC)

"Japanese-US Military Exercises" (Daily Report, November 3, US)

Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies published an essay by Xu Wansheng, in which he argues that while Japan and US have generally maintained a collaborative paradigm, the development of conflicts between Japan and US are inevitable and insurmountable.

"Japan-US Relations" (Daily Report, November 7, PRC)

2. Japanese-DPRK Normalization Talks

Opposition is growing to the government's current approach to the Japanese-DPRK normalization talks from both the ruling and opposition parties because the latest round of talks ended in a deadlock over the issue of past, because no specific date of the next round was decided, and because the Japanese government has not officially revealed the content of the talks, allegedly due to the DPRK's demands.

"Japanese-DPRK Normalization Talks" (Daily Report, November 10, Japan)

Nuclear Issues

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

According to high-ranking DPRK defector Hwang Jang-yop, the DPRK was studying a plan to conduct an underground nuclear test in 1994 and has continued to develop the means to enrich uranium 235 to weapons grade with a Middle Eastern partner.

"DPRK Nuclear Program" (Daily Report, November 8, ROK)

Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, told the UN General Assembly that nuclear inspectors would like to start work immediately to verify that the DPRK is not developing atomic bombs. The DPRK recently reiterated that it will not allow the agency to inspect its nuclear program, which it says is for peaceful purposes only.

"DPRK Nuclear Inspections" (Daily Report, November 7, US)

General Electric (GE) has recently notified the ROK and US governments that it would bow out of the nuclear reactor project in the DPRK unless the governments make pledges of compensation in case of accidents. According to international business rules, the DPRK is obliged to take full responsibility for all accidents stemming from the atomic power plant construction, but GE believes that the DPRK does not have the funds to do this.

"Light-Water Reactor Project" (Daily Report, November 7, ROK)

Former European Commission president Jacques Santer said that the European Union (EU) is likely to double its financial contribution to the KEDO to 30 million euro. Santer also met with DPRK Supreme People's Assembly Chairman Kim Yong-nam and DPRK Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun and discussed the issue of the DPRK's missile development and export. Santer was told that the DPRK expected compensation for the 35% of exports that missiles and missile technology comprise.

"EU Contribution to KEDO" (Daily Report, November 10, Japan)

"EU-DPRK Missile Talks" (Daily Report, November 10, Japan)

2. US Nuclear Program

TRW, Inc reported the successful test of the first remanufactured production Minuteman III stage 1 solid rocket motor.

"US Nuclear Program" (NPP Flash, V.2 #37)

3. Russian Nuclear Forces

Russian Strategic Rocket Forces General Vladimir Yakovlev stated that he planned to raise cash for the armed forces by selling the opportunity to use decommissioned missiles to lift satellites into orbit. The Russian Strategic Rocket Forces test-fired an SS-19 missile on 1 November; the SS-19 appears likely to be removed from service to join the SS-18 rocket as a booster for commercial satellites. Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Ivanov also said that the Strategic Rocket Forces will remain a separate branch of the armed forces for at least another six years.

"Russian Launch Vehicle Conversions" (NPP Flash, V.2 #37)

"Russian Nuclear Forces" (NPP Flash, V.2 #37)

4. India Nuclear Policy

Indian Atomic Energy Commission chairman R. Chidambaram said earlier that the five "carefully planned and completely successful" tests in May 1998 had given India "the capability to design and fabricate nuclear weapons from low yields up to around 200 kilotons. India's Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) completed upgrades of the Russian-made Bramhos supersonic missile, which can be launched from ships and aircraft and made to carry a nuclear warhead.

"India Nuclear Policy" (NPP Flash, V.2 #37)

5. Israeli Nuclear Program

Iranian President Seyed Mohammad Khatami told Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori that the Israeli nuclear arsenal poses a serious threat to regional peace and security. Der Spiegel reported that sources close to the German manufacturers of Israel's newest submarine class have said that the submarine is to be adapted with a nuclear land-attack capability.

"Israeli Nuclear Program" (NPP Flash, V.2 #37)

6. Nuclear Submarines

British officials have resisted pressure from the Spanish government to either remove the crippled HMS Tireless, a nuclear submarine with a damaged reactor, from Gibraltar, or allow Spanish experts aboard to survey the damage. Seven out of Britain's twelve nuclear-powered attack submarines are either defective or show signs of flaw.

"UK Sub Accident" (NPP Flash, V.2 #37)

Nicholas Berry, Senior Analyst at the Center for Defense Information, argues that the rapid acquisition of submarines in Asia destabilizes security conditions and increases the chances of accidents.

"Submarine Proliferation" (NPP Flash, V.2 #37)

Reactions to US Presidential Election

1. Reactions in Asia

The Wall Street Journal reported that Japanese leaders expect the status quo to continue under either George W. Bush or Al Gore, while the PRC are more apprehensive about initial friction if Bush wins the US presidential elections.

"Effect of Election on US Asian Policy" (Daily Report, November 9, US)

ROK President Kim Dae-jung said Wednesday that US policy on the DPRK will not change under a George W. Bush administration and that the ROK will maintain cooperation with the US and Japan in dealing with the DPRK. ROK analysts said that the close and frequent coordination between the ROK, the US and Japan on their DPRK policies may be temporarily suspended in the aftermath of the US presidential election until new officials are lined up.

"US Policy towards DPRK" (Daily Report, November 9, ROK)

"ROK-US-Japan Policy Coordination" (Daily Report, November 10, ROK)

The Taiwanese government said that it hoped that the next US administration would help thaw ties between the PRC and Taiwan.

"Taiwanese View of US Election" (Daily Report, November 8, US)

PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao said on November 2 that the US election is an internal affair of the US, and China "will not interfere." He said that the PRC hopes that friendly relations and cooperation between PRC and US will continue to develop.

"PRC Attitude to US Presidential Election" (Daily Report, November 7, PRC)

Japanese Ambassador to the US Shunji Yanai stated that GOP presidential candidate George W. Bush would give a greater priority to Japan than Vice President Al Gore, and be more cautious towards the DPRK. Yanai also said that, either way, the US will pressure Japan to assume a greater burden in supporting US troops and in peacekeeping operations.

"Japanese-US Relations" (Daily Report, November 10, Japan)

Arms Control

1. UN First Committee

The First Committee of the UN adopted a resolution proposed by Belarus, the PRC, Russia, and Kyrgyzstan that calls for united efforts to strengthen the 1972 ABM Treaty.

"PRC's Position on ABM Treaty" (Daily Report, November 7, PRC)

2. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

An international panel of scientists, established by independent arms control group VERTIC, said in a report issued on Monday that a global nuclear test ban can be reliably verified with existing technology, creating a powerful deterrent against any attempt to cheat.

"Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty" (NPP Flash, V.2 #37)

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