

NAPSNET Week in Review 2 November, 2001

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNET Week in Review 2 November, 2001", NAPSNet Weekly Report, November 02, 2001,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-week-in-review-2-november-2001/>

Korea

1. Inter-Korean Talks

The ROK accepted a DPRK proposal for dialogue at Mount Kumgang. The DPRK earlier warned that military exercises near Seoul had made the atmosphere for talks "complicated." The ROK proposed that the Cabinet meeting take place on November 9-12, but the DPRK has yet to respond. ROK Unification Minister Hong Soon-young is reportedly seeking a meeting with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il on the sidelines of the talks.

"Inter-Korean Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 2, US)

"Inter-Korean Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

"Inter-Korean Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, ROK)

"Inter-Korean Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

"Inter-Korean Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"ROK-DPRK Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 2, ROK)

2. Email Service in DPRK

A company based in Shenyang in northeast PRC and supported by the DPRK government said it installed server computers in Pyongyang in early October and is running an experimental e-mail service. Government agencies or other official organizations said the service is limited for now to only those who want to exchange e-mails with DPRK trade companies.

"Email Service in DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, US)

"DPRK E-mail Service Opens" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 2, ROK)

3. DPRK Participation in Anti-Terrorism Efforts

US Ambassador to the ROK Thomas Hubbard urged the DPRK to join in international efforts to fight terrorism, saying the DPRK is missing out on a key opportunity to improve ties with the US and the world community.

"US Urges DPRK to Take Part in Anti-Terrorism Efforts" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, ROK)

4. ROK Military Exercises

The DPRK accused the ROK of staging a military exercise to heighten tension and derail reconciliation on the peninsula.

"DPRK Criticise ROK Military Exercise" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, ROK)

"DPRK Criticism of ROK Military Exercises" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

5. DPRK-US Talks

The DPRK said that it does not oppose dialogue with the US. It reaffirmed its opposition to US efforts to widen discussions to include DPRK's conventional arms. It added that it would resume dialogue with the US only when the present administration returns to the compromising stance of the previous administration.

"DPRK-US Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"DPRK Policy towards US" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

Former ROK foreign minister Han Sung-joo said that the DPRK and the US are unlikely to reopen dialogue for the time being as the US is preoccupied with its war on terrorism. He added that ties with the US are expected to remain in a lull, and the DPRK is likely to continue to pursue "neither a breakthrough nor break-off" policy towards the ROK in the months to come.

"DPRK-US Talks Unlikely Soon" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, ROK)

6. DPRK-Russia Oil Deal

Russia and the DPRK agreed to look carefully into the issue of supplying surplus Russian power to the DPRK. They plan to sort out the details of the quantity, price and payment procedures in next bilateral working-level talks slated for next month in Vladivostock, Russia.

"DPRK-Russia Deal on Oil Supply" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, ROK)

7. DPRK Religious Freedom

The DPRK criticized the US Congress on International Religious Freedom (CIRF) for including the DPRK in a list of oppressors of religious freedom.

"DPRK Denounce US Report" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, ROK)

"DPRK Refutes Bush's Remark" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

8. DPRK Committed to UN Treaty

According to Patrick Van Haute, leader of a delegation of European Union diplomats, the DPRK said it will ratify a UN treaty meant to block financing for terrorism. DPRK officials said ratification could come as early as next month.

"DPRK Committed to UN Treaty" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

9. DPRK Attendance at US Security Forum

Cho Kil-hong, vice president of the Peace and Arms Reduction Research Institute affiliated with the DPRK's Foreign Ministry, led a three-member delegation to the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) meeting that opened October 29 in Washington.

"DPRK to Attend Security Form in US" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, ROK)

"CSCAP Meeting" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

10. DPRK Diplomatic Corps

The DPRK has assigned Jon Hui-jong as officer of External Affairs to take the place of Jang Myong-sun, DPRK ambassador to Egypt, who himself was assigned to the seat less than a year ago.

"DPRK Reshuffles Foreign Affairs Dept." (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, ROK)

11. Inter-Korean Financial Cooperation

The Bank of Korea (BOK) called for greater financial cooperation between the ROK and the DPRK to provide support for inter-Korean economic activity.

"Financial Inter-Korean Cooperation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

12. ROK Attendance at ASEAN Summit

ROK President Kim Dae-jung visited Brunei to attend the ASEAN plus three summit meetings. Kim was to hold a trilateral summit with his PRC and Japanese counterparts and hold separate one-on-one meetings with ASEAN leaders.

"ROK To Attend ASEAN Plus 2 Summit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

13. ROK-US Anti-Terrorism Talks

The ROK Defense Ministry said that a five-member ROK military delegation left for Hawaii on October 31 to discuss details about the ROK's participation in the US-led war against terrorism.

"ROK-US Talks on Anti-Terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, ROK)

People's Republic of China

1. PRC-US Relations

The PRC on October 30 criticized the US State Department's report on the PRC's religious policy. During a meeting with visiting San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, PRC President Jiang Zemin said Sino-US relations can continuously improve and expand as long as the two sides respect each other, treat each other on an equal footing, seek common ground while reserving differences and properly handle the Taiwan issue and other issues.

"PRC-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, PRC)

2. PRC-Russian Relations

Russian President Vladimir Putin told PRC Vice-President Hu Jintao that relations have reached a new high as the PRC ratified a major Sino-Russian bilateral agreement on October 27.

"PRC-Russian Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, PRC)

"PRC-Russian Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

3. Cross-Strait Relations

PRC President Jiang Zemin urged a delegation of the China Reunification Alliance of Taiwan (CRAT) to increase contact and cooperation across the Taiwan Straits and work for reunification as quickly as possible.

"Cross-Strait Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, PRC)

4. US Weapons to Taiwan

Taiwan welcomed a decision by the US to consider selling anti-tank missile systems.

"US Arms Sales to Taiwan" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

5. PRC Position on Anti-Terrorism

PRC Premier Zhu Rongji said during a meeting with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder that Eastern Turkestan separatists should be targeted by the global war on terrorism.

"PRC Position on Anti-Terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, PRC)

6. Analysis of PRC Vice President Hu Jintao

The New York Times carried an analysis of PRC Vice President Hu Jintao, who is expected to succeed Jiang Zemin in the winter of 2002. Some Western diplomats say they are hopeful that he will be a force for faster change, but they also admit that they just do not know. One unresolved question is whether Jiang will also step down as chairman of the military commission.

"Analysis of PRC Vice President Hu Jintao" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

7. PRC Ratification of Anti-Terror Treaties

Xinhua news agency reported that the PRC parliament has ratified two international anti-terror treaties.

"PRC Ratifies Anti-Terror Treaties" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

Japan

1. Japanese Support of US-led Action

Japanese and US officials held a second day of talks in Tokyo to try to clarify plans for Japan to provide logistical, rearguard support to US military action. Japanese officials said the US praised Japan for speedily taking steps to send its military overseas.

"Japanese Support of US-led Action" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 2, US)

"Japanese Support of US-led Action" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, US)

Legislation authorizing Japan's military to support the US-led war on terrorism won final approval Monday. The Asahi newspaper reported that Japan's Defense Ministry is considering sending four warships to the Indian Ocean. The biggest question was whether to deploy the advanced Aegis guided-missile destroyers.

"Japanese Support of US Led Action" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"Japanese Logistic Support for US" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, Japan)

2. Self-Defense Forces Law

Contractors for the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) are worried about proposed revisions to the SDF Law that would leave even company employees liable for prison terms of up to five years for leaking defense secrets.

"Revision of the Self-Defense Forces Law" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, Japan)

3. Japanese-US Weapons Cooperation

A source said that US and Japanese naval officials will hold talks with manufacturers from both countries on a role for Japanese firms in producing an Aegis air-defense system used on destroyers.

"Japanese Aid in Aegis Production" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 2, US)

4. Reaction to Yasukuni Shrine Visit

Media and court officials said that a group of about 640 Japanese filed lawsuits Thursday against Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi over a visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, saying it violated the constitutional separation of church and state.

"Reaction to Yasukuni Shrine Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 1, US)

5. Japanese Aid to Uzbekistan

The US asked Japan to provide economic aid to Uzbekistan.

"Japan's Aid to Uzbekistan" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, Japan)

Nuclear Issues

1. Pakistan Nuclear Safety

Pakistan's military spokesman Major General Rashid Qureshi told reporters that "there is no question of anyone attacking or coming close" to Pakistan's nuclear assets. US government officials have refuted Seymour Hersh's story in the New Yorker magazine that a special US military unit is training with Israeli commandos to remove Pakistan's nuclear weapons in case of a coup against President Pervez Musharraf. The International Atomic Energy Agency warned that Pakistan could become a source of hardware for terrorists planning to build a nuclear device.

(SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

2. Bin Laden's Alleged Nuclear Weapons

The Afghan ambassador in Islamabad Abdul Salam Zaeef has denied reports that Osama bin Laden may have nuclear arms. Two Pakistani nuclear scientists were arrested by Pakistan's security agencies. Praful Bidwai discusses nuclear dangers in South Asia.

"Related News" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

Afghanistan War

1. Taliban Political Situation

Taliban Foreign Minister Wakil Ahmed Mutawakil denied that splits are emerging in the Taliban.

"Afghanistan: Current Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

2. Future Prospects

United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi told a press conference in Islamabad that the U.N. is "not forming a government" in Afghanistan. The Turkish government has announced its decision to deploy Special Forces troops in Afghanistan. A report in Asia Times suggested that Russia's vocal support of the Northern Alliance is not always matched by its actions.

"Afghanistan: Future Prospects" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

3. Refugee Crisis

Pakistani government officials have denied reports that Pakistan authorities had suspended the admission and registration of Afghan refugees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported, "Pakistan has in principle agreed to accept new Afghan refugees."

"Refugee Crisis"(SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

4. Pakistan

The Taliban government has confirmed that a group of three hundred armed Pakistani youth has been allowed to enter Afghanistan.

"Pakistan" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

5. General Assessments

Writer and Journalist Ahmed Rashid argues that defections from the Taliban should not be taken as a sign that the regime will crumble easily. Mohsen Makhmalbaf, an Iranian filmmaker, notes his impressions of Afghanistan. Writer Marcus Moench examines emerging geopolitical realignments in South and Central Asia.

"General Assessments" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

Pakistan

1. Pakistan Domestic Situation

The Chairman of Pak-Afghan Defence Council, an alliance of pro-Taliban political and religious parties, warned the Pakistani government of "strong resistance and civil disobedience if it does not review its Afghan policy." Armed tribesmen have agreed to open the strategic Karakorum Highway after blockading the road for ten days. Osama bin Laden called on Muslims in Pakistan to "confront the crusade against Islam."

"Pakistan Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

2. India-Pakistan Relations

India claimed that Pakistan had moved additional troops to areas facing Akhnoor in Jammu and Kashmir and Ganganagar in the Rajasthan sectors.

"India-Pakistan Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

India

1. India Domestic Situation

All Opposition members of the Uttar Pradesh State Assembly have resigned, demanding the dissolution of the House and early elections. Jana Krishnamurthy, chief of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), warned that Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee can be replaced "if necessary." A Pakistani military spokesman voiced concern over what appeared to be "disparity and disconnect" between the Indian Government and the Army.

"India Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

2. Pakistan-India Relations

US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld may visit Pakistan and India in early November. Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee has ruled out talks with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf. However, there have been reports of a possible meeting between the two leaders in Kathmandu, Nepal, at a forum of South Asian leaders in early January.

"Pakistan-India Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #42)

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