

NAPSNET Week in Review 23 November, 2001

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Koreas

1. DPRK Biological Weapons

The US on Monday accused Iraq, the DPRK, and possibly Iran of violating the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention banning weapons of germ warfare and said Syria and Libya might be able to produce biological weapons. ROK Defense Minister Kim Dong-shin said that the DPRK has amassed an arsenal of biochemical weapons but no clear evidence exists linking the DPRK to terrorist networks.

"US on DPRK Biological Weapons" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

"DPRK Biological Weapons" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

2. Outlook for Inter-Korean Relations

ROK Unification Minister Hong Soon-young told the National Assembly's committee on unification and foreign affairs that the DPRK is likely to maintain its hard-line policy toward the ROK for the time being.

"Outlook for Inter-Korean Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, ROK)

3. Trilateral Talks on DPRK

The ROK Foreign Ministry said that senior officials from the ROK, the US and Japan will meet in San Francisco on November 26-27 to coordinate their policies on the DPRK. The DPRK criticized the policy coordination between the US and the ROK.

"Trilateral Talks on DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, ROK)

"DPRK Criticizes ROK-US Joint Effort" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, ROK)

4. DPRK-US Talks

US Ambassador to the ROK Thomas Hubbard warned that the DPRK was missing a chance to move ahead with rapprochement talks with the US and urged the DPRK to accept US proposal for talks. Hubbard also said that the US would continue to support the ROK's inter-Korean policy no matter who wins next year's presidential election and that any policy regarding the DPRK would be set by the ROK administration.

"DPRK-US Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

"US Policy towards ROK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, ROK)

5. DPRK Aid

The World Health Organization (WHO) asked the ROK on Wednesday to contribute to its efforts to repair the DPRK's health system.

"ROK Aid to DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

"Medical Aid for DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

"WHO Head Visits DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, ROK)

ROK officials said Monday that the European Union (EU) plans to put into action a 5 million euro (US\$4.3 million) program to teach DPRK citizens about the market economy, energy industry and agriculture next year.

"EU Aid to DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, ROK)

6. DPRK Envoy to UN

The DPRK's official Central Radio said Monday that the DPRK has appointed vice foreign minister Park Kil Yon to replace Ri Hyong Chol as its new ambassador to the UN.

"DPRK Envoy to UN" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

7. DPRK-Poland Relations

ROK officials said Monday that the DPRK and Poland normalized their diplomatic relationship earlier this month with the appointment of a Polish ambassador to the DPRK.

"DPRK-Poland Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, ROK)

8. DPRK Ship Crosses NLL

The ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff said a patrol ship from the DPRK crossed the Northern Limit Line by about 1.8 nautical miles at 8:35 on the morning of November 18 and headed back to the DPRK around 9:11 AM.

"DPRK Ship Crossed NLL" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, ROK)

10. Kim Dae-jung European Visit

ROK President Kim Dae-jung will visit Europe next month as part of efforts to bolster the peace process on the Korean peninsula.

"Kim Dae-jung to Visit Europe" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

China

1. US Strategic View of PRC

Former US Ambassador to Japan Michael H. Armacost and Os Guinness, a senior fellow at the Trinity forum in McLean, Virginia, voiced similar views about a shift in the US perception of the strategic importance of Southeast Asia and the PRC.

"US Strategic View of PRC" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

2. Taiwan Parliamentary Elections

With Taiwan's parliamentary polls just two weeks away, calls have surfaced for Taiwan's main opposition Nationalist Party to merge with the People First Party and the New Party in a political realignment to help its chances of recapturing the presidency in 2004.

"Taiwan Parliamentary Elections" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

3. PRC-Russian Relations

The Russian government said Russian President Vladimir Putin called PRC President Jiang Zemin on Tuesday morning to brief him about his summit last week with US President George W. Bush.

"PRC-Russian Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

Japan

1. Japanese Support of War on Terror

Japan's new ambassador to the US, Ryozo Kato, discussed Japan's contribution to the US-led war on terrorism. US Ambassador Howard H. Baker, Junior, said Wednesday that the US would prefer Japan to deploy one of its advanced Aegis destroyers. The Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker Koichi Kato, chairman of the Lower House Special Committee on Anti-terrorism Countermeasures, said that Japan has a unique advantage in dealing with the Middle East that allows Japan to carry out diplomatic activities in the region in a manner different from the US, yet not in conflict with its relationship with US.

"Japanese Support of War on Terror" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

"Opinion on Japanese Support for US" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, Japan)

2. Ratification of Anti-terrorism Treaty

The Japanese government submitted a letter of acceptance of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings to UN Security General Kofi Annan on November 16. The submission of the letter will put the treaty into effect in Japan on December 16.

"Ratification of Anti-terrorism Treaty" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, Japan)

3. Peacekeeping Bill Approval

Japan's Cabinet approved a bill giving soldiers more freedom to take part in international peacekeeping missions. The bill is expected to go before a parliamentary vote by December 7.

"Japan Approves Peacekeeping Bill" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

4. Japan-US-ROK Military Drill

The Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) is planning to host multilateral submarine rescue drills in the waters off southwestern Japan next spring.

"Japan-US-ROK Military Drill" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, Japan)

5. US-Japan Smallpox Project

Government sources stated that Japan is worried about the potential for a biological attack using the smallpox virus. Officials said Japan has no stockpiles of smallpox vaccine, and is unprepared at present for any epidemics.

"US-Japan Smallpox Project" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, US)

6. MOX Shipment from Japan to Britain

The Japanese government and the European Atomic Agency Committee applied to the US government for permission to send plutonium-uranium mixed oxide (MOX) fuel back to Britain earlier this year. US approval is required because the fuel is made of spent uranium of US origin.

"MOX Shipment from Japan to Britain" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 19, Japan)]

Nuclear Issues

1. India Nuclear Safety

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee told both Houses of Parliament that India and the United States might start a dialogue to make Indian nuclear power reactors more safe.

"India Nuclear Safety" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

Afghanistan War and Implications

1. Afghanistan: Current Situation

Uzbek warlord General Rashid Dostum announced on November 19 that his forces have reached an agreement with the Taliban to end the siege of the northern Afghan city of Kunduz. The next day, however, the Northern Alliance told the Taliban to surrender Kunduz in three days. According to Afghan Islamic Press reports, 150 civilians were killed in the U.S.-led bombing of areas around Khost. Former Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani, forced out of power by the Taliban in 1996, has returned to Kabul.

"Afghanistan: Current Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

2. Afghanistan: Future Prospects

According to unnamed defense sources in London, troops from the Royal Marine's Special Boat Service may be pulled out of Afghanistan. Afghan exiles favoring the return of the former Afghan King Zahir Shah to Kabul have voiced their feeling of exclusion from a role in post-Taliban Afghanistan. Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun leader sympathetic to the former King has indicated that some high-ranking Taliban officials may agree to be a part of a future set up in Kabul that includes Shah. The leaders of the Northern Alliance have formally accepted a UN invitation to meet with other Afghan factions to discuss power-sharing arrangements.

"Afghanistan: Future Prospects" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

3. Humanitarian Crisis

Reports in Pakistani newspapers indicate that more Afghan refugees are moving towards Pakistan. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has started to move Afghan refugees from the makeshift camp at Jalozai to prepared sites inland. A report in The Frontier Post chronicles the worldwide growth in the refugee crisis. Reports in Pakistani newspapers have warned that the capture of Kunduz by the Northern Alliance may lead to large-scale massacres.

"Humanitarian Crisis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

4. Pakistan

The Pakistani government has completely sealed the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Balochistan while at the same time, posting 3000 troops to prevent Afghan fighters from entering the country. The United States has promised to give US\$73 million to support Pakistan's efforts to keep its borders closed to fleeing Afghan fighters.

"Pakistan" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

5. General Assessments

For general assessment editorials and opinion articles from the Asia Times, Nadeem Malik, Syed Saleem Shahzed, Kuldeep Nayar, Marwaan Macan-Markar, and Edward Said, see link below.

"General Assessments" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

Pakistan

1. Pakistan Domestic Situation

President Pervez Musharraf has reportedly ordered Pakistani law-enforcement authorities to take strict action against Afghan refugees who may create "law and order problems." Shahid Javed Burki examines the state of Pakistan's economy before the start of the Afghan war. Muddassir Rizvi notes that the "Taliban retreat has dampened the so-called jihad that had gripped Pakistan in the wake of events after the September 11 terror attacks." Rafi Raza warns, "in the midst of the West's 'fight against terrorism and for freedom', concerns about democracy in Pakistan have clearly been downgraded."

"Pakistan Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

2. India-Pakistan Relations

Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf, accused India of "preparing for adventurism" against Pakistan.

"India-Pakistan Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

3. Iran-Pakistan Relations

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohsin Aminzadey visited Pakistan for "bilateral consultation" on the Afghan crisis. Iranian Interior Minister Abdolvahed Mussavi-Lari has applauded Pakistan for its "efforts" towards a rapprochement over the Afghan crisis.

"Iran - Pakistan Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

India

1. India Domestic Situation

The Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO) has caused serious tensions between the Indian government and opposition political parties. Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has defended his appointment of George Fernandes' as the Defense Minister.

"India Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

2. Pakistan-India Relations

India's Union Home Minister L.K. Advani has accused Pakistan of continuing to support terrorism in Kashmir.

"Pakistan-India Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

3. US India Relations

The Indian government has denied receiving any proposal from the United States for a military alliance. High-level bilateral military and civilian defense talks between the U.S. and India are scheduled to be held in New Delhi over the next few weeks.

"US India Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

Kashmir

1. Internal Situation

Abdul Gani Bhat, chief of the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), the main separatist alliance in Kashmir, has called for a "cease fire," but was met with some opposition from within the alliance. A call for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Kashmir by Hizbul Mujahideen was also met with dissent from within the party. The fall of the Taliban have led to fears that Islamic militants may try to make their way into Kashmir. A report by Human Rights Watch accused India of using criminals for special operations in which "the costs in terms of human lives and the Army's reputation were likely to be too great."

"Internal Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, Vol. 2 #48)

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