

NAPSNET Week in Review 25 January, 2002

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United States

1. US-Philippines Anti-Terrorism

The US intensified its military build-up in the southern Philippines on Friday. Colonel William Ball, deputy chief of the US special forces command in the Pacific region arrived in the southern Philippine city of Zamboanga along with 30 other officers. Arroyo insists that the 660 US troops coming to the southern city of Zamboanga and the nearby island of Basilan are only for the training of local soldiers.

"US-Philippines Anti-Terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 25, US)

"US-Philippines Anti-terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, US)

"US-Philippines Anti-Terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 23, US)

2. US Anti-Terrorism

US President George W. Bush proposed on Wednesday a US\$48 billion increase in military spending next year, the biggest rise in two decades, to buy high-tech equipment for a wider war against terrorism. The US\$48 billion increase would bring the total proposed defense budget to US\$379 billion.

"US Anti-Terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 23, US)

3. US Military in Central Asia

The US does not plan to maintain a permanent military presence in Central Asia despite a substantial buildup of troops there now. Speaking after his meeting with Kyrgyzstan's President Askar Akayev in Bishkek, General Tommy Franks, commander of the US-led Afghan campaign, said that even without a troop presence the US would remain involved in the region as it continued its campaign against violent militants.

"US Military in Central Asia" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, US)

4. US Anti-Proliferation

The US sought on Thursday to put pressure on states it said aided the spread of nuclear, chemical and biological arms, insisting they be held accountable for violating international commitments. In a speech to the Conference on Disarmament, US Under Secretary of State John Bolton vowed the US would use "every method at our disposal" to ensure extremist groups did not get weapons of mass destruction. Bolton accused Iraq and the DPRK of violating the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and interfering with monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"US Anti-Proliferation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 25, US)

Korean Peninsula

1. Inter-Korean Relations

The DPRK has made an appeal for new official talks with the ROK, while seeking to diminish US influence in any reconciliation process. DPRK senior ruling party leader Yang Hyong-Sop made the appeal for new talks at a special meeting in Pyongyang on January 22. However, the DPRK demanded on January 21 that the ROK's opposition chief and leading presidential candidate Lee Hoi-chang apologize for remarks voicing skepticism about the ROK's dealings with the DPRK.

"Inter-Korean Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 23, US)

"Inter-Korean Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 22, US)

2. DPRK-Japan Mystery Ship Incident

Diplomats from Japan and the DPRK met secretly in the PRC after the sinking of an unidentified ship in the East China Sea last month following a firefight with Japanese patrol boats. Unnamed Japanese government sources report that DPRK and Japanese foreign ministry officials held talks in Beijing in late December.

"DPRK-Japan Mystery Ship Incident" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, US)

"DPRK-Japan Mystery Ship" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, Japan)

3. ROK-DPRK Relations

The DPRK launched a scathing attack on the man favored to be the ROK's next president. The DPRK accused Lee Hoi-chang, leader of ROK's opposition Grand National party, of making "reckless" and "provocative" comments in a speech last week in which he promised a tough stance against the DPRK if elected president.

"ROK-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 23, Japan)

4. ROK Sunshine Policy

ROK President Kim Dae-Jung insisted his Sunshine will outlive his stint in power, despite opposition threats to drop it. "Whether we will call it the Sunshine Policy or not, I think it will continue" with the next administration, said Kim.

"ROK Sunshine Policy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, US)

5. DPRK Arirang Festival

The DPRK is busy with preparations for its Arirang Festival, which is scheduled to run from April 29 to June 29. The DPRK hopes the festival will bring about 100,000 foreign tourists to Pyongyang. The DPRK will stage daily performances of a mass rally of 100,000 people to celebrate key political anniversaries. The centerpiece of the festival is a mass performance of 100,000 gymnasts and artists.

"DPRK Arirang Festival" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 22, US)

"DPRK Arirang Festival" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 22, US)

6. ROK-DPRK Tourism Linking

The ROK government hopes to link the World Cup soccer finals in the ROK with a major DPRK festival, both scheduled to take place around June, to boost tourism and the inter-Korean reconciliation process. A senior ROK official stated, "We believe linking the two events will benefit both sides, and we are currently examining various ways to do so."

Beginning in March, ROK citizens and foreign tourists can travel by train to a once-restricted area north of the Imjin River. "The construction of the four kilometer section from the Imjin River Station to Torasan Station part of the inter-Korean Gyeongui railroad is complete," an official at the National Railroad Administration said Tuesday.

"ROK-DPRK Tourism Linking" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 25, ROK)

"Inter-Korean Tourism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, ROK)

7. ROK-DPRK Family Reunions

ROK unification Minister Hong Soon-young said that the ROK plans to propose inter-Korean Red Cross talks with the DPRK perhaps next week. The ROK wants to arrange another separated family reunion on lunar New Year's Day, February 12.

"ROK-DPRK Family Reunions" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 25, ROK)

8. ROK-Japan Extradition Treaty

The ROK and Japan agreed on terms for a criminal extradition treaty on Thursday at the fourth round of working-level talks on the subject in Seoul. The treaty will be signed during a planned state visit by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in March.

"ROK-Japan Extradition Treaty" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 25, ROK)

9. US Military Base Relocation

Residents of several candidate sites for the new US military compound are strongly protesting the plan to relocate the Yongsan base to their areas, claiming the US military presence could cause serious social and environmental problems there. Among possible sites for the new US military base are Geoyeo-dong in Songpa-gu, southeastern Seoul, and the suburban cities of Suwon and Seongnam, both south of the capital.

"US Military Base Relocation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 22, ROK)

10. DPRK-US Relations

The US and the DPRK on January 23 began their latest round of talks aimed at resolving the fate of US servicemen still missing in action from the Korean War five decades ago.

"DPRK-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, PRC)

People's Republic of China

1. Cross-Straits Relations

The PRC urged Taiwan on Friday not to miss a "golden opportunity" to restart reconciliation talks presented by its softer line towards the island's pro-independence ruling party. Vice Premier Qian Qichen signaled the PRC's softer line on Thursday, saying that only a small number of the Democratic Progressive Party were separatists. Qian also invited DPP members to visit the PRC.

"Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 25, US)

"Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, US)

"Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, PRC)

2. PRC Transfer of Weapons

The PRC condemned as "unreasonable" US sanctions imposed on three PRC firms accused of supplying Iran with materials used to make chemical and biological weapons. "The US decision to impose sanctions on Chinese companies using so-called domestic laws and country-specific policy is unreasonable and should be cancelled. China is opposed to any country developing chemical weapons, and furthermore does not help any country develop chemical weapons," the foreign ministry said Friday in a statement.

"PRC Transfer of Weapons" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 25, US)

3. PRC-US Plane Incident

Recriminations over the bugging of a US-made plane intended to serve as the PRC's version of Air Force One are sidelining the career PRC Major General Liu Taichi and throwing a spotlight on the murky business holdings of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

"PRC-US Plane Incident" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 25, US)

"PRC-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, PRC)

"PRC-US Plane Incident" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 23, US)

"PRC-US Plane Incident" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 23, RF)

"PRC-US Airplane Incident" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 22, US)

4. PRC Role in Afghan Reconstruction

Leader of the interim Afghan government Hamid Karzai arrived in Beijing for a two-day visit on Wednesday. PRC Premier Zhu Rongji said that the PRC would do everything it could to help rebuild Afghanistan as Karzai likewise supported the PRC's campaign against Islamic separatists in Xinjiang.

"PRC Role in Afghan Reconstruction" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 23, US)

5. PRC Anti-terrorism

The PRC on January 21 directly linked a series of attacks by Islamic separatists in its northwestern Xinjiang region with Osama bin Laden. The cabinet's information office outlined the allegations in a 10-page report that blamed "East Turkestan" forces for more than 200 incidents between 1990 and 2001 in Xinjiang.

"PRC Anti-terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 22, US)

Japan

1. Japanese Coast Guard

The Japan Coast Guard will install long-range machine guns on its larger patrol vessels in the wake of last month's shootout in the East China Sea. The officials said the 30mm automatically targeting machine guns are aimed at countering attacks like those last month. "Japanese Coast Guard" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 24, Japan)

2. Afghan Reconstruction Conference

Japan promised US\$500 million over the next 2 years, with an immediate contribution of up to US\$250 dollars to cover the first 12 months. "Afghan Reconstruction Conference" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 23, Japan)

3. SDF Transparency

The Japanese Defense Agency officials have been far from forthcoming when asked to explain what the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) are actually doing. For its part, the Defense Agency says it cannot disclose details of SDF missions before the fact for fear of compromising ongoing US military operations. Agency officials said that the agency's style was similar to briefings given by the Pentagon. "SDF Transparency" (NAPSNet Daily Report, January 22, Japan)

Nuclear Issues

1. Pakistan Nuclear Safety

A team from Landau Network, an Italian Arms Control institution, recently visited Pakistan. Their report on the visit discusses, among other issues, security problems concerning Pakistan's nuclear weapons and nuclear material. "Pakistan Nuclear Safety" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

2. Related News and Analysis

India tested a variant of Agni missile with a range of 700 km. The Pakistan government has termed the test as "prejudicial" to regional stability. Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf has stated that Pakistan wants a de-nuclearised South Asia and is willing to sign a no-war pact with India. In response, the Indian government rejected the proposal stating that the de-nuclearisation of South Asia alone would have "no meaning." "Related News and Analysis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

Afghanistan War and Implications

1. Afghanistan: Current Situation

According to US officials, their special forces killed more than a dozen Islamic militants and captured 27 others after a fight in southern Afghanistan. Meanwhile, there were reports of fighting between various Afghan warlords in different parts of the country. Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf believes that Osama bin Laden is dead.

"Afghanistan: Current Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

2. Afghanistan: Reconstruction

Delegates from 61 countries and 21 international organizations attending an international conference in Tokyo, Japan, to help rebuild Afghanistan have pledged about four billion dollars in aid. A report in the Far Eastern Economic Review argues that "without a proper mechanism to establish security and manage development, the country could dissolve into well-funded anarchy rife with corruption and violence." Journalist and author Ahmad Rashid examines some of the challenges of rebuilding Afghanistan.

"Afghanistan: Reconstruction" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

3. Humanitarian Crisis

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is about to complete relocating refugees from Jalozai camp in northwest Pakistan to other sites. The living condition in the makeshift Jalozai camp has been deteriorating following the post September 11th refugee influx. According to UNHCR, over 6000 new Afghan refugees have been allowed to enter refugee camps in Pakistan.

"Humanitarian Crisis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

4. Regional Developments

Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to allow the deployment of US troops is causing her her "biggest political headaches." Russian officials are becoming wary about America's increasing influence in Central Asia. India has protested to the US and Britain over Pakistan's airlifting of its nationals and Taliban fighters after they were cornered in Kunduz during the war in Afghanistan.

"Regional Developments" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

5. General Assessments

G. Parthasarathy's essay in Frontline argues that the US would regret its decision to seek the cooperation of Pakistani military establishment in the "war against terrorism."

"General Assessments" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

India-Pakistan Tensions

1. News

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan suggested a two track approach to resolving India-Pakistan conflict that would consist of "a sustained and determined action against armed extremist groups and an equally sustained dialogue to resolve all differences." Four unidentified armed men on motorcycles opened fire outside the American Center in Kolkata, India, killing five policemen and injuring 20 people. India's Union Home Minister L. K. Advani claimed that Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) was responsible for the attack. Pakistan condemned the assault as an act of terror.

"News" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

2. Analysis

Troop movements ordered by an Indian corps commander Kapil Vij brought India and Pakistan dangerously close to war. The corps commander was subsequently removed. The Indian government, however, has issued a statement that the removal of Lt. Gen. Kapil Vij was a routine matter.

"Analysis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

3. Pakistan: Domestic Situation

Pakistan's President General Pervez Musharraf reaffirmed his commitment to holding general in the country by October 2002. He also outlined objectives that are part of his idea of restoring the "true essence of democracy" in Pakistan.

"Pakistan: Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

4. US-Pakistan Relations

Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Robert S Mueller stated that the US wants to expand its cooperation with Pakistan "beyond counter-terrorism to include cyber-crimes, human trafficking and other crimes."

"US-Pakistan Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

5. India: Domestic Situation

A report in the daily Hindu, India, examines political maneuvering around the upcoming election in Uttar Pradesh. Harish Khare essay in the daily Hindu, India, argues that India "would soon be resembling Pakistan if the present inclination to concede a centrality to the armed forces remains unchecked."

"India: Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

6. China-India Relations

A report in Asia Times examines PRC Premier Zhu Rongji's recent visit to India.

"China-India Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

Kashmir

1. Internal Situation

South Asian newspapers carried various reports on protest and violence in Kashmir.

"Out in the Cold"

"Internal Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

2. India and Pakistan

An essay in Asia Times argues that the renunciation of militancy by the All-Parties Hurriyet Conference (APHC) - an umbrella organization of 23 political parties in Kashmir - will help in finding a political solution to the Kashmir issue. A report in the daily Hindu, India, suggests that political parties in India believe that designating the current Line of Control dividing Indian and Pakistani sections of Kashmir as the international border is the only feasible solution to the Kashmir problem.

"India and Pakistan" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #4)

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