

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA  
(UNCURK)

CONFIDENTIAL

Seoul, 3 April 1970

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

The dramatic incident this week overshadowing every other development here involved the hijacking on 31 March 1970 of a JAL Boeing 747 aircraft by a group of radical Japanese students known to be members of the Zekigun (Red Army) and their demand to be flown to north Korea. The plane was first reported to have been hijacked while in flight from Tokyo to Fukuoka when it was forced to fly towards the direction of north Korea, but apparently was intercepted and brought down in the afternoon of the same day at the Seoul's Kimpo International Airport. While the aircraft remained at the airport for almost four days, the hijackers held 93 passengers and seven crew members as hostages and refused to release them unless they were permitted to fly to north Korea. Representatives of the Japanese Government and ROK officials including the Minister of Defence were on hand attempting to convince the hijackers to release the innocent passengers before they could take off for north Korea, but the hijackers remained dubious of the sincerity of the promise because of an earlier trick to make them believe that they had landed in Pyongyang.

The breakthrough in this "Samurai" drama came only by about midnight of 2 April, when the Japanese Vice Minister of Transportation, Mr. Shinjiro Yamamura, arrived at an agreement with the hijackers by which the former volunteered to become their hostage in order to free the rest of the passengers. In the afternoon of 3 April, the hijackers freed the 93 passengers and four stewardesses.

Throughout this bizarre and tense drama, the ROK Government maintained its stand that the passengers should be released before permitting the hijackers to fly to north Korea. On the other hand, the report that north Korean ground fire had been directed at the plane while trying to cross the DMZ was not substantiated because the DPRK announced twice during the crisis that it has pledged to guarantee the safe return of the passengers to Japan.

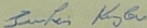
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Mr. C.V. Narasimhan  
Chef de Cabinet  
United Nations  
New York

In another development, the MAC meeting of 31 March was the scene of charges and counter-charges between the UNC and the DPRK sides on the recent activities along the DMZ. Major-General Ri Choon Sun, the DPRK Senior Member, accused the UNC of dispatching a number of south Korean agents into the north on espionage and subversive missions between 10 February and 13 March 1970. He also stated that four south Korean agents were killed and five captured during the said period while trying to infiltrate into north Korea. Major-General J.H. Skeldon, the new UNC Senior Member, denied the charges and accused the DPRK of committing two attacks on the UNC guard post inside the DMZ between 12 February and 14 March. The MAC will hold another meeting next week at the request of the DPRK.

With warm personal regards,

Yours sincerely,



Zouheir Kuzbari  
Principal Secretary