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22 SEP 79

SOUTH KOREA: Political Developments

South Korean authorities have been able to shift public attention from dissidence against the government to the squabbling among rival factions in the major opposition party. Aside from a few student protests, the nation remains relatively calm. [REDACTED]

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The move yesterday by the party of President Pak Chong-hui to suspend the national assembly session for several weeks clearly is intended to dramatize the disarray in the opposition New Democratic Party. Kim Yong-sam, the outspoken opposition leader, refuses to recognize a recent court order suspending him from the party presidency. A rival faction in the party brought the legal action with the evident backing of the Pak government. [REDACTED]

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though a compromise solution over the court ruling is possible, Kim may decide to run for reelection to the party leadership at a newly convened party convention, or he may carry out his frequent threat to bolt the party.

[REDACTED]

Recent public statements by Kim Yong-sam are more than sufficient to justify his arrest under government decrees barring criticism of the Pak government. Seoul, however, knows that his arrest probably would cause a strong foreign as well as domestic reaction and does not want to make a martyr of him. The government instead has tried to discredit Kim at home through selective quotes of his [REDACTED] statements to a foreign newspaper. [REDACTED]

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