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**COVER PHOTO:** North Korean leader Kim Jong-un points toward South Korea in an undated picture made available on March 4 during an inspection of the truce village of Panmunjom on the border separating the two Koreas.

# Kim Jong-un's Field Inspection of Military Units



- ❶ Kim Jong-un (C) looks through binoculars during a visit to the 4th Corps of the KPA.
- ❷ Kim Jong-un inspects the country's missile command unit, the Strategic Rocket Force Command.
- ❸ Kim Jong-un shoots to check the quality of the sporting bullets at a shooting gallery in Pyongyang.
- ❹ Aboard a naval vessel, Kim Jong-un waves during a visit to a Navy unit.
- ❺ Kim Jong-un inspects live-fire military maneuvers by the country's army, navy and air force.

# Pledging Allegiance through Generations to Kim Jong-un



North Korean troops pledge their allegiance to Kim Jong-un in a rally at the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun in Pyongyang. ⑥  
 A grand performance for the late leader Kim Jong-il's birthday "We Will Be Loyal Down through Generations" is given at the Pyongyang Indoor Stadium. ⑦  
 A music video "We Will Defend General Kim Jong-un at the Risk of Our Lives" is aired by the North Korean Central TV Station. ⑧  
 Kim Jong-un with troops from the army's Strategic Rocket Force Command. ⑨

# N.K.'S DOUBLE STANCE TOWARD SEOUL & WASHINGTON

**Pyongyang's rhetoric keeps the region on edge and complicates diplomatic efforts to settle the standoff over its nuclear weapons program.**

■ By Lee Kwang-ho

**A**s North Korea's new leadership came into power following the death of Kim Jong-il, many observers foresaw the Kim Jong-un regime would seek continuity of his father's policies rather than a policy shift from the dictatorial system. Such an initial prediction has not been proven false so far, given the North's double stance toward its southern neighbor. Despite Seoul's repeated call for dialogue, North Korea is refusing to speak with South Korea while reaching an agreement with the United States.

Recently, Pyongyang agreed to halt some of its nuclear activities in return for food aid from the U.S. This is an example of how the socialist neighbor is bypassing Seoul, seeking to talk only with Washington on major international issues. For years, the late leader Kim Jong-il established his trademark "songun" or military-first ideology by halting inter-Korean dialogue and channeling the country's resources into armaments even as millions of North Koreans starved to death.

## **Pyongyang's Two-faced Policy**

Experts say the recent spate of belligerent rhetoric from the socialist state is primarily an apparent campaign to consolidate the internal standing of new leader Kim Jong-un and meddle in the South's domestic politics. Since Kim Jong-il's death last December, North Korea has vowed to maintain the late leader's policies and has linked its nuclear program to Kim's legacy.

North Korea has also threatened revenge against South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, who ended a no-strings-attached aid policy

U.S. Special Representative for North Korean Affairs Glyn Davies (L) talks to media reporters during a press briefing after the first day of nuclear talks with North Korea in Beijing on Feb. 23 (EPA-Yonhap Photo)



when he took office in 2008. Moreover, it has expressed anger over a South Korean military unit recently posting threatening slogans beneath portraits of Kim Jong-un and his father Kim Jong-il.

Still, Pyongyang's rhetoric keeps the region on edge and complicates diplomatic efforts to settle the standoff over North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Washington has said that better inter-Korean ties are crucial to the success of nuclear diplomacy. The North's moves seem to be intended to foster an ideological division between conservatives and progressives in South Korea and influence the vote in the general elections in April and presidential election in December, Seoul officials said.

North Korea's such two-faced policy was witnessed in its recent deal with the U.S. After high-level bilateral talks in Beijing, the two wartime enemies announced an agreement on Feb. 29 that commits North

Korea to temporarily halting its uranium enrichment program, allowing monitoring by United Nations inspectors and placing a moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile tests in exchange for food aid from the U.S.

There were some differences, however, in statements by the U.S. and North Korea on the nuclear moratoriums. The North's stance is that the North agreed to the nuclear moratoriums and the allowance of U.N. inspectors "with a view to maintaining a positive atmosphere" for U.S.-North Korea talks. But the U.S. said North Korea agreed to a moratorium on "nuclear activities" at Yongbyon, including uranium enrichment, while the North Korean statement only refers to uranium enrichment. It was not immediately clear if that implied the plutonium-based program would continue.

The two sides also struck a deal on Washington's provision of 240,000 metric

tons of “nutritional assistance” for Pyongyang with the prospect of additional food assistance. The U.S. stressed the food would be delivered “along with intensive monitoring,” but the North did not address the sensitive issue. The North had initially asked for “large quantities of rice and grain,” which Washington believes could be diverted to the military and other ruling elites.

Pyongyang, meanwhile, placed emphasis on other incentives. “The U.S. made it clear that sanctions against the DPRK are not targeting the civilian sector, including the livelihoods of people,” the North said. “Once the six-party talks are resumed, priority will be given to the discussion of issues concerning the lifting of sanctions on the DPRK (North Korea) and provision of light water reactors.” Such details were not included in the U.S. statement.

### **Pyongyang’s Intention**

The North claimed the U.S. had reaffirmed it no longer has a hostile intent toward North Korea and was prepared to take steps to improve bilateral relations in the spirit of mutual respect for sovereignty and equality. “The U.S. also agreed to take steps to increase people-to-people exchanges, including the areas of culture, education, and sports.”

As the two have differed publicly over the content of the agreement, the U.S. admits that “tough negotiations” lie ahead for deciding the sequence of the measures, as has been seen before. Also, a resumption of the six-party talks does not necessarily mean a resolution of the North’s

nuclear issue.

The North is now in desperate need of financial and political support from the U.S. to help consolidate its new head of state Kim Jong-un’s leadership and push ahead with upcoming major political events. It is to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the birth of its founding father Kim Il-sung on April 15 and hold its ruling party’s meeting of representatives in mid-April, where Kim Jong-un is expected to be elevated to the party’s top post of general secretary.

The socialist country is also expected to convene a session of the Supreme People’s Assembly, the North’s rubber-stamp parliament, in early April, when Jong-un is expected to be appointed chairman of the powerful National Defense Commission. On top of that, the North is determined to declare its status as a “strong, prosperous state” this year.

In the agreement, Washington and Pyongyang also reaffirmed their commitment to a September 2005 six-nation deal. This envisaged the North scrapping its nuclear programs in return for major diplomatic and economic benefits and for a peace treaty formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War. U.S. analysts expressed cautious hope the deal might portend a more conciliatory posture from Pyongyang. But critics in Seoul and Washington warned that North Korea had spent years deceiving the West, and accused the U.S. administration of reneging on repeated promises not to link humanitarian assistance to the nuclear issue.

Washington might have felt a strategic need to stabilize the peninsula by cajoling

Pyongyang into peace in an election season this year, while North Korea had a need to secure food aid and demonstrate that the new Kim Jong-un regime is functioning normally in addition to showing off its status as Washington's equal in dialogue.

But the North has a track record of renegeing on deals with the U.S. and putting its nuclear facilities back into operation. "The regime gets paid again for a promise it already made in 2005. Also, Pyongyang gets an immediate, tangible benefit in food aid while making a temporary concession that can be withdrawn at any time," said Denny Roy, a senior fellow at the East-West Center.

## Propaganda Campaign

It looks difficult for the Obama administration to avoid criticism that it used food as a diplomatic card again to draw political concessions. Hardline U.S. lawmakers labeled the agreement as a failure similar to those in the past. "The North Korean regime will view our food deliveries as payment for its return to the bargaining table, which has led to nothing in the past," Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said in a statement.

The South Korean government welcomed the agreements but is apparently uncomfortable with the agreements reached in the absence of Seoul. The South has long pursued direct dialogue with the North before any agreements between Washington and Pyongyang. Last year, the two Koreas held bilateral talks in

tandem with Pyongyang and Washington negotiations.

But North Korea's attitude for dialogue with the South has changed since the death of Kim Jong-il. It turned belligerent and almost cut off every dialogue channel and cooperation projects with Seoul. In early February, North Korea's powerful National Defense Commission asked a nine-point questionnaire to the South Korean government. It urged Seoul to offer an apology over its attitude toward the death of its leader Kim Jong-il as a key condition of resuming stalled bilateral talks. The move came weeks after North Korea repeatedly accused South Korea of neglecting Kim's demise and vowed not to deal with South Korea's Lee Myung-bak government.

South Korea expressed sympathy to the people of North Korea over Kim's death, though it did not send an official mourning delegation to Pyongyang. Seoul only approved a condolence trip by private delegations led by two high-profile women who have ties with North Korea. South Korea has repeatedly called on the North to come forward for talks to ease tension and encourage the North move in a positive direction following Kim's death.

In the questionnaire, the North's top-decision making NDC also urged South Korea to make the political decision to stop all big joint military exercises with the U.S. if Seoul wants dialogue with Pyongyang. South Korea and the U.S. were to jointly stage major military maneuvers, called Key Resolve, from Feb. 27 to March 9, with about 200,000 South Korean and 2,100 U.S. troops participating. Separately,

the two allies planned to conduct the Foal Eagle exercise from March 1 to April 30, a joint exercise that includes about 11,000 U.S. forces plus South Korean troops in division-sized or smaller units.

Still, North Korea routinely denounces military drills in the South as rehearsals for a northward invasion. South Korea quickly expressed regret over what it sees is the North's propaganda campaign and called on the North to sincerely respond to Seoul's efforts to resume talks. "Can they announce before the world that they would no longer hurt the DPRK," the NDC asked in reference to the Cheonan sinking and Yeonpyeong Island shelling in 2010.

### **South Korea's Flexible Attitude**

The North also asked if the South has an intention to implement the June 15 joint declaration and the Oct. 4 declaration, saying that it is exactly the Lee group that marred the historical achievements of national reconciliation, peace and prosperity. The questionnaire also calls for denuclearization of the whole Korean Peninsula. It also called for halting anti-North Korean psychological warfare; resuming North-South Korean cooperation and exchange in the direction of promoting peace, prosperity and common interests in the nation; replacing the present armistice system by a peace-keeping mechanism; abolishing the South's national security law and other "evil laws."

South Korean authorities, however, regard the North's NDC questionnaire as propaganda for its own internal unity under new leadership as well as to stage

psychological warfare against the U.S. and South Korea. In the eyes of the Seoul government, the North's demands are disappointing and regrettable. Reverting its hardline policy, the South Korean government, since the inauguration of Unification Minister Yu Woo-ik last year, has made efforts to show flexibility to improve frayed inter-Korean relations.

Since the debut of Kim Jong-un's leadership, the Seoul government has taken a flexible attitude such as constructing a hospital, fire prevention facilities and expanding roads in the Kaesong Industrial Complex. It also allowed religious leaders to visit the North for mutual cooperation works and also allowed South Korea's world-renowned conductor Chung Myung-whun to visit Pyongyang for musical cooperation.

Through UNICEF, the South sent hepatitis vaccines and anti-tuberculosis drugs to the North. Seoul's contribution will be used to provide vaccines and other medical supplies as well as to treat malnourished children. Seoul has proposed to the North the expansion of humanitarian assistance and the reunion of families separated for years by the 1950-53 Korean War. But the North has turned a deaf ear to these calls.

As to the resumption of the stalled Mount Kumgang tourism, Seoul has taken a flexible attitude by showing some forward stance. Nevertheless, the North has not shown sincerity in meeting the Seoul proposal. The South Korean government is ready to make continued efforts to create an environment that allows for North Korea to establish lasting peace on the



Korean Peninsula and to improve inter-Korean relations, Seoul officials explained.

Despite Seoul's efforts, tensions between the two Koreas have escalated rapidly recently. About 150,000 North Koreans rallied at the Kim Il-sung Square in Pyongyang on March 4 to condemn the South. At the rally, Ri Yong-ho, the chief of the general staff of the Army, read a statement to renew the threat of war.

North Korea intensified its campaign against South Korean President Lee on March 8, with state TV showing footage of citizens firing on a paper target overlapped with the image of a man under Lee's name. North Korea has sharply escalated its criticism after a South Korean military unit put up a hostile slogan against Kim Jong-un and his late father Kim Jong-il in its barracks. State media have been sending a wave of articles full of abusive language and hatred of Lee and other top officials, with the *Rodong Sinmun* even calling Lee

a "deranged dog" in an article earlier.

Seoul's stance still leaves ample room for Pyongyang to work to improve ties, a move it needs to make if it wants to resume the lucrative six-party negotiations concerning its nuclear program. Experts said the South is keeping the door open in case the North shows signs of wanting to hold inter-Korean dialogue, as part of the six-party talks process, if the North abides by its agreement with Washington.

Washington has said that better inter-Korean ties are crucial for diplomacy to succeed. North Korea calls the U.S.-South Korean war games a threat to peace at a time when the U.S. and North Korean officials are holding talks aimed at improving relations. North Korea considers the drills an additional affront because they are being staged during the semiofficial 100-day mourning period following Kim Jong-il's Dec. 17 death. (Yonhap News)

### North Korea's Nine-point Questionnaire to South Korea

North Korea issued a nine-point questionnaire to the South Korean government on Feb. 2, urging Seoul to apologize for its response to the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il as a key condition of resuming stalled bilateral talks.

The move came weeks after North Korea repeatedly accused South Korea of neglecting Kim's demise in December and vowed not to deal with South Korea's Lee Myung-bak government.

South Korea has repeatedly called on the North to come forward for talks to ease tension and encouraged the North to move in a positive direction following Kim's death.

In the questionnaire released by the North's powerful National Defense Commission, the North covered all other contentious inter-Korean issues such as the joint summit declarations; Cheonan warship sinking and Yeonpyeong Island shelling incidents; S. Korea-U.S. joint military drills; denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula; psychological smear campaigns and others. (Yonhap News)

## FOUR YEARS OF N. KOREA POLICY UNDER PRESIDENT LEE

**“By pushing forward with a consistent policy for the past four years, we accomplished meaningful achievements,” Unification Ministry said.**

■ By Nam Kwang-sik

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak said on Feb. 22 Seoul is ready to talk with North Korea with an “open heart” if Pyongyang is willing to talk in a sincere manner. He gave the remarks during a special news conference marking the fourth anniversary of his inauguration. He also stressed inter-Korean dialogue must take place for the sake of peace and stability on the divided Korean Peninsula.

President Lee also said Pyongyang has a “good opportunity” to change its course, apparently referring to the country’s leadership change in the wake of the December death of former leader Kim Jong-il. Kim’s youngest son, Kim Jong-un, has succeeded his father as leader. He said that after Kim Jong-il’s death, there was hope the unexpected event could serve as a chance to repair badly strained inter-Korean relations.

### **President Lee’s Remarks**

Such remarks seem to reflect his hopes for a breakthrough in improving the currently deadlocked relations under the new political situations on the Korean Peninsula. Since his inauguration in February 2008, President Lee has sought changes in inter-Korean relations through various policies, although there are conflicting assessments of his methods.

Earlier on Feb. 19, South Korea’s Unification Ministry released a report regarding the achievements of North Korea policy driven by the Lee government over the last four years. In the report, entitled “Current

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak speaks during a special press conference at the presidential office Cheong Wa Dae on Feb. 22, marking the fourth anniversary of his inauguration. (Yonhap Photo)



Policy Toward North Korea,” the ministry said the government accomplished “meaningful achievements” in North Korea policy. “Tangible results in line with the public’s expectations were lacking. However, by pushing forward with a consistent policy for the past four years, we accomplished meaningful achievements,” it said.

The Unification Ministry said “meaningful achievements” mean the way in which the government has “formed a social consensus among the international community to denuclearize, reform and develop the North,” adding, “The formally one-sided relationship between the North and the South is gradually changing.” It further assessed, “(We) have prepared ways to normalize North-South relations by correcting the North’s perception of South Korea.”

The ministry also explained that it “has been very prudent in trying to maintain stability on the Korean Peninsula after the death of the North’s longtime leader Kim Jong-il,” saying that while pushing ahead with a consistent policy, it has still remained flexible in dealing with North Korea.

During the last four years, inter-Korean relations have certainly gone through a number of ups and downs, although much of the conflict was attributed to the North. Among them are the death of a South Korean female tourist at Mount Kungang resort on the North’s eastern coast, the sinking of a South Korean warship Cheonan and the shelling of Yeonpyong Island in the Yellow Sea.

The death of a South Korean female tourist at Mount Kungang resort through a fatal shooting by a North Korean soldier in July 2008 provoked Seoul’s suspension of the tourism program to the resort. The measures also prodded the North to put a lid on the Kaesong Industrial Complex and suspend the Kaesong tour program in December 2008.

Defying the South's proposal for denuclearization, the North launched a long-range missile in April 2009 and conducted its second nuclear test in May 2009. To make matters worse, inter-Korean relations were severely worsened by the sinking of a South Korean warship Cheonan in the Yellow Sea, which was torpedoed by the North's navy in March 2010. In return, South Korea on May 24 suspended a range of inter-Korean exchanges with the exception of the Kaesong Industrial Complex in retaliation for the sinking of the Cheonan. The sinking of the Cheonan was followed by the North's deadly shelling of Yeonpyeong Island, a South Korean western border island, on Nov. 23, 2010.

Due to the South's May 24 measures, bilateral trade between North Korea and South Korea fell 10 percent to US\$1.71 billion in 2011 compared with the previous year, according to data released by the (South) Korean International Trade Association in Seoul. However, thanks to the Kaesong Industrial Complex, the number of South Koreans who visited the North between 2008 and 2011 increased 47.4 percent to 553,949, compared with 275,797 in the 2004 - 2007 period.

### **South Korea's Strenuous Efforts**

On the other hand, inter-Korean trade totaled US\$7.13 billion since 2008, while private and government aid for the North in the same period added up to \$234.8 billion. "Seoul cannot maintain its large scale unilateral aid to Pyongyang and continue economic cooperation when the North keeps refusing calls for denuclearization and makes provocations against the South," the ministry said. The South suspended its aid to the North via international humanitarian organizations in 2010, but resumed it again in late 2011.

Last year, the two Koreas made some progress in their relations via two rounds of denuclearization talks in July and September in step with the improvement of relations between the North and the United States. Pyongyang and Washington held two rounds of talks in July and October in a bid to discuss the resumption of six-party talks, which have been stalled since 2008.

The South has switched its policy toward the North after the unexpected death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il in December and improvements between Pyongyang and Washington. The Lee Myung-bak government has adopted a flexible policy toward the North, which is a contrast from its earlier days in office when it sought a hard-line stance.

The unification ministry said, "The government has made a strenuous effort to safely maintain stability amid the volatile situation on the Korean Peninsula after the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il." Regarding its changed policy, the ministry said it aims to improve the stalled inter-Korean relations.

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak called on the North to wind up mutual distrust in order to achieve prosperity in his New Year's address on Jan. 2, 2012. Three days later, South Korea's Unification Minister Yu Woo-ik proposed holding working-level talks with the North as a preemptive step to discuss bilateral pending issues.

The minister called for the North to agree to his request at least three times since January, but the North showed a cool reaction. The North hinted it would not talk to the Lee Myung-bak government at the end of last year. The North's powerful National Defense Commission said in a statement on Dec. 30, 2011 that the North will not deal with the South Korean government, which will complete its five-year term in February 2013. (Yonhap News)

### Major Chronology on Inter-Korean Ties Since February 2008

July 11, 2008	A South Korean female tourist is fatally shot by a North Korean soldier at the Mount Kumgang resort. Seoul suspends the tour and demands access to the site of the shooting for its investigation.
Dec. 1, 2008	North Korea restricts the number of South Koreans staying in the Kaesong complex to 880 and suspends the Kaesong tour program.
April 5, 2009	North Korea launches the Kwangmyongsong-2 satellite and declares the launch a success. Outside monitors later said no such object entered into orbit.
April 16, 2009	N.Korea proposes the first official inter-Korean talks with the Lee Myung-bak government over the operation of the Kaesong Industrial Complex.
Aug. 17, 2009	South Korea's Hyundai Group and North Korea's Asia-Pacific Peace Committee announce a five-point agreement including the resumption of touring Mount Kumgang and Kaesong .
Aug. 20, 2009	North Korea lifts its restrictions on inter-Korean overland passage.
Sept. 26-Oct. 1, 2009	The reunion of inter-Korean separated families is held at Mount Kumgang resort located on the eastern coast of North Korea.
March 26, 2010	The South Korean warship Cheonan sinks in the Yellow Sea off Baengnyeong Island, a South Korean island near inter-Korean maritime border.
May 24, 2010	South Korea halts all inter-Korean exchange except for the Kaesong Industrial Complex.
Oct. 30-Nov. 5, 2010	The reunion of inter-Korean separated families is held at Mt. Kumgang resort.
Nov. 23, 2010	North Korea shells Yeonpyeong Island, a South Korean western border island, leaving four South Koreans including two marines dead.
July 22, 2011	Two Koreas hold the first denuclearization talks in Bali, Indonesia.
Sept. 21, 2011	Two Koreas hold the second denuclearization talks in Beijing.
Dec. 30, 2011	The North's National Defense Commission says the country will no longer deal with the Lee Myung-bak government.
Jan. 2, 2012	South Korean President Lee Myung-bak says in his New Year's message "We are leaving a window of opportunity open. If North Korea shows an attitude of sincerity, a new era on the Korean Peninsula can begin."
March 16, 2012	North Korea says that it will launch a working satellite, the Kwangmyongsong-3, to mark the 100th birth anniversary of Kim Il-sung.

## SEOUL NUCLEAR SECURITY SUMMIT & N.K.'S NUCLEAR PROBLEM

**In a broader context, the 2nd NSS provides some opportunities in terms of resolving the North Korean nuclear problem.**

■ By Cheon Seongwhun *Senior Research Fellow, Korea Institute for National Unification in Seoul, Korea*

“Nuclear security” is a general term used to discuss activities designed to prevent terrorists from using nuclear material leaked from power plants or research facilities. Nuclear security is one of the comprehensive agenda items proposed by President Barack Obama for the purpose of moving toward a world free of nuclear weapons.

At the opening plenary session of the 1st Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) in Washington, he remarked that, “One year ago today in – one year ago in Prague, I called for a new international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear materials around the world in four years. This is one part of a broader, comprehensive agenda that the United States is pursuing – including reducing our nuclear arsenal and stopping the spread of nuclear weapons – an agenda that will bring us closer to our ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons.”

In the wake of 9/11, danger of nuclear terror has drawn urgent attention from the international community as a whole. Especially, the United States has shown

keen interest to prevent nuclear terror from occurring around the world. President Obama articulated the perceived danger as “it is increasingly clear that the danger of nuclear terrorism is one of the greatest threats to global security – to our collective security.”

### Meaning of Nuclear Security

As of today, more than 2,000 tons of plutonium and highly enriched uranium are placed in dozens of countries with peaceful as well as military uses. There have been at least 18 documented cases of theft or loss of these materials, and al-Qaeda and possibly other terrorist groups are seeking nuclear weapons or materials. Thus, the issue is that “Any country could be a target, and all countries would feel the effects.” And it is the responsibility of the civilized society to thwart any malicious attempt that could lead to another 9/11. Now the challenge is how to secure these materials, plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU).

The launch of the Nuclear Security

Summit as a collective effort is visible progress toward taking on this challenge. The 1st Nuclear Security Summit was convened in Washington D.C. from April 12-13, 2010 with great success. It was a major international conference hosting leaders from 37 countries and high-ranking officials from 10 additional countries, as well as representatives from three international agencies (the UN, the IAEA and the EU). Over 40 years have passed since the start of the nuclear nonproliferation regime based upon the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). Yet this conference marks the first time that 47 leaders and representatives from around the world have gathered in one place for an earnest discussion of nuclear security.

At the Washington summit, South Korea was selected to be the host country of the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit in 2012. Seoul's role was confirmed when President Lee Myung-bak accepted President Obama's invitation and all participating nations approved. The Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, which will be held on March 26-27, is expected to draw 57 heads of state, high-level national representatives and international organizations. This means the summit will be the largest international gathering in the history of the Republic of Korea. It will be a good opportunity for the nation to contribute to global peace, enhance its prestige in the international community and promote national interests.

It is not surprising to see the public aspiration in South Korea that the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit may contribute to dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapon capabilities. However, we need to take a

carefully managed course of action in this regard. It should be firmly understood that denuclearization or nuclear arms reduction is not the subject of the Nuclear Security Summit. This is an issue of nuclear non-proliferation or disarmament, not of nuclear security.

But it still is difficult to completely set aside the North Korean nuclear issue at a conference hosted by South Korea. President Lee, at a meeting to commemorate the 43rd Science Day held shortly after the first Nuclear Security Summit, said, "I think the issues concerning the two countries, North Korea and Iran, will be discussed in earnest" at the second Nuclear Security Summit.

## **North Korean Nuclear Issue**

North Korea's irresponsible proliferation and illegal trafficking of nuclear materials and technology are direct targets of nuclear security. For example, North Korea's construction of an improved model of the 5MWe nuclear reactor in Syria since the early 2000s is clear evidence that it has spread its nuclear technology. The centrifugal separation facility that North Korea unveiled in early November 2011 was an important example that shows nuclear technology and material were brought into North Korea from third countries. Actually, the North's highly enriched uranium program has been progressing since the mid-1990s in cooperation with Pakistan. North Korea's close cooperation with state sponsors of terrorism and missile supply to several Middle East countries also should be considered. In other words, South Korea

can find a link that connects the North Korean nuclear issue to nuclear security from the fact that the outlier regime has irresponsibly proliferated nuclear technology and material, abetting the threat of nuclear terrorism.

The nexus between the North Korean nuclear problem and nuclear security can also be found in the security-safety overlaps. The safety problems of North Korean nuclear facilities can be handled in terms of security by recognizing that safety and security are not separate concepts but supplement each other. Safety basically addresses accidents while security deals with intentional incidents and disasters. In this vein, security can be defined as “artificial safety problems.” On the other hand, accidents caused by natural disasters, like the one in Fukushima, Japan, can be defined as “sabotage by nature.”

## Nuclear Confidence Building

Although the Nuclear Security Summit will not be a forum to directly solve the North Korean nuclear issue, a failure to discuss the North Korean nuclear problem, the biggest security threat facing South Korea will be seen as inappropriate by the South Korean people. If the organizers fail to properly cover the issue, criticism may arise about “missing the crucial North Korea issue,” and skepticism may spread about “hosting big international events that cannot take care of our own security issue.”

In a broader context, the second Nuclear Security Summit provides the following opportunities in terms of resolving the

North Korean nuclear problem.

- Imprint the importance and seriousness of the North Korean nuclear issue once again in the international community
- Introduce in detail the threat of the North Korean nuclear programs by appropriately citing Pyongyang’s intimidating slogans such as “Turn Seoul into a sea of fire” and “Change South Korea into a heap of ashes”
- Produce the effects of applying indirect, diplomatic pressure on the North Korean leadership to abandon its nuclear programs
- Win international support for Seoul’s non-nuclear-weapon, peaceful atomic energy policy
- Remind global leaders of the reality surrounding the divided Korean Peninsula and secure the South’s diplomatic edge over the North by taking advantage of a multilateral summit that discusses nuclear issues

Seoul could make the following proposals in regard to nuclear security.

- Urge North Korea to accede to all international norms related with nuclear security as soon as possible
- Propose nuclear security cooperation between the two Koreas, and push for mutual monitoring of their nuclear facilities and exchange of related data
- Sign an agreement that bans the sabotage and use of force on each other’s nuclear facilities

In this regard, Luongo, recalling North



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***The nexus between the North Korean nuclear problem and nuclear security can also be found in the security-safety overlaps. The safety problems of North Korean nuclear facilities can be handled in terms of security by recognizing that safety and security are not separate concepts but supplement each other.***

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Korea's April 2010 memorandum, said it would be advisable to invite the North and discuss the following problems before or after the summit.

- The six countries participating in the North Korean nuclear negotiations invite North Korea for inspection of advanced nuclear security situations

- Conduct workshops on technical issues that include ①security of nuclear stockpiles through a computerized measurement technique, ②physical protection system using cameras, fences and intruder detection devices, ③emergency response and communication technology, ④training of security personnel, ⑤security of nuclear material during transport, ⑥border security and ⑦preventing smuggling of nuclear material

- Related technology demonstrations may be conducted at test facilities in the United States or Russia, instead of North Korea

In addition, South Korea may propose more specifically what it can give in return for North Korea's abandonment of its nuclear programs. For instance, Seoul could provide such incentives as support for the construction of light-water nuclear

reactors, re-employment of North Korean nuclear scientists and cooperation for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. All these can serve as systematic and comprehensive "carrots" that can simultaneously meet the South's goal of eliminating the North Korean nuclear threat and the North's demand for economic aid.

The prototype of this denuclearization scheme is found in the "Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR)" program implemented by the United States to dismantle Russia's nuclear weapons and convert their military capability into civilian use after the Cold War ended. The CTR program has been intensively applied to Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus, where nuclear weapons were deployed during the Cold War. Learning from this example, South Korea is advised to propose the "Korean Peninsula Cooperative Threat Reduction (KCTR)" program to North Korea as well as the international community. The program should call for eliminating North Korea's nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction and missile threats by converting facilities that can be reused into civilian use and deploying related manpower to industrial worksites for peaceful purposes. (Yonhap News)

## EMERGENCE OF A KANGSONG TAEGUK LOGIC & ITS EMBODIMENT

**North Korea indicated that Kim Jong-un will inherit the task of turning the country into a Kangsong Taeguk.**

■ By Cheong Seong-chang *a Senior Research Fellow of the Sejong Institute in Seongnam, South Korea*

It was on Aug. 22, 1998 that the logic regarding a Kangsong Taeguk (great, prosperous and powerful nation), showing the framework of the country's strategy for survival and development in the Kim Jong-il era, emerged for the first time in North Korea. The logic was publicized in a lengthy editorial in *Rodong Sinmun*, the official newspaper of the Workers' Party of (North) Korea (WPK). The editorial described the Kangsong Taeguk as "an eternal ideal country where the state fully meet people's independent demand and realizes the desire of human beings, putting an end to the counter-revolutionary, inhumane history of state construction in the past era spoiled by exploitation and suppression, poverty and ignorance, aggression and plunder, plus domination and subordination." It went on to say, "The Juche-oriented Kangsong Taeguk is the product of a bold blueprint for brightening the 21st century under the initiative of Korea, which was drawn by the Great General (referring to Kim Jong-il) under a pledge before the preceding head of state (referring to Kim Il-sung), the

fatherland and the nation."

As for the reason the North insisted on the theory of a Kangsong Taeguk oriented to the Suryong (absolute leader), the editorial said, "Respecting the outstanding Suryong, great patriot and iron-willed general, who is outstanding in strategy and bravery as the eternal head of state, is the life and the supreme principle in the construction of an independent powerful socialist country." This argument is aimed at clarifying that the North's "revolutionary view of the Suryong, which serves as the backbone of the Juche idea, also serves as the most important principle for the theory of a Kangsong Taeguk."

### North Korea's Argument

"Our general's way of constructing a Juche-oriented Kangsong Taeguk is to install the army firmly as a pillar of the revolution and bring about a brilliant leap in economic construction based on that great power of the army," the editorial said, adding that a firm grip on the ideology and the army equals a firm grip on the funda-

mentals. This contention indicates that North Korea's logic regarding the military-first politics, which stresses the role of the Party as a leader and that of the army as a model, is in close relation with the theory of a Kangsong Taeguk.

North Korea has already become "the most powerful country ideologically, a great country politically," and "a military power," the editorial said, while maintaining, "It is definite that our country will rise high to the rank of economic powers as viewed by the great general, who said that there is no reason for us not to be able to solve economic problems because we are furnished with a good socialist system and a Party which is efficient in battle, plus diligent people." But the sweeping majority of North Korea watchers in Seoul believe that the editorial is wishful thinking in its mention of the North's goal to become an economic power in the near future, calling most of its economic projections too rosy and unrealistic.

The North surprised the world on Aug. 31, 1998 when it launched a long-range rocket, calling it "an artificial satellite named the Kwangmyongsong-1." The North might have kept in mind the rocket launch when it published the aforementioned editorial mentioning its plan for turning itself into a Kangsong Taeguk. The rocket failed to orbit the earth, but the North claimed that the rocket was "the first roar of the guns signaling the start of reconstructing the country into a Kangsong Taeguk." While claiming that it joined the rank of countries exploring the universe, the North officially inaugurated the regime led by Kim Jong-il on Sept. 8, 1998.

While commemorating the 50th founding anniversary of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a *Rodong Sinmun* editorial the next day again mentioned the North's idea of turning the country into a Kangsong Taeguk. This editorial was similar to the editorial on Aug. 22 in many aspects, but differed from it in some points. The editorial on Sept. 9 called on North Korean citizens "to reinforce and develop their socialist regime into a powerful weapon with which they can realize the ideology and politics of great leader, comrade Kim Jong-il," while maintaining that upholding Kim's ideology and politics was a "decisive guarantee" for reconstructing a powerful socialist country.

### **Launch of Artificial Satellite**

And the editorial on Sept. 9 said North Korea's current task today is to rebuild North Korea into a Kangsong Taeguk, while claiming, "Our fatherland will take root as a powerful country in all aspects if we activate the economy with brisk socialist construction and demonstrate the power of our self-reliant economy" because the country is demonstrating its dignity as an ideologically, politically powerful country and a military power. "It is the unswerving will of Kim Jong-il not to make even a minor concession in reinforcing its military power under any adverse situation even if the country has to make the painful march under trials one hundred times more," the editorial maintained, while reiterating the North's position to continually exert efforts to reinforce its military power.

In an editorial carried in the aforemen-

tioned three newspapers on New Year's Day of 1999, North Korea revealed an additional aspect of the Kangsong Taeguk. "Our country should be further exalted as an ideologically powerful socialist state," said an English version of the editorial aired by the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) that day, while stressing: "Our powerful socialist state is a Juche-type one which is wholly based on the great Kim Jong-il's ideas." It further said: "All the people should become absolute worshippers, resolute defenders and thorough executors of the great Kim Jong-il's idea who breathe and fight as demanded only by the Workers' Party of Korea." It also called on all North Korean citizens "to love rifles, earnestly learn military affairs and turn the whole country into an impregnable fortress and strengthen our defense industry which we have constructed by girding up our loins."

Asserting that economic construction is the most important task to be fulfilled in building a powerful nation, the editorial presented sector-by-sector goals to be attained by 1999. It put a specific emphasis on the science and technology sector, calling it a "driving force" in rebuilding the country into a Kangsong Taeguk. It went on: "We should consolidate our single-hearted unity around the leader steel-strong and should carry out socialist construction with the united might. In all sections and all units, Party ranks should strengthen their organizational ideology to enhance the leading role of the Party to the maximum. It is imperative to break through the present difficulty with the might of ideology, radically improving the

WPK's political work."

North Korea has gradually revealed the nature of this goal since August 1988, and on Jan. 1, 1999. North Korean leader Kim Jong-il spoke in further detail about the plan for turning the North into a Kangsong Taeguk during a meeting with "responsible" officials of the Party Central Committee. Under this environment during the Kim Jong-il era, the theory regarding a Kangsong Taeguk took root as an ideology, or a key topic in North Korea under the influence of the Juche idea. The North institutionalized the idea for turning itself into a powerful nation in 2000, publishing two books under the headings, "Great Leader, Comrade Kim Jong-il's Strategy for Rebuilding Our Country into a Kangsong Taeguk," and "The Ideology Regarding the Construction of a Socialist Kangsong Taeguk," respectively.

## Significance of 2012

North Korea exerted its own efforts for the goal until 2007 when the North designated 2012 the year for becoming a great, prosperous and powerful nation in a meeting of North Korean intellectuals held in Pyongyang on Nov. 30 that year. In a speech delivered there, Choe Thae-bok, secretary of the Party Central Committee, urged the participants "to launch a bold struggle at the forefront of the revolutionary general march oriented to the military-first principle for rebuilding the country into a Kangsong Taeguk and open up the gate of our country as a Kangsong Taeguk by all means" in 2012 when the North will mark Kim Il-sung's 100th birthday. The

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***As many North Korea watchers in Seoul and elsewhere showed a skeptical response to the North's declaration that it will open its gate as a Kangsong Taeguk, North Korea has once told a group of visiting South Koreans that a residence has a gate, a front door and doors to its rooms.***

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meeting came within two months after the second inter-Korean summit was held in early October 2007, generating speculation that the North had become optimistic about its economic development thanks to the eight-point agreement in the summit for much closer economic cooperation between the two Koreas.

As many North Korea watchers in Seoul and elsewhere showed a skeptical response to the North's declaration that it will open its gate as a Kangsong Taeguk, North Korea has once told a group of visiting South Koreans that a residence has a gate, a front door and doors to its rooms, indicating that Choe's statement does not mean that the North will completely become a great, prosperous and powerful nation, but that it will complete the construction of the base for rebuilding the country into one by 2012.

While visiting the Chollima Steel Complex in December 2008, North Korean leader Kim Jong-il said it is "an unswerving will of our party and people" to open up the front gate of our country as a Kangsong Taeguk by 2012 and urged the complex to kindle and uphold the revolutionary torch of a new upsurge (in production). The steel complex is the industrial unit which has played a leading role in a

work-harder campaign under the name of the chollima movement during the five-year economic plan period (1957-61). Chollima is a Korean word referring to a legendary horse that can run 400km a day. Kim's visit to the industrial concern indicates that the North planned to press most of the North Korean citizens into an outdated work-harder campaign in this 21st century in a move to revive the moribund North Korean economy.

Kim Jong-il died less than half a month before the onset of 2012 when the North is to open up its gate as a Kangsong Taeguk. North Korea watchers in Seoul and elsewhere are focusing their attention on the behavior of his third son and successor Kim Jong-un regarding his commitment to rebuilding the North into a great, prosperous and powerful nation. The North has trumpeted in recent weeks the successful construction of Huichon Power Station and residential unit in Pyongyang en masse, the project serving as a symbol of the Kangsong Taeguk, and defines the success in the projects as a "product" of the young Kim's leadership, indicating that the new North Korean leadership will also inherit the task of turning the country into a Kangsong Taeguk. (Yonhap News)

## NORTH KOREA'S TATTOO AND KIM JONG-UN'S CHOICE

**What we need is the evolution of a composite North Korean policy and no more useless debate on the feasibility of “wind” or “sunshine.”**

■ By Jo Dong-ho *Professor, Ewha Womans University in Seoul, Korea*

The Lee Myung-bak administration's North Korea policy is no different from that of previous governments. The two contrasting approaches – the engagement policy pursued by Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, and the incumbent President Lee's hard-line stance – show a lack of proper understanding of the neighboring country. On the surface, the two strategies seem to be poles apart; but in their own way, both seek to “undress” the North by means of “sunshine” or “wind.”

Both current and previous governments have mistaken the “tattoos” in which the North covers itself for “clothes.” In any case, neither Kim and Roh's sunshine nor Lee's wind is the answer. A policy to change North Korea through either appeasement or pressure is nothing but a pipe dream, doomed from the start.

A tattoo can only be removed by the wearer, as change is something that can only be decided from within. Others can give advice on the pace and scale of change, but it is utterly of one's own determination whether or not to take a new

direction. The same principle applies to North Korea, the impoverished nation ruled by the late leader, Kim Jong-il. The successor of “socialism in our own way” who held on to power for so many years resisted external influence. Therefore, it is hopeless to assume we can force North Korea to change. Both the “sunshine” and “wind” approaches could not but fail to effect change, leading to inescapable criticism for the South Korean governments.

Yet, the situation is changing with the advent of young North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. Though still in mourning, Kim Jong-un must come up with a vision for his nation, as the new leader of any country does. His vision cannot but be an economic one. He is bound to carry on his father's unfinished work to become an economic powerhouse and Kangsong Taeguk, a great country that is powerful ideologically, militarily and economically. The dream of “rice with beef soup,” indicating the end of economic downturn, has remained unaccomplished since the days of Jong-un's grandfather and North Korea's founder Kim Il-sung. The third-generation

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***The young leader who is full with confidence may be more positive than others. Although Kim Jong-un is reluctant to adopt a transition to a new system, which might be risky, it may be a matter of time before he pushes to implement change within the system, which is relatively less dangerous.***

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succession will only be justified if the economy improves.

The North's media also implies that the new leader has no choice other than to boost the economy. A 3,700-word report released after Kim Jong-il's death said, "Kim Jong-il, who built an ideologically and militarily strong nation, passed away due to fatigue from intense on-site guidance in his efforts to build an economic powerhouse." This recalls the "teachings left behind by Great Leader, Comrade Kim Il-sung" and prevents possible political disputes among elder statesmen.

To gain the support of the North Korean citizens, Kim Jong-un will need to focus on the economy. Even though he was named successor by the authorities' agreement, ordinary people wonder if he is anything other than a political "novice." Therefore, he should deal with people's livelihood issues more seriously and create changes that the public can see, if he is to be recognized by them. Measures to stabilize the people's livelihoods are the core prerequisite for a stable era.

The North should open its doors if it wants to revive its economy and take care of its people. Though a supposedly self-

reliant economy, the North's foundations of that self-reliance have collapsed, due to the failure of its planned economy. There are no internal resources available for economic growth or the improvement of people's livelihoods. It is inevitable that North Korea will need to secure external capital through an open-door policy. In addition, Kim Jong-un cannot just ignore China's repeated demands for opening, as he is desperately dependent on support from the world's second biggest economy.

Some believe the new leader will not be able to open up the economy, as it would cause instability to the regime. Kim Jong-nam (the eldest son of Kim Jong-il) said that for North Korea, no reform and opening means the failure of the country, while openness and reform means the end of the regime. If so, why not open up and see if it is better than nothing?

The young leader who is full with confidence may be more positive than others. Although Kim Jong-un is reluctant to adopt a transition to a new system, which might be risky, it may be a matter of time before he pushes to implement change within the system, which is relatively less dangerous. (Yonhap News)

## CHOE RYONG-HAE

**Full General and Secretary of the WPK Central Committee**

**Alternate Member of the Politburo of the WPK Central Committee**

**A**s the current North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was publicly nominated as the North's heir apparent in September 2010, Choe Ryong-hae, 62, made his dazzling debut on the political scene. Choe was appointed as full general along with Kim Jong-un. He also became an alternate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of (North) Korea (WPK) and secretary of the WPK Central Committee in charge of North Korea's social organizations including the General Federation of Trade Unions.

Earlier, Choe had served as first-secretary of the Central Committee of the Kimilsung Socialist Youth League, a key youth organization under the WPK since January 1996. But he was purged from the center of the political arena in 1998 for his involvement in kickbacks by officials of the league.

However, he got off lightly compared with other officials involved in the bribery case. He was transferred to secretary of the party chapter of the Pyongyang water and sewage control office and was reinstated to deputy minister of the general affairs department of the WPK in August 2003.

Unfortunately, he was replaced less than six months later. In early 2004 when his

political guru Jang Song-thaek was purged to lesser jobs in the countryside for causing sectional strife within the party, Choe was also dismissed from the office. He is known as the closest aide to Jang, vice chairman of the North's powerful National Defense Commission (NDC), who is the most reliable supporter of new North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.

After Jang reemerged in late 2005 as first-deputy director of the Capital Construction Department of the WPK, Choe staged a comeback as chief secretary of the North Hwanghae Provincial Party Committee in 2006 with Jang's support. When Choe held the post, he welcomed former South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun upon his crossing the inter-Korean border to hold summit talks with Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang in October 2007. It was the second inter-Korean summit after the 1950-53 Korean War.

North Korea watchers say that Choe's appointment as full general and party secretary was designed by the late Kim Jong-il to support Kim Jong-un. They say the late North Korean leader appeared to have a plan to stabilize his power transfer to the successor by giving Choe key positions in the party and military.



Since then, Choe made brisk appearances at a variety of public events, accompanying the late North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. Choe escorted Kim Jong-un five times during his public activities between early 2012 and the beginning of March. According to sources familiar with North Korea, the late North Korean leader treated Choe, who is eight years younger, with affection as if he was his biological younger brother.

Choe Ryong-hae's father is Choe Hyun, who waged an anti-Japanese struggle with the North's founder Kim Il-sung in the 1930s. Choe's father, who died in 1982, served as minister of the People's Armed Forces. In particular, Choe Hyun played a crucial role in eliminating political opponents during a power struggle against Kim Il-sung in August 1956, even pointing his pistol at the political opponents. After putting down the incident, then North Korean leadership praised Choe's family as a "loyalist family."

Choe Ryong-hae on Feb. 9 was awarded the Kim Jong-il Order on the 70th birthday of the late North Korean leader on Feb. 16. The North instituted the order as part of efforts to strengthen the personality cult of the late North Korean leader after his death in December 2011.

Choe usually does not speak his mind, but if he judges that it is time to take action, he goes on the offensive like his father, said an overseas Chinese businessman living in South Korea, who had met with Choe. Choe treats others who are younger than him with consideration and listens to them. His attitude toward younger people was part of the reason that



CHOE RYONG-HAE

he was appointed as first-secretary of the of the Kimilsung Socialist Youth League, the businessman said.

Choe also had a liberal view on the economy, the entrepreneur said, adding Choe thought that the North should first revive the livelihoods of the people in order to stabilize its economy. When Choe served as chief secretary of the North Hwanghae Provincial Party Committee in 2006, he reportedly increased the provision of daily necessities by restoring a food factory and department store in the province.

Choe was born in Sinchon, South Hwanghae Province, in January 1950 and graduated from the faculty of economics of the North's most prestigious Kimilsung University, according to data by South Korea's Unification Ministry. He enlisted in the military in September 1967. (Yonhap News)

## N. Korea's Satellite Launch Plan Sparks International Condemnation

**Pyongyang insists its satellite launches are for peaceful purposes while the U.S. and other nations see them as a pretext for long-range missile tests.**

**N**orth Korea's sudden announcement of a plan to launch a satellite into space has rattled the international community, invoking international condemnation against the scheme seen as a disguised test of military missiles. North Korea said on March 16 that it would fire an observation satellite into space aboard a long-range rocket as part of celebrations in mid-April for the 100th anniversary of late President Kim Il-sung's birth.

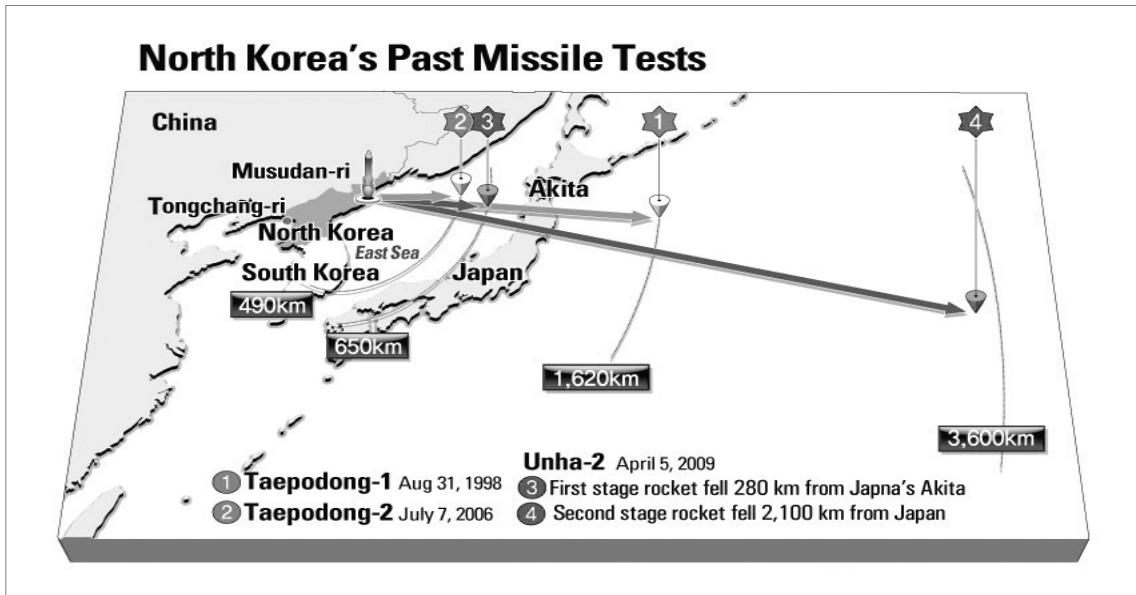
The announcement came just weeks after North Korea agreed to temporarily put a moratorium on missile and nuclear tests and freeze its uranium-enrichment facilities in exchange for food aid from the United States. The North insists its satellite launches are for peaceful scientific purposes while the U.S. and other nations see them as a pretext for long-range missile tests. The U.S. called the rocket launch a "deal breaker" for the bilateral agreement made in February in which the North agreed to halt its nuclear weapons program, including test firing missiles, in exchange for receiving 240,000 metric tons of food aid.

The North's Korean Committee for Space Technology announced that Unha-3 rocket carrying Kwangmyongsong-3 will blast off from its satellite launching station in North Phongan Province between April 12 and 16, while noting that the launch of a satellite built by indigenous technology is designed "to mark the 100th birth anniversary of President Kim Il-sung," the country's founder and the late grandfather of current leader Kim Jong-un.

### Sudden Announcement

The launch date is set around the late founder's April 15 birthday, one of the most important holidays in the isolated country. The North has vowed to usher in a prosperous and powerful nation by the milestone anniversary. The committee claimed that the launch will greatly encourage North Koreans "in the building of a thriving nation and will offer an important occasion of putting the country's technology of space use for peaceful purposes on a higher stage."

The committee said it has chosen a safe



flight orbit to ensure carrier rocket debris generated during the flight would not have any impact on neighboring countries. North Korea “will strictly abide by relevant international regulations and usage concerning the launch of scientific and technological satellites for peaceful purposes and ensure maximum transparency,” the North’s committee said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Meanwhile, South Korea called on North Korea to “immediately stop such a provocative act and abide by its international obligations.” The launch “will become a grave provocative act against peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia,” the foreign ministry said in a statement.

The North said the rocket would be launched southward from a new site it has been developing at Tongchang-ri on the

northwest tip of the country. The Unha-3 is known outside the North as the Taepodong-3 and is theoretically capable of reaching U.S. territory.

The North’s last long-range rocket launch on April 5, 2009, also purportedly to put a satellite into orbit, brought U.N. Security Council condemnation and tightened sanctions. Pyongyang quit six-party nuclear disarmament talks in protest of the censure and conducted its second atomic weapons test the following month.

The upcoming launch comes as the North is set to hold a key political conference. The KCNA reported in February that the Workers’ Party conference in mid-April is designed “to glorify the sacred revolutionary life and feats” of its late leader Kim Jong-il and rally around his son and successor, Kim Jong-un.

In response to the international community’s criticism, North Korea said March 17

it will invite a group of foreign experts and journalists to observe its launch of earth observation satellite Kwangmyongsong-3 in April. "The Korean Committee for Space Technology will invite experienced foreign experts on space science and technology and journalists to visit the Sohae Satellite Launching Station, the General Satellite Control and Command Center and other places and observe its launch," the North's official KCNA said.

"The relevant bodies of the DPRK (North Korea) sent necessary information to the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the International Telecommunication Union and others according to international regulations and procedures as part of the preparations for the launch of Kwangmyongsong-3," the KCNA said.

North Korea claimed on March 18 that launching an earth observation satellite is the sovereign right of the socialist country as it continued to refute accusations that the plan had ulterior motives.

## Deep Concerns

In a commentary carried by the KCNA, Pyongyang said that hostile forces including South Korea, the United States and Japan denounced the scheduled launch of the Kwangmyongsong-3 satellite on the Unha-3 space rocket as a missile test. It went on to dismiss the allegations as an extension of the three countries' hostile position toward the regime and their attempts to undermine it. "Satellite launches for scientific research and use of space for economic development can no longer

be monopolized by a few countries," the KCNA dispatch said.

According to the flight plan of the satellite that North Korea submitted to the International Maritime Organization, the three-stage rocket will be launched toward the southwest. The first stage booster is expected to splash down in the international waters between China and South Korea, 140 kilometers off the South's Byeonsan Beach, and the second stage will land in the sea 190 kilometers off the eastern coast of the Philippines.

The North's main newspaper *Rodong Sinmun* said the rocket will take a "safer" flight path compared to previous launches that strayed into Japanese airspace. The new flight orbit showcased the country's advancing "technological prowess" and "economic power," Professor Ko Yong-hae from the Kimilsung University wrote in a paper published March 17.

The U.S. State Department called the proposed launch "highly provocative" and a threat to regional security. And it voiced doubt over whether it could move ahead with providing the food aid if Pyongyang followed through with its threat. "Were we to have a launch, it would create obviously tensions and that would make the implementation of any kind of nutritional agreement quite difficult," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said. She said that U.S. diplomats told their North Korean counterparts prior to the February 29 agreement that a missile launch would be a "deal breaker."

Also, Japan condemned the plan while Russia voiced concern. U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called on North

Korea not to go ahead with the plan. EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said she was “deeply concerned” and called on the North to confirm that it will refrain from the launch “as a matter of urgency.”

Even China, the North’s closest ally, expressed concern. Vice foreign minister Zhang Zhijun met Ji Jae-ryong, Pyongyang’s ambassador, on March 16 to express Beijing’s worries, the official Xinhua news agency said. “We sincerely hope parties concerned stay calm and exercise restraint,” Zhang was quoted as saying. “We are closely paying attention to the North’s plan and international communities’ response to it,” Liu Weimin, foreign ministry spokesman, said at a regular briefing.

However, the location and the equipment installed at the facility Pyongyang is likely to launch the rocket from are fueling doubts about such claims. The facility from which the rocket will be launched in April is considered likely to be the facility in Tongchang-ri in North Phongan Province on the western side of North Korea.

## Grave Provocation

Previously North Korea had launched rockets from the Musudan-ri facility on the northeastern side of the peninsula. The Tongchang-ri facility has a larger launch tower than the facility in Musudan-ri, allowing larger rockets including intercontinental ballistic missiles to be fired.

In addition, Tongchang-ri’s proximity to the Yongbyon nuclear complex is also raising concerns that the new facility allows nuclear materials to be transported more easily should Pyongyang succeed in devel-

oping a nuclear warhead. The Tongchang-ri facility is located 70 kilometers away from the Yongbyon complex, while the Musudan-ri facility is about 300 kilometers away.

On March 19, South Korea again condemned North Korea’s planned rocket launch as a “grave provocation” aimed at developing a long-range ballistic missile capable of delivering nuclear weapons. Seoul’s presidential office issued the condemnation after President Lee Myung-bak presided over a meeting of foreign and security ministers to discuss the North’s announcement.

Meanwhile, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said on March 19 that North Korea has invited the nuclear watchdog to return to the country, three years after expelling its nuclear monitors. IAEA’s announcement of the overture from the North came just hours after Ri Yongho, a senior North Korean nuclear negotiator, said Pyongyang was sending invitations to agency inspectors as part of implementing the moratorium agreement.

In Beijing on March 19, Ri said the launch of the satellite is separate from recent talks between the U.S. and North Korea over food aid. “The launching of the satellite is part of our right to develop space programs,” Ri said, warning that the North would respond to any threats to its sovereignty.

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said on March 19 Washington had not been told of a formal invitation to the IAEA from the North, but said such a move would be positive. (Yonhap News)

## Pyongyang's Chief Nuclear Envoy Attends Forum in U.S.

**Ri Yong-ho said that U.N. watchdog inspectors will soon visit the country and monitor the suspension of its nuclear program.**

**N**orth Korea's chief nuclear envoy wrapped up his visit to the United States in early March, where he has expressed hope for the improvement of relations with Washington and the resolution of Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program.

Though his visit to New York was a private mission, he spoke with academics during a seminar hosted by the Syracuse University's Maxwell School and later meetings by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, a nongovernmental organization aimed at resolving international conflicts.

Ri Yong-ho, a vice foreign minister and chief envoy to international nuclear talks, held talks with U.S. academics amid new hopes of disarmament progress after the socialist country agreed to freeze its weapons program after years of tension.

After wrapping up his trip to the U.S., Ri said that United Nations watchdog inspectors will soon visit the regime and monitor the suspension of its nuclear program as promised at the recent aid-for-denuclearization agreement with the U.S., a

positive sign of a thaw in the frosty relations between the two countries.

Ri, who arrived in New York on March 6 for the seminar, was approached by reporters in front of the Millennium U.N. Plaza Hotel in New York City on March 12 and asked when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors will be allowed to access the regime's uranium enrichment facility in Yongbyon, following the bilateral deal with the U.S. that was hammered out in Beijing.

"I think the IAEA inspection will happen in the upcoming days," Ri said. "Concrete steps are being taken to carry out the DPRK (North Korea)-U.S. agreement made in February."

Ri also expressed hope for improving ties with Washington. "If the United States wants to improve relations with us, we are willing to accept the move," he emphasized. "Ending the hostile relationship with the United States is the most important thing for us. This is the beginning point and basis for resolving all other problems."

However, Ri dismissed the report from Japanese media that North Korea and the

North Korea's chief nuclear envoy, Ri Yong-ho, is surrounded by journalists upon arrival at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York on March 6. (Yonhap Photo)



United States had determined to open liaison offices each in Pyongyang and Washington. “Nothing has been proposed,” Ri said. But Ri also said his government was willing to improve ties with Washington if such a desire was reciprocated, reportedly reiterating Pyongyang’s position that it is willing to establish liaison offices in both countries.

During the seminar, a news report claimed that Ri proposed establishing a liaison office in both nations’ capitals. The vice foreign minister said this was only a repeat of Pyongyang’s basic position. “We did not put forward a concrete proposal but just revealed a principled position.”

But while Pyongyang is striving to improve ties with the U.S., which it sees as important for securing aid and moving toward its ultimate goal of normalized relations, there’s no sign it wants to do the same with Seoul.

Ri said, “The problem is whether the South has an intention to implement the

June 15 Joint Declaration and Oct. 4 Declaration, but I don’t think the South is willing to do it.”

Ri repeatedly stressed the importance of carrying out the two inter-Korean agreements, both of which were made with former South Korean Presidents Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, as a precondition for resuming inter-Korean talks.

“If the South respects these declarations and has intentions to implement them, we are eager to hold their hands and go together,” Ri said.

“We are willing to go hand in hand if the South respects the declarations and has a resolve to implement them. But (the South) does not seem to have such a will yet,” he said.

Asked about the academic forum, Ri said, “The meetings went well. Plenty of opinions were exchanged. I am satisfied with the result of the meeting.”

When it comes to the allegations that young heir Kim Jong-un reportedly

expressed intentions to visit the U.N. headquarters, Ri refused to respond, saying, "I'm not in a position to talk about his intentions."

During the forum, Seoul's representative was cold shouldered by his counterpart from Pyongyang, according to a source. Lim Sung-nam, Seoul's representative to the six-party talks, and the North's Ri Yong-ho both attended the forum held from March 7-9. During the forum, Ri suggested a formula for resolving the North's nuclear issue in which progress could be made after improvement in relations with the U.S.

The six-party talks have been stalled since the North's withdrawal in April 2009. But in February, the North and the U.S. brightened the prospect for its resumption by agreeing to a substantial deal.

Under the agreement announced Feb. 29, the two agreed to trade 240,000 metric tons of U.S. food assistance for the North's tentative suspension of uranium enrichment at its Yongbyon facility and cooperation with international nuclear inspectors. The U.S. and South Korea have made improved relations between the two Koreas a condition for resuming the six-party talks.

Ties have been badly frayed in recent years and reached their worst point in decades in 2010 when the North waged two deadly provocations against the South. Washington wants the relations to improve before resumption of the six-party talks. North Korea walked out of the six-party talks after being slapped with international sanctions for nuclear testing. North Korea's Ri Yong-ho and his South Korean counter-

part, Lim Sung-nam, were among several dozen participants of the conference at a hotel near the United Nations headquarters. Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former Deputy Secretary of State Jim Steinberg have also taken part, but no currently serving U.S. government officials have participated.

"For the resumption of the six-party talks, North Korea should properly implement the Feb. 29 North-U.S. agreement," Lim said at the forum. "Above all, the North Korean authorities need to accept a call for inter-Korean dialogue."

Despite the progress, many analysts say the North is unlikely to give up nuclear weapons that it sees as its greatest deterrent. Some say Pyongyang could be angling to freeze its program in return for light-water reactors and more food aid.

Washington, meanwhile, said food aid would be delivered to the impoverished state "as soon as possible" in an agreement made in late February that is said to open the door for multilateral negotiations over the North's nuclear program.

U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Mark Toner said the United States would discuss "logistical challenges" with officials from the World Food Program, which is slated to deliver about half of the U.S. aid.

The other half will be delivered by private U.S. groups, reports said. The deliveries are said to include biscuits and nutritional items for children amid widespread speculation that other items such as rice are easily diverted for military use. (Yonhap News)



## <Internal Affairs>

### North Korea to Hold Key Party Conference in April

North Korea will hold a key political conference in April, the country's state media reported on Feb. 20, amid fresh tensions with South Korea.

The Workers' Party has decided to convene the conference in mid-April "to glorify the sacred revolutionary life and feats" of its late leader Kim Jong-il and "rallied close" around his son and successor, Kim Jong-un, according to the KCNA.

The junior Kim was named vice chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party of (North) Korea (WPK) in the previous party conference in September 2010, the North's biggest political gathering in 44 years.

The young leader has become the supreme commander of the 1.1 million-strong military after taking over the communist country following the death of his father in December.

Paik Hak-soon, a senior research fellow at the Sejong Institute, an independent think tank near Seoul, said Kim Jong-un is likely to assume key party posts at the upcoming conference such as general secretary and chairman of the WPK Central Military Commission.

The planned conference is expected to be held around April 15, the centennial of the birth of the country's founder Kim Il-sung, the grandfather of current leader Kim Jong-un.

North Korea, one of the poorest countries in the world, has vowed to usher in a prosperous and powerful nation by this year. The North also marks the 80th founding anniversary of its military in April. (Yonhap News)

### North Korea Doles out Medals and Commendations to Its People

North Korea has doled out medals and state commendations to its people in February in what could be an attempt to win their loyalty following a transition of power.

The North held a ceremony of awarding state commendation to more than 300 officials and workers in the field of public service at the People's Palace of Culture on Feb. 25, according to the KCNA.

Award recipients include barbers, a tailor and a teacher in training. The North also conferred Order of National Flag and Order of Labor on 305 people, the KCNA said.

"They were awarded commendation in recognition of their contributions to promoting the convenience of people's life through years of faithful public services in the spirit of devoted service to the people," the dispatch said.

The North also awarded "the title of DPRK (North Korea) Hero" to Pak Thae-son, former miner who the KCNA has said "devoted his life to saving his colleague when there was an accident in a pit."

He was also honored with a gold star medal and Order of National Flag First Class, the KCNA said.

North Korea's new leader Kim Jong-un praised the dead miner and instructed mine workers "not to forget his heroic act." Kim made the comment in a handwritten note to the Komdok Mining Complex, North Korea's largest lead and zinc production base, according to the North's state media.

The North also conferred "the title of DPRK (North Korea) Labor Hero" to painter Ri Song-il who "successfully created the portrait of smiling leader Kim Jong-il as a national treasure," the KCNA said in a separate dispatch.

Ri also received Gold Medal and Order of National Flag First Class, the KCNA said earlier this month.

The North's recent move came as the North's new leader is believed to be consolidating his power after the December death of his father, long-time leader Kim Jong-il.

The move "appears to be aimed at winning public allegiance and displaying to the outside world that Kim Jong-un's regime is stable," said Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul. (Yonhap News)

## **N. Korean Leader Orders Front-line Troops to Always Be Alert**

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has ordered a front-line military unit to be alert as he toured the border village of Panmunjom, Pyongyang's state media reported on March 4.

The inspection trip comes as the socialist country ratcheted up threats against South Korea over its ongoing military exercises with the U.S. that Pyongyang says are rehearsals for a northward invasion.

South Korea and the U.S. regularly hold military exercises to bolster their readiness against a possible North Korean provocation. Seoul and Washington say the exercises are defensive in nature.

Kim told "the soldiers on the outpost duty at Panmunjom to always maintain the maximum alertness as they are standing in confrontation with the enemies at all times," the KCNA said in a dispatch.

The border village, located inside a 4-kilometer-wide military buffer zone separating the two Koreas, is one of the key venues for inter-Korean meetings.

The young leader also "put forth the important tasks which would serve as guidelines for increasing the combat capability of the unit," the dispatch said, without elaborating.

Earlier on March 3, the KCNA said Kim inspected the Strategic Rocket Force Command of the KPA which is believed to be in Kangdong District, northeastern Pyongyang, the North's capital. "He told the service personnel of the unit to make thorough-going preparations for battles," it said. (Yonhap News)

## Chief of N.K. Army Unit Responsible for Yeonpyeong Attack Replaced

The head of a North Korean army unit responsible for shelling South Korea's Yeonpyeong Island in 2010 has been replaced by the country's vice defense minister, the North's state media confirmed on March 6.

General Kim Kyok-sik, who headed the 4th Army Corps of the KPA starting in February 2009, is believed to have led the deadly attack on Yeonpyeong that killed four South Koreans, including two civilians.

The front-line unit near the inter-Korean sea border in the Yellow Sea is now headed by Pyon In-son, vice minister of the People's Armed Forces, according to North Korean media reports of his appearance on state television on March 5.

Kim has often been spotted at events unrelated to the unit since late last year, spurring speculation that he may have been replaced.

During the broadcast by the (North) Korean Central Broadcasting Station, Pyon was introduced as commander of the 4th Army Corps, in effect confirming the replacement.

Pyon In-son served as vice defense minister starting in December 2010, and was included in the North's 232-member commission for the funeral of former leader Kim Jong-il last December.

"The hearts of my corps' soldiers are boiling with hatred for the Lee Myung-bak group of traitors and determination to get revenge," Pyon was quoted as saying on air. "Be it Cheong Wa Dae or Incheon, we will immerse them all in a sea of fire and not let a single member of the group of traitors survive." (Yonhap News)

## Rodong Sinmun Adds Late Leader Kim Jong-il in New Slogan

North Korea's main *Rodong Sinmun* newspaper added on March 7 the country's late leader Kim Jong-il in its propaganda slogan in what could be a move to strengthen his cult of personality.

The previous slogan in the newspaper's front page had called for readers to arm themselves with the country's founder Kim Il-sung's "juche," an ideology of self-reliance that is deeply ingrained in the socialist country.

The slogan had been used for more than 30 years, but the newspaper has recently added the founder's son, Kim Jong-il, in its new slogan following his death in December. Kim's youngest son, Kim Jong-un, appears to be tightening his grip on the power he inherited from his father, Kim Jong-il.

The new slogan called on North Koreans to thoroughly arm themselves with the "revolutionary ideology of the great comrade Kim Il-sung and comrade Kim Jong-il." (Yonhap News)

## **N. Korean Leader Kim Jong-un Inspects Navy Units in Yellow Sea**

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un inspected navy units guarding its western coastal regions, the North's media said on March 10, as the communist country continued to ratchet up hostile rhetoric against South Korea.

Accompanied by several military commanders, Kim toured a navy defense unit on Cho Islet off its west coast and another onshore naval unit, the KCNA said in an English report, monitored in Seoul.

"Saying that Cho Islet is a gate to the West Sea and Pyongyang is behind the islet, he instructed the service personnel of the defense unit to consolidate the combat positions as firm as a rock," the report said.

Kim's military inspection came days after South Korean Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin made a rare trip to Yeonpyeong Island to vow to launch a powerful retaliation against North Korea if provoked again amid a spate of militaristic rhetoric by Pyongyang.

The North shelled the frontline island of Yeonpyeong in November 2010, killing two South Korean marines and two civilians.

The young leader, believed to be in his late 20s, has toured the heavily armed border with the South and visited a number of military units, apparently seen as efforts to seek to bolster support.

"He instructed the service personnel to step up combat preparations, always aware that their positions allow no retreat and there is no place to retreat even an inch there, and thus mercilessly wipe out the aggressors should they come in attack," the KCNA said.

The latest remark also came a day after South Korea and United States forces wrapped up their 12-day joint annual military exercise, called the Key Resolve.

North Korea made war threats before and during the exercise in February, accusing the South and the U.S. of preparing for a northward invasion, though no actual attack has occurred.

Seoul and Washington say their exercises are routine and defensive in nature.

The two Koreas remain technically at war with each other since their 1950-53 conflict ended with a truce, not a peace treaty. (Yonhap News)

## **N. Korea Names Ri Jong-guk as Minister of Machine-Building Industry**

North Korea has recently appointed Ri Jong-guk, a member of the Supreme People's Assembly, as minister of Machine-Building Industry, according to the North's media reports.

His appointment was confirmed as *Rodong Sinmun*, the organ of the ruling Workers' Party of (North) Korea (WPK), introduced him on March 11 as minister of Machine-Building Industry in its report on a ceremony to mark an economic campaign.

The office of minister of Machine-Building Industry had formerly been held by Vice Premier Jo Byong-ju.

Ri served as bureau chief of Metal and Machine-Building Industry Ministry, the predecessor of Machine-Building Industry Ministry, in December 1999. He was elected as member of the SPA in 2003 and 2009 for the second time in a row.

North Korea consolidated the Ministry of Metals Industry and Ministry of Machine-Building Industry into the Metal and Machine-Building Industry Ministry in September 1999, but separated it again into the Ministry of Metals Industry and Ministry of Machine-Building Industry in May 2005. (Yonhap News)

## **<External Affairs>**

### **N. Korea Warns It Won't Overlook Upcoming Nuclear Summit**

North Korea warned on Feb. 22 it would take unspecified actions against South Korea over the nuclear security summit to be held in Seoul in late March, calling the event "an intolerable grave provocation."

South Korea is scheduled to host the second Nuclear Security Summit from March 26 through 27 to bolster international safeguards and help prevent nuclear terrorism. The meeting is scheduled to bring together top leaders from about 50 nations, including U.S. President Barack Obama, who hosted the first summit in Washington in 2010.

North Korea's three committees on peace condemned the South's hosting of the summit as "an unpardonable crime" and "an intolerable grave provocation" aimed at the North, according to an English-language report by the KCNA.

"We will never overlook such nuclear confab doing harm to the dignified DPRK (North Korea) ... but decisively smash the anti-DPRK nuclear racket by disturbers and wreckers of peace," the committees said in the joint statement, referring to the North by the initials of its official name. The statement did not elaborate further.

South Korea plans to mobilize about 40,000 police officers and an unidentified number of troops during the summit to guard against possible provocations by North Korea or terrorists, according to South Korean officials.

The latest warning comes a day after the KCNA reported North Korea's new leader Kim Jong-un had inspected a military base believed to oversee missile units.

Tensions persist on the Korean Peninsula following two deadly attacks by the North against the South in 2010. The North recently threatened military action against South Korea over live-fire drills near their disputed western sea border earlier this week, although no clash occurred.

The statement also said the summit “will only lay one more stumbling block to the settlement of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula.”

The warning came a day before North Korea’s First-vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye-gwan is to meet his U.S. counterpart Glyn Davies in Beijing in what could be the third round of high-level talks between the two sides. (Yonhap News)

## **N. Korea Blasts S. Korea for Protest over Defectors’ Repatriation**

North Korea denounced South Korea on Feb. 24 for its recent protest over a group of North Korean defectors facing repatriation from China, claiming the South has no right to interfere in the decisions of sovereign nations.

A group of 34 North Korean defectors were reportedly rounded up in China earlier in February and now face deportation back to their homeland, where they are feared to face harsh persecution and even execution.

Seoul is expected to raise the issue at a United Nations meeting, while President Lee Myung-bak called on China on Feb. 22 to follow international norms in handling North Korean defectors.

South Korean human rights activists and lawmakers have staged numerous rallies and protests in recent days demanding China recognize the defectors as refugees and stop their repatriation.

Earlier in the day, a parliamentary committee adopted a resolution condemning Beijing’s actions and urged China to abide by international refugee laws.

“The South Korean government has recently raised its biggest commotion over ‘defectors’ in a reckless attempt to internationalize the issue of ‘defector repatriation,’” the North’s propaganda Web site, Uriminzokkiri, said in a commentary.

“Taking administrative actions in line with domestic laws and relevant treaties is the rightful activity of sovereign nations and is not up for discussion,” it said.

South Korea has a longstanding policy of accepting any North Korean defectors who wish to live in the South and has repeatedly asked for Beijing’s cooperation through bilateral diplomatic channels. China, as North Korea’s only major ally and benefactor, is bound by a treaty with the North to repatriate the defectors, seeing them as illegal economic migrants, not refugees. (Yonhap News)

## **N. Korea’s Red Cross Denies Existence of Defectors in China**

North Korea denied on Feb. 25 the existence of any North Korean refugees in China, claiming that the issue was an attempt by South Korea to defame its socialist regime.

“The North Korean defector issue is not an issue of refugees but the outcome of efforts by

hostile forces to isolate the DRPK (North Korea) in the international community and to lure and abduct our people,” the North’s Red Cross Society said in a statement carried by the KCNA.

Tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of North Koreans are believed to be hiding in China, waiting for a flight to South Korea. Some 23,000 North Koreans have so far defected to South Korea, mostly through China.

China routinely cracks down on the North Korean escapees on its soil and repatriates them to their homeland where they are said to face severe punishment, including torture and execution.

China does not recognize North Korean border-crossers as refugees and would rather treat them as economic migrants.

The issue has drawn fresh attention amid media reports that China is moving to repatriate some 30 North Korean escapees they have arrested since early February.

In a departure from its past policy of trying to resolve the issue through “quiet diplomacy,” South Korea has started openly urging China to regard the North Koreans as refugees and not to repatriate them.

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, in a recent national news conference, called on China to treat those North Koreans on its soil as refugees in accordance with international standards. (Yonhap News)

## **19 North Korean Athletes Qualify in 9 Events for London Olympics**

Nineteen North Korean athletes have qualified in nine events including women’s soccer for the 2012 London Olympics, the KCNA said on March 3.

The nine events were women’s soccer, weight lifting, wrestling, shooting, marathon, table tennis, archery, judo and diving, the news outlet said.

Among the 19 athletes are An Kum-ae, who won a gold medal in the 52 kg category event at the 2012 Women’s Judo World Cup and Kim Un-hyang and Kim Jin-ok who met requirements set by International Swimming Federation in the 18th Diving World Cup, the KCNA said.

The 2012 London Olympics is slated to be held from July 27 to August 12, 2012. (Yonhap News)

## **Anti-South Korea Rallies Spread across North Korea**

Rallies have been held across North Korea pledging to wage a “sacred war” against South Korea over alleged defamation of its leadership by a South Korean military unit since the March 4 Pyongyang rally, according to the North’s media including the KCNA.

The North claimed on March 2 that a South Korean army unit in the western port of

Incheon scrawled defamatory words below portraits mocking the North's leaders carelessly hung on walls and doors.

A South Korean military unit in Incheon posted two photos of North Korea's late leader Kim Jong-il and his youngest son, new leader Kim Jong-un, inside a building with a sign that translates to "Let's Kill Kim Jong-un," according to local media.

The North threatened to launch a "sacred war" against South Korea in a statement released by the Supreme Command of the (North) Korean People's Army (KPA) on March 2, denouncing the defamation of its leadership.

After the announcement of the statement, about 150,000 Pyongyang citizens rallied at Kim Il-sung Square to vow to wage a "sacred war" against South Korea.

The Pyongyang rally was followed by ones in South Phyongan and South Hamgyong provinces on March 5 and in North Phyongan and Kangwon provinces on March 6.

Meanwhile, youth and students held a rally on March 6 in Pyongyang to pledge to join or rejoin the KPA for the sacred war against the South, the KCNA said the same day.

The number of youths who want to join or rejoin the KPA has reached more than 1.94 million across the country, the KCNA said on March 6. (Yonhap News)

## **North Korean Delegation Heads for New York for Photo Exhibition**

A group of North Korean journalists left for the United States on March 10 to attend a photo exhibition set to open the following week, marking the centenary of the birth of the North's late founding leader, Kim Il-sung, the country's media said.

The North's delegation, led by Kim Chang-gwang, vice director of the KCNA, will attend the opening ceremony of the photo exhibition scheduled for March 15, the news agency said in a report.

The photo exhibition, to be jointly organized with The Associated Press, is scheduled to run until April 13, two days before the late leader's 100th birthday, the American news agency said in its Web site.

Kim Il-sung, who founded North Korea in 1948 with the backing of the old Soviet Union, died in 1994. He is still revered as a national hero in the isolated socialist country.

The photo exhibition is part of joint programs being pushed by the KCNA to promote its nascent relations with the U.S. news agency. The AP opened a bureau in Pyongyang in January, the first international news agency with a full-time presence in the reclusive country to dispatch texts, photos and video.

The KCNA said the New York exhibition will showcase photos archived by two news agencies, including the North's late founding leader and his deceased son Kim Jong-il who died of heart failure in December last year, as well as people and life in the communist state.

The U.S. and North Korea, who fought against each other in the 1950-53 Korean War, have no diplomatic relations. About 28,500 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea as a



deterrent. (Yonhap News)

## **North Korea Bashes Seoul for Internationalizing Defector Issue**

The North Korean foreign ministry denounced South Korea for raising the issue of its defectors on the international arena, the North's media said on March 13.

The spokesman for the North's foreign ministry accused the Lee Myung-bak administration of pursuing a "foolish bid to internationalize national showdown" by calling on other countries and the United Nations to get involved in the defector issue, according to an interview carried by the KCNA.

The issue of North Korean defectors fleeing their totalitarian and hunger-stricken nation has become a hot topic in South Korea following press reports that about 30 North Koreans have been forcefully repatriated or face deportation after being arrested by Chinese authorities.

Tens of thousands of North Korean defectors are believed to be hiding in China, hoping to travel to Thailand or other Southeast Asian countries before resettling in South Korea, home to more than 23,000 defectors from the communist country.

But as Pyongyang's key ally, China has detained dozens of such defectors and reportedly sent some of them back to the North, where they could face harsh punishment, as Beijing considers them "economic migrants," not refugees.

Earlier in the day, Marzuki Darusman, special U.N. rapporteur on North Korean human rights, reiterated at a session of the U.N. Human Rights Council his deep concern over the safety and protection of the fleeing North Koreans, and called on all states to adhere to their obligation of providing international protection to asylum-seekers.

At the U.N. session, a brief physical clash broke out between a North Korean diplomat and South Korean lawmakers, after So Se-pyong, the North's ambassador to its mission in Geneva, flatly denied a U.N. report on Pyongyang's human rights record.

The North's foreign ministry spokesman said South Korea pursued a "psychological campaign" against it "for a political reason," lambasting Seoul for "curbing the atmosphere for friendship, cooperation, dialogue, and improvement of relations in the region and repeating the evil cycle of confrontation and conflicts," according to the KCNA. (Yonhap News)

## **<Inter-Korean Affairs>**

### **Seoul to Press N.K. Again to Hold Reunions of Separated Families**

South Korea's point man on North Korea said on Feb. 21 he will urge Pyongyang to

accept Seoul's offer to resume reunions of family members separated for nearly six decades.

The move came three days after North Korea rejected South Korea's recent proposal to hold Red Cross talks to help arrange reunions of separated families.

The North has called for South Korea's apology for not paying official respect over the December death of its leader Kim Jong-il as a key condition for resuming stalled bilateral talks.

South Korea expressed sympathy to the people of North Korea over Kim's death but did not send an official mourning delegation to Pyongyang. Seoul did approve condolence trips by private delegations.

"I will urge North Korea" again to accept the issue of reuniting separated family members, Unification Minister Yu Woo-ik told reporters, without providing a specific time frame for his planned offer.

He also called on the North to put aside differences in staging family reunions, one of the key humanitarian issues between the two divided Koreas.

Millions of Koreans have been separated from their family members since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a cease-fire, not a peace treaty, leaving the two sides still technically at war.

The divided Koreas have held more than a dozen rounds of reunions since a landmark summit in 2000, bringing together more than 21,700 family members who had not seen each other since the war.

South Korea wants to resume regular reunions, but none have taken place since October 2010.

There are no direct means of contact between ordinary civilians of the two countries that remain divided by a heavily fortified border. (Yonhap News)

## **S. Korea OKs Private Agencies to Ship Medical Aid to N. Korea**

South Korea will allow private aid agencies to ship medical supplies to North Korea, an official said on Feb. 23, despite lingering tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The decision made on Feb. 22 gave a green light to Nanum International and the Eugene Bell Foundation to send a set of X-ray equipment and tuberculosis-related medical supplies, respectively, to the North, according to the official from the Unification Ministry.

North Korean hospitals are often ill-equipped to treat patients due to a lack of medicines and other supplies, according to outside experts who have visited the country.

All aid to the North from South Korea must first win approval from the government.

South Korea has approved a series of humanitarian aid missions to the North despite tensions on the Korean Peninsula over the North's two deadly attacks against the South in 2010.

In November, the South Korean government also resumed medical aid to North Korea through the World Health Organization to give basic medical supplies and medical facilities

to North Korean hospitals.

It was not immediately clear whether the impoverished country would accept the latest private aid, valued at 79 million won (US\$70,000).

Seoul's approval came a day after Pyongyang banned its Buddhist officials from meeting with their South Korean counterparts in the North's border city of Kaesong.

South Korean Buddhist monks traveled to Kaesong on Feb. 21 for previously arranged talks with their North Korean counterparts on a joint project to return artifacts seized by Japan during its 1910-45 colonial rule over the Korean Peninsula.

The two sides also planned to discuss how to display in Pyongyang some of about 1,200 ancient Korean royal books Japan returned to South Korea in December. Some of the books record and illustrate royal protocols used during the Joseon Dynasty, which ruled the Korean Peninsula from 1392 to 1910.

The North Korean Buddhist officials did not show up at the meeting, however, according to another South Korean government official.

The North reportedly boycotted the meeting in protest at South Korea's live-fire drills near their disputed western sea border on Feb. 20.

The North had threatened military action against Seoul's military drills, although no clash occurred.

The South Korean Buddhist monks who traveled to the North were not immediately available for comment. (Yonhap News)

## **N. Korea Steps up Bashing Campaign against S. Korean President**

North Korea intensified its campaign against South Korean President Lee Myung-bak on March 8, with state TV showing footage of citizens firing on a paper target overlapped with the image of a man under Lee's name.

North Korea has sharply escalated its criticism of the Lee administration following a media report that a South Korean military unit put up a hostile slogan against new North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and his late father Kim Jong-il in its barracks.

State media have been sending a wave of articles full of abusive language and hatred of Lee and other top officials, with the *Rodong Sinmun* newspaper even calling Lee a "deranged dog" in an article earlier this week. The regime has also organized massive public rallies against the South.

On March 8, North Korean TV showed members of a women's organization under the ruling Workers' Party and athletes of a sports shooting team firing pistols and rifles at a paper target with the chest-up drawing of a dressed-up man and Lee's name hand-written on it.

Footage also showed them chanting anti-Lee slogans.

The socialist country usually bristles strongly at any criticism of its leader. But analysts say the North's recent hysterical reaction to the anti-Kim slogan in the South Korean barracks is

primarily aimed at solidifying internal unity under the new leader believed to be in his late 20s. (Yonhap News)

## **S. Korea's Defense Chief Vows to Retaliate If Provoked by N. Korea**

South Korea will launch a powerful retaliation against North Korea if provoked again, Seoul's defense chief warned on March 7 amid a spate of militaristic rhetoric by Pyongyang.

In a rare trip to Yeonpyeong Island, Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin said he believes North Korea will make a carefully calculated provocation against South Korea to help its new leader Kim Jong-un consolidate his power and resolve internal friction.

South Korea will powerfully retaliate against North Korea until the unit responsible and its support bases "completely surrender in case of the North's provocation," Kim told troops on the South Korean western border island shelled by North Korea in 2010.

The artillery attack on Yeonpyeong Island killed two South Korean marines and two civilians. The attack, together with the North's deadly sinking of a South Korean warship earlier in 2010, plunged inter-Korean relations to one of their lowest levels in decades.

South Korea has since strengthened its defense posture and repeatedly pledged to retaliate against the communist country if provoked again.

The defense chief's latest trip to Yeonpyeong Island came as North Korea rattled its saber against South Korea in recent days over defamation of the dignity of its new leader Kim Jong-un.

The North has accused a South Korean army unit in Incheon, a port west of Seoul, of writing aggressive defamatory words above and below portraits of the North's leader Kim Jong-un and his late father, former leader Kim Jong-il.

The South Korean military unit in Incheon reportedly posted photos of the two Kims inside a barrack with accompanying text that translates as, "Let's Kill Kim Jong-un."

The North has long bristled at any outside criticism of its leader and has made similar threats against the South over the past several months, although no actual attack has occurred yet.

On March 6, Pyon In-son, the new commander of the North's 4th Corps that shelled Yeonpyeong Island in 2010, warned that either Seoul or Incheon "will be engulfed in flames and no enemy will survive our strikes" once the North's artillery pieces open fire all at once.

Seoul, the South Korean capital city of more than 10 million people, is within range of North Korea's artillery.

The North's new leader Kim Jong-un, who took over the country following the December death of his father Kim Jong-il, has ordered his troops to strongly retaliate if South Korea breaches the North's borders.

The North's Kim made the comment during a recent inspection trip to units under the 4th Corps in the southwestern region. (Yonhap News)

# PROSPECTS FOR THE POWER STRUCTURE UNDER THE KIM JONG-UN REGIME AND ITS POLICY DIRECTION

## I. Introduction

North Korea announced at noon on Dec. 19, 2011 that its leader Kim Jong-il “passed away of a sudden illness” two days earlier. North Korea watchers in Seoul and elsewhere have since expressed various views on questions regarding the stability of the new North Korean regime led by Kim Jong-un, son of the late leader rumored to be in his late 20s, and its policies.

As for the question of leadership stability, some observers hold the view that Kim Jong-un’s current status as state leader is secure and will remain stable in the future. Kim Jong-il took an array of in-depth measures while he was alive to ensure a smooth power transfer to the younger Kim. But some others believe North Korea will experience uneasy political developments in one to two years because of the very short period for training the younger Kim as successor-designate and for this reason, he must be under the guardianship of his uncle Jang Song-thaek, who could also betray him. Moreover, they add, possibilities are high that internal disputes among the North Korean elite officials will surface sooner or later.

As for the question of policies, North Korea watchers have focused their attention on whether or not the new North Korean leadership will be more active in reforms and opening up. Some watchers believe Kim Jong-un will not take a more active approach than his father to instituting reform and opening up because he has an obligation to abide by his father’s teachings. But many others believe that the new leader, who has attended a school in a Western country, will likely be more positive toward an opening-up, and that it will be inevitable for him to

By Park Hyeong-jung  
*Senior Research Fellow  
at the Korea Institute for  
National Unification  
in Seoul, Korea*

do so because of the extremely adverse situation facing the North Korean economy today.

This essay will pose a question regarding the stability of the new North Korean leadership in a different formula and will answer it in a different way. There are two different views on the aforementioned question of the new North Korean leadership: One could be called the theory of stable leadership and the other the theory of a leadership crisis bound to surface. This essay will observe various factors that could help hold together, uplift, or sublimate contradictory elements in the two different views, without completely destroying one another.

As for the North Korean policies in the future, this essay will pose a new question, with no focus on the question of reforms and an opening up. It will identify the North's five policy factors for its survival strategy in the past and forecast their future course in the event of its success or failure.

## **II. Kim Jong-un's Hereditary Leadership Succession and the North Korean Regime**

### **1. An Examination of Leadership Security**

The key question regarding political developments in North Korea since the death of its leader Kim Jong-il on Dec. 17, 2011 is: How deeply did Kim Jong-un's inherited leadership take root and how secure will his leadership be in the future?

An analysis of the various views of North Korea watchers expressed so far

breaks answers to this question down into two categories. Observers in one category focus on the elevation of Kim's nominal status and the ensuing formation of his nominal power system, and thus consider both his status and the system as evidence of his seizure of substantial power and the stabilized Kim Jong-il regime. We can call this "the theory of the already stable Kim Jong-un regime." Observers in the other category focus on power struggles between key institutions and between elite officials with different interests, and not on a change in Kim Jong-un's official status. We can call this "the theory of a crisis bound to face the Kim Jong-un regime." Of course, there are factors overlapping between the two theories.

Those in favor of the former theory are apt to judge that the status of Kim Jong-un as North's leader as already secure. In other words, they argue that the Kim Jong-un regime has been set during the past three years and will be secure in the future. This position is held by more North Korea watchers in South Korea than in the United States.<sup>1)</sup>

Those who support the latter theory are skeptical of Kim Jong-un's status as the North's leader. In other words, they tend to maintain that North Korea appears to be united behind Kim Jong-un, but his leadership is uneasy and it could face a crisis. This is because Kim Jong-il died before establishing his young, inexperienced son's firm leadership and key offices and elite officials are exposed to potential power struggles among them. This position is held by more North Korea watchers in the U.S. than in South Korea.<sup>2)</sup>

How can we assess the process of Kim

Jong-un's hereditary leadership succession to date? An answer to this question will reveal the real aspect of the aforementioned two theories regarding the current state and future of his leadership.

First of all, we can hardly ignore the fact that North Korea has taken various steps aimed at establishing a system for Kim Jong-un's hereditary leadership succession for three years – from early 2009 until the death of the North Korean leader in December 2011. Noteworthy is that the measures included the replacement of many elite officials in all grades, in particular those in senior positions. Undoubtedly, the conference of representatives of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) held in September 2010 was a function to mark the completion of the basic framework for Kim Jong-un's dynastic leadership succession. Kim Jong-il designated the younger Kim as supreme commander of the Korean People's Army on Oct. 8, 2011,<sup>3)</sup> while entrusting him unofficially with managing a great deal of government administration two days later.<sup>4)</sup>

It is unreasonable to agree completely with the North Korea watchers siding with the theory of the junior Kim's stable leadership, who maintain that Kim Jong-un has succeeded in establishing his independent authority and power base and that the North has already cemented the basic framework for the hereditary leadership transfer. It is also unreasonable to agree completely with North Korea watchers who support the theory of a new North Korean leadership crisis, who predict a power struggle among the North Korean elite that will result in social disorder and may bring about the collapse of the North

Korean socialist regime. The theory of Kim's stable leadership is flawed because it disregards various weak points applicable to hereditary leadership succession, in particular, factors for potential disputes among key governing institutions and elite officials. Also troublesome is the theory of a leadership crisis because it ignores factors that encourage the North Korean elite to tacitly approve of the Kim Jong-un regime.

We need to distinguish the factors conducive to stabilizing the younger Kim's leadership from the factors threatening his leadership should we overcome the biased views of the two theories. Above all, we need to consider the advantages Kim Jong-un enjoyed as a successor for at least two years.

This is because, as aforementioned, the hereditary power succession is in the interests of those who enjoyed privileges while the late leader was in charge. Despite the qualms of conscience, they will feel comfortable showing loyalty to their new leader Kim Jong-un, who will guarantee their vested rights. They include relatives of North Korean founding leader Kim Il-sung and his wife Kang Ban-sok; descendants of the members of an anti-Japanese guerrilla unit in the 1930s under the control of the Chinese Communist Party; and bereaved members of the families whose leaders or members were soldiers killed or wounded while in action during the Korean War, among others.

Second, it would be difficult for a figure in the North to openly challenge the inherited leadership of Kim Jong-un, since North Koreans also witnessed Kim Jong-il's hereditary succession to leadership and were inundated by the years-long propa-

ganda campaign involving Kim Jong-un as heir apparent. There is a huge probability that an absolute dictator will succeed in his or her attempt for hereditary power transfer as evidenced by the history of the autocratic countries.<sup>5)</sup> Moreover, in North Korea, ruled by two absolute dictators for more than half a century, its citizens can hardly distinguish between the state and a regime. For this reason, any attempt to replace Kim Jong-un with another leader could be perceived by the public as an attempt to betray the state. Under tense circumstances, that attempt will be most likely perceived in the North as a behavior aimed at threatening the North Korean socialist regime and debasing the North Korean elite.

Third, the behavior of North Koreans, and elite officials in particular, is closely monitored by the authorities concerned, making it nearly impossible for them to conspire to rise in revolt against their leader. Kim Jong-il survived power struggles and scheming for more than 37 years. The most effective tool for his survival was the ruling mechanism for checks and balances, mutual competition, strict surveillance, and mutual distrust. Possibilities are slim that the late North Korean leader was idle in providing a safety valve while establishing and implementing a plan to hand over his leadership to his son even though he was racing against time. He brought under the control of the younger Kim such security-related offices as the General Political Bureau of the army; the State Security Department, which is the North's secret police; the General Reconnaissance Bureau, and the Safeguard Command, which serves as the secret ser-

vice. Armed with these powerful organizations, it is not difficult for Kim Jong-un to use the ruling mechanism commanded by his father.

Fourth, China actively supports Kim Jong-un's leadership because it wants a stable North Korean leadership and has no other option for a North Korean leader. Moreover, other neighboring countries also do not want uneasy developments in the country in the northern half of the Korean peninsula.

## **2. Potential Factors Threatening the Kim Jong-un Regime**

There are three potential factors threatening Kim Jong-un's leadership. The first is internal disputes among key power offices and elite officials. His ability to deal successfully with these disputes, if they arise, will undoubtedly determine the success or failure of his leadership. Both Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il exerted their best efforts to effectively handle this matter, although their efforts were not always successful. Their ability to deal with these situations was limited by the situation facing the offices involved in the disputes. In other words, it was harder for Kim Jong-il than for his father Kim Il-sung to deal with those affairs because Kim Jong-il had to grant a freer hand to government offices for their self-reliant operation in 1995 when the North Korean economy was trapped in its worst-ever situation. In sharp contrast, WPK organizations and the command economy were under normal operations while Kim Il-sung ruled the North.

It will be harder for Kim Jong-un to deal with that question because the young



leader's authority is much weaker than his father's while the power struggle among key offices and elite officials will become fiercer, and market functions in addition to corruption will be more prevalent. Uneasy political developments may take place and even Kim's leadership might be threatened if and when he fails to deal effectively with internal disputes among key offices and elite officials. In the course of designating Kim Jong-un as successor to his father, the North Korean leadership has since 2009 replaced many officials in key offices. And Kim will probably further replace many officials there with others in years to come. A challenging task for the young leader is dealing with these unhappy officials given unfavorable treatment.<sup>6)</sup>

The second factor concerns the rising tension between the North Korean socialist regime and North Korean society. As far as this question is concerned, the North Korean policy in the first five years of the 21st century was drawn to adapt to the changing aspects of society, while that in the last five years was designed to counter it. North Korean citizens' feelings of dissatisfaction with their government have continued to rise since the currency reform in November 2009 until the North took measures to appease them. And for more than a year since the conference of WPK representatives held in September 2010, North Korea has campaigned against non-socialist behavior and activities in provinces bordering China including North Hamgyong and Ryanggang – reportedly under the initiative of Kim Jong-un, whose status as successor-designate was declared at the conference. Social control through measures similar to this campaign has been

reportedly reinforced since the death of Kim Jong-il. If the North continues to impose intensive regulations on its citizens, a conflict could take place between some North Korean citizens and their authorities concerned in a limited area. Widespread uneasy socio-political developments may also emerge in the North if and when a larger conflict takes place and news on this movement reaches North Korean citizens in many parts of the country. Moreover, there will likely appear widespread feelings of disappointment among North Korean citizens when the North fails to keep its word “to open up its gate as a Kangsong Taeguk (great, prosperous and powerful nation) in 2012,” and their frustration will turn into dissatisfactory feelings toward the Kim Jong-un regime.

Moreover, the North Korean economy could be mired in serious problems in the second half of this year because of its excessive investments in the construction and renovation of 100,000 residential units and non-productive projects. The North may suffer from problems caused by social disputes originated in a generation gap. This year the North Koreans born in 1994 will be drafted into the army, or enter college.<sup>7)</sup> These people, together with those born in the 1970s through the early 1990s, will be a key generation in North Korean society. This generation has yet to substantially experience the North's specific style of socialism. Their way of thinking and behavior likely differs greatly from what is desired by the North Korean leadership.<sup>8)</sup>

The third factor concerns the North's market management and North Korean citizens' ever increasing contact with the outside world. The market has provided the

North Korean regime with a chance to adapt itself to new environments while serving as a potential factor threatening it politically. Neither an excessively expanding market nor an excessively shrinking market is desirable for the North Korean leadership. This is because the North Korean government can hardly control its national economy as long as new market-oriented cash-laden classes threaten the privilege of the classes with vested rights at a time when the market is growing rapidly. The income of both the government and the classes with vested rights will also decrease sharply when the market shrinks excessively. It will not be easy for the North Korean government to find a balancing point. The market itself, however, is unlikely to threaten the survival of the North Korean socialist regime. A dictatorial regime can get along with the market because most despotic states, except communist states, have survived on the basis of a market economy. Many of them have survived by means of gaining excessive profits from the market economy while keeping most of their citizens poor and helpless. These despotic states are called "predatory states."<sup>9)</sup> In terms of its economic structure and policy, plus its internal economic profit structure since the mid-1990s, North Korea is now deep in the territory of a predatory state. It will not be easy for the North to reverse this trend.

It is not necessarily always correct to say that the expansion of the market in North Korea is meant for the reinforcement of the forces challenging the North Korean socialist regime. The North Korean regime has adapted itself to the changing environments where the market was ever expand-

ing and utilized it for two decades since the early 1990s through the determination that the market would help it survive and maintain the vested rights of certain classes. If we fix our eye on the North's image in the 1980s, we can become trapped in the mistaken belief that the North can survive mysteriously under situations where its survival seems impossible. The North Korean socialist regime is likely to adapt itself to the changing environments and change although it seems to be in danger. But the adaptation and change will most unlikely take place in the direction of reform and an opening-up desired by South Korea and most other countries. And we can hardly deny the possibility that North Korea will make mistakes in the course of adaptation and undergoing change. The mistakes could include delaying necessary measures, and as a result, bringing about a crisis.

The greatest threat to Kim Jong-un's leadership among the three aforementioned factors is a power struggle among the elite officials, while the greatest threat to the North Korean regime is a rise in tensions between the regime and society. Even if a power struggle results in the replacement of Kim Jong-un with another leader, the North Korean regime can survive. No autocracy has collapsed because of internal disputes among the elite. But tensions between the regime and society can give birth to a situation where some social elements rise in revolt against the structure of the current power hierarchy.

When and how intensively can these three factors challenge Kim Jong-un's leadership? An answer to this question depends upon the effectiveness of the policy mea-

asures being taken by the new North Korean regime. This is because the North is faced with a situation similar to that facing a company where the authority of its president rises, allowing the president to manage internal disputes easily when its business is thriving, and vice versa. If so, what are the strategic programs the North Korean socialist regime has pushed ahead with for its survival and what is the possibility of their success or failure?

### **III. A Forecast of North Korean Policies in Years to Come**

North Korea watchers have shown two different views on the North's future policies since Kim Jong-un emerged as the country's leader. One view maintains it would be exceedingly difficult for Kim to deny the policy line set by his grandfather Kim Il-sung and his father Kim Jong-il because he inherited his leadership from them.<sup>10</sup> The other view argues that Kim might be more active in opening-up because of his western educational background and the extremely adverse situation facing the North Korean economy.

This essay starts with the assumption that North Korea under Kim Jong-un's leadership will not change any of its policies, including those related to the economy, because there have been no changes not only in key elements of the North Korean regime, including its power group, elite officials and their interests, but in foreign positions on the North. In other words, the North does not feel the need to make a change in its basic position because there is no change in its interests.

If its policy failure turns out to be clear, the North will reach a crossroads where it has no option to make changes, or has to choose a path toward collapse, or a collision with what it has to challenge.

#### **1. Five Guiding Principles for North Korean Policies**

North Korea adopted five guiding principles for its key policies, domestic and international, on the basis of its survival strategy in 2005, and revealed their clearer aspects to the international community in 2009. First, the North will exert its best efforts to expand its nuclear capabilities and get international recognition of its status as a nuclear power. Second, the North will push ahead with negotiations with the U.S. for the normalization of relations between the two countries while maintaining its status as a nuclear power. Third, the North will consider South Korea a minor counterpart for negotiations. In other words, the North will hold substantial talks with the U.S. over the question of its nuclear weapons development program and a peace treaty on the Korean Peninsula, while limiting the role of South Korea to supporting the North politically and economically. Fourth, the North will maintain an anti-reform internal policy while actively increasing activities aimed at earning foreign currency. Fifth, the North will promote domestic political stability through social control, while providing its elite officials with a chance to make money utilizing political means.

These guiding principles were never announced by the North, but were inferred from the North's official statements and

practical behavior. Of course, the North's official statements often have made indirect statements in an effort to conceal their real intention to the outside world. But it is evident that the North's primary strategic goal is to realize the guiding principles for its policies. The principles, however, are in conflict with the interests of its neighboring countries and what they desire. Undoubtedly, North Korea knows that it is unlikely to get everything it wants, and is also well aware of the need to make a compromise with the countries concerned. But the more the North makes concessions, the worse the environment becomes for its survival. In any case, there is no evidence that the North has revised its five guiding policy principles.

## **2. A Strategy against Reform, in favor of Actively Seeking Foreign Currency**

The economic policies in autocratic states are essentially aimed at justifying the measures to guarantee benefits of the group loyal to the dictator.<sup>11</sup> This policy only takes care of a handful of persons, and can be in conflict with measures aimed at increasing production. The autocratic regime often chooses the policies to guarantee interests of the group loyal to the ruler, rather than those that would increase industrial output of the country. Policy decisions in this direction will bring about an economic slump and lasting poverty for the sweeping majority of its citizens.

If the ruler makes a different policy decision, the group, which has been loyal to the leader, would not feel the need to continue to show their loyalty to the autocrat, which will bring about a crisis for the auto-

cratic regime. Noteworthy is the fact that the despotic regime employs a logic of presenting itself as establishing and pushing ahead with a policy goal aimed at promoting public benefits, while concealing its actual policies. We need to keep a close eye on the real purpose of a policy drawn by an autocratic regime, rather than its rhetoric.

North Korea implemented reform-oriented measures during the first four or five years in the 21st century, but adopted anti-reform policies thereafter and took no steps to boost production while concentrating its efforts on projects for earning foreign currency. The foreign currency earning projects of the North break down into five categories. First, programs to increase exports of minerals (raw materials accounted for 70 percent of the North's overseas shipments in 2010); second, the establishment of more closed-end special economic zones such as those in Kaesong, Mt. Kumgang, Hwanggumpyong and Rason; third, the attraction of more foreign assistance to the country through food and nuclear diplomacy; fourth, exports of its labor force to China and Russia; and fifth, projects riding on its geological advantage such as tourism projects, and opening of ports in Rason and Chongjin to foreign ships.

The North's stance against reforms and for foreign currency earning could bring about following developments. The North Korean leadership is reluctant to take reform measures that could threaten the vested rights of the group supporting the leader, which will inevitably result in a decrease in productivity and eventually bring about a crisis for both the North

Korean economy and the North Korean socialist regime. Should the North avoid this development, it must increase projects for foreign currency earning and channel part of the income into the state-run economic sector and normalize the production of this dysfunctional sector. If the North can produce enough intermediate and consumer goods, and supply them to its citizens through the state-run public distribution system, the government can increase its ability to control its industries and citizens. The central issue, however, is that the state-run economic sector has no ability to stand on its own feet and its survival requires incessant external assistance. In other words, investments in the state-run economic sector, with notable exceptions such as facilities for power generation, are undesirable. North Korea has continued its attempt to expand projects for foreign currency earning through trade with South Korea until 2007, when the second inter-Korean summit was held, and through economic relations with China since Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to the North in October 2009.

The policy against reforms and for increasing foreign currency earning has the following characteristics. First, this policy brings the national economy into a vicious circle where the economic sector depends excessively on exports of raw materials and foreign assistance while the domestic industries are dysfunctional. In a situation where there is no increase in productivity because of anti-reform policies and the economy plunges into a deep slump, the North Korean regime will feel a greater need to increase exports of raw materials and foreign assistance in a move to secure

the political funds necessary for its survival.

Second, the projects for earning foreign currency are organized in a way for the regime or its leadership to easily monopolize their profits. This is so the regime can reward loyal officials and reinforce the ruling efficiency of the regime without a domestic production increase.

Third, this policy brings about a long-standing structured wide gap between the awarded wealthy group and the ordinary citizens who suffer from high unemployment and are given no chance to improve the quality of their labor. The general citizens lose an employment opportunity and are placed under a cursed situation with eternal poverty and ignorance if and when the regime makes the mining industry a pillar of the national economy, which may provide it with abundant funds for the dictatorial ruler and for its survival. But judging from the viewpoint of the regime, it will be conducive to maintaining the regime when it avoids investments in educational and health programs for laborers and other programs for increasing their income, programs that may increase their ability to challenge the regime.

Fourth, that policy helps give birth to and maintain the national economy based on a special economic system for power organizations, plus corruptions. The economic system oriented towards foreign currency earning provides powerful organizations with an exclusive chance to accumulate wealth, benefiting them with the commercial right to monopolize the collection and exports of raw materials because of their role in maintaining the regime. And that economic system guarantees the

situation where the politically powerful persons have the chance to plunder the politically weak ones, and the powerful organizations can gain monopolistic profits, leaving alone the vulnerable public system for protecting ownership and contracts, and the prevalence of corruptions, or encouraging those undesirable developments.

### **3. A Forecast of North Korean Internal Policies in 2012**

Fundamentally, the North's internal policies in 2012 will most likely remain within the territory of the aforementioned five guiding principles for North Korean policies. If the North feels the need for a change, it will likely be a strategic one.

There was a development in 2011 that may signal the direction of North Korean policies in the future. Reportedly on Oct. 10 that year, Kim Jong-il virtually entrusted Kim Jong-un with the government administration and "guidance squads" for the young Kim were inaugurated thereafter.<sup>12)</sup> The squads have reportedly proposed six policy measures, five of them regarding the economy.

The first of them calls for placing a top priority on power generation while banning exports of coal; the second, for the full operation of all plants and the normal supply of consumer goods to North Korean citizens within two to three years; the third, for the unconditional food supply to citizens in Pyongyang and Hoeryong, plus officials serving both the central and provincial governments, giving top priority to officials serving law enforcement offices and servicemen in all military units; the fourth, for decreasing by 50 per-

cent the quantity of foreign goods traded on the market by 2013, in particular, Chinese goods, and for banishing all foreign goods from the market step by step, filling the market with farm products, and reducing or closing down the market. The fifth measure calls for reducing commodity imports and saving foreign currency in order to channel that saved money into military and other projects, which are conducive to turning the country into a Kangsong Taeguk. The sixth policy measure proposed by the squads calls for cracking down on citizens that have communication channels with foreign groups against the North and North Korean refugees in foreign countries, and desperately blocking North Koreans' crossing of the river bordering China, and crackdown on the North Koreans with illegal cell phones.

These policy steps recommended by the squads show the successive nature of the new North Korean regime's policies. Nothing new is found in the policy measures to be taken under Kim Jong-un's leadership. The joint editorial on New Year's Day of 2011 extraordinarily stressed the significance of light industry, and the North has since often proclaimed that it will restore the food rationing system for all North Korean citizens. It has steadily pushed ahead with anti-reform, anti-market policies since 2005. Moreover, in September 2010, the North launched a year-long campaign against non-socialist activities in the area bordering China, including the provinces of North Hamgyong and Ryanggang. The North also banned the use of Chinese bank notes, the renminbi, starting in early 2010.

In conclusion, both the policy measures recommended by the squads and the policy direction set by the joint editorial on New Year's Day of 2012 indicate that North Korea will continue to push ahead with a strategy against reforms and for more projects to earn foreign currency. In a move to promote economic achievements, the joint editorial used the terms, "great upsurge, the leap forward," plus "the general offensive," which had appeared in the period oriented to mobilization in the 1950s and 1960s, while keeping mum on the question of economic management. The slogans announced jointly by the WPK Central Committee and the WPK Central Military Commission<sup>13)</sup> call for the settlement of

economic problems through saving, mobilization, the reinforcement of mental power, an increase in input of materials, science and technology, an increase in the state role, plus the construction, mobilization and reinforcement of the army. These slogans remind North Korea watchers of the slogans prevalent in the era of chollima campaign in the latter half of the 1950s. Moreover, the joint editorial proposed such unrealistic economic goals as turning the North into "an economic giant in the 21st century" and "a powerful country with the knowledge-based economy" while bringing about "a golden age of its prosperity under the torch of the industrial revolution in the new century."

#### Notes:

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**Kim Jong-il's Eldest Son in Financial Trouble: Report**

<Yonhap from MOSCOW/ February 17, 2012>

— Kim Jong-nam, the eldest son of North Korea's late leader Kim Jong-il, is having financial problems after his own country and China cut off funding over recent doubts he expressed about his younger brother's grip on power, a Russian newspaper said on Feb. 17.

— According to the latest edition of *Argumenty i Fakty*, Kim Jong-nam was recently kicked out of his 17th-floor room at a luxurious hotel in Macao because he could not pay the US\$15,000 that was due.

— Kim, believed to be in his early 40s, has been reported to enjoy a lavish lifestyle in the Chinese enclave, after apparently falling out of favor with his father for attempting to enter Japan on a fake passport in 2001.

— The paper said he rents a luxurious apartment for his wife, lover and children, while he prefers to stay at top-rated hotels. A Chinese intelligence agency has paid for the rent, leaving the North Korean regime to pay for his gambling and other entertainment costs, the paper said, quoting government officials in Macao.

**N. Korean Defectors Push to Join Int'l Writers' Association**

<Yonhap News from SEOUL/ February 20, 2012>

— About 20 North Korean defectors in South Korea will push to become members of an internationally recognized writers' association later this year, an official said on Feb. 20.

— PEN International is scheduled to hold its congress in South Korea's ancient city of Gyeongju in September where the issue of accepting North Korean defectors as members is expected to be discussed and approved, according to Kim Kyung-sik, secretary general of PEN Korea in Seoul.

— PEN International, the London-based worldwide association of writers, advocates freedom of expression and its members include writers, journalists and translators.

— The non-governmental organization has 144 autonomous PEN centers in more than 100 countries around the world. Kim said the defectors will form the Independent North Korean International PEN if their request is approved in September.

**N. Korea's Per-capita GDP Grows 4.7 Pct in 2011: Report**

<Yonhap News from SEOUL/ February 26, 2012>

— North Korea's per-capita gross domestic product probably expanded more than 4 percent in 2011 from a year earlier on an improved grain harvest and intensified state efforts, a report said on Feb. 26.

— The North's per-capita GDP for last year is estimated at US\$720, up 4.7 percent from \$688 a year earlier, Hyundai Research Institute said in the report based on the socialist country's infant mortality rate and grain production.

— The North's 2011 per-capita GDP amounts to a mere 3 percent of that for archrival South Korea.



— “The increase stemmed from better grain crops,” the think tank said. “Pyongyang also stepped up its efforts to meet its goal of building a strong and prosperous nation in 2012.”

### **N. Koreans’ Life Expectancy Ranks 151st in World: CIA Data**

<Yonhap News from SEOUL/ March 2, 2012>

— The average North Korean can expect to live 69.2 years, placing the nation 151st in the world in terms of life expectancy, recent U.S. government data showed.

— The typical North Korean male born this year is expected to live 65.34 years, while the average female can expect to live 73.24 years, according to the data posted on the online World Factbook of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The information was last updated on Feb. 8.

— The figures were a slight improvement from last year, when the CIA expected the average North Korean to live 68.9 years. Males were expected to live 65 years, while females were expected live 72.9 years. Life expectancy is a measure of the average life span of a baby born this year.

— By ranking, North Korea came in 151st among the 221 countries for which data was available, down two notches from last year. In similar findings earlier this month, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific projected the life span of a typical North Korean male at 66 years, and that of the average female at 72 years.

### **Satellite Photos Show N. Korea’s Progress in Nuke Reactor Construction**

<Yonhap News from WASHINGTON/ March 6, 2012>

— North Korea has made progress in the construction of a light-water reactor at its key nuclear complex north of Pyongyang but it seems not to be operational yet, according to satellite images released on March 6.

— The Feb. 3 images of the Yongbyon nuclear site show that the reactor’s turbine building appears externally complete, according to the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), a Washington-based think tank.

— The commercial satellite images were taken less than a month before North Korea agreed with the United States to freeze its uranium-enrichment activities at Yongbyon in return for food aid.

— An earlier satellite image from Sept. 20 of the light-water reactor construction site showed the turbine building was still under construction.

### **50 North Korean Orphans Defected to China in Late February**

<Yonhap News from SEOUL/ March 8, 2012>

— A South Korean lawmaker revealed on March 8 that a group of 50 North Korean orphans defected from their impoverished homeland late February, while it is not known whether they have been caught by Chinese authorities.

— Rep. Park Sun-young of the conservative minor Liberty Forward Party said 50 children

fled from an orphanage in the northern Ryanggang Province in late February, adding she has been holding the information acquired from sources in China due to their safety.

— “Fortunately, I haven’t heard that they were caught (by Chinese authorities),” Park told Yonhap by phone.

### **RSF Labels North Korea as Country Hostile to Internet**

<Yonhap News from SEOUL/ March 13, 2012>

— Reporters Without Borders (RSF), an international non-profit organization for press freedom, designated North Korea as a country hostile to the Internet, the Voice of America said on March 13.

— In its annual report “Enemies of the Internet” released on March 12, RSF said the designation was warranted by the North’s gagging of its press and reporting the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il two days after he died of a heart attack.

— The non-profit organization said North Korea uses the Internet to wage its propaganda campaign and operates a hacker squad in order to disable other countries’ Web sites and spy on other countries.

### **North Korean TV News Revamped under New Leader Kim Jong-un**

<Yonhap News from SEOUL/ March 13, 2012>

— North Korea’s state television has drastically changed the appearance of its news programs, using a brighter background color and plenty of captions and graphics, a move that could be linked to new leader Kim Jong-un’s personal interest in the visual arts, analysts in Seoul said on March 13.

— New features have appeared throughout the main news bulletin at 8 p.m., starting with a change in background color on March 10 from brown to light blue, according to Yonhap News Agency’s monitoring of the North’s official Korean Central Broadcasting Station.

— Young female news anchors in their late 20s or early 30s now present the news more often, replacing the older women and men who used to dominate the program.

### **About 130 Senior North Korean Officials Visit Border Village**

<Yonhap News from SEOUL/ March 14, 2012>

— About 130 senior North Korean officials visited the border village of Panmunjom in early March as the socialist country ratcheted up militaristic rhetoric against South Korea, a South Korean military official said on March 14.

— The trips came days after their new leader Kim Jong-un placed his troops in Panmunjom on alert during his surprise inspection trip to the village straddling the heavily armed inter-Korean border on March 3.

— Kim, who took over the communist country following the December death of his father Kim Jong-il, has made frequent trips to military units whose support is seen as key to his consolidation of power.

## PEOPLE

**Kim Jong-un** (김정은) : Supreme Commander of the (North) Korean People's Army (KPA) and Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) of the Workers' Party of (North) Korea (WPK)

- Feb. 16 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un sent copies of his autograph to the people of Manpho City, Jagang Province, in reply to a letter they had sent after moving to new houses.
- 16 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un attended a meeting of the servicepersons of the KPA held at the Kumsusan Memorial Palace in Pyongyang to pledge loyalty to him.
- 16 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un visited the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun to pay respects to his late father Kim Jong-il who lies in state in the palace, along with Kim Yong-nam, Choe Yong-rim, Ri Yong-ho and Kim Kyong-hui among others.
- 16 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un watched a performance, called "We will be loyal down through generations," staged at the Pyongyang Indoor Stadium, along with Kim Yong-nam, Choe Yong-rim and Ri Yong-ho.
- 17 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un enjoyed a concert, called "The hearts following the Sun," given by the Unhasu Orchestra, along with Choe Yong-rim, Jang Song-thaek, Kim Kyong-hui and Ri Yong-ho among others.
- 18 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un received a gift from the board director of a Chinese food company from Tangshan City, Hebei Province.
- 21 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un visited the KPA unit No. 842, along with General Pak Jae-gyong and Lieutenant General Ri Tu-song.
- 23 sends an autograph to recognize the deed of Ri Chang-son, head of a sub-work team, at the Ohyon Cooperative Farm, Yonan County, South Hwanghae Province.
- 24 enjoys a concert, called "The Hearts Following the Sun," commemorating the Day of the Shining Star given by the Unhasu Orchestra.
- 24 sends a wreath to the bier of So Man-sul, late chairman of the Central Standing Committee of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan.
- 25 The KCNA says that Kim Jong-un inspected units under the Command of the KPA 4th Corps stationed in the southwestern sector of the front, accompanied by KPA Generals Kim Myong-guk, Kim Won-hong, Pak Jae-gyong and Hwang Pyong-so.
- March 2 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un visited the Strategic Rocket Force Command of the KPA, accompanied by Vice Marshal Ri Yong-ho.
- 3 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un visited the border village of Panmunjom, along with Generals Pak Jae-gyong and Kim Yong-chol.
- 6 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un sent a congratulatory message to Russian President-elect Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin.
- 8 attends a concert of the Unhasu Orchestra entitled "Women Are Flowers" on International Women's Day.
- 10 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un visited a military unit on Cho Islet on the west coast of North Korea and the KPA Navy Unit No. 123.

- March 14 The KCNA says Kim Jong-un watched a combined strike drill of the North's armed forces.
- 15 The KCNA says that he inspected live fire military maneuvers by the country's army, navy and force.

**Kim Yong-nam** (김영남) : President of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) Presidium

- Feb. 24 sends a message of greeting to Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, emir of Kuwait, and Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, successor to the emir of Kuwait, on the occasion of the 51st anniversary of its independence and the 21st anniversary of its liberation.
- 25 sends a congratulatory message to Mohammed Waheed Hassan upon his assumption of office as Maldivian president.
- 28 sends a message to President of Cote d'Ivoire Alassane Ouattara to congratulate him on the successful conclusion of the 40th summit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and his election as chairman of ECOWAS.
- 28 sends a message to Abd Rabbuh Mansur al-Hadi to congratulate him on his election as president of Yemen.
- March 12 receives credentials from Josef Muellner, new Austrian ambassador to North Korea, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall in Pyongyang.

**Choe Yong-rim** (최영림) : Premier

- Feb. 19 ends his two-day visit to Nos. 1 and 2 plants of Huichon power station recently built in Jagang Province bordering China.
- 24 learns about the work at the Anju Area Coal Mining Complex, located in South Phyongan Province.
- 24 sends a message of greeting to Prime Minister of Kuwait Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on the occasion of the 51st anniversary of its independence and the 21st anniversary of its liberation.
- March 1 visits some stations and repairing bases of Pyongyang Metro.
- 15 visits the Musan Mining Complex and Puryong Ferroalloy Plant located in North Hamgyong Province.

**Yang Hyong-sop** (양형섭) : Vice President of the SPA Presidium

- Feb. 24 meets and has a talk with the visiting delegation of Koreans living in Japan for commemorating the Day of the Shining Star in a compatriotic atmosphere at the Mansudae Assembly Hall in Pyongyang.
- 27 meets and has a talk with Kiattisak Keobanhthith, new Lao ambassador to North Korea who paid a courtesy call on him, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.

**Pak Ui-chun** (박의춘) : Foreign Minister

- Feb. 8 meets with Latif Gandilov, ambassador of Azerbaijan to North Korea.
- March 14 meets with new Austrian Ambassador to North Korea Josef Muellner, who paid a cour-

tesy call on him.

**So Man-sul** (서만술) : Former Chairman of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan.  
Feb. 19 dies of a heart failure at the age of 84.

## CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW

### (Local Events)

- Feb. 16 The KCNA says events were held across North Korea on the 70th birth anniversary of the late Kim Jong-il.
- 16 A banquet is held at the People's Palace of Culture in Pyongyang to mark the 70th birthday of the late Kim Jong-il, with the participation of Kim Yong-nam, Choe Yong-rim and Ri Yong-ho in attendance.
- 17 A student arts group stages a performance at the Mangyongdae Schoolchildren's Palace in Pyongyang to mark the birth anniversary of the late Kim Jong-il.
- 18 A reception is hosted by the WPK Central Committee and the National Defense Commission (NDC) at the Mokran House in Pyongyang to mark the 70th birthday of the late Kim Jong-il, with the participation of Kim Yong-nam, Choe Yong-rim and Ri Yong-ho among others.
- 18 North Korea awards the title of North Korea Labor Hero to Ri Song-il, who is an artist of the mural and jewel painting group at the Art Studio of the KPA, for his contribution to portraying the late Kim Jong-il.
- 18 The Politburo of the WPK Central Committee decides to convene the party conference in mid-April.
- 19 The KCNA says the North Korean women's team won the cup at the 2012 Four-nation Women's Soccer Invitation.
- 20 The KCNA says a performance, entitled "We will be loyal down through generations," is being staged at the Pyongyang Indoor Stadium to mark the birthday of the late Kim Jong-il.
- 21 The 16th Kimjongilia (a hybrid flower named after the late Kim Jong-il) Festival is closed at the Kimilsungia-Kimjongilia Exhibition after a weeklong run starting on Feb. 14.
- 21 The Pothong River Aquatic Products Shop opens on the banks of the River Pothong in Pyongyang, with Ryang Man-gil, chairman of the Pyongyang City People's Committee in attendance.
- 24 Pak Thae-son, a former miner at Kumgol Mine of the Komdok Mining Complex, is given the title of hero. He was also honored with a gold star medal and Order of National Flag First Class.
- 26 The KCNA says that a ceremony awarding state commendation to officials and work-

- ers in the field of public service took place at the People's Palace of Culture.
- Feb. 26 The KCNA says that An Kum-ae won a gold medal at the 2012 Women's Judo World Cup held in Warsaw, Poland.
- 27 The KCNA says Sol Kyong bagged a gold medal in the 70 kg-category at the 2012 Women's Judo World Cup held in Warsaw on Feb. 25 and 26.
- 27 The KCNA says that a research group of the Central Experimental Analytical Institute of the State Academy of Sciences developed a new combustion additive which helps raise the effectiveness of combustion of all sorts of coal including high and low-caloric coal.
- 28 The sports contest for the Mount Paektu Prize closes with due ceremony at the Basketball Gymnasium in Chongchun Street in Pyongyang.
- 28 The KCNA says that the Central Mining Research Institute of the DPRK (North Korea) has made a new additive to improve the quality of lubricants.
- 29 The KCNA says a *Rodong Sinmun* editorial calls upon the people to unite closely around Kim Jong-un and greet the forthcoming conference of the North's Workers' Party with a high degree of political enthusiasm and labor achievements.
- March 1 The KCNA says the number of fruit farms is increasing in North Korea.
- 1 North Korean players return home after participating in the 2012 Women's Judo World Cup held in Warsaw, Poland.
- 2 The KCNA says meetings took place in various parts of North Korea to mark the Tree-Planting Day.
- 3 The Policy Department of the National Defence Commission (NDC) holds a press conference at the People's Palace of Culture to slam the defamation of the North's leadership by a South Korean military unit.
- 4 Servicepersons and people in Pyongyang gather at Kim Il-sung Square to vow to wage a "sacred war" against South Korea.
- 5 Servicepersons and people in South Phyongan and South Hamgyong Provinces hold rallies to vow to wage a merciless "sacred war" against South Korea over defamation of its leadership by a South Korean military unit.
- 5 Youths and students hold a rally in Pyongyang to pledge to join or rejoin the KPA for a "sacred war" against South Korea.
- 6 Servicepersons and people in North Phyongan and Kangwon provinces hold rallies to vow to wage a "sacred war" against South Korea.
- 7 Servicepersons and people in Jagang province and Rason city hold rallies to pledge to stage a sacred war against South Korea.
- 7 A meeting of workers and members of the General Federation of Trade Unions of (North) Korea takes place to vow to wage a sacred war against South Korea.
- 8 A national meeting is held at the People's Palace of Culture to mark the 102nd anniversary of International Women's Day.
- 10 An exhibition of fine arts pieces presented by amateur artists opens in Pyongyang as part of the National Art Festival to mark the 100th birthday of North Korean founder Kim Il-sung, which falls on April 15.

March 12 The KCNA says more meetings took place in various cities and provinces of North Korea in which servicepersons and civilians vowed to wage a “sacred war” against South Korea over defamation of its leadership by a South Korean military unit.

**(Foreign Events)**

Feb. 16 The KCNA says the North Korean Embassy in Beijing gave a reception on Feb. 13 for the 70th birth anniversary of the late Kim Jong-il.

16 A delegation of the North Korea-Vietnam Friendship Association leaves Pyongyang for Vietnam to attend commemorations of the 100th birthday of the late North Korean founder Kim Il-sung and the 70th birthday of the late Kim Jong-il.

17 North Korean women’s team defeats Mexico 1-0 in a match at the 2012 Four-nation Women’s Soccer Invitation held in China.

17 Hyon Hak-bong, North Korean ambassador to Britain, presents his credentials to British Queen Elizabeth II.

18 Figure skaters from Russia, China, Bulgaria, France and Finland who took part in the 21st Mount Paektu Prize International Figure Skating Festival leave Pyongyang.

21 A delegation led by Kim Kye-gwan, first-vice minister of Foreign Affairs, leaves Pyongyang to attend North Korea-U.S. high-level talks to be held in Beijing.

24 The 45th meeting of the DPRK-China Science and Technology Cooperation Committee is held in Beijing.

27 Kim Kye-gwan, first-vice minister of the foreign ministry, returns home after attending the DPRK-U.S. high-level talks in Beijing.

27 A spokesman for the foreign ministry in a statement denounces the U.S. and South Korea for starting the Key Resolve and Foal Eagle joint military exercises.

28 South Korean music director Chung Myung-whun arrives in Pyongyang for a rehearsal of a planned joint performance in Paris by North Korean and French orchestras.

29 Foreign Minister Pak Ui-chun speaks with new Laotian Ambassador to North Korea Kiettisak Keobanhthit, who paid a courtesy call to him.

March 1 A delegation of the North Korea-Vietnam Friendship Association returns home after taking part in the commemorations in Vietnam on the 100th birthday of North Korea’s founder Kim Il-sung and the 70th birthday of the late Kim Jong-il.

1 Renowned South Korean conductor Chung Myung-whun, the director of the Seoul metropolitan orchestra, leaves Pyongyang, winding up his three-day visit to North Korea.

2 A spokesman for the Supreme Command of the KPA releases a statement threatening to launch a “sacred war” against South Korea over defamation of its leadership by a South Korean military unit.

3 The KCNA says 19 players have qualified for the London Olympic Games.

4 A spokesman for the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of (North) Korea issues a statement denouncing defamation of its leadership by a South Korean military unit.

9 The Unhasu Orchestra led by Kwon Hyok-bong, advisor to the (North) Korean Traditional Music Institute, leaves Pyongyang for France to perform with the Radio

- Philharmonic Orchestra of France.
- March 9 The International Seminar on Forest and Landscape Restoration closes in Pyongyang after a three-day run with the participation of delegates from China, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, the U.S. and Canada.
- 10 A delegation of the KCNA headed by its first-vice director general Kim Chang-kwang, leaves Pyongyang to take part in the opening ceremony of a joint photo exhibition in the U.S. to commemorate the 100th birthday of Kim Il-sung.
- 11 The Unhasu Orchestra led by Kwon Hyok-bong, advisor to the (North) Korean Traditional Music Institute, arrives in Paris.
- 13 A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry of North Korea denounces South Korea for referring the issue of North Korean defectors to the international community at the United Nations Human Rights Council.
- 15 The KCNA says the International Kim Il-sung Prize Council on Jan. 15 decided to award the prize to Cambodian King Norodom Sihanouk on the centenary of the birth of Kim Il-sung.

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Publisher : Park Jung-chan

Managing Editor : Chang Yoon-joo

Editor : Kwak Seung-ji

Staff Writers : Lee Kwang-ho, Nam Kwang-sik

Copyreaders : Adam Lipper, Elaine Ayo, Tracie Barrett, Kimberly Campbell

Contributors : Rachel Lee, Kim You Jin

Subscription inquiries and address changes should be mailed to : The Editor, **VANTAGE POINT**

**YONHAP NEWS AGENCY**, 67 Center One Bldg. Suha-dong, Jung-gu, Seoul, 100-210, Korea

P.O. Box Kwanghwamoon 1039, Korea Tel : 82-2-398-3519 Fax : 82-2-398-3463

Internet Address : <http://www.yna.co.kr>

E-mail Address : [vpnk@yna.co.kr](mailto:vpnk@yna.co.kr)

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