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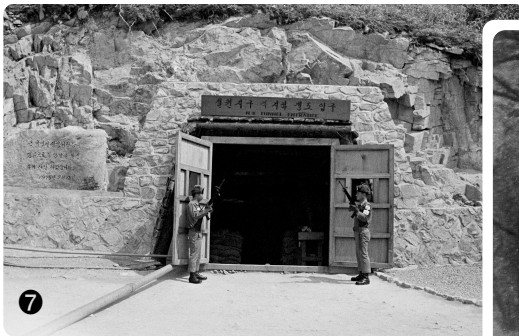
COVER PHOTO : Barbed-wire fence along the southern boundary of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) stretches through the west-central area bisecting South and North Korea in this photo taken in July 2013. South Korean President Park Geun-hye has proposed an idea to build an international peace park inside the DMZ to transform the heavily armed border area into a place of peace and trust. (Yonhap Photo)

Ceremonies Marking the Korean War Armistice Agreement



- ❶ S. Korean President Park delivers a speech at a ceremony in Seoul on July 27.
- ❷ U.S. President Barack Obama (left) participates in a ceremony in Washington on July 27.
- ❸ Representatives from the Korean War-joined nations visit the U.N. Cemetery in Busan on July 28.
- ❹ A group of foreign veterans who participated in the Korean War and their family members look around a Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission meeting room at Panmunjom on July 29.

North Korea's Violations of Armistice Agreement



- USS Pueblo seajacked by North Korea in 1968 ⑤
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DMZ PEACE PARK: FROM ARMISTICE TO PEACE

“I hope to work toward an international park inside the DMZ. It will be a park that sends a message of peace to all of humanity,” President Park said.

■ By Lee Kwang-ho

The fratricidal Korean War ceased 60 years ago, but the dark shadow of the war still lingers over the divided Korean Peninsula. The Armistice Agreement of July 27, 1953 barely changed the division drawn across the peninsula along the 38th parallel shortly after Korea’s liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945. After the three-year war, the peninsula was split into two sides along the heavily-fortified Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

For the past 60 years, South and North Korea have always been on the frontline of a severe ideological confrontation, fighting each other in the border areas, including the maritime border, largely due to the North’s persistent provocations. Permanent peace on the peninsula is the crucial topic as well as the dream for the entire Korean people. But Cold War strategies have intensified antagonism between the South and the North by deepening mutual distrust.

Creation of Peace Park

In this stark reality, a symbolic project is emerging that may change the whole landscape of the buffer zone. The creation of a peace park in the DMZ area is an idea South Korean President Park Geun-hye suggested during her address to the joint session of the U.S. Congress on May 9. The president called the peace park “a message of peace to all humanity.”

President Park formally proposed to North Korea joint development

of a peace park in the heavily-fortified border in a Liberation Day address on Aug. 15 marking the end of Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. Weeks earlier, she emphasized her vision to build an international peace park inside the DMZ to turn the heavily armed border area guarded by armed forces of the two Koreas into a place of "peace and trust." She made the remark on July 27 at a ceremony in Seoul commemorating the 60th anniversary of the signing of the armistice that ended the Korean War.

In her address to the U.S. Congress, Park said the last Cold War frontier "must live up to its name – a zone that strengthens peace, not undermines it," adding that she hoped to work toward an international park inside the fortified strip of land.

President Park has her own North Korea policy dubbed "trustpolitik," which consists of a trust-building process on the Korean peninsula, a trust-building process in Northeast Asia and an international peace park in the DMZ. The idea evolved from her pledge made during last year's presidential campaign to promote tourism in the areas near the DMZ by forging an ecological conservation belt.

She added more political touches to the original proposal to make it an international project to be pursued in parallel with her trust-building process, also dubbed the Korean Peninsula Trust Process.

"Sixty years ago, a stretch of earth bisecting the Korean Peninsula was cleared of arms. Today, that DMZ, drawn to prevent armed collision, is the most militarized place on the planet," she told the U.S. Congress. "And the standoff around the



South Korean President Park Geun-hye (center) receives applause from U.S. Vice President Joe Biden (left) and U.S. House Speaker John Boehner (right) while delivering an address during a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress in Washington on May 8. (EPA-Yonhap Photo)

DMZ has the potential to endanger global peace. We must defuse that danger. Not just South and North Korea. The world must also get involved."

"It is with this vision in mind that I hope to work toward an international park inside the DMZ. It will be a park that sends a message of peace to all of humanity. This could be pursued in parallel with my trust-building process. There, I believe we can start to grow peace – to grow trust. It would be a zone of peace bringing together not just Koreans separated by a military line, but also the citizens of the

world.”

The DMZ is a 248-kilometer strip of rugged no-man’s land stretching from coast to coast on the Korean Peninsula, serving as a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War that ended in an Armistice Agreement instead of a peace treaty, keeping the two countries still technically at war. It runs from seashore to seashore, through river valleys and across mountains. The DMZ is a buffer zone, stretching two kilometers north and south and ranging four kilometers in width.

Well-preserved Habitats

The natural isolation in the 4-kilometer-wide buffer zone has created an involuntary park that is recognized as one of the well-preserved temperate habitats in the world and is home to 67 endangered species. It is also nature’s repository and home to approximately 2,716 kinds of wild animals and plants.

Though generally calm, the DMZ has been the scene of much saber-rattling and several small skirmishes between the two Koreas over the past several decades. The armistice restricted fortification within the buffer zone, limiting defenses to patrols and observation posts without heavy weapons.

Advocates of reconciliation with Pyongyang welcomed Park’s peace initiative, but they stressed that efforts are first needed to resolve the prolonged impasse over inter-Korean relations. For years, the two Koreas had jointly operated such projects as the Kaesong industrial zone and Mount Kumgang tours in North Korea. But

the Kaesong Industrial Complex has fallen victim to the escalating stand-off in recent months, and the Mount Kumgang tour program was shut down in 2008 after a South Korean tourist was shot to death by a North Korean guard.

Park’s idea for the international peace park along the DMZ drew some public interest initially, but it has withered due to ensuing indifference. Many people question if North Korea would participate in the peace park project at a time when the relations between the two Koreas are at their lowest level in several years.

Nevertheless, the Seoul government is preparing the project in an aggressive manner. Following Park’s remark on the peace park, Seoul’s unification ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, announced a plan to study measures to build the park in conjunction with other related government agencies as part of efforts to allay inter-Korean tensions under Park’s trust-building process.

The ministry also said it will seek cooperation from the United Nations Command (UNC) in pursuing the plan, because the DMZ is under the jurisdiction of Seoul and the UNC, which supervises the Armistice Agreement. To be precise, the DMZ is under the jurisdiction of Seoul, Pyongyang and the UNC that supervised the 1953 Armistice Agreement.

Although a detailed plan has yet to be made, the Seoul government, as a first step, plans to establish a peace park in a specific zone. In the long term, however, the government plans to create two or three more parks within the DMZ together with neighboring countries and the United

Nations. The South Korean government will persuade North Korea to participate in the project under the assistance from the United Nations and China, the closest ally of North Korea.

Together with the park, the government has a plan to create a “peace belt” along the DMZ by removing landmines in the whole DMZ area. It is estimated that more than one million landmines are planted along the area. An official said the government will create the park to eradicate the heavily-fortified image of both South and North Korea.

Unique Advantages

If the North does not respond favorably, the Seoul government would consider fostering its own park at the southern part of the DMZ first. The venue of the park has yet to be designated, but it will be selected from three regions of the country’s eastern, central and western areas.

Each area has its own unique advantages. For example, the western area of the DMZ holds an appeal because of its easy access from Seoul and the capital area, while the central part of the DMZ has the advantage of being seated at the center of the peninsula. The eastern part is famed for its natural scenery.

But Seoul’s proposed DMZ peace park faces a tough road ahead. The widespread view is that it will be difficult to accomplish this goal any time soon because of heightened tensions with the socialist nation, which has aggressively pursued missile and nuclear programs under young leader Kim Jong-un. Previous attempts by

governments to bring symbols of peace into the no-man’s land, fortified with heavy arms and strewn with land mines, ended in smoke.

Analysts and officials generally agree it will be hard to convince Pyongyang’s military forces stationed near the spot to disarm. “It will be hard to disarm the security-intensive spot, which is heavily surrounded by artillery and quick-reaction forces that are trained to hunt down infiltrators,” a military official in Seoul said.

Back in the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations, North Korea had been uninterested in South Korea’s proposal to create an ecological peace park. Though former President Roh said that the park could generate large revenues if the two Koreas cooperate by withdrawing heavy weapons and protecting natural resources – such as building a peace ecological park in the DMZ – the late North Korean leader Kim Jong-il did not respond to the offer, according to the records of the 2007 inter-Korean summit.

Creating a world peace park in the DMZ bordering the two Koreas requires Pyongyang’s consent, experts said. Even if the South wants to create a park in the zone on its side, and not the area that belongs to the North, it should still consult with the North.

It is because the North is a stakeholder of the Military Armistice Commission, which manages the DMZ under the Armistice Treaty. Pyongyang took a negative stance when President Park announced her initiative to build a world peace park in the DMZ in early May.

In a reflection of the views held by the

Pyongyang leadership, an Internet website serving as the North's propaganda tool denounced the proposal as rash and unacceptable. It said the DMZ is a symbol of national hatred and disgrace, which should be removed as soon as possible.

"Making flower gardens and drawing foreign visitors to the symbol of hatred is aimed at advertising Korean people's tragedy," the website Uriminzokkiri said in a commentary, undermining "the war-monger's absurd proposal."

Pyongyang's Stance

Despite a number of obstacles, the unification ministry in Seoul is supportive of the move, saying that the United Nations and the United States are also in favor. "The U.N. and U.S. said they will cooperate in pursuing the plan," said a unification ministry official. "Talks for creating the DMZ peace park will soon take place on a regular basis between Seoul, Washington and the international body."

Reportedly, Park exchanged views on the plan with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and U.S. President Barack Obama during her trip to the United States in May. Park is known to have discussed the idea with the U.N. chief and U.S. officials during her visit to New York and Washington, drawing favorable responses from them.

Park's aides say her will to push through the initiative is strong, and in-depth reviews have been underway on preparatory work. North Korea's response will hold the key to realizing the idea, which Park seems to be seeking as a means to break through the frozen inter-Korean ties.

Moreover, a news report said that China also gave a positive response to the peace park. A source said that during her trip to China in June, President Park disclosed the DMZ park concept to Chinese President Xi Jinping, asking him to deliver Seoul's wish to construct the park. Other sources in Seoul said that Park obtained the understanding from the Beijing authorities on the idea, whereas the Beijing side did not reject the idea.

Other sources recently said that despite Pyongyang's outwardly negative stance on the peace park, Pyongyang is quite interested in developing the DMZ as a tourist destination. "North Korea has been interested in developing a DMZ park since the early 2000s," a key North Korea source said. "It may not be able to respond to the offer immediately, because resuming the business in the Kaesong Industrial Complex is more urgent. Once the issue is addressed, however, the North might become more aggressive in developing the DMZ."

A source from the South Korean ruling party said, "I heard that North Korea proposed a project to develop an ecological park in the DMZ to a South Korean company early this year. The North also thinks it could be a good opportunity to attract foreign capital."

The source also said North Korea showed interest when Ted Turner, CNN founder and head of the Turner Foundation, proposed the ecological protection and peaceful uses of the DMZ to North Korean high-ranking officials during his visit to the North in 2005.

Sources say that in much of the same

way that they initially reacted to the Kaesong Industrial Complex project, the North Korean military is against touching the DMZ. The North Korean cabinet, which is interested in economic development and attracting foreign capital, is highly likely to remain at loggerheads over the proposed world peace park. Given such circumstances, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's decision is critical, and aggressive persuading from Beijing and the U.N. is desperately needed.

Easing Tensions, Bringing Peace

Most recently, a senior North Korean official stressed that Seoul's plan to build a peace park in the DMZ will be dependent on the success of an inter-Korean factory park in Kaesong, a businessman with close ties to Pyongyang said on Aug. 11.

In a meeting with reporters after his recent 11-day trip to the North, Park Sang-kwon, the honorary chairman of Pyeonghwa Motors Corp., said Kim Yang-gon, Pyongyang's point man on cross-border relations, told him that the peace park and Kaesong Industrial Park issues are interconnected.

"Kim made it clear that if the Kaesong complex does well, so will other plans to develop the DMZ," Park said. Kim pointed out that Kaesong is effectively located along the demarcation line and argued that with the future of the industrial complex in doubt it is impossible to talk about other projects, according to Park.

The most important tool to capture North Korea's interest in the world peace park project is money. If the park is devel-

oped, North Korea will have infrastructure and facilities in the northern side of the DMZ and foreign capital will flow in, which will surely help North Korea's economy. In addition, the North and the South could split the revenue from the park.

On the security front, however, it could be a double-edged sword because the world peace park could not only act as a safety valve for North Korea but could also trigger a wave of reform and openness at the same time. The North seems to be against the initiative, which involves the United Nations mentioning the "intervention of foreigners," just as it opposed the globalization of the Kaesong Industrial Complex because of the same reason.

If the South creates a park in the DMZ with the U.N., the risk of North Korea can be reduced. But some critics argue that cash flows to the North from the tourist project could indirectly finance its nuclear programs. "The world peace park initiative has more meaning in easing tensions and bringing peace to the Korean Peninsula than inter-Korean economic cooperation," said a government source.

While Pyongyang might prefer working with a private South Korean company as it did for the Kaesong Industrial Complex and the Mount Kumgang projects, the Park Geun-hye administration is firm in its stance that it will seek a project directly involved with the two governments. A South Korean high-ranking official said, "As the world peace park is about penetrating the militarized zone between the two countries in a technical state of war, it is not a matter that the private sector can handle." (Yonhap News)

CONSISTENT POSITION IN INTER-KOREAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Park said that the two Koreas should work out a deal in line with “common sense and international standards” about normalizing the joint complex.

■ By Kim Tae-shik

South and North Korea agreed on Aug. 14 to reopen their shuttered joint factory park after Pyongyang promised not to shut it down again “under any circumstances.” The two Koreas also agreed in their seventh round of talks to “internationalize” the Kaesong Industrial Complex in the North’s border city of the same name by hosting foreign investors, a joint statement said.

The two sides held in vain six rounds of working-level talks in July to discuss the normalization of the complex which has remained shut down since early April following the North’s unilateral pullout of its workers in protest against South Korea’s “insults against the dignity of its leadership” and military drills with U.S. forces. South Korea forwarded a proposal for “final talks” to the North on July 29.

Consistent and Repeated Demands

North Korea had not shown a response to the South’s proposal for 10 days before it sent a proposal on Aug. 7 to meet the South Korean delegates at the Kaesong complex on Aug. 14, which the South promptly accepted.

The Ministry of Unification in Seoul said that the North’s offer to hold working-level talks on Aug. 14, which would be the seventh round following the failure of the previous six, can be viewed in a positive light. “Seoul views the latest talks proposal as the North responding to repeated calls for dialogue from Seoul,” ministry spokesman Kim Hyung-suk said. “We hope the North will engage in dialogue in an earnest manner that can contribute to the constructive growth of the

South and North Korean chief delegates exchange agreed documents at the North's border city of Kaesong on Aug. 14 after they reached a five-point agreement at the seventh round of negotiations to resume an inter-Korean joint complex. (Yonhap Photo)



complex,” he said.

After the sixth talks ended without progress, North Korea threatened to re-position its military at the factory park in its border city of Kaesong. The zone was opened in 2004 after North Korea had relocated its military units stationed there.

South Korea consistently maintained that the unilateral shutdown of the joint park should not happen again and demanded that North Korea provide safeguards to prevent another recurrence through the six rounds of talks. The South also repeatedly called on the North to settle problems with dialogue in line with “common sense and international standards.”

On April 9, a day after North Korea proclaimed temporary suspension of the complex, South Korean President Park Geun-hye said, “It is very disappointing that North Korea abruptly said yesterday that it will temporarily suspend the operations of the Kaesong Industrial Complex that has been operating without any problems.”

“How long should we see this endless vicious cycle of (North Korea) creating crises before reaching compromise in exchange for aid and again creating crises before compromise and aid?” she said, hinting that she would sternly deal with the North’s hackneyed pattern of bad behavior.

“If North Korea breaches international regulations and promises like this, there will be no countries or companies that would make investments in North Korea,” Park said. “North Korea should halt its wrong behavior and make the right choice for the sake of the entire future of the Korean people.”

Since then South Korea repeatedly called for the North to discuss the reopening of the complex at working-level talks and held the talks six times in July.

On April 22, Park urged Pyongyang to honor an inter-Korean agreement and re-start oper-

ations at the complex. She stressed that such a basic promise must be kept to build trust between the two sides based on which they can discuss new promises.

“This is not only a promise to the Republic of Korea, but it is also an issue of trust with the entire world,” she said. “If a promise is broken out of the blue, who will come and make a promise (with North Korea)?” The Republic of Korea is the official title of South Korea.

South Korea on May 14 extended an offer for working-level talks to North Korea on the return of industrial production materials and finished goods from the inter-Korean industrial complex after President Park Geun-hye instructed the unification minister to propose talks with North Korea in order to bring back South Korean materials and finished goods. North Korea, however, rejected the offer.

Park said on July 8 that South and North Korea should work out a deal in line with “common sense and international standards” about normalizing the suspended joint industrial complex in the communist nation.

The two Koreas resumed talks for the fifth round on July 22 and President Park said she hoped the two Koreas would work out a “sustainable” agreement on the joint complex. “Though these working-level talks are focused on normalizing the Kaesong complex, we have to keep in mind that they will serve as an important basis for principles and frameworks for reconfiguring new relations between the South and the North,” she said.

The joint project was a key outcome of the first-ever inter-Korean summit in 2000. The complex produced clothes, utensils, watches and other labor-intensive goods through the combination of South Korean capital and technology with cheap North Korean labor.

Common Sense and International Standards

The four-month suspension has led to 450 billion won (US\$401 million) in damages to the invested assets of the 123 South Korean companies at Kaesong and 300 billion won in operating losses, among other damages, according to the ministry. Other estimates claim the halt in operations has resulted in losses exceeding 1.05 trillion won (US\$940 million) for the 123 South Korean companies.

As Pyongyang remained silent regarding Seoul’s call for final talks for a week, the government hinted that it could take some resolute and grave decisions that could lead to a complete closure of the complex.

On July 28, Seoul’s unification minister Ryoo Kihl-jae said if the North fails to give a clear response on the safeguard issue, Seoul will be left with no other choice but to make a “grave” decision.

The government later announced a decision to provide 280.9 billion won (US\$250.9 million) in insurance payment to the companies with factories and assets in the Kaesong complex. It said five companies are in the process of receiving the insurance money with others waiting to see the outcome of the latest talks. A total of 123 South Korean companies were operating factories in Kaesong hiring some 53,000 North Korean workers before North Korea

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pulled out its laborers from the park on the pretext of South Korea’s political and military provocations.

Once payment is made, the government can exercise ownership of assets in Kaesong that many here believe can give it more leeway to close the park if it feels no progress is likely, observers said.

Other observers said that headway is critical at the talks because South Korea and the United States will launch the joint Ulchi Freedom Guardian (UGF) military exercise on Aug. 19. The drill that runs through Aug. 30 is expected to halt cross-border talks since Pyongyang sees such maneuvers as a dress rehearsal for invasion.

Until the sixth round of talks, the two sides had made little headway to reopen the factory park due to preconditions for resuming operations there. Seoul had steadfastly demanded safeguards to prevent a recurrence of a unilateral shutdown while Pyongyang had insisted resumption and skirted blame for the current stoppage.

In the seventh talks, South Korean delegates once again stressed the importance of securing a guarantee from the North that it will not close the factory park in the future, while explaining the need for the creation of a joint management committee and the need to “internationalize” Kaesong, a South Korean official said. He pointed out such measures are critical for the “progressive growth” of the complex that first started producing goods in late 2004.

Meanwhile, Unification Minister Ryoo said on Aug. 14 that the inter-Korean standoff over the Kaesong complex may serve as an opportunity to build trust between the two Koreas, the trademark policy of President Park to ease tension on the Korean Peninsula, and secure peace and stability.

“North Korea caused the trouble that should have not occurred. But I think the two Koreas should take the very incident as a chance to build trust. I am quite confident that we are doing well, and it will definitely serve as such a desirable chance,” Ryoo said during a speech to a forum in Seoul. (Yonhap News)

IMPLICATION OF REVIEW OF KOREAN WAR BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Washington and Beijing made a new approach to the war and its armistice while holding gala functions to mark the 60th armistice anniversary.

■ By Oh Seung Yul, *Dean of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies Graduate School of International and Area Studies in Seoul, Korea*

The two Koreas and the U.S. held gala functions respectively on and around July 27 this year to mark the day 60 years ago when there came a halt to the 1950-53 Korean War under an armistice. The three-year war was triggered by the invading North Korean troops to South Korea in the early morning of June 25, 1950.

South Korea this year held a ceremony for the first time to commemorate the day as the “U.N. Forces Participation Day,” with South Korean President Park Geun-hye attending. In the United States, a function was held in Washington, D.C. to mark the day with an unusual attendance by an incumbent president, Barack Obama.

New Approach to Korean War

Meanwhile, North Korea demonstrated its military might in a military parade marking the 60th anniversary, which the socialist country celebrates as “Victory Day” in what it calls the “Fatherland Liberation War,” with Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao alongside North Korea’s young leader Kim Jong-un.

What was noteworthy is that Seoul, Washington and Beijing made a new approach to the war and its armistice while holding gala functions to mark the 60th armistice anniversary.

The North has continued to mark the day as a day to celebrate, in stark contrast to South Korea, which commemorates the day as one to

regard in a somber manner as the two Koreas remain divided. This is the very reason why the South has commemorated the armistice day in a calmer manner in the past. The South Korean government invited delegates from 27 countries to its large-scale function, undoubtedly in an expression of its confidence in dealing with a still unpredictable North Korea.

In the function held in the U.S. capital to commemorate the armistice day, President Obama said, "Today, we can say with confidence that war was no tie. Korea was a victory. When 50 million South Koreans live in freedom – a vibrant democracy, one of the world's most dynamic economies, in stark contrast to the repression and poverty of the North – that's a victory."

In other words, he connected the victory in the war of the U.N. Allied Forces led by the U.S. closely with the political-economic success achieved by South Koreans after the war, probably in a move to justify its policy toward engagement in the Northeast Asian region.

South Korean Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin stressed at an academic gathering for the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Agreement that despite Pyongyang's efforts to celebrate July 27 as a day of victory, it in fact "failed to achieve its original goal of unifying the Korean Peninsula under a communist ideology." By contrast, he said the war was a "success" for the South Korean and the United Nations Allied Forces as they had successfully defended the "freedom and peace of this nation from communist invasion."

Also, Minister Kim pointed out the

North's incessant violation of the Armistice Agreement, including the shelling of the Yeonpyeong Island and its nuclear weapons tests, and called on Pyongyang to "choose the right path" by abiding by the agreement in a more mature and sincere manner.

So far, China has described the Korean War in its own way as "a war to resist the U.S. imperialists and assist (North) Korean comrades," while the North has defined it as a war to liberate the southern half of the fatherland from U.S. colonial rule. Speaking at an event commemorating the 60th anniversary of the entry of the "Chinese People's Volunteers" into the Korean War in Beijing in October 2010, Xi Jinping, then Chinese vice president, referred to the Korean War as a "great and just war for safeguarding peace and resisting aggression."

Simultaneous Developments

While covering Vice President Li Yuanchao's visit to North Korea on July 24, Xinhua, the state-run Chinese news agency, quoted Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei as saying, "During the visit, Li, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, will attend activities in commemoration of the 60th anniversary for the truce of the Korean War."

The change in its expression of the war is undoubtedly aimed at defining the Korean War as a war only for North Korea, undoubtedly because of its distaste for confrontation with the U.S. in this era

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where Washington and Beijing are serving as two main pillars of the world.

These simultaneous, spontaneous developments in the U.S. and China are unprecedented. On one hand, these developments have given rise to the impression that the Korean War has eventually found its right place. On the other, they lured this writer to the illusion that high tensions on the Korean Peninsula since the North's third nuclear test in February this year turned suddenly into a tornado respectively in the U.S., China and the Korean Peninsula in terms of international politics.

For China, which has been mulling its relations with North Korea after the North conducted its third nuclear test, the North is not an entity to give up readily despite its little value, because the North is still useful for its global strategy despite the trouble it causes with China's relations with Washington and Seoul.

At least in appearance, relations among Washington, Seoul and Beijing seem unharmed, providing South Koreans with a renewed sense to tackle the North Korea issue once and for all.

In other words, South Korea can now confront and deal with their painful past of

a fratricidal war with confidence. And they should, as no Korean, South or North, can be free of shame over the little progress they have made in improving relations with their brethren in the past several decades.

Surely, the writer is not likely alone in continuing to feel sorrow and frustration at the vestiges of the cold war, while China, the U.S. and the two Koreas each find reasons to "celebrate" this wretched day.

When will North Korea – which after 60 years continues to provoke its southern neighbor and insists on the United States to replace the armistice with a peace treaty – ever become a responsible member of the international community?

For the armistice day to be more than simply the day the war ended, this writer expects and hopes the Park administration's so-called Korean Peninsula Trust Process to yield fruitful results, not empty gestures. (Yonhap News)

TRAGIC FATE OF NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS

“About 200,000 people have fled North Korea, but only 25,000 have entered South Korea so far,” said An Chan-il, co-producer of the film ‘48M.’

■ By Cho A-ra

How far is the distance between life and death? To North Korean defectors, it's 48 meters, or the width of the narrowest point of the Amnok River flowing between North Korea and China. It is also the name of a recently released film that depicts the tragic fate of North Korean defectors who risk their lives traversing the 48 meters into China to be freed from hunger and oppression. In making their way across this forbidden distance, only a few reach the other end, and the others are shot down by the piercing bullets of border guards hiding in camouflage.

“I wanted to show that some people are still hanging between life and death by the Amnok River even in the 21st century,” An Chan-il, the co-producer of the film, said in a press preview held in central Seoul.

An, who had been a North Korean soldier, escaped the socialist country in 1979 through a western military border and went on to make a life for himself in South Korea. He is now a political science professor at Chung-Ang University in Seoul and provided his first-hand experience as a defector to make “48M” even more realistic. “All the stories shown in this movie are true. They are only more brutal in reality,” said An.

“48M” was released on July 4 in South Korea. Constrained by a low budget and limited theatrical releases, the film did not pull in a large audience but has received dominantly positive reviews on major movie review sites. Many viewers have found the stories of several characters in it appallingly vivid and revealing, which the director Min Baek-doo attributes to over 300 in-depth interviews the production team held



An Chan-il

with North Korean defectors in order to create the film.

The House of Representatives in the United States held a special screening of the film in September last year – a first for a Korean movie. It was also screened at the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva. With North Korean human rights issues becoming an international concern, “48M” has alerted attention to the adversities taking place near the border.

“The movie received a very favorable response in Washington,” An said. “Interest in human rights conditions in North Korea is very high in the U.S.”

Even beyond the 48 meters, the few lucky escapees who reach freedom, in reality, aren’t fully liberated from threats and oppression. As illustrated in the recent case of nine young North Korean defectors who were repatriated back to their homeland from Laos through China, the watchful eyes of North Korean authorities are extended to neighboring regions.

Moreover, since the new leader Kim Jong-un ascended to power, North Korea has tightened security at its border areas. The number of defectors that came to South Korea plunged by half last year from a year earlier to some 1,500 people, according to the Ministry of Unification.

Even those who finally settle down in South Korea continue to endure hardships, says An. Social maladjustment is common. The South’s completely different social and economic systems from the North make assimilation into mainstream society considerably difficult. Even social bonding within the defector community is very weak, according to An.

To address this problem, An set up the World Federation of North Korea Refugees in 2010. The first global body for North Korean defectors aims to band defectors together who are living in different countries and play a role in bringing peace to the Korean peninsula.

“I intend to develop the federation into an international community for North Korean defectors and also into a major countervailing force against the Pyongyang regime,” An said.

One of the federation’s main projects in progress is providing leadership education to student defectors. The six-month program jointly run with the Korea Future Foundation gives lectures and overseas training to foster the students’ knowledge on inter-Korean issues.

“We’re seeing a good level of participation because the students are encouraged to develop some notions about their potential role in the reunification process, something they used to have very few and vague ideas about before,” An said. He believes promoting educational opportunities is the best and surest way to help defectors adjust to life in the South.

Another difficulty that many of the new defectors encounter in South Korea is the feeling of relative deprivation. Although they no longer suffer from absolute poverty or oppression like they had in the North, the competitive market system and economic inequalities resulting

“I hope more people will come to realize that the suffering of North Koreans is still ongoing and that it will go on to an indefinite future if we fail to address the issue,” An Chan-il said.

from it drive many North Korean defectors to grow disillusioned about life in the South. Some even choose to go back to their communist home, as seen by recent cases of re-defection.

The positive side is that their social activities are increasing and diversifying, albeit slowly. Although the majority of North Korean defectors still do manual labor for a living, a noticeable number have distinguished themselves in the creative fields of painting, movie directing, cooking and music. Their college admission rate is also on the rise.

The percentage of defectors going on to university after high school jumped to 85 percent in 2011 from 67 percent in 2009, according to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Currently, there are about 1,200 undergraduate students, 70 master’s degree holders and 12 Ph.D. holders among North Korean defectors in South Korea, according to An, who was the first defector to earn a Ph.D. in South Korea. His doctoral thesis focused on *juche*, the ruling ideology of North Korea that promotes self-reliance.

An has consistently pushed ahead with a move to legislate a bill on North Korean human rights in South Korea. The United States enacted the North Korean Humans Rights Act in 2004 to protect and provide humanitarian assistance to the North Korean people, earmarking US\$24 million a year for its budget. Japan passed a similar bill in 2006.

On the contrary, in South Korea, the parliamentary bill on North Korean human rights has been pending to date since 2005 due to rows between political parties. Promoting the bill was one of the major objectives An wanted to achieve with the film “48M,” and he believes the bill will also help improve the living conditions of North Korean defectors in South Korea. “I hope this movie will serve as impetus for the passage of the North Korean human rights bill,” said An.

It is not only on humanitarian grounds, however, that An argues for giving active aid to the defectors. It constitutes a psychological warfare with the North. He believes helping the defectors successfully settle in and undertake mainstream roles in South Korea will deal a blow to North Korea. “It will pressure the reclusive regime to open up and seek changes,” he said.

From movie production to setting up an international organization to running education programs, An has exerted himself to raise awareness of the human rights conditions of North Koreans and improve their living conditions. “I hope more people will come to realize that the suffering of North Koreans is still ongoing and that it will go on to an indefinite future if we fail to address the issue.” (Yonhap News)

EXTRAVAGANT CELEBRATIONS OF 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMISTICE

The impoverished country held various congratulatory performances and threw lavish offering of national orders to a total of 47,075 ‘meritorious people.’

■ By Kim Tae-shik

Amid deepening economic plight and tightened international sanctions, North Korea held an extravaganza of events, military parade and mass rallies and invited a large number of foreign guests and reporters for the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean War on July 27, which the North celebrates as the day of victory in what it calls the Fatherland Liberation War.

North Korea held a large-scale military parade and a mass demonstration simultaneously in its capital, which North Korea experts in Seoul believe were designed to show the stability of the North Korean system under the young leader Kim Jong-un and its military strength both to its citizens and to the outside world.

Week-long Celebration Period

The impoverished country also held various congratulatory performances, including mass gymnastics and art performance called “Arirang,” and dancing parties in addition to throwing lavish offering of national orders to a total of 47,075 “meritorious people,” including soldiers who participated in the 1950-53 Korean conflict. The three-year war ended in a cease-fire agreement, not a peace treaty, leaving the two Koreas technically in a state of war.

In keeping with the spirit of the anniversary, North Korea dedicated a war veterans cemetery and a renovated war museum, which cost massive funds as Kim Jong-un instructed to use the finest of construction materials.

The (North) Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported that a

North Korea holds an extravaganza of events marking the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean War on July 27 amid deepening economic plight and tightened international sanctions. Shown on the right is the scene of the mass gymnastics and art performance called "Arirang," held at May Day Stadium in Pyongyang. (Yonhap Photo)



military parade and mass demonstration took place with splendor at Kim Il-sung Square in Pyongyang on July 27, with the attendance of Kim Jong-un, Li Yuanchao, vice president of China and head of the Chinese delegation, as well as heads of other foreign delegations and top North Korean party, state and army officials.

Various military hardware and weapons, including armored personnel carriers, tanks and artillery and short-, medium- and long-range missiles marched through the square filled with Pyongyang citizens following the procession of infantry units. Helicopters and aircraft hovered over the square to boost the festive mood.

Following the military parade, a mass demonstration was proceeded for about half an hour. The KCNA said similar meetings took place in provinces, cities (districts), counties and industrial complexes across North Korea to mark the anniversary.

It was very rare for the socialist country to hold both the military parade and the mass demonstration at the same time in Pyongyang. The last time the two events were held simultaneously on the armistice anniversary was in 1993.

On the eve of the anniversary, North Korea held a grand national meeting at May Day Stadium in Pyongyang. Kim Jong-un attended the meeting along with the Chinese vice president and top North Korean officials. Also attending the meeting were delegates of war veterans, diplomatic envoys from various countries, representatives of international organizations and members of the military attaches corps in Pyongyang, the KCNA said.

North Korea also held various concerts, exhibitions, dancing parties during the week-long celebration period around the armistice anniversary.

In a rare move, North Korea held an art performance and dancing party of service personnel of the (North) Korean People's Army (KPA) at the plaza outside the hall at Panmunjom, where the Armistice Agreement was signed 60 years ago.

Earlier, KPA general officer, Ryo Chol-ung, said that “the great victory in the war was a shining fruition of the wise leadership of the great Generalissimo Kim Il-sung” and called on all service personnel to glorify the ever-victorious history and tradition with powerful arms.

“Slogans and songs reflecting the fixed will of the service personnel to display fireworks of victory in the grand struggle for national reunification reverberated far and wide in the sky above Panmunjom,” the KCNA said.

North Korea’s extravagant dancing parties and concerts continued on the following day of the anniversary. The KCNA said an evening dance party was held for the youths and students at Kim Il-sung Stadium.

On the same day, a state chorus and combined military band of the KPA threw an integrated performance of arts and music at the April 25 Culture Hall in Pyongyang, while acrobatic suite “For My Only Motherland” was held at the Pyongyang Circus Theater.

Kim Jong-un had official contacts with foreign reporters for the first time since he took the helm of the country in December 2011. North Korea invited a large number of foreign reporters, including those from the West, for the 60th anniversary events.

On July 27, foreign reporters had a rare opportunity to see Kim Jong-un in close proximity. Some reporters asked questions to Kim, but the North Korean leader declined to answer any questions, simply nodding his head and smiling and waving his hand gently to the reporters.

Counter-purpose of International Assistance

Observers say the fact that a large number of foreign reporters were invited into North Korea and allowed to see the North Korean leader in close distance shows that the North intended to show a friendly image of the young leader to the foreign press.

Chang Yong-suk, a researcher at the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies at Seoul National University, said North Korea seemed to have made desperate efforts to show the stability of the North Korean regime and the leadership of Kim Jong-un to the outside world through the extravagant events amid economic plight and toughened international economic sanctions.

North Korea’s lavish holding of luxurious events to demonstrate its stability and the growth of its expenditure to maintain its system run counter to the purpose of international assistance given to the country on humanitarian grounds, North Korea experts said.

North Korea has spent a huge budget in the renovation of the war museum and construction of the cemetery for fallen soldiers, as well as the preparations for the military parade. The *Munhwa Ilbo*, a daily newspaper published in Seoul, said on July 19 that North Korea reportedly has spent at least US\$150 million in renovating the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum and the Fatherland Liberation War Martyrs Cemetery and for the preparations of the mass military parade on July 27.

The impoverished socialist country began a massive renovation project last September for

its decades-old museum in Pyongyang at Kim Jong-un's instruction. The 52,000-square-meter museum has about 80 exhibition halls and displays "merited weapons" and other items related to Korea's fight against Japan's colonial rule in the early 20th century, and the Korean War.

As the centerpiece of the renovated museum North Korea unveiled the USS Pueblo, a spy ship seized off North Korea's east coast in the late 1960s, to commemorate what North Korea calls Victory Day on the 60th anniversary of the signing of the armistice that ended the Korean War. The ship is North Korea's greatest Cold War trophy, which Pyongyang hopes to use as a potent symbol of how the country has fought the great power of the United States.

Quoting a government spokesman, the paper said North Korea has spent \$2.6 million for the cost of fuel for equipment in the last 100 days to prepare for the parade.

Another report of the U.N. Security Council showed North Korea imported six log-transporting vehicles from China to be used as mobile launcher for its new ballistic missiles. North Korea imported six WS512200 trucks at a cost of 30 million yuan (US\$4.9 million) per vehicle, according to the report. North Korea imported the trucks telling the Chinese exporter that they will be used for transporting logs.

North Korea's Massive Secret Funds

Meanwhile, the Free North Korea Radio in Seoul said a total of \$300 million has been invested in the construction of the Masikryong ski range, which is being built at the instruction of Kim Jong-un.

While its people are suffering from chronic food shortages and deepening economic hardships, the North Korean regime has been pouring large sums of money to personality cult projects for its dead leaders in order to consolidate the ruling of Kim Jong-un. Reports said North Korea has spent more than 11 billion won in constructing statues of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il on the Mansudae Hill in Pyongyang in 2012.

After the death of Kim Jong-il in December 2011, North Korea has spent a total of 28 billion won to change the phrase of "Great Leader Kim Il-sung is with us forever" to "Great leaders Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il ..." on more than 3,000 memorial towers across the country. Another 5.1 billion won was used to renovate the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun where the bodies of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il lie in state.

North Korea has been persistently suspected of holding massive secret funds amounting to billions of dollars at banks in Switzerland or Southeast Asia or other tax havens as "ruling funds." David S. Cohen, the undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence at the U.S. Treasury Department, confirmed that the U.S. is tracking secret funds of the North Korean leader during his visit to Seoul in late July to discuss with South Korean officials on implementing sanctions on the North. (Yonhap News)

N. KOREA'S ARMISTICE VIOLATIONS AND PROVOCATIONS

North Korea breached the armistice a total of 425,271 times since it became effective in July 1953 through the end of April 1994.

■ By Lee Kwang-ho

For the past 60 years, the Armistice Agreement that ended the 1950-53 Korean War has served as a mechanism to prevent hostilities. But the armistice was a temporary cessation of hostilities. Still, the three-year conflict was never permanently resolved in a peace treaty and the cease-fire agreement has often been violated by North Korean provocations. In reality, the Korean Peninsula is technically in a state of war.

North Korea's string of saber-rattling moves earlier this year sharply raised tensions along the heavily armed inter-Korean border, one of the last remaining vestiges of the Cold War. Pyongyang's long-range rocket launch in December, its third atomic test in February and menacing war threats from March through April underlined the precarious nature of peace on the peninsula and the pressing need for a more effective, permanent institution to ensure stability.

Incessant North Korean Provocations

The agreement has so far been maintained despite incessant North Korean provocations. In breach of the armistice, the reclusive state has attempted to infiltrate into the South more than 1,950 times and conducted at least 990 other provocations until today, since it was signed.

According to the U.S.-led United Nations Command (UNC), North Korea breached the armistice a total of 425,271 times since it became effective in July 1953 through the end of April 1994. Since then, there is no data available because the command stopped compiling the numerous incidents of armistice violations by the North, but things have obvi-

ously turned worse as demonstrated by a host of major skirmishes of late, especially in the West Sea.

U.N. Commander Mark W. Clark, North Korea's Supreme Commander Kim Il-sung and Peng Dehuai, the commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers, inked the armistice on July 27, 1953 after two years of grueling negotiations over the demilitarized zone, the military demarcation line, prisoners of war and other truce-related issues.

The three parties recommended a higher-level political meeting be held three months later to resolve Korea-related issues including the withdrawal of foreign troops from the peninsula. The political gathering took place from April through June in 1954 in Geneva, Switzerland with foreign ministers from 19 countries – the two Koreas, China, the former Soviet Union and 15 UNC member states – attending.

But it failed to permanently end the war amid disputes over the UNC role, its activities and other issues. With the U.S.-led UNC backed by the South Korea-U.S. Combined Forces Command that offers a strong deterrent against escalation by the North, the armistice has survived a series of violations by Pyongyang, which has long sought to nullify the agreement while seeking a peace treaty with Washington.

When the agreement was signed the UNC selected Switzerland and Sweden on behalf of South Korea and the U.S., while North Korea and China nominated Czechoslovakia and Poland to investigate the implementation of the pact for the communist North. But Pyongyang has violated the armistice numerous times and withdrawn communist representatives from the Military Armistice Commission (MAC) and Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC), the two major entities that observe the agreement.

UNC's Role and Its Activities

Initially, a significant number of NNSC personnel monitored equipment and troop movements in the two Koreas. While about 150 Swiss military monitors came to Korea in the months following the armistice, the number has since been greatly reduced. Their relevance has also been reduced as the commission no longer operates in the northern side of the Demilitarized Zone.

When Czechoslovakia was split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993, North Korea kicked it out along with Poland that joined NATO, apparently believing that they were no longer friendly to the socialist country. Now, Poland sends representatives to a couple of commission meetings through South Korea each year.

When a two-star South Korean general was appointed as the representative of the U.N. MAC in 1995, the North said the armistice was no longer valid and severed the crucial communications channel with the MAC and NNSC. Then it set up the Korean People's Army's mission in the truce village.

Since the 1990s, Pyongyang has made explicit attempts to nullify and render void the armistice. Amid its menacing war threats earlier this year, the unpredictable regime even

declared it would scrap the armistice. Since then, Pyongyang has called for the dissolution of the UNC, the core body that maintains the armistice, and threatened to nullify the cease-fire. Most recently in March this year, Pyongyang said it would scrap the armistice and stop its Panmunjom mission activities.

The North has faced deeper international isolation with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, coupled with economic maladministration and famines the following years. Hundreds of thousands of North Koreans died during the “painful march under trial” in the 1990s. The North withdrew from the MAC and NNSC that oversee the armistice.

The navies of the two Koreas exchanged fire three times in the West Sea due to a continuing dispute over a de facto maritime border, the Northern Limit Line (NLL), which the North has never officially recognized and tried to nullify, claiming it was drawn unilaterally by the U.S. Two naval battles took place off the border island of Yeonpyeong in 1999 and 2002, resulting in casualties on both sides although North Korea suffered far worse damage. In 2009, the waters off Daecheong Island, just next to Yeonpyeong, became a war zone where the South overwhelmed its Northern rival. North Korea’s fire-gutted patrol boat was left partially destroyed while South Korean navy suffered only superficial damage.

Yet, South Korea experienced great struggles the following year. In late March, one of its frigates, the Cheonan, was sunk in a North Korean torpedo attack in the West Sea. A multinational investigation team concluded that it came from a North Korean vessel, but Pyongyang vehemently denied any involvement in the tragedy that claimed the lives of 46 South Korean sailors. Eight months later, Pyongyang shelled Yeonpyeong Island, killing four people including two civilians.

Ample Examples of Provocations from Pyongyang

In the new millennium, tensions run high not only along the maritime demarcation line but also in an arms race because Pyongyang has developed nuclear missiles along with its conventional weapons. Despite its lingering economic difficulties, the socialist country carried out nuclear tests three times in 2006, 2009 and 2013. The third test in February this year resulted in toughened U.N. sanctions against North Korea, which responded with warlike rhetoric and further threats against South Korea and the U.S. It even disregarded the armistice.

The six-decade-long history of South-North Korean military confrontation on the peninsula has ample examples of provocations from the North. The sinking of South Korean Navy patrol craft No. 56 off the coast of Wonsan in 1967 was the North’s first major military attack in violation of the Armistice Agreement.

Then there were the commando raid in Seoul and the capture of the USS Pueblo in 1968, the guerrilla landings in Uljin and Samcheok in the same year. North Korea’s 1968 infiltration by a group of armed guerrillas aimed at assassinating then South Korean President Park Chung-hee was foiled only at the last minute at a mountain behind the presidential office

Cheong Wa Dae. The North Korean hostilities also include ax-wielding murders of two U.S. Army officers at Panmunjom in 1976.

North Korea waged terrorist attacks on a South Korean presidential delegation in Myanmar in 1983 and bombed KAL flight 858 in 1987. North Korean agents detonated a bomb in Rangoon's Aungmye Shwe Shwun Shrine while then South Korean President Chun Doo-hwan was on a state visit to Myanmar. Although the president was stuck in traffic, as many as 17 South Korean officials and journalists were killed by bombs. The Korean Air jet exploded in midair over the Indian Ocean 10 months before the 1988 Seoul Olympics, and all 115 people on board were killed.

In 1974, North Korea's underground tunnel that was built for infiltration southward was found in Yeoncheon, Gyeonggi Province, in November 1974. The following year, another underground tunnel was discovered in March in the Cheolwon area, Gangwon Province.

North Korea's provocations through infiltration did not stop there. In the 1990s, North Korean soldiers infiltrated into the South along the Imjin River that flows between the two Koreas. In 1996 North Korean commandos secretly landed off the coast of Gangneung to infiltrate into South Korea. Moreover, scores of armed North Korean soldiers staged military demonstration at the truce village of Panmunjom in 1996. In the same year, North Korean soldiers brought heavy weapons into Panmunjom in a show of military demonstration.

The never-ending breaches of the armistice and provocations have now cast a basic question on how to bring a permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. Experts point out that there are so many stumbling blocks before this goal can be achieved due to the vast difference between the two political and economic systems. They say that a realistic target would be to stabilize a peaceful regime in which the two Koreas scrap their hostile stances against each other.

Still, there are hurdles ahead. The North has sought a peace treaty to replace the armistice in a move that Seoul and Washington suspect is intended to pressure the U.S. to withdraw its forces from the peninsula, remove its promise of nuclear protection for the South and stop the allied military drills.

The reclusive state has long called for a peace treaty with the U.S. while seeking to sideline the South in the process on the grounds that Seoul did not join the signing of the armistice. On June 16, the North's powerful National Defense Commission proposed talks to the U.S. over a set of issues including replacing the armistice with a peace treaty.

Washington and Seoul have consistently urged Pyongyang to take meaningful steps toward denuclearization before any negotiations on a peace treaty and improved relations. But Pyongyang insists a peace treaty should be inked before its denuclearization. It argues it would continue to maintain its "nuclear deterrent" to protect itself from what it calls the hostile U.S. policy toward it and outside nuclear threats. It also says denuclearization should come not just to the North but to the entire peninsula, apparently suggesting that the U.S. remove its nuclear umbrella for the South. (Yonhap News)

REALITY OF MALNUTRITION, POOR MEDICAL SERVICE AND DEATH

It is widely known that many inmates ended up dying due to a combination of beating, starvation and other causes, according to defector testimonies.

Correctional Centers

Because of inferior conditions in the Correctional Centers, the inmates suffer from poor quality of food, sanitation, medicine, etc., and in many cases they die. As with the various forms of inhumane treatments outlined above, a number of defectors' testimonies on this topic refer to the Jongo-ri Correctional Center. It seems that only a minimum amount of care is given to the gravely ill, namely allowing them to be off-duty.

According to reports, medicine and medical treatment are not provided to inmates.

- Defector XXX testified that many inmates inside the Jongo-ri Correctional Center died of a high fever during a two-month period from May to July in 2009. He heard that about 300 inmates died from the disease in 2009, and the death toll rose higher in 2010. The hygiene situation of a building for women became better because the building was newly renovated. However, the building for the male inmates was old and dirty, which, in turn, contributed to the high death toll.

- Defector XXX testified that he saw a fellow inmate die from fever and physical exhaustion on July 10, 2009, while he was detained in the Jongo-ri Correctional Center. He said the Jongo-ri Correctional Center classified gravely ill persons into three categories: Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3. Those classified in Grade 3 were exempted from forced labor and given additional food, but did not receive medical treatment. The ill took up four rooms, and those with liver disease and tuberculosis were housed separately. The patients had to pay for their own medicine and treatment, but even then all they received were injections of saline solution.

- Defector XXX testified that when he was detained in the Jongo-ri

Correctional Center in December 2009, he saw a fellow inmate die from disease and over-work.

According to his testimony, the body, after being briefly stored in the hospital, was taken away in a cart to Bulmang Hill, where it was cremated. Beginning in 2009, the Jonggo-ri Correctional Center established a section for the gravely ill, and that is where many of the death reports originated.

- Defector XXX testified that while he was detained in the Jonggo-ri Correctional Center in June 2010, he witnessed many of his fellow inmates die from malnutrition. During his detention, he saw numerous deaths inside the camp.

- Defector XXX testified that he saw an inmate named XXX (a 36- to 40-year-old female) die from malnutrition while he was detained in the Hamhung Correctional Center in Hamgyong Province in July 2010. The number of deaths in the camp increased rapidly in 2010, and almost every day people died.

Labor Training Camps

Labor Training Camps are said to provide meals, but many inmates die due to malnutrition and physical exhaustion from the heavy workload.

According to the testimonies of North Korean defectors, it is widely known that many inmates ended up dying due to a combination of beating, starvation and other causes. Some testimony even indicates that the lack of timely medical treatment has been a contributing cause of death.

- Defector XXX testified that one of his fellow inmates, XXX (a 43-year-old male), died from malnutrition one day after being released from the Onsong Labor Training Camp in June 2008.

- Defector XXX testified that while he was detained in the Onsong Labor Training Camp in August 2009, he saw a fellow inmate suffering from severe diarrhea eventually die because he was not taken to the hospital. Technically, doctors are on duty in the Labor Training Camps, but the patients have to purchase the necessary medicines for treatment.

- Defector XXX testified that while he was detained in the Hoeryong Labor Training Camp in October 2010, he heard that XXX (a 27-year-old male) ate poisonous grass. Because the camp did not administer emergency treatment, the man eventually died.

- Defector XXX testified that on July 13, 2011, when he was detained in the Paekam Labor Training Camp in Ryanggang Province, he saw a fellow inmate die of malnutrition.

Short-term Labor Detention Facilities

North Korean citizens' right to life is also jeopardized in the Short-term Labor Detention Facilities just as in other detention facilities. The detainees suffer from malnutrition and poor sanitation of the facilities. Some simply collapse and die due to physical exhaustion.

- Defector XXX testified that on February 6, 2009, while he was detained in the Hyesan Short-term Labor Detention Facility in Ryanggang Province, he saw a fellow inmate die of

malnutrition. The inmate's daily meal weighed a mere 200 to 250g, and he appeared to have died of starvation and physical weakness.

- Defector XXX testified that he saw a fellow inmate die of malnutrition at the Chongjin Provincial Short-term Labor Detention Facility in 2010. He heard that the person became physically weak while working in the firewood collecting group in Puryong, North Hamgyong Province, and eventually died in the Chongjin Short-term Labor Detention Facility.

In February 2010, a pregnant female sought treatment for bad cough and high fever. However, the Short-term Labor Detention Facility would not accept her as a patient. As a result, she came down with the tuberculosis and died on her way to a hospital.

- Defector XXX testified that he saw a fellow inmate die of malnutrition in the Sinuiju Short-term Labor Detention Facility on January 3, 2011. The body was wrapped in a blanket and stored in the warehouse. The next day, it was buried after a brief autopsy conducted by a People's Safety Ministry doctor.

Detention Facilities

Many detainees were also dying in the Ministry of People's Detention Facilities due to malnutrition and disease.

- Defector XXX testified that when he was detained in the Ministry of People's Safety Detention Facility located in Kimhyongjik County, Ryanggang Province in January 2009, he saw a fellow inmate who was on the verge of death due to malnutrition.

- Defector XXX testified that he saw a fellow inmate die of malnutrition during his detainment in the Ministry of People's Safety Detention Facility in Hoeryong, North Hamgyong Province in December 2009.

Nutrition in detention houses supervised by the State Security Agency is no better than that of the Detention Facilities under the jurisdiction of the police. North Korean defector XXX testified that he was forcibly repatriated to North Korea and detained in the Onsong Detention Facility from July 1-14, 2010.

While there, he received three meals a day, but each meal consisted of just 4 to 5 spoonful of boiled corn flour ground with corn husks. Many inmates also died in Security Agency Detention Facilities due to inhumane treatment, disease, and malnutrition.

- Defector XXX testified that while he was detained in the Kyonghung County (Undok County) Security Agency Detention Facility in North Hamgyong Province, he heard from XXX (a 43-year-old female) from Shinhung-dong, Kokunwon Nodong District, Kyongwon County, that XXX from Kyongwon County (Sebyol County) had died from torture.

(This is an excerpt from *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea 2012* published by the Korea Institute for National Unification in Seoul, Korea.)

N. Korea Marks Korean War Armistice with Military Parade

Although Pyongyang frequently uses the occasion to reveal new hardware, there did not appear to be any new weapons in the military parade.

North Korea on July 27 marked the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement with a large-scale parade of soldiers and military hardware with its leader Kim Jong-un in attendance.

On the day, which is celebrated as “Victory Day” in the socialist nation, goose-stepping soldiers marched through Kim Il-sung Square in Pyongyang as thousands of spectators wearing red and white clothes stood in a group to spell out the young leader’s name.

The military parade marks a holiday the North Koreans call “Victory Day in the Fatherland Liberation War,” although the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a truce, and the Korean Peninsula remains technically at war.

Flanked by senior military leaders, Kim, who was wearing a Mao-style suit, walked on a red carpet to an upper podium, the state-run Korean Central Television showed in live footage.

The parade was conducted with two large portraits of Kim’s grandfather, Kim Il-sung, and his late father, Kim Jong-il, hung

on the front of the Grand People’s Study Hall. Some soldiers and old veterans attended the parade in old combat uniforms worn during the war.

For North Korea, the day is celebrated as a show of strength both to its own people and the rest of the world, specifically to the United States, that it stands ready to fight again.

Thousands of soldiers marched across Kim Il-sung Square with military equipment, including ballistic missiles, cannons and rockets on mobile launchers.

The young third generation leader did not address the crowd, but after thousands of cheering citizens paraded by shouting his name, Kim, with Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao at his side, waved to the crowd from a shaded balcony.

The two were often seen speaking together during the ceremony, showing signs of close relations between the two nations. China is Pyongyang’s major ally and a crucial source of economic aid.

Li visited the North to commemorate the ceremony as China had fought alongside the North against South Korean and U.N.

forces. He is the most senior Chinese official to visit Pyongyang since Kim took power in December 2011.

The lavish assembly of weapons and troops is reminiscent of the marches held by the Soviet Union and China at the height of the Cold War. It is one of the few chances the world gets to see North Korea's military up close.

Although Pyongyang frequently uses the occasion to reveal new hardware, there didn't appear to be any new weapons in the military parade.

Overlooking a sea of spectators mobilized in Kim Il-sung Square to cheer and wave flags, leader Kim saluted his troops. He was flanked by senior military officials, the chests of their olive green and white uniforms laden with medals.

Kim's rule, which began in late 2011 after the death of his father, Kim Jong-il, has been marked by high tensions with Washington and Seoul. He has overseen two long-range rocket launches and a nuclear test that drew widespread condemnation and tightened U.N. sanctions.

Kim made his first major public speech during a parade in April 2012 in celebration of the centennial birthday of the country's founder Kim Il-sung, but he did not make an address on the July 27 anniversary event.

During the ceremony, the North's military leader Choe Ryong-hae called on the armed forces and the country's citizens to strive to build a prosperous nation and be prepared to oppose any foreign aggression.

"A peaceful environment is important for our country that puts priority on economic construction and the improvement of the

lives of our people," Choe said. "All armed forces and people should strengthen the nation's defense posture and stand ready for a combat situation to be able to defend against any intrusion by foreign forces."

Choe, the director of the General Political Bureau of the (North) Korean People's Army (KPA), said the spirit of the 1950s has been "consistently inherited" by Kim Jong-un through his father Kim Jong-il.

He told the crowd that the country's military and people along with the Workers' Party would surely fulfill the lofty dreams of those heroes and warriors of the 1950s.

Choe said North Korea should be ready to fight to defend the stability the country needs to revive the economy. But his speech was mild compared with past fiery rhetoric where Pyongyang attacked the United States and South Korea.

The North's state media revealed a drone during a military drill in late March when tensions were running high as Pyongyang threatened to strike Seoul and Washington in response to the two allies' annual military drills.

It was the first time since 1993 that North Korea had staged a parade on the armistice anniversary. The North usually held military parades on its national foundation day or the birthday of its late founder, Kim Il-sung.

Armored vehicles and trucks carrying cannons and multiple rocket launchers followed the march. Helicopters and fighter jets conducted an air show and an unmanned aircraft joined the performance.

Mobile launchers carrying Scud, Rodong and Musudan ballistic missiles as well as its newest missile, the KN-08, followed in succession.

North Korea holds a military parade at Kim Il-sung Square in Pyongyang on July 27 to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Agreement. (Xinhua-Yonhap Photo)



A South Korean government source said that about 300 pieces of weapons appear to have been mobilized for the armistice parade, but no state-of-the-art weapons were seen.

“New weapons did not appear this year, and the number of weapons displayed during the parade was estimated to be about half the number in 2012,” the source said.

One group of soldiers in the parade carried backpacks with a radioactive symbol. A South Korean military source said it is unlikely that they contain nuclear weapons, so the regime is probably just trying to give the impression that it has deployed nukes warfare ready and there is a unit in charge of them.

North Korea is estimated to have a handful of crude nuclear bombs, but many analysts don't think it has yet mastered the technology needed to build warheads small enough to fit on long-range missiles.

“Although there is no evidence that the North has developed small-sized nuclear weapons, their participation in the parade

shows that the country may have developed portable nuke weapons on its own,” the source said.

Rows of tanks and other mobile armored weapons rolled past. All of them had the phrase, “Let's annihilate the U.S. imperial aggressors; the blood enemy of the Korean people,” written on the side.

The parade was smaller than the one held on Kim Il-sung's 100th birthday in April last year. Some 12,000 to 13,000 soldiers and about 300 pieces of military equipment were seen, a South Korean government source said, compared to 15,000 and 800 last year.

North Korean state-run papers editorially marked the 60th anniversary. *Rodong Sinmun* said, “The brilliant victory in the Fatherland Liberation War under the leadership of President Kim Il-sung was a historic event that provided a landmark for an epochal turn in hewing out the destiny of the country and the nation, and accomplishing the human cause of independence.” (Yonhap News)

N. Korean Ship Carrying Undeclared Weapon Seized by Panama

The N. Korean ship Chong Chon Gang allegedly was transporting a radar-control system for a Soviet-era surface-to-air missile system.

A North Korean ship carrying what appear to be missile parts buried under sacks of sugar was seized in mid-July as it tried to cross the Panama Canal on its way from Cuba to its home country.

The 14,000-ton Chong Chon Gang, seized by Panamanian authorities on July 15, was transporting contraband weapons possibly in violation of U.N. sanctions slapped on the North.

North Korea is under broad U.N. sanctions against arms trafficking with other countries after it defiantly launched a long-range rocket in December and conducted its third nuclear test in February.

The ship allegedly was transporting a radar-control system for a Soviet-era surface-to-air missile system, according to a private defense analysis firm that examined a photograph of the seized cargo.

Panamanian officials said on Aug. 2 that they found ammunition for grenade launchers and other unidentified types of munitions, though they did not specify the amount of munitions.

They have since found missile radar and

control systems, two MiG-21 fighter jets and 12 engines on board, but no drugs have been discovered so far.

North Korea and Cuba have claimed the shipment consisted of “obsolete weaponry” that were to be repaired and returned to Cuba.

North Korea has said it was transporting obsolete weaponry under a legitimate contract with Cuba. It demanded an immediate release of the ship and its 35-man crew indicted by local prosecutors for “attempts against Panama’s security.”

North Korea’s foreign ministry said on July 18 the vessel was transporting “aging weapons,” adding that “Panamanian investigation authorities rashly attacked and detained the captain and crewmen of the ship on the plea of ‘drug investigation’ and searched its cargo but did not discover any drug.”

“An abnormal incident in which our trade ship Chong Chon Gang was seized by Panamanian authorities on suspicion of carrying narcotics has occurred,” an unnamed spokesman of North Korea’s foreign ministry said in an interview with the

Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), Pyongyang's official news agency.

The weapons, manufactured in the mid-20th century, were two anti-aircraft missile complexes, nine missile parts and spares, two MiG-21 Bis and 15 motors for those planes, said Cuban foreign ministry officials in a statement on July 16.

The ship has a public record of carrying narcotics, the ministry officials said. Panama has said it found arms on the ship, and analysts, based on released photos of the captured vessel, said they appear to be missile-related equipment.

While the U.S. government commended Panama's actions, whether Pyongyang actually violated the U.N. sanctions with the intercepted shipment remains to be seen.

U.S. officials said they will await the results from a U.N. investigation. "There's a U.N. process through the Security Council to determine whether there was a violation of sanctions. That process is ongoing," U.S. State Department deputy spokeswoman Marie Harf said in a press briefing on July 17.

It was the first time that North Korea was spotted carrying missile items since Pyongyang was slapped with fresh U.N. sanctions early March.

"We need to verify the facts first, but if (the seized items) are found to be materials for missiles, we can take actions as they violate the U.N. resolutions," a Seoul government source said, requesting anonymity.

On July 19, South Korea expressed support for Panama's seizure of the North Korean ship and vowed close international

cooperation to fully implement sanctions against its communist neighbor.

The South Korean government "commends and supports the interdiction by the Panamanian government of the Chong Chon Gang."

"We expect that this case in question will be promptly addressed through investigations by the government of Panama and the 1718 Security Council Sanctions Committee," it added.

Expressing hope for "full implementation by all states" of the resolutions against Pyongyang, the South Korean government also vowed "a close cooperation with the international community to this end."

The U.S. government expects a lengthy process to determine whether the shipment is in violation of the U.N. Security Council sanctions.

"The ship is still being off-loaded," State Department deputy spokeswoman Marie Harf said at a press briefing in Washington on July 18. "This process, just to set expectations here, will probably be a lengthy one."

She added, "We're viewing this as a potential violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions on North Korea. That's really the lens through which we're viewing it."

The U.S. government sought to limit the impact of the incident on apparently warming ties between Washington and Havana.

"I would underscore that the issue of the ship isn't a U.S.-Cuba issue," Harf said. "It's really an issue that we're focused on in terms of the U.N. and the sanctions that we have through the U.N. on North Korea." (Yonhap News)

U.N. Commission Begins Investigation into N. Korean Rights Abuses

The COI investigators from the UNHCR plan to meet with more defectors and continue their work with other N. Korean human rights bodies in the South.

A United Nations commission on human rights abuses in North Korea began its official investigation by interviewing North Korean defectors in South Korea for the first time since its launch earlier this year, sources said on July 31.

The sources at Free the NK Gulag, a defectors group in Seoul, said two working-level officials from the United Nations Commission of Inquiry for North Korea (COI) arrived here on July 29 and carried out interviews with people who escaped from the socialist country.

It said the officials met eight people from July 30 onwards and heard testimonies that they had been personally subjected to human rights abuses or witnessed such acts being performed on others.

The COI investigators from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) plan to meet with more defectors until Aug. 7 and continue their work with other North Korean human rights bodies in South Korea.

There are some 25,000 North Korean escapees living in the South, who can pro-

vide firsthand accounts of living conditions in their home country.

An official at the defectors group said three other investigators from the UN commission, including Commissioner Michael Donald Kirby, a former Australian Supreme Court justice, will arrive in Seoul later in August to hold a five-day hearing on human rights conditions in the North. A total of 35 defectors will be invited to the public hearing to be held in Seoul from Aug. 20, the official said.

They will examine claims of abuses carried out in political prison camps and other abuses of North Koreans by the state. They will also determine discrimination between genders, suppression of freedom of speech and movement restrictions, as well as other basic human rights violations.

The commission is to conduct their inquiry mainly in South Korea as the commissioners were not given access to the communist country. It also plans to visit Japan later this month to carry out similar activities.

Commissioner Kirby said in an interview with Yonhap in Geneva that he has sent a

letter to North Korean authorities to allow COI officials to visit the country from Aug. 11-17.

Kirby said investigation in North Korea is essential for the COI's task of investigation and that the COI will carry out investigation in every possible way.

The independent U.N. body is scheduled to submit its final report, containing findings and recommendations concerning imprisonment, torture and kidnapping by the North, to the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in March next year after submitting an interim report to UNHRC in September and to the U.N. General Assembly in October.

South Korea plans to actively support the COI's activities here. The National Human Rights Commission plans to offer translation services for local human rights bodies and individuals who want to submit documents and information about North Korea's human rights abuses to the COI.

The Korean national human rights commission got a request from the COI to hand out materials about the North Korean human rights conditions on July 22 and delivered the request the next day to South Korean organizations related to North Korean human rights issues.

Meanwhile, a Japanese government source in Tokyo said COI officials will visit Japan in late August to collect information about Japanese citizens who were abducted to North Korea. The three COI commissioners will meet with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other Japanese government officials and family members of the Japanese abductees.

North Korea has been accused of grave

human rights abuses ranging from holding hundreds of thousands of political prisoners in concentration camps to committing torture and carrying out public executions. The country, however, has denied the accusations, calling them U.S.-led propaganda to topple its regime.

The U.N. established the COI under the U.N. Human Rights Council in March, the first-ever U.N.-approved body to investigate human rights conditions in the reclusive country, amid increasing international concerns about the dire human rights environment in the communist North.

The UNHRC passed the resolution for the establishment of an independent investigation commission on March 21 during the 22nd session to approve the establishment of the COI.

The resolution called for the COI to be launched to conduct in-depth investigations into human rights abuses in North Korea and report its findings at the next sessions of the U.N. General Assembly and the UNHRC.

Human rights advocacy groups have long called for international efforts to stop genocide and crimes against humanity which they claim are being systematically carried out by North Korean authorities.

International demand for the United Nations to establish a commission to investigate human rights crimes in North Korea has been rising, and the voices calling for the organization of the U.N. commission have grown after North Korea conducted its third nuclear test on Feb. 12. The test is viewed as the country sacrificing the needs of its people for its so-called military-first politics. (Yonhap News)

<Internal Affairs>

Kim Jong-gak named Kim Il-sung Military University President

North Korea's former People's Armed Forces Minister, Kim Jong-gak, has been named president of Kim Il-sung Military University, according to a North Korean broadcasting station.

Radio Pyongyang reported on July 18 that the former defense minister participated in a discussion session on the military achievements of the late North Korean founder Kim Il-sung, introducing him as the president of the military university.

The new president has not been in the public spotlight since he withdrew from the post of the chief defense official in October last year. But he showed himself at an athletic game in April between Kim Il-sung Military University and Kim Il-sung Political University, where North Korean leader Kim Jong-un attended.

The young North Korean leader attended special courses at Kim Il-sung Military University for several years from 2002 to 2007.

Meanwhile, Kim Chang-gwang has been named new president of North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). The new president used to be the vice president of the state media.

According to a KCNA report on July 18, a meeting between North Korea's No. 2 leader Kim Yong-nam, president of the Supreme People's Assembly, and the director general of the Mongolia's Montsame News Agency, Avia Baatarhuyag, took place in Pyongyang, where Kim Chang-gwang also attended as the KCNA president.

The top post at the KCNA was previously held by Kim Pyong-ho, who had served since February 2010. (Yonhap News)

North Korea Raises Alert Level for Global Flu Virus

Health authorities in North Korea are beefing up measures to prevent the spread of a mutated strain of coronavirus originating in the Middle East, the state media said on July 22.

Quarantine activities are being carried out at the country's border stations, harbors and airports, along with medical check-ups on people returning home from infected regions, according to *Rodong Sinmun*, the organ of the North's ruling Workers' Party of Korea.

No infections have so far been reported in North Korea.

The newspaper warned that the deadly virus, formally dubbed the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) coronavirus, induces SARS-like symptoms, referring to the flu endemic that ravaged Asia a decade ago, such as high fever, cough, pneumonia and, in worse cases,

kidney failure.

The route of transmission has yet to be identified, but more experts are now weighing the possibility of human-to-human contagion, it added.

Earlier on June 30, the head of North Korea's hygiene inspection bureau Pak Mong-su argued that the country's "project to put off the new strain of the coronavirus must be staged as a national campaign" in a column carried by the *Rodong Sinmun*.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has so far confirmed a total of 45 deaths globally from the infection. It emerged last year in Saudi Arabia and has quickly spread across the Middle East and beyond. (Yonhap News)

Pyongyang Reports Substantial Flood Damage from Heavy Rainfall

North Korea has suffered severe damage from recent torrential downpours, according to the North's state media, affecting flood-prone areas hit hard from last year's seasonal rain.

Flood damage from seasonal heavy rainfall is growing in North Korea with the number of people killed or reported missing increasing to 23, as eight more died between July 20 and 22, the North's official KCNA reported on July 23.

More than 4,500 houses were destroyed or submerged, rendering some 17,700 people homeless, the state news agency said. At least 1,000 houses were damaged in North Phyongan Province, with 2,300 houses submerged in Unsan County alone.

A total of 6,550 hectares of farmland were damaged in North and South Phyongan provinces. Since July 17, more than 40,000 people have been displaced from their homes.

In the past 20 days since the onset of the monsoon season, the country saw rains nearly double the average precipitation in previous years, according to weather authorities.

Tongsin County of Jagang Province had a downpour of 413 millimeters between 9 p.m. on July 19 and 3 p.m. on July 21, while Songwon County and Huichon City were each battered by 383 millimeters and 322 millimeters of rain, respectively.

In North Phyongan Province, Taechon County received 380 millimeters of rain, followed by Hyangsan County's 312 millimeters and Tongchang County's 304 millimeters.

The KCNA added that this summer's torrential rain has brought damage to some 30 schools and 15 hospitals throughout the country as of July 23.

Meanwhile, the Voice of America (VOA) reported the city of Anju, South Phyongan Province, was submerged in heavy seasonal rains for the second consecutive year.

Quoting a spokesman of the International Federation of Red Cross, the U.S. broadcaster said 80 percent of the city was submerged as the Chongchon River flooded, leaving more than 10,000 people displaced.

The Red Cross, the VOA said, will send relief materials to the flood-stricken city, which suffered heavy damage from the rain last year as well. (Yonhap News)

North Korea Welcomes Female Football Team Back Home

North Korea gave a rapturous welcome to the women's national football team returning home after winning the 2013 East Asian Football Federation (EAFF) Cup held in Seoul.

The North's ruling Workers' Party and government officials, including Vice Premier Kim Yong-jin and Physical Culture and Sports Minister Ri Jong-mu, as well as a crowd of North Koreans greeted the triumphant football team with bouquets and congratulatory messages at a Pyongyang airport, the North's official Korean Central TV Broadcasting Station (KCBS TV) monitored in Seoul reported on July 29.

The country's female football team on July 27 won its first East Asian Cup crown with a 1-0 victory against China.

KCBS TV also broadcasted winning speeches from the athletes and interviewed people from the crowd.

"The last match took place ahead of the 'Day of Victory in the Great Fatherland Liberation War.' All the players and coaches ran together, thinking that we must and will win the game," said player Kim Un-ju, who received the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award of the tournament. North Korea celebrates the anniversary of the 1953 Korean War armistice as a day of victory in what it calls the Fatherland Liberation War.

"The athletes and the team braced up to bring more honor to the dignity and spirit of the DPRK (North Korea) by shedding more sweat in their future trainings," the report said.

Shortly after arriving at the airport, the team went to lay flowers before the statues of the country's founder Kim Il-sung and late leader Kim Jong-il at Pyongyang's Mansudae Hill, KCBS TV added. (Yonhap News)

North Korea Moves to Develop Cutting-edge Nanotech Industry

North Korea is moving to bolster its nanotech industry and produce high-tech products, Pyongyang's state media reported on Aug. 2.

Rodong Sinmun, the organ of the Workers' Party of (North) Korea (WPK), said in an article that the country's nanotech center that was recently built has made advances in medicine, energy, environmental conservation, light industry and farming.

Nanotechnology involves synthesizing and controlling matter on an atomic scale, leading to the creation of materials of high commercial value with wide-ranging benefits.

The newspaper monitored in Seoul said the nanotech center, built under the guidance of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, has played a key part in developing the sector. It added that roughly 1,000 nano products and prototypes were on display at the 10th nanoscience exhibition that opened on July 30.

North Korean media started mentioning the nanotech center in April, although no detail had been made public on when it was established.

It said the country's technicians from universities and laboratories have been able to develop agricultural sterilizers, growth accelerators, air cleaners and shoes with this technology.

The daily also said the total number of products showcased at the exhibit represents a 10-fold increase from four years ago, highlighting the progress made by the country in the next-generation technology.

The latest news article follows another report by the KCNA that claimed in May that many practical products to cope with athlete's foot have reached consumers in the socialist country.

In June, *Choson Sinbo*, a Japan-based pro-Pyongyang newspaper, said an alcoholic beverage made using nanotechnology enjoyed popularity in Pyongyang. (Yonhap News)

N. Korea Denounces Capitalist Lifestyle, Calls for Renewed Order

North Korea's mouthpiece newspaper on Aug. 9 condemned capitalist lifestyles and called for a new socialist order, in an apparent swipe against outside influence penetrating the country's tightly controlled border with China.

The *Rodong Sinmun*, the organ of the ruling Workers' Party, said the country's enemies were constantly scheming to overthrow the regime by spreading "superstitious beliefs" about capitalism.

"The bourgeois lifestyle that dominates capitalist societies is founded upon extreme selfishness and egoism," said the newspaper. "It corrupts our people, and the decadent lifestyle undermines our national identity."

"We must root out outmoded tradition," the paper continued, "and push for establishing new ethics and lifestyles that represent our socialist society."

A day earlier, the newspaper denounced capitalism as a "superstitious belief that taints the minds of our people and enslaves them for eternity."

It said that capitalist organizations calling for such things as religious freedom and human rights brought the demise of former socialist regimes in Eastern Europe.

North Korea watchers in Seoul said the rhetoric is likely aimed at preventing further South Korean, American and Japanese influence from seeping in through China.

Washington-based Radio Free Asia reported in June that North Korean officials have tightened control of goods smuggled in from South Korea and that bribing officials and removing manufacturer labels were no longer enough for North Koreans to evade restrictions. (Yonhap News)

Kim Jong-un Visits Smartphone Factory, Gives Field Guidance

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un visited a local manufacturing factory and gave field instruction on the functions and packaging of a homegrown smartphone being made in

the factory.

During the tour of the May 11 Factory, Kim was given a detailed briefing on the performance, quality and packaging of the “Arirang phone,” the North’s official KCNA reported on Aug. 11.

Kim looked around different places of the factory, including the assembling shop, the KCNA reported, saying the young North Korean leader praised the Arirang developers for coming up with a product that “provides the best convenience to the users while strictly guaranteeing security.”

He said he appreciated the creative ingenuity and patriotic enthusiasm with which the officials and employees of the factory laid a solid foundation for mass-producing cell phones by building a new modern phone production process.

After learning about the performance of a touch smartphone, he said that the technology makes the phones easy to use. He also mentioned the high number of pixels of the phone’s camera, the news agency said.

Kim said he was pleased that the Arirang phones, which the factory started producing a few days ago, were in high demand.

Looking at the trademark “Arirang” inscribed on the phones, he noted that mass-production of goods with the DPRK (North Korea) trademark can instill national pride and self-respect in the Korean people.

Cell phones were introduced to North Korea in 2008 through a joint venture with the Egyptian telecom firm Orascom, which says there are now two million users in North Korea. (Yonhap News)

<External Affairs>

N. Korea Warns of ‘Catastrophe’ from S. Korea-U.S. Military Drill

North Korea warned on July 21 of a “catastrophe” if South Korea and the United States push ahead with their annual military drill in August.

The Ulchi Freedom Guardian (UFG) is one of the two joint military drills South Korea and the United States have been staging annually to test and improve their defense posture against the rival North. Pyongyang, however, has routinely criticized the drills as a rehearsal for a war against the North.

This year’s edition of the computer simulation exercise is scheduled for mid-August.

“The United States again tries to open a large-scale joint military exercise in August,” said an article carried by *Rodong Sinmun*, an organ of the North Korean Workers’ Party.

It warned that the Korean Peninsula will fall “into a state of catastrophe” if the UFG gets

underway.

The newspaper then called for the dismantlement of the United Nations Command (UNC), saying its state members' participation in the annual military drill was problematic.

The UNC is the unified command structure for the U.S.-led multinational forces that supported South Korea in its fight against the invading North in the war. The UNC, headed by the commander of U.S. Forces Korea, still exists as the Koreas remain technically at war after the 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice. About 28,500 U.S. soldiers are stationed here to deter North Korean threat.

Any disbandment of the UNC will help ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula and positively affect building confidence between the U.S. and the North, the newspaper claimed. (Yonhap News)

China Reaffirms Commitment to Korean Peninsula Denuclearization

Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao reaffirmed his country's commitment to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula during a meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, international media reports from Pyongyang said on July 26.

The meeting in Pyongyang took place while Li visited the isolationist country as head of a Chinese delegation to mark the 60th anniversary of the truce of the Korean War (1950-53).

China had fought alongside the North against South Korea, the United States and United Nations forces, with the conflict ending in stalemate.

International media reported that Li made clear to Kim that Beijing adheres to the principle of a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and supports peace and stability in the region. The meeting comes as bilateral relations have soured between the two countries after the North defied China's warnings and went ahead with a nuclear test in February, which forced Beijing to sign off on a United Nations sanctions motion.

The senior official added that China advocates for all outstanding differences concerning the communist North to be handled at the negotiating table and that the six-party talks should be resumed. The talks, which started in 2003 to temper the North's nuclear ambitions, have been on hold since late 2008.

North Korea has said it is willing to take part in the talks, though Seoul and Washington have made it clear that the communist country must first clarify its stance on its nuclear weapons program. The country detonated three nuclear devices since 2006 and has so far failed to renounce its right to possess such weapons by citing continued military threat from the United States.

In response, Kim Jong-un said the North wants to work with all interested parties to ensure peace and security in the region.

The leader, who took power in late 2011, said Pyongyang is doing its best to push forward economic growth and improve the livelihoods of his people.

Media outlets said that during the meeting, Li verbally delivered a message from Chinese leader Xi Jinping that expressed warm greetings.

Related to the talks, the North's official KCNA monitored in Seoul omitted Li's calls for denuclearization and only emphasized the traditional close ties that have existed between the ideological partners.

The report said the North will not forget the valor and achievements of the Chinese soldiers who fought in the Korean War, and emphasized that the North Korea-China tie is sealed in blood.

The KCNA said that besides meeting Kim, the vice president met with Kim Yong-nam, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly. (Yonhap News)

N. Korea Warns Joint S. Korea-U.S. Military Drill Will Fuel Tensions

North Korea warned on July 31 that a joint South Korea-U.S. military drill scheduled for mid-August will once again fuel tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The annual Ulchi Freedom Guardian (UFG) exercise, which aims to improve the defensive posture of the two allies against potential attacks by the North, is slated to take place in South Korea in August.

The UFG is one of two major joint military drills South Korea and the United States have held annually since the 1970s. The North has routinely denounced the drill as a preparation for war.

"South Korea and the United States plan to conduct a military exercise in August with the United Nations Command getting involved," said an article carried by *Rodong Sinmun*, the organ of the North Korean Workers' Party. "If the drill takes place, conditions in the region will become unpredictable and escalate to the brink of war."

The warning comes after the socialist country ratcheted up tensions to an all-time high in decades as it detonated its third nuclear device in February and threatened nuclear attacks against South Korea and the United States.

The official paper blamed the United Nations Command (UNC) for spiking up tensions, claiming it must be disbanded to reduce tensions.

The UNC is the unified command structure for the U.S.-led multinational forces that supported South Korea in its fight against the invading North Korean military in the 1950-53 Korean conflict.

Rodong Sinmun said the command is an unlawful and phantom organization that needs to be disbanded. "Pyongyang has asked for the disbandment of the UNC on the 60th anniversary of the Armistice Agreement being signed."

Citing another annual U.S.-involved South Korean military drills in March, North Korea in April pulled its workers from, and thereby suspended operations at, an inter-Korean joint complex in its border city Kaesong.

The two Koreas have tried to revive the Kaesong Industrial Complex, a major symbol of inter-Korean rapprochement, by holding six rounds of talks in July, but failed to agree on preconditions for resumption. (Yonhap News)

North Korea Ranks 5th at International Math Olympiad

North Korea has ranked fifth among dozens of countries competing in this year's International Math Olympiad in July, Pyongyang's state-run media said on Aug. 3.

The North's official KCNA said six students from the Pyongyang Secondary School No. 1 won two gold and four silver medals, respectively, at the 54th International Math Olympiad held in Santa Marta, Colombia.

North Korea ranked fifth after China, South Korea, the United States and Russia in the event running from July 18-28, the South's Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning said.

South Korea bagged five gold medals and one silver medal for a total of 204 points, just four points behind China.

The International Math Olympiad is an annual competition for high school students established in 1959. More than 520 students from 97 countries participated in this year's event. (Yonhap News)

North Korea Blasts Japan's New Defense Report as Provocative

North Korea warned on Aug. 6 that Japan is following a militarization program that is escalating regional tension that had already crossed "the danger line."

A commentary by the North's official KCNA highlighted a Japanese Defense Ministry paper published in July that stressed the need to boost the strength and range of forces required to protect Japan's far-flung territories.

The paper specifically called for a "comprehensive containment capability" to counter ballistic missile threats from North Korea.

"This is a provocative claim negating the root cause of the escalating regional tension," the KCNA said. "It is nothing but a broad hoax of Japan to justify its moves to turn it into a military giant which have gone beyond the danger line."

The commentary argued that "loudmouth" warnings about the missile and nuclear threat from North Korea were aimed at diverting international attention from efforts by Shinzo Abe's conservative government to ditch Japan's pacifist constitution.

"The escalating tension on the Korean Peninsula and other parts in the region is mainly attributable to the United States' persistent hostile policy toward the DPRK (North Korea) and its military build-up in the region," the KCNA said.

The news agency said the U.S. has worked hard to disturb all conditions and environment

for North Korea's peaceful economic construction and its efforts to improve the people's living standard, a vivid expression of the former's hostile policy toward the latter.

"Japan is zealously toeing Washington's policy toward the DPRK to give spurs to its militarization and realize its ambition for overseas invasion," the KCNA said. "Japan's assertions are too unreasonable and illogical to justify its sinister aim." (Yonhap News)

<Inter-Korean Relations>

N. Korea Informs S. Korea of Water Release from Border Dam

North Korea informed Seoul on July 15 that it will release water from its Mount Kumgang dam to control the rise in water levels brought on by heavy rains, the government said.

The Ministry of Unification said Pyongyang notified Seoul through official communication channels running through the neutral border village of Panmunjom that the dam will be releasing water at 6 p.m.

"This is the third time ever that the North has given the South advance notice," a ministry official said. He said the North notified Seoul in 2002 and 2004. The source did not elaborate on how many gates the North will open and what effect it will have on the South.

The dam, officially called the Innam Dam in the North, was constructed from 1986 through 2003 and is located just north of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), which separates the two Koreas. It is close to Mount Kumgang, a scenic resort on North Korea's east coast.

The dam may hold up to 2.6 billion tons of water and its water feeds the Han River that flows through South Korea's capital city of Seoul.

Seoul Korea had been concerned about the integrity of the dam and its possible use as a means to flood large parts of the country, so they built the Peace Dam in 2005 just south of the DMZ.

The ministry, meanwhile, said the North's warning has been sent to related agencies in the South, which has been coping with torrential rains in the past few days. (Yonhap News)

Inter-Korean Body Opens Website on N. Korea's Mineral Resources

A South Korean government-affiliated body on July 18 opened the nation's first website that gives a rare look into North Korea's widely untapped mineral resources.

The South-North Korea Exchanges and Cooperation Support Association said the website (www.irenk.net) will be updated monthly to provide the latest information on some 110

North Korean mines and its 24 minerals.

The Information System for Resources of North Korea will also list maps locating the communist nation's 12 major minerals, in addition to import and export figures for the metals, the group supervised by the South's unification ministry said.

North Korea is reported to be sitting on a huge pile of natural resources, with its magnetite, zinc and tungsten reserves estimated to be one of the world's 10 largest. Minerals also accounted for 57.4 percent of the nation's total exports last year, the group said.

"The potential worth of minerals in North Korea is estimated at around 7,000 trillion won (US\$6.22 trillion), which is 22 times that of the South," the group said. "The Web service is expected to be highly useful for furthering our understanding of these relatively unknown minerals." (Yonhap News)

S. Korean NGOs Start Shipping Humanitarian Aid to N. Korea

South Korean non-governmental organizations (NGOs) started shipping out humanitarian aid to North Korea on July 31 to help alleviate the plight of children and sick people in the impoverished country.

The move comes after Seoul's unification ministry approved the shipment of goods earlier in the week as a sign that South Korea is open to offering urgent humanitarian assistance to the North in spite of sanctions on the country for its nuclear device detonation in February.

The Korea Association of People Sharing Love, one of five NGOs to gain permission to ship goods, said it has ordered the shipment of bread in China for delivery to child-care centers and orphanages in Sinuiju, a North Korean border city with China.

It said other shipments of food will be made in the coming weeks. The organization was allowed to send US\$46,000 worth of bread, baby formulas and nutritional supplements.

Medical Aid for Children, another charity group, said it has held a ceremony in Incheon, west of Seoul, to mark the start of its deliveries of antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs.

The group said medical supplies worth 223 million won (\$199,700) will be sent to a children's hospital in the North.

Other groups like Green Tree Korea, Okedongmu Children and Stop Hunger said the first of their aid shipments will reach the North next month.

These organization plan to send more than 1.2 billion won worth of warm clothing, blankets, flour, powdered milk to the North in the coming weeks.

The shipments mark the first time in four months that Seoul has approved humanitarian aid to the communist country. The last shipment included tuberculosis medicine sent by the Eugene Bell foundation.

Seoul had imposed a blanket ban on shipments of goods after accusing the North of sinking one of its naval vessels near the South-North sea demarcation line in March 2010. (Yonhap News)

THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF THE KIM JONG-UN REGIME IN N. KOREA & PROSPECTS FOR ITS CHANGE

I. The Emergence of Kim Jong-un as Successor-Designate and the Process for Another Hereditary Leadership Succession in North Korea

Three years have already passed by since Kim Jong-un made his debut on the North Korean political scene in September 2010. And he became the new North Korean leader under a scenario for another hereditary leadership succession upon the death of his father and former leader Kim Jong-il in December the next year. For a period since the third conference of representatives of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK, simply as the Party below), which heralded the appearance of a new North Korean regime led by Kim Jong-un sooner or later, dominating in Seoul was the view suspicious of a stable Kim Jong-un regime. But today, most North Korea watchers in Seoul and elsewhere share the view that the Kim Jong-un regime is on a stable, solid footing.

Although the Kim Jong-un regime was inaugurated in the wake of the abrupt death of Kim Jong-il in December 2011, the restructuring of the power hierarchy in the new regime has most likely been completed on the occasion of the fourth conference of Party representatives and the fifth session of the 12-term Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), the North's rubber-stamp parliament, both held in April 2012. The office given first to Kim Jong-un as successor-designate in the third Party conference was

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vice chairman of the Party Central Military Commission (PCMC), office created that time exclusively for the heir-apparent. On Dec. 30, 2011, barely two weeks after his father's death, the young Kim took the office of supreme commander of the North Korean People's Army. And he naturally succeeded the North's leadership in his capacity as first secretary of the Party Central Committee (PCC), first chairman of the National Defense Commission (NDC), member of the Party Politburo Presidium and chairman of the PCMC, concurrently. Those offices were given to him in the two political functions held in April 2012. Noteworthy is the fact that he became "marshal of the republic" three months later, and not "marshal of the army." Marshal of the republic is meant for "supreme leader" of the country who controls all organizations of the Party, the state and the army. The North launched the Kim Jong-un regime this way, while honoring its late leader Kim Jong-il as "eternal" NDC chairman and "eternal" general secretary of the Party Central Committee.

For the smooth inauguration of its new regime led by Kim Jong-un, the North also wrote late leader's achievements into the Constitution and the Party charter; defined the WPK as the Party of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il and its guiding ideology as the idea of Kim Il-sung and that of Kim Jong-il; renamed the Kumsusan Memorial Palace, where the bodies of the two late leaders are laid in state, as the Kumsusan Memorial Palace of the Sun; and built their statues anew on the Mansudae Hill in downtown Pyongyang, the North's capital. These developments taking place in less than four months after the death of Kim

Jong-il indicate that the hereditary power transfer had been well prepared while the senior Kim was alive.

II. The Restructuring of the North's Power Hierarchy after the Death of Kim Jong-il and Characteristics of the New North Korean Leadership

There can be various approaches to the emergence of Kim Jong-un as leader and the restructuring of the North's power hierarchy after the death of former leader Kim Jong-il, should we discuss the nature and characteristics of the new North Korean leadership. It will serve as a barometer of stability and change in the North, if any, under the ruling system for the suryong (leader furnished with absolute authorities), should we establish the institutional relationship between the supreme leader and the core power elite there, know their struggles for policies and lines and examine the power structure under which the leader can demonstrate his ruling technique in a power struggle.

To mention the characteristics of the process of power structuring in the Kim Jong-un regime in a nutshell, institutional power was guaranteed to the young leader swiftly in four months through a legal and institutional adjustment of Party's functions and roles, and then he began to exercise his authorities based on it. In the Kim Jong-il regime, the status and role of the suryong was emphasized excessively only to bring about the nominal nature of Party's organization and function in the course of policy-making. This development

has touched off an academic view that the organization and function of the Party in the North were dismantled and the Party system became incompetent. But this view can be applied only to the relationship between the supreme leader and the power elite in the course of making key policies. Probably, it underestimated the political influence and role of the Party. We need to bear in the mind the fact that Kim Jong-il as well as Kim Jong-un became the North's top leader on a basis of the Party's status as a ruling machinery. It is essential for anyone to have control over the Party should he or she become top leader in North Korea, because the North Korean political regime places priority on the Party over the government or the state.

Kim Jong-un began the work to succeed leadership from his father in a military-related office in the Party, and neither in the Supreme Command of the Korean People's Army (KPA) nor in the NDC. He did so probably in consideration of the status and influence of the Party and the important role of the army as the driving force of the revolution. North Korea reinforced the authorities of the NDC through a constitutional revision in 2009 and an amendment to the Party charter in 2010. These measures were to clarify *raison d'être* of the Kim Jong-un regime and the direction it is heading toward, in a move to back up institutionally and legally the absolute role and authorities of the suryong in the coming generation and his authorities under the pretext of guaranteeing the "lasting" revolution.

In a documentary under the heading, "Succeeding the Great Cause of the Military-first Revolution," made public

recently, North Korea introduced political activities of the young Kim. Stressing the point that the junior Kim has accompanied his father Kim Jong-il during his on-spot guidance tours on many occasions since 2010, in an effort to trumpet his gifted ability regarding military strategies and war-related tactics, the documentary quoted Kim Jong-il as having said that the junior Kim has written academic papers on the outstanding technique of commanding the army demonstrated by founding leader Kim Il-sung during the Korean War and his imperishable achievements. Noteworthy is the North's argument that the young Kim began to learn military tactics well in 1998 when he was merely 16 years old. This propaganda is likely aimed at trumpeting the point that the young Kim is entitled to present his own creative line and direction of the revolution based on his in-depth study and understanding of Kim Il-sung's *juche* idea and Kim Jong-il's military-first politics. It is so because the North began to institutionalize Kim Jong-il's military-first politics. In other words, it is undoubtedly aimed at justifying the hereditary leadership succession and reiterates a clear link between the leadership succession and the military-first politics.

Taking a close look at these developments, North Korea elevated NDC's status to the highest organ of state power guiding national defense affairs, under a constitutional revision in 2009. Kim Jong-il has defined the office of NDC chairman legally as the top office in the arena of national defense. But under the constitutional amendment, the NDC became a top state office with reinforced authorities regarding national defense.

Provision 27 of the WPK charter stipulates: "The Party Central Military Commission organizes and guides all military projects on a Party level, examines and decides measures to implement the military line and policies of the Party while the Party congress is in recess. It also guides the whole program regarding national defense, including the projects aimed at reinforcing the armed forces of the revolution and developing the munitions industry." It implies that the commission is the highest Party organ to manage, supervise and command the armed forces of the North as far as the Party congress is in recess. The North has constantly maintained the guiding principle for the leader's political command and control of the army through the Party channel, from the Kim Il-sung era.

While the revision to the Constitution and the Party charter was aimed at promoting division of the role among core ruling offices, the Political Bureau in the Party Central Committee, dubbed the Politburo, has played a pivotal role in providing the young leader with institutionally guaranteed authorities in the course of cementing the power base for him since he became top leader of the North. Noteworthy is that all persons are members of both the PCMC and the NDC, and all of them have membership in the Politburo. Also noteworthy is that in a reshuffle of the NDC, the number of its members from the army decreased while there is no change in the number of its members from the Party and the state organizations and that all of its four vice chairmen are those from the Party and state organizations. Among the PCMC members drawing the attention of

North Korea watchers in Seoul are such field commanders of the army as deputy chief of the General Staff, chief of the Operation Bureau, chief of the General Logistics Bureau, commanders of the air force and navy, commander of the Strategic Rocket Force and commander of the 11th Corps, all of whom seem to be cementing their power base in the army.

In North Korea, which has suffered from a protracted crisis facing its socialist regime and that which has no developed civic society, the long-standing dictatorial rule could be possible thanks to the absolute power of its supreme leader who managed to completely control the armed forces there. At the same time, the strong unity of the leading group in the North and strong support of Party members and the core elite have served as factors responsible for the survival of the North Korean regime. North Korea watchers can hardly deny the possibilities that the North will suffer from an abrupt division of its elite as they are maintaining their unity because of their accord on interest in privileges rather than their intricate comradeship and their sense of duty, unlike in the Kim Jong-il era. Possibilities are high that many of the North Korean elite will face a purging campaign against them of higher intensity because they are under constant political guidance and inspection of the authorities concerned. The membership of core field commanders of the army in the PCMC can indicate an increase in the number of elite army officers who have made their way into the Party, but it can imply the leader's intention to prevent uneasy movements in the army, reinforce Party's guidance of the army, awaken the army anew to its role in

the Kim Jong-un era and eventually clarify the army's status as Party's army and Kim Jong-un's army.

Typical examples of this development include the purge of Vice Marshal Ri Yong-ho and the demotion of Choe Ryong-hae from vice marshal to general. And all of the four senior army officers escorting a hearse carrying the body of late leader Kim Jong-il in December 2011, comprising Ri Yong-ho, Kim Yong-chun, Kim Jong-gak and U Tong-chuk, were banished from their offices later for less significant jobs, while the three Party cadres, Jang Song-thaek, Kim Ki-nam and Choe Thae-bok, who carried out the same job, has continued to remain in their offices to date. In countries under dictatorial rule, actions against senior officials are usually kept in secret for a long time. But the state-controlled North Korean media reported on July 16, 2012 that the Politburo decided the preceding day to relieve Ri Yong-ho of all of his posts including as member of the Presidium of the Politburo and vice-chairman of the Party Central Military Commission. The measure against Ri implies that the top brass of the North Korean army suffered a setback in a political game with Party cadres and that Kim Jong-un was on a stable power footing.

Choe Ryong-hae, who became member of the Politburo Presidium, chief of the General Political Bureau of the army and NDC member in April 2012, has since occasionally made on-spot inspection tours of construction sites involving servicemen, indicating he is in charge of Party projects in the army. Choe was demoted from vice marshal to general but has continued to carry out activities in the army, indicating

the army is under complete control of the Party.

The public activities made by new North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in recent months have shown some specific points in his leadership as follows. First, he has demonstrated his strenuous efforts to narrow the wide distance between the leader and North Korean citizens through his contacts with the general public. For instance, when the young leader visited the residence of a North Korean citizen, he sat down on the floor of a room in the house and talked naturally with people and the owner of the house, and he reminded North Koreans of the North's founding father Kim Il-sung, who had often encouraged laborers and farmers without formality during his on-spot guidance tour of industrial units and farms. The young leader drew public attention when he was often accompanied by his wife Ri Sol-ju during his public activities, unlike his father Kim Jong-il and his grandfather Kim Il-sung. The state-controlled North Korean media began to make public the aspect of the young leader accompanied by his wife on July 6 last year when he, along with senior officials, attended the performance of a concert by the newly organized Moranbong band.

The performance of the Moranbong band, which was attended by Kim Jong-un and his wife, was so surprising that one can hardly think it is a North Korean musical performance if he or she monitored it through the North's radio broadcast. Its repertoire even included "Gonna Fly Now," the theme song from the movie "Rocky," composed by Bill Conti with lyrics by Carol Connors and Ayn Robbins,

with “My Way,” a song popularized by Frank Sinatra, as background music. And appearing on the stage were various funny cartoon characters including Mickey Mouse.

Second, in sharp contrast with his father, Kim Jong-un has delivered speeches before the public. He, for instance, made a speech each in a military parade held April 15, 2012 and in a function of the Korean Children’s Union held on June 6 that year. His behavior is most likely aimed at impressing the public, encouraging their loyalty to him and demonstrating his stable position as leader.

Third, the North Korean government under Kim Jong-un’s leadership has allowed its state-run media to reveal facts about some key issues, instead of propaganda campaigns, in an effort to share some key information with its citizens, find solutions to problems together with its citizens, check bureaucracy and form a close bond between the state and its citizens. While visiting Mangyongdae Fun Fair in May last year, Kim Jong-un rebuked bluntly officials concerned for their poor management of the amusement park. The North Korean media quoted Kim as having said in an excited tone: “I have never thought that the funfair is under such a bad state and the proverb ‘the darkest place is under the candlestick’ fits the funfair.” Moreover, the North admitted the failure in its launch of a long-range rocket Unha-3 in April 2012, while announcing the damage from torrential rains.

III. North Korea’s Strategies for Survival

1. Armament with Weapons of Mass Destruction

North Korea has conducted nuclear tests while test-firing long-range missiles because development of weapons of mass destruction has been an integral part of its strategy for maintaining its socialist regime and its survival. The North is probably furnished with a double-pronged strategy for its survival. It is aimed first at winning its status as a nuclear state, maintaining its socialist regime and gaining a guarantee for its survival in bilateral negotiations with the U.S., and secondly at attaining internal political stability through unity of its citizens and settling another hereditary power succession.

2. Maintaining Balance in Its External Relations Based on a Belligerent Strategy

1) The North’s Relations with the U.S.

A tug-of-war between the North and the U.S. touched off by the North’s launch of a rocket in April 2012 and its third nuclear test in February 2013 has well shown the aspect of the North’s double-pronged strategy. The North Korean media said on March 16, 2012 that the Korea Committee for Space Technology will launch the Kwangmyongsong-3 satellite between April 12 and 16 from the Sohae Satellite Center in Cholsan County, North Phyongan Province, adding that the launch will be held in honor of the 100th anniversary of the birth of the North’s founding leader Kim Il-sung. And the North actually launched a rocket loaded with a satellite called Unha-3 on April 13 in violation of its

agreement with the U.S. on Feb. 29 that year calling for the North's moratorium on its rocket launch in return for the U.S.'s provision of food aid. This development has indicated that the North pursued two contradictory policies because a rocket launch requires a considerable preparatory period. This behavior by the North has given rise to widespread unsatisfactory sentiment by the Chinese, the North's traditional ally, against it.

Attending a banquet marking the 52nd anniversary of Kim Jong-il's launch of his military-first leadership, the young North Korean leader exposed the North's belligerent posture toward the U.S. He said at the banquet: "During my inspection of units on the forefront in the southwestern sector of the front, I already issued an order to the KPA to keep itself highly alert against reckless moves of the enemies and follow them with high vigilance. If the enemies fire even a single shell on our inviolable territory and territorial waters, the KPA should deal promptly with deadly blows at them and the whole army should turn out as one and lead the battle to an all-out counter-offensive for accomplishing the great cause of national reunification. I issued this order to the whole army and examined the operational plan for implementing it and finally signed it." Kim's hostile statement toward the U.S. came at a time when the U.S. and South Korea were conducting an annual joint military drill. His statement against the U.S. is likely reflective of the internal political situation facing the North, which requires unity of its citizens around the young leader rather than an improvement in its relations with the U.S.

2) North's Relations with China

North Korea's trade with China accounts for 70-80 percent of its total foreign trade, and China is providing a considerable amount of petroleum and food in aid to the North. For this specific relationship between them, China is considered a sole country that has leverage over the North. In August 2012, Jang Song-thaek, uncle-in-law of the new North Korean leader, made a six-day visit to China, leading a 50-plus-member economic delegation of the North. Meeting Jang, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao has reportedly told him about five-point requirements for the North to develop closer ties with China, indicating a change in relations between the decades-old allies. One of the requirements calls for the North Korean government not to interfere unreasonably with investment and economic activities of Chinese business concerns in the North.

China has agreed with the U.N. Security Council's adoption of Resolution 2087 on Jan. 22, 2013 to condemn North Korea's launch of a rocket on Dec. 12, 2012 using its ballistic missile technology, and its Resolution 2094 on March 7, 2013 to condemn in the strongest terms the nuclear test conducted by the North on Feb. 12, 2013. The North made an immediate response to the UNSC Resolution 2087 in a statement of its foreign ministry, which declared "no talks for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." Noteworthy is the challenge the statement poses for the long stalled nuclear disarmament talks involving six countries that involve the two Koreas, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia. Chinese leader Xi Jinping refuted the North Korean statement, reiterating that the

denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is a prerequisite to the stabilization of the peninsula. China also issued a statement blaming the North's third nuclear test and reiterating the significance of the six-way talks, which China hosts.

3. The North's Moves for Reforms and an Opening-up: Focusing on June 28, 2012 Measures and a Realignment of the Related Legal System

In 2012, North Korea has reportedly released a document carrying the so-called June 28 measures, under the heading "About the Establishment of a New Economic Management System of Our Own Style." Reportedly under the new economic management system, industrial concerns will set up their own production plans and decide the sales formula for their products for themselves, with no state interference. In the farming sector, the new system calls for distributing 70 percent of farm products to the state and the remaining 30 percent to farmers, regardless of the state production plan. And it allows state organizations and cooperatives to invest in the foreign trade sector, even with private capital. This is meant for the coexistence of the command economy and the market economy in the North, with the market playing a pivotal role in distribution of resources.

In the eyes of economic policy makers in North Korea, the market might have been a necessary evil. The market has expanded its province in the North during the "painful march under trials" in the mid-1990s, with a temporary policy against it in 2005. And the North redenominated its

money in November 2009 only to legally deprive merchants in the market of even their small capital. The Kwangbok District Commercial Center in Pyongyang, a giant shopping center which was visited by Kim Jong-il shortly before his death, was established in an apparent effort of the North to put economic activities of Pyongyang citizens into the state distribution system.

These policy measures of the North were aimed fundamentally at increasing its fiscal revenue. In response to neighboring countries' mention of its substantial reforms and opening-up oriented toward a capitalist market economy, the North has said that there will be no change in its policies as desired by "our enemies," indicating that the recent reform measures are aimed at making a conservative, limited change based on the North Korean current economic reality and structure. The June 28 measures were followed by a skyrocketing rise in rice prices and foreign exchange rates on the market, a development most likely reflecting the self-help oriented behavior of merchants on the market to prevent the state from legally plundering their properties. According to a North Korean refugee in Seoul, for instance, North Korean citizens could survive an economic crisis ironically because they had their own measures to counter policies of the Party and the state.

Because of a radical reduction in foreign assistance to the country plus a structural decrease in its productivity of its industries, North Korea is trapped in an economic situation where it has to mobilize all of its resources should it survive this crisis. This implies that the North has changed its economic structure in a way to legally plunder

much of its citizens' income under an ideology and a system necessary for the maintenance of its political regime. In a typical development in this direction, North Korea made the redenomination of its bank notes in 2009. But the North needs to improve its relations with the international community and bring in foreign capital and technology to back up its economic reforms should its efforts for reforms through the June 28 measures pay off. Some North Korea watchers have maintained that there is no way out for the North but to collapse. Their view might be valid on the long term because the North is unable to conduct comprehensive reform. At stake is the situation facing the North where many of its citizens are suspicious of the policy objectives of their government and its ability, there is monopoly and oligopoly of resources, and the country is trapped in internal and external tensions. A solution to this problem requires, among other things, the government's firm commitment to a policy not to plunder citizens' property, albeit lawfully.

North Korea has failed to attract much foreign capital despite its opening-up attempt, because of its limited application and some incredible steps it has taken. In particular, its isolation from the international community and international sanctions against it serves as factors fundamentally limiting the North's moves for an opening-up. In reality, it is impossible for the North to fully introduce market functions, and the international community needs patience for a long period to see the day when the North undertakes substantial reform and opens up its door. And the North needs to continue its attempt even

for the conservative, limited reforms should it find out its dynamic factors and link them with additional reforms.

Of course, North Korea can approach reforms and an opening-up in a practical way only when it lifts tensions between the North and its neighboring countries and actively introduce foreign capital and technology. But at present, no North Korea watchers can expect these developments. The North needs to form an environment where the international community can aid the North and make investment in the country in an open manner for the June 28 measures to result in success. The North also needs to ease control of its citizens and provide the distribution-related economic system with more incentives should it encourage them to increase their economic self-reliance. If not, the June 28 measures will undoubtedly turn into a tool for lawful plunder.

The realignment of laws made in the North shortly before and after the death of former leader Kim Jong-il was related to the North's moves for economic reform. This development probably indicates the will of North Korea under the leadership of Kim Jong-un to reconstruct its moribund economy through brisk activities for attracting foreign capital and vitalizing economic activities. Twelve of the 15 laws enacted or revised are related with foreign investment in the North and the remaining ones, excluding the common education law, with special economic zones, joint ventures and management tie-ups. The realignment of economic laws was made in a way to abide by international rules. The North Korean laws call for abiding by the arbitration rules of the International Court

of Arbitration in resolving business disputes. The Common Education Law, enacted in the North in January 2011, emphasizes measures for educating young economic officials who will play a leading role for the reconstruction of the North Korean economy. Accented in the law are education regarding basic science and technology, plus foreign language.

The collapse of the socialist bloc led by the Soviet Union at the turn of the 1990s, the normalization of diplomatic relations between Seoul and Moscow in 1990, that between Seoul and Beijing in 1992, plus the economic crisis in the North following the death of its founding leader Kim Il-sung have served as factors forcing the North to pursue an intensive isolationist policy aimed at blocking the capitalist influence over the country. Under such circumstances, the North Korean young elite attending foreign colleges, those in Moscow in particular, had to return home, resulting in a backward step of the elite in their internationalization, most of them children of senior officials in the Party and the government, in terms of their technological level, among other things.

North Korea's realignment of the educational law and system came under the government's perception of this troublesome situation facing the North Korean educational sector. Undoubtedly, this development came under the government policy aimed at pushing up the internationalization level of the young elite and facilitating economic reforms and the introduction of advanced foreign technology into the country. Since the first-ever inter-Korean summit in 2000, the North has exerted its efforts to restore diplomatic relations with

many Western countries, which have been severed due to the North's default on repayment of its loans from them and its dealing with drugs, while sending economic and technological officials to the countries for training. As a result, University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, for instance, concluded the Knowledge Partnership Program with the North and invited the teaching staff of Kim Il-sung University for training since 2011.

(This is a revised excerpt of an essay carried in the 2013 spring edition of *The North Korean Economy*, a quarterly published by the Export-Import Bank of Korea, in Seoul, dubbed the Korea Exim Bank.)

Notes:

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- 2) The (North) Korean Central TV, Jan. 8, 2013.
- 3) Jeong Seong-im, *op.cit.*, p. 49.
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- 6) *Rodong Sinmun*, April 15, 2012; June 6, 2012.
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- 8) Park, Hyeong-jung, "The Launch of Unha No. 3 and Kim Jong-un Regime's Strategy for Survival," The Korea Institute for National Unification, Online Series CO 12-42, 2012, pp. 1-3.
- 9) *Rodong Sinmun*, Aug. 26, 2012.
- 10) Yonhap News Agency, July, 30, 2012.
- 11) *Sisa Press*, Nov. 28, 2012.
- 12) Yonhap News Agency, Aug. 18, 2011.

North Korea Population Estimated at 24.7 Mln: Report

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ July 13, 2013>

— North Korea has a population of 24.72 million as of July 1, a media report based on data provided by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) showed on July 13.

— The numbers released by Radio Free Asia named the socialist country as the 49th most populous country in the world among 239 states checked.

— It showed that 43.8 percent of the North's population was between 25 to 54 years of age, with those under 14 making up 21.7 percent. The CIA report added that those between the ages of 15 and 24 accounted for 16 percent of all people in the country with those over 65 making up 9.5 percent.

— The report said the North's population grew 0.53 percent on-year and that the rate of increase was generally slower than the other countries it had checked.

North Korean Refugees in U.S. Total 159: Report

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ July 13, 2013>

— The number of North Korean escapees who are living in the United States is tallied at 159, a U.S. radio station reported on July 13.

— The U.S. began accepting North Korean refugees after adopting the North Korean Human Rights Act in 2004. The number rose from nine in the 2006 fiscal year to 37 in 2008 and 22 last year, the Washington-based Radio Free Asia (RFA) said in a report.

— The report, written with data provided by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration at the U.S. State Department, said that from last October to the end of 2012, 13 North Koreans had obtained refugee status and were allowed into the country.

Germany's Paulaner Spurns N. Korean Leader's Request for Beer Garden

<Yonhap from BERLIN/ July 18, 2013>

— A German brewer has spurned a request by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un to open a beer garden and brewery in his isolated socialist country, a news report said.

— Paulaner Brewery said it did not consider opening a biergarten in North Korea, according to *Bild*, Germany's best-selling daily, on its website on July 18.

— The Munich-based brewery said its capacity is stretched thin because it plans to open beer gardens in 12 new locations, including one in the United States and two others in Russia, Moscow and St. Petersburg, according to the daily.

N. Koreans Nabbed for Smuggling Medicine in Mongolia

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ July 23, 2013>

— North Koreans carrying diplomatic passports were caught smuggling medicine by Mongolian customs officials, a report said on July 23.

— The *UB Post* monitored in Seoul said two people caught were on an international train between Beijing and Ulan Bator. It gave no names, but said inspectors discovered large

amounts of products in their baggage, including a thousand boxes of injection medicine, 12 boxes of bear spleen products and 20 bottles of alcoholic beverages.

— The English language newspaper said those implicated in the illegal transport could not be identified as incumbent North Korean diplomats.

N. Korea Doubles Floor Space of Uranium Facility in Yongbyon

<Yonhap from WASHINGTON/ August 7, 2013>

— North Korea appears to have doubled the floor size of its uranium enrichment facility in Yongbyon, apparently in line with its stated plans to advance related technology and production, a U.S. research center said on Aug. 7, citing recent satellite imagery.

— The Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) said the North seems to have expanded a building in the fuel fabrication complex that houses a gas centrifuge plant for uranium enrichment.

— “The area is now covered by an extended roof that is roughly twice the size of the previous one,” it said in a report. “A doubling of available floor space at this building could allow a doubling of the number of centrifuges installed there.”

80 Percent of North Koreans Suffer Food Shortages: WFP

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ August 8, 2013>

— Eight out of 10 North Korean people are suffering from food shortages this year, with nearly 20 percent of children younger than five severely malnourished, a report by the U.N. food body has said.

— According to the quarterly report the World Food Program (WFP) published on its assistance project for the socialist country, 81 percent out of the 115 households there were found to be in the category of “poor food consumption” or the category between having adequate and poor food consumption in the second quarter of this year.

— Of the surveyed, 76 percent coped with the crisis either by relying on support from others or eating cheaper food. Some 14 percent reduced their portions, with 3 percent skipping meals, the report showed.

Intel Corp. Reaffirms No Plans for Business in N. Korea

<Yonhap from WASHINGTON/ August 8, 2013>

— Intel Corp., a U.S. tech giant, stressed on Aug. 8 that it has no intention of doing business in North Korea although it has secured the U.S. government’s approval for efforts to protect its intellectual property rights in the socialist nation.

— “Our position is that we have no plans to do business in North Korea,” Chuck Mulloy, a spokesman for Intel, said in an email.

— Last year, the company submitted an application for a “specific license” in North Korea to the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control. North Korea is subject to a wide web of sanctions imposed by the U.S. in line with U.N. Security Council resolutions.

PEOPLE

Kim Jong-un (김정은) : Supreme Commander of the (North) Korean People's Army (KPA), First Secretary of the Workers' Party of (North) Korea (WPK), First Chairman of the National Defense Commission (NDC)

- July 16 provides field guidance to a children's hospital and dental hospital under construction.
- 25 meets the delegation of the People's Republic of China led by Vice President Li Yuanchao at the Mansudae Assembly Hall in Pyongyang.
- 27 visits the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun in Pyongyang to pay tribute to Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il on the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 29 visits the Cemetery of Fallen Fighters of the Chinese People's Volunteers (CPV) in Hoechang County, South Phyongan Province, on the 60th anniversary of the armistice.
- 29 visits the Songhung Revolutionary Site where the Command of the CPV was located on the 60th anniversary of the armistice.
- 30 has a photo session with overseas Koreans who took part in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the armistice.
- 31 meets the members of the North Korean female soccer who won the 2013 East Asian Cup, held in Seoul.
- 31 watches archery games between the April 25 Defense Sports Team and the Amnokgang Defense Sports Team, and a men's soccer match between the April 25 Team and the Hwaebul Team.
- Aug. 3 has a photo session with war veterans and commanding officers who took part in the military parade held in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the armistice.
- 4 enjoys the performance given by the Moranbong Band for the participants in the military parade for celebrating the 60th anniversary of the armistice.
- 6 takes a tour around the Pyongyang Indoor Stadium in renovation and the construction site of apartment houses for scientists, close to completion.
- 9 visits the construction site of the Munsu Wading Pool and the construction site of the Mirim Riding Club in Pyongyang.
- 10 visits the May 11 Factory, which produces electronics products including mobile phones.
- 13 visits the construction site of apartment houses for scientists of Kim Il-sung University in Pyongyang.
- 14 watches a men's soccer match at Kim Il-sung Stadium in Pyongyang along with high ranking officials.

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

- July 17 holds a talk with Lundeg Purevsuren, the national security and foreign policy adviser to the president of Mongolia, and his party who paid a courtesy call on him at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.
- 23 receives credentials from new Thai ambassador to North Korea Wiboon Khusakul at

the Mansudae Assembly Hall.

- July 24 receives credentials respectively from new Bangladeshi Ambassador to North Korea Muhammad Azizul Haque and new Philippine Ambassador to North Korea Erlinda F. Basilio at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.
- Aug. 3-6 visits Tehran to take part in the inaugural ceremony of the Iranian President Hassan Rowhani at the invitation of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- 14 receives credentials from German Ambassador to North Korea Thomas Schaefer at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.

Pak Pong-ju (박봉주) : Premier

- July 19 makes a field survey of a children's hospital and dental hospital under construction.
- 21 makes a field survey of farming at the Pudok Co-op Farm in Jaeryong County, the Oguk Co-op Farm in Anak County, and the Jangryon and Kwanhae Co-op farms in Unryul County in South Hwanghae Province.
- 31 makes a field survey of farms in Songchon County, South Phyongan Province.
- Aug. 1 makes a field survey of mushroom-growing factories operated by the KPA.

Choe Ryong-hae (최룡해) : Director of the General Political Bureau of the KPA

- July 28 meets with the Vietnamese military delegation headed by Luong Cong, deputy head of the General Political Department of the Vietnam People's Army.
- Aug. 10 makes a field survey of the construction of a ski resort on Masik Pass.

Pak Ui-chun (박의춘) : Foreign Minister

- July 16 talks with Lundeg Purevsuren, the national security and foreign policy adviser to the president of Mongolia, and his party who paid a courtesy call on him.
- 23 talks with Thai Ambassador to North Korea Wiboon Khusakul, who paid a courtesy call on him.
- Aug. 10 leaves Pyongyang to visit several countries in Africa.

CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW

(Local Events)

- July 17 The national fine art exhibition opens with due ceremony at the (North) Korean Art Gallery in Pyongyang to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Korean War.
- 17 A national photo exhibition opens with due ceremony at the Grand People's Study House in Pyongyang to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Korean War.
- 18 A ten-day film show opens to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War.
- 19 The KCNA says the Jurists Society of North Korea issued a memorandum disclosing crimes committed by the U.S. during the Korean War.
- 19 A ceremony takes place at the Kim Jong-il University of the People's Security to unveil

- the statue of the late North Korean leader Kim Jong-il with the attendance of top North Korean officials.
- July 22 The Presidium of the SPA publishes a decree on awarding the order commemorating the 60th anniversary of the victory in the Fatherland Liberation War to songs “July 27 March,” “Holiday of Great War Victory,” “Tell, Fireworks of War Victory.”
- 22 The WPK Publishing House publishes a book of memoirs “Among the People” Vol. 102 to mark the 60th anniversary of the “victory” in the Korean War.
- 22 The grand gymnastic and artistic performance “Arirang,” a winner of the Kim Il-sung Prize, opens in May Day Stadium in Pyongyang to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 23 The (North) Korean stamp exhibition opens to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 23 The 1st national Taekwon-do star contest for the Jongsung Cup opens with due ceremony on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the end of Korean War.
- 24 A meeting of officers and men of the KPA takes place at the Ministry of the People’s Armed Forces on the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 27 A military parade and mass demonstration take place at Kim Il-sung Square in Pyongyang on the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 27 The WPK Central Military Commission and the NDC give a grand banquet at the Mokran House in Pyongyang on the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- Aug. 5 An event takes place in Nampho to mark the beginning of the World Breastfeeding Week.
- 5 The North’s Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) hosts a reception on the occasion of its 46th anniversary.
- 8 The 1st national Taekwon-do star contest for the Jongsung Cup closes. It opened on July 23.
- 9 The KCNA says the Kaesong Youth Stadium has been remodeled.
- 9 The Vitamin C Factory is commenced with due ceremony. The factory was built on the bank of the Taedong River in Pyongyang and has the latest production processes that use bioengineering methods.
- 9 The party and government delegation headed by Kim Ki-nam returns home after visiting Equatorial Guinea.
- 13 The 15th national scientific and technical achievements exhibition in the public health field opens at the New Technology and Innovation Hall of the Three-Revolution Exhibition House.

(Foreign Events)

- July 16 Talks between the delegation of the DPRK (North Korea)-EU Friendship Parliamentary Group and the delegation for relations with the Korean Peninsula of the European Parliament were held at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.
- 17 South and North Korea open their fourth round of working-level talks on the resumption of the Kaesong Industrial Park, which has remained suspended since early April

- in the North Korean border city of Kaesong.
- July 21 A group of Chinese tourists from Yanji, China, arrive in Pyongyang by plane to tour Mt. Kumgang.
- 22 The fifth round of working-level talks between authorities of North and South Korea for normalizing the operation in the Kaesong Industrial Zone (KIZ) takes place in the zone.
- 23 The (North) Korean Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and the Federation of Peace and Friendship Organizations of Mongolia sign an agreement on friendship and cooperation in Pyongyang.
- 23 A delegation of Korean War veterans in China led by Kim Kang-hui, the head of the lecturers group of veterans of the Chinese People's Volunteers, arrives in Pyongyang to participate in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the "victory" in the Korean War.
- 24 The KCNA says John Daniszewski, the vice president of the Associated Press of the U.S., arrived in Pyongyang by air.
- 24 The KCNA says foreign delegations and guests arrived in Pyongyang to take part in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean War and international solidarity events.
- 25 An agreement on establishing sister city relations between North Korea's Songrim City, North Hwanghae Province, and Deleg City, Ecuador, is signed in Songrim City.
- 25 A cultural and art delegation of the Chinese People's Liberation Army arrives in Pyongyang to take part in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 25 Yoji Ishikawa, special adviser to Kyodo News, arrives in Pyongyang to participate in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 25 China's Vice President Li Yuanchao arrives in Pyongyang to participate in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 25 The sixth round of the working-level talks between the two Koreas for the normalization of operations in the Kaesong Industrial Complex ends without agreement.
- 26 A delegation of the Red Cross Society leaves Pyongyang to take part in the meeting of leading officials of Red Cross organizations in East Asia to be held in Hong Kong.
- 26 Talks between the delegations of the WPK and the Communist Party of Vietnam are held in Pyongyang.
- 28 The KCNA says North Korean wrestlers bagged four gold medals at the 2013 Asian Junior Wrestling Championship underway in Mongolia.
- 29 Talks between the delegations of the WPK and the Communist Party of Cuba (CPC) are held in Pyongyang.
- 29 A friendship joint gathering of war veterans of North Korea and China takes place at the People's Theatre in Pyongyang to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- 29 A delegation of the China Institute of International Studies led by Vice President Guo Xiangang arrives in Pyongyang by air.

- July 30 John Daniszewski, vice president of the AP, and Yoji Isikawa, special advisor to Kyodo News, flies back home.
- Aug. 1 The KCNA says that the International Kim Jong-il Prize Council decided to award the prize to Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, president of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.
- 2 A delegation of the Central Committee of the National Construction Front of Laos led by Chairman Phandoangchit Vongsa arrives in Pyongyang.
- 3 A party and government delegation led by Kim Ki-nam, member of the Political Bureau and secretary of the WPK Central Committee, arrives in Malabo to visit Equatorial Guinea.
- 4 A memorial service to commemorate the 10th anniversary of death of Jung Mong-hon, former chairman of South Korea's Hyundai Group, takes place at Mt. Kumgang resort.
- 7 North Korea proposes to South Korea to hold another round of talks on Aug. 14 aimed at normalizing a joint industrial complex that has been shuttered since early April. South Korea, which had proposed "final talks" more than a week ago, accepts the North's proposal.
- 13 A meeting and film screening take place at the Taedonggang Diplomatic Club in Pyongyang during the month of solidarity with the Cuban people.
- 14 Two Koreas agree to normalize operations in the Kaesong Industrial Complex in their seventh working-level talks.
- 14 A reception is given by Igor Sagitov, charge d'affaires ad interim of the Russian Embassy in Pyongyang, on the occasion of the 68th anniversary of Korea's liberation.
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