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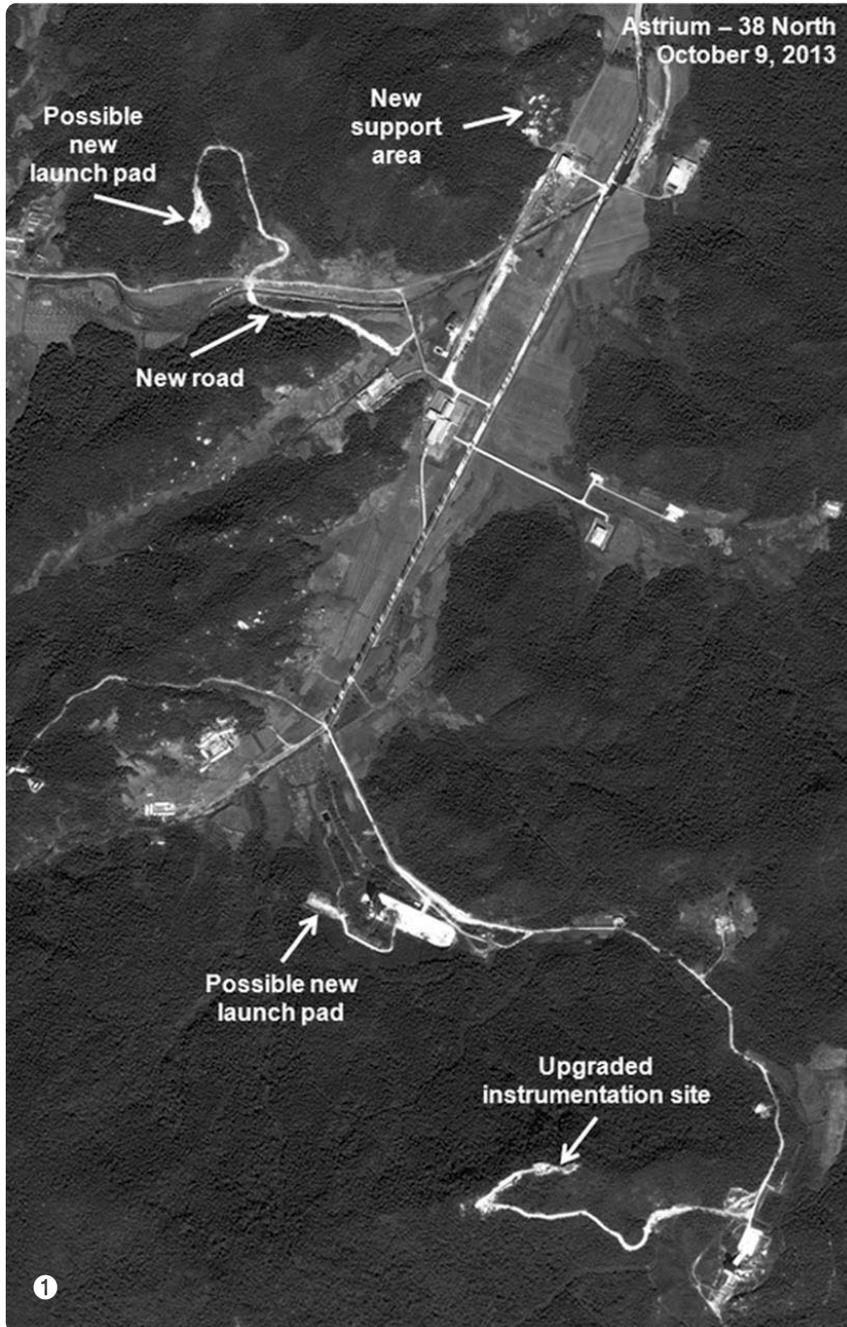
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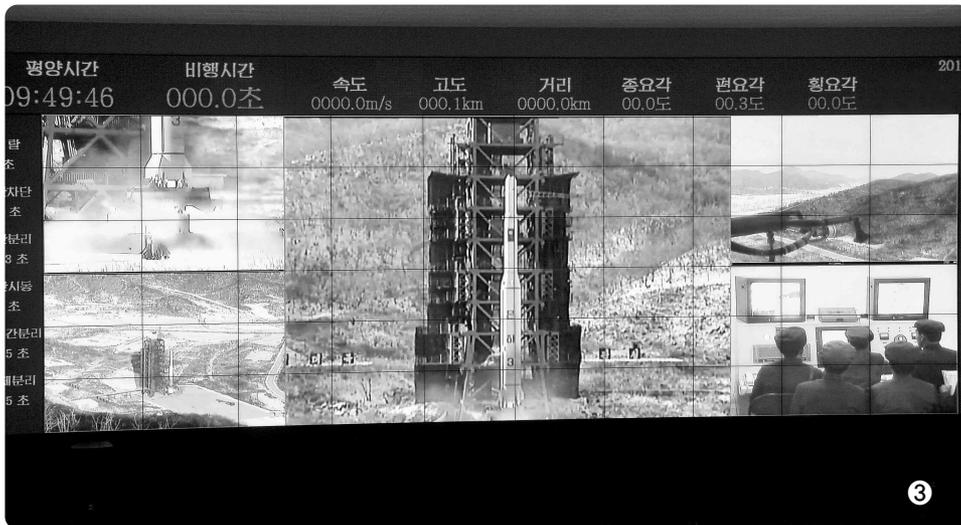
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COVER PHOTO : North Korean defector Shin Dong-hyuk (C) shares his experience inside the political prison camp where he was born at a seminar hosted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, a non-profit organization, at the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center in Skokie, IL, on Nov. 6, 2013. (Yonhap Photo)

Signs of North Korea's Long-range Rocket Launch





- ❶ This Oct. 9, 2013 satellite image taken by Astrium shows the Sohae site where North Korea launched a long-range rocket into space in December 2012. The U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies said on Oct. 28, 2013, North Korea is conducting major construction at its main missile launch site, apparently to accommodate larger rockets and new mobile missiles.
- ❷ This May 26, 2013 satellite image taken by Astrium shows an unfinished new missile assembly building, top left, and control center, top right, at the Tonghae (Musudan-ri) facility in North Korea.
- ❸ North Korea's long-range rocket "Unha-3" takes off from the Sohae Space Center in Tongchang-ri on Dec. 12, 2012.

INTERNATIONAL REACTION TO N. KOREA'S HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

The U.N. resolution detailed human rights violations in political prison camps in North Korea, calling for the immediate shutdown of the gulags.

■ By Lee Kwang-ho

For decades, controversy over the dire human rights situation in North Korea has been simmering, yet there have not been any tangible results in the improvement of human rights of the recalcitrant nation. This is because the international community's persistent efforts to raise the issue are inherently fragmentary and repetitive without practical solutions to enhance human rights across the border.

As the socialist country is under persistent criticism, a United Nations human rights committee recently adopted a resolution that denounces North Korea's worsening human rights violations, calling on the country to immediately release all political prisoners detained in the country.

U.N. Resolution on N.K. Human Rights Abuses

The resolution, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly's committee on Nov. 19 called attention to the "systematic, widespread and grave" human rights violations in North Korea, citing its reported use of torture, the death penalty for political and religious reasons and numerous political prison camps. The resolution was led by Japan and the European Union.

The annual resolution against North Korea for the country's human rights abuses – including torture, the death penalty and its many labor camps – were passed by consensus without even a single vote. It was the second such adoption by consensus without voting since its first in November last year. Previously, the U.N. committee had adopted reso-

Robert King, the U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights issues, is interviewed in Seoul following his meeting with foreign ministry officials on Nov. 18, 2013. (Yonhap Photo)



lutions on North Korea's human rights abuses by vote from 2005 through 2011.

However, a group of countries, including Russia, Cuba, Venezuela and China, later said they disassociated themselves from the consensus, expressing discontent with country-specific resolutions. The resolution is set to go to the U.N. General Assembly for final approval in December, with its passage expected to be a virtual certainty.

This year's resolution detailed human rights violations in political prison camps in North Korea, calling for the immediate shutdown of the gulags as well as the unconditional release of prisoners there. North Korea forcibly holds up to 120,000 political prisoners on starvation rations while subjecting them to forced labor, beatings and other severe punishment, according to various sources.

After the passage, North Korean diplomat Kim Song vehemently rejected the resolution, saying it was "politically motivated" and promoted by the United States and its followers "in their attempt to achieve

their goals of undermining our system." He added that all information in the resolution "is a false fabrication cooked up by some hostile non-governmental organizations" funded by the U.S., he said.

In Pyongyang, the North's foreign ministry denounced the U.N. committee's adoption as it did before. "The U.S. and its allies' adoption of such a resolution every year is the height of the politicization and selectivity of human rights and the application of double standard," a ministry spokesman was quoted as saying by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Lithuania's deputy U.N. ambassador, Rita Kazragiene, who introduced the resolution, said North Korea's positive steps in the past year, including signing the convention on the rights of people with disabilities, "do not go nearly far enough and are clearly outweighed by a general deterioration in the overall human rights situation."

The resolution highlights inhuman conditions of detention, public executions, col-

lective punishments extending up to three generations, the extensive use of forced labor, limitations on every person who wants to travel in the country or abroad and severe punishment of refugees or asylum seekers returned to North Korea.

It also expressed “very deep concern at the precarious humanitarian situation in the country, which could rapidly deteriorate” because of North Korea’s “limited resilience toward natural disasters” and government policies causing limited availability and access to food. It also expressed hope that the two Koreas could resume the reunions of Korean family members separated by the Korean War.

COI’s Investigation

The U.N. committee repeated calls made in previous resolutions that North Korean defectors should not be forced back into their home country and it should resolve the issue of Japanese and South Korean abductees in the socialist country. The text also calls on the country to ensure that its citizens who are expelled or returned to the North are “able to return in safety and dignity” and “are not subjected to any kind of punishment.”

The resolution underscores the very serious concern of unresolved questions of international concern relating to abductions in the form of enforced disappearances. Among the foreign nationals abducted by North Korea are a number of Japanese, who were taken there during the 1970s and 1980s mainly for the purpose of teaching the Japanese language and culture.

The committee also welcomed the establishment of a U.N.-commissioned inquiry into the human rights violation records of North Korea in the resolution. The three-man Commission of Inquiry (COI) interviewed many North Korean defectors in Seoul earlier this year as part of their efforts to verify the severe human rights violation allegations.

Assessing the resolution, the South Korean foreign ministry said, “The second straight consensus on the adoption of the North Korea human rights resolution indicates the gravity of the issue among the international community.” It urges North Korea to cooperate with the new commission of inquiry by, for example, allowing the special rapporteur, Marzuki Darusman, to visit North Korea. Pyongyang has refused entry to such officials in the past.

In this connection, the U.N. special rapporteur on North Korea’s human rights violations visited South Korea in mid-November as part of his investigation efforts. In Seoul, Darusman said on Nov. 15 that the special U.N. panel on North Korea’s human rights abuses has been seeking to determine whether the socialist country’s massive violations constitute crimes against humanity.

“We have a clear picture of what is happening there. It is the almost-complete denial of the human rights in the country,” said Darusman in a press conference. He is a COI member, a three-man investigation body led by retired Australian Judge Michael Kirby.

In August, the COI began its investigation in Seoul after the U.N. launched the agency in March under a U.N. Human

Rights Council resolution, and it is scheduled to present a final written report on their findings to the human rights council in March next year. It was the U.N.'s first attempt to launch an official investigative mission on the North's widely condemned human rights abuses.

In order to grasp the situation with regard to the decreasing number of North Koreans defecting across the border into China, he also said the COI "has been seeking access to China" to see if this could be due to the North's tightening of the border or the improved situation in the impoverished country.

King's Aborted Pyongyang Trip

As a way to improve the human rights situation in the North, he stressed the need to pursue humanitarian outreach rather than put pressure on it. Dismissing arguments that the assistance for the impoverished country has rather allowed the regime to build its nuclear capabilities, he stressed the need for aid without strings attached.

North Korea is also under criticism from the international community on its detention of U.S. citizens. Kenneth Bae, a 45-year-old Korean-American man, has been detained in North Korea for more than a year. He has been sentenced to 15 years of hard labor for committing an unspecified crime against the state.

Meanwhile, Robert King, U.S. special envoy for North Korean human rights issues, visited South Korea on Nov. 17 for talks with South Korean officials. King's trip overlapped with Kenneth Bae's deten-

tion in the North. Ambassador King had hoped to visit Pyongyang for talks on Bae's possible release in August on the North's invitation, but had not been able to as the socialist state withdrew its invitation at the last minute.

As of late, there has been a news report that another U.S. citizen is being detained in North Korea. However, the U.S. government would not immediately confirm reports from Nov. 20 that an elderly American man has been detained in North Korea since October.

Japan's Kyodo News Service reported the possibility of another American citizen being held in the socialist nation. Some American media identified the man as Merrill Newman, 85, from Palo Alto in northern California. He reportedly entered North Korea on a tourist visa. Newman is known to have served as an infantry officer during the 1950-53 Korean War. On Nov. 19, the State Department issued an updated travel warning for North Korea.

In a related development, a group of North Korean escapees trying to reach South Korea has been arrested by Chinese police in Yunnan Province in southern China. A North Korean human rights group official in Seoul said 13 people were caught in Kunming on Nov. 15. Of those arrested, two were ethnic Koreans with Chinese citizenships acting as guides. Yunnan is a province that all North Korean escapees must pass through in order to reach countries such as Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam. After reaching these countries, many escapees make their way to South Korea, their ultimate destination.

Related to the latest arrest, a unification

ministry official in Seoul said it is impossible to tell if the North put in a special request with Beijing or if the arrest was carried out by regional Chinese law enforcement without prior consultation with the North.

China's foreign ministry said it had no information that 13 North Korean defectors were arrested in the Chinese city of Kunming. "I'm not aware of the specifics you mention," ministry spokesman Qin Gang told reporters on Nov. 18 when asked about the North Koreans. However, Qin reiterated China's long-standing policy of not recognizing North Korean defectors as asylum seekers, calling them "illegal border-crossers."

China's Policy on N.K. Defectors

Tens of thousands of North Korean defectors are believed to be hiding in China, hoping to travel to Southeast Asian countries before settling in South Korea, which is presently home to more than 25,000 North Korean defectors. China, the North's closest ally, has been quite cooperative with North Korea in returning many North Korean escapees who have crossed the Sino-North Korean border.

Earlier this year, leaders of the Group of Eight countries made an issue of the deplorable human rights conditions of repatriated North Korean defectors. In a joint statement after closing a summit in Northern Ireland on June 19, they strongly urged Pyongyang to deal with the international community's growing concerns about the human rights situation of North Koreans, including those who are forcibly

deported back to their impoverished homeland.

The G-8 announcement reflected the international community's unprecedented worries about the fate of nine young North Koreans who were deported by Lao and Chinese authorities back to North Korea in May. A forcible repatriation of a defector is a universal human rights issue rather than the internal affair of a particular country.

The inhumane treatment and merciless punishment of repatriated defectors is widely known to the world through various testimonials by defectors. North Korean authorities appeared to offer the nine young defectors special treatment after criticism from the international community. But the vast majority of North Korean defectors forced to return home suffer an unimaginable degree of torture and abuse, mostly at prison camps across the country.

But analysts say China holds the key to the issue. Despite Beijing's contention that it has been dealing with North Korean defectors based on humanitarian principles, it is believed that China has persistently approached it from the perspective of its national interest. Beijing still believes that a massive influx of North Koreans across the border will not only threaten the security of its traditional ally, but also go against China's national interests.

More recently, North Korea has been classified as a country facing a serious "humanitarian crisis" by the Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS), an international non-governmental body, for the second year in a row. According to Radio Free Asia on Nov. 14, the Belgium-based ACAPS

said the communist country suffers from a chronic food shortage that affects at least 16 million people.

The report added that 2.4 million people must receive foreign food aid. ACAPS, created in 2009, is a consortium of three NGOs that aim to better assess humanitarian problems facing countries around the world. Those countries viewed as suffering from serious humanitarian situations need close monitoring and aid from the global community, it said.

Sueing Kim Jong-un to ICC

Of the 114 countries that requested humanitarian aid in the last six months, the NGO consortium said only North Korea and the African state of Eritrea have been classified as facing serious challenges. The organization also classified North Korea as a humanitarian crisis country in October 2012 and February of this year.

In Seoul, campaigns against dismal human rights abuses are intensifying ever more. Family members of people abducted during the Korean War said on Nov. 18 they will formally sue North Korean leader Kim Jong-un for unlawful detention and failure to address such abuses. The petition will be filed against Kim, People's Armed Forces Minister Jang Jong-nam, State Security Minister Kim Won-hong and Choe Pu-il, minister of people's security, the Korean War Abductees Family Association said.

The group said the legal motion, along with supporting evidence, will be submitted to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague on Nov. 20. The

motion marks the first time that a legal motion was filed against a North Korean leader and senior leadership in hopes of taking them to court over the kidnapping of people during the three-year civil war.

Meanwhile, the U.N. Commission of Inquiry for North Korea held a press conference in Seoul in late August after wrapping up 10 days in South Korea of exploring the North's human rights situation. Michael Kirby, chairman of the commission, said a wide range of human rights abuses are presumed to take place in the secluded country, including inhumane treatment of political prisoners and POWs at prison camps, public executions, a guilt-by-association system, restrictions on the freedom of movement and free speech, forced abortions and human trafficking.

The chairman urged North Korean authorities to allow the commission to launch an on-site survey to affirm the existence of such human rights violations in the North, despite the North's claim that such findings are lies and slander. It is the first time that the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council set up a commission charged with examining North Korea's human rights conditions since its establishment in 2006.

More recently, Michael Kirby said in Geneva that he aimed to draw up a list of violators within the North Korean regime after hearing testimony from North Koreans who had escaped Pyongyang's clutches. He spotlighted "unspeakable atrocities" in North Korea's political prison camps, citing survivors who saw babies drowned, had relatives killed before their eyes and lived on vermin. (Yonhap News)

PARK'S SUMMIT DIPLOMACY FOR TRUST PROCESS POLICY

President Park and all of her counterparts were in full agreement that a nuclear North Korea is unacceptable under any circumstances.

■ By Kim Tae-shik

South Korean President Park Geun-hye won full support from European leaders on her vision for regional peace, including the Korean Peninsula trust process, her signature inter-Korean policy, and the Northeast Asia peace and cooperation initiative during her recent summit talks with them.

Wrapping up her summit diplomacy in the first year of her presidency, Park toured Western Europe from Nov. 2-9 to hold talks with leaders of France, Britain, Belgium and the European Union. Leaders of all three countries and the European Union expressed full support for Park's initiative. Also, Park's initiative was supported by Russian President Vladimir Putin during a summit meeting in Seoul on Nov. 13.

Full Support from European Leaders

Park has carried out brisk summit diplomacy with global leaders soliciting her counterparts to back her initiatives for regional peace since she was sworn in as president in February this year, starting with the United States. She also held talks with leaders of China, G20 countries, Russia, Asia-Pacific Economic Council (APEC) and the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Park stressed in her meetings with European leaders that North Korea should not be recognized as a nuclear state under any circumstances. In her summit talks with French President Francois Hollande on Nov. 4, Park shared the view with the French leader that denuclearization of North Korea is essential for peace and stability not only on the Korean Peninsula but throughout the Northeast Asian region as

South Korean President Park Geun-hye is applauded by British parliamentary leaders after she addressed lawmakers at Westminster in London on Nov. 5, 2013. In her speech, Park sought London's help in getting North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons. (Yonhap Photo)



well as the entire world.

They underscored that North Korea should not have the status of a nuclear state in accordance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). They expressed concern over the human rights conditions in North Korea and supported the investigation by the U.N. Commission of Inquiry. President Hollande supported Park's Korean Peninsula trust process and welcomed her Northeast Asia peace and cooperation initiative.

In London, on the second leg of her European trip, Park held talks with British Prime Minister David Cameron on Nov. 6 to discuss the furthering of Seoul-London ties in various fields. On North Korea, the two leaders agreed that the verifiable denuclearization of North Korea is essential for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and beyond, and urged Pyongyang to abide by U.N. Security Council resolutions and its own commitments to forgo nuclear ambitions.

Britain also expressed support for Park's Korean Peninsula trust process and the Northeast Asia peace and cooperation initiative, according to the joint statement. The two visions call for promoting peace in a step-by-step manner beginning with small confidence-building projects.

Park also appealed in a meeting with British parliamentarians that North Korea's nuclear issue is an urgent task to be resolved as it jeopardizes peace, and that human rights conditions of the North Korean people is a matter that should not be left unattended any longer. "I think North Korea should discard its nuclear program and behave as a responsible member of the international community so as to open a new era of the Korean peninsula," she said.

Park added that the South Korean government will make efforts to induce North Korea to change by exercising patience even though the process will take time. The president said she would pursue with consistency her Korean Peninsula trust process and establish inter-

Korean relations that comply with common sense and international norms and establish sustainable peace on the peninsula.

Park and all of her counterparts were also in full agreement that a nuclear North Korea is unacceptable under any circumstances and that the communist nation must scrap its nuclear program in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. In her summit talks with European Council President Herman Van Rompuy and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, the top EU leaders expressed support for Park's peace visions and agreed to strengthen economic cooperation.

Russian President Vladimir Putin also expressed full support for Park's Korean Peninsula trust process plan. A joint statement announced at the end of the Park-Putin summit meeting in Seoul said the Russian Federation positively supports the efforts to build trust on the Korean Peninsula, which is an important condition for the normalization of inter-Korean relations, as well as for peace and stability in the Northeast Asian region. The statement also said Russia welcomes the Northeast Asia peace and cooperation initiative proposed by Park, and the two sides agreed to invigorate cooperation in this field.

Park and Putin also agreed that North Korea's nuclear armament should not be tolerated. "The two sides confirmed they cannot accept Pyongyang's policy of building independent nuclear and missile capabilities ... and stressed that North Korea cannot have the status of a nuclear state," the joint statement said.

Breaking the Vicious Cycle

They also emphasized that the North should abide by international denuclearization obligations and commitments, and agreed to work together to create the right conditions for restarting the long-stalled six-party talks on ending Pyongyang's nuclear program, the statement said. Russia is a member of the six-party talks, which are aimed at ending Pyongyang's nuclear program, and is also one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

The summit with Putin earned Park support on her signature North Korea policy and regional peace initiative from all four related super powers such as the U.S. and China, except for Japan with which she has yet to hold a summit meeting, and the five permanent member countries of the U.N. Security Council.

Before departing for Europe, Park said South Korea will make continued efforts to build trust between the two Koreas, although she expressed strong disappointment over North Korea's recent acts of breaching agreements.

In an interview with British broadcaster BBC released on Nov. 4, Park said North Korea's recent behavior was very disappointing, as they keep flouting promises. The interview was made at the presidential office in Seoul on Oct. 29, four days ahead of her three-nation European tour of France, Britain and Belgium.

She cited the North's abrupt postponement of the family reunion event scheduled for

September for dispersed families in the two Koreas, only four days before the reunions were to take place. "I'm saying North Korea is untrustworthy, but we will not give up but make continued efforts to persuade North Korea to come to the table for dialogue and build trust."

She also said North Korea should not be allowed to capitalize on nuclear disarmament talks to earn more time to move its atomic weapons program forward, referring to China's recent efforts to reopen the long-stalled six-party talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear development.

Park stressed that the international community must break the "vicious cycle" of rewarding Pyongyang's bad behavior, or it will be much harder to get the socialist nation to give up its nuclear program. "We must sever that vicious cycle of the past. We must make sure that we do not repeat a situation where North Korea says it will engage but instead buys time to advance the sophistication of its nuclear weapons," Park said during the interview.

"North Korea's actions and its behavior are very disappointing because they have not honored their promises," Park said. Referring to a series of actions North Korea has taken in violation of agreements. "But this is not to say that we will close the door entirely on North Korea. We will keep the door to dialogue open and continue our efforts to build trust," she said.

Inter-Korean relations plunged sharply early this year as Pyongyang ratcheted up war threats after conducting its third nuclear test. Later, relations between the neighbors had showed signs of thawing with the reopening of a joint industrial complex in the North, but chilled again after Pyongyang unilaterally called off reunions for separated families in September.

Park also vowed to deal sternly with any North Korean provocations. "While we will keep the door to dialogue open, we will also be sure that we meet any North Korean provocations ... with a very firm and unremitting response," she said.

In a separate interview with French daily *Le Figaro* published on Nov. 2, she expressed a willingness to meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un if it is necessary to improve inter-Korean relations and peace in the region. She said Seoul is ready to help the North and she can meet with the North's young leader if it is necessary for moving inter-Korean relations forward and promoting peace on the divided Korean Peninsula.

However, the office of the president later cautioned against reading too much into her remark, saying it was an unspecific and general statement. "It was an answer in principle," senior presidential press secretary Lee Jung-hyun said.

Backing up the presidential office's call for caution, the unification ministry said conditions are not ripe for pushing forward for a summit between the two Koreas.

Park has urged North Korea to give up its nuclear program, saying the communist nation is "pursuing an impossible illusion" by trying to rebuild its broken economy while concurrently seeking missile and nuclear weapons development.

"North Korea is ignoring the hunger and livelihoods of its people in order to maintain its regime," she said during the interview. (Yonhap News)

ASSESSING FEASIBILITY OF N. KOREA'S NEXT MISSILE LAUNCH

Experts at SAIS assess that N. Korea likely has the capability to mount a plutonium-based nuclear warhead on the shorter range Nodong missile already.

■ By Cheon, Sehun *Associate Researcher, Center for Conflict, Security and Terrorism at University of Nottingham, U.K.*

After the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il on Dec. 17, 2011 it was not immediately clear whether the succession process would give rise to the regime's rapid collapse or at least discernible instability in Pyongyang. But four months after his death, there had been few signs of regime change, with no overt indication of crisis or instability. Despite speculation that Kim Jong-un was too inexperienced to lead the country, his every move had gone off without a hitch since his ascent to power. In fact, the lack of information left analysts and policy makers around the world guessing what Kim Jong-un would look like, and many hoped for a fresh breeze in Pyongyang, for a new leadership that would focus the nation's resources on feeding its population instead of funding its nuclear weapon and missile programs.

Current Situation

However, Kim Jong-un relentlessly triggered unsettling provocations towards the international community. On April 13, 2012, his regime attempted to launch its new long-range rocket (called the Unha-3) in the face of international warnings to stand down. The United Nations resolutions already prohibited North Korea from conducting missile tests. The attempt ended in failure. But again, North Korea surprised and angered the international community by launching another long-range rocket on Dec. 11, 2012. The rocket was successfully launched, and put a satellite into orbit, beating the South Koreans by a month in their race to join the space club. Furthermore, two months after the

North's success in the rocket launch, it also carried out a nuclear test.

Such provocations have proved that the young Kim's strategies have deviated little from those of his predecessors. Some analysts assumed that Kim Jong-un was trying to cement his grip on power among the different groups, namely the Workers' Party of (North) Korea, the government and, above all, the politically crucial military. If the assumption is correct, we can surmise that Kim Jong-un's provocative and ruthless actions will hold out until his leadership in North Korea is entirely secure. Then again, it should also be expected that Kim Jong-un never stops such actions until he realizes his nuclear ambitions, as his predecessors did.

North Korea has recently pledged to continue to launch commercial satellites amid U.N. resolutions banning such actions at a committee meeting of the 68th U.N. General Assembly. An anonymous official at the meeting was quoted by Yonhap News Agency as saying that the North is committed to the peaceful development of space and that no country has a right to infringe on the DPRK's (North Korea's) sovereign rights in this field.

In addition, the Washington-based think tank 38 North at SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, said on Oct. 28, 2013, that the major construction work is underway at North Korea's missile launch station. It was said that a second flat mobile missile launch pad may be under development in the western town of Tongchang, where the North successfully launched the long-range rocket known as the Unha-3 in December.

38 North image analyst and report

author Nick Hansen said it is too early to know for certain what all of the building activity is aimed at. Hansen, however, speculated that enhancements to the launchpad used for the Unha-3 could be completed soon, permitting the North regime to fire larger space vehicles from the platform.

In a more recent post on the 38 North website, it was said that the first flight test of the KN-08 purported ICBM could occur at any time. KN-08, which was later found to be called the Hwaesong-13 in the North, has a theoretical range of 5,500 km to over 11,000 km, which means it is able to deliver a light nuclear warhead as far as Seattle. Jeffrey Lewis and John Shilling at SAIS said, "the KN-08 mockup that the North displayed in 2012 and 2013 are consistent with an ongoing development program for a missile with limited intercontinental capability using only existing North Korean technology".

International Response

At the same time, the South Korean intelligence agency made the revelations that the North has conducted five separate rocket engine tests this year and an underground test site in Punggye-ri is ready for nuclear device testing.

When North Korea launched the Unha-3 rocket last December, the international community questioned how effective fresh sanctions would be, given that similar measures introduced in 2006 and 2009 had not changed the North's behavior. In the case of the Unha-2 rocket launch by the North on April 5, 2009, the Obama administration

remained the most critical player in defusing the impasse – while China and Russia showed a tendency to stay back, South Korea, Japan, Britain, France and other major European nations took a tough stance against the North's case – and reaching a final solution of the North's missile issue. In the end, the U.N. Security Council agreed to adjust the measures imposed by the resolution UNSCR 1718 by requiring sanctions.

Unlike the former case, after North Korea launched the rocket last December, the international community condemned and expressed concerns about the North's provocative action, as it had before. However, none of the members of the Security Council immediately called for prompt actions on the North's violation of the UNSCR 1718. Then why didn't the members even demand increased sanctions, which the UNSCR 1718 requires? The reason is that the sanctions remain porous; North Koreans had evaded financial curbs by couriering cash in bulk. They had also converted civilian goods to military use. Eventually, the U.N. embargo, backed by all the members of the Security Council including China was tightened after the December launch and again after the February nuclear test.

North Korea has an extensive ballistic missile force that can strike South Korea, Japan and even U.S. military bases in Asia. It is continuing to develop ICBMs that would threaten the continental United States. The international community generally believes that North Korea indigenously produced and deployed perhaps 1,000 ballistic missiles of various types.

In July 2006, North Korea successfully launched six Scud and Nodong missiles. In July 2009, seven Scud missiles, which flew 300 miles prior to landing in the East Sea, were launched. As mentioned earlier, the North eventually succeeded in launching an ICBM-type missile on Dec. 12, 2012; Unha-3 with a theoretical range of between 5,500 to more than 11,000 kilometers.

As shown above, North Korea's missile forces cast a long shadow over all neighboring countries including U.S. military bases in Asia. The United States has sought to develop common missile defense policies to defend the region against missile attacks from the North. For Japan, the 1998 Taepodong-1 test launch and the 2006 Unha-2 launch caused Tokyo to accelerate planned missile defense deployments. Over the past decade, the U.S. and Japan have made strides in ballistic missile defense cooperation and interoperability.

By-products

In doing so, Japan has developed and deployed many cutting-edge weapons with regards to an integrated missile defense system with the United States. Nevertheless, several factors severely handicap its use. Japan's post-war pacifist constitution precludes engagement in "collective self-defense." Under the current constitutional interpretation, Japanese missile defense systems would not be allowed to intercept missiles attacking the United States or to protect the U.S. forces in Japan. In light of the increasing North Korean military threat, the Japanese government seized an oppor-

tunity to expand the role of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and a less restrictive interpretation of the edit against collective self-defense.

For South Korea, despite the steadily increasing North Korean missile threat, two former presidents, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, Klingner said, were fearful that deploying a missile defense system or even criticizing the North over its military provocations and human rights abuses would anger Pyongyang, lead to a collapse of the inter-Korean engagement policy and strain relations with China.

However, North Korea's never-ending nuclear ambitions and its fast-growing missile technology induced South Korea to build its own missile defense system. In February 2009, the South Korean government announced that it would build an independent lower-tier Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD) system by 2012. Meanwhile, the U.S. has kept pressing South Korea to join a regional missile defense system. On Oct. 16, Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin reiterated that South Korea would not join a comprehensive regional missile system with the United States and Japan.

As described above, North Korea's relentless missile ambitions have drastically changed the security environment in the region. Since 2010, North Korea has unveiled new ballistic missiles seemingly based on Soviet designs, although the new MRBM and mobile ICBM vehicles paraded through Pyongyang have not been flight tested, and as mentioned earlier, some analysts have assessed them as mock-ups. Despite international condemnation and

the U.N. sanctions, the North's regime twice in 2012 launched long-range ballistic missiles carrying ostensible satellite payloads, demonstrating the importance that Pyongyang places on the continued development of ballistic missiles. The missile launch last December was the first successful space launch after four failures (1998, 2006, 2009 and April 2012).

Prospects

By the way, Markus Schiller, missile expert, asserts that the 2012 December missile (Unha-3) is not capable of carrying a nuclear warhead at an intercontinental range. Indeed, a key concern about North Korea's missile test launches is the potential ability of the North to miniaturize a nuclear warhead and mate it to a ballistic missile. An anonymous official in DNI was quoted in a press release on April 13 as saying, "North Korea has not yet demonstrated the full range of capabilities necessary for nuclear armed missiles." Meanwhile, experts at SAIS assess that North Korea likely has the capability to mount a plutonium-based nuclear warhead on the shorter range Nodong missile already.

North Korea's launch campaigns are primarily done for political purposes; such actions would make the new leader Kim Jong-un's regime increase domestic support and draw global attention. On the other hand, it is likely that Kim's regime would take a radically different approach to expanding its nuclear ambitions. If so, Kim's regime would not stop launching missiles until the regime realizes its ambitions. (Yonhap News)

DECLINING STATUS OF PRO-PYONGYANG BODY IN JAPAN

The reason for the Chongryon's fall is attributable to its lavish support to the impoverished North Korea for many years.

■ By Lee Kwang-ho

For decades, the pro-Pyongyang association for Korean residents in Japan has been a staunch supporter of the North Korean regime. Chongryon, the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, has effectively represented the North Korean government since Tokyo and Pyongyang do not have diplomatic ties. But the organization has been facing degrading fate in recent years due to financial crisis and its outdated behaviors closely linked to Pyongyang regime.

Chongryon has come under close public scrutiny amid the unresolved issue of North Korea's abduction of Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as Pyongyang's continued nuclear and missile activities, the source of outrage from the Japanese government and its people. As the North has been under harsh United Nations sanctions for its provocative actions, it has no longer maintained its previous fame in the Korean society in Japan.

Financial Crisis of Chongryon

Traditionally, Chongryon has promoted pro-North Korean ideology among Koreans in Japan, raising funds through them for Pyongyang, and running businesses to generate cash for the isolationist country. It still provides practical services for the Korean community but not as much as before. Japanese officials say that money helps to prop up the North's economy and continue its nuclear weapons program.

As North Korea has moved ahead with its development of nuclear weapons and missiles capable of hitting Japan's major cities, Tokyo has tightened sanctions aimed at isolating Pyongyang and forcing it into

international negotiations.

North Korea's efforts to earn hard currency have suffered a setback not only due to U.N. sanctions, but also from the financial crisis of Chongryon. As a result, the status and influence of Chongryon have markedly decreased in the socialist nation.

The reason for the Chongryon's fall is also attributable to its lavish support to the impoverished North Korea for many years. In effect, Chongryon funneled huge amounts of money to North Korea in the mid-1990s when the massive famine took place in the country.

Hundreds of thousands of North Koreans were believed to have died from hunger caused by natural disasters and poor administration by the North Korean regime during the period called the "desperate march under trials." The arduous march period is remembered as the hardest time for North Koreans.

Chongryon had solid financial pipelines in Japan before. According to various reports and estimates, the number of credit unions affiliated with Chongryon stood at 38 in the 1990s, but 16 of them went bankrupt, and 19 were merged before and after the year 2000.

As the pro-Pyongyang organization faced financial problems, the Japanese government put up the building in downtown Tokyo for auction, suspecting that funds of a Chongryon-affiliated bank, which went bankrupt despite an injection of public funds, had been funneled back into Chongryon. A report revealed that the Tokyo government's loan-collecting agency RCC (Resolution and Collection Corporation) poured more than 1 trillion yen (US\$10.1 billion) of public funds into the organization.

Through the auction on Oct. 17, the building in Tokyo was sold to Avar LLC. for around US\$51 million. But the Tokyo District Court blocked the sale pending an investigation whether it is a paper company. Although the company is based in Mongolia, its owner and the purpose of the acquisition remain a mystery, according to Japanese broadcaster NHK. Further stoking suspicions about the company is the fact that no Mongolian business has ever bought a building in Tokyo before.

Reports from Foreign Newspapers

Located in the Chiyoda district, the building stands 10-story high with two basement floors. It was built in 1986 and put up for auction last year after a credit union run by Chongryon went bankrupt. In the first round of the auction in March, a Japanese religious group with close ties to high-ranking North Korean officials won the bid for around \$46 million but failed to secure necessary funds.

Recently, a column in the *Washington Post* said on Oct. 27 that the status and influence of Chongryon have markedly decreased in the socialist nation. Max Fisher, the Post's foreign affairs blogger, said, "The hermit kingdom has a number of ways to bring in cold, hard cash, but one of its previously most reliable has hit another setback in what appears to be its permanent decline."

Since its founding in the 1950s, Chongryon reportedly used to send between \$600 million

and \$1 billion to North Korea each year, most of it for the ruling Kim family. It once claimed around 250,000 members and had its own banking system, wielding huge political clout in North Korea, he said.

Chongryon, which was a “very effective sanctions-busting enterprise,” went bust itself last year, going formally broke, Fisher noted. Chongryon is accused of having prospered in the past on a number of illicit activities like cash-smuggling, bribery, tax evasion and unlicensed gambling businesses.

Fisher said, “In a sign of Chongryon’s waning importance to North Korea, the regime in Pyongyang has downgraded it within the all-important halls of power.” He cited a report by Japan’s *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper that Chongryon, previously under the control of a powerful body “Room No. 225,” is now overseen by the United Front Department of the North’s ruling Workers’ Party.

Room No. 225 is known as a North Korean government organ tasked with handling clandestine money-gathering operations abroad, while the United Front Department deals with inter-Korean relations and Koreans living overseas. “That might sound like simple bureaucratic shuffling, but it’s a big deal in North Korean politics, an indication that Chongryon is no longer the Pyongyang power player and lifeline it once was,” Fisher said.

The fall of Chongryon is also related to the remarkable economic growth of South Korea and rise of its international status, which is comparable to North Korea’s notoriety as an impoverished, rogue and hostile country.

Established in 1955, the number of Koreans affiliated with the Chongryon reached 430,000 at its peak, but as of today, it declined to mere 70,000, according to an unofficial estimate of Korean community in Japan. Officials at a pro-Seoul organization called Mindan, or the Korean Residents Union in Japan, said that many North Koreans in Japan gave up their North Korean citizenship. In 2003 alone, some 10,000 North Koreans relinquished their North Korean nationality.

Around 62,000 North Koreans

This is because of the Pyongyang’s official admittance of its abduction of Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s. Earning South Korean citizenship has also boomed due to the 2002 FIFA World Cup cohosted by South Korea and Japan. As North Korea’s hereditary power succession from Kim Jong-il to Kim Jong-un took place, an average of 100 Chongryon-affiliated Koreans obtained South Korean nationality per month. In Japan, Chongryon members are often restricted from their overseas trip.

Same is the fate of the pro-North Korean schools in Japan. The number of students at once stood at 40,000 but decreased to 6,000 recently, according to Mindan officials. The pro-Pyongyang schools have played a key role in cultivating core elites for Chongryon and propagating North Korean regime.

According to the foreign ministry in Seoul, around 62,000 North Koreans and around

486,000 South Koreans have settled in Japan with permanent residency status as of July 2009. Another estimated 30,000 Korean residents chose neither North nor South Korean citizenship when the peninsula was divided.

Japanese Justice Ministry statistics show around 10,000 Koreans became naturalized between 2003 and 2009. More and more North Korean and undecided citizenship holders became naturalized Japanese citizens. This is due to North Korea's notoriety as an impoverished country, while South Korea's international status has risen. According to Mindan, the number of Koreans in Japan with undecided citizenship decreased from around 100,000 in 2000 to around 30,000 in 2009.

But other unofficial statistics said that about one million ethnic Koreans live in Japan, and just over half of them hold Korean nationality. During Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 until its World War II defeat in 1945, hundreds of thousands of Koreans settled in Japan. Some came of their own free will for work or education, while others were conscripted into forced labor. Many returned to their homeland after the war was over when Korea, divided into North and South, gained independence.

For many of the Koreans who stayed in Japan, their loyalty was split along political lines. Today, the descendants of those Koreans number at around a million. Many are naturalized Japanese citizens, but over half a million ethnic Koreans hold citizenship from South Korea or are considered North Koreans.

In addition to their conflicting views on Korean politics, the two groups also differ on what role the Koreans in Japan should play in Japanese society. Neither group wants to relinquish Korean citizenship, in part due to what they say is harsh treatment and job discrimination many Koreans experienced in Japan in the past.

According to a recent report by the Associated Press, more than 9,000 ethnic Koreans in Japan go to schools, from kindergarten through college, closely affiliated with North Korea.

Now, Japan's government is moving to ostracize the schools even further by excluding them from subsidies. School officials say the impact of the exclusion policy, announced earlier this year, is still to be seen but will likely influence enrollment in schools and deepen the stigma they already face.

Despite criticism from human rights groups that the government is bullying a vulnerable ethnic group, Japanese officials say they are acting out of concern over the schools' ties to a hostile nation. The solution, they say, is for the schools to become more Japanese.

The schools estimated to number at 98 in total also receive funds from Pyongyang, but that income stream has largely dried up as North Korea has been struggling to meet its own domestic economic shortcomings.

In the 1950s and 1960s, North Korea's seemingly bright economic prospects and promise of a socialist paradise prompted many Koreans in Japan to align with Pyongyang – which was quick to support their schools. That legacy continues to be a major factor behind why so many Koreans in Japan associate themselves with North Korea, despite Pyongyang's subsequent decline and isolation, according to the AP report. (Yonhap News)

N. KOREA'S DEVELOPMENT OF MORE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

N. Korea's economic policy under the Kim Jong-un regime focuses on inviting foreign investment through developing special economic zones.

■ By Kim Tae-shik

North Korea has designated 14 new special economic zones (SEZs) this year, a more than three-fold increase from the current number, and promoted the status of the country's economic development agency from a general bureau to a state commission, indicating that the impoverished country's economic development policy under leader Kim Jong-un is focused on attracting foreign investment.

According to an Oct. 28 article of *Rodong Sinmun*, an organ of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), an academician from the prestigious Kim Il-sung University has confirmed the sharp increase in the development zones, up from the current four operational zones in the country. Speaking at an international conference on special economic zones, Prof. Kang Jong-nam of the university's Faculty of Law said there are four SEZs in North Korea with 14 more newly designated this year.

New Special Economic Zones

Economists and other academics from Canada, Malaysia, America, India and China took part in the event held on Oct. 16 and 17 in Pyongyang, along with officials of the State Economic Development Commission and the Economic Development Association as well as North Korean economists.

Though the daily did not name the new sites, they are expected to be in provinces and major cities. The paper quoted Kang as saying that legal regulations, administrative support, development and management of such regions are all in place.

Pyongyang has been moving to create development zones ever since leader Kim called on regional governments to create special zones in each city and province during a meeting of WPK members in late March.

The leader, who took power after the death of his father nearly two years ago, has emphasized the importance of building up the country's industrial base.

North Korea currently has four special economic zones: the Hwanggumphyong and Wihwa islands, Kaesong Industrial Complex, Mount Kumgang region and Rason.

Pyongyang watchers in the South, meanwhile, said newly designated special zones include economic zones, agricultural zones and tourism zones, including ones in Kaesong, Sinuiju, Phyongsong, Nampho, Kangryong, Haeju and Wonsan.

The North has set aside Wonsan on the east coast and Mount Chilbo in North Hamgyong Province as a special tourism region along with Kangryong County on the southwestern coast this year.

According to experts and reports from the North, the socialist country designated a special high-tech technology development zone in Kaesong separate from the existing joint factory park in the border city that is currently home to 123 South Korean factories.

North Korea will jointly build a hi-tech industrial park in its border city of Kaesong with a consortium of foreign firms from Singapore and other nations, according to the socialist country's official media.

The firms include Jurong Consultants and OKP Holdings of Singapore, P and T Architects and Engineers of Hong Kong and other "well-known" companies in East Asia and the Middle East, according to a brief dispatch released on Oct. 17 by the (North) Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

10-year Development Plan

"The consortium agreed with the North's related organs on collaboration in building the Kaesong Hi-Tech Industrial Park and Highway Toll Road from Capital Airport to Pyongyang City," the KCNA said. "The projects will soon begin," it added, giving no further details.

In May, North Korea introduced a new law that calls for building SEZs, including a hi-tech industrial park, across the country. Under that law, the special zones would give preferential treatment to foreign businesses.

The two Koreas recently resumed operations at a joint industrial park in Kaesong, just north of the inter-Korean border, after the socialist country withdrew its 53,000 workers from the zone in April in protest of American-involved military drills in the South and new U.N. sanctions enforced against its regime.

"Considering Kaesong's geographical location, it appears that North Korea is trying to attract South Korea's advanced technology with the expectation that inter-Korean ties will improve in the long term," said Lim Eul-chul, a research professor at Kyungnam University in Changwon, about 400 kilometers south of Seoul.

Others, however, suggested that the new project could reflect the North's lack of interest in expanding the existing industrial complex in Kaesong. The complex, a key outcome of the first-ever inter-Korean summit in 2000, combines South Korean capital and technology with cheap North Korean labor to produce clothes, utensils, watches and other labor-intensive goods. The project serves as a key source of cash for the impoverished country.

In a related move, North Korea renamed the General Bureau for State Economic Development the State Economic Development Commission. The KCNA reported on Oct. 16 a decree of the Presidium of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly was promulgated in this regard.

The General Bureau for State Economic Development was established in 2011 to draw up a 10-year development plan for national economy. That North Korea elevated the level from a bureau to a state commission means the country wants to strengthen the function of the economic development organization, according to North Korea experts.

Cho bong-hyun, a researcher of the IBK Economic Research Institute in Seoul, said "the commission should be regarded as an organ which controls the country's overall economic development policies, including the development of special economic zones and the 10-year development plan." Cho said leader Kim will likely announce some bold measures to boost economic development.

Japan's *Asahi Shimbun* reported on Oct. 28 that North Korea has suggested to foreign investors to give them long-term land rights. The leading Japanese daily said it confirmed in the investment proposal authored by the State Economic Development Commission of North Korea that foreign firms that are going to invest in the North's special economic zones will be provided with the right to use land and the right to develop the zone for 50 years.

Skepticism over North Korea's Efforts

North Korea's economic development policy under Kim focuses on inviting foreign investment through developing special economic zones and rearing up tourism industry. As the country is in dire need of capital, it is all out to introduce foreign investment.

The tourism industry has emerged as a key strategic industry for economic development and its success depends on how to invite foreign capital. At the center of tourism industry development is the Wonsan special tourist region, North Korea experts said.

That North Korea pushes ahead with the construction of a ski resort on Masik Pass as a state project and that North Korea urges South Korea to discuss the resumption of stalled tour projects to its scenic Mount Kumgang resort are related with the development of the Wonsan tourist region.

North Korea also established a private-level economic development association to help facilitate the inducement of foreign investment and arrange international investment seminars and distribute investment information.

The KCNA reported on Oct. 16 that the Economic Development Association was orga-

nized in North Korea as a non-governmental organization and it helps foreign businesses and entities to get better knowledge of SEZs in the DPRK and to make investments in them.

The association is also working to assist business activities of foreign investors in the zones, the KCNA wrote, adding phone numbers and an email address for contact.

There is skepticism over whether North Korea's efforts to induce foreign investment will be successful under the economic sanctions of the international community against the regime. As the international sanctions remain intact, the North's efforts to allure foreign investment cannot but have a fundamental limitation.

As inter-Korean relations stagnate, North Korea is likely to place emphasis on inviting foreign capital rather than South Korean investors. North Korea will likely make efforts to pull in investment from its only ally, China.

North Korea is speeding up the construction work to build a bridge linking its border city of Sinuiju in North Phyongan Province and the Chinese city of Dandong. When the bridge is built, North Korea-China economic cooperation will be accelerated, which some experts worry would intensify North Korea's economic dependency on China.

The country is also stepping up economic cooperation with Russia. A railway section between the North's Rajin Port and Russia's Far Eastern city of Khasan opened for service in late September, which will inevitably promote economic cooperation between the two countries, the KCNA said.

"The railway section from Rajin to Khasan will be helpful to the economy, transport service and people's wellbeing of the two countries. It can also develop into an international transit between Asia and Europe," the news agency said.

Park Hyung-joong, head of the Center for North Korean Studies under the Korea Institute for National Unification, said there are some economic tryouts by the Kim regime but it is doubtful if the conditions for successful accomplishment have been prepared.

"While the problem of its nuclear programs remains unsettled and unless the (North's) domestic economic environment is changed fundamentally, the recent tries for economic development will end in smoke as past economic reform attempts did," he said.

Although North Korea is suggesting various incentives to allure foreign investment in special economic zones, there remain numerous obstacles hindering the inflow of foreign capital in the socialist country, experts said. North Korea should first clear away investors' doubts if the laws and systems Pyongyang has prepared to induce foreign investment are to be effective.

While there is scanty trust in North Korea's guarantee of free economic activities of foreign businesses in the country, it will be difficult to attract foreign investors with just laws and systems, they said.

"It is very rare for foreign businesses to be successful in their inroads into North Korea," Park said. "Because North Korea is perceived as a country with big risk in business activities, Pyongyang's strategy to develop special economic zones will not easily be successful." (Yonhap News)

NEW CAMPAIGN TO ENSURE SAFETY OF NORTH KOREANS

“If more volunteers could gather to achieve this common goal, their efforts would have a more far-reaching influence,” Pastor Jung said.

■ By Park So-jung

Freshly ordained pastor Peter Jung did not plan on coming back to South Korea when he first left for China in 1998 to become a Christian missionary. Unaware of the hundreds of thousands of North Korean refugees he would encounter in the northeastern province of Liaoning, the then fledgling pastor did not imagine he would one day establish a basement office in Seoul to advocate for the rights of fellow Koreans who were born just 65 kilometers north of the South Korean capital.

“Everywhere I went, there were North Korean orphans who died of hunger and cold,” Jung, now the director of Seoul-based non-profit Justice for North Korea (JFNK), said in an interview with *Vantage Point*.

During the Great Famine of the late 1990s, hundreds of thousands of North Koreans swarmed into China in search of food after the state rationing system collapsed and failed to provide essential services to the people. “I couldn’t just stand by and watch, so I began providing shelter to these women and children by night, and studied by day,” said Jung.

Other missionaries joined him in his secretive project, which gradually expanded to reach a greater circle of North Korean refugees. But as the number of shelters grew – and the concerns of being caught by the Chinese police grew as well – Jung and his colleagues decided to send these refugees to South Korea where they would be safe.

In the summer of 2003, Jung was caught by Chinese police, who sent a North Korean posing as a defector to arrest him. Following his one-and-a-half prison term in Jilin Province, he decided to launch an NGO to raise awareness about the dire human rights conditions North

Koreans face in their home country and other transit countries leading to South Korea.

In May 2007, JFNK began protesting outside of Chinese consulates in South Korea and a dozen European countries in a campaign that ran for 444 days until the opening night of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The number four, which is homophonous with the word “death” in Chinese, was used to signify the deaths of North Koreans through trafficking, labor exploitation, torture and beatings in China.

In a bid to save North Koreans, JFNK in late 2007 started street campaigns in Seoul, in which volunteers re-enacted the scenario of North Korean refugees getting caught by a Chinese guard on the border.

In 2012, a new campaign called “Save My Friends (SMF)” was launched to petition the South Korean foreign ministry to ensure the safety of North Koreans who are forcibly sent back to the North from China and other transit countries. This year’s “SMF before Christmas” campaign calls on the ministry to protect the nine North Korean youths who are feared to face torture, imprisonment and execution following their repatriation from Laos in May.

However, Jung’s outlook on JFNK’s progress since its launch is grim. “Nothing that we wanted has been achieved,” said Jung. “China continues to repatriate North Koreans against their will, who in turn face forced abortions, labor and political imprisonment in their home country,” he said.

Though China is a party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 protocol, it continues to deny protection of North Korean refugees, claiming they are economic migrants, not asylum seekers.

The number of North Koreans arriving in the South has also been declining since young leader Kim Jong-un took power. Some 1,500 North Koreans entered South Korea last year, according to the South’s unification ministry, which is about half the figure in 2011. Jung said the declining trend may be due to tightened border control by North Korea and China, in addition to the lack of assistance South Korean consulates provide to refugees when they arrive at their doors in transit countries.

This summer, Jung and a fellow South Korean human rights activist published “Persecution,” a book chronicling the history of religious persecution in North Korea. “You cannot possibly discuss North Korea without discussing Christianity there,” Jung said. Indeed, the North Korean capital of Pyongyang used to be known as the “Jerusalem of the East” because



Pastor Peter Jung (center) poses with Justice for North Korea volunteers and staff members from the U.N. Commission of Inquiry on North Korean human rights following a street campaign in downtown Seoul on Aug. 31, 2013. (Yonhap Photo)

of its once large missionary community prior to the Japanese occupation of the Korean Peninsula.

Even North Korean founder Kim Il-sung was raised by Protestant parents, but as the growing Christian community threatened his grip on power, he began to incarcerate them in the 1950s, throwing hundreds of thousands of Christians into underground churches and leaving the socialist land devoid of open religious activities by the mid-1950s.

In 1988, North Korea for the first time approved public worship at the state-built Pongsu Church in Pyongyang – a turn of events defectors have attributed to external pressure to allow greater religious freedom in the repressive country.

A year later, another state-approved church called Chilgol was built, followed by the establishment of Pyongyang Jeil Church in 2005 with the support of the South Korean Christian community. North Korean defectors, however, maintain that worshippers at these churches are hand-picked by the ruling Workers' Party to serve as props to show that the country supports religious freedom.

Jung estimates that there are some 400,000 underground Christians today in the isolated country, including those who have preserved their faith since before the 1950-53 Korean War and those who were evangelized in China and returned to North Korea. These Christians, if caught, are sent to political prison camps or are used as live military training dummies or as subjects of biological experiments, according to Jung.

The process of purging Christians has also become more systematic, with the prestigious Kim Il-sung University having a department dedicated to locating, interrogating and punishing believers of what the country calls the “wicked teachings of the U.S. imperialists.”

When asked what the international community could do to resolve this situation, Jung said the world needs to shift its attention away from the North's nuclear and missile programs and focus on the grave human rights violations that continue to plague North Korea. “North Korea hasn't even responded to the request by the United Nations' Commission of Inquiry (COI) to allow investigators into the country,” he said, referring to an independent U.N. panel launched in March to determine whether human rights abuses in North Korea amount to crimes against humanity.

“More NGOs and private organizations should work toward raising awareness about the North Korean human rights conditions among South Koreans,” Jung asserted, adding that the South's understanding of human rights abuses in the North is indispensable to any preparations for reunification. “The international community must also pressure China to recognize North Korean defectors as refugees and stop their forcible repatriation to a country where they would face torture, beating and execution,” he added.

Jung admitted that none of these goals would be possible with the effort of just one person, organization or country. “In order to achieve justice in North Korea, many parties and organizations will have to cooperate,” he said. “If more volunteers could gather to achieve this common goal, their efforts would have a more far-reaching influence than any one person or country could ever attain.” (Yonhap News)

DWELLINGS AND CAMP LIFE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

Detainees are prohibited from all verbal or written communication with relatives and are absolutely forbidden to have any contact with the outside world.

Civil Right, Family Right and Forced Labor

Once a condemned person enters a detention camp, the camp authorities confiscate his citizen ID card, depriving him of fundamental civic rights such as the right to vote or to run for public office. It seems that Party membership, marriage and childbirth have at times been allowed inside the camp. Kim Hye-suk became an exemplary member of the League of Socialist Working Youth and entered the Party on recommendations from Primary Party Committee and Primary League of Socialist Working Youth in October 1984 while imprisoned in a Political Concentration Camp. She also married a blaster working in her coal mine, and gave birth to his child.

Enjoying a married life inside the camp is something every inmate dreams of. The guidance officer decides whether to permit a marriage. Thus, all inmates try to win this officer's favor by working hard, volunteering for risky jobs, observing all rules and regulations, and even spying on other inmates. This is the only way to win the highest honor: the so-called "marriage commendation." Detainees are prohibited from all verbal or written communication with family/relatives and are absolutely forbidden to have any contact with the outside world, including relatives.

Normally, the inmates wake up before dawn, eat breakfast, and get ready for work. Security agents and work supervisors conduct roll call. Work is assigned to each unit of five workers. To prevent conversation or conspiracy, inmates are to work until dusk. About two hours are taken for lunch; the inmates eat steamed corn rolls they have brought with them. Before the day is over, a security agent or supervisor con-

firms the progress of work, and if the work is behind schedule they decide whether to extend the prisoners' work hours.

Inmates usually wake up at 4 a.m., eat breakfast, and leave for work at 5 a.m. By the time they arrive at work it is about 6 a.m. Weekend breaks are never granted in the camp, so everyone works on Saturdays and Sundays. Inmates are given one day off every month, usually at the beginning of each month. They also rest on annual holidays, which include New Year's Day and the birthdays of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il.

The inmates are mobilized to work on holidays. In the case of the No. 18 Pukchang Political Concentration Camp, detainees are mobilized on holidays to work in the houses of the coal mine guidance officers or security agents. They plow fields, plant potatoes, or carry coal to be stored inside the warehouses.

In some cases, forced labor resulted in death. In the case of the No. 18 Pukchang Political Concentration Camp, many of the inmates ended up dying from accidents within the coal mines. Kim Hye-suk's brother also lost his life while working in the coal mine.

Meanwhile, it has been revealed that the Political Concentration Camps pay wages for forced labor. Kim Hye-suk used to save her wages. One day she bought 80 kilograms of seaweed with the saved money. Her husband also earned wages. In addition to the wages, each coal mine workers were provided with one piece of soap and one pair of gloves per month, and a pair of shoes every 6 months.

Housing and Right to Health

In these detention camps, single people or those imprisoned without their spouses live collectively in barracks while families live in huts which they built themselves with wood, mud, and straw mats. Because the floors and walls are made of earth, the rooms are very dusty. Roofs in most cases are made from wooden boards covered with straw mats. Floors may be covered with mats made of bark. Rain leaks in and it is extremely cold in the winter.

Under such miserable conditions, many prisoners suffer from pneumonia, tuberculosis, pellagra and other diseases, mainly due to malnutrition and heavy labor. Many suffer from frostbite or hemorrhoids, but everyone, without exception, is forced to work. When a sickness becomes so bad that the foreman decides the prisoner can no longer work, the prisoner is sent to a sanatorium and essentially abandoned, as there are no proper medicines or doctors.

The mother of North Korean defector Kim Hye-suk used to climb hills to catch earthworms in a bucket and to feed to farmraised hens and ducks while she was confined in the concentration camp. In the process, she became physically feeble. Even though her abdomen swelled from ascites, she was not treated with proper medicine. Kim Hye-suk bought nutritional supplements for her mother by selling Chinese rice. After taking the nutritional supplements, her symptoms were relieved. However, once the supplements ran out, the symptoms returned. After being confined to her home with the illness for six months, she eventually passed away at the relatively young age of 43. Kim Hye-suk's husband came

down with pellagra while in the Pukchang Political Concentration Camp during the Arduous March. Many inmates confined in the concentration camp died from pellagra, as most suffer from nutritional deficiencies.

Right to Food and Education

The daily ration at coal mines and farms amounts to 900 grams of corn per person a day. Since the mid-1990s, the inmates have been given only 700 grams, as 200 grams are taken away in the name of “grain savings.” For side-dishes, inmates receive three pieces of salted lettuce and a handful of salt. The work is hard and intensive but the quality of each meal is very poor, so all inmates suffer from extreme hunger all the time. The most popular activity among inmates is to catch mice for cooking and eating. When inmates are dispatched to help out at collective farms, they can easily catch mice.

In the case of North Korean defector Kim Hye-suk, a mere eight kilograms of rice and grains were distributed to her seven-member family per month. She said that because there was no other means to obtaining food, they had to gather edible wild greens in the mountains to satisfy their hunger. Whenever they had a day off, the entire family went to the hillside to gather edible wild greens and stored them for food.

Traditional holidays were no better than ordinary days. Luckily, Kim Hye-suk’s family was able to have the rice mixed with corn on traditional holidays without having to mix in wild edible greens. During winter, it was extremely difficult to obtain things to eat. Kim Hye-suk’s mother bought a millstone and ground corn to make porridge for each meal. People suffered from malnutrition to the point where their own relatives could not recognize them because they were so emaciated.

At the camp “people’s school” (elementary school), the daily routine is almost the same as other elementary schools across North Korea, except for the labor details the children are mobilized for from time to time. However, there is a significant difference between camp schools and schools outside in terms of course subjects, content of instruction, and the teacher-student relationship. At camp elementary schools, they teach only three subjects: Korean language, math, and physical education. No other subjects are taught there. Subjects like Kim Il-sung, the Party, revolution, North Korean history, geography, science, music and fine arts are never taught in the camps.

In middle/high school, camp students spend most of their time at factories, farms, or coal mines, so most former inmates do not have particular memories of their middle school days. At the camp schools, therefore, students do not study in classrooms but are mobilized for work at farms or factories as soon as they graduate from elementary school and matriculate to middle school. In high schools there are no textbooks, only notes taken during the Lifestyle Review meetings.

(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.)

Kim Jong-un Seeks Army Support, Loyalty by Holding Commanders' Meeting

Analysts said the purpose of the meeting was likely aimed at bolstering the allegiance of officers to the leader, and improving morale of troops.

Since taking power in late 2011, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has been trying to gain the confidence of the people by holding a variety of nationwide meetings of all walks of life. This time, the young leader strives to gain support from the military through a meeting of some 20,000 company commanders and political instructors.

The North Korean company-grade military officers and political commissars gathered in October in the socialist capital of Pyongyang for a rare meeting that is aimed at eliciting their loyalty to leader Kim.

Kim directly supervised the meeting, making opening and closing speeches, calling on company commanders and political instructors to rally around the ruling Workers' Party of Korea and help it overcome all challenges.

The call was made at the fourth meeting of military officers and political directors of the (North) Korean People's Army (KPA) that took place in Pyongyang on Oct. 22 and Oct. 23, the (North) Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said on Oct. 25.

Attending the event were other leading

officials of the armed forces organs, commanding officers of the KPA, company commanders, political instructors, commanding officers and political officials of units at all levels "who have devoted themselves to safeguarding the sky, land and sea of the country and strengthening companies," according to the KCNA report.

Kim, who took power after the death of his father Kim Jong-il in December 2011, ordered officers to prepare their troops both militarily and ideologically, and to instill a greater sense of discipline.

The KCNA said that Kim made both the opening and closing speeches at the gathering, an unusual show of the leader's interest in the proceedings.

The 20,000-strong meeting is the largest convened by the North and the first held in more than a decade. The last company commanders meeting was held in 1999, while Pyongyang convened a meeting of political directors assigned to company-level formation the following year.

The media outlet, meanwhile, reported that Ri Yong-gil, the chief of the General Staff of the KPA; Jang Jong-nam, the

Armed Forces minister; National Security Agency chief Kim Won-hong; and the head of the Ministry of People's Security, Choe Pu-il, all attended the meeting.

According to the KCNA report, the meeting reviewed achievements and experiences gained in strengthening companies in the past and discussed tasks and ways for further strengthening companies, cells of the KPA and basic combat units.

In his opening speech, Kim Jong-un stressed that when all the participants strengthen companies, cells and basic combat units of the People's Army, to repay the party's trust and expectation, the might of the powerful revolutionary army of Mount Paektu will be highly displayed. He then expressed the conviction that the ongoing meeting will serve as a historical landmark in arousing the whole army to improve companies.

Choe Ryong-hae, director of the KPA General Political Bureau, called on officers to forge the KPA into an invincible military force by adhering to the teachings and guiding principles of the country's founder Kim Il-sung and later leader Kim Jong-il.

Choe said that Kim Jong-un wants service personnel to be brave and stalwart fighters who can eliminate 100 enemies single-handedly, and provided energetic guidance to turn all companies into steel-strong militant ranks, having strong discipline and assuming the perfect appearance as the regular armed forces by scrupulously managing the companies.

Later, Kim Jong-un called for establishing strong discipline in the companies, boosting their appearance as regular units, decisively raising the level of company com-

manding ability, and improving the living conditions and environment of the soldiers.

Kim also awarded the title of Labor Hero, a gold medal (hammer and sickle), and Order of National Flag First Class to five exemplary commanders and officers.

In his closing address, Kim Jong-un said that the meeting would go down in the history of building a Juche (self-reliance)-based army as it provided a landmark for the development of the powerful revolutionary army of Mount Paektu.

The commanders' meeting brought together the largest group for such a meeting and came as North Korea is trying to build up its nuclear arms and its economy at the same time. Like many communist nations, the North has political instructors assigned to all company-level or higher commands to oversee political indoctrination of front-line troops.

On Oct. 28, a rally was held at the plaza of the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun in Pyongyang to pay high tribute to Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il, and thoroughly implement the important tasks set forth by Kim Jong-un in his "historic speech" made at the 4th meeting.

Analysts in Seoul said the purpose of the meeting was likely aimed at bolstering the allegiance of officers to the leader, improving morale of troops and instilling a greater sense of discipline in the military's rank and file. According to the KCNA report, Kim Jong-un on Oct. 29 also guided the shooting contest of the participants at the 4th meeting of the company commanders and political instructors of the KPA. (Yonhap News)

Mongolian President Says 'No Tyranny Lasts Forever' in Pyongyang

Elbegdorj voiced hope that N. Korean students would "have all what it takes to lead the N. Korean people to a happy and prosperous future."

Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, at the end of his rare visit to North Korea in late October, encouraged the North to let its people "live free" and emulate Mongolia's model of transformation," according to a transcript of Elbegdorj's speech.

Elbegdorj gave the speech at the Kim Il-sung University on Oct. 31 or before wrapping up his four-day visit to North Korea from Oct. 28, the Mongolian leader's office said in the transcript.

Elbegdorj, who was also the first Mongolian leader to visit Pyongyang in nine years, discussed with North Korean officials the furthering of economic and other cooperation between the two countries, including the North's titular head of state Kim Yong-nam, according to the North's state media. A much-expected meeting with Kim Jong-un did not take place, however.

The last visit by a Mongolian head of state to North Korea was in December 2004 when former President Natsagiin Bagabandi visited Pyongyang. Bagabandi held talks with Kim Yong-nam but did not

meet with Kim Jong-il.

According to the English-language transcript, Elbegdorj said, "No tyranny lasts forever. It is the desire of the people to live free that is the eternal power."

"I believe in the power of freedom. Freedom is an asset bestowed upon every single man and woman. Freedom enables every human to discover and realize his or her opportunities and chances for development," he said. "Free people look for solutions in themselves."

"Strengthening a free society and transitioning to it is not easy. It is a daily task, a grueling mundane routine to clean our free society from ills and dirt, just like parents change the diapers of their babies every morning," he said.

The visit by Elbegdorj spawned speculation that he could hold a summit with the North's young leader, in what would be his debut on the summit diplomacy stage, but such a meeting did not appear to have taken place.

Kim has been tightening his grip on power and conducted his country's third nuclear test in February of this year, draw-

ing condemnation and sanctions from the international community, including China.

North Korea is becoming increasingly isolated within the international community as it continues to defy international warnings against its nuclear and missile programs. In April this year, Pyongyang asked Ulan Bator for food aid.

Activists said North Korea, one of the world's most reclusive and repressive nations, is holding hundreds of thousands of political prisoners in at least six facilities where they face extrajudicial executions, torture and forced labor. Pyongyang has flatly denied the accusations, calling them a U.S.-led attempt to topple the regime.

Calling Kim "a young man," Elbegdorj voiced hope that the North Korean students at the university would "have all what it takes to lead the (North) Korean people to a happy and prosperous future."

In the "notes" part of the transcript, the Mongolian presidential office said, "No questions were asked, but the audience of professors and students offered a lengthy applause until the president left the audience."

But North Korean media did not report his speech in Kim Il-sung University. The North's state media reported on Oct. 29 the Mongolian president stressed that his country will work with Pyongyang to promote stability in Northeast Asia, in a banquet hosted by the North's Presidium of Supreme People's Assembly (SPA).

The (North) Korean Central Television (KCTV) said President Elbegdorj emphasized the important role that can be played by Pyongyang and Ulan Bator in pushing forward peace and stability in the region.

The broadcaster said the remark was made by the chief executive following talks with Kim Yong-nam, the president of the SPA Presidium.

Kim Yong-nam, meanwhile, said that there has been continuous cooperation in military and sports as well as in political and economic realms, and that Pyongyang is committed to expanding strong ties with Ulan Bator.

North Korea experts in Seoul and abroad said Elbegdorj's visit is significant, as it marks the first one by a foreign head of state since Kim Jong-un took control of the socialist country.

Elbegdorj arrived in Pyongyang on Oct. 28 and visited the truce town of Panmunjom and the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun in Pyongyang, a mausoleum housing the bodies of North Korea's founder Kim Il-sung and late leader Kim Jong-il. He also watched a performance by the Mansudae Art Troupe at the East Pyongyang Grand Theater.

Elbegdorj also met with Pak Pong-ju, premier of the North's Cabinet, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall in Pyongyang on Oct. 30, the (North) Korean Central News Agency reported the same day, without elaborating on the content of the talks.

Elbegdorj's visit to North Korea will likely expand substantial bilateral cooperation, North Korea watchers said. North Korea and Mongolia have maintained close ties as socialist countries. Elbegdorj's visit is expected to contribute to expanding the traditional ties further, especially in the field of economic cooperation, they said. (Yonhap News)

<Internal Affairs>

N. Korea Cabinet Meeting Highlights Potential in Farming, Light Industry

Agriculture and light industry topped the agenda of a meeting involving the North Korean Cabinet, regional planning officials and businesspeople, Pyongyang's state-run media reported on Oct. 21.

"Our major task is to solve the shortages of food and consumer goods by developing agriculture and light industry," the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) quoted the officials as saying.

Present at the Cabinet's enlarged plenary session was Premier Pak Pong-ju, along with the chairpersons of various provincial committees, factory managers and businessmen who attended as observers.

The goal of the meeting was to review the third-quarter results of the North's economy and outline plans for the fourth quarter.

Increasing coal and steel production and raising the standards for education, healthcare and sports were also discussed in the meeting, the KCNA reported. (Yonhap News)

North Korean University Students Sweep Global Coding Contests

A team of students from North Korea's prestigious Kim Il-sung University has won a monthly global programming contest for the third consecutive month, a pro-North Korean newspaper in Japan reported on Oct. 24, in the latest showing of the reclusive country's surprising prowess in the field of technology.

The team from the Pyongyang-based university came out on top of this month's CodeChef, an international coding contest hosted by Indian software company Directi, *Choson Sinbo* said.

The team had won the same competition in August and September, surprising spectators by beating a group of programmers from the U.S. tech firm Google in the latter contest, the newspaper run by the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan said.

The students "hoisted the flag of our republic as the world's No. 1 programmers," read *Choson Sinbo*, which added that the students' programming knowledge "astonished others at the event."

In July, the same team won Codeforces, a programming contest held by a Russian state university. In March, students at the University of Natural Science in Pyongyang took the No. 1 title of Codechef, followed by a similar victory by students from Kim Chaek University of Technology in June.

North Korea is known to operate a cyber warfare unit of 3,000 hackers who are trained to break into South Korean computer networks to steal information and distribute malware.

N. Korean Economist Says Peace Necessary for Economic Success

A leading North Korean economist said recently that peaceful atmosphere is necessary for realizing the socialist country's goal of becoming an economic power.

"Peaceful environment is essential" for economic development, said Ri Haeng-ho, who leads a Pyongyang-based association of economists, in the October issue of *Kumsugangsan*, a North Korean monthly publication aimed at publicizing the country's political system to the outside world.

"We do not want the tension escalation (on the Korean Peninsula) to worsen, as we should be heading toward peace building," the 72-year-old economist said.

Ri said North Korea has always resorted to maximum self-control at times of heightened tension and that the strong power of the country's military-first policy has been the foundation of such control.

The former economic researcher at North Korea's social science academy seems to have been promoted recently to the current post.

The chairman also said North Korea has put its focus on growth in productivity in the agricultural and light-industry sectors, as well as on developing science technology and building tourist zones.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has earlier pledged to build the country as an economic power as one of his two major goals that also include building up its nuclear capacity. (Yonhap News)

N. Korea Wins 360 Medals at International Sports Competitions

North Korean athletes collected more than 360 medals at international sports competitions this year, over four times the amount they won in the same period last year, a North Korean radio station reported on Nov. 5.

"Our athletes participated in more than 60 competitions from January to October this year, and won over 360 medals," Kim Mu-hyon, a ranking North Korean sports official told the Pyongyang Broadcasting Station.

"That's a 4.3-fold increase from last year," said Kim, the deputy secretary-general of the State Physical Culture and Sports Guidance Commission.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has repeatedly shown interest in developing the nation's competitiveness in global sports, and the latest number suggests the country may be making progress in achieving his goal.

North Korea founded the powerful State Physical Culture and Sports Guidance Commission last November, and named Jang Song-thaek, the uncle of leader Kim, as the chairman of the organization.

North Korean athletes also won over 50 gold medals at various sports events across the

globe between January and July of this year, according to *Rodong Sinmun*, an organ of the ruling Workers' Party of (North) Korea. (Yonhap News)

North Korea Starts Building Science & Tech Zone in Kaesong

North Korea has begun collaborating with foreign companies to build a science and technology zone in Kaesong in which foreigners will be free to invest and start their businesses, the state-run media reported on Nov. 11.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the Latest Science and Technology Development Zone located near the inter-Korean joint industrial complex in Kaesong was attended by Jang Sunam, the head of the Peace and Economy Development Group, and foreign officials related to the project, the KCNA reported.

The KCNA said in October that companies from Singapore, Hong Kong and China would be taking part in the country's development projects, such as building the aforementioned zone and a highway connecting an airport to the capital city of Pyongyang.

The move comes after North Korea enacted a law in May that allows foreigners to invest and establish businesses in the so-called economic development zones in fields such as industry, agriculture, tourism, science and technology.

Jang said the Latest Science and Technology Development Zone would help promote friendship and collaboration among different countries. He reiterated that the North has and will continue to protect the rights of investors in the country.

Foreign participants of the ceremony also expressed hope that the zone would contribute to the North's regional development and improved living standards for North Koreans, the KCNA reported. (Yonhap News)

<External Affairs>

North Korea Slams Efforts to Beef up U.S.-Japan Alliance

North Korea on October 16 lambasted ongoing efforts by the United States and Japan to strengthen their military alliance, claiming such a development could threaten world peace.

Rodong Sinmun, an organ of the ruling Workers' Party of (North) Korea, said the bilateral military alliance can only be viewed as a tool to invade other countries and does nothing to safeguard peace in the region.

The agreement reached at the latest U.S.-Japan defense meeting reflects Washington's

eagerness to draw in Tokyo's support for its aggressive Asia-Pacific policy goal, while Japan seeks to build up its military might, the paper said.

At the meeting held in Tokyo on Oct. 3, Washington expressed support in regards to Japan exercising its right to "collective self-defense" and other measures that can enhance the country's war capabilities. The allies also agreed to rewrite the joint security guidelines by the end of 2014.

Rodong Sinmun argued that Japan is trying to reconstitute its Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere that was used as an excuse to invade other countries during World War II.

"Japan is in the process of acquiring high-tech weaponry and becoming a military power," it said.

The newspaper also claimed that the whole purpose of the U.S.-Japan alliance is to set up a system allowing the two countries to work together if there is another war on the Korean Peninsula.

"This can be seen as an attempt to start another war of aggression on the peninsula and to make it possible (for the allies) to militarily control all of Asia," it said. (Yonhap News)

Indonesian President Sends Personal Letter to N. Korean Leader

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono sent a personal letter to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, the North's official media said on Oct. 22.

The personal letter was delivered to Kim Yong-nam, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), by Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa, who is visiting North Korea, the KCNA said.

The KCNA failed to reveal the contents of the personal letter, but the Indonesian president hoped for the further development of bilateral cooperation with North Korea in his letter, China's Xinhua News Agency said quoting the Indonesian foreign ministry.

In a meeting with the North's Foreign Minister Pak Ui-chun, the Indonesian foreign minister proposed sending an Indonesian economic delegation to the North in a bid to enhance the two countries' economic cooperation, the Chinese news agency said.

Last month, the Indonesian president also sent a congratulatory letter to the North Korean leader to mark the 65th founding anniversary of the country, which fell on Sept. 9. (Yonhap News)

North Korea Denies Alleged Money Laundering

North Korea said on Oct. 24 it is committed to joining global efforts to fight money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

The statement came in response to a recent report by the Financial Action Task Force

(FATF) that accuses Pyongyang of failing to address its “significant deficiencies” in those areas.

In the report, issued at the plenary session in Paris in mid-October, the FATF, a sister organization of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), also called on the international community to give special attention to business relationships and transactions with North Korea, including its companies and financial institutions.

Pyongyang claimed the report is a “sinister attempt of hostile forces to tighten the financial sanctions” against the socialist nation.

“The contents of the report are based on misinformation contrary to the facts and, therefore, it doesn’t deserve even a passing note,” the North’s foreign ministry said, according to the North’s official KCNA.

“By origin, the DPRK (North Korea) does not allow such practices as money laundering and financing of terrorism in the light of the nature of its social system.” (Yonhap News)

N.K. Stresses Ties with Beijing on China’s Entry into Korean War

North Korea’s mouthpiece newspaper prominently displayed the history of the nation’s ties with China on Oct. 25, the day when Chinese forces entered the 1950-53 Korean War to assist its communist ally 63 years ago.

Rodong Sinmun, an organ of the North’s ruling Workers’ Party of Korea (WPK), carried a commentary and three articles praising the “bravery” of the Chinese People’s Volunteers (CPV) and noting the continued friendship between the two countries.

“The CPV’s assistance in our battle against American imperialists showed that the friendship between the DPRK (North Korea) and China is forever immutable,” the commentary said.

The commentary also noted the efforts made by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un to bolster relations between Pyongyang and Beijing.

“No matter how times may change, the DPRK will continue to make efforts to promote the DPRK-China relationship, a legacy bequeathed by the great Generalissimos Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il,” it said.

Yang Hyong-sop, vice president of the Presidium of the Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA), and various other party and military officials laid flowers before the North Korea-China Friendship Tower in Pyongyang, the North’s official news agency KCNA said.

The wreath was laid under the names of the Central Committee of the WPK, the Presidium of the SPA and the North Korean Cabinet.

According to the KCNA, wreath-laying ceremonies were held nationwide at the graves of Chinese soldiers in South Phyongan Province and North Hamgyong Province. (Yonhap News)

Japanese Association to Open Pyongyang Office for Sports Exchanges

North Korea said on Nov. 4 it has signed an agreement with a visiting Japanese lawmaker to open a Pyongyang office for bilateral sports exchanges.

The KCNA said that Kanji Inoki, the Japanese legislator who heads the Sports Peace Community Association, has agreed to open the association's representative office in Pyongyang.

The KCNA report said the office will act as an agent for contacts and businesses for sports exchanges to "contribute to creating the atmosphere of friendship between the two peoples."

Inoki, widely known as Antonio Inoki from his days as a professional wrestler, arrived in Pyongyang on Oct. 29 for another round of travel, which in the past included talks with North Korean officials.

The KCNA said Inoki met with Kim Yong-il, secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and advisor to the North Korea-Japan friendship association. It did not provide further details.

Inoki's latest trip was not approved by the Japanese parliament, which by rule is necessary when the Diet is in session. (Yonhap News)

N. Korea Denies Explosion Report, Blames Seoul for Fueling Unrest

North Korea on Nov. 6 denied South Korean media reports that there was an explosion at a military arms factory, accusing Seoul of spreading lies to fuel unrest in the socialist country.

In an article carried by the KCNA, Pyongyang dismissed as groundless reports about an explosion in North Phyongan Province and a fire breaking out on a train carrying equipment for the country's armed forces in Ryanggang Province.

The North's news wire service said reports by conservative media outlets, aligned with the Park Geun-hye administration, can only be viewed as an underhanded ploy to spread malicious lies.

In October, some South Korean papers and broadcasters, citing unspecified sources, said North Korean military installations were destroyed by a fire and speculated that this could have been caused by terrorist attacks carried out by people opposed to the regime.

It speculated that the lies have been generated to foment uncertainty within the North and scare away prospective foreign investors. The reports, moreover, said the lies hurt the socialist country's image abroad.

Pyongyang canceled a meeting with foreign investors in Beijing, due to the lack of interest shown by businessmen.

The latest attack directed at the South comes as inter-Korean relations have soured in

recent weeks after the unilateral cancellation by the North of a family reunion event involving people separated by the 1950-53 Korean War in late September.

Meanwhile, *Rodong Sinmun*, an organ of the North's ruling Workers' Party, said that the real culprit behind instability in Northeast Asia is the United States.

Washington's use of aircraft carriers, stealth bombers and nuclear-powered submarines in recent military drills has threatened peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, it said.

The daily then said that Pyongyang will never bow to pressure and that it has no intention to beg for dialogue. It warned that the threat of war will be countered by the strengthening of the country's military. (Yonhap News)

N. Korea Slams Plan to Create New Joint S. Korea-U.S. Military Command

North Korea on Nov. 8 slammed a plan to create a new joint South Korea-U.S. military command after Seoul reclaims wartime operation command (OPCON) of its troops.

In an article carried by *Rodong Sinmun*, an organ of the ruling Workers' Party of (North) Korea (WPK), the North claimed that the Combined Forces Command (CFC) which has been in existence for 35 years is nothing more than a criminal organization designed to carry out an invasion of the socialist country.

It added that the combined control structure that Seoul and Washington agreed to create to replace the CFC effectively is no different in its goal, and nullifies the rationale for the OPCON transfer.

The two allies are currently engaged in talks to push back the deadline for the transfer of OPCON, due to heightened regional tensions triggered by Pyongyang's unwillingness to give up its buildup of weapons of mass destruction.

Originally, Seoul is set to regain operational control in late 2015 that will give its generals primary responsibility for defending the country with the United States military playing the supporting role.

The paper monitored in Seoul said that creating another command structure fielded by officers from the two allies aims to deceive the public into thinking change has taken place.

"Just because there is a change in the name and a South Korean officer is placed at the head of the command does not alter the fact that the U.S. will provide intelligence and exercise real wartime operational control," *Rodong Sinmun* said.

It then argued that a complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Korean Peninsula would play a critical role in enhancing global peace and stability, and remove any cause for future conflict.

The latest attack comes after the North said in June that a proposal to create the new command is a serious military provocation. (Yonhap News)

Top N. Korean Diplomat in U.N. Optimistic over Six-way Talks

The top North Korean envoy to the United Nations expressed optimism on Nov. 12 over the six-party talks on his country's nuclear program.

"I think the six-way talks will fare well," Amb. Sin Son-ho said in a brief meeting with a Yonhap News Agency correspondent at the U.N. headquarters.

Sin took an unusually kind attitude toward the South Korean reporter.

He said in a soft tone that he does not have time to discuss details at the moment, adding he would like to meet again later.

Sin's comment marks a contrast to a silence by North Korea's Vice Foreign Minister Pak Gil-yon when he faced questions from Yonhap in October shortly after his U.N. General Assembly speech.

The socialist North is hoping for the resumption of the six-way talks without any preconditions.

South Korea and the United States have been lukewarm, urging Pyongyang to demonstrate its seriousness by taking substantial steps toward denuclearization.

China has been active in efforts to revive the talks last held in December 2008. The other participants are Russia and Japan. (Yonhap News)

N. Korea Cites 'Remarkable Success' in Trade Zone with China

Destitute North Korea's move to jointly build a free trade zone with China has made a "remarkable success," a Pyongyang official said on Nov. 13, indicating that the North's nuclear standoff has not soured economic ties with Beijing.

China has built "several industrial zones, modern-farming facilities and plants" at the free trade zone in North Korea's northeastern cities of Rajin and Sonbong, known as Rason, said Hwang Ik-hwan, a senior researcher at the North's foreign ministry-affiliated Institute for Disarmament & Peace.

"The joint development and management of the Rason economic trade zone with China is being carried out at the highest speed and a remarkable success has been achieved," Hwang told an international conference in Tianjin, organized by the China Foundation for International Studies (CFIS) and the China International Institute for Strategic Society.

China, North Korea's key ally and major trading partner, has reportedly agreed to invest about US\$3 billion in developing the North's free trade zone as its export base. The ports at Rajin and Sonbong give China's northeastern provinces direct access to the East Sea off the Korean Peninsula's east coast.

"The DPRK (North Korea) government is taking positive measures to speed up economic development by promoting economic cooperation with other countries and attracting investment," Hwang said.

Although China appears to have become increasingly frustrated with North Korea, particularly after the North's third nuclear test in February, Beijing has been deepening its economic cooperation with Pyongyang.

Hwang cited an annual trade exhibition, which was held last month in the Chinese border city of Dandong, as a "typical example of growing economic cooperation" between the two nations.

"More than 10,000 people from 20-odd countries, including the DPRK and China, participated in the exhibition," Hwang said of the North Korea-China Economic, Trade, Culture and Tourism Expo.

"Over 90 trade cooperation agreements valued at \$1.6 billion were signed at the end of the exhibition in Dandong," Hwang said. (Yonhap News)

<Inter-Korean Relations>

Two Koreas Ink Deal on Operations of Kaesong Committee Secretariat

South and North Korea sealed a deal covering the everyday operations of the secretariat of a management committee that runs an inter-Korean industrial complex in the socialist country, the South's government said on Oct. 23.

The Ministry of Unification said the attached agreement is a follow-up to the broader pact reached on Aug. 28 that formally created the joint committee. The committee that opened for business on Sept. 30 gives Seoul an equal say in the running of the Kaesong Industrial Park in North Korea.

Before Seoul and Pyongyang reached an understanding to reopen the inter-Korean factory park on Sept. 16, the North's General Bureau for Central Guidance to the Development of the Special Zone had been running the complex.

The complex, which is home to 123 South Korean factories, was shut down by the North in early April amid heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The latest agreement outlines operating hours, meetings, exchange of information, travel, communication and emergency protocol.

Under the pact, every possible convenience in movement will be offered to personnel assigned to the secretariat located inside the Kaesong complex to make it possible for the officials to carry out their duties.

The two sides also agreed to regularly exchange information and hold meetings that can allow the secretariat to act as an official liaison office between Seoul and Pyongyang.

The South will, moreover, be permitted to set up three communications lines between the secretariat and Seoul. The communication lines can be increased if situations warrant such a

move. (Yonhap News)

N. Korea Returns Six S. Korean Men, Body of S. Korean Woman

North Korea handed over six South Korean citizens and the body of a South Korean female at the neutral border village of Panmunjom on Oct. 25, a move that has raised speculation that the country may be trying to mend fences with its southern rival.

The Ministry of Unification said that the six men crossed over into South Korea at 4:50 p.m. and will be questioned by authorities to determine how they entered the communist country.

In addition, the North also handed over the body of a South Korean woman via the truce village, along with the six, the ministry said.

“According to the North, the woman is the wife of one of the six men, and was killed by her husband in the North,” a ministry official said.

The North explained that the quarrel between them had led to the homicide, but a probe into the case was needed, the official added.

No media was allowed to witness the arrival of the South Koreans, with authorities saying they will be given a medical checkup and taken to an undisclosed, secure location to be questioned.

“Seoul has verified overnight that all six are citizens, but because the North claimed they voluntarily crossed over into the North, it has been determined that their actual names will not be released for now,” said ministry spokesman Kim Eui-do. Releasing names of people who may face criminal charges could raise legal issues, he added.

If they willingly entered North Korea without getting prior approval from the government, they can be prosecuted for violating the National Security Law.

The ministry in charge of managing inter-Korean affairs already said on Oct. 25, when the North announced it would send the six back, that the people to return home were not on its list of people abducted by the North. (Yonhap News)

South Korean Lawmakers Visit Inter-Korean Joint Factory Park

A group of South Korean lawmakers crossed the border into North Korea on Oct. 30 to visit an inter-Korean factory complex in the socialist country that has recently resumed operations after a five-month hiatus.

The 21 lawmakers from the National Assembly’s Foreign Affairs and Unification Committee and their 26 support staff crossed the demilitarized zone that separates the two Koreas at 9:30 a.m. and are slated to return around 4 p.m., parliamentary and government sources said.

The trip marks the first time for lawmakers to visit the Kaesong Industrial Complex under the Park Geun-hye administration. Under the previous Lee Myung-bak government, lawmakers visited Kaesong on three different occasions.

The committee said the tour is part of the ongoing parliamentary audit and will involve being briefed by the head of the Kaesong Industrial District Management Committee and holding meetings with South Korean businessmen who have factories at the factory zone.

Lawmakers are scheduled to inspect four companies that make clothes, shoes and parts for mobile phones, and look over social infrastructure facilities such as a water treatment center, power substation, clinic and fire station.

Parliamentary sources said the visit could facilitate cross-border relations that have soured in recent weeks and make it possible to transform Kaesong into a truly international production hub.

Operations at Kaesong, which started churning out products in late 2004, came to a screeching halt in early April amid a spike in tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

After drawn-out negotiations, Kaesong was reopened for business on Sept. 16, but production has stayed at 80 percent of capacity with some companies hard-pressed to secure new orders. (Yonhap News)

S. Korean Buddhist Group Returns from N. Korean Temple Trip

A group of South Korean Buddhists returned from a trip to a North Korean temple on Nov. 7 after holding joint ceremonies with their North Korean counterparts.

The unification ministry said 21 monks and lay representatives from the Cheontae Order returned safely over the demilitarized zone that separates the two countries at 5 p.m.

The group was given permission to visit Ryongtongsa (Ryongtong Temple) in Kaesong by the ministry a day before the trip. They crossed into the North earlier in the day and held a memorial service to mark the 912th anniversary of the passing of Uicheon.

The Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392) monk founded the Cheontae school, which has since become the second largest Buddhist sect in South Korea.

In addition, they held a ceremony marking the reconstruction of the temple that was destroyed by a fire in the 16th century. South Korean funds went into the restoration work that was concluded in 2005.

Related to the visit, the KCNA said the South Korean group was met by members of the North's Buddhist Federation and monks and believers from Ryongtongsa.

The North's official news wire service said Buddhists from both Koreas agreed to strive for permanent peace and unification of the Korean Peninsula as well as play a role in improving inter-Korean relations. (Yonhap News)

CHARACTERISTICS OF MARKETIZATION IN NORTH KOREA AND POLITICAL COUNTER-MEASURES

I. Introduction

This essay is aimed at clarifying the characteristics of marketization in North Korea by means of reviewing the formation and development of the North Korean market and at predicting the way the market will affect the stability of the North Korean socialist regime on the basis of the political results of marketization, which refers to the act or process of entering into, participating in, or introducing a free market economy. Most studies of North Korean marketization in Seoul and elsewhere have concerned the market's scale, the level and trend of marketization and its structural characteristics. These studies have attempted to verify the assumption that an unofficial economic sector can erode the official command economy in the North only to bring about the collapse of the socialist political regime there,¹⁾ and herald a transformation of the socialist regime caused by marketization. Some studies argue that there is no evidence that the market in the North has expanded enough to destroy the command economy of the country, while establishing the confrontational relationship between the government and the market. But they say the North Korean regime could collapse if and when it fails to control the market.

Some studies contradict each other in their views about the relationship between the government and the market, and the results of marketization. Are the government and the market in the North in a confrontational relationship or a supplementary

By Oh Gyeong-seob,
*Research Fellow of the Sejong
Institute in Seongnam,
south of Seoul, Korea*

one? What political results will be brought about by marketization? Will marketization help stabilize the socialist regime, or result in its collapse? How did the North Korean regime restrict the market in an effort to prevent its collapse?

These questions can be condensed into two issues. One of them concerns the relationship between the government and the market in the North, and the other regards the influence of marketization upon political stability there. This essay will analyze the characteristics of marketization in the North, dealing with the questions regarding the timing and the reason of the market formation, the political process vitalizing the market, the way the market helps the government make up for its economic failure and the way the market serves as a pressure and a burden on the government. This analysis will focus on such issues as the political results of marketization, the way the government restricts the market and the influence of marketization on the political stability in the North.

II. The Characteristics of Marketization in the North

1. The Farmers' Market under Government Control

North Korea has proclaimed that it is furnished with a command economy under which “the state controls all production facilities and raw materials uniformly, organizes premeditatedly all state economic life, including production and consumption, and proceeds with it.”²⁾ But it is no more than an idealistic goal for the North

to run a complete command economy, because the economy is not backed up by an advanced production capacity. For this reason, North Korea has approved the farmers' market tacitly.

It had to do so because its production capacity was at a low level, and there remained business management depending on cooperatives and personal side jobs. The North began a rationing system under a certain standard, officially called the “Public Distribution System” in a move to adjust the distribution and consumption of commodities at a time when the state supply could hardly meet the demand. In other words, outside of the command economy, the farmers' market has served as a channel for the supply of food and daily necessities.

North Korea's founding leader Kim Il-sung has said that it was inevitable for the state to allow the farmers' market – despite its capitalist nature – because the North's production capacity had yet to increase enough for achieving a balance between the supply and the demand. He admitted that even a socialist state has no option but to allow the farmers' market and black-market dealings before its production capacity achieves an increase enough to meet the demand and it replaces the cooperative ownership³⁾ with all people's ownership. The farmers' market has actually contributed to serving the convenience of farmers' lives, supplementing state-run commercial activities and improving people's lives while supplying laborers and office workers with food and other farm products.

The farmers' market is a commercial formula that should disappear eventually in

the North, although it has supplemented the North's command economy because it erodes the command economy. The North Korean government was concerned about the possibilities that if it allows the farmers' market, peasants at cooperative farms will be reluctant to participate in collective labor while devoting themselves to the cultivation of their land, and will promote capitalist factors in the socialist North. It has taken measures aimed at preventing the farmers' market from escaping state control and expanding its arena excessively.

The North Korean government has imposed restrictions on the name, place and the opening interval of the market, plus qualifications for merchants and trade items in the market. It has limited the commodities traded there, like vegetables and other subsidiary foods, while banning the trade of food grain – including rice – and manufactured goods. The farmers' market has never been closed down, because it was given a peripheral position in the North's command economy and was under government's control. While suspending the food rationing to its citizens in 1993, the North Korean government allowed the opening of the farmers' market every day.⁴⁾

The farmers' market gained momentum at the turn of the 1980s when the state rationing of food and daily necessities was causing turmoil. Then the amount of food supplied by the state began to decrease. Many plants and enterprises began to reduce the number of their employees, many of them female workers, in the mid-1980s as the food situation worsened. An architectural firm in Chongjin City in North Hamgyong Province, for instance, dismissed most female workers from

households whose leaders were supplied with 700 grams of food daily. A spinning machine plant in Sinuiju City in North Phyongan Province persuaded female workers, who were not on the production line, to quit their jobs when its operation rate declined and wages to its employees and food rationing were delayed.⁵⁾ These undesirable developments resulted in the activation of the farmers' market. The North Korean government allowed farmers to privately cultivate larger areas of land in the early 1980s and also permitted them to dispose of farm products from their land at their will.

These policy measures, aimed at encouraging the side-job work teams and the household work teams, have resulted in an increase in daily necessities flowing into the market. Under the special instructions of Kim Il-sung, measures were taken to organize 10,000 such work teams. And under the instruction of his successor-designated son Kim Jong-il in 1984, a campaign for the production of more consumer goods was launched. That year, the work teams in the North Korean plants and enterprises under the direct control of the central government reportedly earned 13 percent of living costs for their employees.

The number of the teams increased to about 47,000 in 1993. They used byproducts and waste in plants for their production and ran their own shops to sell their products, with some of the products flowing into the market.⁶⁾ The North Korean government has permitted the farmers' market tacitly and has taken policy measures favorable for it as far as the market tolerates the state control and functions as a supplementary means for the command

economy. But it has regulated the market strictly when the market vitalized, and the possibilities were high that it would erode the command economy.

In 1987, the farmers' market began to be held once every seven days, with traded items under strict control. In 1989, illegal cultivation of land was banned. The North Korean government conducted currency reforms in July 1992, with the exchange of old money for new money at a parity rate. In October that year, it organized task forces against non-socialist factors, cracking down on illegal activities of the farmers' market and unlawful farming.⁷⁾ Before the North was struck by famine, there were few people who went to the farmers' market to shop. Food grain, vegetables, fish and domestic animals were traded there. As the economic crisis lasted in the North, the farmers' market gained momentum, affecting all economic sectors and partly eroding the command economy. The farmers' market, however, was unable to affect the North Korean socialist regime politically until the late 1980s, because it had remained under state control.

2. The Collapse of the Command Economy and Spontaneous Marketization

Marketization in North Korea began in the mid-1990s when the North Korean command economy became dysfunctional. This development followed the suspension of Moscow's economic aid to the North upon the collapse of the socialist bloc led by the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 1990s. In 1991, the North's exports were tallied at \$950 million, down 45.5 percent

from \$1.73 billion in the preceding year, and imports at \$1.64 billion, down 32.7 percent from \$2.44 billion. The suspension of the Soviet economic assistance dealt a heavy blow to the North Korean economy because the Soviet's provision of raw materials and technologies had helped the North build its industrial foundation. The trouble in the North's trade with the Soviet Union has negatively affected the country's industries that produce consumer goods.⁸⁾

The North's economy lost its inter-sector balance, and the State Planning Commission could hardly establish even a one-year economic plan. It could give a production plan every month to plants and enterprises in the manufacturing sector. The North's power generation and crude steel production decreased sharply. Power demand of 15,000-plus plants and other industrial units throughout the country reached 10 million kW, but its generation capacity was merely 1.9 million kW. To make matters worse, only 650,000 kW were actually available to them when the loss and supply to special facilities was put into consideration. Monthly crude steel production shrank to 10,000 tons from 200,000 tons earlier, and many plants and enterprises could hardly provide their employees with food rationing, let alone wages.

The economic crisis also affected the agricultural sector, decreasing food grain production and giving rise to serious troubles in state food rationing. The North Korean government had to decrease the per capita daily food rationing 10 percent from 546 grams to 492 grams from June 15, 1992 to Oct. 31 that year while launching a campaign for two meals a day. In March

the next year, it allowed the trading of rice on the farmers' market while limiting food rationing to security officials in the Workers' Party of Korea – which is the North's version of the Communist Party – and the Korean People's Army, plus citizens of Pyongyang, the North's capital city. It was inevitable for the North to take these measures, as annual rice production in the country decreased to 4 million tons in the early 1990s and further to 3 million tons after 1995 from the normal production of 5 million tons.

Unlike other socialist countries, marketization in North Korea began spontaneously from the bottom. A change in the political system preceded a change in the economic system in such socialist countries as Poland and the Soviet Union, while Hungary and China took economic reform measures long before their Communist Party was awakened to their weakening influence.⁹⁾

The North Korean leadership had no intention of pushing ahead with reforms oriented with a market economy. Former North Korean leader Kim Jong-il undoubtedly believed that the expansion of the market and commercial activities would proliferate egoism and threaten to destroy the class position of the Party. He had maintained that the collapse of the socialist bloc in East Europe was ascribable to their introduction of a market economy. For this reason, he proclaimed "socialism of our own style" aimed at safeguarding the command economy and self-reliant economy of a closed nature. Despite his stand against the market economy, marketization continued to grow under the initiatives of the general public and small-sized social

units who had to survive outside of the command economy at a time when the state failed to meet the demand of most North Korean citizens for daily necessities. In other words, marketization in the North followed the collapse of the command economy there.

A socialist food rationing system became dysfunctional in North Korea, and the socialist channel for the distribution of consumer and capital goods broke down. Households, working units, offices of local Party chapters, government officials, military units and small-sized social units went to the market for foods. Many citizens derailed from the command economy and engaged in commercial activities at the market. They became the sole channel for most North Korean citizens to secure food and daily necessities. Officials of the Party, the army and the government participated voluntarily in the process of marketization and decentralization. The military troops have also served as distributors, because they were furnished with trucks and food grain.¹⁰⁾

Under this situation, the North Korean government had to lift all restrictions on the farmers' market. If it didn't, more North Korean citizens would have starved to death. This development was followed by the transformation of the farmers' market to a general market, and its proliferation throughout the country at a rapid pace. After 1995, two or three markets were established in each county, and three to five in each city, with the number of markets throughout the North estimated at 300-350. And on July 1, 2002, the North Korean government took an array of measures aimed at improving its economic

management, only to accelerate marketization. In the past, the reform measures were meant to reduce illegal activities on the market. The general market was institutionalized under the Cabinet Measure No. 24 in March 2003. The trade of food grain and manufactured goods was allowed on the general market, and civilians, state-run enterprises and cooperatives were allowed to install their own stalls.

Even more incentive measures for farmers were taken, such as downsizing the work squad and legalizing the cultivation of private land. The government also reinforced the authorities of managers in the state-run enterprises while weighing their business achievements with their actual income. Plants and enterprises were allowed to sell excess products on the market. They could also barter for raw materials and imported goods between them while the state was unable to meet their demand of raw materials. State-run shops were allowed to buy goods on commission, only to join the market force.¹¹⁾

Then the state institutions began to play a leading role in marketization. As the market functions gained traction throughout the North, not only plants and enterprises joined the market, but trade units of the Party, the army and the government also joined, as they had to procure raw materials for themselves at a time when the state suspended the distribution of resources. The market has served as a channel for plants and enterprises to supply raw materials, sell their products, raise funds and proceed with other economic activities. In addition, plants and enterprises created profits by selling their products on the market at prices higher than those at state-

run shops. State institutions had a competitive edge over individual merchants on the market. They have played a leading role in marketization since the North Korean government adopted the July 1, 2002 reform measures, which legalized their participation in the market activities.

As marketization progressed, a channel for production and distribution to meet the demand of the market was gradually formed. Goods were sold to consumers on the market through a channel linking the producer, the wholesaler and the retailer. The distribution network for the market was formed systematically at a nationwide level, accompanied by the development of transportation and communications. The general market was divided into the market for consumer goods, that for capital goods, the labor market and the financial market.

Farmers and some other North Korean citizens cultivated private gardens or small pieces of land left idle in the cooperative farms and supplied the market with products there. A farmer was allowed to cultivate up to 990 square meters of idle land in farms,¹²⁾ but some households cultivated more than 16,500 square meters of idle land. Most manufactured goods traded on the market were and are commodities made in China. In the early stage of the general market, Chinese goods were smuggled in, but after the July 1, 2002 reform measures, they were imported through legal trade channels.

The capital goods market expanded when a market for the trade of domestic materials emerged in 2001, and the market for the trade of imported materials emerged in June, 2005. Plants, enterprises

and cooperative farms participated in the capital goods market.¹³⁾

In the financial market, cash-laden merchants lent money to individuals or other businesses of interest. The private money market was formed in the North when a money demand from merchants and enterprises emerged in the course of marketization, but they could not borrow money from state-run banks.

III. Political Measures against Marketization

1. An Ever-deepening Political Crisis

In recent years, food rations were given to Party members, soldiers, Pyongyang citizens and the officials working at security-related offices. The number of North Korean citizens who benefited from food rationing was about 2.5 million, representing 12 percent of the country's population.¹⁴⁾ The state has supplied raw materials only to strategic industries, including the munitions industry, while trumpeting the principle of self-reliance. In this environment, plants and enterprises increased the share of their products for the market, even violating the production plan, and their dependence on the Party decreased.¹⁵⁾

Phyongsong of South Phyongan Province has more merchants laden with cash than other cities, with every 20-30 merchants owning \$100,000 or more. Every money lender has contact with 5-6 brokers who have dealings with 5-10 retailers.¹⁶⁾

Marketization has given rise to new types of corruption involving Party officials, who take bribes while restricting the

participation of trade companies, plants and enterprises in market activities. Moreover, they and their family members have participated in the market,¹⁷⁾ and formed a connection with merchants to take bribes from them.

Party cadres have utilized their powerful positions to form political connections and corruption links. Cash-laden merchants have formed political connections to survive the uneasy market environment and seek additional profits. Political connections demonstrate their effect remarkably well in the situation where resources are under strict state control.¹⁸⁾ Political connections are usually formed between market forces and junior officials. Repeated crackdowns on illegal activities on the market have resulted in the co-existence of officials and merchants.¹⁹⁾

Marketization in the North has also spread non-socialist factors while affecting citizens' political perception. People's participation in market activities has weakened their will to participate in collective activities for the Party or social organizations. Some workers in plants and enterprises have paid money not to go to work or not to participate in activities for the Party or social organizations. Even compact discs (CDs), digital video discs (DVDs) and universal serial buses (USBs) are traded on the market. Many of the USBs carry South Korean dramas or information on developments in foreign countries. These USBs carrying foreign information affect North Koreans' perception of developments in their country, giving rise to critical thinking about their leader and society.²⁰⁾

But marketization in North Korea has its own limits. The cash-laden merchants and

the middle class can hardly build enough political power to ask the government for the right to their property. A market economy can hardly develop normally when personal property rights are not protected.

2. Policy Measures against Marketization

During the early stages of marketization, the North Korean regime took no measures against the market and approved it tacitly. It did so because the market played a role for supplementing the command economy, while also supplying citizens with food and consumer goods and creating room for citizens' economic activities. The market resulted in the reassignment of the labor force and the restructuring of the labor market, only to increase the North's productivity. Households, enterprises and state institutions participated in market activities to receive profits created by their market activities, reduce the state's economic burden and provide the state with a fiscal income. In the course of these developments, the North Korean economy, which suffered from setbacks every year from 1990 through 1998, registered a substantial growth rate in 1999.

The North Korean regime placed the market under state management for its utilization, and at the same time imposed regulations on it. This dual policy has been pursued by most socialist countries which introduced market functions earlier. There the market supplemented the command economy while eroding it. In socialist countries, officials resist the private sector while assisting it. Their behavior might be contradictory, but their support for the private sector is natural because it helps them

solve the problem of commodities being in short supply.²¹⁾

The North Korean regime institutionalized the market reform measures for maximum utilization, and formed a system for control. It enforced traders in the market to pay new taxes and fees to the state, and filled the state coffer with these payments, while encouraging plants, enterprises and trading companies to participate in market activities. It also placed foreign trade under its complete control, utilizing its authority to regulate the establishment of trade companies and the quantity of imported goods. Trade companies under the umbrella of the Party, the army and the government were given special favor, and monopolized imports of Chinese goods only to make a large amount of profits on the market. Special trade companies have reportedly provided the powerful office controlling them with 70 percent of their income.

While expanding its arena, the market has eroded the province of the command economy. Market-oriented reform in socialist countries usually results in the market's erosion of the command economy and weakens the established political order. The ruling circle there attempts to increase the intensity of its oppressive measures to solve the problem, if and when the problem becomes more complex and expansive in the course of the reform measures.²²⁾

In a move to prevent the weakening of the Party's influence, the North Korean regime has implemented a policy for intensively regulating the general market since 2007 under instructions of its leader Kim Jong-il. It defined the market as a hotbed of capitalism, which promotes egoism and non-socialist elements. While giving the

instructions on Aug. 26 that year, Kim said the market became a home to non-socialist elements. Regulations on the market became more intensive after he made a statement on June 18, 2008 calling for safeguarding socialist principles and reinforcing measures to regulate the market. The measures call for limiting the age of merchants in the market, the opening hours of the market, and the items traded on the market, among other things.²³⁾ The most intensive step for regulating the market was the redenomination of North Korean bank notes, which was implemented on Nov. 30, 2009.

The North Korean regime has utilized offices, which were set up to monitor North Koreans' behavior and control them, for preventing marketization from triggering a change in the political arena. It is uncertain how long the regime can survive the pressure of marketization for a political change, as the regime's ability for social control has its limitations. In any case, the market will likely continue to touch off a change in political order in the socialist North and increase the costs for government activities against the market. The North Korean socialist regime will collapse if and when it reaches the point where it cannot bear the costs and has to give up its monitoring of citizens' ideological behavior.

IV. Conclusion

In reviewing the development of the North Korean market, this essay has shed light on the characteristics of marketization in the North, analyzed the political results

of marketization and predicted the way the market will affect the stabilization of the North Korean regime. Marketization in the North differs greatly from that in former socialist countries. It started spontaneously in the North, while the government approved the market tacitly because of its moribund command economy. But in other countries, marketization began through government initiatives.

The market effectively filled a hole left by the failing official command economy in the North. It increased the supply of food and daily necessities to North Korean citizens, provided participants in market activities with profits and served as a channel for making up for a shortage of fiscal income. The market functions not only moved the surplus manpower to the labor market but reassigned laborers in a way to increase productivity.

All economic performers in the North have participated in the market and obtained profits created there. Plants, enterprises and state institutions reduced the state's economic burden and contributed to making up for a shortage of state revenues. In 1999, North Korea emerged from a long tunnel of negative economic growth and a famine.

But marketization in the North has eroded the official command economy of the socialist country and threatened the stability of the regime. It has also brought about a change in the established political order, which had served as the foundation of the Party's power and authority. All North Korean economic performers, including plants, enterprises, state institutions and citizens, did not depend on the state rationing of food and the state distribution

of resources, but procured them on the market.

On July 1, 2002, the North Korean regime took an array of measures aimed at establishing a new system for managing and regulating the market. Those measures legalized the market and allowed plants, enterprises and state institutions to participate in the market, resulting in the acceleration of marketization.

Marketization changed the traditional social class structure in the North. Merchants laden with cash – the North's version of money lenders – emerged. The appearance of a new wealthy class has deepened the undesirable development that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, resulting in an increase in factors causing public complaints and social unrest. Marketization has given rise to new types of corruption, which have taken various forms, such as stealing state property, embezzlement, personal accumulation of wealth and bribery. The rising corruption distorted the production activities of the state and began to threaten the North Korean regime. Marketization weakened North Korean citizens' will to participate in collective activities for the Party and social organizations, spread non-socialist factors and equipped North Korean citizens with a capitalist way of thinking.

Since 1999, the North Korean regime has pursued a dual policy regarding the market in a move to utilize it, and at the same time to regulate it. Its policy behavior was ascribable to its belief that the market supplements the command economy while eroding it. The North Korean regime institutionalized the market through July 1, 2002, and established regulations and a

system for its management. It created an array of new payments to the state and fees regarding the market in a move to make up for a shortage of fiscal revenues, while supporting the participation of plants, enterprises and trade companies in market activities.

The ever-expanding market eroded the province of the command economy at a rapid pace, weakening the influence of the Party and authorities. For this reason, the North Korean regime has regulated the market intensively since 2007, under the instruction of its leader Kim Jong-il. But it will be impossible for it to close down the market or take excessive, oppressive measures against the market unless it fully restores a healthy command economy, with the normal rationing of food and consumer goods, and the normal provision of raw materials. Its excessive measures against the market will bring about more damage to the command economy and invite resistance of all participants in the market.

The North Korean government is intensifying measures for monitoring market behavior in an effort to prevent political unrest and maintain its influence, but it will most likely fail to completely control the market. The regime's ability to control the market has a limit, and the market will continue to weaken the regime and increase the cost for monitoring market behavior.

(This is an excerpt from a paper under the heading, "The Formation and Development of the North Korean Market," published by the Sejong Institute in August 2013.)

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Canadian Charity Delivers 220 Tons of Beans to N. Korea: Report

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ October 17, 2013>

— Canadian charity group First Steps has sent 220 tons of beans to North Korea that will be used to make soy milk for malnourished children, a media report said on Oct. 17.

— According to Radio Free Asia (RFA), the Christian nongovernmental organization sent the beans to orphanages and daycare centers in Kangwon and South Phyongan provinces and will send monitors to the socialist country this week to oversee distribution.

— The three-person monitoring team plans to visit cities such as Wonsan, Tongchon, Nampho and Dokchon to verify that the beans are being used to make soy milk and inspect the health of children. They also plan to determine the level of food aid coming into these regions.

North Hamgyong Province Affected Most by Food Shortage in N. Korea

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ October 22, 2013>

— North Hamgyong Province in the remote northeastern tip of North Korea is the most affected by food shortages in the isolationist country, a media report showed on Oct. 22.

— The Voice of America (VOA), citing findings released by the World Food Programme (WFP), said at least half of the province's administrative districts such as Chongjin, Hoeryong, Rason and Musan suffer from serious food distribution problems.

— The WFP, an assistant branch of the United Nations, added that three districts in South Hamgyong Province, adjacent to North Hamgyong Province, are also hard-pressed to feed its people.

Spread of Portable EVD Players Fueling 'Korean Wave' in N. Korea

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ October 22, 2013>

— The spread of enhanced versatile disc (EVD) players in North Korea is making it harder for authorities to crack down on citizens watching South Korean-made videos, and fueling the spread of the "Korean wave" in the socialist country, a local scholar said on Oct. 22.

— Kang Dong-won, a professor of international relations at Dong-a University, said that the arrival of cheap, Chinese-made "portable TVs" that started reaching the isolated country in 2005 has made it possible for people to watch various movies and dramas made in the South. He made the comments at an academic seminar hosted by the North Korean Strategy Center.

— The latest assertions corroborate the first-hand accounts of many North Korean escapees who said they knew about the Korean wave even before they arrived in the South. The Korean wave, or "Hallyu" in Korean, is a word to describe the growing popularity of South Korean television shows and pop songs across the world.

N.K. Asked China for Troops in 1965 in Preparation for 2nd Korean War

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ October 24, 2013>

— North Korea asked Beijing in 1965 to send troops in preparation for another war on the

Korean Peninsula, a Chinese scholar said on Oct. 24, citing declassified diplomatic documents.

— Cheng Xiaohe, a professor of international studies at Renmin University, said in a paper released at an academic seminar hosted by the Institute for Peace Affairs in Seoul, that North Korean leader Kim Il-sung told China's envoy to Pyongyang that he wanted to start a second Korean War and that a conflict with South Korea was inevitable.

— The claim is based on the document submitted by the Chinese Ambassador Hao Deqing to Beijing following his meeting with Kim. Kim founded North Korea following World War II, launched the 1950-53 Korean War and ruled the socialist country until his death in 1994.

N. Korea's Population Stands at 24.9 Mln, 49th-largest in the World

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ October 31, 2013>

— North Korea's population stands at 24.9 million, the 49th-largest in the world, a report by a United Nations fund showed on Oct. 31.

— According to "State of World Population 2013" published by the U.N. Population Fund, the North Korean population is expected to grow 0.5 percent in the 2010-15 period.

— It said that boys born during this five-year period could expect to live an average of 66 years, while the female life expectancy was estimated at 73 years.

Stanford Medical School to Help N. Korean Doctors Treat Tuberculosis

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ November 6, 2013>

— The Stanford University School of Medicine plans to send a team of doctors and health-care providers to North Korea in November to help the country diagnose and treat tuberculosis (TB), a media report said on Nov. 6.

— The team will arrive in the North on Nov. 12 and plans to stay for two weeks to pass on know-how on how to combat TB to local doctors and nurses, Radio Free Asia said.

— North Korea reportedly has a large number of people suffering from TB, with the disease being closely associated with poverty.

North Korea to Open Embassy in Spain: Media Report

<Yonhap from SEOUL/ November 7, 2013>

— North Korea is expected to open an embassy in Spain, a media report said on Nov. 7. According to a report by Radio Free Asia (RFA), Madrid's foreign ministry recently gave North Korea the green light to set up a diplomatic mission there.

— The embassy will be set up at the Aravaca ward in the capital city, with Pyongyang already having signed a lease for the space, the Washington-based broadcaster said, citing local sources. North Korea established diplomatic relations with Spain in 2001.

— In recent months, Pyongyang has moved to expand bilateral exchange with Spain, including sending of 14 young football players to a school in Barcelona.

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)

- Oct. 20 visits the Mirim Riding Club in Pyongyang, which North Korea says was built as a monumental edifice in the WPK era.
- 24 enjoys a joint performance given by the Moranbong Band and State Merited Chorus together with participants of the 4th meeting of company commanders and political instructors of the KPA.
- 27 enjoys a performance given by winners of the 36th Art Festival of KPA Servicepersons.
- 29 guides a shooting contest of the participants of the 4th meeting of the company commanders and political instructors of the KPA.
- 31 watches a firepower strike drill of the KPA together with the participants in the 4th meeting of the KPA company commanders and political instructors.
- Nov. 1 visits the cemetery of fallen fighters of KPA Navy Unit 790 and visits the shipyard managed by Ju Song-ho to give field guidance.
- 2 visits a construction site of the Ski Resort on Masik Pass, going around the hotel and completed ski slopes.
- 8 visits the hall of the "Supreme Commander and Comrades-in-Arms" at the Revolutionary Museum of the Ministry of the People's Armed Forces on the occasion of the 3rd anniversary of the death of Jo Myong-rok, a prominent official of the party, state and army.
- 12 has a photo session with the participants of the 4th meeting of active service personnel of the KPA for political work with the enemy.
- 12 provides field guidance to the November 2 Factory of the KPA, which produces a variety of foodstuffs, including confectioneries and bread, for service personnel.

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

- Oct. 17 meets with the visiting Congolese government delegation led by Gakosso Jean Claude, minister of Culture and Art, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall in Pyongyang.
- 28 holds a summit meeting with Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.
- Nov. 4 meets with the delegation of the People's Consultative Assembly of Indonesia led by Speaker Sidarto Danusubroto at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.
- 7 meets with the South African government delegation headed by Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim, the vice minister of International Relations and Cooperation, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.

Pak Pong-ju (박봉주) : Premier

- Oct. 26 makes a field survey of autumn harvesting and threshing in Ongjin County, South

Hwanghae Province.

- Oct. 30 meets with Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.
- Nov. 1 makes a field survey of the second phase construction project at the Breeding Station No. 621 of the KPA.
- 12 makes a field survey of Kwisong Saltern, a huge pool of underground ultra-saline water of great economic value.

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

- Nov. 7 makes a field survey of the construction of the Ski Resort on Masik Pass.
- 12 makes a field survey of the construction of a dormitory of the Kim Jong-suk Pyongyang Textile Mill.

Jang Song-thaek (장성택) : Chairman of the State Physical Culture and Sports Guidance Commission

- 6 meets with the Japanese delegation led by Kanji Inoki, a member of the House of Councilors of Japan, who is also chief director of the Sports Peace Community Association.

CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW

(Local Events)

- Oct. 16 The (North) Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) says the General Bureau for State Economic Development was renamed as the State Economic Development Committee, according to a decree of the SPA Presidium.
- 18 Pyongyang Indoor Stadium marks its 40th anniversary.
- 19 Joint performances were given by the artists of the National Symphony Orchestra of the DPRK (North Korea) and the visiting Orchestra of the 21st Century of Russia at the Mansudae Art Theater in Pyongyang.
- 20 The participants in the 4th meeting of company commanders and political instructors of the KPA visit the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun in Pyongyang.
- 21 An enlarged plenary meeting of the Cabinet is held in Pyongyang with the attendance of Premier Pak Pong-ju and members of the Cabinet.
- 23 The KCNA says that the National Mushroom Research Institute of the State Academy of Sciences was successfully built in Pyongyang as a modern research base.
- 25 The Mirim Riding Club, a comprehensive and modern riding service center in Mirim area in the suburbs of Pyongyang, becomes operational.
- 29 North Korean athlete Kim Un-ju finishes first in the women's 75 kg category weightlifting in the 6th East Asian Games held in Pyongyang.
- 30 A photo and art exhibition opens at the Pyongyang Centre for Cultural Exchange with Foreign Countries to mark the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the DPRK-

Sweden diplomatic ties.

- Oct. 31 The 44th sports contest of artists takes place at Kim Il-sung Stadium in Pyongyang.
- Nov. 1 Pyongyang University of Dramatic and Cinematic Arts marks its 60th anniversary.
- 2 State commendations are awarded to service personnel, workers and officials in recognition of their contributions to successfully building the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum in Pyongyang.
- 6 A national sci-tech presentation in the field of pomiculture takes place under the sponsorship of the Central Committee of the General Federation of Science and Technology of (North) Korea.
- 7 A North-South joint Buddhist mass praying for Korea's reunification and nirvana service takes place at Ryongthong Temple in Kaesong to mark the 8th anniversary of the restoration of the temple.
- 12 A national sci-tech presentation in the field of forestry takes place at the Grand People's Study House to mark the 65th anniversary of the Academy of Forestry.
- 13 A national meeting of scientists and technicians takes place at the April 25 House of Culture in Pyongyang with Premier Pak Pong-ju and other high-ranking officials in attendance.

(Foreign Events)

- Oct. 16 The International Conference on Special Economic Zone Development opens at the Yanggakdo International Hotel in Pyongyang, with economists from North Korea, Canada and other countries in attendance.
- 16 The DPRK honorary doctorate of medical science is awarded to Samlee Plianbangchang, director of the Regional Office for South-East Asia of the World Health Organization (WHO).
- 17 The delegation of the WHO led by Samlee Plianbangchang visits the Breast Tumour Institute of the Pyongyang Maternity Hospital.
- 17 The KCNA claims the situation on the Korean Peninsula has entered a touch-and-go phase due to the U.S. and South Korea's reckless attempt to provoke a nuclear war against North Korea.
- 19 The KCNA says Li Yuanchao, vice president of China, meets with the DPRK youth delegation headed by Jon Yong-nam, chairman of the Central Committee of the Kim Il-sung Socialist Youth League, in Beijing on Oct. 17.
- 19 A delegation of the New Socialist Party of Japan headed by Eiko Tomiyama, vice president of its Central Executive Committee, arrives in Pyongyang.
- 21 The delegation of the Central Broadcasting Committee of (North) Korea led by its Vice Chairman Pak Song-il leaves Pyongyang to visit China.
- 21 An inter-governmental agreement on cultural exchange and cooperation between the DPRK and the Republic of Congo is signed in Pyongyang.
- 21 A delegation of French business circles led by Alban Yung, Chinese representative of Foundation of Victor Segalen, arrives in Pyongyang.
- 21 A delegation of the All-China Journalists Association led by Liu Ying, director of the

- International Department of the Workers' Daily, arrives in Pyongyang.
- Oct. 21 The Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of (North) Korea (CPRK) denounces remarks by South Korean Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin and new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Choi Yun-hee, as a "deliberate and premeditated provocation pushing the North-South ties into a catastrophe as well as a dangerous criminal act to ignite a war against the DPRK at any cost."
- 21 The DPRK government hosts a banquet in honor of the Indonesian Foreign Minister Raden Mohammad Marty Muliana Natalegawa and his party who arrived in Pyongyang.
- 23 The Foreign Ministry spokesman says in a statement that the U.S. is pushing the situation on the Korean Peninsula from a phase of detente back to a state of tensions and confrontation.
- 24 Ghulam M. Isaczai, the U.N. resident coordinator and resident representative of the U.N. Development Program in Pyongyang, gives a reception at the Yanggakdo International Hotel in Pyongyang to mark United Nations Day.
- 25 The KCNA says the DPRK Red Cross Society handed over six illegal South Korean entrants into the DPRK to the South Korean Red Cross via Panmunjom.
- 26 A delegation of the Supreme Public Prosecutors Office headed by First-vice Director Ri Chol leaves Pyongyang to visit China.
- 28 The SPA Presidium hosts a banquet in honor of Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, who is on a state visit to the DPRK, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall.
- 28 Indian Ambassador to the DPRK Ajay Kumar Sharma visits Pyongyang University of Foreign Studies on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.
- 28 The delegation of *Rodong Sinmun* led by its Vice Editor-in-Chief Kim Won-sok leaves Pyongyang for China.
- 29 Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj visits the truce town of Panmunjom in the border city of Kaesong.
- 29 The embassy of the Czech Republic in Pyongyang gives a reception on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the DPRK and the Czech Republic as well as its national day.
- 30 Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj meets with Choe Thae-bok, chairman of the SPA, at the state guest house in the Flower Garden in Pyongyang.
- Nov. 1 A delegation of the People's Consultative Assembly of Indonesia led by speaker Sidarto Danusubroto arrives in Pyongyang.
- 2 A delegation of the WPK headed by Ri Yong-chol, a vice department director of the WPK Central Committee, leaves Pyongyang to visit France and attend the 15th international meeting of the communist parties and workers' parties to be held in Lisbon, Portugal.
- 2 Choe Thae-bok, chairman of the SPA, holds talks with Sidarto Danusubroto, the speaker of the People's Consultative Assembly (PCA) of Indonesia, at the Mansudae Assembly Hall in Pyongyang.

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- Nov. 4 Wu Dawei, a special representative of the Chinese government for issues on the Korean Peninsula, and his party arrive in Pyongyang.
- 4 An agreement on the opening of the Pyongyang Representative Office is signed in Pyongyang between the DPRK-Japan Friendship Association and the Sports Peace Community Association, a specified non-profit undertaking corporation of Japan.
- 4 The Vietnamese government economic delegation headed by Nguyen Cam Tu, the vice minister of Industry and Commerce, arrives in Pyongyang.
- 5 The KCNA says an MOU on cooperation between the DPRK Supreme Public Prosecutors Office and the Supreme People's Procuratorate of China was signed in Beijing.
- 9 A delegation of the KCNA headed by Vice Director General Ri Ho-gyu leaves Pyongyang to visit China.
- 12 Diplomatic envoys of Nordic countries give a reception at the Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the DPRK and Nordic countries.
- 14 The NDC denounces South Korean President Park Geun-hye's remarks on North Korea's nuclear program during her European tour as sophism.
- 14 The spokesman for the Foreign Ministry of the DPRK refutes the rumor about its involvement in military operations in Syria as false. (Yonhap News)

Publisher : Song Hyun-seung

Managing Editor : Yun Dong-young

Deputy Managing Editor : Lee Sang-in

Editor : Kwak Seung-ji

Staff Writers : Lee Kwang-ho, Kim Tae-shik

Copyreaders : Adam Lipper, Darryl Coote, Jenna Davis, Ara Cho

Contributor : Park So-jung

Subscription inquiries and address changes should be mailed to :

VANTAGE POINT YONHAP NEWS AGENCY, 110 Susong-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea

Telephone : 82-2-398-3519 Fax : 82-2-398-3463

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

E-mail Address : vpnk@yna.co.kr

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