

Respected Comrade Kim Jong Un visits Kumsusan Palace of Sun on greatest national memorial day

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All the people across the DPRK are most reverently honouring the memory of Chairman Kim Jong Il, missing him more greatly with the passage of time, on the occasion of the 13th anniversary of the demise of the leader, who dedicated his whole life to the accomplishment of the revolutionary cause of Juche holding aloft the red flag of Paektu.

Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, visited the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun on December 17.

Accompanying him were Kim Tok Hun, Jo Yong Won, Choe Ryong Hae and Ri Pyong Chol, members of the Presidium of the Political Bureau of

the WPK Central Committee, other senior officials of the Party and the government, officials of the WPK Central Committee, leading officials of commissions and ministries and commanding officers of the armed forces organs.

The Kumsusan Palace of the Sun, where the eternal leaders of our

dignified Party, state and people lie in state, was wrapped in a solemnest atmosphere.

A flower basket in the name of the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un was laid before the statues of President Kim Il Sung and Chairman Kim Jong Il.

Also laid were the flower baskets in

add eternal lustre to the new chapter of comprehensive development of the state by steadily bringing about epoch-making transformations and rejuvenation on all fronts of socialist construction, upholding single-mindedly the ideology and guidance of Kim Jong Un with pure loyalty.

the name of the WPK Central Committee, the DPRK State Affairs Commission, the Standing Committee of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly and the DPRK Cabinet.

Kim Jong Un, together with other visitors, made a bow before the statues.

At the hall, where the Chairman lies in state, he paid high tribute to the Chairman, praying for his immortality.

All the visitors made a firm pledge to



First precious entities of ten-year revolution of WPK ushering in fresh era of regional rejuvenation

Inauguration ceremony of regional-industry factories in Songchon County takes place with splendour

Respected Comrade Kim Jong Un attends inauguration ceremony and makes important speech

KCNA

A series of transformative structures symbolizing the new era of national rejuvenation is being created across the DPRK thanks to the outstanding idea and seasoned leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea which leads the Korean revolution only to victory under the uplifted banner of the people-first principle. The first-year task of the WPK's Regional Development 20x10 Policy for the rapid improvement of the regional people's material and cultural



living standards has been carried out and, thereby, scores of modern regional-industry factories have been splendidly built in 20 cities and counties throughout the country.

All the officers and men of the construction regiments who turned out true to the decisions of the 19th Enlarged Meeting of the Political Bureau of the Eighth WPK Central Committee and the order of the Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the WPK performed the distinguished

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feats of building the Korean-style modern regional-industry factories, which conform to the regional features and in which production has been put on an automated and scientific basis at a high level, in only 290-odd days since the beginning of the regional-industry revolution in the spirit of unconditional execution and with stubborn practical ability peculiar to the revolutionary army.

The birth of the first precious entities of the ten-year drive for creation to be specially recorded in the sacred course of the development of the Juche revolution is the proud fruition of the revolutionary leadership, based on the noble idea of "The people are God" and devoted service for the people, of the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un who set it as the supreme principle of activities of the Party and the state to promote the people's wellbeing and realize their ideal. It is also an encouraging event proving that a greatly stirring age when the regions change and prosper has come as a reality.

An inauguration ceremony of the regional-industry factories in Songchon County for the Regional Development 20x10 Policy took place with splendour on December 20.

The venue of the ceremony was full of the boundless pride of the soldier-builders who built the assets of prosperity on the site of glory, where they had a historic ground-breaking ceremony to signal the start of the ten-year revolution, and the deep gratitude and delight of the working

people in Songchon County who would enjoy a new civilization and new life of regional transformation under the loving care of the Party.

Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the DPRK, attended the inauguration ceremony.

When the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un arrived at the venue of the ceremony amid the playing of welcome music, all the participants paid the highest respect to the prominent leader of the revolution and great leader of the people who is ushering in a new era of epochal regional rejuvenation and a glorious heyday of comprehensive national development on this land, as he makes untiring efforts setting it as his lifelong mission to achieve the prosperity of the country and promote the people's wellbeing.

Present at the ceremony were members of the Presidium of the Political Bureau of the WPK Central Committee and other members of the Party central leadership body, members of the non-permanent committees for promoting the Regional Development 20x10 Policy at all levels, officials and working people in South Phyongan Province and Songchon County and service personnel of the Korean People's Army involved in the construction.

The national anthem of the DPRK was solemnly played.

Kim Jong Un made an important speech on the inauguration of the regional-industry factories in Songchon County.

Saying that holding an inauguration

ceremony of the first fruition after ten months at the historic place where the beginning of the WPK's ten-year revolution was declared is a significant event of confirming the real intention and prospect of our work, he stated with pride that the erection of new entities in different regions of the country this year, which can be called the start of the ten-year revolution and the epitome for judging its success or failure, gave the people a sure understanding that the regions are undergoing a transformation and made it possible to secure the motive force to promote the regional development policy more scientifically and accurately on the basis of many-sided and rich experience.

He gave a comprehensive and critical analysis and estimation of the causes of failure for the regional-industry policy and the programme for the rural revolution in the past era to achieve due results contrary to the intention to shore up the people's living and the country's agriculture in all regions, and of the important issues to be promptly rectified for the final solution of the rural question.

He stressed the need to surely and unconditionally carry on the great age in which 20 cities and counties change every year and make greater and accurate strides for advance while attaching more importance to lessons and prospects than to visible successes. He clarified the matters of principle and important tasks for conducting in a revolutionary way the construction work in the new year in implementing the regional development policy.

The WPK will further expand and intensify the regional development policy and the programme for the rural revolution in the historic new era so that the people can benefit from them even after 100 years, and will be more courageous in splendidly transforming even one more thing in the regions, he said, ardently calling for making courageous efforts to bring earlier the day when the beloved younger generation and the people will enjoy a civilized and rich life in their transformed native lands and prospering localities.

Kim Jong Un cut the inauguration tape amid the stormy cheers of "Hurrah!" raised by all the participants with the ardent reverence for and absolute trust in the great Party Central Committee.

Fireworks were displayed and many balloons soared into the sky over the venue of the ceremony in Songchon writing the first page with pride in the history of regional development in the new era.

With deep emotion, all the participants offered their thanks to the great father of the large socialist family, who set the people-first principle as the eternal political idea and steadfast political mode of the WPK and is devoting himself to the eternal peace and happiness of the people across the country.

Kim Jong Un went round the regional-industry factories in Songchon County together with the participants in the inauguration ceremony.

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Respected Comrade Kim Jong Un makes speech at inauguration ceremony of regional-industry factories built in Songchon County under the Regional Development 20×10 Policy

Dear citizens of Songchon County,
Officers and men of the construction regiments at all levels that were organized along with the Regional Development 20×10 Policy, the first of its kind in the history of our nation building, and presented their first creations to the country and people,

Officials of various promotion committees, relevant units and South Phyongan Province who have waged a vigorous struggle throughout the year after assuming an important mission of leading the great historic cause of transforming regions,

Comrades,

We have finally completed the first year's construction projects amid the whole country's concern, for which we all broke ground in February last with an ardent, cherished desire after the blasting that signalled the beginning of the historic revolution for regional development. Now they have materialized as a wealth of Songchon County.

At the historic place, where the start of our Party's ten-year revolution was declared, we are holding the inauguration ceremony of its first result after ten months. This is a significant event confirming the real meaning and prospect of our work.

To think that we have now been able to provide new, modern factories to the locals in this region, I feel a little relieved of what I have always been sorry about before the



regional people.

Availing myself of this meaningful opportunity, I, on behalf of the Party and the government of the Republic,

various regions of the country, thus bringing to the people

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He went round the rooms for producing cooking oil, soy sauce, bean paste, chestnut jam, bread, drinks and soap, wood processing workteam and other production processes of foodstuff and daily necessities factories to learn in detail about the variety and quality of trial products.

Calling on the regional-industry factories to direct primary efforts to improving the quality of products, he said that they should make the maximum use of modern production processes so as to produce a lot of popular goods and famous commodities with distinctive features of their regions and the goods would be evaluated by the inhabitants in the county.

He called upon the newly-built regional-industry factories to foster and expand the climate of developing competitively, while exchanging experience with each other and learning from others, as regards the problems arising in their management such as production activities, ensuring of

quality and training of skilled workers.

Repeatedly stressing that the most important thing in the operation of modern regional-industry factories is the normalization of production and improvement of quality, he said that the county Party committees should take these two issues as important policy tasks and as the work of the Party committees and conduct a thorough review and take measures every month to make sure that the policy on regional development set forth by the Party genuinely contributes to the improvement of the material and cultural life of the regional people and turns into a policy radically improving the efficiency of regional development.

He set forth important tasks arising in the business activities and normalization of production at regional-industry factories, including the issue of increasing the proportion of locally available raw and other materials and home-made equipment, the issue of establishing a strict system of product inspection, the issue of steadily improving the level of

modernization of production processes and the issue of thoroughly ensuring convenience and profitability in packing goods.

Noting that it is our Party's strategy for building the state to consolidate its foundation by strengthening regions and build a higher tower on that and it can be said that every regional-industry factory now under construction epitomizes all our conscience, ideal, strenuous efforts and fighting spirit, he expressed belief that all the officers and men of the construction regiment would continue to fulfill their honourable mission as pioneers of transformation and defenders of happiness for the country and its people in the next year, too, in the spirit and mettle with which they vigorously made the first breakthrough in the 10-year campaign for regional rejuvenation.

Going round the rooms for education in the revolutionary history and rooms dedicated to the histories of the foodstuff, daily necessities and garment factories and

extend warm gratitude to officers and men of the construction regiment who, with ardent patriotism and loyalty, wrote the first proud page of the regional development history in the new era, bringing about a new appearance of Songchon, and all other soldier-builders.

I also express deep thanks to the officials and working people of relevant units and other supporters, who contributed to today's inauguration with unstained devotion and a high sense of responsibility.

Comrades,

With the start of the new year to come, scores of regional-industry factories will be inaugurated simultaneously in nearly 20 cities and counties throughout the country, as here in Songchon County.

This inspiring reality means that the task for the first year in implementing our Party's regional development policy, a revolutionary line which it proactively studied and has pushed ahead with to transform the living environment of the regional people, will be carried out.

This year, which can be called the starting point of the ten-year revolution and an epitome of its success, we have set up new entities in

their production rooms, the participants in the ceremony including members of the Party central leadership body renewed their firm pledge to single-heartedly and faithfully support the far-reaching plan of the Party Central Committee for regional development, recollecting once again the sacred journey of devotion made by Kim Jong Un for the radical development of regions and the improvement of the material and cultural life of the people across the country.

The inauguration of the regional-industry factories in Songchon County built as the first creation of regional rejuvenation under the energetic guidance of the great Party Central Committee serves as a significant occasion in greatly encouraging the patriotic struggle of the people across the country who are accelerating the historic advance for comprehensive national rejuvenation initiated by the Eighth Party Congress with confidence in the bright prospects of the Juche cause and our future to be more civilized and prosperous.

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a definite awareness that the regions are changing, and securing a dynamic force with which to implement more scientifically and correctly the regional development policy based on many-sided and rich experiences.

Construction regiments at various levels, the vanguard corps of the regional industry revolution, have greatly enhanced their efficiency, and well-regulated national guidance and supply systems have been established. This is also an important achievement and guarantee that has opened a wonderful prospect for achieving regional transformation in a multi-stage, three-dimensional and offensive way.

The successes we have achieved in a year are not a few, but this cannot be a reason for us to congratulate ourselves or raise a cheer for them now.

The overall regional industry is on the decline as it is now, not because in the past decades we had no policy or line on regional development or we failed to expend efforts and funds.

Then, why did the regional industry policy fail to be implemented until now, over six decades after the Changsong Joint Conference?

Leading cadres of the Party and state, including members of the central leadership of the Party, and relevant officials of the central and regional organs are here today to discuss on the spot the issue of developing the regional industry. I think that, availing ourselves of this opportunity, we should make an analysis of the reasons lest we repeat the painful mistakes in the future.

The main reason is, first, that the work of developing the regional industry was conducted without clear-cut goals, stage-by-stage plans, exact standards and scientific methodology.

The regional industry is an industrial realm pioneered by our country.

When an undertaking has to follow an untrodden path, it should be conducted with a clear goal and milestones, but the undertakings of the past for implementing the regional development policy were done in a very sporadic and spontaneous way.

To cite as an example the construction of factories that are elementary and general in the regional economy. The projects were conducted by respective regions without clear-cut goals and standards, i.e., what kinds of factories should be built in how many cities and counties, and by when and on what standards they should be built; this being the case, such a deviation as being obsessed with how to increase their number could not be overcome, and worse still, the abnormal result was that there were no factories badly needed for the living of the local populations, and unnecessary factories came into being.

The work system, whereby reporting the number of factories built by avoiding as much as possible those that demanded much effort was not called to account, and the convention, whereby reporting the result of supplying the people with whatever goods was highly commended, are reflected on the appearance of the regional-industry factories of the past and the people's negative attitude towards the regional industry.

In the past some cities and counties, like Usi and Yonhan counties, achieved some successes in developing their regional industry; on the contrary, some regions were on an indescribably low level. This prolonged extreme imbalance caused by the coexistence of such regions is ascribed to the fact that the regional-industry policy was implemented without any clear standards and principles.

As the regional-industry factories varied considerably in scale, form and production line and the levels of their operation differed greatly from one another, it brought about a result that ran counter to the intention of the policy on improving the people's living standards in all regions.

Strictly speaking, the regional-industry policy of the past days was dependent on the attitude of the officials of relevant fields and regions to Party policy and their abilities, and on the economic potentials of the cities and

counties.

After the Changsong Joint Conference, construction of regional-industry factories continued to expand, their number reaching nearly 4 000 by 1980; however, not to mention the appearance of the buildings and their technical levels, there were only a few factories, which could make the most of the economic and geographical conditions and potentials of the relevant regions, and the number of varieties and kinds of goods, which the regional people really demanded, could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Once there were a number of regional-industry factories here in Songchon County, including foodstuff, daily-necessities, garment, building-materials, pharmaceutical and farm-machine factories. The local people, who have lived here, know better than others their actual situation in those days, I think.

Consequently, the regional industry projects, despite the scores of years of their history, have failed to bring the people as much benefit as had been expected.

Another reason should be identified in the fact that the drive to implement the regional-industry policy has not been conducted in a powerful way as an undertaking involving the Party and state.

Developing the regional industry is a gigantic and complex undertaking related to improving the living standards of all the regional populations and developing the economy in the over 200 cities and counties; as such the state's responsibility and role are essential to this.

There are a number of matters to be tackled by the state in this respect, including establishing a well-regulated guidance system for coordinated control and promotion of the projects, providing the cities and counties with conditions for securing their own funds in addition to state investment and the centrally-run industry's support, and properly adjusting and distributing raw-materials bases for them.

Nevertheless, when its progress up to now is considered, the regional industry can be said to have virtually been under the responsibility of regions.

Take for instance the matter of putting the production lines at regional-industry factories on a mechanized and automatic basis, an important task put forward at the Joint Conference. Except for some of those that were on the priority list, they have furnished the factories mostly with the extra products or scrap equipment from the centrally-run industrial establishments; and in many cases they have been obsessed with how to enlist the locally available manpower and funds under the pretext of mass-based movements.

It is self-evident that the regional industry, dependent on the supply of extra resources of the centrally-run one and on its backward economic and technical forces, can hardly rid itself of its deep-rooted backwardness and will lag behind the times.

Changsong County has been called the native place of the new history of regional industry, and its regional-industry factories have enjoyed more support from the centrally-run industry than any others. Even these factories are too outdated to talk about modernization of equipment as they have not been provided with investment and technical assistance on a regular basis. Such being the situation, the other regions' conditions are beyond description.

With Changsong County put forward as a model to be emulated across the country, there came a documentary and even a song about its changes to introduce it widely. But the point is how much actual benefit the factories have brought to the regional people.

Even when it was clear that the regional-industry factories had become completely inefficient due to the overall economic situation of the country and there was no hope for them to be revived by the efforts of the regions alone, the economic organs in the government, on the pretext of the prevailing situation and conditions, engrossed themselves in an unrealistic, empty talk of building some model regional-industry factories and

renovating others on a yearly basis.

To make matters worse, the national organ in charge of supervising the regional industry has been merged with or separated from other ones a dozen times, causing disorder and chaos in the state control and management over the regional economy. In the course of this, not a few of the buildings and equipment of the regional-industry factories have been lost, while their economic efficiency has fallen drastically.

Along with this failure to provide proper state investment and coordinated guidance, which are essential elements, units affiliated with ministries, national agencies, armed forces organs and other establishments of special importance have occupied those places and resources favourable for the cities and counties to boost their incomes, leaving them in reduced spaces for their economic activities. Consequently, the regional industry has experienced difficulty in developing by itself and the regional people have lost their enthusiasm in creative production activities.

As mentioned above, if we do not take a revolutionary measure for changing this irrational and disadvantageous state of affairs, we would never see the regional industry rising—this is our conclusion.

The current deplorable condition of our regional industry is partly—and more importantly—attributable to the wrong viewpoint, non-revolutionary manner of work and incompetence of our officials who are directly responsible for the development of the regional industry.

In the 1960s and 1970s, when the regional economy was in a healthy condition, there were consumer goods that were enjoying favourable comment from the public, like Nampho glassware, Sariwon Kyongamsan shoe polish and Wonsan ironware, and some kinds of light-industry goods gained access to the international market. However, as officials did not adopt an ideological approach to giving fuller, sustained play to the viability of the policy, the regional-industry factories, though having cost a lot, have lost their value gradually.

In the past officials in the economic sector made much ado about modernization and technical renovation of light-industry factories, but what was in their mind was the centrally-run industry, not the regional industry.

They used to regard it as an everyday occurrence for the regional people to get what were inferior to the products from the centrally-run establishments; they felt it all right if only they avoided criticism over their failure to fulfil their production plans, giving their primary consideration to quantity ahead of quality. Owing to their narrow-minded ideological point of view and short-sighted manner of work, many of the regional-industry factories have virtually lost their true masters, leading the regional industry to stagnation.

Worse still, in the 1990s and thereafter, when the factories were nearly shut down, officials, seized by defeatism, only complained about the poor conditions, failing to preserve the technicians and skilled workers who were the backbone of the regional industry.

For the characteristics unique to it, whereby it is based on the economic resources and geographical conditions of the relevant regions, the regional industry can play its role only when specific measures are taken for them to exploit their potentials.

For this reason, the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung emphasized, whenever he had an opportunity long ago, the need to improve the people's living standards by making good use of mountains in mountainous regions as well as the sea in seabound regions.

In the past, however, in mountainous regions they were satisfied with simply making drinks by collecting wild fruits and in seabound regions, with simply catching fish and gathering seaweeds in the sea to supply them to the locals.

In a nutshell, a passive manner of conducting production activities and economic work by relying on the benefit

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from Mother Nature, instead of creating their own wealth, represented the reality of our regional industry as well as the officials' non-revolutionary style of work.

All the officials present here should find the causes of the economic poverty of the regional industry, which is yet to shake off its age-old backwardness, not in the objective conditions but in their wrong view of the regional people and their lack of spirit of serving them, narrow-mindedness and incompetence.

This is a proper attitude our officials should acquire as they are entirely responsible for the regional people's living and a positive attitude they should maintain in improving their own qualities in view of the past lessons.

The officials, who are in charge of the regional industry at present, should work hard lest they leave their names as incompetent and irresponsible ones in history, like their predecessors.

Comrades,

Availing myself of this opportunity, I would also like to refer to the reason why the theses on the socialist rural question, adopted at the Eighth Plenary Meeting of the Fourth Central Committee of the Party in 1964, remains yet to be implemented 60 years after its adoption.

Given the present stage and future of our revolution and socialist construction, the rural question is a key factor decisive of their victory or setback; if we fail to find a proper solution to this question, the validity of the cause, which we are going against all odds to accomplish by ourselves, and the inevitability of its triumph cannot be proven, nor can we reach the goals we are desirous of achieving.

We are now advancing towards the complete victory of socialism, and solving the rural question poses itself as a major task to be tackled in the period of transition when we should prepare for moving forward to a higher stage.

In view of class relations, socialist construction is a course through which the whole society is being assimilated to the working class, and in view of socio-economic relations, a course through which agriculture is being put on an industrial footing, the countryside transformed on an urban pattern and a single form of ownership established.

This shows that by solving the rural question once and for all, we can accomplish the tasks for the period of transition and proclaim the victory of socialism.

What is more, in the case of our country that has not gone through the normal stages of social development, the period of transition is bound to last relatively long, just because of the rural question. So, how quickly we pass through the period of transition depends on how quickly we solve the rural question.

This is the very reason why our Party set the final settlement of the rural question as a major strategic task after the victory of the socialist revolution, put forward the socialist rural theses encapsulating the direction, basic principles and ways for implementing this task, and has worked for long years to put them into effect.

Strictly speaking, however, nothing has changed in our countryside as it turns out now.

Admittedly, in the light of the socio-economic features of the countryside and its age-old backwardness, the rural question is a long-term, challenging task that can be fulfilled through a persevering struggle and unremitting efforts.

But the serious problem is that over the long period of six decades following the publication of the rural theses no substantial change or transformation has taken place across the realms of the countryside.

Worse still, as time has since passed to this day, the countryside has impoverished, the urban-rural gap widened and the living standards there declined.

This obviously means stagnating and even retreating in the effort to implement the rural theses.

With no progress being made in solving the rural question

and a retrogression persisting in agricultural development, some are worried about the prospects for our countryside and even doubtful about the victory of socialism.

Such a programme as the socialist rural theses has not been published in any other country. We should think over why the theses has yet to bear fruit as they should.

The reasons for the floundering countryside and the declining regional industry are, in my view, essentially the same.

Immediately after its publication the rural theses played a significant role in pulling our countryside out of its age-old backwardness and poverty and elevating it to a stage of epoch-making transformation, and in the course of this, the country's agricultural development attained a high level.

Notwithstanding this, as the country faced grave economic difficulties and its investment in agriculture plunged down to 3% of the national budget, the irrigation, mechanization, chemicalization and electrification of the rural economy kept backsliding. This ended up our countryside growing very weak both materially and technically.

The national irrigation system, which the state completed in the main by expending huge amounts of cement and steel, has become defunct due to the lack of regular repair and maintenance; a chronic shortage of farming machines has resulted from a drastic drop in their production; the supply of chemical fertilizers in the 2000s reduced to under one third of the level in the 1980s; and large numbers of power equipment in the rural areas have broken down or gone missing.

From the mid-1990s the material foundations of agriculture became shaky, but no fundamental measures were adopted to reverse this situation. The rural communities kept foundering because the funds and materials, which were in short supply for construction projects, were continually funnelled from the farms. Consequently, there once circulated a claim about agriculture's support for industry, not the latter's assistance to the former.

The after-effects of inadequate national measures were evident in the appearance of the rural communities.

Back in the 1970s and 1980s, with a rural construction corps active in each city and county and the general bureau of rural housing construction in the capital, housing projects in the rural communities went full steam ahead as a national undertaking. However, it became sluggish with the cities, counties or farms individually building houses. Worse still, no proper design was available and the supply of cement per house amounted to no more than four to five tons. So, adobe, tree branches and other local materials were used in most cases.

Also, the revamping of ri hospitals and clinics in the rural communities and their furnishing with medical equipment and fittings were not done under a master plan of the state, and this was left to the discretion of the relevant farms. As things stand, the countryside has no ri hospitals and clinics to speak of, nor has it any proper sci-tech learning spaces or welfare service facilities, such as barber's and bathhouse. This has left farmers lagging far behind modern knowledge and civilization, some even regarding cultural activities as something exclusive to urban communities.

Because of the prolonged backwardness of the countryside, the living standards of farmers have deteriorated to the point that they cannot even afford an electric lamp; their consciousness has changed, some without any feeling of attachment to the rural areas leaving to find jobs in other sectors; and the number of agricultural technicians and experts has sharply decreased. With the rural positions declining as a whole, the state organs and the rural Party organizations and officials have done little to cope with this situation, with a short-sighted attitude of leaning on agricultural production.

Despite the annual repetitions of verbal emphasis on the consolidation of the countryside and the numerous releases of relevant documents, the central agricultural

guidance organ has been ineffective in playing its inherent functions and role of taking responsibility for, and providing direction over, the long-term research into the overall development of the country's agriculture and its technological advancement. This fact has confirmed that we cannot attain our high aim by divorcing ourselves from the reality and glossing over things.

The rural revolution programme in the new era clearly illuminates the path for us to follow in finally settling the rural question and achieving the complete victory of socialism as soon as possible.

Following the proclamation of this programme at the Fourth Plenary Meeting of the Eighth Party Central Committee held in December 2021, the national drive gained momentum to put the country's agriculture on a definite upward trajectory and achieve a leap forward in the development of the socialist countryside. This drive has produced significant successes in a short span of time.

The most precious of the successes is that our agricultural workers are witnessing the countryside undergoing transformation, and that they have become convinced, while experiencing first-hand the vitality of the Party's policy on changing the grain production structure, that they can transform their villages and communities by their own efforts.

The change taking place in their awareness in no more than one to two years represents a revolution, as well as a successful promotion of the rural revolution programme onto a new high, constituting the most decisive factor that will enable a faster rate of transformations and improvements.

An in-depth analysis of the course of struggle we have followed so far, however, indicates that there are not a few problems that need to be put to rights without delay.

Encouraging the agricultural workers to buckle down to farming with a strong desire is an important task in ensuring that they take charge of the rural revolution as befitting its masters, and boosting agricultural production.

But practices of infringing upon their interests contrary to the Party's policies persist in the rural communities, with the result that their enthusiasm for production is waning.

Such practices as taking from the farmers' shares without hesitation on the pretext of carrying out various construction projects and policy-oriented tasks are yet to be eliminated, resulting in serious complaints arising among many of them. In this situation, how can we convey the Party's ideas to them and call on them to display patriotism?

The leading officials in the agricultural sector and Party organizations in the countryside should refrain from making empty talks that they are reforming the ideological consciousness of the agricultural workers, but accurately calculate the daily work-points and make distributions so that the farmers can be fully convinced that farming well makes the country prosper and themselves better off. And judicial and procuratorial organs should take decisive steps to eradicate all illegal practices that infringe upon the farmers' interests.

In order to consolidate the material and technical foundations of the rural economy and achieve substantial results in agricultural development, our Party and government have attached great importance to readjusting and reinforcing the irrigation systems and supplying the rural communities with modern and efficient farm machines, chemical fertilizers and other farming materials and are pushing forward with the work on a preferential basis even in the difficult conditions and environment.

As part of it, after the rural revolution programme in the new era was advanced, farm machines have been supplied in large numbers to the rural communities; but the actual rate of their utilization is low.

Last year not a few farm machines the nonmilitary

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industrial enterprises manufactured and sent to the countryside were so poor in performance and went out of order so frequently that they were not used properly in farming. If we fail in finding solutions to such problems, substantial assistance to the countryside would be inconceivable, no matter how huge investments by the state might be, and it would be little different from pouring water into a bottomless pot.

The farm machine-building units and relevant research institutions should keep making vigorous efforts to raise the quality of farm machines, be proactive in developing and introducing efficient ones that suit the conditions of our countryside, and conduct a rigorous inspection of their qualities, so that farm machines helpful to the farmers in their work and conducive to agricultural production can be sent to the rural communities.

Transforming the appearance and environment of the countryside is an important task of the rural revolution programme, and the rural housing construction for its implementation is now in full swing on a nationwide scale.

New residential districts boasting socialist rural civilization are springing up one after another, providing the agricultural workers with a cultured environment and presenting new looks of the regions undergoing transformation, and not only the rural inhabitants but also other people throughout the country are welcoming it and actively supporting our Party's policy of rural construction.

However, in some parts construction of the rural houses, an important political undertaking, has been conducted in a slipshod manner, misleading the people's view of Party policy and hindering the implementation of the rural revolution programme.

It has been reported that among the newly-built rural houses are some which look flawless outwardly but were given poor finishing touches inside, some others where the invisible systems for electric wiring and heating were installed so carelessly that they had to be redone by the dwellers after they moved into them, and still others whose roofs leak because of the failure to observe the construction rules.

If these phenomena continue to be prevalent in the future, the yearly supply of 10 000 tons of cement to each one of the cities and counties thanks to the crucial decision of the Party and state would be of no significance, and, worse still, it might give rise to a serious political issue of causing the people to doubt the validity of the Party's lines and policies.

Senior officials of cities and counties and all other officials involved in rural housing construction should carefully review their work and adopt revolutionary measures for preventing such wrong practices from being repeated.

If we fail to correct these trivial deviations revealed in the first step on the course of implementing the rural revolution programme, the programme, however great, might remain another historical record.

We should make every stride in the effort to pioneer the gigantic cause of comprehensive development in a responsible and steady manner and accomplish without fail the sacred duty entrusted to us by the times and the revolution.

In realizing our Party's ideals of comprehensive development, the regional development policy and the rural revolution programme are related to each other in an organic way.

In order for the regional development policy in the new era to display its proper vitality in a sustained way through the settlement of such problems as ensuring sufficient supply of raw materials for regional-industry factories and increasing the purchasing power of the rural population, it is essential for the policy to be carried out simultaneously with the rural revolution programme; and only when the countryside is transformed in a

revolutionary way, can the regions be transformed.

We will not repeat the wrong customs and practices of indulging in idle talks.

The undertakings we are now pressing on with are fundamentally different from those conducted in the previous days when exaggerating the achievements made in the implementation of the tasks put forward by the Changsong Joint Conference and the rural theses could go unpunished.

On the basis of our Party's plan of regional development corresponding to the period of comprehensive development of socialism and an overall analysis of the lessons of the past, the regional development policy and the rural revolution programme in the new era elucidate revolutionary and scientific ways for their implementation. They contain nothing that is ambiguous, unfeasible, unrealistic or unprofitable.

The Party and state are vigorously pushing forward with the implementation of the policy and programme, with the Party Central Committee keeping a direct grip and planning and commanding it and the state providing all the conditions on a preferential basis and carrying the burden of full responsibility for doing so.

At the same time, the work of taking relevant economic and technical measures for cities and counties to develop their own fund-securing capacities is being conducted on a nationwide scale.

If we carry out all the policy-oriented tasks without fail and in a perfect way with firm faith and confidence in the Party's policies, this will surely lead to positive and gratifying results.

The point of vital importance is that we should present distinct entities every year at any cost and whatever the circumstances.

To translate ideals into reality through perseverance and perfect practice irrespective of the given conditions, is the sacred mission and fighting stamina of us, revolutionaries, who have assumed for ourselves the formidable and challenging revolutionary task for comprehensive development.

Comrades,

The great decade should see 20 cities and counties undergoing transformation every year without fail and unconditionally.

We should make bigger and more correct strides of advance, attaching greater importance to the lessons and prospects rather than the immediately visible successes.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I would like to emphasize some tasks for achieving correct results as we have intended in the new year's work for implementing the regional development policy.

We should push ahead with construction for the implementation of the policy in a revolutionary way.

As was already declared, our Party decided to carry out the construction of three essential projects of building public health facilities, cultural complexes and grain management facilities, along with the construction of regional-industry factories, in order to radically raise the efficiency of regional development and provide the regional people across the country with a material and cultural life that would improve in a sustained way.

At present, the work of newly building or renovating educational establishments in cities and counties across the country is underway. If the three projects are implemented in addition to this work, all the regions will be able to provide the people with a much better life, based on a sustainable development environment that relies not only on the light industry foundations but on modern civilization and technology, and, furthermore, this will bring about great progress in realizing the comprehensive national development programme with the advancement of science, education and public health as the core motive force.

The backwardness of the regions and the rural communities will never disappear of its own accord simply because the regional people lead a rich life in modern and cultured houses.

We should bring about a turn in the realm of their consciousness by transforming their ideas and transferring knowledge to them.

Rejuvenating the regions and urbanizing the rural communities do not simply imply their architectural aesthetic aspect.

Our aspiration to make the countryside modernized and civilized is mainly aimed at making the rural forces progressive and transforming them on a working-class pattern in keeping with the level of those in urban areas and achieving successes in the technical revolution as early as possible.

It conforms not only with our Party's line on building up the cities and counties but with our ideals to build a state that develops, based on solid politico-ideological foundations, by dint of science and technology and on the strength of advanced civilization.

Some would say it is challenging for us to promote the current projects alone, but we should launch into the new struggle without hesitation and produce perfect results without fail in construction, which could be called a breakthrough for the implementation of the regional development policy.

What is most important in construction in the new year is to thoroughly ensure the quality of structures.

The regional construction we are conducting should never be something for the sake of publicity. When the projects are brought to completion, they should lead to the change of the whole country and bring benefits to the populations in the relevant regions.

This year, deviations were revealed in some construction projects, delaying the progress of the whole process and causing confusion, as they were conducted in a way of competition and with impatience in disregard of the quality indexes. In the course of putting them to rights, we have redefined the concepts of quality and speed.

In construction, quality takes precedence over speed and quality is its lifeblood.

Our ideals, spirit of service and traces of strenuous efforts should be manifested in the perfect quality of all our creations.

In order to implement the real purpose of regional construction as well as to finish the tasks for a given year in time as scheduled, it is imperative to give priority without fail to ensuring quality.

The construction regiments at all levels that are in direct charge of construction and relevant units should press ahead with the mass movement for a skilled worker to train several skilled workers in a year, the work of making construction equipment modernized and standardized and the work of radically enhancing supervision and control over construction as the main link in the whole chain of their efforts for improving quality.

It is necessary to attach importance to specialization in all processes of construction, rely on scientific accuracy and ensure profitability.

The lessons and experiences gained in the course of building regional-industry factories this year show that the subjective and unrealistic way of thinking and judgment constitute the main factor that arrests our advance.

From the stage of making preparations for their construction, architects, experts in relevant sectors and officials of the units that will operate them should strengthen consultation and cooperation so as to remove irrational elements and present scientific and optimal proposals.

In particular, the design sector should make a careful study to the last for presenting various designs, effective and accurate, for regional construction next year in conformity with both the purposes and functional features of buildings and equipment and the legal standards, and display a high sense of responsibility.

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The project schedules and equipment assembly processes should not be decided upon according to an individual's subjective point of view or opinion, but collective discussions should be held to make them as appropriate as possible and fully consistent with the construction rules.

It is needed to make vigorous efforts to ensure the domestic production of building equipment, materials and goods.

Regional development should be thoroughly based on self-development and self-sustenance, and this principle should be embodied first in regional construction.

If we are to push forward with regional construction at will in the future, irrespective of the objective conditions, and ensure full operation of the regional-industry factories, we should produce and supply quality building equipment, materials and goods by ourselves in every way possible.

We plan to take into full account the equipment needed for the regional-industry factories every year and build a general factory for their production next year.

By doing so, we can ensure the speed and quality in the building of equipment and raise the proportion of the indigenous ones.

In this way, we should make proactive efforts to create our own modern perfume and pigment industries and other advanced and viable industries in relevant sectors, thus laying durable and solid foundations for developing the regional industry by ourselves.

Along with this, the building-materials production units should work hard to improve the quality of their products, including finishing materials, and increase their variety, thus providing a sure guarantee for the success of regional construction.

We should adhere to the principle of focusing on construction in backward regions.

Our Party's original intention in transforming regions materially and culturally is to shore up, first and foremost, the cities and counties which are located in out-of-the-way mountains and where the locals' living standards are among the lowest.

Of course, if the construction workforce moves to the adjoining cities or counties or anywhere else with favourable conditions, their projects will proceed smoothly. However, this does not accord with our Party's policy.

Just as good, nourishing food is given first to the weakest child in a family, assistance and benefits should be rendered primarily to the locals in difficult areas.

Modern regional-industry factories and cultural and public health facilities should be built in the country's most backward and infertile regions before any others; if these regions are short of raw materials and have unfavourable conditions for business operation, the state should increase its assistance to them.

A strong push should be given for the regular operation of the newly-built regional-industry factories.

As I have stressed several times, this is a key factor that is decisive of success or failure in implementing the

regional development policy.

The great revolutionary work, on which our Party and people have focused with a single mind, will demonstrate its practical veracity from the beginning of the new year through the operation of the regional-industry factories.

Currently, national measures are in place for providing these factories with essential raw materials, and arrangements have been made for teachers and researchers of central institutions, as well as highly-skilled workers of industrial establishments in the capital city, to go down to the cities and counties and give a helping hand in switching on those factories.

The cities and counties should make sure that the new factories consult these experts about the technical problems that arise in their trial operation and find effective solutions to them, conduct a strict quality test of their trial products and roll out only those that meet all necessary indexes.

The non-permanent promotion committees and the relevant sectors should conduct a rigorous review of how the cities and counties are building up their bases for raw materials and throw their full weight behind this work. On the other hand, they should draw up realistic plans to provide raw materials to the cities and counties where there is a vague possibility of creating such bases, so that the supply of raw materials is prioritized over the construction of regional-industry factories.

Whether or not the new regional-industry factories maintain regular production to satisfy the local demands depends entirely on the qualifications of the senior officials of the cities and counties concerned.

Chief secretaries of city and county Party committees, bearing in mind that our Party and people do not need any symbolic factories, should carry out on their own responsibility the policy-oriented tasks that have been put forward in relation to the operation of new regional-industry factories. In this way they can help these factories become solid buttresses and valuable assets for the improvement of the local living standards from the day of their commissioning.

In particular, they should be conscious that if they fail to train talented personnel, who make up the most essential and strategic resource for the development of the regional industry, they might have to stand empty-handed before the people, and they should apply themselves to training core technicians and expanding the ranks of skilled workers.

This Songchon County is a renowned source of tobacco in our country, and it has long been famous for silk and medicinal chestnut. While sustaining its peculiar features and tapping its potentialities, it should make the most of its traffic advantages to effectively develop and utilize such local resources for cultural tourism as the shores of the Piryu River and the Songchon Hot Spring. This will offer further possibility for securing funds necessary for operating its regional-industry factories.

Other cities and counties, too, should make proactive efforts to make full use of their unique economic resources and potentials and develop and utilize them to their best effect. By doing so, they can steadily increase their leverage for economic development.

The relevant units should work to guarantee the supply of electric power and take other practical steps to provide all necessary conditions for the full-capacity operation of regional-industry factories.

Comrades,

To make the capital envious of the regions, to make regional rejuvenation represent the progress and development of our state and to make the true image of our style of socialism mirrored on the ideal appearance of the regions—this is our Party's plan for the new era.

Our Party will expand the historic regional development policy and the rural revolution programme in the new era so that our people can benefit from them even after a hundred years, and it will adopt bolder measures for further regional transformation.

The everlasting wellbeing of the people is a source of all honour and dignity for our Party.

“We serve the people!” and “Everything for the improvement of the people's livelihood!”—these will remain for ever as the slogans representing the intrinsic nature and invariable duty of the Workers' Party of Korea.

Commanding officers of the People's Army and officers and men of the construction regiments at all levels,

I am convinced that next year, too, our army will leave its proud footprints on another 20 cities and counties in the country.

Our Party regards you not merely as part of the construction workforce but as the vanguard detachment in implementing the historic cause, the first of its kind after the founding of the state. And it hopes that in the course of carrying out these construction projects all of you will become staunch champions and advocates of the Party's policies and artists of transformation and defenders of happiness who can creditably fulfil the tasks entrusted to you by it, whatever they may be and whenever.

I hope that staking the honour of the era and the reputation of our army, you will work more courageously to achieve one new success after another in promoting regional construction and thus live up to the precious trust of your country and fellow people.

The exploits performed by our heroic service personnel will be etched in every part of this land, and they will shine for all ages along with our people's wellbeing.

Leading cadres of the Party and government and officials of regional Party committees and administrative and economic organs,

Regional transformation is the most sacred and just cause, and devotion to this great revolutionary undertaking is a source of our boundless pride and honour.

History is exhorting us to accelerate this cause and our people are looking forward to its realization.

Let us work with greater courage to bring forward the day when our people, our beloved children in particular, will lead a cultured and rich life in their prospering native places that have been transformed beyond recognition.

I wish the people in Songchon County good health and happiness.



Inauguration ceremony of dwelling houses in flood-hit areas of North Phyongan Province takes place with splendour

Respected Comrade Kim Jong Un attends inauguration ceremony



KCNA

The great Workers' Party of Korea is bringing earlier the future of advanced civilization and prosperity in our own way and by our own efforts from A to Z, based on the idea of "The people are God", single-hearted unity and self-reliance. Its revolutionary guidance firmly unites the DPRK people under the banner of patriotism and overcomes manifold difficulties by dint of the great unity, thereby ushering in a new era of epoch-making changes on this land.

Ideal "cultured rural towns" and beautiful villages epitomizing modern civilization have been built to greet the significant time of completion in the flood-hit areas of North Phyongan, Jagang and Ryanggang provinces, fully demonstrating the advantages and invincibility of Korean-style socialism.

All the builders and supporters, including the Party members, service personnel and members of the Paektusan Hero Youth Shock Brigade, who volunteered for the rehabilitation projects in the flood-hit areas in hearty response to the ardent call of the Party Central

Committee for making miraculous successes by overcoming the crisis once again and going all out for the people and the country, successfully built the embankments invulnerable to any flood, thousands of modern flats, nurseries, kindergartens, schools, hospitals, clinics, etc. in a little more than four months, thus giving full play to the irresistible might unique to Juche Korea which gets stronger in ordeals and gets firmer through a vigorous struggle for creating new things with loyalty and patriotism.

This eye-opening reality, which has recorded another dramatic change in the

history of the country, is the precious fruition of the noble outlook on the people and outstanding leadership of the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un who has made an uninterrupted journey of love and devotion for the safety and wellbeing of the people, regarding the pains he takes for them as his greatest honour.

An inauguration ceremony of dwelling houses in flood-hit areas of North Phyongan Province took place with splendour on December 21.

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Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, was present at the ceremony.

When the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un arrived amid the playing of welcome music, all the participants broke into enthusiastic cheers, looking up to the great leader of the people and benevolent father who unconditionally subordinates all the state affairs to the people's well-being and translates their dreams and ideals into brilliant reality.

He extended warm militant greetings to all the builders who built the dwelling houses for the people in the flood-hit areas, bravely overcoming difficulties with absolute trust in the Party and firm faith in socialism.

Present there were members of the Presidium of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and other members of the Party central leadership body, officials of the rehabilitation headquarters, officials and working people of North Phyongan Province, the city of Sinuiju and Uiju County, service personnel of the Korean People's Army and commanding officers and members of the Paektusan Hero Youth Shock Brigade engaged in the

rehabilitation work.

The national anthem of the DPRK was played.

Kim Jong Un made a speech in celebration of the inauguration.

He said in the speech:

Today we are holding a meaningful inauguration ceremony while reviewing the proud result of the more than 130 days of the arduous campaign of rehabilitating the disaster-stricken areas by building durable embankments and houses for the local people. This gigantic transformation makes us realize once again how proud our Party is in having made a correct decision and conducted a worthwhile undertaking, as well as how wonderful the socialist ideals are and how sacred and honourable our cause is, which we are advancing while overcoming the difficulties by our own efforts and by dint of fortitude.

In support of the political ideals and intentions of their Party that places the safety and wellbeing of the people before anything else, the service personnel, members of youth shock brigades, officials and working people of North Phyongan Province and helpers from across the country have worked strenuously overcoming all manner of difficulties from the sweltering summer to the bitter winter, and thus built cultured rural residential areas that

reflect the original features of our style of socialism and its future. On behalf of the Central Committee of the Party and the government of the Republic, I extend warm thanks to them.

This ceremony is an important occasion for demonstrating that our socialist cause that absolutely supports and serves the people, the foundations of the state and all that forms it, is advancing stoutly in the face of all manner of difficulties. As I see the result of the campaign, I feel confident that this lower reaches of the Amnok will remain durable in another severe flooding in 100 years; and as the flood victims will start a new life on the islands transformed beyond their original appearance, I am pleased with a feeling of relief.

The campaign was conducted in the worst conditions in terms of the period of a few months from designing to completion, its sites and transportation of materials, but it has unfolded the present reality. This can be called a miracle in the history of construction. But what I feel really sorry for is that its completion date, which was made as an express promise with the flood victims and was fixed as a decision of the Party, was extended repeatedly, resulting in its completion in the end of the year, when the cold has set in.

We have so far launched into and waged

major construction projects however difficult the circumstances were—even in the emergency anti-epidemic days—but no project has been implemented in a strained way like this one.

After pointing out the unrealistic and unscientific deviations revealed among officials during the campaign, like lack of far-sightedness in planning, Kim Jong Un continued:

Frankly speaking, when we launched into the campaign, several countries and international organizations expressed their will to assist us, but we made clear our determination to remain faithful to our approach to resolving problems by our own efforts at all costs. This was because we were confident in our own strength and, more importantly, our self-supporting spiritual and material asset that had to be developed further during this challenging project was more precious than anything else.

The in-depth analysis of the recent flooding revealed that it was not merely a disaster caused by the unpredictable force of nature, but an artificial disaster caused by the loose system of the relevant disaster prevention organs of our state plus the irresponsible sense of reasonability and carelessness of the officials. So I decided that through the course of self-reliant

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rehabilitation project, we should learn the subsequent cost and repent ourselves.

And I thought that the experience would be essential for us to cope with the possible disasters in the future.

If we had pinned hope on the assistance from others, there would not have been the dignity we are all now feeling, not to mention these wonderful transformations.

The recent rehabilitation project was not simply an undertaking to remove the aftermath of an unexpected disaster; it was a struggle that could surely emerge victorious by our own efforts as it was an undertaking for us to bring about epochal transformation on an attitude of taking responsibility for the future.

It was the Party's intention to further cultivate our internal forces for braving any manner of difficulties by our own strength while winding up the campaign on schedule without fail by dint of the united strength of the whole country, with a belief in the strength of our army and people including the young people.

It was an occasion for further cultivating the spirit of self-sustenance.

Kim Jong Un pointed out that the officials' unscientific work attitude kept such a project of such great political magnitude from making progress as had been originally expected, specifying the

causes of the failure to put construction work on a scientific footing, its consequences and the serious lessons to draw from it.

As the new year begins, we will launch into a new regional plan that correctly reflects our Party's and government's goals for the comprehensive development of socialism and is consistent with the local people's ideals, he noted, adding:

We should carry out our Party's crucial decisions to transform this region into a socialist fairyland by implementing one project after another in a three-dimensional way.

As the long-term plan is shown on this map here, next year we are going to build combined greenhouse farms on a hundreds-of-hectares-wide area of Wihwa and Taji islands.

Over the past several years large-sized modern greenhouse farms have emerged in Jungphyong and Ryonpho on the east coast and in the capital city of Pyongyang, proving the economic effectiveness of vegetable cultivation in greenhouses. With a sea of greenhouses appearing here, we will be taking a huge step forward towards improving our people's standard of living.

We will assign these greenhouse projects to the People's Army units and the Paektusan Hero Youth Shock Brigade, so that they can once again demonstrate our creative abilities in an atmosphere of



fierce competition.

Also included in this plan is the construction of a modern vegetable science institute as a base for scientific and technological research and information diffusion to put vegetable cultivation in greenhouses on a scientific, intensive and industrial basis, as well as the setting up of greenhouses for experimental cultivation, dwelling houses and public welfare facilities, thereby transforming the island areas into model farms of the new era with potentials for development.

Along with this, we are faced with many tasks, including reinforcing the embankments in the islands on the lower reaches of the Amnok River and in Sinuiju and Uiju County to turn this region into a buttress free from any other possible damage, and building bases for political and cultural activities, service networks and other public buildings in the new residential districts.

We must never rest content with what we have achieved today or remain on the level we have attained; such construction work is a requisite for implementing the Party's plan to transform the country's border cities in a modern fashion.

I'd like to add that our future plan involves transforming Sinuiju into an ensemble of modernity, originality and national identity, a thriving city epitomizing the advanced level of

socialist Korea and its might.

Here we should begin with developing the island areas and then transform Sinuiju. Then the locality in the northwestern part of the country will have excellent regional culture and potentials for development.

Noting that the shortcut to civilization and prosperity is open and the successful dash towards them depends on our struggle, he underscored the need for the construction headquarters to conduct the planning and command for construction projects in a responsible and scrupulous way, based on the experiences and lessons gained in the course of this year's construction, so as to ensure the perfect implementation of the Party's decisions. And he stressed:

The officials of the Paektusan Hero Youth Shock Brigade and the youth league, mindful of the intention of the Party in dispatching the young people to the major projects, should conduct the organizational and political work and the command of construction effectively, so that the indomitable spirit of advance of the heroic youth in the new era always prevails in the whole ranks. Regarding the course of grand construction as a good opportunity for training our young people to be staunch defenders and reliable builders of socialism, they should pay

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special attention to training all the young people to be strong pillars of the times, who have learned how to love the country and the people, deal with difficulties and create things on the fronts of acute political struggle and in the crucible of gigantic struggle for pioneering.

Construction is an undertaking which clearly represents our Party's ideology and policy. At present, the successes in this sector, for their political character, visual impact and great vitality, constitute a political symbol which instils into people the confidence in and optimism about the revolutionary cause and powerfully demonstrates the development level of the state.

Referring to the measures to be surely taken for the long-term development of construction, he went on:

We should put the new turning point of construction revolution and regional construction in the new era on the track of radical and steady development so as to adorn the historic cause of achieving the comprehensive national rejuvenation with substantial, simultaneous and multiple changes.

To this end, it is important to raise it as an important policy-oriented requirement to improve the level of specialization in construction and push powerfully ahead with this.

Only then, can we ensure both the speed and quality of construction, improve the effectiveness of expenditure and make a leap forward towards the goals we have set.

Gone are the days when construction was conducted by a large number of people singing *Song of General Mobilization*. Human-wave tactics cannot meet the requirements of the present times, when our construction work demands a fresh, qualitative leap forward.

To improve the level of specialization in construction, three elements—design, workforce and equipment—should be regarded as important elements, and they

should be steadily improved.

The Party and the state should direct their efforts to training a large number of competent designers, building up the regional design institutions with talented personnel and steadily improving their qualifications through practical work; they should also put stress on ensuring the functional occupancy, convenient effect and diverse aspect, making a meticulous calculation of economic effectiveness and profitability and applying optimum options at the stage of designing.

The construction units should steadily intensify the work of enhancing the technical qualifications of their employees with clear-cut objectives and methodology, so that they can acquire the ability for carrying out any construction projects.

Foremost among the three elements of the effort for the specialization in construction is to improve building equipment, and it is necessary to back up the development of the construction sector by working out and pushing ahead with a national long-term plan to build up the capacity for producing modern building equipment, ranging from small tools to heavy-duty machinery, in consideration of the characteristics of construction featured by protraction and in keeping with the world trend.

Kim Jong Un reiterated that the Party and government of the Republic would lead the sacred cause of realizing the centuries-old desire of the people across the country to the last without a moment's pause or interruption, and expressed belief that all the officials, service personnel of the People's Army and youth shock brigade members, who are about to start another new construction projects, would add another page to the annals of national rejuvenation by displaying indomitable spiritual strength and taking patriotic action with high pride in being participants in and direct undertakers of the sacred and worthwhile struggle of adding glory to our state's prestige and honour and bringing earlier the wellbeing of the local people.

Extending warm congratulations to the

residents in the city of Sinuiju and Uiju County who will settle in new houses amid the blessings of the whole country and sincerely wishing all families happiness and harmony, he ardently called on all to make unyielding efforts to bring about the country's eternal prosperity and the people's wellbeing.

When Kim Jong Un finished his speech, stormy cheers of "Hurrah!" raised by the audience with deep reverence for and trust in the great Party Central Committee resounded far and wide through the sky in December.

Kim Jong Un cut the inauguration tape.

The venue for the ceremony where fireworks were displayed was full of the high spirit and militant enthusiasm of the service personnel and members of the youth shock brigade to repay the great trust and expectations of the Party Central Committee with devoted service for the country and people, strenuous efforts and creation of a new legendary tale of construction.

He, together with the participants, looked round the new modern rural residential districts.

Enjoying a bird's-eye view of Hadan-ri of Sinuiju where modern high-rise and low-rise urban-style rural dwelling houses imposingly stand in a safe zone, surrounded by solidly built embankments, he said with great satisfaction: I had a heavy heart at the thought of the homeless people in hardship, when I looked around the inundated area on a rubber boat a few months ago. But now I feast my eyes on this area that has turned into a splendid ideal socialist village. This is, indeed, a dramatic change.

Going around an apartment house, he said happily that it was good to have furnished each flat with a TV, furniture and other daily necessities and that the flood victims came to enjoy a happy and civilized life at their homes without any worry, adding: I was told that the flood victims are called the "people blessed by flood" and it is really good news.

He said: Through the rehabilitation project in the Amnok River basin, we further boosted our confidence in the irresistible force of the single-hearted unity unique to our country, the one and only unity in the world, and our own strength and have come to pass through a new stage and process of development for regional and rural rejuvenation.

Our Party has been able to adorn its arduous journey of revolution full of trials with only victory and glory, because our people have sincerely trusted and followed it and defended its cause. Our people are just the benevolent patriots who firmly support this country with sincere sweat and efforts, shouldering every burden of the country at the time of hardship, while placing the state affairs before their household ones. We should make more strenuous efforts to firmly defend and hold in higher esteem such excellent and great people without parallel in the world and make them happiest in the world.

Going round modern rural residential districts, members of the Party central leadership body and other participants cherished more deeply the absolute truth that eternal victory and prosperity are in store for our powerful country and a rosy future for our people and posterity as they hold Kim Jong Un in high esteem as the father of the great socialist family.

All the participants renewed their iron will to uphold the great Party's ideology and leadership with single-minded loyalty and thus make our advantageous socialist system and country more excellent and beautiful.

The loud shouts of "Long live the great Comrade Kim Jong Un!" and "Long live the Workers' Party of Korea!" that resounded in the northwestern tip of the country were a great echo of history demonstrating the spirit of dynamic advance of socialist Korea which confidently hastens its civilized and prosperous future in the face of all difficulties, firmly adhering to its own outlook on development and mode of development.



On anniv of demise of Chairman Kim Jong II

Nation remembers Chairman Kim Jong II

KCNA

All the people in the DPRK most reverently honoured the memory of Chairman Kim Jong II, the great man who is a peerless patriot and great sage of revolution, on the occasion of the 13th anniversary of his demise.

Officials, working people, service personnel, youth and students visited the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun, the sacred temple of Juche where President Kim Il Sung and Chairman Kim Jong II are preserved in their lifetime appearance, on the occasion of the greatest national memorial day and made a bow to their portraits at the plaza.

They also placed flower baskets, bouquets and flowers at the statues of the great leaders and mosaics of the peerlessly great men on Mansu Hill in Pyongyang and in other parts of the country.

Officials, working people, service personnel, youth and students across the country watched documentary films dealing with the noble personality traits of Kim Jong II as a great man.

The workplaces, guard posts and families were full of the will to hold Kim Jong II in high esteem forever and carry out the plans and policies of the Workers' Party of Korea.

Working people held meetings to tell stories about virtues of the Chairman at



Officials, working people, service personnel, youth and students lay flower baskets, bouquets and flowers at the statues of President Kim Il Sung and Chairman Kim Jong II and the mosaics of the peerlessly great men across the country.

the Central Hall of Workers, the Central Youth Hall, the Hall of Women and other places to praise his noble career and immortal exploits.

Officials, working people, service personnel, youth and students of the DPRK visited the statues of President Kim Il Sung and Chairman Kim Jong II across the country and paid floral tribute to them on the greatest national memorial day.

Laid at the statues of the great leaders on Mansu Hill were bouquets and flower baskets in the name of the Party, power and armed forces organs, social organizations, ministries, national agencies, units of the Korean People's Army and the Public Security Forces, and institutions, industrial establishments, universities and others at all levels in Pyongyang.

The visitors made a deep bow to the statues.

Flower baskets in the name of KPA and PSF units, institutions, enterprises and others were placed at the statues of the President and the Chairman in different parts of Pyongyang including Kim Il Sung University and the Mansudae Art Studio.

Officials, working people, service personnel, youth and students in other parts of the country visited the statues of the great leaders in their residential areas to pay homage to them.

Meetings held to commemorate Chairman Kim Jong II's demise anniversary

KCNA

Trade union members, agricultural workers

Workers and trade union members and members of the Union of Agricultural Workers of Korea held meetings on December 13 to commemorate the 13th anniversary of the demise of Chairman Kim Jong II.

Present there were Pak In Chol, chairman of the Central Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea, Han Jong Hyok, chairman of the Central Committee of the UAWK, officials of the GFTUK and the UAWK, workers and trade union members, agricultural workers and members of the UAWK in Pyongyang.

At the meeting of workers and trade union members for hearing stories about the noble virtues of Kim Jong II

held at the Central Hall of Workers, the performers said that the whole life of Kim Jong II who made the high-intensity forced march only for the people without a moment's rest was the noble revolutionary career of a peerless patriot.

They said that he took a measure to build a cultural recreation ground for the people at the foot of scenic Moran Hill and visited the

Kaeson Youth Park again, though he was not well, in the last period of his life.

At the meeting of agricultural workers and UAWK members held at the Jangchon House of Culture in Sadong District, the speakers said that Kim Jong II visited model farms again, personally organized the socialist emulation among them and led them to take the lead in the agricultural

production.

Thanks to his devoted efforts, a new turn could be brought about in the whole field of agriculture including grain, fruit and livestock farming, they stressed.

Young people, women's union members

Youth and students and officials and members of the Socialist Women's Union of Korea held meetings on December 16 to commemorate the 13th anniversary of the demise of Chairman Kim Jong II.

Present at the meetings were Kim Jong Sun, department director of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, Mun Chol, chairman of the Central Committee of the Socialist Patriotic Youth League, Jon Hyang Sun, chairwoman of the Central Committee of the SWUK, officials of the youth



Youth and students hold a meeting to tell stories about the noble virtues of Kim Jong II at the Central Youth Hall on December 16.

league and the women's union, and youth and students and women's union members in Pyongyang.

At the Central Youth Hall, youth and students held a meeting to tell stories about the noble virtues of Kim Jong II. The speakers referred to the undying feats of Kim Jong II who paid close attention to the youth work

and trained the young people into reliable successors to the revolutionary cause of Juche in the whole period of his revolutionary leadership.

At the Hall of Women, women's union officials and members held a similar meeting. The speakers highly praised his noble revolutionary career.



Workers and trade union members hold a meeting for hearing stories about the noble virtues of Kim Jong II at the Central Hall of Workers on December 13.

Flood victims send letters of thanks to respected Comrade Kim Jong Un

The days when they lived in the houses of love provided by the respected fatherly Marshal Kim Jong Un were the moments of happiness full of legendary tales to be handed down forever

KCNA

The flood victims of North Phyongan, Jagang and Ryanggang provinces who have spent meaningful days with unforgettable, valuable memories in Pyongyang, the capital of the DPRK, under the warm loving care of the great father greeted a time of emotion to go back to their native places that have wonderfully been turned into the socialist fairyland and paradise of the people after eradicating the aftermath of natural disaster.

The elderly, nursing mothers, honoured disabled soldiers and schoolchildren have come to go back to their new homes wonderfully built after staying in the capital city for dream-like 120-odd days, enjoying privileges to be envied by the world according to the unprecedented special measures in history of the DPRK taken by the Workers' Party of Korea and the state for the people who suffered natural disasters.

They sincerely presented letters of thanks to the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un, shedding tears of great emotion.

Meetings of those flood victims were held to

adopt letters of loyalty to Kim Jong Un on December 19.

Present there were Kim Jong Sun and Choe Tong Myong, department directors of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, and other officials of the WPK Central Committee together with the victims and schoolchildren from the flood-afflicted areas.

Letters of loyalty to Kim Jong Un were courteously read out at the meetings.

All the flood victims in their letters expressed their deep thanks to the benevolent father for saving them who lost their homes and property and whose lives hanged in the balance due to the flash flood and giving them all blessings, regarding the self-sacrificing devotion for the people as the greatest pleasure.

Saying that Kim Jong Un guided the rescue operation despite the cold rain at an airport, learned about the damage in the flood-afflicted areas on a small rubber boat, visited the tents used by them despite the midsummer heat and showed warm benevolence for them, they noted that he is their benevolent and considerate

real father who visited the children who suffered misfortune before anyone else, encouraged them and relieved them of distress.

They said that they did not think that Kim Jong Un would personally greet them and make a welcome address full of familial affection when they went to the April 25 Hostel and training base for military parade by a special train and buses amid the warm welcome by Pyongyang citizens.

They recollected their emotion of the day when they ran to him and wept at the sight of him who said that they must have taken much trouble coming all the way here and justly deserved such grand welcome and sincere hospitality, hoping that they would enjoy a comfortable and happy life without worry until they go back to their native homes that will be turned into better ones.

Saying that the days when they lived in the houses of love provided by the respected fatherly Marshal Kim Jong Un were the moments of happiness full of legendary tales to be handed down forever, they noted that they are expressing happy "concerns" that their parents,

husbands and children would not recognize them if they go back to their native places after their children have grown tall and women and the elderly have become fine under the loving care of Kim Jong Un who provided their children with new school uniforms and things, took warm care of them while watching a demonstration lesson and personally listed the menu for the flood victims.

They wrote in their letters that children and adults passed sleepless nights while ardently yearning for Kim Jong Un, keeping their diaries with the desire every day to convey his boundless love and benevolence generation after generation, noting that officials, employees and doctors of the lodging quarters kindly looked after them and they were treated as special guests everywhere they went, including Mt Kumgang, Mt Myohyang, Ryongsupho Bathing Beach and the Yangdok Hot Spring Resort.

Schoolchildren expressed their determination to grow up as reliable pillars who uphold the motherland in the future and thus live up to the warm loving care and benevolence of

Kim Jong Un with loyalty, saying that they studied to their heart's content in the excellent classrooms provided by him and by the good teachers sent by him while eating tasty and nutritious food and growing up physically and mentally.

Saying that flood victims who would be in despair and grief in other countries became the blessed people envied by the world under the care of the Party, they added that the inhabitants and schoolchildren have undergone a dramatic change in their destiny and come to realize more keenly why the WPK is called the motherly party and why their country and social system are called the people's country and people's world.

Saying that the masters of the land enjoyed only happiness when Kim Jong Un made a dangerous journey to build "country towns of culture" in the afflicted areas, they expressed their gratitude to him who is taking care of the people across the country and providing them with a highly civilized and happy life with his boundless love and devotion.

They expressed their

determination to turn their native lands into the places full of pride in high yield and good to live in with a single mind to firmly defend the happiness provided by all the efforts of the great father.

The participants in the meetings in their letters wholeheartedly wished the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un, their destiny, the whole of their life and the dear father of the great socialist family, good health, reflecting the unanimous mind of all the flood victims and the people across the country.

Then, the letters of loyalty to Kim Jong Un were adopted with great emotion and enthusiastic applause of the participants.

All the participants were filled with burning enthusiasm to steadfastly follow the road of repayment for the eternal prosperity of the socialist country generation after generation, single-mindedly remaining faithful to fatherly Marshal Kim Jong Un, expressing their great happiness and emotion of holding in high esteem the great leader of the people who is the greatest in the world as the dear father of the great socialist family.



Flood victims staying in Pyongyang hold meetings to adopt letters of loyalty to the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un on December 19.

Flood victims move into new houses in Jagang and Ryanggang provinces

KCNA

The blessed areas of Jagang and Ryanggang provinces in the DPRK, which have changed splendidly thanks to the wise leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea, are full of great joy of the people.

Socialist modern villages have mushroomed in a little over three months. This eye-opening change is the precious fruit of the great love of the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un for the people and his tireless efforts.

Bearing in mind the devoted efforts of Kim Jong Un, the builders, including the members of the regiments of Party members from

Pyongyang Municipality and all the provinces, built thousands of modern farmhouses in the flood-hit areas near the northern border of the country.

Ceremonies for moving into new houses took place at those villages of Jagang and Ryanggang provinces respectively.

Present at the ceremonies were Kim Jae Ryong and Jon Hyon Chol, members of the Political Bureau and secretaries of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, Sin Chang Gil, chairman of the Jagang Provincial People's Committee, officials of Party and power organs in those areas, working people and

builders.

Congratulatory speeches were made at the ceremonies.

The speakers congratulated the flood victims on moving into their new houses in the new villages, which have undergone a transformation beyond recognition, under the loving care of the motherly Party dedicating itself to the sake of the people.

They also extended thanks to the builders, officials of those areas, Party members and other working people who completed the housing construction in the flood-hit areas at the highest level through a do-or-die struggle to bring joy to the people.

They stressed that the fine new houses to be owned by

the flood victims would be unthinkable apart from the wise guidance of Kim Jong Un who has noble outlook on the people.

Representing the unanimous wishes of all the participants, the speakers extended the warmest thanks to Kim Jong Un who absolutely defends the destiny and future of the people across the country and takes warm care of them.

Conveyed at the ceremonies were the household goods sent by Kim Jong Un to the flood victims and the licences for the use of houses.

The venues for the ceremonies turned into a sea of tears of gratitude of the people deeply moved

by the great benevolence of Kim Jong Un who provided them with excellent houses and even household goods free of charge.

The people who took the floor said in an excited tone that the flood victims, once left homeless, enjoy the fortune of owning new modern houses on the same day under the loving care of Kim Jong Un.

They expressed their determination to turn their villages into a socialist paradise, where it is good to work and live, and to become true patriots who work devotedly for the Party and the prosperity of the country, conveying the love and benevolence of the motherly Party to posterity.

Moving into new houses began at the same time in the new villages of Jagang and Ryanggang provinces.

In the "country towns of culture", which are associated with the loving care of the motherly Party, the happy inhabitants danced and sang songs with the great pleasure of living under the care of the greatest leader, dear father in the world, and others congratulated them, sharing joy with them.

Their voices of determination to live up to the great benevolence and love of the Party were heard in every nook and corner of the villages and houses which have undergone a dramatic change.



Ceremonies for moving into new houses are held in the new villages of Jagang and Ryanggang provinces including the newly built Songgan County township and Kwangmyong area and the township area of Kim Hyong Jik County.

Energy-saving oxygen blast furnace inaugurated in Hwanghae Iron and Steel Complex



KCNA

An inauguration ceremony of the energy-saving oxygen blast furnace of the Hwanghae Iron and Steel Complex took place on the spot on December 19.

Present there were Kim Tok Hun, member of the Presidium of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the WPK, vice-president of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK and premier of the Cabinet, Jon Hyon Chol, secretary

of the Central Committee of the WPK, Pak Chang Ho, chief secretary of the North Hwanghae Provincial Committee of the WPK, Kim Son Il, chairman of the North Hwanghae Provincial People's Committee, officials and employees of the Hwanghae Iron and Steel Complex, officials concerned and working people.

An Kum Chol, minister of Metallurgical Industry, made an inaugural address.

Upon authorization of the WPK Central Committee and the DPRK government,

the speaker extended warm congratulations to the workers of the complex, all the builders, scientists and technicians who made great contributions to the development of the country's metallurgical industry by dint of the immense revolutionary enthusiasm, fighting spirit and extraordinary creative efforts as befitting the vanguard of the grand all-people advance of self-reliance.

He said that the gigantic entity built at the complex this significant year shining with eye-opening events and

victories is a proud creation provided by the workers by devotedly implementing the decisions adopted at the plenary meetings of the Party Central Committee in the spirit of absoluteness and unconditionality.

He said that the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un set the metallurgical industry as Height 1211 in economic construction and specified the tasks and ways for putting the metallurgical industry on a Juche basis by further perfecting the iron and steel-making technology based on domestic raw materials and

fuel.

The iron blast furnace of our style, which was built, demonstrating the spirit of dynamic advance of Juche Korea, is also associated with the devotion and sincerity of officials and working people of ministries, national agencies, relevant units and North Hwanghae Province who have provided necessary equipment and materials in a responsible manner and rendered material and moral assistance to it, he noted.

Then, Ri Song Ho, deputy manager of the Hwanghae

Iron and Steel Complex, and Yun Hyok Chol, deputy workshop manager, made speeches.

Speakers said with excitement that the Korean-style energy-saving oxygen blast furnace, unprecedented in the metallurgical industry of the world, has been built again thanks to the grand plan, strong will, bold decision and wise leadership of Kim Jong Un.

At the end of the ceremony the participants went round the newly-built Juche-based iron production process.

Army-people power station completed in Kangwon Province



KCNA

The Kosong Army-People Power Station, a large hydroelectric power plant, has been completed in Kangwon Province.

This laid a new foundation for the economic development of the province and the improvement of its people's living standards.

An inauguration ceremony took place on the spot on December 18.

Present there were Jon Hyon Chol, secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, Jon Sung Guk, vice-premier of the Cabinet, Paek Song Guk, chief secretary of the Kangwon Provincial Committee of the WPK, officials, working people and builders of the province and employees of the power station.

Ju Mun Jin, chairman of the Kangwon Provincial People's Committee, addressed the ceremony.

Medical oxygen factory inaugurated in Jagang Province

KCNA

The Jagang Provincial Medical Oxygen Factory has wonderfully been built.

The construction of the factory provided another material and technical basis.

An inauguration ceremony of the factory took place on December 18.

Present there were Pak Song Chol, chief secretary of the Jagang Provincial Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, officials concerned, officials in the field of public health, builders and employees of the factory.

Sin Chang Gil, chairman of the provincial people's committee, addressed the ceremony.



North Hwanghae Provincial Institute of Agricultural Science inaugurated



KCNA

The North Hwanghae Provincial Institute of Agricultural Science was newly built in the DPRK.

The construction of a comprehensive research base provided another material and technical foundation for the development of agriculture in the province.

An inauguration ceremony

took place on December 13.

Present there were Pak Chang Ho, chief secretary of the North Hwanghae Provincial Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, officials, working people and builders in the province and employees of the institute.

Kim Il Hwan, vice-chairman of the provincial people's committee, made an inaugural address at the ceremony.

New smeltery inaugurated at Sangnong Mine

KCNA

A hydrometallurgical copper smeltery has been built at the Sangnong Mine.

The completion of the smeltery with a modern production line has opened up a prospect of revitalizing the production of various rare metals and sulfuric

acid.

An inauguration ceremony of the smeltery took place on the spot on December 18.

Present there were Yang

Sung Ho, vice-premier of the Cabinet, Ri Jong Nam, chief secretary of the South Hamgyong Provincial Committee of the Workers' Party of

Korea, Kim Yong Sik, chairman of the provincial people's committee, employees of the Sangnong Mine, officials of the units which contributed

to the construction, and lecturers and researchers of Kim Chaek University of Technology.

Yang Sung Ho addressed the ceremony.

DPRK-Russia relations reach important watershed in 2024

By Choe Song Jun PT

The DPRK-Russia friendly relations, which have steadily developed decade after decade and from one century to the next with long historical roots, are to mark an important watershed in their history.

Comprehensive strategic partnership

On December 4 2024, the Treaty on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the DPRK and the Russian Federation came into force. The ratification instruments of the treaty were exchanged in Moscow.

It provided a legal framework for putting the bilateral relations on a new strategic height and building powerful states while firmly defending the security environment of the region and the world in the common interests of the two countries.

The close DPRK-Russia ties based on the Treaty on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership will serve as a powerful driving force to accelerate the establishment

of an independent and just multipolar world order free from domination, subjugation and hegemony.

The birth of the new inter-state treaty setting the strategic path to be followed by the two countries and further convincing them of the victory in their cause is a brilliant fruition of the outstanding foresight, political will and decision of the heads of state of the two countries.

With comradely friendship and trust

High-level talks continued to take place between the two countries this year.

The respected Comrade Kim Jong Un met Alexandr Kozlov, minister of Natural Resources and Ecology, on a visit to the DPRK heading the Russian government delegation on November 18.

On November 29 he had a friendly and trustworthy talk with Andrei Belousov, minister of Defence of the Russian Federation. At the talk the respected Comrade Kim Jong Un reaffirmed that the DPRK government, army and people would

invariably support the policy of the Russian Federation to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity from the moves of the imperialists for hegemony in the future, too, and Pyongyang would always be on the side of Moscow.

Choe Son Hui, foreign minister of the DPRK, met Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, president of the Russian Federation, in Moscow. In the meeting they had a good talk over many projects for steadily developing the relations between the two countries and reaffirmed the will to further consolidate the DPRK-Russia friendship which was put on the track of new all-round development.

The close ties between the DPRK and the Russian Federation, whose common ideal is to achieve independence and justice, are growing stronger day by day, entering a period of overall efflorescence amid the special comradely friendship and trust between the heads of state of the two countries.

Multi-faceted exchanges and cooperation

2024 is the year marking

the 75th anniversary of the conclusion of the agreement on economic and cultural cooperation between the DPRK and Russia.

The many-sided exchanges and cooperation between the two countries got closer in this significant year.

They signed an agreement on exchanges and cooperation between the Pyongyang Municipal Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Moscow City branch of the United Russia party, an agreement on cooperation in the field of post and telecommunications, information technology and digital development between the Ministry of Information Industry of the DPRK and the Ministry of Digital Development, Post and Telecommunications and Public Information of the Russian Federation and a protocol on sports exchanges in 2025 between the sports ministries of the two countries.

There was the 11th meeting of the DPRK-Russia Intergovernmental Committee for Cooperation in Trade, Economy, Science and Technology. The meeting

reviewed the implementation of the protocol of the 10th meeting held last year and discussed in detail the items for multi-faceted bilateral cooperation in different fields including electric power, agriculture, science and technology, education, public health and tourism.

The DPRK-Russia IT products exhibition-2024 held in Pyongyang marked a significant occasion in boosting exchanges and cooperation between the two countries.

There were also frequent exchange visits of delegations between the two countries in various fields including science and technology, forestry, fisheries and culture.

Young people and children cement friendship

Meetings and joint celebrations took place in the DPRK and Russia this year, demonstrating the unity and bonds between young people of the two countries. In a performance given by the artistic information squad

of the Central Committee of the Socialist Patriotic Youth League (of Korea) at the DPRK-Russia friendship gathering, young people of the two countries held a lively dance party and deepened friendly feelings with each other.

The first DPRK-Russia children's friendship camping took place at the Songdowon International Children's Camp in summer. During the camping, the children of the two countries conducted various activities including the "Day of the DPRK", "Day of Russia" and "Night of Friendship" meetings, a stage of talented children, quiz contest, national food cooking contest and children's friendship sports meeting. The Taekwon-Do and other extracurricular groups were also run.

The days of camping were cherished as a precious memory in the minds of schoolchildren of the two countries who cultivated friendship while singing songs of friendship and dancing together.

The aim of pursuing expansionist munitions industry

By Jong Chol PT

The munitions industry of Japan is going through an unusual boom.

According to a recent report of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute of Sweden, five Japanese companies were included in the list of 100 munitions companies with the greatest sales on the global scale last year, with their total value reaching nearly US\$10 billion (1 500 billion yen), a 35% increase as against the year before. All their products were sold in the country.

Meanwhile, the Japanese Defense Ministry hosted an exhibition in Tokyo Metropolis in early December in order to promote businesses to be engaged in the defence industry. At least 40 small- and medium-sized enterprises possessing technologies including those of drone, outer space and medicine took part in the exhibition.

At the exhibition, the advisor to the Defense Minister said that the application of advanced technologies and their products in manufacturing, maintaining and readjusting defence equipment would lead to the attainment of technical superiority and the reinforcement of supply network, in his attempt to tempt those businesses.

The Japanese authorities' stepping up of the militarization of industries is further arousing the vigilance of the international community.

Japan has already removed all legal barriers one by one standing in the way of overseas aggression and fixed overseas military activities as one of main missions of the Self-Defense Forces and expanded its scope to the worldwide scale. It is systematically increasing military expenditure and investing a colossal sum of money to the development and production of new military hardware after completely switching

its military policy from "exclusive defence" over to a preemptive strike strategy.

In recent years alone, it has been hell-bent on massively importing cutting-edge military hardware including stealth fighters and beefing up its naval and air forces through the building of various kinds of warships and remodelling of fighter jets.

It also tries to increase its military expenditure to the level of more than 2% of its GDP in the near future. If so, its "defense expenses" will take the world's third place.

Though Japan tries to justify its moves to build a military power under the signboard of "peace" and "defence", they are nothing but a reckless move to realize the old dream of "Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere" it failed to realize in the past.

If Japan follows the road of reinvasion out of an anachronistic ambition for hegemony, it will surely lead to self-destruction.

Japan's crimes seen through draconian probation law

By Choe Yong Nam PT

During their military occupation of Korea in the last century (1905-1945), the Japanese imperialists cooked up all sorts of draconian laws to ruthlessly suppress and eliminate the independence movement of the Korean people.

As the anti-Japanese struggle of the Koreans further intensified in the mid-1930s, they enacted and announced the "law on probation of Korean political offenders" as "decree" No. 16 to watch, control and oppress Korean communists, patriots and fighters for independence.

The law, which was enforced from December 1936, was a retrogressively revised version of the "law on probation of political offenders" which had already been in force in Japan.

It stipulated that the reprieved violators of the "law on maintenance of public order", the persons exempted from indictment and those who served their sentences or were on parole shall be defined as objects of "probation", their

freedom of action including residence, social intercourse and communication shall be restricted and their every movement shall constantly be watched and controlled.

Based on the law, Japan set up a "political offender probation office" in Pyongyang, Hamhung, Chongjin, Sinuiju and other major cities to frequently bring there the objects of "probation" in an attempt to force them to be an "imperial subject".

In February 1941, it introduced the "law on preventive detention of Korean political offenders", a harsher one than the probation law, to further intensify the suppression of the objects

of "probation" and enforce a "preventive detention" system. The system was a so-called "preventive measure" for detaining those who were considered dangerous even though they did not commit any crime.

By using it, the Japanese arrested and detained at random and cruelly suppressed and executed not only blacklisted and insubordinate patriots but all other Koreans incurring their displeasure.

Numerous Koreans fell victim to the "law on probation of Korean political offenders" and other unjust laws of Japan.

Japan's crimes are vividly recorded in history and the Korean people will settle accounts with it without fail.

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DPRK weightlifters win 26 gold, 13 silver and 6 bronze medals, 45 medals in all, men's and women's team cups, topping the country and regional medal tally

KCNA

DPRK weightlifters returned home after demonstrating the honour of the country at the 2024 International Weightlifting Federation World Championships held in Bahrain.

At the championships, they achieved signal successes by bagging 26 gold, 13 silver and 6 bronze medals, 45 medals in all, and topping the country and regional medal tally.

Pak Myong Jin, Ri Chong Song, Kang Hyon Gyong, Kim Il Gyong and Song Kuk Hyang were placed first in snatch, jerk and total of the men's 61kg and 81kg and women's 55kg, 59kg and 76kg categories to win three gold medals respectively.

Ri Won Ju, Ri Ryong Hyon, Ri Song Gum and Ri Suk were awarded two gold medals in the men's 67kg and 73kg and the women's 49kg and 64kg categories respectively, while Rim Un Sim, Pak Pyol and Pang Un Chol earned gold medals in the women's 64kg and the men's 67kg and 55kg categories.

Ri Suk and Kim Il Gyong lifted 115kg and 108kg in snatch, 149kg and 141kg in jerk, 264kg and 249kg in total respectively, setting new world records in jerk and

total, and Ri Won Ju bettered a world record by jerking 190kg.

In particular, Ri Suk renewed two world records in jerk and total.

The women's team cup (first place) and the men's team cup (third place) were awarded to the DPRK players who were successful at the championships and Kim Il Gyong won the most valuable player award.

On December 19, they were warmly greeted at Pyongyang International Airport by Kim Myong Hun, vice-premier of the Cabinet, Kim Il Guk, minister of Physical Culture and Sports, Ri Yong Min, director of the Guidance Bureau of Public Catering Service who is chairman of the Weightlifting Association, officials in the sports field and their families.

Sportspersons presented garlands and bouquets to the players and coaches, congratulating them on their successes in the championships.

Many citizens waved their hands to the proud sons and daughters of the country who shook the world weightlifting circle, extending warm congratulations to them on streets of the capital city.

The proud successes of the DPRK weightlifters in the event give great encouragement to all the



DPRK weightlifters return home on December 19 after demonstrating the honour of the country at the 2024 IWF World Championships held in Bahrain.

people in the country who are out in the campaign for the year-end summing-up, true to the decisions of the plenary meetings of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea.

The DPRK Cabinet hosted a reception at Okryu Restaurant on December

20 in congratulation of the weightlifters who proved successful at the 2024 IWF World Championships.

Present there were Ri Yong Min, director of the Guidance Bureau of Public Catering Service and chairman of the Weightlifting Association, officials in the sports field,

players and coaches of the weightlifting players team.

Kim Yong Gwon, vice-minister of Physical Culture and Sports, made a congratulatory speech at the reception.

The speaker congratulated the reliable weightlifters who demonstrated once again

the prestige of the dignified DPRK at the 2024 IWF World Championships.

Player Kim Il Gyong in a reply speech expressed the will to further intensify training and add glory to the dignity and honour of the great DPRK by winning more gold medals.

Egg-shaped rock of Mt Kumgang

By Ri Sung Ik PT

Located in Onjong-ri, Kosong County of Kangwon Province, the egg-shaped rock of Mt

Kumgang is on Mt Tagalbawi on the left side of the entrance to the Kuryong Pool from the Onjong Bridge in Outer Kumgang.

This oval rock is 7 metres

high, 20-21 metres round at the maximum and 15 metres at the minimum.

As one corner of the giant rock is on a flat and broad rock, it looks as if it will

fall down immediately and makes you fearful.

But as it is perfectly balanced, it has maintained its appearance without rolling down for ages.

