

CHRONOLOGY

Major Events Around the Korean Peninsula (November 23, 2000 - February 24, 2001)

November

- 23 A ceremony is held at the People's Palace of Culture to present membership cards of the Workers' Party to 63 repatriated North Korean spies, attended by Party Secretary Kim Yong-sun.
- 24 Former Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda, former JDA Director Generals Fukushima Nukaga and Shigenari Norota, and other Liberal Democratic Party members decided to establish a group within the Lower House, aiming to raise the status of the JDA from agency to ministry, *The Yomiuri Shimbun* reports.
- The NK Ministry of the Metal and Machine-Building Industries and the Ministry of Power and Coal Industries jointly sign an agreement with the multinational ABB Group, led by President and CEO Goran Lindahl, on cooperation in the production of electrical machines and equipment and the modernization of the power network system.
- 25 A European Union delegation, led by Dominique Girard, director for Asia of the French Foreign Ministry, and Tony Hall, a U.S. congressman, land in Pyongyang for visits.
- 26 *Rodong Shinmun*, the organ of the NK Worker's Party, criticizes the U.S. for 'deliberately delaying' the construction of light-water reactors in North Korea, warning 'an appropriate measure' will be taken if the U.S. continues to do so.
- 28 Barry Fisher, vice-president of Human Rights Advocates International, visits Pyongyang.
- Russian Defense Minister Marshal Igor Sergeev makes an three-day official visit to Japan to discuss Theater Missile Defense issue with his Japanese counterparts, including Kazuo Torashima, Chief of the National Defense Agency.
- South and North Korea hold the first working-level military talks at the truce village of Panmunjom to clear obstacles for reconnecting a railway linking Seoul and Shinuiju and for constructing a highway.
- 29 In a nonbinding parliamentary resolution, SK lawmakers say that Japan must apologize for its 35 years of colonial rule of Korea and make appropriate compensations before it normalizes ties with NK.
- 30 A delegation of the Japan-North

Korea People's Council for Promoting the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations, led by ex-Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, visits NK.

A total of 200 SK and NK citizens visit each other's capitals for the second round of family reunions this year.

The Kajima Corporation agreed to establish a fund with 500 million yen (US\$4.6 million) to compensate wartime laborers at its Hanaoka copper mine and their survivors. The agreement settled a court case brought on behalf of nearly 1,000 Chinese forced to work in Japan during World War II, *Agence France-Presse* reports.

The second reunion of separated families takes place in Seoul and Pyongyang. A Korean Air flight carrying the 100 SK visitors landed at Sunan Airport outside Pyongyang and then returned to Seoul with an equal number of NK Nationals for similar reunions.

The WCRP is held in Kyoto, Japan.

December

- 1 A Japanese delegation led by Former Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama visits Pyongyang.

In an editorial in *Rodong Shinmun*, NK refuses a Japanese proposal to normalize relations based on an economic plan similar to that used years before to normalize relations with SK.

- 2 SK and the US resume talks to revise the SOFA governing the status of the US troops in SK. The agenda includes criminal jurisdiction, labor rules, quarantines, and environmen-

tal issues and facilities.

- 3 In the Defense White Paper 2000, SK Defense Ministry states that the US would deploy up to 690,000 troops, 160 vessels and 1,600 planes on the Korean peninsula if a new war broke out there. The figure has risen from 480,000 in plans made in the early 1990s and 630,000 in the mid-1990s as a result of a new US 'win-win strategy.' It added that NK is still the primary enemy of SK. According to the White Paper, NK's official military budget for next year is US\$1.36 billion, which accounts for 14.5 percent of NK's total budget, but the actual military budget accounts for 30 percent of the total.

KCBS reports that a national computer program contest for middle and high school students is held in Pyongyang Nov. 19 to Dec. 2.

- 4 A spokesman for the NK's Flood Damage Rehabilitation Committee issues a statement expressing thanks to the international community for providing food aid to the North, hit by a series of natural disasters over the past few years.

SK and US investigators have drawn different conclusions about Nogun-ri allegations and whether US soldiers committed the mass killings intentionally, *The Korea Herald* reports.

- 5 SK National Assembly's Defense Committee unanimously adopts a resolution calling on the US to conduct an open, objective probe of the alleged killing of Korean civilians by US soldiers during the Korean War.

Working-level military officials of the two Koreas hold a second round of talks at the truce village of

- Panmunjom to discuss ways to prevent accidental clashes in the Demilitarized Zone during the construction of a cross-border railway and highway.
- 6 Hundreds of SK citizens hold a protest rally in front of the War Memorial in Seoul, calling for an overhaul of the SOFA.
- 7 David Morton, the UN resident coordinator in NK announces that NK is suffering its worst food shortages since 1996-97. He adds that if SK, Japan, the US and other nations provide 810,000 tons of food, relief agencies should be able to feed NK's people through the winter and into next year's growing season.
- Kim Byoung-ho, chief policy coordinator at SK prime minister's office, announces that SK wants the US to apologize and give compensation to victims and surviving relatives, for the killings at Nogun-ri village during the early days of the Korean War.
- 8 A subgroup meeting of the CSCAP is held in Manila to discuss security in Northeast Asia and on the Korean peninsula. Twenty Asia-Pacific countries, including the two Koreas attend.
- 10 A spokesman for the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland issues a statement demanding SK retract its description of the Communist country as a 'main enemy.'
- Senior experts from NK and the KEDO hold talks in Hyangsan, North Pyongan Province.
- SK President Kim Dae-jung receives the Nobel Peace Prize for 2000.
- 12 Britain and NK sign an agreement to establish ambassadorial-level relations at the end of their working-level normalization talks in London.
- SK and NK open four days of high-level talks in Pyongyang to review a year of dramatic inter-Korean thaw and make an overall readjustment of schedules for unimplemented projects.
- South and North Korea open the fourth round of ministerial talks in Pyongyang to discuss ways to promote inter-Korean exchanges.
- 13 SK's two labor federations, the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions and Federation of Korean Trade Unions, send 32 delegates to the unification forum of workers of the two Koreas, which takes place at NK's Mt. Kumgang. The forum was jointly organized by the two SK labor groups and the NK General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea.
- Taiwan unilaterally announces that it would ease a ban on Chinese citizens traveling to and trading with two of its islands as part of efforts to ease tensions with China.
- 15 Japanese government's Security Council approves a new five-year procurement plan for the Japanese Self-Defense Forces totaling 25.16 trillion yen. The proposed defense outlay, which covers fiscal 2001 through fiscal 2005, shows an increase of 930 billion yen over the current five-year program, with an average annual growth rate of 0.7 percent.
- North Korea and Spain agree to establish diplomatic ties.

- 16 SK and NK wrap up the fourth ministerial-level talks in Pyongyang after signing four treaties to protect investment and avoid double taxation.
- 18 Rodong Shinmun, the organ of the Workers' Party, says Pyongyang will exert greater efforts to improve relations with all countries favorable to the Communist North.
- SK Defense Minister Cho Sung-tae hold talks with his Vietnamese counterpart, Pham Van Tra. Cho's visit was the first by an SK defense minister to Vietnam since the Vietnam War.
- 19 The US and NK have agreed to expand their joint search operation next year for the remains of the US servicemen killed in the Korean War to include, for the first time, the areas around the Changjin Reservoir, the Korea Herald reports.
- 21 A monument extolling Kim Jong-il's military-first policy is dedicated on Mt. Kungang in Kangwon Province, in a ceremony attended by Chong Ha-chol, head of a department under the Workers' Party Central Committee.
- A national fine arts exhibition opens at the People's Palace of Culture to mark the 9th anniversary of NK leader Kim Jong-il's appointment as the Supreme Army Commander and marking the birth of his natural mother Kim Jong-suk.
- Kim Sang-cheol, the head of the UN Petition Campaign Center for the Protection of North Korean Refugees, is known to have submitted refugee status application forms of some 83 NK refugees in China, to the Tokyo office of the UNHCR on December 2. This is the first time that NK refugees have submitted such forms to the UNHCR collectively.
- SK and NK military officials hold talks on the NK side of Panmunjom to discuss details of work to reconnect a railway and build a four-lane highway across the DMZ.
- SK Unification Ministry reveals that NK defectors to SK exceeded 300 this year for the first time in history. Last year marked 148, exceeding 100 for the first time, but this year numbers have reached 303.
- 25 In Pyongyang, NK and China sign a protocol on cultural and sport exchanges in 2001.
- 27 A SK delegation, led by Vice Finance-Economy Minister Lee Jung-jae, flies into Pyongyang for the first meeting of the inter-Korean economic cooperation committee.
- 28 Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue announces that China will not block the so-called Taiwan's 'mini-links' plan to open two offshore islands to goods and passengers from the mainland and allow island residents to travel directly to China.
- JDA Vice Director General Ken Sato visits Seoul.
- The US and SK agree on new rules in the SOFA that give the SK government broader jurisdiction over US soldiers accused of crimes while stationed in SK.
- US President Bill Clinton announces that he will not visit NK before the end of his term.

29 SK Unification Ministry announces that NK's population is estimated to be 22,000,000. Based on 1994 figures of 21,210,000, the ministry considers natural increases and decreases due to effects of natural disasters and famine.

January 2001

1 NK leader Kim Jong-il visits Kumsusan Memorial Palace to pay his respects to his father, whose embalmed body is entombed there, accompanied by a group of Party and state leaders, including Kim Yongnam and Cho Myong-rok.

NK publishes its policies for the New Year in a joint editorial carried by the Workers' Party, the People's Army and the Kimilsung Socialist Youth League, under the title, "Let us open up the road of advancement through the new century in the spirit of the victorious march under struggle trials."

A SK government official estimated the total amount of private aid to NK totalled 42.07 billion won, including the 11.31 billion won extended through the SK National Red Cross, *The Korea Times* reports.

SK President Kim Dae-jung states in a New Year's address that SK will work further improve ties with NK while keeping a strong security posture against a possible military threat.

3 KCBS reports the locomotive unit in Danchon transported 20 percent more freight in the first day of this year, than the same day last year.

4 A group of 46 parliamentarians from Taiwan's two major opposition parties, the Kuomintang (KMT) and the

New Party, flew to Beijing to study the possibilities of direct unrestricted links between Taiwan and China.

5 More than 100,000 Pyongyang citizens hold a rally vowing to carry out their tasks for this year as announced in the joint editorial carried on New Year's Day.

7 KCBS says the fifth annual exhibition of the Kim Jong-il flower (*Kimjongilia*) will open in Pyongyang on Feb. 14 for a seven-day run under the sponsorship of the North Korean Kimjongilia Federation.

11 KCNA reports the Pyongyang Information Center (PIC) recently developed a Korean speech recognition and synthesis program, a database program, a 'PIC Font,' a 3D Cad called 'San Ak,' and a multimedia program called 'Korea Today.' The 'PIC Font' includes various character fonts used in other countries, it added.

KCNA says the North's Foreign Ministry had held a 'friendship' meeting with the Chinese Embassy at the Mokran House in downtown Pyongyang the preceding day.

13 A spokesman for the NK's Fishery Ministry issues a statement to propose the immediate holding of working-level talks to deal with inter-Korean fishery cooperation.

14 NK leader Kim Jong-il makes an unannounced visit to China by train.

16 Ri Hyong-chol, NK ambassador to the United Nations, and Charles Kartman, special US envoy for the Korean peace process, meet in New York, the first time that NK and the new Bush administration have had

- diplomatic contact.
- The SK NIS announced that it will publicize the arrival of NK defectors to SK to make the public aware of the reality of the NK regime and the situation of the defectors.
- 17 NK and the Netherlands established diplomatic relations. The two sides agreed on the Netherlands' twin assignments of ambassadors to both SK and NK.
- SK foreign ministry announced SK's new missile policy that would allow SK to develop short-range missiles with a range of 300 kilometers and a payload of 500 kilograms, capable of hitting targets in most of NK.
- A NK freighter arrives at Osaka Port to transport the first batch of 500,000 tons of rice aid to NK.
- 18 SK and the US sign a revised SOFA on after several years of difficult negotiations. The accord increases the number of crimes under SK jurisdiction to 12 and allows US suspects to be handed over to SK before indictment. There are also stricter environmental conditions for US bases and regulations for dismissal of SK employees on US bases.
- 19 The US paid a total of \$28 million to the Chinese government for property losses caused by the US bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia on May 8, 1999.
- 21 The Chinese media announces that Kim Jong-il, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korean Central Committee and Chairman of the National Defense Commission of DPRK, paid an unofficial visit to China between January 15-20.
- 22 UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan meets Chinese President Jiang Zemin in Beijing.
- 23 A mission of the British Foreign Ministry led by Rosalind Marsden, director of Asia-Pacific Command, lands in Pyongyang.
- 24 NK and Belgium establish diplomatic relations. Belgium is the ninth EU member to set up relations with NK.
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-il ends his three-day inspection visits to light industrial plants in Shinuiju, the capital of North Pyongan Province. On his visit, he emphasizes the "new-thinking" and adopt the latest science and technology.
- 25 Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun meets in Pyongyang with a mission of the British Foreign Ministry led by Rosalind Marsden, director of Asia-Pacific Command.
- Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono and US Secretary of State Colin Powell agree to promote substantive policy talks to strengthen the alliance between Japan and the US.
- 29 The third round of inter-Korean Red Cross talks opens in a hotel on Mt. Kumgang for a three-day run.
- 30 The families of victims of Korean Airlines flight 858, blown up by NK agents over Burma in 1987, announce that they will file a lawsuit in the Seoul District Prosecutors' Office against Kim Jong-il for ordering the bombing.
- The KCNA criticizes a US Defense Department 2001 report for highlighting NK military threat and calling for a closer US-Japan security

alliance in East Asia. All other state-controlled newspapers cited the criticism in their editorial to target the new US administration of President George W. Bush.

SK's KOTRA announces that the US has imposed economic sanctions against the NK firm Changgwang Sinyong Corporation for exporting missile technology to Iran, the first US action directed at a NK business since the US eased sanctions against the country in June 2000.

February

- 1 A two-day meeting in Pyongyang of officials in the field of the land conservation and environment closes.

KCNA reports a group from the Pyongyang Circus won first prize at the ninth Massay International Circus Festival held in Massay, France, Jan. 25-28.

- 2 The KCNA says the Ministry of Postal and Telecommunications recently issued commemorative stamps depicting former North Korean spies dispatched to South Korea, who were repatriated to the North early last September after serving long prison terms and refusing to renounce their Communist beliefs.
- 3 NK and the UNICEF sign in Pyongyang a master plan for 2001-2003.
- 5 *Chosun Ilbo* reports that NK Leader Kim Jong-il's visit to Seoul is likely to be delayed until May or June according to a high-ranking government official.

NK heightened the level of anti-US propaganda after US Secretary of

State Colin Powell called Kim Jong-il a "dictator," *The Korea Times* reports.

SK Foreign Minister Lee Jung-binn visits Washington to meet with US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

KCNA reports the first session of the committee for promoting inter-Korean economic cooperation, held on Dec. 27-30 last year, has decided to set up two subcommittees to deal with issues concerning Seoul's power supply to Pyongyang and the flood-prevention project along the Imjin River.

- 6 A mission of the European Union flies into Pyongyang to observe the North Korean economy.

A mission of the International Liaison Department under the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, led by the deputy chief of the department, flies into Pyongyang.

Canada establishes diplomatic relations with NK.

SK and Russian military officials meet in Seoul to discuss matters concerning SK's purchase of some US \$500 million worth of Russian weapons.

- 7 Spain establishes diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level with NK.

The Korea Times reports that NK has been seeking to purchase Russian S-300 interceptor missiles and assemble Russian fighters by the end of the year.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell and SK Foreign Minister Lee Jung-

- binn release a joint statement that the two countries are in agreement on policy toward NK and concur on the importance of maintaining the two nations' comprehensive partnership and close cooperation on NK policy.
- 8 Economic officials of the two Koreas open three days of talks in Pyongyang on measures to help ease NK's chronic energy shortages.
- SK and NK militaries reach full agreement on arrangements to reconnect a cross-border railway. The 41-point agreement also calls for opening a hotline between the two militaries.
- The first inter-Korean working level conference on electricity cooperation is held in Pyongyang.
- Valery Denisov, Russian ambassador to North Korea, hosts a reception to mark the first anniversary of the signing of a treaty for friendship, good neighborliness and cooperation between Russia and NK.
- 9 A US-based international aid organization has recently sent 2.78 billion won (\$2.18 million) worth of medication to NK, *The Korea Times* reports.
- KCBS says officials and scholars from various sectors, including agriculture, education and science, recently held forums to study the theory of the seed and the ideology that values the seed presented by North Korean leader Kim Jong-il in the 1970s.
- 10 US-based General Electric, which was supposed to deal with the core technology of the light-water reactors being built by the KEDO, decides to withdraw. It will be replaced by Japanese Hitachi and Toshiba.
- 11 A group of pro-Pyongyang Korean residents in Japan arrive in the port city of Wonsan aboard a North Korean vessel, for a visit to their homeland.
- NK arts group including opera singers and folk music singers makes their first tour of the US cities of Los Angeles, New York, Washington, Chicago and Houston—all cities with large Korean communities.
- 12 UNHRC releases NK's first report on its human rights situation in 16 years. The report, however, only describes NK's human rights-related laws.
- 13 In celebration of the 59th birthday of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, a group of military leaders and army commanders gathered at Kim's purported birthplace on Mt. Paektu for a gun salute in his honor at 6:30 a.m. They include Vice Marshal Cho Myong-rok, first vice chairman of the all powerful National Defense Commission; and Vice Marshal Kim Il-chol, People's Armed Forces Minister.
- NK unilaterally ratified agreement on joint regulation that it reached the week before with SK for the proposed inter-Korean railway and road projects across the border, the SK Defense Ministry announces.
- WFP will provide 810,000 tons of food and \$93 million in aid to NK this year, *The Korea Herald* reports.
- 15 A ceremony is held in Pyongyang to celebrate North Korean leader Kim

- Jong-il's 59th birthday, with the participation of thousands of senior officials and army officers, including Kim Yong-nam, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly; Vice Marshal Cho Myong-rok, first vice chairman of the all-powerful National Defense Commission; and Premier Hong Song-nam.
- 17 UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy visits SK.
- 20 The KCNA announces that the SK insistence on naming NK as its 'principal enemy' is jeopardizing the recent *rapprochement* between the two countries.
- 21 A SK delegation arrives in Pyongyang to attend the first session of a subcommittee established in the Seoul-Pyongyang Committee for the Promotion of Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation to deal with measures for preventing floods along the Imjin River flows that through a border area of the two Koreas.
- Han Dok-su, head of the pro-Pyongyang General Federation of Korean Residents in Japan, dubbed Chongryon or Chosen Soren, dies of chronic disease at 94.
- 24 An NK economic mission, led by Minister of Metal and Machine Industry Jon Sung-hun, leaves for Italy.
- The Foreign Ministry issues a statement condemning Japan's distortion of history regarding the beginning of colonial rule in 1910.

ABBREVIATIONS

CSCAP	Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific	NIS	National Intelligence Service of SK
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone	NK	North Korea
JDA	Japanese Defense Agency	SK	South Korea
KCBS	(North) Korean Central Broadcasting Station	SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
KCNA	(North) Korean Central News Agency	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
KEDO	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
KOTRA	Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency	WCRP	World Conference on Religion and Peace
		WFP	The World Food Programme