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Chairman Kim Jong Un extends condolences to President Xi Jinping

Kim Jong Un, chairman of the Workers' Party of Korea and chairman of the DPRK State Affairs Commission, sent a letter to Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is also general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, as regards the campaign to combat infectious pneumonia caused by novel coronavirus currently underway in China.

The DPRK Supreme Leader sent warm greetings to all the Party members and medical workers of China who are at the forefront of the fight against the epidemic, and expressed his deep condolences to the families of the people who died of the infectious disease.

Saying that the WPK and the people of the DPRK regard the outbreak of the infectious disease in China as their

own affair and the losses suffered by their own families, he conveyed his sincere wish to share the suffering and trial of the fraternal Chinese people and help them even a little.

He expressed the conviction that the Party, government and people of China would surely emerge victorious in the campaign to combat the disease under the wise guidance of General Secretary Xi Jinping,

offering his militant greetings to him and all the CPC members and wishing the Chinese people well-being and happiness.

The WPK Central Committee sent a relief fund to the CPC Central Committee in accordance with the decision of its Political Bureau on Jan 31.

KCNA

HEALTH

Nation out for combat against nCoV



Researchers work on remedies to prevent the novel coronavirus infection at the Central Hygienic and Anti-epidemic Centre of the DPRK Ministry of Public Health.

Efforts are being made in the DPRK to raise hygienic awareness of the novel coronavirus infection.

Newspapers, TV and other mass media inform the people of the occurrences of the novel coronavirus infection in different countries and the danger, the course of transmission and symptoms of the epidemic, preventive measures and others instantly.

The public health sector carefully organizes the work to encourage medical workers conduct hygienic information activities in various forms and ways.

The Ministry of Public Health and the Health Education Institute rapidly distributed reference data and explanations to cope with the epidemic to all parts of the country through the electronic public health administration system.

Kim Man Yu Hospital, South Phyongan Provincial People's Hospital, North

Phyongan Provincial People's Hospital and other public health institutions conduct information activities through multimedia presentations at their compounds and give explanations about the epidemic in units in their charge.

Medical workers of all the clinics urgently request all the residents to be especially careful about personal and foodstuff hygiene.

Industrial establishments are taking thorough measures to inform the employees of the elementary common knowledge to prevent the epidemic and establish a regular system of notifying the public health and anti-epidemic institutions in case any abnormal symptoms are observed among them. Since the establishment of the state emergency anti-epidemic system, the central emergency anti-epidemic headquarters has been proactive in its efforts.

Its divisions were reinforced

PROJECT

Phosphate fertilizer factory project makes headway

The Sunchon Phosphate Fertilizer Factory project is making progress at a fast rate.

The assembly of equipment and apparatuses for the 35 000-ton-capacity phosphoric acid production process, the kernel part of the factory, was completed in the main last January, providing a basis for pushing the establishment of the phosphoric acid production line with a total capacity of 70 000 tons.

According to information available, the major production processes are currently being assembled while the internal and external executions are simultaneously pushed forward in the final stage at dozens of



The Sunchon Phosphate Fertilizer Factory project progresses apace.

with leading officials of ministries and national agencies and the whole country got to prioritize the prevention of the novel corona virus over all other affairs.

All the divisions including those for general affairs, blockade and quarantine, hygienic information work, inspection, external affairs, medicine and treatment are responsibly discharging their duties.

The work details of the

building sites including those for a comprehensive welfare facility, dorm and hall of culture.

Electric furnace No. 2, which is the core of the yellow phosphorus production process, is ready for a trial run with the completion of the body assembly, fireproof brickwork and electrode installation and the setup of large apparatuses such as cold condensation and washing towers and corresponding pipelines.

Plastering for the exterior, interior and floor and other finishing works are underway at the building sites.

A project has been initiated



to timely solve scientific and technical problems which arise or might arise in the construction and operation of the factory.

Especially, the possible effects of the factory's waste water and pollutants on the ecosystem are thoroughly examined so as to prevent pollution in Sunchon City and the Taedong River.

The phosphorite moulding and processing technology was established underpinned by the recent successful research which made it possible to adopt muck from Anju brown coal as a locally-available binding material for moulding.

By Jong Hwa Sun PT

promptly tackle the shortage of reagents needed for diagnosing the infection and to prevent hospital infection.

Medical institutions and hospitals of all levels are developing a high sense of responsibility its employees.

At present, over 30 000 medical workers are taking part in the hygienic information work and examinations every day across the country.

By Pang Un Ju PT

LEAD

KPA carries on the mission of defender and builder

February 8 this year marks the 72nd anniversary of the founding of the Korean People's Army.

After achieving the historic cause of national liberation in 1945 President Kim Il Sung put forward the building of a powerful regular army as an essential task for building an independent sovereign state, and energetically led the efforts to found the army with his original ideas.

Having matured his regular army-building plan during the 20-year-long anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, he saw to it that the military setup and equipment and logistics were set so that various services and arms could be developed in a comprehensive way to meet the features of modern warfare and in accordance with the tasks of the Korean revolution. He also ensured that military and political officers were trained by local efforts and a Juche-oriented defence industry was established.

As the result, the Korean People's Army was founded in 1948 with the anti-Japanese war veterans as the hardcore and the fighting experiences obtained during the anti-Japanese armed

struggle as valuable asset.

The KPA guaranteed the building of a new Korea and socialist construction with arms and, especially in the 1950s, created a heroic legend by repulsing the armed invasion by the imperialist allied forces.

In the grim Fatherland Liberation War which was called a confrontation between rifle and atomic bomb, KPA soldiers fought against the enemy in the self-sacrificing spirit for the Party, leader, country and people.

The victory in the war was a historic event that demonstrated the KPA's dignity to the world and instilled into the Korean people greater pride in having their own excellent army.

Chairman Kim Jong Il's Songun-based revolutionary leadership provided a turning point in the KPA's ideological and moral qualities, its combat preparedness and its features as a regular army.

In the face of constant tension and heated confrontation in the world's worst powder keg and hot spot, the KPA reliably safeguarded the country's safety, revolutionary gains and peace and security on them

Korean peninsula.

It also brought the people happiness as it performed feats on the major fronts of socialist construction.

The noble ideological and fighting spirit the KPA created in the course of generating wealth for the people under the slogan of "Let us take upon ourselves both national defence and socialist construction!" has injected vitality into the whole society.

Its fighting spirit and pattern of creation have been generalized throughout the DPRK to make the country brim with the indomitable will and revolutionary stamina and enable all fronts of a powerful socialist nation building to undergo rapid development.

On the occasion of the founding anniversary of the KPA, the elite revolutionary armed forces that defend socialism and revolution as standard-bearer and unyielding fulcrum, all the Korean people are extending warm congratulations to the gallant service personnel who are their beloved sons and daughters.

By Kim Rye Yong PT



Choe Ryong Hae (foreground centre), president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, on a survey trip to the construction site of the Sunchon Phosphate Fertilizer Factory in South Phyongan Province.

SUPPORT

Housewives give helping hand

Members of the women's union are taking a large share in the offensive for a frontal breakthrough.

Those in Sunchon City of South Phyongan Province are lending a big hand to the builders of the Sunchon Phosphate Fertilizer Factory.

They have turned out to the construction site from the outset of the project to collect gravels and sand and do other works, giving builders considerable encouragement.

Women in Songnim City of North Hwanghae Province collected a great deal of scrap iron to send it to the Hwanghae Iron and Steel Complex and those in Jagang Province are

assisting lumberjacks with log production as they cut twigs and repair roads.

Women's union members in South Hwanghae Province made tens of thousands of tons of manure in some days to send them to cooperative farms in the province and those in North Hamgyong Province secured quality organic fertilizer and farming materials to contribute to farming preparations.

Those in South Hamgyong Province prepared more than 33 000 tons of liquid manure, wood ash and night soil to help farmers reap a good crop.

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Nationwide

Beer lovers enjoy drinking in winter

Demand for Taedonggang beer does not decline a bit even in winter.

Shops serving Taedonggang beer everywhere in Pyongyang are always crowded with beer lovers.

Lots of working people go to the Taedonggang beer houses after a day's work in the evening and many others go for a drink at noon.

There they talk about the day's happenings as they "review" their work.

As they see the gas bubbles rising up to the rims of mugs they joyfully recall the day's successes, sports games they played at lunchtime, birthday parties and the like.

First batch of triplets of the year leave hospital

Kim Yong Hwa and her husband Kim Man Yong from Nampho left the Pyongyang Maternity Hospital on Feb 3 with their triplet daughters in their arms.

The triplets weighed 1.56kg, 1.84kg and 1.79kg each at the time of birth on Oct 25 last year, but now they reached 4.08kg, 4.48kg and 4.72kg after 101 days. The triplets

and their mother received gold rings, silver knives and other gifts from the state.



Blastings conducted in Kangwon

A 180 000-cubic-metre blasting and 230 000 cubic-metre blasting were respectively carried out on Jan 28 and 23 at the dam construction sites of the Phyonggang and Kosong army-people power stations in Kangwon Province. They have provided a large amount of gravels and sand for the projects.

Agrochemicals producer starts operation

A large-capacity agricultural chemicals production base for the production of cocoons has been built in the Unsan area of South Phyongan Province and launched into production.

Built in an area of thousands of square metres, the base's production processes are automated and put on assembly line, and will annually produce a large amount of quality disinfectants for silkworms

and site, silkworm raising rooms and apparatuses.

The disinfectants are much more cost-effective and have higher quality than imported ones. They reportedly have a long shelf life and are convenient for transport.

Struggling in cold water for hours

Shortly ago, the water of a dam rose unexpectedly and dry leaves flowed into the intake of the Manpho Yonha Power Station to close it up.

The remarkable reduction of the amount of water entering the intake began to hinder the operation of generator.

At that juncture, several workers removed the obstacles for hours in the cold water, which is several metres deep, in order to ensure the normal working of the generator.

University of technology hosts sci-tech fest

The 35th Festival of Science and Technology of Kim Chaek University of Technology opened in Pyongyang on Tuesday.

The festival is to be held in the form of presentation of scientific and technological achievements, contest of exhibition of units and exchange of new technologies, divided into 11 panels

including education science, IT, metal materials, electronics and automation, and high-tech products.

It will also feature a presentation of sci-tech strategy.

More than 280 scientific research findings have been exhibited at the festival.

It will go on until Feb 7.

Mask production soars against novel CoV infection

With emergency measures being taken one after another to prevent novel coronavirus infection, the Pyongyang, Mangyongdae, Hyongjesan and other garment factories in

Pyongyang are producing tens of thousands of masks every day.



Agricultural institute project goes full steam ahead

The construction project for four institutes of the Academy of Agricultural Science has just passed the 68 percent line.

The new institutes being built are dedicated to the research of

agrobiology, plant protection science, agro-nanotechnology and agrochemistry.

Fish farm increases production with less water

The Samchon Catfish Farm in South Hwanghae Province has channelled big efforts into putting fish farming on a scientific and intensive basis, thereby recycling 80 percent of used water and producing an average of 200 kilograms of catfish per cubic metre of water and 270 kilograms at the maximum.

Apatite mines restored

Strenuous efforts are being made to immediately restore apatite mines in North and South Phyongan provinces to their original state in keeping with the quick tempo of the construction of the Sunchon Phosphate Fertilizer Factory.

Lots of waterlogged stopes and production processes have been brought back to pave the way for carrying on apatite production at a certain level.

The rehabilitation of stopes is being conducted at the final stage and production equipment and transport lines are being repaired while the production of apatite concentrate is going on.

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NOTEBOOK

Mindulle gives priority to quality control

The Mindulle Notebook Factory is paying close attention to raising the quality of its goods in February, the month of taking measures for improving the quality of products.

"We are trying hard to provide children and students with more quality notebooks," said chief engineer Choe Chol Min. "In this month we are giving priority to enhancing the quality of notebooks a level higher."

According to him, a team activity for improving the quality and increasing the quantity of products is conducted at the factory involving all the staff from the manager to assistant machine operators.

Most recently, they developed and introduced a wire direction-changing device for spiral wire moulding machine to remove a production process, and mechanized the production of the handicraft toolbox which was made manually previously, thereby increasing productivity by five times while saving labour and time.

The factory also introduced overlaying and substandard paper detecting devices into the paper feeder of the screen printing process, thus making it possible to run the process with six workers instead of



PAK CHANG BOK / THE PYONGYANG TIMES
Workers pack notebooks from the production line at the Mindulle Notebook Factory in Pyongyang.

the previous eight, thereby using all the paper sheets without waste and halving the production cost. In recent years, they came up with over 30 contrivances and technical innovation plans every year and improved product quality while saving a great deal of labour and materials.

And it has quarterly organized a prize contest on notebook cover design and applied prize-winning ones to production. Consequently, it now turns out nearly 50 kinds of notebooks as compared to six at the time of its inauguration in 2016.

In particular, it designed and made a flexography-wire bookbinding line with an annual production capacity of 50 million notebooks to develop the capacity of turning out 150 million, and upgraded a semi-automatic bookbinding machine into a fully automatic one.

"We will turn out much more notebooks with better quality by giving precedence to quality over quantity and making all the employees work in a responsible manner to maximize the quality of products," said manager Pak Pyong Ho.

By Kim Il Jin PT

HAIRDYE

New dyestuff proves less negative

The Pyongyang Cosmetics Factory has unveiled dyeing shampoo and cream.

According to Kang Min Sim, chief engineer of the factory, it is inevitable that hair turns grey with the passage of time, but some women and young people have witnessed their hairs turning yellow or white earlier in recent years due to the excessive use of permanent chemical or shampoo and malnutrition.

"Therefore, more and more people turn to dyeing products, and the level of their demand is very high. The traditional dyes have triggered an excessive reaction among the users," said Won Son Ju, section chief of the cosmetics research institute of the factory.

The dyeing shampoo and cream developed by the factory, however, prove more effective than the traditional dyes as they contain locally-abundant natural

plant extracts, she added.

They have some features in terms of their form, function, usage and others.

A gel product, the dyeing shampoo is used to cleanse and dye hair, while the dyeing cream is only devoted to dyeing.

It takes three to four minutes to dye with the cream, but 10 to 11 minutes in case of using the shampoo.

"Many people prefer the dyeing shampoo since it is designed to be used like washing hair and therefore it is generally more convenient to use," said Won.

"The previous dyes required the assistance of hairdresser or others and they took 30 to 40 minutes to dye hair. But the new developments of the Pyongyang Cosmetics Factory are very useful as they not only turn hair into black in a short time without stimulating skin but also preserve soft hair after washing," said Ri Hyon Hui, a woman aged 40, living in Mangyongdae District, Pyongyang.

By Jong Hwa Sun PT



JON KWANG HUN / THE PYONGYANG TIMES
Unhasu-brand dyeing shampoo and cream produced by the Pyongyang Cosmetics Factory.

WEATHER

Higher-than-average temperature persists this winter

The temperature has been higher than the average this winter in the DPRK.

"This winter is marked by high temperature throughout the country from the beginning until today," said Kim Chol Min, section chief of the State Hydro-meteorological Administration.

According to him, the lowest daily temperature rose above zero degree centigrade in most areas south of the central part of the country around Sohan, the beginning of the severest cold, which fell on January 6. And

there was also much rain, a rare abnormal weather, as the low pressure of the Yangtze River, which influences the weather in the Korean peninsula mostly in spring and autumn, passed by.

Such abnormal weather phenomena have often occurred in the DPRK in recent years as the seawater temperature goes up all over the equator and the subtropical zone due to global warming and a huge quantity of heat moves toward the middle latitudes, he said.

KCNA

INSTRUMENT

Unbangul accordions find favour with customers



PAK KWANG HUN / THE PYONGYANG TIMES

Employees assemble bayan keys in the Pyongyang Musical Instrument Factory.

"Thanks to the quick mechanism of wind compartment, the players of 'Unbangul'-brand accordions can properly represent music as they wish. They are featured by soft tone quality and beautiful sound as a whole," said Ri Nam Sin, instructor of Pyongyang Music School No. 2.

The accordion is produced at the Pyongyang Musical Instrument Factory in Mangyongdae District, Pyongyang.

Established in October 1953 in a total area of 15 300 square metres, the factory consists of over ten workshops, designing office, technical arrangement office and others.

"Generally, accordion has a very complex structure, and it consists of more than 8 000 accessories made through over 12 000 processes," said Ri Chang Ho, manager of the factory.

Therefore, ensuring of accuracy arises as a very important matter in making accordions.

According to Yun Thae Gun, chief engineer of

the factory, the musical instrument producer attaches particular importance to the role of skilled workers with rich experience and high technique to improve the accuracy of products.

The factory also produces bayan and harmonica.

"We have manufactured bayan with our own efforts and technology, without relying on technical collaboration with other countries, and it is drawing great interest and popularity among consumers," said workshop manager Pak Yong Il.

The factory's 'Unbangul' accordion and bayan won the top prizes at the 10th Pyongyang Exhibition of Musical Instruments last year and became special favourites at the 2019 international exhibition of musical instruments held in Guangzhou and Shanghai, China, and thousands of them found their way to various foreign markets last year, including Russia, China and Italy.

By Yun Kyong Il PT

Resort has much to offer visitors



The main ingredients of Sokthang hot spring are simple silica, sulphur and fluorine (sodium bicarbonate). It is said to be very effective for the treatment of chronic gastritis, poisoning, osteoporosis, skin diseases, arthritis, neuralgia and neuritis and especially good for skincare of women.

It has a daily natural yield of 1,300 cubic metres, with the water temperature being 84.5 degrees centigrade and its pH 8.6.

Sprawling in an area of over 1.66 million square metres, the resort is divided into sections of hotels, medical treatment and care, indoor and outdoor spa baths, ski slope, horse riding park and dwelling houses and for walk as well. All buildings boast their modern beauty while blending in so well with the geographical features of the mountainous area and natural environment covered with pine forests.

Suites and rooms in various classes including those for persons with disabilities, recreation centres and spa bathrooms at hotels and inns provide visitors with full convenience to meet their demands.

And the panel lodges houses with several rooms are designed to make the holidaymakers cook by themselves feeling family atmosphere.

The resort in Onjong-ri, Yangdok County of South Phyongan Province in the middle of the DPRK, was inaugurated in December last year as a comprehensive spa treatment service base and a multifunctional sports, cultural and recreational complex which combines hot spring bath with various sporting activities.

The Pyongyang-Onjong tourist railway line and tourist buses run for holidaymakers.

An old history book *Tonggukyoyisungnam* published in 1481 says that Yangdok hot spring wells up from the openings between rocks and so it has been called "tolthang" or "sokthang" since olden times.

Major facilities

- Indoor and outdoor spa baths

There are hot spring bath tanks using traditional medicines, fish hot spring bath, terraced and detached spa baths, high-pressure water bath, egg-boiling site and others.

- Recreational service centre

The service centre has a banquet hall, dining rooms, public service amenities, treatment service facilities



for physiotherapy and others, fitness room, room for electronic games and massage room, etc.

- Skiing area

The skiing area has three ski slopes (735, 685 and 345 metres high).

- Riding park

- Accommodation

There are a hotel, panel lodges and six blocks of inns.

A flood of holidaymakers arrive in the Yangdok Hot Spring Resort nestled in a fashionable style in contrast and harmony with the surrounding sky-high mountains.

It is nearly a month since it started service on Jan 10 and the number of holidaymakers visiting the resort has already reached tens of thousands.

"It was an out-of-the-way mountainous area a year ago, but now it is seething with people from all parts of the country. All of them envy us living here," proudly said Ri Song Guk, an old native of Yangdok.

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What they say

Among the first batch of holidaymakers at the Yangdok Hot Spring Resort were families of soldier builders.

"Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un invited us, the wives of army officers, to the resort as 'special guests'. I've never dreamt that countrywomen like me would be the 'first guests' of the splendid spa resort. I will take photos of everything in this dreamland and show my husband and parents back at home."

An officer's wife

"I had a doubt when my son wrote to me that he was building an unbelievably fantastic holiday resort, but here I realized that he was perfectly right in his description of this wonderland. I feel great pride and pleasure here as I am enjoying myself at the resort my son has built."

An officer's mother

"The children are in vacation,

so my family members came here all together."

Jang Pok Il, worker at a garment factory in Kumya County, South Hamgyong Province

"We are using all the facilities in the indoor and outdoor spa areas and the ski area at low rates. I keenly experience that our socialist country is really the best."

"My primary schoolboy really likes it very much, saying he feels as if he is in a dreamland. I am afraid as he would not want to go home as he can enjoy everything he wants including skiing, hot spring bath, sports and electronic games."

Ri Su Yong, a woman from Phyongsong, South Phyongan Province

Tourists take unique delight in spa bath

The strongest appeal of the Yangdok Hot Spring Resort is the famous spa bath.

It is not a simple spa bath, but the one boasting the curative efficacy of Sokthang Hot Spring of the indoor spa bath.

She added that the bubble bath in the clinic is especially good for the heart and the treatment of hypertension and nervous system disorders, while the bath at various temperatures is effective for physical training and for curing diabetes, frigidity and impotence.

At every bath tank the water temperature is displayed in real time and there is a signboard telling about treatment efficiency and indications at the relevant spa bath and, therefore, customers can easily find their appropriate tank without guide.

A particular favourite at the indoor spa bath is bathing with fishes that make bathers' skin clean.

As the "kind" fishes tickle bathers at their hands, feet and other parts of the body, even blunt persons cannot but laugh.

The outdoor spa bath, which

By Ri Sung Ik PT



Skiing experience leaves fond memory

"photographs," said Kim Yong Sim, photographer of the centre. Ski lift and snowmobile services are also available. Holidaymakers can have soft drinks and simple meal at resting places.

By Pang Un Ju PT



According to Kim Song I, service woman of the ski service centre, the ski resort was built in the most ideal place as it has low percentage of sunshine all the year round.

There are three ski courses at the resort. The first and second courses are for professionals or skilful skiers, with their respective height being 735 and 685 metres and gradients being 26 degrees respectively. Fans can use the third ski slope as it is 345 metres high and has a gradient of 13 degrees.

The section, where the three slopes meet, has a gradient of six degrees and is 160 metres wide, so beginners practise skiing skills there.

Some of them fall down by treading on their ski boards by mistake or bump against protective walls as they slide down the slopes.

Therefore, the resort offers ski education service to beginners.

"Even beginners want to skilfully slide down the course as early as possible, but they need some time to fulfil their desire and there is no fixed rule about the period," said ski instructor Ri Kum Byol.

Jang In Chol, mining workteam leader of pit No. 9 of the February 8 Jiktong Youth Coal Mine, said that he shouted for joy after sliding down ski slope No. 3 in an hour, though he was a beginner.

Courage is required before knack or skill in skiing, the instructor added.

"The emotion when I looked up and down the ski course was quite different," said Ro Myong Ho, worker of the Sunchon Thermal Power Station.

He said that he fell down during sliding, though he tried after hesitating for 15 minutes on top of the third course.

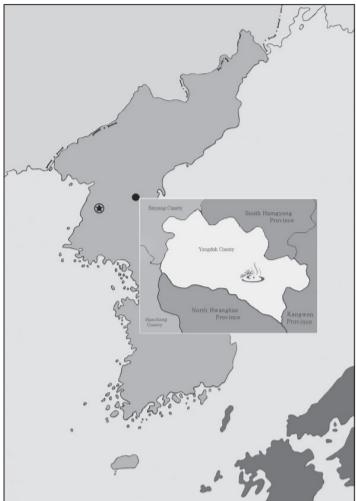
In comparison with him, some women and children courageously slide down the third slope without the help of ski sticks.

An eye-catcher at the resort is the sledge ground.

The holidaymakers slide down the course while whirling on float-shaped sledges.

"It puts me in a pretty sweat as every slider asks me to take their

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Hot spring resort creates buzz for tourists



What they say

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so my family members came here all together."

Jang Pok Il, worker at a garment factory in Kumya County, South Hamgyong Province

The resort also has a building for medical treatment with some 200 sickrooms, in which those who come here for medical treatment can receive non-drug treatment of various forms ranging from diagnosis to spa treatment, massaging, inhalation and exercises free of charge under the socialist public health system of the country.

"We are using all the facilities in the indoor and outdoor spa areas and the ski area at low rates. I keenly experience that our socialist country is really the best."

An officer's wife

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PROFILE

Writer delves into details of life to build his career

Paek Hyon U's "Answer the World" was an instant best seller last year.

The novel tells about class-A crimes of Japan which were concealed in the annals of history and the activities of Korean patriots who delayed the Japanese scheme.

According to the author, immediately after its defeat Japan issued a secret order to completely destroy all evidence related to the atomic bomb test and making it had committed in Korea's Hungnam area, called the "Noguchi industrial area" at the time, and killed all Koreans who had been involved in it or known anything about it.

Paek is said to have searched the whole country for the descendants of the victims to write the novel.

"He had collected materials and met many people for 30 years to write the novel. He never starts writing if he has any doubt or the materials are not enough," said Tong Ui Hwi, a woman writer at the Central Committee of the Writers Union of Korea.

Such a writing habit of him surprised his peers when he wrote the novel "People Who Control Fire" decades ago.



At the time he left Pyongyang for Songnim with his wife and worked at the then Hwanghae Iron Works for years.

The novel dealt with the smelters who had reconstructed the damaged coke oven to kindle the flames of the building of a new democratic Korea as masters of the country after its liberation from Japanese military rule.

Later, it was adapted as a blockbuster TV series.

To love life and give a lifelike representation of it—this is the principle of production Paek has maintained until today.

"Only when one loves life passionately, can he or she give a lifelike portrayal of it. I came to know what is life and how to love it during my childhood," said the old novelist.

He was born in a mountain village in Unsan County of

North Phyongan Province in May 1943. After the end of the Korean war he studied at the then Pyongyang Primary School No. 4.

It was the time when postwar rehabilitation was in full swing across the country.

One day there was a Korean language class and his teacher gave a subject "Our classroom" for composition.

Just before the 45-minute class was over, the teacher read a namesake children's verse after checking the compositions of the class. It was greeted with thunderous applause from all the classmates.

The poem was written by Chairman Kim Jong Il.

Recalling the days with deep emotion, Paek said, "The Chairman expressed the sound of hammering and shovelling what we all had heard as commonplace or sometimes annoying as an 'exuberant song of gigantic construction'. It was an expression which could be only used by someone who deeply loved life."

He is now working on a novel about the Chairman in his childhood, recollecting his past.

By Ri Sung Ik PT

TRAFFIC

Trolley buses of 70s still operative, inspirational

It is not uncommon to see some 20th-century trolley buses in the streets of Pyongyang, though they are distinguishable from modern-day ones in terms of colour and shape.

They are Chollima-70 trolley buses, the first of its kind produced in the DPRK in the 1970s.

The sides of them are dotted with red stars with the letters "fifty thousand", which

indicates the distance they ran without accident in kilometre.

"We are very proud of the stars," said Kim Myong Gil, a driver who runs the West Pyongyang-Pyongyang Railway Station course. "In actuality, the total distances of their accident-free run are enough to cover their whole surfaces with red stars."

Myong Gil's trolley bus with the licence plate number

"819" was personally visited by President Kim Il Sung on April 8 1972 as he paid much attention to solving the traffic problem of the capital city.

Though it has been running for decades, the trolley bus still preserves its original looks and capacity.

The glittering paint, neat fittings, glossy handle among others reflect the driver's affection and devotion to his vehicle.

"I feel relieved every time I get on the trolley bus, which I took to and from work for over 30 years. It also reminds me of my childhood when I would visit my father's workplace which was bubbling with the Chollima movement. Such a memory makes me harden the resolve to be faithful to my work as those of my father's generation was," said An Son Yong living in Tonghung-dong, Central District, Pyongyang.

By Jong Hwa Sun PT



A 1972 trolley bus runs along the street in Pyongyang.

EDUCATION

Dozens of hobby groups operational

Mirae Primary School in Phyongchon District of Pyongyang under Kim Hyong Jik University of Education runs 40-odd extracurricular groups that are divided into different fields.

"We are going to find out and develop diverse aptitudes and likings of our pupils," said Pak Un Gyong, headmistress of the school.

The school started to operate the groups with the beginning of this year's winter vacation.

It classified pupils into three categories according to their level and included frontrunners in certain hobby groups in the first category, those who lag behind in the second category, and newcomers from other groups in the third category.

Even in the same group,

different curricula are implemented and education level differs.

Such hobby groups with many applicants as vocal music, art of speaking and foreign languages are divided into several small groups so that teachers can teach many pupils without imposing heavy physical burdens.

A math group for those with low scholarly performance is also in operation at the school.

In the group reviews are done and lessons to which necessary contents have been added are given to meet the levels of the pupils, eliciting a positive response from their parents.

Other schools are following the school's way of operating hobby groups.

By Pang Un Ju PT



KIM YONG CHAN / THE PYONGYANG TIMES

Members of the group of robotics work on the operating principle of electric fan at Mirae Primary School in Pyongyang.

PHARMACY

New medicines developed

The Ryonghung Pharmaceutical Factory has recently developed scores of new products by raising the ratio of locally-available raw materials for medicines and concentrating efforts on the modernization of equipment.

Last year, it replaced the substitute materials needed for the making of Angunguhwanghwan and Noesimsahyang medicines with locally-available natural materials, and ensured the domestic production of cocarboxilase.

It now produces over 190 kinds of medicines.

A typical product is the Koryo insam active pill.

"This pill was made by organically combining immunity-function promoting medicinal herbs including Kaesong Koryo insam and selenium, and it dissolves and detoxifies active oxygen, peroxide and toxic materials," said researcher Kim Yong Hui.

The thrombus injection and hyperlipemia capsule which are specially good for treating cerebral thrombosis and circulatory diseases won national patents, and Angunguhwanghwan, Ryukmihwan and Sipjondaebohwan pills which were made on the basis of Tonguibogam received certifications at exhibitions held in China, Vietnam and some other countries.

The factory conducts brisk service activities by relying on dozens of its sales branches in Pyongyang and provinces.

"We will develop new medicine production technologies with locally-abundant natural medicinal materials as raw materials and produce much more famous medicines with a competitive edge in the world's market," said Sin Kum Rye, manageress of the factory.

By Kim Rye Yong PT

JAPAN

Militarization bid only brings ignominy and ruin

Japan's wild ambition for militaristic glory gets stronger with the passage of time.

A few days ago Prime Minister Abe, at a meeting of the Liberal Democratic Party on the revision of the constitution, called for putting an end to the discussion of the constitution by properly specifying the existence of the Self-Defence Forces in the constitution. He also told a Budget Committee meeting of the House of Representatives that "it is related to the keynote of national defence to stipulate

and codify the validity of the SDF members".

His remarks are little short of an open declaration that he would continue to turn a deaf ear to the strong protest and denunciation at home and abroad and railroad the criminal revision of the constitution through.

Now the international community denounces the current Japanese authorities that are openly challenging international laws that stipulate the post-war status and future of Japan as a heinous group keen on overseas reinvasion and

modern-version fascist force.

With the number of those opposing the constitutional revision increasing in Japanese society, even the political circle argues that "it is necessary to bring down the Abe regime that violates Article 9 of the constitution".

However, Abe and the forces are making desperate attempts to amend the constitution in defiance of the demand of humanity and public sentiment while talking about the "building of a state towards a new era".

Lurking behind this is the

cunning intention to regain the old status of the colonial suzerain state by which it acted an emperor in the Asian countries occupied by it in the last century under the pretext of securing the status of a normal state.

It is not difficult to guess what those brutal guys, who obstinately defend aggression and plunder describing them as justice and innocence, meant by saying about the "building of a new state".

Japanese politicians, who are making desperate attempts to realize the old dream of the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere", should clearly understand that they can never evade the merciless rebuff by the international community.

By Om Ryong PT

A researcher of the University of Maryland denounced the US authorities, saying that whenever a horrific gun crime occurred and the firearm issue was brought up for discussion, the authorities would come up with an incomplete plan to mess things up and would be through with the matter when public interest waned.

Foreign media reported that the problem of firearms in the US has seriously been affected by factional strife and group interests, adding it would never be resolved as the politicians who are supported by arms dealers are indifferent to firearms control.

By Min Chol PT

of Israelis feel uneasy about the fact that society is disrupted politically and nationally. People of Arab origin who account for 20 percent of population are dissatisfied with the government's policy of national discrimination.

Not only such Mideast countries as Lebanon and Iran, to say nothing of Palestine, but also European countries including France and Germany are resolutely opposing and rejecting Israel's wild ambition for territorial expansion.

The West Bank and East Quds are permeated with blood and tears of lots of innocent Palestinians, and many Palestinians leave their native villages.

The Israeli government's problem of merging the Jordan valley, which is as dangerous as taking a time bomb, might be a detonator of wrath and collapse, analysts comment.

By Choe Yong Nam PT

the US military bases in south Korea.

The carcinogenic substance found in a US base is more dangerous than the novel coronavirus which causes great concern across the world at present, it noted.

Briefly**Russia****History distortion decried**

The chairwoman of the Russian Federation Council in a recent interview denounced the attempts to blame the USSR as a provoker of the Second World War.

It is unimaginable to compare the country, which suffered the severest damage from the Nazis and broke the backbone of the fascists in the war, with the fascist Germany or to blame the former as a provoker of the WWII, she said.

UK**Brexit comes true**

The UK officially broke away from the European Union on the night of Jan 31.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson in a televised speech said what the government must do now is to unite the country which was badly disrupted since the referendum on the country's withdrawal from the EU in 2016.

Cuba**Cuban FM voices support for Venezuela**

The Cuban foreign minister in an article on his Twitter account on Jan 20 expressed the invariable stand of the Cuban government to support the Bolivar revolution, saying that the US will be unable to check Cuba's support for and solidarity with Venezuela by dint of any lies.

Middle East**US' Mideast peace initiative rejected**

Iran, Turkey, Syria and other countries in the Middle East denounced the US' Middle East policy as a "betrayal of the century", not a "deal of the century", saying the Middle East peace initiative of the US which recognized Quds as the "undivided capital" of Israel showed an apparent conspiracy between the US and Israel and their animosities towards the Arab nation.

Palestine**Palestine to cut ties with Israel, US**

Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas clarified his stand to cut all relations with Israel and the US in his speech at an emergency meeting of foreign ministers of the League of Arab States, which was held in Cairo, Egypt, on Feb 1.

Referring to the US announcement of its "Middle East peace initiative", he said that the Palestinian government conveyed its stand against it to the US and Israel and notified them of its intention not to have any relations with them including security relationship.

US

Gun violence incurable malady

According to Japan's NHK report, about 300 million firearms are possessed by individuals in the United States.

The possession of gun is allowed and fostered by law and institutionally in the country.

In November last year Montgomery of Texas was declared to be a firearms protection county where residents are allowed to carry guns without any legal restriction. More than 200 counties and 11 cities have so

far been declared as such areas.

According to a recent survey conducted by an American survey group, shootings claimed a total of 15,259 lives in the country last year, or an increase of 470 deaths as compared to the year before.

Gun violence was committed one after another in the US from the outset of the year, striking people with terror.

Such a case occurred in front of a court in Connecticut on Jan 27, wounding four people.

Two people were killed and

four were wounded in a shooting at a restaurant in South Carolina on Jan 26.

Earlier on Jan 19, an armed criminal fired at people in front of a pub in Kansas of Missouri, killing two persons and injuring fifteen.

On the same day, two people were killed and five others wounded in gunfire in San Antonio, Texas.

Horrible gun crimes occurred in many places across the country including cities of Utah, Illinois and Washington.

ISRAEL

Expansion of Jewish settlements aims what

Israel, which gave its approval to the construction of about 10,000 blocks of dwellings for Jews in the occupied Palestinian territory last year, decided to carry out the plan for building 1,930-odd blocks of dwellings in the West Bank in the new year.

In September last year, Netanyahu said that he would merge the Jordan valley if he was reelected. His remark is being translated into reality.

Why then is Israel openly revealing its greed for the West Bank?

At present, the political situations of Israel are very complicated.

Last year, two rounds of parliamentary elections were

frustrated and the incumbent Prime Minister was prosecuted for taking bribes on the political arena, with the voice demanding his resignation growing louder.

In the economic aspect, its agriculture suffered great loss due to global warming, making hundreds of thousands of families trapped by famine. And the prospect of its settlement is uncertain this year, too.

Israel aims to tide over these political and economic crises by occupying the West Bank, the major granary of Palestine, and stabilizing the public sentiment.

A major agricultural production region, the area is good for the cultivation of crops including wheat and barley, vegetables, vine and olive,

as well as for the breeding of sheep, goat, camel and other animals.

Recently, Israel brought a bill on the merge of the Jordan valley before the parliament.

Moreover, the Israeli defence minister unilaterally proclaimed that the present district under its control in the West Bank came under the jurisdiction of the country, underscoring the need to increase the number of Jewish residents in the West Bank to a million within ten years.

But the Israeli authorities' moves to expand the Jewish settlements are faced with opposition at home and abroad.

According to Bar-Ilan University, nearly 80 percent

and other mechanized strike means. In addition, it plans to send more troops than before.

South Korean online newspaper *Voice of People* on Feb 4 said that pollutants exceeding the permissible limits were detected by a survey of soil and underground water around

What's on in s.Korea

according to a news report on Feb 2.

It used to send some troops to join the military drills in the past, but this time they are going to dispatch tanks, SPGs

KCNA

The south Korean military is pushing forward with a plan to escalate the joint military drills with the US slated to be waged in California, the US,

THE PYONGYANG TIMES

SCENIC SITE

A celebrated mountain of Korea

Winter is peak season for Mt Paektu, the most celebrated mountain in Korea, to present a spectacular sight.

The mountain is 2 750 metres above sea level, or the highest in Korea, and is situated in Samjiyon City of Ryanggang Province at the northern tip of the DPRK.

Great Paektu Mountains are the cardinal mountain range that stretches down as far as Kujae Peak on the shore of the South Sea of Korea to link the whole of the Korean territory in a contiguous line.

The Korean nation has long held Mt Paektu sacred as the ancestral mountain, believing the spirit of the resourceful, brave and immaculate nation originated from the mountain.

It is associated with the history of the anti-Japanese armed struggle. President Kim Il Sung organized and

victoriously led and there is the Paektusan Secret Camp where Chairman Kim Jong Il was born.

The mountain has a singular natural environment.

It has a volcanic zone covering an area of about 5 350 square kilometres that was formed by volcanic eruptions, peaks of more than 2 000 metres above sea level that

came into being as the volcano threw out lava of over 1 000 degrees centigrade, precipices with gradients of over 60 degrees and myriad-shaped peaks and rocks surrounding Lake Chon like a folding screen. Among them, Jong Il Peak is a noted peak located in a special position.

The sunrise on Mt Paektu is a fascinating spectacle rare to be found in the world.

The mountain is the coldest area in the country noted for

capricious weather. Storms break all of a sudden to bring rain clouds to the placid lakeside, and as dark clouds clear in a flash the sky lightens. Raindrops are replaced with a shower of fist-size hailstones and when the heavy hail stops falling, flowers burst forth in the sunlight, while fluffy snowflakes drift in the air.

Lots of people are now on study tour of Mt Paektu.

By Ri Myong Jun PT



A rainbow hangs on top of Mt Paektu in a howling blizzard.

HONG HUN / PICTORIAL KOREA

RACE

'Runner papa' preps for another run at 78

impression on spectators.

Since then, he has participated in the 10km amateur races of the event seven times.

He also took part in the 2019 Autumn Amateur Marathoners Competition held in the capital city last September.

At the age of 77, he was the oldest runner of the event which drew lots of marathon lovers from many countries and regions including the DPRK, China, Russia, Germany and Poland.

With the number "098" on his chest, he ran 5km in 28 minutes and crossed the finishing line amid the hearty cheers of the spectators.

"As he reached the finish line with no sign of fatigue on his smiling face, some foreign runners gave him thumbs-up signs," said an official who had been a member of the organizing committee, adding he perfectly displayed his sportsmanship.

He looks much younger than he really is.



He has no dislikes in food and favours vegetables and beans. He has a good habit of rubbing his body with a cold wet towel. The healthy old man is also a good singer.

According to his household doctor Ri Chan Jin, Pak has a strong heart and lungs and good mobility.

He is now limbering up for the next amateur marathon event.

By Pang Un Ju PT

FOLKLORE

People still enjoy seeing first full moon of year

Jongwoldaeborum, or the fifteenth day of the first month by the lunar calendar, which comes after lunar New Year's Day is one of the traditional folk holidays of the Korean nation.

On the day, Korean ancestors held a variety of ceremonies in the hope of fortunes and good harvest in the new year.

The ceremonies usually began on the 14th of the first lunar month, and the 14th day was called small full moon day and the 15th big full moon day.

The small full moon day was mainly devoted to a ceremony signalling the start of farming.

The Korean ancestors welcomed the first full moon on the evening of the big full moon day. They went up high places like mountains at the back of their villages or surrounding hills to pray for good harvest and fortunes in the new year as they enjoyed the first full moon.

It was said that the one who saw the first full moon before anybody else would be blessed with many good things.

The Koreans prepared diverse foods on the day to share them with each other.

That day's special foods included *ogokpap* (dish made with all five grains), *yakpap* (sweet rice dish) and *pokssam* (wrapped *ogokpap*) reflecting their wish for being resistant to illnesses and summer heat and dishes made of nine kinds of dry edible greens good for health.

They played such popular folk games as tug of war and kite-flying conducive to strengthening unity and cooperation between them.

Even today, the Korean people celebrate the folk holiday, and *ogokpap* and dishes made of nine kinds of dry edible greens are a must for the day in all families.

Restaurants serve the traditional dishes of the holiday.

In the evening, plazas in all parts of the country and mountainous and coastal villages are crowded with people who come out to view the first full moon, and children add more colours to the festive mood while playing folk games like kite-flying and shuttlecock game from morning.

This year's *Jongwoldaeborum* falls on Feb 8.

By Jong Chol PT

