Amid the great expectations and interest of all the Party members and the people who have turned out in the new revolutionary advance upholding the programme for struggle set forth at the Eighth Congress of the Workers’ Party of Korea, the Second Plenary Meeting of the Eighth Central Committee of the WPK was held in Pyongyang from February 8 to 11.

The plenum was convened at a time when the guidance and the fighting efficiency of the WPK, which leads Korean-style socialism to new victories with the great idea and the art of leadership, have been remarkably demonstrated and the fighting spirit of all the Party members and other people who are boundlessly loyal to the Party’s cause has been elated.

Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the WPK, guided the plenary meeting.

As the General Secretary took the platform with members of the Presidium of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee, all the participants raised stormy cheers of the greatest respect for him who wisely leads the Party and the people along the road of victory and glory out of the noble responsibility for the country, revolution and people.

Attending the meeting were members and alternate members of the WPK Central Committee.

Present as observers were deputy directors of the relevant departments of the Party Central Committee, leading Party and administrative officials of commissions, ministries and national agencies, senior officials of the leading institutions at provincial level, chief secretaries of city and county Party committees and leading Party and administrative officials of major industrial establishments. They listened in the teleconference system.

Kim Jong Un presided over the meeting upon authorization of the Political Bureau of the WPK Central Committee.

Prior to the discussion of the agenda items, the General Secretary referred to the main purport of the convening of the plenary meeting of the WPK Central Committee.

Saying that the Party Central Committee should powerfully lead the masses to the implementation of the decisions made at the Eighth Party Congress by nurturing the heightened enthusiasm of the masses who have sympathized with the idea and...
spirit of the congress, he stressed the need to provide Party organizations and members with practical means of innovation which would help bring about substantial change and progress from the first year of the five-year plan.

As the decisions made at the Party congress are mid- and long-term tasks to be fulfilled by every sector during the coming five years, he said, it is necessary for the plenary meeting to examine the plans for this year in detail and fix and issue them as the decisions of the Party Central Committee. He expressed the determination and will of the Party Central Committee to take important measures to push ahead with economic construction and provide the people with more stable and improved living conditions despite the continuous emergency infectious disease prevention situation, in particular.

He proposed agenda items to be discussed at the plenary meeting, as he underscored the need to make a serious study of a series of issues arising in thoroughly overcoming negative elements hindering socialist construction at present, further consolidating the Party organizationally and ideologically and enhancing the militant functions and role of Party organizations.

The agenda items brought up before the plenary meeting was adopted with unanimous approval.

1. On thoroughly implementing the decisions of the Party congress and members with practical means of innovation which would help bring about substantial change and progress from the first year of the five-year plan.

2. On waging more intensive struggle against anti-socialist and non-socialist practices throughout society.

3. On modifying the collection of the slogans of the Party Central Committee.

4. On the formulation of “Explanation of the Rules of the Workers’ Party of Korea”

5. An organizational matter

The plenum discussed the first agenda item.

The General Secretary delivered an important report on the first agenda item “On Carrying out the First Year’s Tasks of the Five-Year Plan Set Forth at the Eighth Party Congress.”

He, in the report, first referred to the need to properly organize the economic work of the first year for implementing the new five-year plan for national economic development.

Saying that the first-year work is very important in attaining the new long-term goal decided on by the Eighth Congress of the WPK, he noted that the five-year plan can be finally accomplished with confidence only when the first-year plan is properly set up and fully implemented. The new five-year plan requires a new start apart from all those old and out of date and all the people in the country are now watching how the work for implementing the decisions made at the Party Congress starts and what kind of change is being made, the report stressed.

In order to successfully do this year’s work decisive of the result of the implementation of the decisions made at the Eighth Party Congress, the plan which is its operational map and a blueprint should be set up in an innovative and effective way and the whole Party, the whole country and all the people should wage a vigorous struggle for its implementation.

However, there are no remarkable changes in the national economic plan drawn up by the Cabinet for this year as compared to before, the report analysed, noting that the idea and policy of the Party congress are not properly reflected in the proposed plan for economic work for this year and innovative viewpoint and clear tactics cannot be found although the congress has just made decisions and intensive studies on the document of the congress have been made and discussions of orientation have been held.

The Cabinet failed to play a leading role in mapping out plans of key economic sectors and almost mechanically brought together the figures drafted by the ministries. And as a result, the goals of the plan of a certain sector have been set subjectively without even actual possibility and the those of some other sectors have been set lower under the signboard of readjusting and reinforcing even though they can easily be achieved or should be reached.

The report sharply criticized the work of several sectors that markedly showed such tendencies.

In the agricultural sector, the goal for grain production has been set high subjectively from the first year of the five-year plan in disregard of the present situation where farming condition is unfavorable and the state is unable to supply enough farming materials, thereby making it hard to avoid bureaucracy and bragging from the planning stage just as before.

In contrast with this, the sectors of electric power industry, construction and light industry have lowered the goals of the production plans for major indices to such level as they would not be blamed in the year-end.

Now major industrial establishments in the sectors of metal, chemical and machine industries, local industry factories across the country and the agricultural sector impatiently demand even a bit more electricity, and coal and other mines cannot but stop production and the people feel inconvenience in their living due to shortage of electricity.

This being a fact, the Cabinet, the State Planning Commission and the Ministry of Electric Power Industry mapped out this year’s plan for producing electricity lower than the present level under the pretext of adjusting to the present demand on electricity of major industrial establishments and directing efforts to restoring original efficiency of electric generators.

The construction sector also made the plan for building dwelling houses in Pyongyang Municipality lower than the goal decided by the Party congress under the excuses of the supply of materials and labour.

These are seeds of self-protectionism and defeatism of officials in economic sectors who are trying to take a breather and keep up pretense of doing work under the pretext of condition and environment.
The General Secretary in the report referred to the need to map out plans efficiently for expanding production capacity and foundations when organizing economic work for this year. All sectors of the national economy should build new production bases for production growth in the future, upgrade the backward and outdated production processes and reinforce necessary processes so as to step up the work of expanding production capacity while pushing the current production.

As suggested in the main tasks of the five-year plan, we should press ahead with the nationwide work of focusing investment on the metallurgical and chemical industries, regarding them as key links in the whole chain of the national economy, and consolidating the material and technical foundations of the agricultural sector in a planned way from this year.

We also need a method by which we can concentrate efforts in an accurately-targeted method on projects that are urgent to us and in which ten achievements can be made from one success.

Stressing that the nationwide, planned and scientific self-reliance requires special priority and should be applied in an innovative way in economic work, the report said that this year’s plan mentions about preferentially providing materials demanded in the major sectors of the national economy but state supply measures have been taken for only a few of them.

For economic guidance organs to tell subordinate units to buy and use goods in every case even those goods, which need not to be imported and which are domestically produced, is the most typical expression of dereliction found in those organs characterized by shifting their responsibilities on to the lower units by abusing the slogan “self-reliance”.

The persistence of such situation would result in gradual waning of the economic authority and control power of the state and in pushing state-run enterprises to illegal moneymaking.

Noting that the Cabinet and the State Planning Commission should take centralized and unified control of products from all sectors of the national economy and businesses, and make quick switchover to the work system of fully meeting the demand by establishing production-consumption relations, the report underscored the need to intensively provide labour, equipment, materials and funds to businesses of key industry sectors and the only-son factories, take nationwide encouraging and preferential steps and take detailed measures to ensure import indices with domestic production.

The General Secretary in the report called for attaching importance to talents in organizing economic work for this year and paying special attention to bringing up talented scientific and technical personnel and management personnel and Party officials in every sector.

The knottiest problem in propping up the national economy now is the shortage of talents and it is an urgent task to bring up new-type talents at present when we are set to make a bold innovation in all work.

Changes should be made in the work of bringing up talents first to make substantial changes in Party, state and economic work and the people’s living.

The report said that all sectors and units should regard it as an important task in the five-year plan to bring up able scientific and technical personnel, administrative personnel and Party officials who can shoulder each field of the country in the future and push it in a planned way. To this end, all sectors of the national economy should meticulously organize work on the principle of bringing up talents necessary for their sectors by themselves and leading economic officials should hold fast to it as an important practice of finding talents first and rely on them in taking stock of the actual situation of their own sectors and exploring the ways for improvement.

It should be the working attitude and trait common to all officials to boldly appoint talents, bring them up in practice and put them forward before the Party and state with a viewpoint that no work can be carried out, to say nothing of the decisions of the Party congress, without having talents in hand and bringing them up, the report added.

It stressed the need to train Party officials who are capable of finding out and intentionally bringing up talented management personnel excellent in conceiving ideas and in organizing, managing and controlling power, and who are proficient in work with people.

The General Secretary in the report put important emphasis on intensifying the struggle for putting an end to units’ claiming of their special importance and self-centredness across the whole Party, state and society when conducting the first year’s work for implementing the decisions of the Party congress.

The report said that misuse of power, bureaucratism and irregularities and corruption are anti-Party and anti-people acts committed by individuals, whereas units’ claiming of their special importance and self-centredness are graver anti-Party, anti-state and anti-people acts perpetrated under the veil of unit and organization, stressing these are the biggest obstacle to applying our Party’s people-first politics and consolidating our own strength, our internal driving force.

It specially mentioned that the practices of units’ claiming of their special importance and self-centredness which infringe on the interests of the state and people and neglect the implementation of the decisions and instructions of the Party must not be allowed to go at large any longer but be stamped out resolutely by mobilizing Party authority and legal and military powers.

It expressed the determination of the Party Central Committee to regard units’ claiming of their special importance and self-centredness as the enemy to the revolution and state tantamount to the misuse of power, bureaucratism and irregularities and corruption and to wage an all-out war against them with the plenary meeting as an occasion, and called on all Party organizations, political and state organs and all the people to be the main force in the war for wiping out units’ claiming of their special importance and self-centredness.

In the report the General Secretary pointed to the necessity to organize economic work for this year in the direction of demonstrating the potential of self-supporting economy and stabilizing the people’s living to the maximum while strictly maintaining the state emergency infectious disease prevention discipline.

He then suggested the tasks facing the sectors of the national economy for this year.

The report suggested key tasks to be carried out this year by main industrial sectors such as metal, chemical, power, coal, development and exploitation of natural resources, machine and forestry in reinforcing production foundations while conducting ongoing production, and specified detailed ways to fulfill them.

Importantly stressed was the issue of pushing the improvement of the railway situation with the focus of this year’s work put on adjusting and reinforcing railways in the sector of rail transport.

The report suggested the tasks of conducting on an extensive scale the construction of major projects including the unconditional construction of dwelling houses for 10 000 families in Pyongyang and finishing of infra-network project as planned as well as local construction and of accelerating the expansion of the cement production capacity and meeting the demand for various building materials in a responsible manner in the sector of construction.
and building materials industry.

In the report the General Secretary underlined the need for the light industrial sector holding a big share in solving food, clothing and housing problems for the people to tap all potentials and to increase to the maximum the production of consumer goods and light industrial goods. He set it as the central part of the work for this year to ensure domestic production of raw materials, recycling, recovery of original performance of equipment, creation of new production capacity, and invigoration of local industry and the General Bureau of the Tanchon Area Mining Industry.

The report stressed that it was decided to spruce up local industrial factories in Kimhwa County of Kangwon Province this year to implement the line of strengthening city and county set forth at the Eighth Congress of the Party and to set a new standard of local industrial factory. The report proposed assigning the task of taking measures for this to the Cabinet, the State Planning Commission and the Ministry of Light Industry.

In addition, it suggested the tasks for the fisheries sector to put emphasis on strengthening its material and technical foundations and actively carry out fishing and fish culture and farming so as to bring substantial benefits to the people this year.

The report also detailed the major tasks to be carried out this year by the fields of commerce, communications, land and environment, city management, external economic relations and tourism.

The General Secretary in the report stressed the need to unconditionally carry out the plan for agricultural production for this year.

The report called upon the agricultural guidance organs including the Ministry of Agriculture to map out a foresighted plan for farming and, in particular, to take measures for coping with the disastrous climate in a scientific and realistic way, stressing the need for the agricultural sector to steadily lay the foundations for stable and sustained development for increased grain output by thoroughly fulfilling this year’s plans for cereals production and procurement.

It suggested tasks for breeding high yielding varieties and expanding the area for cultivating them to increase the per-hectare yield, decisively increasing the fertility of soil, ensuring the scientific cultivation method for each farming process in line with the features of each breed and mapping out and pushing ahead with a detailed plan for making the low-yielding fields fertile before farming season.

It called for promoting in a planned way the work for laying material and technical foundations of units producing tractor and farm machines, pushing forward the restoration of irrigation systems and facilities and the expansion of the irrigated areas, accelerating the reclamation of tideland, cultivation of new land and land realignment and increasing the production of livestock products, vegetables, fruits and industrial crops.

It dealt with issues of supplying farming materials on which success or failure of this year’s farming hinge in a responsible manner on a nationwide scale, stamping out the practices of talking big in the agricultural sector, and bringing about a decisive improvement in the work of rural and Party committees.

The General Secretary in the report referred to the tasks to be fulfilled by the field of science and culture.

The report emphasized the matter of smoothly solving technological problems arising in consolidating the existing economic foundations and putting production on a normal track in the field this year, and the matter of identifying all scientific and technological talents in different sectors, regions and units, while taking practical steps for improving the qualifications and levels of scientists and technicians.

It said that the secondary educational sector should establish a rational educational system for bringing up reserve scientific and technological talents in a planned way and that universities should train more scientific and technological talents including experts on IT, biological engineering, chemistry and materials.

Important tasks were also suggested to be carried out by the public health sector in order to bring about a remarkable improvement in it this year.

The sector should direct primary efforts to decisively eradicating different kinds of contagious diseases and promote as scheduled the construction of new public health facilities and the pharmaceutical, medical appliances and medical supplies factories now underway.

The report rounded exposed the real state of art and literature still in stagnation and hibernation and called for bringing about a step forward in creation activities as required by reality that has entered a new period of turn.

Tasks were suggested for the mass media to wage a vigorous media campaign aimed at inspiring the masses to the implementation of the decisions of the Party congress, and for the field of physical culture and sports to organize a variety of sports events and conduct brisk mass sports activities.

The report stressed the importance for the People’s Army and the munitions industry and the sectors in charge of south Korean and external affairs to thoroughly achieve and carry out the fighting goal and plans for this year for implementing the decisions of the Eighth Party Congress without an inch of deflection.

The General Secretary in the report made special reference to the tasks for improving economic work in an innovative way by decisively enhancing the functions and role of state economic guidance organs.

What should be done immediately at present is for the Cabinet and state economic guidance organs to improve its guidance over and management of the overall economy by restoring the functions peculiar to them as economic organizer and their controlling functions.

State economic guidance organs should emerge from force of old habit of sitting helplessly, only complaining about bad conditions and lack of authority, and actively wage a bold campaign for overcoming economic difficulties and obstacles.

It is important to remove stumbling blocks to economic development and make sure the economy of the country is smoothly managed by improving the role of the non-permanent economic development committee.

The report stressed the need to make every process dovetailed from the planning stage, pay attention to promoting organic relationship and cooperation among economic sectors, thoroughly reject the evasion of responsibility and self-centredness existing in state economic guidance organs and overcome obstacles and difficulties while actively supporting and complementing each other purposefully and actively.

It is important to establish strict discipline in planning and critically review the results of production in order to organize and command economic work in an efficient way.

It is necessary for the Cabinet and state economic guidance organs to make exact demands on all production units while providing them with necessary conditions so that they can unconditionally carry out their plans for production and supply of materials, and to conduct an intensive struggle against such phenomena as bargaining and defaulting on plan discipline and observing it for mere form’s sake.

The report also set forth tasks for the Cabinet and state economic guidance organs to boldly conduct the work for improving the economic management method.

In improving economic management methods, it is necessary to attach importance to finding out and adopting the methods of the state’s unified and numerical control and distribution of all products and imported materials.

It is necessary to properly combine political, economic and technical, and administrative and organizational methods in order to settle the issue of economic management in our own way in line with our own situation.

The General Secretary in his report repeatedly emphasized the need for officials in the economic field to decisively enhance a sense of responsibility and role.

Saying that the expectations of the Party and people about leading economic officials are very high at the present starting point towards the five-year plan and the reality calls upon all officials to work with redoubled efforts beyond the limitation of their level, ability and potentiality, the report called upon the officials to display mental power and fighting spirit to make a staunch dash toward the future and terminal of the five-year plan while always looking for ways to overcome difficulties.
far into the future.

The General Secretary in his report set forth the tasks for guaranteeing the fulfillment of the national economic plan by law.

Saying that nobody has a right to bargain over the national economic plan and everyone has only a duty to unconditionally carry it out as it is the instruction of the Party and law of the state, he stressed the need for the judicial sector to set it as the core task to provide a powerful and thorough legal guarantee for the national economic plan this year and thoroughly carry it out.

He pointed to the necessity to concentrate Party efforts on the fulfillment of the tasks for this year.

The report attributed the serious mistakes made in attaining the goals of the five-year strategy for national economic development set forth at the Seventh Party Congress to the misguidance by Party committees at all levels over economic work and the failure of Party officials to fulfill their responsibility and role as organizers and standard-bearers in implementing Party policies.

The report mentioned the matters of principle to be maintained in Party policies and of failing to boldly do the work while complaining about poor conditions, being seized by defeatism and self-protectionism.

Concluding his three-day report, the General Secretary said that the plenary meeting was convened in an appropriate and necessary period in the sense that it helped rectify mistakes from the stage of planning a year’s work and newly decided on the great work for the people and that it helped find out and correct ideological maladies including passivism and self-protectionism latent in officials.

Expressing the expectation that every member of the Party central leadership body would correctly confirm the work plan for this year through consultative meetings of panels, he called for making the plenary meeting a significant occasion of giving greater confidence and courage to all members of the Party and other people who turned out in implementing the decisions made at the Eighth Party Congress.

After he finished his report on the first agenda item, all the participants in the meeting raised enthusiastic cheers to pay the greatest tribute to the General Secretary who provided the commanding officials of the revolution, all Party members and other people with the powerful weapon of advance and innovation by unfolding a clear plan for the first year’s march for implementing the decisions made at the Eighth Congress of the Party with his rare insight and deep thought and by energetically guiding the meeting for days.

His important report full of absolute confidence in the justice of the socialist cause, spirit of boundlessly serving the people and strong will to
The draft resolution drawn up through the consultative meetings was acknowledged as correctly embodying the strategic tasks and policies of the Party congress and fully reflecting the scientific accuracy, feasibility and dynamism of this year’s work direction and targets for different sectors.

The General Secretary in his report clarified his revolutionary will and determination to definitely remove vicious cancer that threatens the ideology and social system and hinders single-minded unity.

The report also suggested the task of powerfully waging the struggle against anti-socialist and non-socialist practices in Party organizations, working people’s organizations, government organs and law enforcement institutions.

The report noted that powerful combined headquarters should be organized ranging from Pyongyang to provinces, cities and counties so that they could grasp the actual conditions of the struggle against anti-socialist and non-socialist practices in a unified way on one and the same principle and powerfully carry it out in an intensive and diverse way.

It specially stressed the need for Party organizations to intensively carry out the operation for overcoming abuse of power, bureaucratic behaviour and irregularities and corruption among the officials and also definitely remove those who connive at and foster anti-socialist and non-socialist acts from the ranks of officials.

It is necessary to set the urgent settlement of the economic management problem as a very important task for defending the socialist character of the state and rooting out the anti-socialist and non-socialist practices, and solve the problem step by step in a strict and resolute manner.

The General Secretary in his report said that all officials should clearly bear in mind that low-keyed struggle done only in words will never end anti-socialist and non-socialist practices and that if so, they and our people might be compelled to pay a dear price. He stressed the need for the officials to fulfil their responsibilities and duties in the struggle for mercilessly curbing and stamping out anti-socialist and non-socialist acts found in their own sectors and units and for consolidating Korean-style socialism in order to protect the destiny of the country, people and younger generation.

Listening to the report of the General Secretary, the participants bore in mind once again the necessity and urgency of the intensified struggle.
A press release of the Second Plenary Meeting of the Eighth Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea was issued on February 11.

According to it, Ri Son Gwon and Kim Song Nam were by-elected as member and alternate member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the WPK respectively and O Su Yong was elected as secretary of the Party Central Committee and director of its Department of Economic Affairs at the plenary meeting.

The plenary meeting discussed “Explanation of the Rules of the Workers’ Party of Korea”.

The General Secretary referred to the purport of deliberating on “Explanation of the Rules of the Workers’ Party of Korea” at the plenary meeting.

Noting that the Eighth Party Congress modified and supplemented some contents of the Party rules as required by the developing revolution, he said that to compile the handbook on the Party rules is of great significance in consolidating the Party organizationally and ideologically, strengthening the militant functions and role of Party organizations and intensifying the Party life of Party members.

He said that the handbook on the Party rules must be decided on at the plenary meeting of the Party Central Committee, which organizes and guides all Party work at an interval after the handbook was examined and distributed, Party organizations and members should deeply study it and do every Party work and lead Party life as required by the norms of the Party rules.

The plenary meeting, based on the full pre-study by the members of the Party central leadership body, adopted a decision on determining the draft handbook as the handbook on the Party rules of the WPK.

The plenary meeting provided a strong policy weapon with which to prevail against and eradicate the internal negative factors hindering the existence and development of the socialist system, and a political means of equipping and rousing the whole Party.

He said that through the plenary meeting, the Party Central Committee came to further refine its leadership art of finding correct solutions to problems and submitting and directing everything to them, and to gain precious experience.

Calling on all the members of the Party central leadership body to value the decisions of the plenary meeting as their life and make every effort for their unconditional and thorough implementation, he said it is time for them to undergo test over their loyalty before their loving people. He earnestly asked all the comrades to turn out as one in the revolution for translating into practice the grand fighting programme of the Party by making redoubled efforts.
Kim Jong Un enjoys lunar New Year’s Day celebration with Party leadership body members

Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers’ Party of Korea, president of the State Affairs of the DPRK and supreme commander of the armed forces of the DPRK, saw the lunar New Year’s Day celebration performance on Thursday together with members of the Party central leadership body.

As he entered the auditorium amid the playing of the welcome music, all the participants burst into enthusiastic cheers of “Hurrah!” extending the greatest respects to the General Secretary who indicates the broad avenue to fresh advance and victory for the Party and people with his far-sighted wisdom and extraordinary leadership art and strengthens the Party into the motherly party that fights, advances and unconditionally serves the people both in name and reality.

The performance was given by the artistes of the State Merited Chorus and other major art troupes. The performers sang highly of the greatness of the Party which has confidently led the Korean revolution along the straight path of victory in the face of the unprecedentedly grim hardships and challenges and demonstrated the might of the country and people to the world.

Resounding through the hall were famous pieces in the era of the Workers’ Party showing deep reverence of the people for Kim Jong Un, who is making a new history of a dignified powerful country with the people-first politics, and reflecting the loyalty and single-minded unity of them who are determined to greet all victories and glory on the road of trusting and following the Party only.

Seeing the performance unfolding a solemn and noble music world with hymns to the Party, the audience keenly realized once again the truth that the country and people have an immensely bright future whatever hardships and difficulties may arise in the way of their advance as the General Secretary, who dedicates his all to realizing the dream and ideal of the people with the noble idea of devotion to the cause of the people, single-minded unity and self-reliance, leads the Party and revolution.

KCNA
February 16 is the birthday of Chairman Kim Jong II. The DPRK commemorates it as the Day of the Shining Star, one of the greatest national holidays, every year.

It is an expression of tremendous admiration of the Korean people for the great exploits the Chairman had performed for the country and nation.

He firmly defended the sovereignty of the country and the dignity of the nation in the latter half of the 1990s, which was recorded as the period of Arduous March and forced march in the history of building a powerful socialist country in the DPRK.

The 1990s were really a hard time for the DPRK. It was compelled to experience unprecedented trials and ordeals due to the sanctions and blockade the imperialists tightened further by taking advantage of the collapse of socialism in East Europe and terrible natural disasters that hit the country for several consecutive years, and the world closely watched how the DPRK would overcome the difficult situation.

At the crossroads of the history to decide whether it would be reduced to the slave of imperialism or safeguard its independence, the DPRK opted for the latter.

DPRK leader Kim Jong II decided to cope with grave difficulties and victoriously advance the revolution with the People’s Army as the main force of revolution and made his way through the path of Songun at the forefront.

On his continued field guidance tour from the front to the rear and from the rear to the front, he inspected frontline army posts and climbed up the steep cliff of Mt Osong by pushing his car. On the way, such an amusing story about his nap and rice-ball was told.

In the hard times the DPRK not merely safeguarded national dignity and security, but made big strides forward for fresh progress.

He continued his forced march even in the face of the biting cold in midwinter and the scorching heat in summer, and made his way forward for fresh progress.

The 1990s was a period of the DPRK's economic hardships. It was a time when the country encountered extreme difficulties, and it looked to the distant future to usher in an age of breaking through the cutting edge.

All victories and achievements the DPRK has won and made in recent years are inconceivable apart from the seeds of happiness the Chairman sowed and cultivated.

Therefore, along with the Day of the Shining Star, the Korean people remember with deep emotion the exploits of the Chairman who led the campaign for defence of socialism to victory and laid an eternal foundation for building a prosperous country.

By Kim Rye Yong PT

Kim Jong Il praised for his benevolence

On hearing the fact from relevant officials, Kim Jong Il saw to it that all necessary measures were taken to rescue him from the jaws of death although he was going through the greater pain of loss than anybody else after President Kim Il Sung passed away.

Accordingly, a 10-odd-member medical team was formed with competent doctors, who waged a 24-7 struggle to cure him using the up-to-date medical equipment and rare medicines.

Such devotion created a miracle. The patient came round after a month and fully recovered afterwards to leave the hospital.

His Excellency Kim Jong Il showed boundless parental love to my son. I am at a loss to know how to return such an immense love. He is just the father who embraces and takes warm care of all the people,” said his mother.

Dolphinarium built under Chairman’s concern

The dolphinarium in Pyongyang was also constructed under the close concern of Chairman Kim Jong Il.

At a meeting with officials one day, he referred to the need to build a dolphinarium, saying it would give delight to the people, especially youth and schoolchildren. Since amusement and water parks are planned to be built on Rungra Islet, it would be good to construct the dolphinarium there, he suggested.

He took necessary measures, saying when it was constructed on Rungra Islet, lots of people would visit it as they could get easy access to it. He told them to bring not only dolphins but also other rare animals and paid attention even to ensuring the temperature of animal houses and aquarium.
Macrobian happy with family reunion on holiday

With lunar New Year’s Day just around the corner, the family of 101-year-old Hyon Pong Hak in neighbourhood unit No. 32, Tongsong-dong, Central District, Pyongyang, is busy with preparations for the traditional folk holiday.

“All our family members get together every lunar New Year’s Day,” said her daughter-in-law, Mun Myong Sun.

On this holiday, too, Hyon’s six children and their spouses and children are coming to her home, she said.

On such holiday, housewives are very busy with preparing festive dishes, but there is pleasure that only women can derive, said Mun. Her sisters-in-law have come to Mun’s home a day earlier to help her with cooking.

Hyon’s daughters and daughters-in-law make glutinous rice-cakes at one side of the house and mung-bean pancakes at the other side flautning their culinary skills, while the elderly woman “nags” at them as she samples the foods. Although she is over 100 years, she is incredibly alive and kicking.

According to Mun, her hale and hearty mother-in-law still does needlework and even kitchen work and as she is a very good cook, women in the village as well as her daughters and daughters-in-law often learn from her how to cook traditional dishes.

As she is so familiar with folk customs, she tells young women about dishes prepared on such folk holidays as lunar New Year’s Day and macrobiotic foods and gets her children to make them in families frequently.

“Thanks to state benefits, I have been able to live long and now spend such an enjoyable holiday with this big family,” said Hyon Pong Hak.

Born into a poor peasant’s family before Korea’s liberation from Japanese military rule, they could not afford to enjoy holidays.

Only after liberation could she lead a happy life, she recalled.

She raised all her children to be honourable citizens and is now head of the family of dozens of members. She asks her descendants including great-grandchildren to do good things for the country this year, too.

By Kwon Hyo Song PT

Folk games enliven holiday schedule

Many families spend a good time while playing folk games on the lunar New Year’s Day. Typical folk games include yut (four-stick) game, janggi (Korean chess), paduk (go) and kite-flying.

The yut game was in full swing in the family of Pak Yong Jin who is residing in neighbourhood unit No. 34 of Phalgol-dong No. 2, Mangyongdae District, Pyongyang.

“On holidays or Sundays, all the members of our family get together to play the yut game and on this lunar New Year’s Day I have teamed up with my father to have a match against my mother who has been paired with my wife,” said Pak Yong Jin.

A typical folk game that had been played by the Korean ancestors before the period of the Three Kingdoms (3rd century BC-AD 7th century), it is played with four sticks, a certain number of markers for each team and a board.

In the game to see who advances pieces faster to the finish, a player can catch the opponent’s pieces, join two or three pieces to move them together, and play individually or by making up teams.

“My husband sometimes cheats us by exercising a privilege as head of the family. So we put forward our grandson as a referee to ensure fair play,” said Ri Jong Suk, mother of Pak Yong Jin.

The appearance of mother and daughter-in-law was delightful to see as they were pleased while clapping their hands when wanted scores came after carefully looking at rolling four sticks, but the appearance of father and son evoked mirth as they waged a psychological warfare whenever their opponents cast yut.

In the heated game, the mother’s team was about to finish their game when the last triplet pieces were expected to come out.

But the triplets were caught by the opponents and a shout of sigh and joy rocked the whole house all at once.

Finally, the game ended in favour of the father and son.

“The yut game is very interesting as we play it. No one can assure how the yut sticks come out and sometimes the game turns out to be defeat when we think of victory or vice versa. The yut game is best as it can be played by men and women of all ages in any place,” said Pak Song Su, father of Pak Yong Jin.

By Han Kwi Hun PT

Eatery draws many on lunar New Year’s Day

The Rice-Cake Soup House in the Changgwang Food Alley is the heart of the capital city is visited by many customers.

“Although there are many restaurants in the food alley, many people come to our eatery to savour rice-cake soup, a special dish for lunar New Year’s Day,” said So Hyon Gyong, chief of the soup house.

Rice-cake soup that is made by boiling slices of rice-cake in meat soup has long been a symbolic food for lunar New Year’s Day in all parts of Korea including Pyongyang.

So it became customary to ask “How many bowls of rice-cake soup have you had?” when asking children their ages on the day.

The soup has distinctive characters according to regions. In the Kaesong area, bar rice-cake is sliced with a bamboo knife into the shape of peanut to prepare the soup.

The restaurant serves the soup made to a traditional recipe of the Pyongyang area.

White rice is selected carefully to make chewy and glossy bar cakes. The rice is pulverized and the flour is kneaded with hot water and steamed.

It is very important to select the rice and adjust the amount of water when making the dough with hot water. The processes are undertaken by most experienced cooks.

Cooks dexterously knead the dough to make long bar rice-cakes, slice them into the shape of willow leaf, parboil the pieces in salty water and pour cold water over them to lightly boil them again before putting them into cold water.

“Rice-cake soup can easily be made at home, but the homemade soup is not as savoury as the soup of this restaurant,” said Kim Jong Su, an elderly resident in Tonghung-dong of Central District, Pyongyang.

On holidays or Sundays, all the members of our family get together to play the yut game and on this lunar New Year’s Day I have teamed up with my father to have a match against my mother who has been paired with my wife,” said Pak Yong Jin.

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“As she is so familiar with folk customs, she tells young women about dishes prepared on such folk holidays as lunar New Year’s Day and macrobiotic foods and gets her children to make them in families frequently.”

By Kwon Hyo Song PT

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