

# Might of “People-first Principle”

Kamakura Takao  
Director of IIJI Board

The Eighth Congress of the Workers’ Party of Korea was held from January 5 to 12, 2021.

The Eighth Party Congress fully demonstrated once again the might of unity and the revolutionary passion peculiar to the WPK and the people in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, who firmly united with a single idea and purpose and make an uninterrupted advance and leap forward towards new tasks of struggle even in the face of manifold challenges and ordeals.

The Eighth Party Congress served as a congress of struggle and progress, which demonstrated the revolutionaries’ steadfast will to achieve prosperity and development of the Korean-style socialism without fail, with self-confidence in victory and courage and by invariably holding aloft the banner of great Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism.

Based on the study of the report delivered by General Secretary Kim Jong Un at the Eighth Party Congress, I would like to explain the might of the DPRK advancing with “self-reliance” based on “The people-first principle” as the “political line to be consistently adhered to” in the socialist construction.

## **1. Amid the Wide-Spread of COVID-19**

At present, the DPRK completely checks the inroad of COVID-19

that sways the whole world. The DPRK has thoroughly checked the inroads of the malignant virus and maintained stable anti-epidemic situation despite the worldwide health crisis, which is ascribed to the glorious achievement made by the far-sighted leadership of the Party Central Committee and the high sense of voluntariness of all people who move as one according to the order of the Party Central Committee.

The report to the work of the 7<sup>th</sup> Party Central Committee noted that in the public health sector, material and technical foundations, were further strengthened, a well-regulated working system and foundations were built in the hygienic and anti-epidemic sector through the preemptive and powerful emergency epidemic prevention efforts to check the inroads of the pandemic.

On this basis, the report noted the following. The report dealt with detailed plans for providing people with better medical benefits by developing the socialist healthcare into the most advantageous and advanced one. The sector of public health should substantially carry out the work of renovating the treatment and prevention institutions and pharmaceutical and medical appliances factories, build up the ranks of medical workers and create a reliable anti-epidemic bases capable of coping with every world health crisis.

Socialist public healthcare is to ensure and improve the health of the people. As it established “foundations” for it, the DPRK could check inroads of malignant virus. The report stressed to create on a more reliable level an anti-epidemic basis capable of coping with all world health crises. What is important in creating such basis is to build up the rank of medical workers.

The popular masses are object of public healthcare. At the same

time, they are in charge of maintaining public healthcare. The public healthcare that relies on the popular masses and serves them—this is the main of the socialist healthcare. Checking inroads of the malignant virus, the DPRK has proved the might of the socialist public healthcare in reality.

The socialist healthcare is the unified medical treatment given by the state centring on the leadership political party. Considering it as the state control over the people, some people are inclined to think that the socialist healthcare disagrees with democracy. But the unconscious acts of individuals certainly result in social damages. Therefore, in order to prevent infection of malignant virus, they must act in concert and need the direct and unified guidance of the state. Of course, some people may resist because they regard such unified guidance as “compulsory”. Nevertheless, every individual should act not by compulsion but on the basis of his or her own thinking and recognition in order to control such circumstances. Education is needed for its recognition. One should be conscious that his or her acts are supported by social relations with other people through the daily life and labour activities, and form social relations based on the mutual respect and trust among the people.

In the DPRK, the central emergency anti-epidemic sector is now further strengthening the mass anti-epidemic atmosphere so as to make all people fulfill their duty as citizens in the anti-epidemic work while taking well-timed measures to secure the economic construction through the high-intensity anti-epidemic campaign. Ideological education and hygienic information service are being given in different forms and ways through the mass media and educational network and a habit of maintaining tension all the time and strictly observing the state anti-epidemic measures is being established across the country

## **2. Successes Made in the Period under Review (for 5 Years after the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of WPK)**

Let us confirm the “successes” made in the struggle in the past 5 years after the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of the WPK, on the basis of “the report to the work of the 7<sup>th</sup> Central Committee of the WPK” made by General Secretary Kim Jong Un at the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of the WPK. The successes are that the “era of our state-first principle,” a “new era of self-respect and prosperity” has been opened.

### **Consolidation of Single-hearted Unit of the Party and the people**

The Workers’ Party of Korea vigorously pursued “the politics based on the people-first principle”--“Everything for the people and everything by relying on them!” As a result, the single-hearted unity of the Party and the people has been consolidated and the “politico-ideological might” strengthened remarkably.

The Party Central Committee carried out more intensively the education in the revolutionary tradition in order to consolidate the “politico-ideological might”, and staged dynamic political activities to inform the Party members and other people of the demand of the situation, the Party’s intention and the revolutionary tasks and arouse them to vigorous struggle. It became an important part of politics based on the people-first principle that the Party Central Committee made the People’s Army fulfill its mission as the army of the country and the people which firmly defends the country and the people from not only

military but sudden nonmilitary threats.

## **Self-reliance**

The WPK developed self-reliance further into a strategy for offensive to turn mean sanctions by the hostile forces into a golden opportunity of strengthening the DPRK's self-development and into a political line to be constantly adhered to in the socialist construction.

Although economic construction failed to hit the expected strategic goal, a precious foundation for making sustained economic development on the strength of "self-reliance" was provided and thus the backbone of the self-supporting national economy, the socialist economy was maintained and its arteries were preserved.

In the period under review, successes were made in all fields of construction, agriculture, metal, chemistry, light industry, forest resources, forest and water conservation, environment protection, etc.

The WPK put stress on environmental protection while solving the people's food, clothing and housing problems. Steady development was made in the sectors of science and technology, education and public health, sports and culture. The WPK reviewed with confidence that such "successes" were made under the "protracted vicious sanctions and blockade and terrible disasters."

## **Consolidation of Nuclear War Deterrent and Self-reliant Defence Capabilities**

The WPK perfected the great cause of building the national nuclear forces.

Through the implementation of the line of simultaneously promoting economic construction and building up of nuclear forces, the WPK made history of miracle, that is, the birth of a strategic weapon of the WPK style.

Intermediate-range and intercontinental ballistic missiles of *Hwasongpho* series and submarine-launched and ground-based ballistic missiles of *Pukkuksong* series were developed and test-fired. The test-fire of ICBM *Hwasongpho*-15 was succeeded on November 29, 2017. The national defence science sector developed the super-large MLRS, a hyper-powerful attack weapon, and proceeded to develop ultra-modern tactical nuclear weapons. The national defence science sector finished research of developing warheads of different combat missions including the hypersonic gliding flight warheads for new-type ballistic missiles and was making preparations for their test manufacture. The designing of new nuclear-powered submarine was finished and was in the stage of final examination. The Party Central Committee successfully accomplished the great cause of building the country's nuclear forces and ensured peaceful environment of socialist construction while gaining absolute control of the imperialists' ambition to provoke, threat and attack the DPRK.

### **DPRK's External Position Raised Radically**

The Party Central Committee never made even the slightest concession in its revolutionary principle while adhering more firmly to the principle of independence even in the sanctions and blockade, the harshest in its history since its founding, imposed by the imperialists and their vessel forces. On this basis, the Party Central Committee

brought the world to the realization that “the improved relation with the DPRK is absolutely impossible without the respect for its sovereignty.”

The Party Central Committee strengthened communication, promoted mutual understanding and deepened comradely trust between the two Parties through five rounds of the DPRK-China summit talks as required by the times that demand to “establish the DPRK-China relations of friendship with socialism as its core” and “strengthen fraternal ties and unity between the Parties and peoples of the two countries which are inseparably bound up with each other.”

A cornerstone for expansion of friendly relations with Russia was laid. Through the summit meetings with Cuba and Vietnam, the Party Central Committee strengthened its unity and solidarity with other socialist countries.

At the summit of the top leaders of the DPRK and the US, the first of its kind in the hostile relations between the two countries, the Party Central Committee made sure that the joint declaration that assured the establishment of new DPRK-US relations was adopted. This was an event of the greatest significance in the history of world politics.

Rapid rise of the DPRK’s external position is a precious fruition of the protracted and hard-fought struggle waged by the WPK and people in the DPRK.

### **3. Socialist Construction on the Strength of “Self-reliance”**

The report to the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of the WPK advanced the tasks on the basis of having made a strict and detailed analysis of the implementation of the five-year strategy for the national economic development and a new long-term plan.

## **The Report Analyzed Subjective and Objective Factors which Affected the Implementation of the Five-year Strategy for the National Economic Development.**

The report pointed out the most barbarous sanctions and blockade by the US and other hostile forces as the first objective factor. Besides, typhoons and other natural disasters and the protracted world health crisis were severe obstacles to the economic work in the DPRK, the report analyzed.

The report said that due to such obstacles, state investment and supplies, planned to bolster the major economic sectors in the five-year strategy for the national economic development, could not be carried out properly. It pointed out that it could not but draw conclusion that, if one ascribes its failure to objective conditions, he can do nothing and the action and role of the driving force will be unnecessary.

The Party Central Committee analyzed the current situation, in which the five-year strategy for the national economic development had not been properly worked out on the basis of scientific calculation and grounds, science and technology failed to actually play the role of propelling the economic work of the country and the work of readjusting and reinforcing the irrational economic work system and discipline was not properly done. The report referred to the conclusive lesson that the economy of the country can never be boosted without breaking with the wrong ideological viewpoint, irresponsible working attitude, incompetence and obsolete working manner that have been prevalent so far. It stressed the need to take steps for decisively switching the overall work of the Party and the state to aspiring after



and encouraging fresh innovation, bold creation and steady advance.

**The report stressed that the WPK's economic strategy for coming five years is the one for readjustment and reinforcement aimed at putting the economy on a normal track to run smoothly without being affected by any external influence by restoring and readjusting the economic work system and the organic relations among sectors and pushing ahead with the work for cementing the self-supporting foundations.**

The general orientation of the new five-year plan for the national economic development is to lay solid foundations for reenergizing the overall national economy and improving the people's standard of living by concentrating efforts on the main links in the whole chain of economic development. The major tasks of the new five-year plan aim at focusing investment with the metal industry and chemical industry as key links so as to normalize production in all sectors of the national economy, consolidate the material and technical foundations of the agricultural field and supply enough raw and other materials to light industry for increased production of consumer goods.

The five-year plan mainly presupposes that the Cabinet, as the economic headquarters of the country, properly enforces the Cabinet-responsibility system, Cabinet-centred system, for economic work, vigorously accelerates the work of strengthening the essential lifeline and integrity of the country's economy, definitely improves its economic management, actively promotes the normalization of production, renovation and local provision of raw and other materials by dint of science and technology and orientates the external economic activities towards reinforcing the foundations and potentiality of the self-supporting economy. And the new plan reflects the demands for

perfecting the self-supporting structure of the national economy, lowering the proportion of dependence on imports and stabilizing the people's living.

The main seed and theme of the plan are, as always, self-reliance and self-sufficiency. The self-reliance during the period of the new long-term plan should develop into nationwide, planned and scientific self-reliance.

**On this basis, the report referred to the followings;**

**\_ present conditions in the major economic sectors and the issues related with their readjustment and development**

**\_ task for improving economic management**

**\_ tasks for making a breakthrough in solving the people's food, clothing and housing problems and effecting tangible changes and innovations**

**\_ strengthening the national defence capacity**

**\_ building of science, technology and socialist culture**

**\_ tasks for further consolidating the state social system**

"Self-reliance" is the realistic task and strategy for building an independent national economy.

① Reenergizing and developing the national economy aims at the improvement of the people's standard of living.

The five-year plan for the state economic development intends to solve the people's food, clothing and housing problems, in particular, eliminate disparities between the working class and the peasantry, the gaps between industry and agriculture and differences between the urban and rural areas by pushing ahead with the three revolutions in the rural areas and thoroughly implementing the theses on the socialist rural question.

② The report stressed to realize economic self-sufficiency relying not only on the domestic resources, but on domestic talents and technology. It also emphasized to technically perfect the Korean system of iron making and expand its capacity, give precedence to building up the domestic technical forces in chemical industry and increase the production of electricity by promoting the plan of founding the nuclear power industry. In order to realize foodstuff self-sufficiency, it is important to make efforts into seed improvement, scientific farming, increased output in low-yielding fields, cultivation of new land and tideland reclamation, while developing farming, animal husbandry and fruit growing and pushing irrigation and mechanization of agriculture as an important strategic priority.

③ The report underlined to hasten the housing construction so as to satisfy the people's material and cultural needs, expand production in building industry, step up technical updating of infrastructure of communication and readjust the broadcasting networks and provide full conditions for the people in all parts of the country, ranging from cities to remote mountain villages, to make the people enjoy good cultural life.

④ In particular, the report presented land management and ecological environment protection as the work of strategic importance for future of the country. It pointed out the matters of grasping through surveys the overall situation of the ecological environment including forests and dealing with changes correctly and promptly in accordance with the results of the relevant analysis.

⑤ The report noted that the independent, planned and people-oriented characters of the national economy should be strengthened and, to this end, it is necessary to raise the functions of the

state that organizes economic affairs, and ensure unified management of products on the principle of making sure that the fruition of the economic activities is channeled into promoting the well-being of the people. The fundamental requirement in improving the economic management is to “give priority to the people’s demand and interests” and hold fast to the principle of “reducing cost and improving quality” as the key to improved economic management.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> Party Central Committee (held from February 8 to 11, 2021) noted that the Cabinet failed to play a leading role in mapping out plans of key economic fields and as a result, the plan of one field has been raised subjectively even there is no actual possibility and the plans of other fields have been lowered under the signboard of readjusting and reinforcing even there are tasks that can certainly be accomplished or must be fulfilled. It stressed to improve the guidance and management of the Cabinet and state economic guidance organs over the whole economy by restoring the function peculiar to them as economic organizer and their controlling function.

⑥ It is important to bolster up the “state defence capabilities” in order to counter the US imperialism seeking dissolution of the DPRK’s system with its preemptive strike and secure peace on the Korean peninsula. The report set forth important tasks for the Korean People’s Army to develop into a reliable defender of the state and people by maintaining it as the general task for the army building to model itself on Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism. On the basis of strengthening and development of defence industry, it is essential to further develop the nuclear technology to a higher level, make the nuclear weapons miniaturizes, light and tactical and push ahead with the manufacturing of a super-large hydrogen bomb on a durable basis. The report also set

a goal of attaining an advanced capability for making a preemptive and retaliatory nuclear strike within a long range.

It is the object of the DPRK's military strength to safeguard independence and peace against the US imperialism that is maneuvering to seize and dissolve the DPRK's sovereignty. The report stated that as long as there is no change in the entity of the US and its policy toward the DPRK, the DPRK will steadily bolster up the national defence capability and expand solidarity with the anti-imperialist, independent forces.

That we have stored the strongest war deterrent and steadily develop them is aimed at defending ourselves and opening up an era of genuine peace free from war for ever, the report continued.

Stating that the key to establishing new DPRK-US relations lies in the US withdrawal of its hostile policy toward the DPRK, the report clarified the WPK's stand that it would approach the US in the principle of power for power and goodwill for goodwill in the future, too.

#### ⑦ Inter-Korean relations

It is no exaggeration to say that the current inter-Korean relations have been brought back to the time before the publication of the Panmunjom Declaration. It is because that the hostile military acts and anti-DPRK smear campaign are still going on in south Korea. The south Korean authorities continue to introduce latest military hardware and stage joint military exercises with the US. A new road toward improved north-south relations based on firm trust and reconciliation can be proved only when the south Korea authorities strictly control and root out all abnormal and anti-reunification conducts.

The report commented that "the north-south relations may return

to a new starting point of peace and prosperity” depending on how the “south Korean” authorities respond to the demands of the “north” and how they implement the north-south declarations.

#### **4. Model of Socialist Construction, For Global Peace**

##### **Critical realities**

The DPRK firmly adheres to and advances its socialist system even in the critical realities in which the US-led imperialist forces intensify their machinations to dissolve system in the DPRK through aggression and impose high-intensity sanctions on the DPRK, malignant virus has become rampant owing to the moves geared towards profits by capital destroying ecological environment and the natural disasters caused by repeated typhoon brought about huge losses.

As a matter of fact, it is certain that the regulations and control in the external economic relations (in particular restriction of trade relations with China) for preventing the inroads of COVID-19 cause big difficulties in the economy and the people’s livelihood in the DPRK. However, even under such difficulties, the DPRK firmly adheres to and advances its socialist system. The difficulties in the objective situation have cemented the single-hearted unity, enhanced the self-development capability and self-reliance and enabled the DPRK to build solid independent national economy so as to advance socialist construction.

##### **Work of training its own talents in charge of development of high-tech technology**

In particular, DPRK positively steps up the undertakings to bring up talented economic management personnel (for labour-saving and resource-saving and strengthening productive forces) and educational

personnel. Work for bringing up the talents who can shoulder the building of an independent national economy is being hastened in the DPRK.

“People-first principle”—the popular masses are the motive force in forming and developing human society. It is the intrinsic requirement of socialism to enable the popular masses to play their role as the motive force with consciousness of being the motive force. It is imperative to have consciousness that it is the process of improving human qualities (consciousness, creativity and partnership) to engage in labour while cherishing the significance of labour(that labour supports human life) instead of such viewpoint that workers cannot but engage in labour in order to eke out their bare existence.

It is definitely important to establish “the people-first principle” as the realistic viewpoint on the popular masses and prove it in practice.

**The DPRK advances socialism on the strength of its own politics in such reality as the division of the Korean peninsula.**

Of course, the DPRK consistently demands and directs towards the independent and peaceful reunification of Korea. It is told that “an independent national economy”, too, should and can be built based on the realization of the north-south reunification.

In reality, the DPRK hastens the economic self-sufficiency while developing and securing resources and bringing up and securing the talented technological and management personnel by its own efforts. The DPRK has promoted self-sufficiency in technology and resources indispensable for life and production while supplementing and securing the resources to be imported through the friendly relations with China, Russia, Cuba and Vietnam and the relations with other countries based on mutual respect of independence.

It is of decisive significance that a country becomes self-sufficient in necessities and means of production on the strength of its own economy while intensifying the restrictions of external economic relations to check the inroads of COVID-19.

### **Realization of Socialism**

In reality, socialism is realized under the leadership of the state. Regarding the people as the driving force in forming the state, it establishes the rules of political, economic, social and cultural activities as the state “laws” suitable to the socialist system. In his report, General Secretary Kim Jong Un underlined to thoroughly establish the revolutionary spirit of law observance throughout the society as required by the building of a socialist rule-of-law state.

Observance of state “laws” is the rules of the people as they are the motive force of state. However, even though socialism is realized in a country, the socialist law observance is indispensable as long as capitalism, imperialism remains on the earth, the moves to collapse socialism and propagation and infiltration of bourgeois egoism and idea of the stronger preying upon the weaker continue and the people under socialism are affected by such ideological influence.

A socialist society is built in reality with a country as a unit. People’s will is expressed intensively as that of state. In particular, a state plays a leading role in external relations, as a direct representative of all people. Main in the external relations of a socialist state is to secure equality and mutual respect of independence. Essential in the external relations of the DPRK is to “adhere to the independent stand.” It is essential to secure peace and stability in the Korean peninsula and the world. As mentioned above, the relations of goodwill for goodwill based on “peaceful relations” can be established if “the US withdraws



its hostile policy towards the DPRK” and adheres to the principle of respecting its sovereignty.

The DPRK claims the US and Japan, following the US lines, to stop their hostility towards the DPRK and infringement of “the DPRK’s independence”, based on the “imperialist” ambition of domination, and establish equal international relations based on the mutual respect of independence. We must recognize thoroughly that the establishment of such relations is the key to the global peace.