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Liberation Day Celebration Underlines Pan-National Will to Reunification

2001 Grand Korean Reunification Festival Held in Pyongyang

An inter-Korean grand festival was held in Pyongyang between August 15 and 16 to commemorate the 56th anniversary of the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule from 1912 to 1945.

Over 4,000 delegates from the north, south and overseas attended the festival, named "The 2001 Grand Festival for National Reunification." This was the first time that Koreans in the north, south and overseas met for the celebration of a liberation anniversary, though in the past some south Korean reunification movement groups had sent their delegates to north Korea in violation of south Korea's "National Security Law."

Heartily welcomed by thousands of flower-waving Pyongyangites, an over 360-member south Korean delegation, which was made up of delegates from almost 220 organizations including political parties, civic and religious groups and press corps, took part in the opening ceremony of the north-south joint reunification rally.

Jam-packed with 4,000 delegates of Koreans in the north, south and overseas countries, the reunification rally opened in a square in front of the newly built Monument of Three Charters for National Reunification in Pyongyang.

Also participating in the opening ceremony were senior party and state officials of the DPRK including President Kim Yong Nam of the Presidium of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly; Secretary Kim Yong Sun of the WPK; Kim Yong Dae, Chairman of the Korean Socialist Demo-



Photo shows the opening ceremony of the 2001 Grand Festival for National Reunification held in a square in front of the newly built Monument of Three Charters for National Reunification on Aug. 15.

cratic Party; Ryu Mi Yong, Chairwoman of the Central Committee of the Korean Chondoist Chongu Party as well as unconverted long-term prisoners who had been repatriated from south Korea to north Korea, and working people from all walks of life in Pyongyang.

Kim Yong Dae, in his congratulatory speech, said that holding the 2001 Grand

Festival for National Reunification on August 15, Liberation Day, was a clear demonstration of the unshakable determination and will of all the seventy million Koreans to surely accomplish national reunification in the near future in the new century. This grand festival for reunification will provide the Korean nation with an opportunity to further accelerate the move-

ment for independent reunification which started under the banner of the June 15 North-South Joint Declaration with fresh hopes for and conviction of national reunification, he added.

During the two-day festival, participants held various kinds of events, such as joint meetings, forums, exhibitions, concerts, etc.

The festival was also highlighted by the participation of Rim Su Gyong, who had visited Pyongyang braving the National Security Law to participate in the international youth festival in 1989 as a delegate of south Korean progressive student organization. Rim, who is popular in the DPRK, called the "flower of reunification," received a warm welcome by north Korean people. Also included in the delegation was Hwang Sok Yong, a famous novelist in south Korea, who also had visited Pyongyang in 1989. After his visit to the DPRK, he spent five years in exile, followed by another five years in prison.

During the festival, reaffirming their strong desire for national reunification, representatives from various walks of life met each other's counterparts to discuss expanding mutual cooperation and exchange between the north and the south.

Representatives of workers' trade unions of the north and the south discussed how to manage the "North-South Workers' Conference for National Reunification," established in last March, the first-ever inter-Korean workers' solidarity board. In a joint solidarity meeting, farmers of north and south Korea emphasized a need to continue to take joint actions on issues of mutual concern, including the necessity of a farmers' solidarity organization.

Members of north Korea's National Economic Cooperation Federation met with south Korean businessmen to exchange views on expanding cooperation in the eco-

(Continued on page 2)

Kim Jong Il's Visit to Russia Is Epochal Event on Development DPRK-Russia Ties: Pyongyang

Joint Statement of WPK, CMC of WPK and DPRK NDC

PYONGYANG, August 18 (KCNA) — A joint press statement of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, the Central Military Commission of the WPK and the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was issued today. The full text of the joint press statement says:

Kim Jong Il, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea, Chairman of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army, returned home today after successfully wrapping up his official visit to the Russian Federation.

Making a long journey of more than 20,000 kilometres for over 20 days, he conducted energetic external activities, deepened the intimate relations with President V.V. Putin through meetings and talks and further strengthened the DPRK-Russia friendly ties, thus making immortal contributions to the history of DPRK-Russia friendly relations.

Kim Jong Il's recent visit to the Russian Federation successfully took place and bore a good fruit under the special care

shown by Russian President V.V. Putin.

The army and people of the DPRK express appreciation and deep thanks to President V.V. Putin and the Russian people for most warmly receiving Kim Jong Il and according cordial hospitality to him with high respect, kindness and profound trust.

Kim Jong Il's historic visit to the Russian Federation will be brilliantly recorded in the annals of the DPRK-Russia friendship as it is an epochal event which marked a new turning point in further consolidating and developing the traditional DPRK-Russia friendship.

The WPK Central Committee, the WPK Central Military Commission and the DPRK National Defence Commission express the belief that the whole army and people will vigorously step up the revolution and construction, holding high the army-first banner under the wise guidance of Kim Jong Il and thus accelerate the revolutionary cause of Juche and make greater contributions to promoting the common cause of humankind for peace, democracy, national sovereignty and independence.

Tokyo Isolated at Geneva U.N. Meet; Blamed for Its Past and Present Acts

At the current 53rd Session of Subcommittee on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of the United Nations held between July 30 and August 17, Japan became a target of criticism for the "comfort women" issue as well as for the issues of controversial distorted textbooks and Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro's Yasukuni Shrine visit. The latter two were not supposed to be discussed there.

"Comfort Women" Issue

Jonathan Sisson of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, speaking on behalf of the Japanese Fellowship of Reconciliation, said most of the victims of the Japanese military sexual slavery during World War II had not survived the ordeal, but research over the past decade had revealed that some 200,000 women had been forced into such slavery. This Japanese military practice, he continued, was in clear violation of the International Labour Organization Convention on forced and compulsory labour which was signed by Japan without restriction in 1932, not to mention other norms of international law.

Referring to State obligations to compensate victims as pointed out at the 1996 Subcommittee session, he stated that a situation of de facto impunity prevailed in relation to Japanese sexual slavery; not a single case pertaining to war crimes had ever been prosecuted in a Japanese court during the post-war period. He concluded his speech by urging the Subcommittee to adopt a resolution on systematic and

sexual slavery and to explore the possibility of setting up a truth and reconciliation commission to implement the recommendations made by the Subcommittee in this regard.

A representative of Korea Women's Association United, reminding the current meeting of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal 2000 for the Trial of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery, said that the judges had found the indicted, including Emperor Hirohito, guilty under international law at the time of rape and sexual slavery, and criticized the Tokyo government for its failure to acknowledge its legal responsibility.

Kim Yong Ho from North Korea said: "Sexual slavery in wartime was a crime against humanity; it caused unbearable and long-suffering. There should be thorough punishment of past offenses of this nature, but Japan has yet to resolve the crimes committed under its system of sexual slavery during World War II."

Yun Byung Se from South Korea harshly criticized the Japanese government by calling the enslavement and rape of over 200,000 women and girls in comfort stations or rape centers throughout Asia during World War II, the most egregious international crime of slavery, crime against humanity and wartime, systematic rape and sexual slavery.

In the meantime, Yokota Yozo, a representative of Japan, defended the Japanese

(Continued on page 4)



Participants dance together in the closing ceremony of the joint reunification rally.

Joint Reunification Rally
(Continued from page 1)

conomic field in conformity with the desire of all the Korean nation and vowed to develop the national economy in constant cooperation with each other.

Religionists of north and south Korea met in a temple, a cathedral and a church in Pyongyang and had joint prayer services, joint masses and other rituals. They clearly expressed the will of the believers in the north and the south to make concerted efforts to achieve great national unity in keeping with the faith, purpose and ideal of their religions under the banner of the June 15 Joint Declaration and thus positively to contribute to achieving the reunification of the country and to the prosperity of the nation.

Representatives of the regional headquarters of Ponminryun (Pan-National Alliance for the Reunification of the Fatherland) met together for the first time since its establishment and held a meeting of the co-presidium of Ponminryun. At the meeting, discussing new tasks and measures to activate the reunification movement, delegates of the regional headquarters of the north, the south and overseas revised the organization's platform and rules, adopted the June 15 Joint Declaration as the action platform of the organization.

Joint Photo Exhibition

A joint photo exhibition denouncing Japan's wartime atrocities and recent moves to distort history was held in Pyongyang on Aug. 16.

Displayed at the exhibition were photos showing massacres of Koreans by the Japanese Imperial Army, crimes related "comfort women," forcible drafting and forced labor of Koreans and other wrongdoings committed by Japanese imperialism against Korea.

A joint resolution denouncing Japan's wartime atrocities and history distortion was issued at the exhibition by the representatives of north, south and overseas Koreans.

The resolution denounced Japan's 40-year colonial rule of Korea as an intolerable infringement of and an act of aggression against the autonomy and human rights of the Korean nation, saying that Japan has rejected to make an official apology or compensation, and now it glorifies its wartime wrongdoings by unfolding campaigns to distort history.

The five-point joint resolution said that Koreans in the north, south and overseas would work together to compel Japan to make an apology and compensation for the atrocities and acts of plunder committed by the Japanese Imperial Army during Japan's 36-year colonial rule of Korea, develop activities to fully expose the gravity and shamelessness of Japan's history distortion, keep an eye on Japan's re-armament scheme and revival of militarism and take strong measures against these plots, urging the Japanese government to sincerely apologize for its past crimes, make full compensation for them and put a stop to the moves to tamper with history and respect the sovereignty and dignity of the Korean nation.



Rim Su Gyong (center), a former south Korean student activist, shouts slogans of the reunification of the divided Korean Peninsula with young Koreans in north and south Korea and abroad, in a meeting of young Koreans.

Joint Press Statement on 2001 Grand Festival For National Reunification

PYONGYANG, August 21 (KCNA) — A joint press statement of Koreans in the north and south of Korea and abroad was released on Aug. 21 on the successful 2001 grand festival for national reunification which was held from August 15 to 16. According to the document, the delegation from the south side and abroad stayed in Pyongyang till August 21, had meetings and solidarity meetings with workers, farmers, youth and students, women, religionists, businessmen and men of culture and people of other social strata in the north, toured different places and participated in joint functions.

The 2001 grand festival for national reunification, the first gathering of delegates from the north and south of Korea and abroad after the division of the country, was a nationwide event for reunification that demonstrated at home and abroad the ardent desire and firm will of the fellow countrymen to reunify the country independently by the efforts of the Korean nation itself in accordance with the June 15 North-South Joint Declaration and a proud assembly for great national unity that left its great mark on the history of the movement for national reunification, it says.

The delegates from the north and south of Korea and abroad, it says, agreed to follow up the successes gained in the festival and implement to the letter the historic June 15 north-south joint declaration through a nationwide campaign for reunification.

It further says:

1. The delegates from the north and south of Korea and abroad reconfirmed the historic June 15 north-south joint declaration which was adopted amidst the support of all the fellow countrymen as the only landmark for national reunification in the new century and a patriotic reunification programme and agreed to

work hard to implement the declaration so as to settle the reunification issue independently by the concerted efforts of the Korean nation.

2. They agreed to strengthen solidarity of non-governmental organizations to put an end to the interference of outsiders, remove a source of war and ensure security of the nation and peace so as to reunify the country independently and peacefully in the spirit of the declaration.

3. With a view to following up the successes of the Pyongyang festival they agreed to have joint events in Pyongyang and Seoul on the 57th anniversary of August 15 national liberation and welcome the participation of the north side delegation in the projected Seoul joint event.

4. They agreed to invigorate exchange as well as multi-faceted non-governmental cooperation in order to achieve national reconciliation and unity and strengthen solidarity among people from all walks of life.

They agreed to take steps to put into practice the urgent issues discussed at the meetings and gatherings of organizations and people of different social standings which took place during the festival.

5. They appreciated the success of the inter-Korean joint photo exhibition aimed to expose atrocities of the Japanese imperialists and Japan's distortion of history which took place as an event common to the nation during the festival. They agreed to continue having various forms of joint events to lay bare the Japanese imperialists' occupation of Korea and their thrice-cursed crimes against the Korean nation and get an apology and compensation for them and to strengthen a joint action of non-governmental organizations to firmly protect the dominium over Tok islet and have an academic symposium in this regard as an immediate task.



South Korean delegates are warmly welcomed by north Korean people as they march along a street in Pyongyang.



Photo shows the joint photo exhibition denouncing Japan's wartime wrongdoings and recent moves to distort history, held on Aug. 16.

Koizumi's War Shrine Visit Adds Fuel to Flames of Asian Anger

By Choe Kwan Ik, PK Editor

As a gesture of "compromise" but in a self-contradictory manner, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro of Japan dared to pay a visit on August 13 to Yasukuni Shrine that enshrines Japan's Class-A war criminals, by retreating a step from his pledge to visit the Shinto shrine on the 56th anniversary day of Japan's surrender in World War II (August 15).

Mounting Asian Criticism in Chorus

Not surprisingly, the visit drew harsh criticisms from Asian neighbors. North Korea condemned Koizumi's visit by calling it "an insult to those countries and peoples that fell victim to the Japanese imperialists' aggression" and "nothing but an expression of his intention to embellish and repeat Japan's crime-woven past," said "Rodong Sinmun," organ of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea.

South Korea's governing Millennium Democratic Party said the visit was like "throwing a dagger at Asian countries." "We will not spare any effort to condemn and block the ghost of Japan's resurgent imperialism, in solidarity with other Asian countries." The largest opposition Grand National Party also lambasted, describing Koizumi's act as "stupid behavior that has gained just some support in Japan at the expense of losing worldwide support."

China, expressing strong dissatisfaction and indignation, criticized the Japanese chief executive, saying: "This erroneous act has damaged the political foundation of Sino-Japanese relations as well as the feelings of the Chinese people and other Asian victims." Protesters in South Korea burned posters of the Japanese prime minister. There were also demonstrations in Beijing, Hong Kong, Taipei, Kuala Lumpur. In Manila, former "comfort women" for the Imperial Japan Army during the last war angrily said the visit "honors the Japanese soldiers who raped women."

Implications of Shrine Visit

Yamasaki Taku, LDP's Secretary General, said that he made "an anguished decision; but there was no alternative." Nationalist Dietmen including a nonpartisan "Association of Representatives for Prime Minister Koizumi's Visit to Yasukuni Shrine" and ultra-rightist Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintaro, accused Koizumi of "bowing down to external pressure" and "damaging national interest" by his failure to visit the shrine on August 15 as he had pledged to. Apart from such "a storm in a teacup," Koizumi's shrine visit in itself to worship the spirits of the war dead including war criminals enshrined in the shrine had much more serious historical implications—surpassing his personality—given a wide gulf between his explicit statements and ambiguity in deed, the hidden history of the shrine, in particular.

First, his statement of August 13 which said his visit to Yasukuni on August 15 "could lead the peoples of neighboring nations to cast doubts on Japan's fundamental policy for peace," is incompatible with his earlier strong emotional statements: "I don't understand why I have to be criticized," or "Why should I give up the visit just because people in other countries don't approve."

If he really doesn't understand why his act has caused unanimous criticism and concern among Japan's neighbors, he must have been totally ignorant of the history of the shrine. Otherwise he must have been seeking something special for a political purpose. He was once health and welfare minister, the responsible position of a ministry which, by succeeding the defunct Imperial Navy and Army, dealt with en-



Photo shows a civic rally held in Nagoya denouncing Japan's wartime wrongdoings, its distorted history textbooks and Prime Minister Koizumi's plan to visit Yasukuni Shrine.

shrinement of the souls of the war dead in consultation with the Yasukuni authorities—when Koizumi prayed fervently for the repose of those souls, as he said during the June 20 Question Time. This indicates he knew what he was doing at least.

Second, Koizumi declined to characterize his visit—as to whether it was a visit as prime minister or as a private citizen. After visiting the shrine, he told reporters: "Koizumi Junichiro, who is prime minister, made a sincere visit. That's all." Earlier, he said: "I am as much an individual person as a prime minister. I am going (to the shrine) as a private individual, and I am going also as prime minister." Here again, ambiguity—actually a sophism—was used to rationalize the visit. This statement of his is obviously related to the constitutional principle of separation of religion and state: Article 20 of the Constitution stipulates the separation of religion and state. Yasukuni Shrine became a "private religious institution" by pledging to sever all its ties with the state, following the guidance given by the U.S. Occupation authorities after the war ended.

He was reportedly to have bowed only once before the altar, avoiding the traditional Shinto ritual of two bows, two hand claps and a final bow. He was also said to have paid a "flower fee" from his own pocket money, apparently to avoid violating the Constitution. However, it was not made clear whether he received a traditional Shinto "purification" rite performed by the shrine's chief priest. Nakasone Yasuhiro, who became the first prime minister to make an official visit to the shrine in 1985, had been blamed by the chief priest for his failure to receive the "sacred" rite. Koizumi arrived there with a government entourage. Apparently, he wanted to create another established fact of official homage to the shrine following what Nakasone had done.

Third, Koizumi failed to mention his stand on the 14 Class-A war criminals including then Prime Minister Tojo Hideki. The enshrinement of Class-A war criminals in the shrine is the principal reason why an official visit to Yasukuni by any Cabinet member has aroused heated controversy not only in Japan but also in other Asian nations who fell victim to Japan's aggression and colonial rule. In a wanton violation of the 1952 San Francisco Peace Accord in which Japan accepted the results of the Tokyo Tribunal, Yasukuni Shrine secretly included the names of the war criminals in 1978. The Yasukuni side resisted calls for removing them after the act was revealed the following year. The Tokyo government explored constitutional loopholes that would allow official visits ever after Nakasone Yasuhiro came to power. A government panel's conclusion was that the controversial enshrinement of war criminals should be "a matter to be left to the discretion of Yasukuni Shrine."

Such being the case, why should he get so obsessed with "paying sincere respect and thanks" to the souls of the war dead in

Yasukuni Shrine only? Why not the tomb of unknown soldiers at Chidorigafuchi in Tokyo? Why doesn't he show his "open-minded" sincerity if any, by advocating the removal of the names of war criminals from the rosters in the shrine first, in a bid to allay international concern about this issue? Given his statements, verbal or in writing, regarding this central issue, he has retreated from the government's August 1995 statement of the then Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi which admitted Japan's responsibility for the past crimes by saying that "Japan inflicted huge damage and pain on the peoples of Asian countries through colonial domination and invasion, due to a wrong national policy." In the case of Koizumi, however, he declined to make clear a responsible party of the war. He just expressed his regrets for his backing away from his pledge, saying "it was shameful."

Fourth, the history of Yasukuni Shrine itself has become a central pivot of the nation-building of modern Japan based on Emperor-worship and racial superiority as well as on a historical point of view which glorifies all the wars Imperial Japan had waged since Meiji era as "holy" and "defensive" wars. Enshrined in the shrine are only those who "remained loyal to the Emperors" and died in the wars—not the ordinary war dead.

It is logically natural, therefore, that those advocating official visits to the shrine by politicians are without exception chauvinistic and fervent supporters of the controversial history and civics textbooks. They regard the Military Tribunal of the Far East as illegal and unilateral. A former Upper House member who faced war crimes charges once reportedly said at a meeting functioning as a board of directors of Yasukuni Shrine that "unless the Class-A war criminals were enshrined, it would mean acceptance of the judgment of the Tokyo Trial," reported the Asahi Shimbun.

Indications are that the post-war history of Yasukuni Shrine is permeated with "a will of the State" which has attempted to reestablish and rehabilitate the old outlook on history. United into an inseparable entity with this special Shinto shrine as its center have been the remnants of the Imperial Army and Navy, conservative political forces, right-wing groups, old and new, such as the "Society to Honor the Souls of the War Dead," the "Japan War-Bereaved Families Association" supported by rightwing forces, ministries concerned, and Yasukuni Shrine itself. And Koizumi is reportedly to have been encouraged by those conservative forces including Nakasone Yasuhiro to force the issue with the backing of a highest-ever popular support.

Fifth, Asian nations' suspicions and doubts about Koizumi's real intention derive from his basic stand and policy. For instance, he has ignored repeated requests from Asian neighbors, especially China and South Korea, with regard to the dis-

torted history textbooks prepared by a right-wing group obviously with the backing of neo-nationalist political forces including conservative LDP members. The issues of the textbooks and Yasukuni Shrine are the two sides of the same coin—Japan's views of its own history. He has also unsettled Asian neighbors by publicly suggesting a possible amendment to the war-renouncing Constitution. He has proposed to start active debate on the "right to collective defense" which would allow Japan to field an army to become "an ordinary country that can fight war" in case of a "contingency" in the so-called "surrounding areas." This process which has continued since the mid-1990s has been close to completion with a closer cooperation of Washington.

Conclusion

Koizumi's Yasukuni Shrine visit appears to be an act of turning back the clock of history. It is apparent that it will help only aggravate Japan's relations with neighboring nations and widen the gap of history interpretation between Japan and the victimized nations of its aggression. It is ironic that he said at the official ceremony on August 15: "We have a responsibility not to be isolated from international society. We must maintain and develop friendly relations with our neighboring countries to build a lasting peace in the world."

This intention of his is backfiring. Asian nations are getting even more highly vigilant against Tokyo. North and South Korea are getting united in voicing their opposition to Tokyo's moves as is shown in the textbook issue. At the August 14 meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, North and South Korea and China criticized Japan in unison for its past wrongdoings such as military sexual slavery during World War II, distorted history textbooks as well as for Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine.

President Kim Dae Jung on August 17 said that there would be no reason for him to meet the Japanese Prime Minister, unless he "behaves" responsibly and addresses Asian neighbors' concern about rising nationalism in Tokyo. Also on the same day, Seoul announced that 25 Japanese war criminals have been permanently barred from entering south Korea and the number of such people will be increased as further analysis is conducted.

As a matter of gratification, however, the controversial history textbooks written by an ultra-rightist group in Japan have not been adopted by any public junior high schools, except for a few private schools, to be used from the 2002 school year. This indicates the Japanese government, conservative and nationalist politicians are running counter to the trend of history.

A most serious problem is the fact that the younger generation as a whole is ignorant of what Imperial Japan perpetrated against Asian neighbors during the war. Unless they are given correct history education, Japan will be all the more isolated not only in Asia but in the rest of the world.

Speaking of the Yasukuni issue, Tokyo should show its sincerity by taking, at least, due measures to remove the names of war criminals from the shrine's roster, and those of the Korean victims enshrined there who had been forcibly conscripted for the Asia-Pacific War. Otherwise nobody would believe Japan.

If the Koizumi government really wants to build better understanding and relations with the victimized nations in Asia, it should, first of all, apologize to its neighbor countries for having reopened the old wounds of Asian peoples and immediately stop its anachronistic Asia policy, and thereby redress its crime-woven past with concrete steps, not in word. Tokyo must remember that it has done nothing to resolve Japan's past history with, but remains hostile to the closest victim country of its colonial rule: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

*IT in DPRK***Strategic Plan for IT Revolution in DPRK**

Attaching great importance to science, north Korea has launched a national campaign for the development of Information Technology in recent years.

DPRK starts a national campaign for IT

North Korean children who are good at something are able to cultivate their abilities at the Mangyondae Children's Palace and the Pyongyang Children's Palace, which are located in Pyongyang.

The palaces give special education to gifted children who have some special talent such as for playing musical instruments, drawing pictures and sports.

This year the palaces have launched new courses in special education to help children improve their computer skill for the first time in the DPRK.

Six hundred children were selected from all parts of country to receive special education in computer technology at the Kumsong First Junior High School.

"We are trying to train 'computer maniacs' in an environment where they can freely use all systems related to computers," said O Jong Hun, President of the Kumsong First Junior High School, and continued, "Although this is our first experience, but it deserves our effort."

The "computerization of the people's economy" has been posed as an important project as a national campaign for an IT revolution.

The special education program started in the Children's Palaces is a means of promoting this national project.

A special education program, which is supported by the latest computers and peripheral devices, has been opened at the Mangyondae Children's Palace, the Pyongyang Children's Palace and the Kumsong First and Second Junior High Schools.

To assist these schools in their special education programs, computer networks have been set up for children to obtain data provided by special institutes in the DPRK, such as the People's Study House and the Central Scientific and Technological Information Agency. Children are able to receive instruction from computer specialists in north Korea.

There is a severe competition in the entrance examination for children to receive this special computer education.

Choi Kyong Bin, 17, went to Pyongyang from Kusong City in North Pyongan Province after he had passed the entrance examination.

"Although there was a computer club in a school in Kusong City, I was not able to use a computer enough because of lack of



Children receive special education to improve their computer skill as one of national campaign launched by the DPRK to develop Information Technology.

computers available to the club. But I can freely use any computers here."

The special education aimed at training computer experts is drawing great attention in north Korea as newspapers and TV are continuously reporting the efforts to train computer specialists and on children's hopes for their future activities in the area of computer technology.

National Campaign starts in all areas of social activities in the north

In the past, too, the importance of computerization was emphasized in north Korea. But it was mainly for the purpose of introducing automation and computerization to industries and enterprises.

But now, the DPRK stresses the need of "computerization of all areas of the people's economy."

A series of administrative reforms have been carried out. The Ministry of Electronic Industry was newly formed in November 1999 by merging the Automation Control Bureau and the Electron Control Bureau.

At the same time, nationwide campaigns to draw people's interest in this work is being accelerated in real earnest.

Newspapers are carrying articles to explain how to operate PCs and report on the world situation in computer technology development. TV programs dealing with computers were broadcast in the prime time.

Now, IT is not only for specialists but also for ordinary people.

Kim Chaek University of Technology

Hong So Hon, 49, Chief of the Informatics Center at Kim Chaek University, is a representative specialist in computer technology in the DPRK who is now engaged in lecturing on computer technology to high-ranking officials.

The Informatics Center, which was founded in 1997, is an integrated research facility in the DPRK. It is noted for its research results in the development of computer software and programs as well as artificial intelligence.

"Our ideas have a great potential if they are realized because we live in an era of information industry. Our university and the Korea Computer Center have jointly developed a 3D animation program. We have high level technology for developing 3D animation programs so that the Korea Computer Center recognizes us as a partner in a joint development program," Hong said.

Central Scientific and Technological Information Agency

This agency operates its own web site to share its data and newly developed technology with people and is the largest scientific facility in north Korea, as it stores 3,000 items of data.

Children, who have received special education in computer technology, visit its web site to obtain data from its computer network.

Although the agency spends a lot of money to collect data from other countries,

it freely opens these materials to everyone to accelerate public use of the data it has gathered with a view to promote the use of its computer network.

"When we want to get people accustomed to new technology, we should not set a high rate for the utilization of data. Do you know how Microsoft spread its programs in the world?" asked Ri Sang Sol, Doctor in the Central Scientific and Technological Information Agency.

Although at present it provides its data freely to the public, it plans to set a really low rate in the future.

Korea Computer Center

The Korea Computer Center was founded in 1990 as central facility in north Korea to research and develop programs and spread the program created by it.

The DPRK has a lot of difficulties in developing its domestic information industry because of the severe economic sanction imposed on it by the U.S.

Leading computer companies in the U.S. such as Microsoft and Apple Computer have not yet developed an OS that recognizes Korean language text formulated by north Korea.

When north Korean people use Windows or Mac OS, they have to create an environment suitable for inputting Korean text.

The KCC and the Pyongyang Program Center have solved this problem to enable Korean people to input Korean text in computers by jointly developing a Korean typewriting program for the first time in north Korea.

As their capability to develop programs is highly appreciated in the world, joint development projects between the KCC and other countries have been accelerated in recent years.

After the KCC had shown good results in developing the program for inputting Korean text, it developed a new program for work in offices, named "Our Company."

"We do not plan to create anything by depending on others. Of course, software compatibility is important. But we have to have something original when we develop our information industry. For that reason, we are paying attention to Linux to create our original OS," said Choi.

The source code of Linux is open to anyone and people who got it are able to alter and improve the programs freely.

The KCC created a Korean version 1.0 of Linux last year.

He thinks that Linux has a more promising future than Windows. Although there are not so many applications based on Linux yet, he plans to create new applications if there is demand for them.

If Choi's idea is realized, program-creating groups in north Korea will play an important role in the world to accelerate activities to open source codes and it is expected that closer relationships between north Korean and foreign engineers will be realized.

Japanese Government Urged to Take Humanitarian Measures for Korean A-bomb Victims

PYONGYANG, August 6 (KCNA) — The Anti-Nuke Peace Association of Korean A-Bomb Victims issued a statement on Aug. 15 56 years after A-bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. In the DPRK there are thousands of A-bomb victims at present. They are persons who were forcibly taken to Hiroshima and Nagasaki for labor, military service and other missions and had to undergo backbreaking toil and suffered from A-bombs under the colonial rule of the Japanese imperialists, and their descendants.

The statement said: We, A-bomb victims, demand the Japanese authorities make state compensation to us. This demand is intended to prevent

the repetition of the disasters of last century by making the present Japanese government take responsibility and compensate for the war of aggression conducted by the Japanese imperialists in the past and for damage from it.

The Japanese government did not give any humanitarian aid to Korean A-bomb victims in 56 years, though it has done to Japanese victims.

This year it sent a fact-finding team to the DPRK to acquire the details, but has not yet taken any practical measure, the statement said, and continued:

The chief executive of Japan has recently asserted that he would visit "Yasukuni Shrine." Meanwhile, Japan is moving to replace its "peaceful constitution" with war constitution and refusing to accept the strong domestic and foreign demand for revision of junior middle schoolers' history textbooks in which its history of aggression is distorted.

Such moves are aimed to conceal its past crimes and evade apology and compensation for them.

The Japanese government should renounce this wrong attitude at once and promptly take humanitarian measures necessary for the Korean A-bomb victims.

If it keeps dragging time on, abusing the humanitarian issue for any political purpose, it will come under stronger protest and condemnation not only from the victims but from the world community.

Human Rights (Continued from page 1)

government by saying that "some money for atonement" had been provided to victims by the "Asian Women's Fund." Yokota is a member of the Fund.

Park, Subcommittee Expert, refuted his argument by saying "This is not about money. It is about whether the Japanese government will recognize what it had done to the dignity of these human beings."

History Textbooks and Yasukuni Shrine
Fan Guozhang, Subcommittee Expert from China, said that Japan, unlike the

European countries that tried to find resolutions, had actually backtracked with its history about the war and that the issues of distorted history textbooks, sexual slavery and Japanese Prime Minister's visit to Yasukuni Shrine where enshrined the war criminals were closely related to one another.

The North Korean representative said: "Japanese officials honored the spirits of war criminals. Any country that had violated international law must accept its moral and legal responsibilities. Japan should do so."

The South Korean representative said: "Today, there is concern by the glorification and glossing over of past wrongdoings reflected in certain history textbooks in a country responsible for them. Such concealment and abridgement reopens old wounds of the victims of State-sponsored violence, and further dishonors the dead. We are seeing recognition of past wrongs, not for the sake of revenge, but for genuine reconciliation for the present and future."