

<Analysis of the Overall Situation in North Korean>

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1. Possibility of the Regime Change and the Health Crisis of Kim Jongil

- 1) Social and economic perspective – Many changes taking place incl. communist system being almost collapsed and active market trade
- 2) Political and military perspective – No Change in power structure and control system
- 3) Long term- Regime unstable
Short term-possible to maintain the regime
- 4) Core group of the Power are well controlled and yet to find any fault in the group.
- 5) In case of the death of Kim Jungil, the regime could maintain the status quo for a short term –crisis management system is in operation.
- 6) Successor Issue – forbidden issue to be discussed
 - Symbolic Role whoever becomes the successor (order of succession is predictable in feudalistic perspective)
 - The central party is in power in fully in control of the military, thus the military is not a separated entity.
- 7) Status of the leader is too high for anyone to succeed. Hence, realistic institutionalized power structure to govern is necessary. Absolute power on one person cannot be sustained, while maintain symbolic status as the absolute power.
- 8) Internal responses on Kim Jongil missing the 9.9 Day Event
 - i. Prior notice to the Central party officials that Kim Jungil cannot be presented at the 9.9day event,
 - no internal stir
 - worsening relations with US and South Korea, personal security was questioned : his closest prevented him to show up on the event (could also be an excuse to cover up his health crisis)
 - Kim Jongil's health is frail, but not as bad as is known to the world.

- ii. Ordinary People do not consider this incident with any significance; Kim often has missed events in many occasions. People simply think the Kim's health deteriorated while he was working for the people and the country, thus, missing the event.
- iii. Since there are so many speculations from the outside and the people are concerned about the Kim's well-being, he would be present on the Celebration of the 63rd anniversary of the Worker's Party

2. North Korea's Perspective on the US-North Korea Relationship

- 1) Utmost interest lies is on the improving the relations with the US- North Korea for the sake of the regime, however, has a position not to beg for it (saving face is a way to maintain the status quo)
- 2) If US were to discard the hostile policy towards North Korea, North Korea wants to befriend with the US
- 3) Nuclear power is the last resort that the North Korean regime could rest upon, without any power, N. Korea thinks the US will consume them.
- 4) N. Korea's position on the nuclear power: once the US- N.Korea relationship has been normalized, nuclear power is no longer valid. They have clear position on the nuclear proliferation, but the total dismantlement of the nuclear power would be difficult until it obtains the safety guarantee of the regime.
→ nuclear weapon also play greater role for keeping the domestic politics in order.
- 5) N. Korea's Perspective on the Current Confronting Situation
 - i. US is not implementing the agreement, i.e., action on action principle is not being implemented. Declaring nuclear status vs. deletion from the list of 'State Sponsors of Terrorism' is not being followed by the US. N.Korea thinks US is trying to delay the talks by inserting another condition, i.e., nuclear verification, which in their view, reminds of them of the Banko Delta Asia (BDA) after the 9.19 Agreement.
 - ii. N.Korea is firm on the US to implement first: thereby deleting N.Korea from the list of 'State Sponsors of Terrorism' then N.Korea would come back to the table for the nuclear verification.
 - iii. Major obstacle for the Nuclear Verification – Random Inspection of the Nuclear facilities (wherever, whenever)
 - Considered to be impossible – almost equivalent of the total disarmament. Unaccepted from the military
 - Reminds them of the 'nightmare' of the inspection in Gumchangni (금창리)
 - Need to make a feasible resolution that the N.Korean counterpart could accommodate (limiting venues or extending the period)

- iv. Even if the US does not delete N.Korea from list of 'State Sponsors of Terrorism', the agreements made will not be put to abrogate. The negotiation will continue to the next administration.
- v. N.Korea would, however, determine that the US-N.Korea relation cannot be improved even in the next administration, N.Korea would then behave on the brinkmanship for the survival (i.e. breach the agreement, taking experiment on nuclear weapons) of the regime.

3. North Korean Perspective on the N.Korea - S.Korea Relationship

- 1) **Relations:** Primary factor is the N.Korea –US relations while N.Korea-S.Korea relationship is only a subordinate variable.
- 2) Response will depend on how S.Korea behaves (Talks to Talks, Confrontations to Confrontations)
- 3) N.Korea is using the confrontation with S.Korea as their internal control
 - i. Current confrontational policy was shown as the evidence to the people and the party officials who were somewhat, 'amicable' towards S.Korea that the true nature of S.Korean government is hostile policy towards N.Korea and that the S.Korea is just the puppet of the US and Japan.
- 4) **Food:** Humanitarian food assistance would be appreciated since there is devastating shortage of food. But, in a firm position not to beg for food assistance from Lee Myungbak administration.
- 5) **Mt.Gumgang Incident:** N.Korea thinks the incident is a simple incident from a military post, that the S.Korean government is trying to expand the incident out of proportion to heighten hostility towards N.Korea.
- 6) Both Mt.Gumgang Tourism and Gaesung Industrial complex will be dealt upon how the S.Korean government's behavior (good income source, but there are some political risks involved in the activities, such as citizens unrest or military coup – N.Korea is ready to put to a stop)
- 7) **Improving N.Korea-S.Korea Relations:** Without the S. Korean government acknowledging the Declaration on the June 15 and the Declaration on the Oct.4, improvement on the relations will be difficult.

4. Worsening Livelihood for People – Beginning of the Second 'Arduous March'

- 1) Food Crisis – Worst ever since 90s
 - i. Causes of food shortages
 - Internal factors
 - A. Natural Disaster: Consecutive flood in 2006 and 2007 on the grain producing region in North and South Hwanghae province, North and South Pyongan province and highlands in Gangwon province

B. Policy Failure: control on the market trade, prohibition on the individual cultivation (또기|밭), retracting the six-months rented land and the initiation on reviving the public distribution on food resulted considerable reduction of food that individuals could have.

➤ Fundamental problems lie in the Cooperative Farms and shortage of farming resources (fertilizers, plastic sheets, pesticides)

- External factors

A. Missile launch and consecutive nuclear experiments in the year 2006 reduced the foreign food assistance

B. S. Korean government put a stop to food assistance in the year 2008 (400,000MT of grains and 300,000MT of fertilizer on average per year)

C. Chinese government prohibiting the food export (cause for sudden increase of food price)

D. Dramatic increase on the international food prices (reduction of imports)

ii. Particulars of the Food Crisis in 2008 – differences that of the arduous march

- Areas and class of people where famine is occurring

90's: 2008

Nth and Sth Hamgyung provinces → Nth and Sth Hwanghae provinces

Urban workers → Farmers and rural community

- Reasons for Farmers Difficulty in Hwanghae province

- Severe Flood damages in 2006 and 2007

- Producer of the Military provisions

- For last decade, urban workers have adapted to market oriented life style and with individual patches of land, which developed coping mechanism while rural workers have lived in the same way as the pre-famine period.

iii. Prices of 1KG of Rice

Apr.2007	850won	
Apr.2008	2500-2800won	3times as sametime last year(↑)
May-June 2008	3800-4000won	Dramatic increase, regional prices show stark differences (unstable market)
July 2008	2400-2500won	High Prices yet, but stable prices and regulated nation-wide
Early Sep. 2008	2800-3000won	Increases again from mid Aug. 2008. End of Sept. is always shows highest price of all-year-round

iv. Updates on the Food Crisis 2008

April - June	Urban poor, people in institutional care , farmers in rural areas die of hunger Sth Hwanghae, Nth Hwanghae and Gangwon – flood affected areas worst affected
July	New produces (potatoes, barley, wheat) and US food assistance – famine on hold
Aug.-Sept	Death by starvation occur again in urban poor, highlands, rural areas – increase of 'Kkotjebi'(homeless children) Gangwon, Ryanggang, Jagang, Sth.Hamgyung, Sth.Hwanghae –worst affected

v. Famine situation in Spring Lean-Season

- Hwanghae province: 25-40 famers have died per farm in 'li' districts
- Dramatic increase of Kkotjebi: Many deaths in protection centres, children's homes(orphanages), nursing homes are most difficult. In Jangbai, China there have been 10Kkotjebis crossed the border daily to beg for food. They were caught and sent back.
Wide spread of Kkotjebi – even adult Kkotjebi are easy to find in markets and stations
- Increase of urban poor: Increase of deaths in children and elderly people
- Fall of attendance rate in schools, factories, farms and increase of T.B patients.

2) Changes in the Attitudes of People

- i. Giving-up on the food shortage: increasing no. of suicide, family break downs and Kkotjebis
- ii. Responses to shortage: Confronting the market-controlling government → resistance, complaints in groups (Chungjin cases in Mar.14 and Aug.24, Gimchaek, Pyongyang, pyongsung, Gaesung, Sariwon etc.)
- iii. Heightening Complaints from the people – increase in resistance when it comes to subsisting personal livelihood. Yet the resistance lacks political magnitude. (some places are seen with hand-outs with complaints)
- iv. N.Korean government fear social unrest from the cities – thus making preference food provisions to workers in the major cities by importing food.

v. Production Forecast 2008

- A. Worst ever, it would not last six months (1.8mil.MTis the maximum grain production forecast) which will affect next year's food production – all the interests are on how to obtain food. High level of grain theft.
- B. It seems good on the outside, since the weather is good, but lack of fertilizers, seedlings with fault, there are a lot of empty-grains (different forecast from the FAO)