

On the Prevailing Situation and the Tasks of the Battalion Commanders and Political Instructors of the Armed Forces of the Republic

The Respected Comrade Kim Jong Un Makes a Speech Before Those Attending the Fourth Conference of the Battalion Commanders and Political Instructors of the Korean People's Army

Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, made a speech on November 15, titled, *On the Prevailing Situation and the Tasks of the Battalion Commanders and Political Instructors of the Armed Forces of the Republic*, before those attending the Fourth Conference of the Battalion Commanders and Political Instructors of the Korean People's Army.

All the battalion commanders and political instructors of the armed forces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea,

Commanders of the military and political organs at all levels of the armed forces of the Republic,

Comrades,

At the historic time, when the prestige and honour of our legendary army is being fully demonstrated in all the theatres of the revolution seething with struggles and transformations, the Fourth Conference of the Battalion Commanders and Political Instructors of the Korean People's Army has been convened.

First, on behalf of the Central Committee and the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party of Korea, I extend warm congratulations to all the battalion commanders and political instructors of the Republic's armed forces attending this conference.

I also send my warm greetings to all the officers and men of the army, who are unsparingly devoting their ardent loyalty, patriotism and efforts at their honourable outposts for defending the sovereignty of our state and at the construction sites for bringing earlier the comprehensive prosperity of socialism.

In recent years many theoretical and practical tasks have been raised to strengthen the Party, achieve the rejuvenation of the state and promote the wellbeing of the people in addition to the enormous policy-oriented tasks set forth at the congress of our Party and the plenary meetings of its Central Committee. As all these tasks had to be tackled after finding out the correct ways and means through sincere and painstaking efforts, I have always been busy.

However, I have come here today without any regret to see you, who have gathered in Pyongyang, and I am very glad about it.

Why do we attach such importance and special concern to this gathering of the battalion commanders and political instructors?

It can be explained in various ways, but the main reason is that you are our Party's loyal revolutionary fighters, who are firmly and silently consolidating the cornerstone for increasing the military capability while experiencing more difficulties than any others at the grass-roots level of our armed forces.

Battalions are at the lowest level in the military organizational system and command system for realizing the Party's leadership over the army, but the Party and the country have always regarded you as being in very important positions.

Battalions are not large, but the pure and ardent patriotism and loyalty of their

commanders and political instructors, who are leading their men and treading the road of devotion unknown to others as they live in the large family of the Party, revolution, country and socialism, constitute the sustenance for the high honour and military feats of our armed forces.

Exactly ten years have passed since the Third Conference of the Battalion Commanders and Political Instructors of the Korean People's Army was held.

Looking back, over the past ten years our Party, country and people have wrought miracles and transformations in the face of every manner of trials and challenges that could not be described but as being unprecedented. All these are imprinted on the course of struggle of our army that has lived up to its precious appellation as the army of the Party by shouldering by itself the two fronts of national defence and creation, and each page of the chronicles of these heroic feats records your unknown devoted efforts.

All the current battalion commanders and political instructors, commanding personnel of the main combat units of our revolutionary armed forces, are a generation that has grown up in this arduous yet glorious decade, when the importance of presence and feats of our army has become conspicuous.

Because you have played the leading role, our revolutionary army has written another chapter of history of pioneering the road of advance and upswing not only at the borderline posts, where friend and foe are leveling their guns directly at each other, but also on all other fronts, decisive of the future destiny of our state and people.

A precious success achieved in building up the army in these ten years is that its commanding officers, loyal and trustworthy, have been trained. They are leading the ranks of soldiers with an ennobling outlook on life that the army exists to translate the Party's plans and determination into reality and that even though they may fall on this road, it is their glory, and with high-minded examples of death-defyingly implementing them.

Seeing you numbering thousands, the core that can be said to be representing the army's commanding personnel grown up in our era, I am fully convinced that our armed forces' history of loyalty and tradition of patriotism are being stoutly carried forward. I feel most pleased and satisfied with this.

As for the mightiness and promising future of the ever-victorious Korean People's Army, the army of the Workers' Party of Korea, there would be no clearer explanation than this.

True to the sacred mission and genuine conscience of commanding personnel of the revolutionary army, who made an oath before the state, you have overcome manifold difficulties and mental suffering to turn your battalions into elite combat units, thoroughgoing, brave and immaculate in carrying out any orders. Through this courageous struggle, you have added great strength and support to our Party. I extend gratitude to you once again for this.

Kim Jong Un stressed that our armed forces are occupying a position, for which no other forces can substitute in the present and future stages of the revolution as in the past decade, and that immutable and invariable is our Party's stand to propel the revolution steadily and bring about an upsurge in socialist construction with the support of these reliable armed forces, adding:

Availing myself of this opportunity of meeting you, I am going to remind all the service personnel of our armed forces of their natural mission and tasks they must never forget whatever they do at any place, and brief you on how important it is to prepare your battalions well for fulfilling them and what are the tasks facing you.

Our revolutionary armed forces are now in charge of not a few fronts, every one

of which is decisive of the future of our country and people and the advance of the revolution.

Among them, however, the most important is the anti-imperialist class front, and making full preparations for war is the most crucial task facing our armed forces.

This is their main front and their basic duty, for which no other forces can take their place.

The armed forces of our Republic should be prepared so thoroughly that they can foil all manner of aggressive manoeuvres by the enemy through powerful military actions wherever our national sovereignty is exercised, and that they can accomplish their tasks with credit in times of emergency.

They must never forget that the enemy will joyously take advantage of any laxity in their combat readiness to launch an attack, and the price for it will be the dear blood shed by their beloved parents, wives and children.

The more fully they are prepared for war, the more durable peace will prevail on this land, and the closer we will come to our goal of building a powerful and prosperous state.

The moment when our armed forces become fully prepared for war, our state's sovereignty and peace will become permanent.

I would like to reiterate that preparing for war is the most important and vital of all the tasks facing our armed forces.

This is just the revolutionary armed forces' inherent mission and duty.

Noting that the gravity of the recent developments in different parts of the world, the Korean peninsula in particular, demands that all the service personnel of the Republic's armed forces be better prepared for war with a correct understanding of the prevailing situation, Kim Jong Un pointed to the danger of the military provocations by the United States and its vassal forces that are ratcheting up tension to an unprecedented level in pursuit of their adventurist military policy for supremacy in the peninsula, the hottest spot in the world. He went on:

As a key factor threatening peace and stability in the Korean peninsula and other regions of the Asia-Pacific, the tripartite military bloc of the United States, Japan and the ROK is more clearly revealing its menacing nature.

The United States has already converted its alliance with the ROK into a nuclear-based one and created an "Asian NATO" in haste by cementing its military ties with Japan and the ROK. And almost every day it has brought strategic military hardware and the troops of its allies, including those of NATO member states, into and around the ROK, staging intensive drills of all hues to get these forces familiarized with a war of aggression.

The strengthening of the exclusive military bloc and successive military drills simulating a real war are gradually undermining the strategic environment in the Korean peninsula. These dangerous moves by the United States, Japan and the ROK remind us of the criminal actions that NATO committed to create a security crisis in Europe by steadily expanding its military alliance system and pursuing its unjustifiable eastward advance policy.

After all, the US-led military alliance is gaining in scope to include Europe and the Asia-Pacific, and the spearhead of its aggression is being directed at our country, which is the rival most hostile to the United States and the longest belligerent state against it.

The present situation is such that there will be nothing strange about the troops of the United States and its vassal countries, in times of emergency, showing themselves in the Korean peninsula under the signboard of such a military alliance as NATO, not the UN.

The US and ROK scum are approaching closer to the actions that will entail very dangerous consequences.

The United States, Japan and the ROK can never dodge the criminal responsibility for disturbing peace and stability in the Korean peninsula and the region.

The United States has proven to be the ringleader of the disturbers of peace and stability, who are constantly driving the security environment in the peninsula to a labyrinth, and its evil identity as such reminds us repeatedly of what kind of strategic option we must choose to control our rivals.

The more frantic the United States' moves of confrontation against our Republic grow, the clearer it becomes that our efforts and actions in defence of our state's security and regional peace are justified.

Long ago, the line of building up our nuclear forces became an irreversible policy, so what remains to be done now is for these forces to get more fully ready for action so that they can carry out the mission of deterring war and the second mission at any moment.

Recently, I have clarified on several occasions the geopolitical change because of which our option can or should never be changed, and what we should do to cope with it.

We will build up our nation's self-defence forces, the pivot of which is its nuclear capability, limitlessly and endlessly without satisfaction.

War is by no means what concerns others alone, nor is it a thing of a distant future, stressed Kim Jong Un, adding:

As the United States and other Western countries are using Ukraine as a shock force in the war against Russia, we should view it as a manoeuvre to enrich their real-war experience and expand the scope of military intervention all over the world.

Currently, by sustaining their military assistance to Ukraine and Israel, the US warmongers are prolonging the wars there, in which an increasing number of countries are being involved. This aggravates the international security situation, stoking fears of a third world war.

The danger of war lurks in all parts of the planet, and no one is certain when and where it will break out.

Witnessing the use of force in Europe and the Middle East, the world recognizes that another armed conflict is most likely to erupt in the Korean peninsula.

All the levels of our armed forces should completely orient and subordinate their actions to making preparations for war, going all out to perfect them as soon as possible.

Each passing day now is very precious in stepping up preparations to cope with war.

The armed forces of the Republic should make the most effective use of this precious time, regarding a day as a hundred or thousand days, and be fully ready to take the initiative and be active in any military developments.

"All efforts for completing war preparations!"—this is a requirement of the revolution and the present situation, as well as a military slogan to be held aloft by every level of our armed forces.

It is especially important to build up the battalion in maintaining the political and military superiority and accelerating the increase of the military strength for our regular and other armed forces of the Republic to cope with war.

Our Party regards the battalion as the main unit in fighting a revolutionary war, and attaches great significance to building it up.

The battalion is a combat unit that should accomplish a combat mission

independently, given the organizational system of our armed forces and all the subjective and objective conditions of our country.

In case of emergency, the role of battalions is pivotal for our armed forces to move adroitly and exactly in accordance with the strategic intentions of the Party Central Committee and to firmly take hold of the initiative and good chance of winning in accordance with our own tactics whatever the circumstances.

As the wars going on now in several regions of the world give living proof, victory in modern warfare, characterized by colossal deployment of intelligent and informatized state-of-the-art military hardware and comprehensive and multi-dimensional phase of operations and battles, covering land, sea, air and outer and cyber spaces, is dependent on how the battalions, tactical sub-units, are strengthened and commanded.

If a war breaks out, we have to fight the enemy who possess state-of-the-art military technology. Given the situation, the optimum unit is the battalion which can cover up its military action plan from the enemy's various advanced reconnaissance and detection means, launch surprise attacks and preserve the manpower and combat equipment. It is also a group that can effectively manoeuvre in the combat areas in our country with complex topographical features.

Therefore, the battalion constitutes a basic combat unit, a major tactical unit, most important in combat group formation and operation, and a lead unit in demonstrating the powerful combat strength of our army.

I am going to make maximum use of the strength of battalions in possible war by assigning missions with battalions as the basic unit, giving independence to them and ensuring their active operation.

The position and role of the battalion are given such great importance that the Party took a measure for holding this meeting and a short course by summoning all the battalion commanders and political instructors of the army at the same time, even though this is a period pivotal in completing most important state-level projects and the security environment of the country is extremely unstable.

Kim Jong Un stressed once again our Party's steadfast policy on prioritizing battalions—that completion of their war preparations immediately means completion of the whole army's war preparations and their capabilities to fight a real war represent the war potentials of the revolutionary armed forces—and referred to the important tasks facing the battalion commanders and political instructors as follows:

The first basic task for battalion commanders and political instructors is to step up the turning of battalions into ideological and spiritual elite forces with the definite viewpoint that the political and ideological preparedness of revolutionary soldiers decides victory in war.

You should bear in mind that ideology is the most powerful weapon and the only guarantee of invincibility of the revolutionary armed forces.

It is our ever-invariable war method and philosophy of victory to prioritize overwhelming ideological and spiritual victory, no matter how the aspects of modern warfare evolve and what effects advanced military and technical means have on operations and battles.

Our Republic's armed forces should overwhelm the enemy, above all, in the ideological and spiritual aspects.

We, who advocate the Juche-oriented theory of ideology, ought to gain definite control of the enemy's vicious anti-communist consciousness of confrontation by dint of political and moral superiority before military and technical edge, and demonstrate the might of our powerful revolutionary army that always emerges victorious by dint of the communist ideology and morality.

The ideological and spiritual characteristics of the powerful revolutionary army that all the officers and men of the Republic's armed forces should possess are just the absolute loyalty to the Party and the revolution, ardent love for the country, the spirit of devoted service for the people, steadfast class awareness and the will to annihilate the enemy.

The Party has consistently identified the first generation of our revolutionary armed forces and wartime heroes as the noble example in this regard.

We should hold fast, as the primary task in strengthening the battalion, to training all the service personnel to be men strong in ideas and spirit like the first generation of the revolutionary armed forces and wartime heroes.

The work of the battalion should definitely be oriented to this point, and its practical effects should be exhibited just in that.

It is needed to make service personnel burn with the heroic spirit that they would fight against the enemy, standing firmly and holding the red flag in their arms to the death, as the anti-Japanese guerrillas and the victorious wartime generation of the 1950s did.

At the present moment, it is important to deeply imbue service personnel with the thoroughgoing viewpoint on the archenemy and the will to fight a decisive battle against the enemy.

The American and ROK scum we are confronting are whipping up extreme war hysteria as they advocate the heinous anti-communist ideas and the spirit of destroying communism.

We should not view anti-communism merely as the national policy of the United States and the ROK.

It is necessary to make all the service personnel clearly know and always remember that the enemy we should fight are the wicked beings steeped in anti-communism and trained in the spirit of destroying communism and the utter confrontation maniacs who whet swords till they die out of their class nature.

A bullet in the rifle of a soldier with an obscure viewpoint on the archenemy is as good as a dud.

The security of the country and the people should be guaranteed by the staunch class awareness of service personnel, ahead of the force of their arms.

We should inspire all the service personnel to display matchless heroism in a sacred war, once it breaks out, to punish and annihilate the enemy who infringe upon the sovereignty of our beloved country and endanger the lives of our people.

I avail myself of this opportunity to emphasize that battalions should not try to conduct ideological education only on special occasions and under special circumstances.

It is essential to actively explore and apply original methods of education so that all the processes and occasions of performing daily service and carrying out military tasks, as well as the ideological offensive under the situation where the outbreak of war can be said to have become a fait accompli and the countdown to have begun, can be a course of spiritual arming of service personnel.

It is particularly important to make education for them begin with love and be run through with a tender feeling.

As each of children is precious to their parents, the true heart of warmly embracing and taking good care of every soldier constitutes speechless teaching and an inspiration with definite practical effects on service personnel.

Battalion commanders and political instructors should care for service personnel more deeply than anybody else and, by dint of affection and tender feeling, prevent them from becoming ideologically heterogeneous and inspire them to display their

spiritual strength.

You should take this in your mind as my request to the commanding officers, who should take care of service personnel as their blood brothers would do, rather than my order.

I hope you will pour more affection and tender feeling on service personnel who should go to battlefields at the risk of their lives, instil into them the approach to war and powerfully inspire them to a heroic struggle.

The second basic task for battalion commanders and political instructors is to concentrate all efforts on boosting their battalions' capability of fighting a war so as to surely guarantee victory in a revolutionary war militarily and technically.

In order to strengthen our armed forces qualitatively and provide for a revolutionary war, we should step up efforts for building them into an army strong both in the political and ideological aspects and in military and technical aspects.

Noting that modern warfare proves from hour to hour that an army which is technically superannuated cannot beat back the enemy which is armed to the teeth, Kim Jong Un underscored the necessity to step up more dynamically the technological revolution in the People's Army, too, and continued:

The battlefields require combatants, who are capable of overpowering the enemy not only in ideological and spiritual aspects but also in military techniques.

I stress once again: We should make a straight advance towards bolstering up the armed forces of the Republic in military techniques.

Battalion commanders and political instructors should have a clear understanding of the changing aspects of modern warfare and the main orientation of building a powerful army corresponding to the changes, and train all their men into brave fighters fully prepared not only spiritually but in military techniques, into versatile combatants capable of skilfully handling sophisticated weapons and other combat equipment and accomplishing any combat missions with credit.

The actual war capabilities to secure victory in the battlefield can be consolidated through intensive training.

Pointing out some weak points and shortcomings revealed in the course of inspecting the combat readiness of battalions across the army, Kim Jong Un stressed that combat training for the army, which has to defend the country and the people with arms, is the primary revolutionary task that must not be neglected under any conditions and circumstances, and that there is no other revolutionary task more vital and important than that.

Noting that battalion commanders and political instructors should always visualize in their mind the circumstances of battlefields and effect a drastic turn in practical training with the main emphasis put on performing combat duty true to the Party's five-point policy of bringing about a revolution in training so as to ensure that all the officers and men acquire flawless combat capability to correctly carry out the Party's order of military operations, Kim Jong Un indicated the tasks for the commanding officers to improve their abilities to organize and command battles and steadily improve the manoeuvrability and fighting efficiency of battalions.

He clarified the demands of principle for both the operations units and the combat units across the army to maintain in training, including those of exploring and applying the training contents, forms and methods in an innovative way in keeping with the developing aspects and changing trend of modern war and constantly studying innovative tactics and combat plans of our own style to hold the initiative in battlefields.

Noting that enhancing the soldiers' abilities to fight an actual war and putting

weapons and other combat equipment on a regular readiness means making war preparations, he stressed the need to thoroughly establish the spirit and culture of loving and handling weapons with care in battalions across the army.

Even at this moment the United States and ROK, including the ROK puppets, hand in glove with one another, are resorting to provocative sabre-rattling around our country, he said, adding that this situation absolutely highlights the importance of combat guard duty, and continued:

If the sky becomes cloudy often, it will rain, and if dark clouds gather and cover the sky, there will be a flash of lightning. Likewise, it is clear that there will inevitably be a military conflict on this land over which the dark clouds of war hover and, accordingly, it is necessary to be always prepared to contain and frustrate any slight provocation by the enemy immediately and thoroughly by building up all the posts and positions into fortresses of no retreat and carrying on various combat guard duties with high vigilance.

The third basic task for battalion commanders and political instructors is to raise a strong wind of improving their qualifications, being conscious that their own politico-ideological, military and practical preparedness is decisive of their battalions' fighting efficiency and victory in battles, Kim Jong Un said, and went on:

They should become competent and action-oriented commanders of field-officer type, who stand readily in the vanguard before issuing an order and who are equipped with qualifications and organizing and commanding capabilities high enough to accomplish whatever mission the Party gives them in a perfect, thoroughgoing way.

Above all, they should become persons of faith and moral obligation, who follow the Party Central Committee without an inch of deviation, persons strong in ideological faith, who are dyed red with its revolutionary ideas.

They should also make painstaking efforts to enhance their practical abilities so that they can acquire as soon as possible the qualifications and capabilities needed for commanding and controlling their battalions as intended by the Party.

The commanding personnel of battalions should possess a revolutionary work method, militant way of life and ennobling traits, and turn their battalions, by means of their personal examples and effective education of their officers and men, into fighting groups that have established strict ethos and assumed the appearance appropriate to a regular army, Kim Jong Un said, and clarified the ways to do so, before continuing:

Battalion commanders and political instructors,

You are not only masters of your battalions who are responsible for the grass-roots level of our armed forces, but also reserve military and political cadres who will form the backbone of our armed forces in the future.

Most of those officers who attended the Third Conference of Battalion Commanders and Political Instructors have grown into cadres at higher commanding organs now, and you, present here, will surely be assigned to higher ranks than the battalion ones in a few years.

Yet, battalion commanders and political instructors gain experience and lessons and attain the traits and qualifications due for military and political officers while getting invaluable experiences in different spheres like military, political and supply service work. They will find that there is no more worthwhile period of their careers than this one in learning how to work.

This is why we keep it as an essential principle to form the ranks of army commanders with those who have been battalion commanders and political instructors; this will continue to be the consistent principle in dealing with military and political personnel administration, which is of core importance in following the

line of building a powerful army.

Battalions are where army commanders grow up, and it is here that the future of our army is shaped to win victory after victory.

Considering that the key to the building of a powerful army in the new era and victory in war is how to prepare its core force, you have assumed important missions in truly important positions.

As befits the backbone shouldering the future of our revolutionary armed forces, you should make ceaseless efforts to improve your abilities, qualifications and personalities and put your heart and soul in whatever you are doing now, thus proving yourselves worthy of the Party's great trust.

Comrades,

In the prevailing subjective and objective situations, it is a pressing task—which brooks not a day's delay—to make full preparations for war.

If we are to mount a counterattack to the enemy if they attempt to infringe upon the sovereignty and security of our state even in the slightest degree and to win decisive victory in war once it is unleashed, strengthening battalions is posed as an important and urgent task that requires sure progress.

You must not confine yourselves to shouting a slogan or taking an oath in regard to the defence of sovereignty and rights of our state, but must be fully prepared to carry out any combat missions in a perfect way at any time and in any circumstances.

To prepare the battalion into that capable of going into action and engaging in battle immediately after receiving an order, not merely making speeches and taking an oath, and into an all-purpose one that is capable of bringing any missions to brilliant perfection—this is the goal that all the battalions of our armed forces should attain without fail and the spirit of this conference.

Fully aware of the noble mission and duty entrusted by the Party and the revolution, let us all march forward to bring about a substantial and fundamental improvement in strengthening the battalions' capabilities for an actual war, and to defend the state and the people and bring earlier honourable victory in war with the powerful military deterrent that we have long built up.

My most beloved comrades-in-arms,

All the commanding officers of our armed forces,

Availing myself of this opportunity, I extend my warm encouragement to all the beloved officers and men of the army.

For the eternal prosperity and peace of our socialist country and for the safety and happiness of our beloved people, let us all equip ourselves fully with the revolutionary ideology of the Party and fight on dynamically.