

WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

KIM JONG IL

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
IS AN ENNOBLING PATRIOTIC
UNDERTAKING FOR THE
COUNTRY AND NATION**

Talks to Senior Officials of the Party, State and Army
July 2 and December 23, Juche 94 (2005)

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The environment must be well protected.

Environmental protection is an important and responsible undertaking for making the mountains and rivers of the country more beautiful, protecting and promoting people's health and providing them with more cultured living conditions.

The natural environment is, along with their social environment, a prerequisite for the life and activities of human beings, who are directly impacted by it.

The more society and the economy develop, the more the importance of environmental protection grows.

With factories and enterprises being built in large numbers and new industrial sectors being established constantly, the danger of the natural environment suffering damage increases.

Meanwhile, the people's demand for the environment to be protected rises daily.

Environmental protection is not an issue that is related to one country and nation alone, but a serious international issue.

The economy, and science and technology, are developing rapidly worldwide. The imperialists in particular are damaging the natural environment by

extracting natural resources in a predatory manner and recklessly expanding their munitions and polluting industries. This is giving rise to various consequences, including desertification and global warming which threaten the existence of humanity itself.

Ascribing importance to environmental protection is now a trend worldwide.

It is an intrinsic requirement of our unique people-centred socialism to create a natural environment that is more favourable for the existence and activities of people through effective environmental protection.

In our country, where people are regarded as the most valuable beings in the world, we should naturally conduct environmental protection at the highest possible level, and through it prove the true advantages of our style of socialism.

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung regarded land management and environmental protection as an ennobling patriotic undertaking for the people, and always paid close attention to it. And our Party, true to his intention, has taken various steps for improving and stepping up environmental protection work.

However, our officials have not directed proper attention to it. This has resulted in the number of trees in the mountains decreasing and the level of air and

river pollution in Pyongyang and other cities rising.

We are striving to build a thriving socialist country.

The thriving country we are building is a country with great national strength, where the people are living without having any reason to envy others.

Such a country ought to provide its people with the best possible natural environment for their life and activities.

We should push ahead with environmental protection concurrently with the building of a thriving country, so that the people can live well, enjoying all the benefits provided by the best natural environment and by a socio-political and material life. Only such a country can be a thriving socialist one both in name and in reality.

Officials in every sector and unit of the national economy should be clearly mindful of the significance and importance of environmental protection, and should direct due attention and great efforts to this work, ensuring that all the people turn out as one to take part in it.

Since olden times our country has been known as the 3 000-*ri* land of golden tapestry with beautiful mountains and limpid rivers.

We should conduct land management and

environmental protection in a more effective manner so as to turn the beautiful land we have inherited from feudal times into an even more beautiful and rich land of the era of the Workers' Party, a socialist paradise that is an ideal place to live in.

This is the reason why, when I inspect People's Army units and give on-site guidance at factories, rural communities and scientific research institutes, I emphasize the need to plant trees in large numbers and lay out the surroundings in a proper way.

If we are to build our country into a socialist paradise that is more beautiful and better to live in through improved environmental protection work, it is necessary, first of all, to take comprehensive steps to prevent pollution.

Pollution constitutes a major source of contaminating the natural environment, causing various illnesses. Pollution prevention work is not merely a technical and businesslike undertaking, but important political work for the people, that is, work to protect and promote their lives and health.

We should direct great efforts to pollution prevention. In this way we can make ours a country that is free from pollution and ensure that our people lead a happy life in the best possible environment.

Of greatest importance in preventing pollution is completely eliminating air and water pollution.

Air and water are fundamental to our lives and activities; the existence of not only human beings but also all living things is inconceivable without them.

Fresh and clean air and water are a major guarantee of people's good health and longevity.

In order to prevent air and water pollution and protect the environment, it is necessary, above all, to take comprehensive steps for trapping harmful gases and dust at factories and enterprises, including thermal power stations and chemical factories, which emit large amounts of them.

Factories and enterprises should fit effective dust-capturing, airtight and ventilation devices to any equipment and production lines that give off harmful gases and dust.

We should never allow the health of workers and residents to be harmed as a result of a failure to deal with harmful gases and dust.

We can never tolerate such a thing, no matter the importance of what is being produced.

Comprehensive measures should be adopted to capture dust at factories and enterprises such as thermal power stations.

The Party has been stressing this for many years, but economic officials are still not very proactive about solving this problem, claiming that capturing dust costs vast sums of money.

As eliminating pollution is an important issue related to the protection of people's health and lives, even a million tons of gold is not too much to spend on this work.

We should not hesitate to install dust-capturing devices at factories and enterprises which release a lot of dust.

In towns, we should put an end to the practice of burning the fallen leaves from roadside trees and other kinds of waste.

Disposing of them carelessly by burning, regardless of the place, whether inside a town or not, can be described as a bad habit.

Things like fallen leaves should be removed out of the towns or used for producing manure; we should refrain from gathering them randomly and burning them.

Disposing of garbage and sewage from factories, enterprises and residential areas carefully is important in preventing air and water pollution and protecting the environment.

It is natural that the amount of garbage and sewage increases the more society develops and the more varied people's production activities and consumption become.

We should ensure that as little garbage and sewage is released as possible in the course of production activities and life, and should dispose of them promptly and carefully so as to prevent them from polluting the environment.

In order to dispose of garbage promptly, you should place various types of garbage bins in various places, remove them when they are full and replace them with empty ones.

It is an international trend to recycle waste and garbage at waste treatment factories and recycling factories, and to extract the raw materials from them.

Close attention should be directed to recycling waste and garbage and using them in production.

Strict measures should be adopted to treat industrial and urban sewage from factories, enterprises and residential areas.

All factories, enterprises, cities and counties should examine in detail the amount of sewage they produce and their capacity for treating it. Then they should increase their sewage treatment capacity in line with

the amount of sewage, and renovate the relevant facilities if necessary.

In particular, mines should build proper sediment basins and treat wastewater without fail so as to prevent ore dust and wastewater from flowing into the rivers and reservoirs and polluting water and environment.

In urban and housing construction, primary attention should be paid to building waterworks, sewage systems and sewage treatment facilities.

If the waterworks, sewage systems and sewage treatment facilities are poor, they may not only cause people inconvenience, but also pollute the rivers, lakes and seas.

A city can be called civilized only when it is free from pollution as it has been fully equipped with waterworks and a proper sewage system and sewage treatment facilities that function properly.

It is a principle to be adhered to in urban construction to give precedence to building a network of underground facilities for waterworks and sewage treatment.

Officials should work hard to improve waterworks and sewage and drainage systems, the sewage treatment facilities in particular, so as to prevent environmental pollution.

As far as the treatment of sewage from high-rise apartment blocks is concerned, it is better to provide a facility for a large individual skyscraper or just a few multi-storey apartment houses, rather than a general facility for all the apartment buildings in a certain district.

Close attention should be paid to preventing renovation projects at factories and enterprises from causing pollution.

Many factories and enterprises in our country are still using production lines and methods that lag behind technically and are unacceptable in the light of environmental protection.

In order to eliminate environmental pollution, we should remove such backward production lines and methods and introduce new technologies and production methods that do not discharge harmful gases and dust.

The Party ensured that the Sin Pho Hyang Iron Casting Workshop at the Ragwon Machine Complex was renovated. The renovated workshop can be called a model of environmental protection.

Since all the production lines at the workshop have been updated into modern ones controlled by computers, it is now possible to increase casting

several times over using small quantities of labour and electricity and to establish a cultured way of production and life at the highest possible level, free from harmful gases and dust.

Essentially, casting is highly polluting work. But the Sin Pho Hyang Iron Casting Workshop has been updated into a workshop that is free from pollution.

Dust-arresting devices were installed on the sand-recycling line, which can treat the dust and prevent its release.

In order to prevent environmental pollution, it is necessary, in distributing industries, to take environmental protection into consideration.

We should ensure that industry is not located carelessly without considering environmental protection.

Before the country's liberation, the Japanese imperialists installed industrial facilities mainly in towns or along the coast, where it was convenient for them to plunder and ship out Korea's natural resources and products.

Subsequently, economic officials in the past were preoccupied with cost and were not too concerned about factories and enterprises being rebuilt on their original sites.

This has a negative impact not only on the economic development of the country but also on environmental protection.

Factories and enterprises that discharge harmful gases or dust must not be located around towns or near residential areas.

Economic officials should not be obsessed with profit alone but make it an iron rule to take environmental protection into detailed consideration when building factories.

Of the existing factories and enterprises, those which may harm the people's health and living conditions by polluting the environment should be relocated outside towns and residential areas, or demolished.

Several years ago, the Party made a bold decision, and ordered the blowing up of the Nampho Smeltery which released a lot of harmful gases and dust.

Smelting is essential for the state, but the removal of the smeltery was highly rewarding because it got rid of the smell of gas, and the dust.

Since doing so helps to protect people's lives, the factories and enterprises which pollute the environment must be removed without fail.

Such is a people-oriented policy.

Provinces, cities and counties should build relief roads that do not pass through their centre.

These days the Party is constantly stressing the need for vehicles, as far as possible, not to use roads that pass through provincial, city and county centres and to make a detour. This is because it wants to prevent traffic congestion, but more importantly to ensure that the people do not suffer from noise and dust.

If trunk roads pass through provincial, city and county centres as they are doing now, at a time when the number of vehicles is constantly increasing, not only do they cause people inconvenience, but also they do not contribute to the ecological environment and cultural refinement of towns.

By building relief roads that do not go through provincial, city or county centres, we can ensure that people are living in a good environment free from noise and dust.

Special attention should be paid to environmental protection in Pyongyang.

As the capital city of our country, Pyongyang is densely populated and is the location of many state institutions and enterprises.

The water of the Taedong River flowing through the city is used as a source of drinking water for its

citizens and for industrial and irrigation purposes.

Therefore, protecting Pyongyang's environment properly and preventing the pollution of its air and rivers is of great significance in protecting and promoting its citizens' health and developing the country's economy.

That is why, whenever I have the opportunity, I stress the need to pay close attention to environmental protection in the city. Even so, there are still many problems that are arising in doing so.

When he was alive, President Kim Il Sung often emphasized that Pyongyang should be made a thickly wooded city, a city in a park that is free from pollution, and he ensured that many parks and pleasure grounds were built in the city. He never tolerated any practice of damaging these parks and pleasure grounds.

The parks and pleasure grounds in Pyongyang are permeated with the lifelong efforts and meticulous care the President paid to providing the people with a happy and cultured life.

We should add lustre to his exploits by taking good care of the parks and pleasure grounds.

In the future, we should erect as few buildings as possible in the central districts of Pyongyang and lay

out many parks and pleasure grounds instead.

In particular, we should maintain the principle of not constructing public buildings in the city's central districts.

We should ensure that the practice of destroying or damaging parks and pleasure grounds in order to build houses or public facilities does not occur.

We should see to it that many good species of trees are planted in Pyongyang's streets, parks and pleasure grounds so that the whole city is covered in green.

We should not allow out-of-date automobiles that emit a lot of exhaust fumes to drive in Pyongyang.

Exhaust fumes emitted by automobiles contain a lot of harmful gas which pollutes the air.

It is necessary to exercise rigorous control over out-of-date automobiles which emit a lot of exhaust fumes in Pyongyang.

Along with this, we should reduce the number of cars and encourage the people to use buses as much as possible in the city.

The cities, counties, institutions and enterprises located in Pyongyang and along the Taedong River should fully purify their sewage before discharging it into the river.

In the past we ensured that measures were adopted

to purify the toxic water produced in the course of developing film at a film development centre, which was then passed through tanks of live fish and finally discharged into the Taedong River, but only if no problem occurred among the live fish in the tank. If every factory, enterprise and hospital adopts such measures, the Taedong River can be protected from pollution.

We should direct great efforts to sprucing up the streets, parks and pleasure grounds in Pyongyang and prevent the city's atmosphere and the Taedong River from being polluted. By doing so we can build Pyongyang, the heart of our revolution, into a city in a park, both in name and in reality, where there is no air pollution but only thick green, and into a civilized city where it is better than any other city in the world to live in.

In addition, we should protect the country's overall ecological environment well.

We should make sure that, in launching any project for exploiting underground resources or building scenic spots, there is no practice of undermining the ecological environment.

When exploiting underground resources, we should make a detailed calculation of the impact on the

natural environment, along with the economic effectiveness.

The natural environment should not be destroyed in laying out a scenic spot, either.

A scenic spot should be laid out on the principle of fully preserving the beautiful natural environment in its original state.

In some countries, people are now having huge regrets due to how the natural environment has been spoiled by promoting tourism.

We should lay out scenic spots in our own way to ensure that no harm is ever done to the beautiful natural environment.

Full measures should be adopted across the nation to protect and increase the numbers of useful animals and plants.

Our country is rich in medicinal herbs such as wild insam, useful animals like deer and roe deer, and marine resources including trepang and sea tangle.

We should guard against the unrestricted hunting of useful animals and those under protection, as well as the random harvesting of marine resources including trepang, abalone and sea urchins, in violation of the state's laws and regulations.

Unless the work of protecting them is done

properly, valuable marine resources will be lost.

The reckless harvesting of the country's priceless resources without any concern for environmental protection is an expression of a lack of patriotism, and a grave criminal act.

Great efforts should be made to protect water resources.

It is being said around the world that the supply of water will be the most serious problem in the 21st century. We should act positively to protect and make sparing use of our country's abundant water resources.

I have been told that foreigners who visit our country are very envious of our abundant water resources.

People can live without crude oil but not without water.

However much the world economy may develop, humans will need water to survive, but not necessarily crude oil.

People are saying that the world of the future will be the world of water; I think this is quite feasible.

If we fail to economize on and protect our water resources, however abundant they may be in our country, not only will the water resources not be preserved but also the lives and activities of people

will be affected due to water pollution.

By always showing close concern for protecting the country's water resources and preventing water from being polluted, we can make more effective use of our rich water resources for economic development and people's livelihoods.

Of fundamental importance in the effort to prevent air and water pollution and protect the ecological environment by improving and strengthening environmental protection work, is the planting of large numbers of trees.

Recently, the sky has often been covered with dust during high winds, even when our country is not affected by yellow sand. This is mainly because our country does not have a rich covering of trees.

If large numbers of trees are planted on mountains and in fields, we can cover the country with green. In this way we can make its scenery more beautiful, prevent flooding and landslides, protect the air and water, and prevent damage from yellow sand and dusty winds.

If we identify tree-planting as a key task and push ahead with it persistently, the whole country will be covered with trees and flowers in the near future.

In spring and autumn the entire Party, the whole

army and all the people should turn out in the effort to plant many trees.

In particular, working people's organizations, including youth league organizations, should actively enlist in this undertaking.

If we are to plant large numbers of trees, we must establish a tree nursery in every city and county and raise good species of saplings by stages.

Only then can we proceed with tree planting on a regular basis.

We should ensure the satisfactory supply of the saplings needed for covering the whole country with trees and flowers.

It is important in tree planting to choose the right species.

A significant proportion of the trees on the mountains and in the fields in our country are of poor species.

There are many crooked pines on the mountains.

We should plant large numbers of trees, including acacia, which are good for protecting the environment, as well as Pyongyang poplars, dawn redwoods, larches, pine-nuts and ginkgoes which look good, grow fast and are of great economic value.

We should also work to find species of poplars and

willows which are free from insects and downy seeds, grow fast and are pleasing to look at, and widely propagate them.

Strong impetus should be given to creating groves of trees for burning, with the aim of supplying firewood to the local residents.

If we fail to supply them with fuel, a large-scale tree-planting project will be of no use, because the trees may be cut down for firewood.

President Kim Il Sung used to talk about creating groves of firewood, as I have also done several times, but this work is not proceeding as it should.

The land administration and forestry sectors and cooperative farms should work effectively to create groves of firewood as well as farm forests.

Along with planting trees, they must be properly protected.

The whole society is currently working to plant many trees, but they are not being properly protected and tended for their growth.

I have been told that as they are not tended properly after being planted, saplings are being eaten by goats in spring, and the trees are cut down during the grass-cutting campaign in summer and used for firewood in winter.

Therefore, however many trees may be planted, it is useless.

We should step up educational and control work so that people do not cut down trees at random.

Even if it means expanding the ranks of forest rangers, the work of protecting forests should be conducted properly.

We should work effectively to prevent forest fires.

In order to prevent valuable forests from being burnt to ash by fire, the national supervisory and control institutions should strengthen supervisory and control work over forest fires, and Party and working people's organizations should conduct scrupulous education on preventing forest fires among Party members and the other working people.

It is important in environmental protection not only to plant large numbers of trees but also to improve the rivers.

There are many rivers and streams, big and small, in our country, most of which are sharply inclined.

In the rainy seasons many hectares of farmland are washed away by flooding and the surrounding environment is damaged.

To conduct river improvement properly is important not only in developing the economy but also

in protecting water resources and securing people's safety.

Where necessary, river channels should be straightened, embankments built, anti-erosion projects launched and riverbeds dredged on a regular basis in order to prevent any flood damage.

And where necessary, dams should be built to generate electricity, make effective use of the water for irrigation and drinking, raise fish, and allow boating.

In order to effect a fresh turn in environmental protection, officials should have a correct viewpoint and attitude on this work.

Pollution is largely the result of the development of industry, but it is not impossible to prevent it.

However developed industry may be, if thorough measures are adopted, we can definitely prevent environmental pollution.

The point is what viewpoint and attitude our officials adopt for the benefit of the people.

Based on the viewpoint and attitude that eliminating pollution is an important undertaking that has a bearing on the health of the people, all officials, in whatever they do, should show close concern for environmental protection, make an issue of even the

slightest hint of pollution, and promptly adopt strict countermeasures.

Environmental protection is a gigantic undertaking for protecting the overall territory and environment of the country; every field and unit on the territory of the Republic is closely linked with this undertaking.

Hence, this undertaking cannot be carried out merely by the efforts of the officials in the environmental protection sector. It can be brought to a successful conclusion only when the entire Party, the whole army and all the people are mobilized to this end and take a close interest in it.

Always mindful of the fact that environmental protection is noble patriotic work for the prosperity of the country and nation as well as an important undertaking of everlasting significance for the coming generations as well as our generation, all officials, Party members and all the other working people should actively turn out in this work.

The People's Army should stand in the vanguard of environmental protection.

During my recent field inspection of People's Army units, I have learned that environmental protection in the areas surrounding the units is being done well.

The People's Army should not rest on its laurels

with this success, but conduct environmental protection in a more effective way, with society following suit.

It is necessary to develop scientific research work in the environmental protection sector.

This is the age of science and technology. Improving and strengthening environmental protection is inconceivable apart from the development of science and technology in this sector.

To keep abreast of current trends in environmental protection, the scientific research institutes in this sector should strengthen their research so as to promptly solve the scientific and technical problems that arise in developing environmental protection.

The ranks of scientists and technicians in the research field of environmental protection should be built up, and equipment, materials and reagents should be supplied in full so that they can discharge the important responsibility and mission they have assumed before the Party and the country.

Scientists and technicians, with a high sense of honour and pride in their work, should exert themselves in scientific research so as to present research findings of practical value. In this way they can make a tangible contribution to environmental

protection in the country.

Supervision and control over this undertaking should be tightened.

Environmental protection organs and supervision and control institutions should strengthen their supervision and control over the undertaking so that every field and unit in the national economy strictly observes the Party's policy-oriented requirements and state laws and regulations. If such practices as polluting or destroying the environment become evident, they should not overlook them, even the most insignificant, but should combat and rectify them promptly.

Along with this, they should exercise constant supervision and control over how organs and enterprises operate environmental protection facilities, after they have installed proper ones.

A strict pollution monitoring system should be established, and pollutants discovered promptly so that they can be eliminated.

We should conduct an overall examination of the laws and regulations pertaining to environmental protection. If necessary, we should amend some parts of them and stipulate new ones, in line with the demands of the developing reality.

Officials should thoroughly implement the Party's policies on environmental protection so as to bring about a fresh turn in this undertaking.

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