

DPRK REEMPHASIZES PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE INDUSTRIES

The North Korean online magazine 'Our Nation (uri minjokkiri)' emphasized on January 1 that development of national defense industries would be prioritized, stating that it was "the best way to move forward and harden a strong national defense while at the same time developing the entire economy."

In an article titled, "The Path to Economic Construction of the Military-first Era," the website reminded the reader of the goal of building a strong and prosperous nation by 2012, and stated that Kim Jong Il had said that building up the economy was the "main line of construction for the building of a Strong and Prosperous Nation." It went on, "Today's era is the era in which the national economic strength is determined by the amount of development of the national defense industries," and, "National defense industries are in a leading position, while the independent establishment of the core economic structure is necessary, and a strong economic base can be constructed."

The magazine emphasized, "The might of heavy industry can be further strengthened following the completion of the basis of the national defense industries, also ceaselessly developing light industry and agriculture." The article also stressed that as North Korea's national defense industries are at a comparatively high level internationally, matching that of the United States, and that the national economy overwhelming potential is easy to see.

The article noted that today's military competition between nations is practically scientific and technological competition, and, "strengthening of national defense in every way based on

science and technology, and establishing a framework of science and technology and deciding to quickly develop a strong and prosperous nation by focusing on science is really the path for building the economy in the Military-first Era.”

The magazine emphasized that this military-first era economic building plan was “truly for the people, and was the most civic path to prepare national economic strength for public services.”

“In accordance with changes in the political atmosphere and actual conditions, the amount of energy applied to building of national defense and economic construction, citizens’ livelihoods, or other realms could vary, but the true requirement of the building of the socialist economy is to ceaselessly raise the level of the livelihoods of the people, and ultimately, this goal can never waver.”