



NEW PYONGYANG MANAGEMENT LAW AIMS AT MODERNIZATION

North Korea has recently revised the Pyongyang City Management Law in order to support ongoing modernization efforts by increasing the management and operational authority of the Cabinet and of the State Planning Committee. On October 21, the Cabinet newspaper 'Minju Chosun' ran an article emphasizing the need to ensure that necessary capital and supplies were guaranteed for the construction of 100,000 new residences in Pyongyang and now it appears the North is backing up this modernization drive with the law.

The legal code was revised in accordance with Order No. 743, passed down by the standing committee of the Supreme People's Assembly on March 30 of this year, but was just recently made public in South Korea. What stands out in this newly revised law is that the central government has strengthened its hold on management and operations within the city.

Article 47 of the city management law states, "The Cabinet must naturally take control of and supervise Pyongyang management operations," and Article 48 stipulates that the State Planning Committee and the Pyongyang People's Committee establish and strictly follow detailed plans for each sector of management operations within the capital city. Article 47, of the former law (enacted on 26 Nov. 1998), which covered management projects within Pyongyang, was removed while five new articles were added. Article 17 covers housing construction, Article 27 covers management of street lighting, Article 43 covers the delivery of publications, Article 46 stipulates basic working conditions, and Article 51 guarantees that goods will be produced for Pyongyang markets.

Article 17 stipulates that "the construction of housing must be completely guaranteed," and Article 51 states that planning for and production of commercial goods for Pyongyang must be ensured "without fail." Housing, goods, electricity, capital and other necessities for the modernization of Pyongyang have now been essentially legally guaranteed. New housing in the capital has been a priority for the North, with construction already underway and plans for 30,000 additional units next year and 35,000 more in 2012. Article 27 calls for the "logical installation of street lights" to brighten walkways, roads, and national monuments. The new legal revision appears to be yet another step toward shoring up the framework for establishment of a 'Strong and Prosperous Nation' and transition of power to yet a third generation of Kims.



The new law reinforces Pyongyang's centrality in North Korea's revolutionary ambitions, referring to the capital as "the home of Juche," "the heart of the Korean people," and "the face of the nation."