

Life of the Pyongyangites As Seen by Foreigners

The people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are advancing with confidence towards the high goal of building a powerful socialist country in the face of international sanctions.

Many people of the world wonder how they live. Following is what those who have been to the DPRK say.

Russia's website *The Democratic People's Republic of Korea Today*, pointing out the striking contrast between what those who visited the DPRK said and what the Western media said, wrote: The level of their civilization and way of life are completely different from what the West talks about; in Pyongyang there are good and modern recreation grounds, parks, restaurants, theatres and cinemas, including the Munsu Water Park and Rungna People's Recreation Ground, and people enjoy a high standard of material and cultural life there; there are piles of goods that satisfy the demand of the customers in the department stores; the Korean people are paying deep attention to creation and innovation and have strong consciousness to develop the economy with their own efforts and technology.

A Singaporean e-newspaper wrote: If the journalists had not visited Pyongyang nor seen with their own eyes, they must not have believed that this is a city under harsh pressure and sanctions of the international community; its economy did not collapse but is achieving a high standard of urban development; the streets are full of vitality, and the life is normal, people laughing and speaking and children making merry and playing; over the last several years north Korea's economy has grown at high speed and urban construction is going on at great speed as well; Mirae Scientists Street and Ryomyong Street with modern and superhigh buildings look luxurious, dignified and vigorous and match with the aesthetic sense of the era; flourishing urban quarters, stores and shops that sell daily goods, clothes and foods are increasing in number with the development of the economy; even Western restaurants, bars and coffee houses can be found in Pyongyang; the journalists even visited a pizza restaurant in the city; this shows that the Korean

people are enjoying a good admirable life. They talked to Ri Ji Hyang, a 27-year-old researcher, in the restaurant; the woman said that life in Pyongyang is improving day by day with the government having built cultural facilities like water park and pleasure park to provide the citizens with full conditions for weekend rest, adding, “We, the Korean people do not care about the sanctions. We enjoy ourselves eating and drinking as usual.” When asked about her thought about the future, she said her hope was national reunification, prosperity, development of her work and successes in her family life. A 24-year-old student said: The current life is comfortable; houses are provided to the families; the government is providing people with education, medical treatment and others free of charge; I am not worried about money; I play tennis in the park in the weekends; after graduation, I would like to become a medical doctor to make contributions to the state.

The Cuban news agency Prensa Latina carried an article, titled, *Chollima Flying along the Snow-covered streets in Pyongyang*, describing the life of the Pyongyangites taking newly-made modern trolleybuses and tramcars: The citizens take new mass transport means, which were made by their own efforts and are economically very practical for they are fast, convenient with little noise and vibration and good brake; the word *Chollima* engraved in front of the trolleybuses means a horse flying with wings at high speed and symbolizes that the DPRK is developing rapidly.

The TV coverage of Pyongyang by the Beijing correspondent of France 2 TV surprised the media world with five million viewers. Many were surprised at the unimaginable reality of the DPRK while seeing the scenes of Pyongyang. The correspondent himself said he did not realize Pyongyang was such a wonderful city where home-made tramcars run along the streets, modern factories are being built and people enjoy modern civilization, despite sanctions, at wonderful bases of cultural and leisure activities, like the water park, Rungna People’s Recreation Ground, People’s Open-Air Ice Rink, May Day Stadium on Rungna Island on the Taedong in which a mass gymnastics and artistic performance performed by tens of thousands of persons was being staged.