

## **‘CHOSUN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRUST COMPANY’ HANDLING OVERSEAS BUSINESS FOR DPRK**

North Korea’s Chosun International Development Trust Company, founded less than four years ago, is quickly emerging as the center for all of North Korea’s overseas business transactions. This was made public in an article published in the September 18 edition of the Chosun Sinbo, the newspaper of the Jochongryeon, an organization representing the North Korean diaspora in Japan.

The newspaper introduced the trust as being involved in “business and trade dealings with other countries, investment trust activities, financial services and other activities,” while “raising the credit rating of related domestic enterprises through solid business practices and broadly and continuously expanding business transactions with foreign enterprises.” This trust was founded in April 2004, and handles import-export business and investment trust services, as well as financial services and other activities for foreign enterprises. The main imports of the trust are soybean oil and other foodstuffs, fertilizer, and farm-use products such as vinyl sheeting, which are high on the list of consumer demands within North Korea. The trust has set up an exchange market in the Botong River area of Pyongyang, and is responsible for providing production materials to the North’s businesses and farming towns.

This business also focuses on trust investment and financial services. According to the Chosun Sinbo, the trust is “solidifying economic utility and connecting domestic and international firms that are promoting positive prospective plans, guaranteeing and investing capital necessary for the development of national businesses.” The paper also explained that the trust “also provides

financial services, actively promoting the management of domestic enterprises.” According to the article, it appears that the Chosun International Investment Trust Company is receiving foreign capital and investing it in North Korea’s domestic businesses.

The trust seeks capital, particularly Chinese capital in Beijing and Jilin, and invests this foreign capital in the building and operating of a leaf tobacco processing plant, a hygienic products production plant, food processing facilities, automobile repair facilities, and other joint venture and cooperative venture projects.