

## **ECONOMIC FIELD TRIPS FOR NORTH KOREAN ELITE**

In the wake of Kim Jong Il's China visit last January, high-level North Korean administrators have been making their way toward the southern Chinese province of Guangdong, an area serving as a model for China's economic development and expansion. While details are thin, it appears that following Kim's trip, DPRK party and government officials have been touring the facilities and industries there previously inspected by Kim. Observers in Beijing say that up to now, efforts to develop North Korean-style economic reform measures integrating the Chinese model are being evaluated positively.

The most recent visit was by South Pyongang District Party Secretary Lim Hyung-eun. Lim led a Workers' Party delegation to Guangzhou, Guangdong Province on June 21, and talked with the Provincial Party Secretary. Secretary Zuo, who led a 'friendship' delegation from the Chinese Communist Party to North Korea in April, met with Lim in the five-star White Swan Hotel, where Kim had stayed during his January visit. During this meeting, Zuo explained the socio-economic development in Guangdong. Secretary Zuo stated that as Guangdong-North Korean cooperation and exchange continue to develop, this latest trip by the Workers' Party delegation further promoted bilateral relations.

At the beginning of June, Foreign Minister Baek Nam-soon toured both Guangzhou and Shenzhen, meeting with leaders such as Guangdong's assistant secretary of commerce, and the vice-mayor of Shenzhen. Baek was quoted during a discussion with Chinese leaders, "North Koreans receive a great deal of encouragement from Guangdong development," and "Shenzhen's development offers very good experience for North Korean economic building." Baek, who visited China before the DPRK long-range missile test issue developed, met with Premier Wen Jaibao and Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan.

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Kim's right-hand man Jang Sung-taek, the first director of the Workers' Party department of the working people's organization and capital construction, led a friendship delegation from March 18, and traveled to China, inspecting areas including Wohan, Guangzho, and Shenzhen. After avoiding the press for the first ten days of the visit, on March 27, Jang met with Beijing Party Secretary Liu Qi and made the statement, "This inspection was very beneficial, thanks to the efforts of the Chinese Party and government."

Jang's China trip and the concurrent DPRK economic and trade delegation's visit, headed up by North Korean Trade Minister Lee Yong-nam, to Guangdong and the adjacent areas such as Nanning and Vietnam's Ping Xiang. Chinese observers state that, while North Korea is not advancing quickly, by enlarging trade regions and economic and trade cooperation in border areas, North Korea is already implementing development strategies close to the Chinese model.

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