

Gen. Kim's Appointment as Defense Min, to Strengthen President's Grip on Military

By Oh Young-jin
Staff Reporter

Was it a spur of the moment decision or was the move calculated in advance?

These two contrasting views define the reactions of the military circle to the sweeping reshuffle of the top brass of the ROK Armed Forces, executed by President Kim Young-sam, which is highlighted by the appointment of Gen. Kim Dong-jin, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as defense minister.

The choice of Gen. Kim caught many inner circle military observers off guard.

Although the general, well versed in all aspects of military affairs from policy planning to field operations, had been on the shortlist of candidates for the position as defense minister, most observers considered him a long shot because of his stint as a field commander in the crackdown of the 1980 Kwangju uprising.

It was widely believed that Kim could be a political liability to the Chief Executive as the Kwangju issue, still a very emotional matter to residents of the Cholla areas, could spoil the final days of his presidency should he have miscalculated in picking Gen. Kim.

This view gained even more credibility as President Kim's administration enters a critical juncture with the most important event in his docket being next year's presidential election.

But by the same logic, the appointment of Gen. Kim for the highly visible post despite the political flak he could catch shows the confidence the Chief Executive has in the General.

After all the General's rise is very much tied with the incumbent administration. In a sweeping Yedidim

NEWS ANALYSIS

of the military establishment following his inauguration in 1993, the President wielded a major ax, retiring almost all key military postholders who were members of the "Hanahoe" fraternity headed by his predecessors (former generals-turned-president Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo) and appointing "untainted" Army officers.

The leader of this new breed of officer was none other than Gen. Kim, who lived up to his boss's expectations and has led the military establishment since in a clean and efficient manner.

A senior Defense Ministry official, who professed his surprise over the appointment, reasoned that the incumbent administration wanted to keep its firm grip over the military establishment during the waning days of its tenure.

"Thus, Gen. Kim, apparently the most reliable hand the President can count on, was brought in to the top defense post," he said on the premise of his personal opinion.

Although it is premature to predict the possible changes the new defense chief will implement, it is, widely believed that he will expedite the execution of military related projects that have been pigeonholed by his predecessors.

"There are few officers who know better than Gen. Kim about priorities of the Armed Forces," one Army colonel said. "He won the confidence of President Kim. So with that mandate in hand, he will get many unfulfilled jobs done."

As to Gen. Kim's yidety of the y.S., Korea's staunch aUjr and key partner in the joint endeavor to keep North Korea in check, hB is knbwh, td, be, on, good.

terms with U.S military officers but is expected to speak out to promote the country's interest in dealings with Washington, according to military observers.

Besides Kim, yesterday's reshuffle saw two four-star generals assigned to higher posts and the promotion of four three-star generals to four-stars.

Attracting keen attention was the appointment of Gen. Yoon Yong-nam, Army chief of staff, as JCS chairman and Gen. Do n-kyu, commander of the 3rd Army responsible for the defense of the western part of the country, as Yoon's successor.

This reshuffle, originally scheduled for early October but postponed due to the protracted search for the North Korean infiltrators, was almost a carbon copy of what was predicted.

One difference was the retirements of Gen. Cho Song-tai, commander of the 2nd Army which is assigned to defend the rear area of the country, and Gen. Oh Yong-u, commander of the 1st Army, which is responsible for the defense of the country's eastern flank. The two, both 1964 graduates of the Korea Military Academy, had enough "points" to be considered for promotions.

There was a rumor that Oh's early bowout was due to the infiltration of the North's commandos through Kangnung, an area which falls under his responsibility.

As for Gen. Yoon, some ventured to say that his fortunes significantly declined because of a string of accidents that beset the Army prior to the reshuffle. Yoon was almost cut of the picture, according to some military pundits, but obviously he overcame it with his promotion to JCS chairman: Yoon is from Pusan, President Kim's power base.

One in Five Korean Male Adults Alcoholic, NKP Lawmaker Claims

By Hong Sun-hee
Staff Reporter

Believe It or not, but one in five men aged over 20 is an alcoholic and the financial losses that result from their affliction are estimated at over 4,000 billion won a year, a ruling party lawmaker claimed yesterday.

Rep. Chong Ui-hwa of the New Korea Party, a member of the National Assembly Health-Welfare Committee, made the claim, referring to data from a Korea Institute of Health and Welfare survey done last year during the panel's inspection of the Health-Welfare Ministry's affairs.

Over 15 percent of people in their 20s rely on alcoholic beverages to an extent that is neuropsychiatrically abnormal. Such people accounted for 21.9 percent of those in their 30s, 26.1 percent

of those in their 40s, 21.3 percent of those in their 50s and 17.2 percent of those who are 60 years old or older, Rep. Chong quoted the government think tank's survey as indicating.

The respondents were asked to answer yes or no to four questions; "Have you ever made a promise of temperance?" "Have you ever been in trouble due to people criticizing you for drinking?" "Have you ever felt guilty or depressed because of alcoholic intoxication?" "Have you ever drunk again the next morning to get over a hang-over?"

Those who answer yes to two or more of these questions are defined as alcoholics according to the norms of neuropsychiatry.

According to Rep. Chong, a medical doctor himself, there were at least 3.29 million alcoholics in Korea at the end

of 1995, 3.3 times more than in Brazil 2.5 times more than in Sweden and 1.2 times more than in the United States.

Alcoholism in the U.S. results in financial losses of 70 billion dollars a year, indicating that in Korea, when relevant factors are taken into account, the losses probably reach 4,144.7 billion won, he said.

Over the past three years, drinking groups who are adults were slightly down while those who drink everyday rose slightly from 6.3 percent to 6.9 percent. In particular, people given to such drinking in their 20s were up from 1.5 percent to 3.4 percent.

Thus, campaigns to root out alcoholism and to introduce sound drinking patterns should be staged nationwide on a government level, the lawmaker said.

Witnesses Say Paratroopers Fired at Demonstrators First in Kwangju

A former reporter from the national daily Dong-A Ilbo told the court yesterday that paratroopers opened fire on demonstrators and did not even issue any warnings beforehand during the military's suppression of the Kwangju democratic uprising in May 1980.

Testifying during the third hearing of the appeal trial of the 1979-1980 military coup perpetrators, Kim Yong-taek, former correspondent in Kwangju from the daily, said that he saw ammunition distributed to paratroopers positioned at the plaza of the Cholla-namdo provincial government office at around 10 a.m. May 21 prior to hearing gunshots.

He even said that he saw some paratroopers rushing to the rooftops of nearby buildings and firing on demonstrators.

His remarks are in sharp contrast with the testimony by several colonels of airborne battalions who testified in the last hearing of the appeals trial at the Seoul District Court that demonstrators fired first at martial law forces and they had to respond in kind just "for self-defense."

Kim is one of the five witnesses who testified about the standoff and exchange of gunfire between paratroopers and demonstrators, which claimed the lives of more than 200 people and wounded about 2,000 others.

Lee Yang-hyon, one of victims of the military crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations in the southwestern city, said that he took the first gunshots as coming from M-16 rifles, the then main weapon of paratroopers, on May 21, 1980.



Korea Times
Tanks roll onto a pontoon bridge set up by a joint team of ROK Army and U.S. military engineers in a river-crossing exercise at the Han River in southeastern Seoul Thursday.

Gov't Steps Up Efforts to Reduce Foodwaste

The Environment Ministry is preparing to step up efforts to help reduce foodwaste, the disposal of which is one of the environmental authorities' biggest problems.

The more than 750 institutions which provide meals for more than 100 million people a day will be required to "tighten" and reduce foodwaste. At present only institutions which feed 2,000 or more people a day are required to do this.

More than 2,630 restaurants with floor space of 330 square meters (100 pyong) or more will also be subject to stricter control of the food they dispose of, according to a ministry spokesman.

Other steps in the intensive campaign to reduce foodwaste include the introduction of fees at some 47 large wholesale agricultural and fisheries markets for the disposal of their waste. Such fees are at present imposed on the wholesale market in Karak-dong, Seoul.

The ministry will also promote the installation of composting plants at apartment complexes and hundreds of tourism parks in rural areas as well as in military units.

The ministry is seeking to have all low-echelon local administrations install composting and other plants to

transform foodwaste into fertilizer by 2001.

As an initial step, three pilot composting plants costing 2 billion won will be installed. With the installation of such plants, the ministry eyes the recycling and reutilization of 800 tons of foodwaste produced per day by 2001.

Besides the steps to increase the installation of composting plants, the ministry, in an alliance with civic groups, will step up campaigns to encourage people to eat up all the food on their plates at home and restaurants.

The average Korean generates an average 0.34 kilograms of foodwaste a day, far more than in Britain and Germany, where the corresponding figure is 0.26 kilograms and 0.27 kilograms, respectively.

Univ. of Victoria Signs Exchange Agreements With Hanyang Yonsei

The University of Victoria in western Canada signed exchange agreements with Hanyang University and Yonsei University.

The agreement with Hanyang University provides for student exchanges, joint research projects and the possibility of professional exchanges and other initiatives of mutual benefit.

The accord with Yonsei University is initially for student exchanges but it also provides for future exchanges of faculty and joint research programs.

Dr. David Strong, president of the university, heads a visiting delegation in the signing of these agreements and also seeks further strengthening of its academic ties with Korea.

UVic is a Canadian leader in "cooperative education", combining study with work experience. Last year, nearly 2,500 students from 37 University departments completed co-op work

teams in 28 countries around the world.

It has 65 international agreements with other institutions around the world, providing the opportunity for faculty and students to immerse themselves in the culture of another country while they teach or study at its institutions.

Over the past year, several senior executives of LG, limited, have come to UVic to participate in personalized language and business programs.

In a step to expand its campus activities worldwide, the delegation will also visit Korea University, Sogang, Doksung and Chungbuk National University in Chungju where an agreement is being signed with their engineering faculty.

The delegation, in addition to the president, includes the university's acting dean of continuing studies, dean of fine arts and dean of business.

Hong Kong Prof. Wong Trying to Start Korean Language Program

By Kate Wiltrott

People in Hong Kong have a lot on their minds. They could be forgiven for being a little self-absorbed right now less than nine months before becoming citizens of communist China.



Prof. Wong

But that's not the case, at least for Professor Wong Siu-lun. Wong, the new director of the Center of Asian Studies at the University of Hong Kong, is in Seoul this week to drum up support for a Korean language program at his school at the invitation of the Korea Press Center.

"We really have a lack of knowledge about what's happening in Korea," Wong said in an interview on Thursday. So for the first time in 25 years, Wong came to Korea to see for himself what's going on in this "forgotten" country.

The continued development of South Korea is most important," Wong said. "And North Korea is one of the major danger spots. Should things happen in a violent, unexpected way, all die talk about the Asian Century would go up in smoke."

Students in Hong Kong want to learn Japanese and English, the international languages of economics. But Wong insists that Asians need to know other Asian languages if the region is to prosper.

Though Hong Kong citizens are spending a lot of energy wondering what will happen as the July 1 deadline approaches, Wong insists it is more important to concentrate on

Hong Kong's long-term survival. He says the self-analysis spurred on by the reversion to Chinese rule has turned eyes outward as the city reflects on its future identity.

"There is an awareness that it's essential for us to diversify and look out toward the Asian region," he said while overlooking the expanses of Seoul from the top of the Seoul Press Center.

Wong is hopeful his center will eventually produce the kind of scholarship he sees at Korean universities, where professors examine the links between Hong Kong, Korea and Taiwan in an economic and democratic context. The professor hopes to have visiting Korean professors at the university as early as 1997 and a full-fledged program running by 1998.

Korea has a symbolic meaning for Hong Kong, Wong said, because the embargo placed on China during the Korean War forced Hong Kong to expand its manufacturing sector. Both countries underwent civil unrest and then massive industrializing in the last 25 years.

And Wong said he senses a similar dynamic here as on the streets of Hong Kong: outward self-confidence masking deep-seated anxiety about the future.

"Psychologically, we have been preparing for [1997]," Wong said. "We know that everybody else is watching. There is so much at stake. The Chinese government knows this, too."

But you can't feel the tension on the streets of Hong Kong, he said. He was initially surprised that Korea is the same way.

"From what I read, I thought people would be very tense about the situation with the north, the student riots," he said. "But being here I've seen that it's calmer. People are going about their business."

New Tourism Magazine, 'Asian Traveler,' Published

A new bi-monthly international magazine, Asian Traveler, mainly covers the tourism industry in Asia but also showcases interesting travel spots in the region.

Publisher Lee Min-hwan says, "The underlying objective of the magazine is to introduce to readers worldwide the many beautiful facets of Asia, such as nature, culture, travel spots and tourist attractions."

Asia, whose tourism industry is rapidly growing, needs a medium through which its tourism resources can be publicized in a fun-filled and highly informative manner, while pro-

viding light and entertaining coverage of the travel trade."

In its special feature section, the September/October 96 issue of Asian Traveler sheds light on some of the finest hotels of the Asia-Pacific region, including the Oriental Bangkok, one of the world's most renowned and respected hotels.

Each and every issue of the magazine provides in-depth coverage of one country destination. The latest September/October 96 issue is a special issue on Korea, introducing Seoul, Kyongju, Sokcho and other travel destinations in the country.

The issue is available at Korea's major bookstores. For more information, call (02) 264-2841/2.

Six People Killed in 4 Vehicle Rear-End Crash on Expressway

Six people were killed and 25 others were seriously injured in a series of rear-end collisions involving three trucks and an express bus on the Kyongju Expressway early yesterday morning in Chonan, Chungcheong-nam-do.

The accident took place at about 4:50 a.m. on the expressway near Chonan Rotary, 87.2 kilometers south of Seoul, when an 11-ton truck, an express bus and two other vehicles hit each other one after another from behind.

Those who were killed were all passengers of the Hanil Co. express bus bound for Seoul.

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Weather Forecast

TODAY

Cloudy skies and slight rains are expected across the country. Early morning lows will be 5 to 14° C (41-57°F) and midday highs, 13 to 18° C (55-64°F).

Sunrise: 6:43 a.m.
Sunset: 5:51 p.m.

Seoul: Cloudy, rain
11°C (52°F) / 16°C (61°F)
Pusan: Cloudy, rain
14°C (57°F) / 18°C (64°F)
Taegu: Cloudy, rain
12°C (54°F) / 18°C (64°F)
Kwangju: Cloudy, rain
13°C (55°F) / 17°C (63°F)
Taejeon: Cloudy, rain
9°C (48°F) / 16°C (61°F)
Chuncheon: Cloudy, rain
7°C (45°F) / 15°C (59°F)
Kangnung: Cloudy, rain
13°C (55°F) / 16°C (61°F)
Cheju: Cloudy, rain
14°C (57°F) / 20°C (68°F)

TOMORROW

Skies will be partly cloudy. Early morning lows of 4 to 15° C (39-59°F), midday highs 14 to 22° C (57-72°F).

Sunrise: 6:44 a.m.
Sunset: 5:50 p.m.

Seoul: Partly cloudy
8°C (46°F) / 17°C (63°F)
Pusan: Cloudy to clear
12°C (54°F) / 20°C (68°F)
Taegu: Cloudy to clear
10°C (50°F) / 21°C (70°F)
Kwangju: Cloudy to clear
11°C (52°F) / 19°C (66°F)
Taejeon: Partly cloudy
6°C (43°F) / 18°C (64°F)
Chuncheon: Partly cloudy
4°C (39°F) / 16°C (61°F)
Kangnung: Generally cloudy
11°C (52°F) / 15°C (59°F)
Cheju: Cloudy to clear
15°C (59°F) / 22°C (72°F)

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