

WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

KIM JONG IL

LET US BUILD OUR COUNTRY INTO A BEAUTIFUL LAND OF THE AGE OF THE WORKERS' PARTY THROUGH EFFECTIVE FOREST AND WATER CONSERVATION

**Talk to Senior Officials of the Party,
the State and the Army
*March 6, Juche 91 (2002)***

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We should conduct forest and water conservation vigorously as a nationwide and all-people drive in spring and autumn, the periods of general mobilization for land administration, and in the seasons suitable for planting trees.

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung, saying that forest and water conservation is an important part of the foundations of the country, made sure that great efforts were directed to preserving the rivers and forests after liberation. Soon after the country's liberation he planted trees on Munsu Hill, and turned the first sod of the Pothong River improvement project. These signalled the start of a new history of forest and water conservation in our country. Under his wise leadership, our people effectively conducted forest and water conservation by covering with trees the mountains, which had been deforested by the plundering Japanese imperialists and scorched by US imperialist bombs, improving rivers and streams and spreading the irrigation network across the country.

But our officials were not persistent with forest and water conservation, and as a consequence the number of trees on mountains has gradually decreased, forests

have deteriorated and rivers and streams have lost their beauty. Worse still, with the country's economic situation getting more and more difficult owing to the isolate-and-suffocate schemes of the imperialists and severe natural calamities that hit the country for several consecutive years, some people cut trees at random and reclaimed hillsides for tillage. This led to many mountains and hills being stripped bare, and the beds of many rivers rising with the depositing of earth, sand and gravel. This is why, for some years now, I have underlined the importance of conserving forests and water at every opportunity, including during my field guidance. Since then, the work of planting trees and improving rivers and streams has been conducted vigorously, but the work of forest and water conservation is yet to reach the level demanded by the Party. The entire Party, the whole army and all the people should turn out as one to conduct forest and water conservation more vigorously.

Forest and water conservation is a noble, patriotic undertaking for people's well-being and the country's prosperity and an everlasting nature-transforming project.

Our country has many mountains and rivers. Most mountains are stony and the soil is shallow. Moreover,

the rivers are sharply inclined and their currents are swift. If they are not properly conserved, even a small amount of flooding or drought may cause damage. Only when mountains are thickly forested, rivers and streams are improved, and soil erosion control is effective can the land of the country be conserved, the lives and property of the people protected and the mountains and rivers become more beautiful and bountiful.

From olden times, our country has been called a land of golden tapestry because its mountains and rivers are beautiful and it has abundant natural resources. We should turn this land on which our nation has lived through generations into a socialist earthly paradise, a beautiful land of the age of the Workers' Party, which is beautiful and abundant in everything, by better conserving and sprucing them up in our time. Such is the plan and determination of the Party at present in this respect.

All Party organizations and officials, fully aware of the Party's plan and intention, should conduct forest and water conservation properly, so as to bring about a fresh upsurge in building the country into a socialist earthly paradise, a beautiful land of the age of the Workers' Party.

Above all, great efforts should be made to plant trees and take care of them.

Forests are precious resources of the country and a valuable asset for the prosperity of the country and happiness of the people. It is only when we plant trees in great numbers and thus create thick forests that we can increase the natural resources of the country, transform the appearance of the land and provide the people with excellent living conditions and environment.

The leader said long ago that mountainous regions should exploit mountains properly. What he meant is that forests should be created in mountainous areas to make effective use of them in developing the economy and improving the people's standard of living. If forests are created widely and they are put into effective use in our country, a large area of whose territory is mountainous, many problems can be solved in developing the country's economy and improving the people's standard of living.

Our Party has advanced a policy of covering the whole country with forests and flowers by launching forest planting in a fresh way in the 2000s. We should implement the Party's policy to the letter and thus cover the mountains across the country with green

forests in the same way as is shown in the feature film *Forests Sway*.

The most important thing in covering the whole country with forests and flowers is to plant trees of superior species.

At present, many mountains are sparsely covered with trees, and even if they are covered with vegetation this is mainly shrubs and such crooked trees as pine trees which cannot be used as timber. Even though there are a large number of such trees, they cannot bring great economic benefit. If we cut down such trees and plant trees of superior species in their places, we can enjoy their benefit 10 or 20 years later. Man must conquer nature; he must not become its slave. Indiscriminate felling ruined many forests in the days of the Arduous March. If the trees felled then were of inferior species, then it is not a loss. We should plant trees of superior species in large numbers in their places in order to turn the misfortune into a blessing.

The species of the trees should be improved in conformity with the realities of the present era. When I visit famous forests and old trees in various places, including scenic spots and historical sites, the guides say proudly that this tree was planted in the days of

Koryo and that tree was planted in the days of the Ri Dynasty, in addition to extolling the superiority of those trees. It is a similar case with other countries. We should select and plant good species in reflection of the features of our era, the Juche era.

In our country there are many useful species of trees, such as larch, acacia, poplar, pine-nut and ginkgo. We should plant these trees in large numbers so that they can make practical contributions to the prosperity of the country and the nation. We should create forests for obtaining timber, fibre, oil and fruits in order to hand down to posterity mountains which are thickly forested and which produce “gold” and “treasure.” In other words, one must live not merely for today but for tomorrow. When conducting the work of planting forests and covering the whole country with forests and flowers, we should do it with a long-term plan for the coming generations, with an eye to the distant future.

Species of trees should not be designated at random for planting on the plea that trees of useful species are being given priority. Biological features vary according to the species of trees, and climatic and natural features vary according to areas. Many of the mountains in our country are stony and the soil is

shallow. They are also acidified because many coniferous trees have grown there for a long time. Trees, however good the species are, should not be forced to be planted at random. As the principle of sowing the right crop on the right soil is observed in farming, the principle of planting the right tree on the right soil should be observed in planting trees.

Acacia is most suitable to barren and acidified land. It is very good for protecting the environment, grows fast and is tenacious. Because its roots have a bacterium that assimilates atmospheric nitrogen, it grows well even on barren land, and a thick forest of acacias may be formed in a few years. The tree is good not only for enriching the soil but for protecting it from being acidified. It can be used as firewood and as a material for construction and furniture making as well, because the wood is hard and highly resistant to moisture. It is counted as a tree of a good species worldwide because it is favourable for beekeeping for the high content of pollen in its flowers. The tree is useful for breeding such domestic animals as goats, sheep and rabbits, because it is not infested with insects and its leaves contain much protein. I am told that thornless acacia, which is being planted in our country in recent years, grows fast and is good for

timber production and as a roadside tree. If the lower part of the tree is trimmed and the upper part is made in the shape of an umbrella, it will be pleasing to the eye. We should spread the thornless acacia widely.

Recently I have stressed on several occasions that acacias should be planted on a large scale. We should inform cadres, Party members and other working people of the Party's intention of making acacia a tree of Korea so as to ensure that the entire Party, the whole nation and all the people rise up to plant and cultivate the tree.

Trees of inferior species in the recreation grounds and along the roads should be replaced with superior species.

As I said previously, the trees on Mt Taesong are not diverse in variety, and their species are not good, either. Most of the trees growing on the southern slope of the mountain with a recreation ground are pine trees, which do not grow tall. Dwarf-pine trees and other species that do not grow tall and are inferior should be replaced with superior species. We should replace the trees on Mt Taesong with trees of superior species so as to enhance its beauty. The mountains along the road to Kangdong are also covered mainly with dwarf-pine trees; they should also be replaced

with superior species as suited to the local features. Pine trees remain crooked even after scores of years, so it is advisable to leave those trees in certain historical places, like Mangyongdae, Ponghwa-ri, Mausoleum of King Tongmyong and Mt Kungang, and replace those in other places with other species gradually.

When planting trees along the roads, the species should be designated according to the nature of the roads and their surroundings.

Fruit trees should be planted in the hills near villages and around the houses in the countryside. At the moment, we cannot find many fruit trees around the houses in the rural areas. In the past, I would hear such expressions as “pear-tree house,” “house in front of a pear tree” and “house at the back of a pear tree,” but it is difficult to hear such expressions these days. We should make sure that fruit trees are planted in the yards of the rural houses so that these expressions are revived. If fruit trees are planted in the yard of a rural house, they are useful in various ways; they are pleasant to the eye, the family can eat the fruits, and farmers can take a rest in their shade after field work in the sweltering summer days. The leader said that each rural household should plant five or more fruit

trees around the house, and the whole countryside should unfold a campaign to plant fruit trees around houses. When a house is built in the countryside, five or more fruit trees should be planted around the house without fail.

Chestnut trees should be planted in great numbers at the foot of mountains. At the moment the number of these trees is small because they were not taken good care of in the past. From olden times the Songchon Chestnut and Kumya Large Chestnut have been famous in our country. Previously, the Youth League planted chestnut trees and took good care of them, designating groups of them Children's Union forests and League of the Socialist Working Youth forests, but now it seems it is not organizing the work properly. The leader said on several occasions that roasted sweet potatoes and chestnuts should be sold in many places in Pyongyang. But now it seems that there is no place that sells roasted chestnuts there. Chestnut trees should be planted in great numbers so that roasted chestnuts can be sold in various parts of Pyongyang.

Trees should be planted in an effective way. Among the trees that were planted, there are many that have died because they were not planted with the care demanded by the technical regulations. Among the

trees planted in spring, some might die or some might be unpleasing to the eye; those trees should be replaced in autumn. But this is not the case now. We should not merely pay lip-service to planting trees, but conduct the work in a scrupulous way. Every tree should be planted with care by digging a hole for it as required by the technical regulations and watering it conscientiously.

Needle-leaved trees and broad-leaved trees should be planted in combination in planting trees and creating forests. Then, the trees grow well and the soil can be protected from being acidified.

When planting trees in the mountains, they should be planted densely. If young trees are planted sparsely, forests cannot be created in a short period of time. Densely planted trees can be thinned out after they have grown to a certain height.

When transplanting seedlings, those that are too young should not be transplanted. If seedlings are grown to a certain height for some years in nurseries and transplanted, they will grow quickly, creating thick forests and bringing benefit to us in a few years.

In order to cover the whole country with trees and flowers at the earliest date, we should solve the problem of seeds and seedlings.

As this is an important problem, the Party has taken measures for importing seeds and seedlings of trees of superior species and stopping export of tree seeds like pine nuts, which conform to our country's climatic and natural features. The tree seeds necessary for covering the whole country with trees should be put under the control and management of the Ministry of Land and Environment Protection to be used for the production of tree seedlings. Seeds and seedlings of trees that are said to be superior worldwide should be imported to be spread across the country.

Nurseries should be built well and produce healthy seedlings.

Producing seedlings is the first stage in covering the whole country with trees. Though there are nurseries in cities, counties and several other units now, they are not fully meeting the demands for seedlings. This being the situation, some units, when they are told to plant trees in tree-planting seasons, transplant the trees from the mountains. It should not be done in that way. If the trees die after transplantation, it will do more harm than good. Tree-planting should be done by way of cultivating tree seedlings of superior species in nurseries and transplanting them. Provinces, cities, counties and

other relevant units should build up nurseries and produce healthy seedlings in large numbers by cultivating them properly in accordance with the Party's policy of covering the whole country with trees and flowers.

While creating forests on an extensive scale by planting many trees, we should protect and tend the forests with care.

Above all else, the newly-planted trees should be cultivated well. After planting them, we should direct constant attention to them, manuring and watering them and clearing grass and shrubs from around them. In the places dense with grass and shrubs, young trees, including those that demand sunlight, may die or be prevented from growing properly.

The practice of felling trees at random should be eliminated. Such a practice is an illegal act that damages precious assets of the country and the people. A strong discipline and order should be established whereby even one tree may only be felled after the approval of the organ concerned is obtained and may only be felled in the place approved. Young trees must never be felled. Only mature trees should be felled, for if they are not cut down, their trunks get hollow and they become useless. By forest conservation, we do

not mean purposeless forest conservation. As the leader said, the principle of planting ten trees after felling one tree should be observed strictly.

In order to eliminate the practice of felling trees indiscriminately, the problem of fuel should be solved by creating large areas of firewood forests. The decrease of the number of trees in mountains in recent years is related, to a considerable extent, to the fact that the people were not supplied with fuel in sufficient amounts. Every cooperative farm has its own forest of more than one hundred hectares, but this has not proven its real worth as a result of poor management. Cooperative farms should solve the problems of farming materials and firewood of the farmers by creating and managing their forests in a proper way. I have already given instructions that the land administration sector should create firewood forests of 600 000 hectares and the forestry sector 200 000 hectares—800 000 hectares in all; this work should be carried out with persistence. In addition, measures for solving the problem of coal for civilian use should be taken. Provinces, cities, counties, factories, enterprises and cooperative farms should manage their own coal mines effectively. In this way we can decisively solve the problem of fuel for the

people. Without providing the people with sufficient amounts of fuel it will be of no avail to call upon them to protect forests and not to fell trees.

The most important thing in conserving forests is to prevent forest fires. Party and working people's organizations should conduct the educational work for preventing forest fires among their members in an effective way, while the organs of land conservation and administration should strengthen surveillance and control over forest fires so as to ensure that the precious mountains of our country are not ravaged by forest fires.

Forestry science should be developed for covering the whole country with trees and flowers.

This is an era of science and technology, so the work of planting trees and creating forests can achieve success only when it relies on science and technology. In the past, our officials paid little attention to developing forestry science; as a consequence, the science of forestry in our country is behind the other branches of science.

Forestry science research institutions and botanical gardens should be built up and their role enhanced for a fresh upsurge in forestry science. As solving the seed problem is the main thing in the field of

agricultural, stockbreeding and fish-farming sciences, so it is in the field of forestry science. Efforts should be made to develop species of trees which have economic value and are suitable to the climatic and natural features of our country, and spread them quickly. In order to cover the whole country with forests, it is important not only to plant trees in large numbers but to make them grow quickly. So, studies are needed to this end. There may also be many problems to solve in creating and managing forests.

Botanical gardens should cultivate the trees sent by the Party, including all species of fruit trees, in a scientific way, study methods of raising various trees and conduct vigorously the work of spreading the seedlings of trees of superior species throughout the country by producing them in large numbers. For this, competent botanists should be assigned to the botanical gardens in the capital and provinces, and a proper work system should be established for the botanical gardens.

Rivers and streams must be improved, and water should be used in an effective way.

As mountains are stripped of trees, earth and sand trickle down from them if it rains, causing landslides and a great deal of deposits on riverbeds. Take the

Chongchon for example. This river was deep in the past, but it has become so shallow that people can wade across it. The name of the river apparently meant that the water is clear and deep; now it has become shallow, its width narrowed at some points, and stones and sand exposed on the riverbed are not pleasing to the eye. If the river overflows in the present conditions, it may damage the nearby farmlands. At the same time as planting many trees on mountains, we should improve rivers, thus adding beauty to the scenery and preventing flood damage. Where necessary, river channels should be straightened, and embankments and retaining walls built. Bank-protecting tree belts should also be created and riverbeds dredged on a planned and regular basis. Afforestation for erosion control should be done in a proper way to prevent earth and stones flowing into rivers and landslides, and facilities for protecting rivers should be kept in a good state of repair.

Water resources should be protected and used in an effective way.

Water is a precious asset of the country, as it is essential to man's life. Not only man but also every other organism on the earth cannot live without water. Man must take water to live. He can live without oil,

but not without water. But our people do not know how valuable water is. At present, water has become a serious problem throughout the world. I am told that the earth is drying up in our country, too, probably because of crustal movements. From now on we should economize on water and protect water resources.

Dams should be built on rivers and streams to conserve water for irrigation and industry, and for power plants and fish farms for the production of electricity and freshwater fish.

Jongphyong County, South Hamgyong Province, is exemplary in controlling rivers and making effective use of water. In the past the county built several reservoirs and did farming by using water from them. Now the whole county is stepping up the construction of a large-scale dam across the Kumjin River, and the work is in the final stage. When the project is completed, thousands of kilowatts of electricity can be generated. If power stations are built in tiers downstream, they can produce more electricity than the county needs. In the past when the river flooded, the lower parts of Jongphyong County along the river were submerged. But when the project is completed, the county will become completely free from the

threat of floods. The local people say that they will enjoy themselves singing the praises of the benevolence of the Party on a tour boat on the beautiful lake when the dam is built.

We are putting great efforts into the Kaechon-Lake Thaesong waterway project, and it is nearing completion. In the past we built several dams on the Taedong River, thus turning it into a large lake and protecting the Taedong River basin, including Pyongyang, from floods. When the gravitational waterway project is completed, the river will be used more effectively for the economic development of the country and the happy life of the people, and the local landscape will become more beautiful.

Forest and water conservation should be conducted as an all-people drive. As the scale of the tasks is enormous, they cannot be done by a few people in the field of land and environment conservation. All the people should turn out as one in the efforts to plant trees on mountains and fields and improve rivers. Moreover, as tree-planting should not miss the season, all sectors, all units and all people should be mobilized to plant trees in the tree-planting season. In this season soldiers as well as civilians should be enlisted to plant trees, and soldiers should take the lead in this drive as

in other undertakings. Soldiers and civilians should pool their efforts and help each other to make the country and their living places more beautiful.

All units in all fields of the national economy which are conducting the Three-Revolution Red Flag Movement should conduct it in close combination with planting trees and improving rivers. During my field guidance I have found that many factories and enterprises have established a cultured way of production and living, but the mountains in their vicinities are only sparsely covered with trees. Apparently, our people's view is one-sided. Tree planting should be a must for winning the Red Flag; the flag should not be conferred on those units that have failed to scale the target for tree planting.

If forest and water conservation is to be conducted as an all-people drive, all Party members and other working people should be assimilated to socialist patriotism. Socialist patriotism is genuine patriotism which links love for the country with love for its socialist system. Socialist patriotism finds expression in loving every tree and every blade of grass in the socialist country, as well as loving one's family, workplace and native place. Party and working people's organizations should intensify ideological

education and assimilate all the Party members and other working people to socialist patriots so that they will turn out as one to make their country, their motherland, more prosperous and beautiful, cherishing ardent love for their socialist country.

Success in forest and water conservation depends on the view and attitude senior officials of all sectors and units, including provinces, cities and counties, take when organizing and promoting this undertaking. They should improve the mountains and rivers in their respective areas with determination by formulating a bold and ambitious plan as required by the new century. They should make a detailed calculation of the areas to be planted with trees, the size of nurseries, the amount of labour needed, the number of rivers and streams to be improved and the kinds and amounts of the materials needed to improve them to implement the Party's policy. They should draw up detailed plans on an annual basis and carry them out without fail. Forest and water conservation is a challenging and enormous undertaking, but it can surely be carried out if officials organize the work to the minutest detail and motivate the masses. Machinery and oil are needed in large amounts for improving the layout of the land, but they are not needed badly in planting trees on mountains. If

officials, through efficient organizational work, have nurseries built, healthy tree seedlings grown and the seedlings transplanted by mobilizing the masses, this is all that is needed.

The sense of responsibility and role of the Ministry of Land and Environment Protection should be enhanced for a fresh upturn in forest and water conservation.

The ministry has assumed before the Party and people the very important mission of guiding in a unified way land development and management and the protection and management of the resources and environment of the country. In its effort to intensify land and environment conservation, the Party had a ministry in charge of this field set up under the Cabinet. This ministry should undertake its work in a responsible way in line with the Party's intention. What is most important here at the present time is to plant trees in large numbers, so it should vigorously push ahead with this true to the Party's policy.

While formulating a long-term plan for overall land and environment conservation throughout the country and pushing it ahead vigorously, the ministry should guide its subordinate units and their officials to work in a responsible way. In particular, it should ensure

that forest rangers protect the forests effectively.

The forest and water conservation we are undertaking is significant not only for protecting the land and the people's lives and property by merely planting trees on mountains and improving rivers and streams; it is an important undertaking to improve the appearances of the mountains and rivers of the country which were won back thanks to the leader as befit those of a socialist country both in name and in reality. While the land realignment, which is being vigorously pushed ahead in accordance with our Party's far-sighted plan, is an undertaking to change the appearance of the land as befits that of socialist Korea, forest and water conservation is an undertaking to improve the appearances of mountains and rivers too as befit those of socialist Korea. If the appearances of mountains and rivers along with that of the land are improved as appropriate to a socialist country our motherland will become a truly beautiful socialist country which is good to live in.

I expect that all the officials and other people will turn out as one during the period of general mobilization for land management and the tree-planting seasons and conduct the work of planting trees on mountains and improving rivers and streams

vigorously holding up the slogan, “Let us make our own mountains, rivers and native places more beautiful!” thus bringing about a revolutionary upturn in forest and water conservation.

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