

韩国核武器特使访华

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韩国核武器磋商者周四抵达中国协商随着朝鲜民主主义人民共和国最高领导人意外逝世带来的问题。

BEIJING - Seoul's top nuclear negotiator arrived in China on Thursday for talks in the wake of the unexpected death of Kim Jong-il, the top leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

Lim Sung-nam, Republic of Korea's (ROK's) top envoy to stalled talks aimed at ending the DPRK's nuclear program, is scheduled to meet with his Chinese counterpart Wu Dawei to discuss the situation on the state of affairs on the Korean peninsula following Kim's death, the ROK foreign ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said the two envoys are also expected to discuss coordinating joint strategies to resume the Six-Party Talks, last held in 2008. The talks also involve the United States, Japan and Russia.

On the same day, ROK President Lee Myung-bak said Seoul is trying to show no hostility toward Pyongyang. "On future relations with the DPRK, there is room for exercising as much flexibility as possible. We will discuss the matter with all political parties," he said, adding that ROK army units near the border are on "low-level alert".

Lee had phone conversations with leaders of the United States, Japan and Russia after he learned of Kim's death. But he hasn't talked to Chinese President Hu Jintao or the DPRK's new leadership.

All nine members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, including Hu himself, have offered personal condolences on Kim's death during visits to the DPRK embassy in Beijing.

Seoul and Pyongyang are technically still at war following the Korean War of 1950-1953. Tensions have risen on the divided peninsula in recent months. The ROK has accused its northern neighbor of sinking one of its warships in March 2010 and also blamed it for the shelling of a border island eight months later.

The death of Kim, 69, who had led the DPRK since 1994, came amid renewed efforts to revive the moribund negotiations. Pyongyang and Washington recently held two rounds of rare denuclearization talks, with a third round expected in the near future following separate talks on food aid.

The third round of DPRK-US talks, which may be resumed after the official mourning period ends on Dec 29, will pave the way for restarting the Six-Party Talks, said Yang Xiyu, an expert on DPRK studies at the China Institute of International Studies.

The responsibility to lead Pyongyang will fall on Kim Jong-il's youngest son and heir apparent, Kim Jong-un.

An editorial in Rodong Shinmun, the official newspaper of the DPRK's ruling Workers' Party of Korea, on Thursday called on people within the country to unite "around the Great Comrade Kim Jong-un and faithfully accept his leadership".

Jong-un, as the "great successor of the DPRK's Juche Revolution" of self-reliance, will lead the country to "firmly defend socialism and the accomplishments of the revolution", according to the editorial.

"It is our utmost moral duty to eventually realize the General (Kim Jong-il)'s vision to build a Strong and Prosperous Nation," the editorial said.

The DPRK is set to become a "Strong and Prosperous Nation" by April 2012, the centenary of the birth of Kim Il-sung on April 15, 1912. Kim Il-sung is the founder of the DPRK and father of Kim Jong-il.

