

Meaning of *Self-Defence 2021*

Last October, in Pyongyang, the capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Defence Development Exhibition, named *Self-Defence 2021*, opened in the presence of Kim Jong Un, President of the State Affairs.

What did the exhibition that attracted the attentions of the world's military experts and media organs show?

Eye-Opening Development

The military hardware on display struck the visitors with wonder.

What was most wonderful was their advanced and modernized level.

All the weapons such as various small arms and soldier's personal gear, tanks of a new generation, armour-piercing weapons, self-propelled gun howitzers, super-large multiple launch system, various electronic weapons, drones, means of reconnaissance, submarine- and land-launched ballistic missiles of the *Pukguksong* series, medium ranged and intercontinental ballistic missiles of the *Hwasongpho* series and anti-aircraft missile systems were of world level.

Especially, the new-type gigantic missile carried on an 11-axle transporter-erector-launcher vehicle displayed during the military parade, held in October last year to mark the 75th founding anniversary of the Workers' Party of Korea, fully demonstrated the ultra-modernity and striking capability of the country's strategic forces.

In other words, it showed that the military hardware equipped by the Korean People's Army are the source of the irreversible strategic power and war deterrent, which could cope with any opponent and war.

The period and speed of their upgrading were also amazing.

The displayed military hardware were all developed and produced over the past five years, demonstrating their rapid upgrading period and speed.

As the world already observed, the DPRK successfully test-fired ground-to-

ground IRBM *Hwasong-10* at the first launch, and only one year later, successfully test-fired ground-to-ground IRBM *Hwasong-12*, whose tactical and technical specifications and technical features had been remarkably improved. Two months later, new-type ICBM *Hwasong-14* was successfully test-fired, followed by ICBM *Hwasong-14*, test-fired by simulating its maximum firing range, over 20 days later. In November 2017 new-type ICBM *Hwasong-15*, whose tactical and technical specifications and technical features were far superior to *Hwasong-14* and which can be loaded with super-sized nuclear warheads, was successfully test-fired.

What was more surprising was the fact that all the military hardware were developed and their serial production was achieved by the country's own efforts and technology.

Historically, the Korean people suffered trials as a result of being invaded by foreign forces, and it has had to build socialism under a constant threat from hostile forces, from last century to this. For this reason, they have regarded strengthening their country's military capability as an essential and vital affair of state which must not be neglected for even a moment and consistently maintained the line of self-reliance in national defence. The examples are the line of giving equal importance to the building of the economy and the national defences put forward in the early 1960s and the line of simultaneously conducting economic construction and building up the nuclear forces, which was advanced in 2013 and whose successful implementation was declared in 2018.

All the military hardware displayed in the exhibition hall were a brilliant fruition borne of the line of self-reliance in national defence which the country has consistently maintained, of the solid foundations of the munitions industry laid for more than 70 years after its founding and of the efforts made by the large contingent of promising scientists in the defence science sector, who carry out the intentions of Workers' Party of Korea unfailingly.

Prospects of the Defence Industry

The exhibition also gave a hint as to the prospects of the development of the defence industry of the DPRK.

The prospects were clearly expressed in the core plans and important strategic tasks of the five-year plan period, laid out at the Eighth Congress of the WPK in January this year.

At the Congress, the WPK put forward the tasks for making military equipment intelligent, precise, unmanned, high-performance and light as a core target for the munitions industry, and for developing the nuclear technology to a higher level and developing nuclear weapons for various tactical purposes, promoting production of super-sized nuclear warheads continuously, attaining an advanced capability for launching a pre-emptive and retaliatory nuclear strike by further raising the level of precision to the point that a strategic target within a range of 15 000 kilometres can be hit and destroyed with pinpoint accuracy, developing nuclear submarine and underwater-launch nuclear strategic weapons, developing and introducing hypersonic gliding flight warheads, securing a reconnaissance and information-gathering capability based on the operation of a military reconnaissance satellite, and developing reconnaissance drones and other means of reconnaissance capable of precisely reconnoitring over distances of up to 500 kilometres, and rapidly developing the Korean People's Army from an army of a conventional type into an elite hi-tech force.

Accordingly, the Academy of Defence Science conducted a series of test-fire of missiles with upgraded combat performances, like test-fire of a new-type tactical guided missile in March 2021, test-fire of a newly-developed long-range cruise missile in September, inspection firing drill of a railway mobile missile regiment, test-fire of a newly-developed hypersonic missile of *Hwasong-8* type, and test-fire of a newly-developed anti-aircraft missile.

At a speech delivered at the exhibition, Kim Jong Un declared: Our self-defence capability will continue to be transformed in the future, too; we will achieve even

more brilliant successes in carrying out our just and patriotic cause. In the course of doing this, we will build up a more perfect, more complete and more powerful war deterrent, in other words, the strategic might which will guarantee the security and future of our country and people.

