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Kim agrees to 'dismantle' missile sites in presence of foreign experts

Says willing to close main nuclear complex if the US takes unspecified 'reciprocal action'

Seoul : North Korea said on Wednesday it would permanently abolish its key missile facilities in the presence of foreign experts, the latest gesture by leader Kim Jong Un to revive faltering talks with Washington over his country's nuclear programme.

Speaking at a joint news conference in Pyongyang, Kim and South Korean President Moon



Jae-in said they agreed to turn the Korean peninsula into a "land of peace without nuclear weapons and nuclear threats". They said the North was also willing to close its main nuclear complex if the United States took unspecified "reciprocal action." The pledges Kim and Moon made at their third summit this year could inject fresh momentum into the stalled nuclear negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang and lay the groundwork for another meeting Kim recently proposed to US President Trump. "I don't think

President Moon got everything he was seeking from these interactions, but Kim Jong Un gave Moon some tangible things for which he can take credit," said Michael Madden, an analyst at the Stimson Centre's 38 North think tank in Washington.

"These are good-faith gestures which will likely facilitate further and more substantive negotiations," Madden said, adding a second summit between Kim and Trump was "highly probable". Kim pledged to work toward the "complete denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula" during his two meetings with Moon earlier this year and at his historic June summit with Trump in Singapore.

But discussions over how to implement the vague commitments have since faltered. Washington is demanding concrete action towards denuclearisation, such as a full disclosure of North Korea's nuclear and missile facilities, before agreeing to key goals of Pyongyang - declaring an official end to the 1950-53 Korean War and easing tough international sanctions.

Trump called the latest pledges "very exciting". "Kim Jong Un has agreed to allow nuclear inspections, subject to final negotiations, and to permanently dismantle a test site and launch pad in the presence of international experts. In the meantime there will be no rocket or nuclear testing," Trump wrote on Twitter.

Kim said he would visit Seoul in the near future, in what would be the first-ever visit to the South's capital by a North Korean leader. Moon said the visit was expected to take place by the end of the year.

Kim's latest promises come days before Moon meets Trump in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly next week. Seoul officials hope Moon will be able to convince Trump to restart nuclear talks with Pyongyang, after he cancelled a trip by his secretary of state to Pyongyang last month, citing lack of progress.

किम परमाणु स्थल नष्ट करने को राजी, बशर्ते...

अमेरिका भी उसके अनुरूप कदम बढ़ाए

● दोनों देशों के नेता कोरियाई प्रायद्वीप को परमाणु हथियार मुक्त बनाने और "युद्ध के सभी खतरों को खत्म" करने के लिए काम करेंगे



प्योंगयांग, (एपी): दक्षिण कोरिया के राष्ट्रपति मून जे-इन ने कहा है कि उत्तर कोरिया के शासक किम जोंग उन न्योंगब्योंग स्थित अपना मुख्य परमाणु परीक्षण केन्द्र स्थायी तौर पर नष्ट करने को तैयार हैं, बशर्ते कि अमेरिका भी उसके अनुरूप कदम बढ़ाए।

किम के साथ इस वर्ष की तीसरी शिखर बैठक के बाद बुधवार को दक्षिण कोरिया के राष्ट्रपति ने यह बात कही। कोरियाई नेताओं ने कहा कि उत्तर कोरिया बाहरी निरीक्षकों की उपस्थिति में मिसाइल इंजन

परीक्षण केन्द्र और प्रक्षेपण केन्द्र को बंद करेगा।

उत्तर कोरिया कोरियाई युद्ध की समाप्ति की लंबे समय से औपचारिक घोषणा की मांग कर रहा है, लेकिन संयुक्त बयान में दोनों नेताओं में किसी ने इसका जिक्र नहीं किया। कोरियाई युद्ध 1953 में संघर्षविराम संधि के बाद बंद हुआ था।

मून की उपस्थिति में किम ने कहा, "हम कोरियाई प्रायद्वीप को ऐसा शांतिपूर्ण स्थान बनाने पर राजी हुए हैं, जहां परमाणु हथियार या परमाणु खतरा ना हो।" किम ने कहा, "भविष्य की ओर हमारा रास्ता हमेशा सरल नहीं होगा, ऐसे अवरोध और चुनौतियां आ सकती हैं जिनका हमें अनुमान भी नहीं होगा। लेकिन हमें उन तूफानों का डर नहीं है क्योंकि

मून व किम के बीच सैन्य समझौता

दक्षिण कोरिया के राष्ट्रपति मून जे इन और उत्तरी कोरियाई नेता किम जोंग उन ने बुधवार को अपनी शिखर वार्ता के अंत में एक समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए। उत्तर कोरिया के सरकारी गेस्टहाउस पेखेवायोन में आयोजित समारोह के दौरान इस समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए गए जिसका सियोल में सीधा प्रसारण किया गया। समाचार एजेंसी 'योनहप' ने बताया कि नेताओं द्वारा हस्ताक्षरित समझौते का विवरण अभी उपलब्ध नहीं है।

हमारे देश की शक्ति का परीक्षण करने वाले प्रत्येक तूफान के बाद हमारी ताकत बढ़ेगी।" संयुक्त बयान को अंतिम रूप से देने के लिए बैठक कक्ष में जाते हुए किम और मून बेहद खुशमिजाजी से मुस्कराते और बात करते हुए साथ चल रहे थे। संयुक्त बयान में यह भी कहा गया है कि दोनों देशों के नेता कोरियाई प्रायद्वीप को परमाणु हथियार मुक्त बनाने और "युद्ध के सभी खतरों को खत्म" करने के लिए काम करेंगे।

सोल के मुताबिक, दोनों नेताओं किम और मून के बीच शिखर बैठक

उत्तर कोरिया की सत्तारूढ़ वर्कस पार्टी के मुख्यालय में हुई। इसमें मून के साथ उनके दो वरिष्ठ सहयोगियों खुफिया विभाग के प्रमुख सु हून और राष्ट्रपति की सुरक्षा मामलों के निदेशक चुंग इयू-योंग ने, जबकि किम की ओर से उनकी बहन किम यों जों तथा पार्टी के वरिष्ठ नेता किम योंग चोल ने हिस्सा लिया।

शिखर बैठक शुरू होने पर मंगलवार को किम ने अमेरिका के साथ जून में हुए सम्मेलन की मध्यस्थता करने के लिए मून को धन्यवाद दिया।

N. Korea's kim to visit seoul, shut missile site

Seoul: North Korea's Kim Jong Un agreed Wednesday to shutter a missile-testing site and visit Seoul, a historic move the US welcomed by saying it was ready for immediate talks aimed at denuclearising North Korea by January 2021.

Kim's ground-breaking announcement came at a summit with the South's President Moon Jae-in in Pyongyang, where the two signed a document to strengthen ties between the two halves of the divided peninsula.

Progress on the key issue of the North's nuclear arsenal was limited but, building on a growing rapprochement, the two leaders agreed to create a facility to hold family reunions at any time, work towards joining up road and rail links, and mount a combined bid for the 2032 Olympics.

The agreement “carries the people’s fresh hope and the people’s strong, flaming desire for reunification,” Kim said.

Kim’s trip to Seoul would be the first by a Northern leader since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, when hostilities ceased with an armistice rather than a peace treaty, leaving them technically in a state of war.

In their agreement, the North also said it would “permanently close” a missile engine testing site and launch facility in Tongchang-ri “in the presence of experts from relevant nations.”

US President Donald Trump welcomed Wednesday’s declaration, tweeting that Kim had “agreed to allow Nuclear inspections, subject to final negotiations,” adding: “Very exciting!”

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said he spoke with his North Korean counterpart and invited him to meet in New York next week on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

Pompeo praised the “important commitments” made by Pyongyang, adding Washington was ready to “engage immediately in negotiations” to achieve the denuclearisation of North Korea “by January 2021.”

Moon, who brokered Kim’s historic summit with Trump in Singapore in June, had hoped to bring fresh momentum to stalled talks between his hosts and Washington.

Moon later addressed an estimated 150,000 North Koreans at the close of a spectacular propaganda display known as the “Mass Games.” He called for the peninsula to reunite after he received a standing ovation from the crowd.

“I propose that we should completely end the past 70 years of hostility and take a big stride of peace to become one again,” Moon said according to South Korea’s news agency Yonhap.

“Chairman Kim Jong Un and I will make a new fatherland, firmly holding the hands of 80 million Koreans in the South and the North.”

In Singapore, Kim declared his backing for denuclearisation of the peninsula but no details were agreed.

Washington and Pyongyang have since sparred over what that means and how it will be achieved – and experts remain skeptical.

The North – whose ballistic missile programme is banned under UN Security Council resolutions – has carried out several long-range rocket launches from the site, also known as Sohae, but has also used many other locations including Pyongyang airport.

Satellite pictures in August suggested workers were already dismantling an engine test stand at Sohae.

“Kim is playing this brilliantly: verify that I dismantle a single site that I no longer need anyway while I mass-produce the missiles the site helped me develop,” Vipin Narang of MIT said.

Moon also said the North could close its Yongbyon nuclear plant if Washington takes “corresponding measures” – a significant caveat.

Arms control expert Jeffrey Lewis said the consensus view was that the uranium enrichment facility at Yongbyon “was built for (the) express purpose of being sacrificed.”

After the high symbolism of Moon and Kim’s first meeting in April in the Demilitarized Zone, and the Singapore summit, progress had largely stalled.

Washington is pressing for the North’s “final, fully verified denuclearisation,” but Pyongyang has condemned “gangster-like” demands for it to give up its weapons unilaterally.

Ahead of the Pyongyang summit there had been speculation Moon could secure a promise from Kim of a list of the North’s nuclear assets, but no such document was mentioned.

“On the denuclearisation issue, the agreement fell short of expectations,” Korea University political science professor Yoo Ho-yeol told AFP.

But the two Koreas have been pressing ahead with their own rapprochement, with Kim looking to secure economic cooperation from the far wealthier South, and Moon trying to reduce the risk of a US-North Korean conflict that would devastate his country.

The Rodong Sinmun newspaper – the mouthpiece of the North’s ruling party – has carried dozens of photos of the two leaders embracing on Moon’s arrival Tuesday, parading together through the streets of the capital, enjoying a concert and toasting at a banquet.

On Wednesday evening Moon's party dined with Kim and his wife at a new fish restaurant in Pyongyang.

It was chosen after Moon expressed interest in dining at a local restaurant with ordinary citizens. However, a retail shop there sells North Korean caviar at US\$50 for a 50-gramme jar – a luxury far beyond the reach of most North Koreans.

Before returning home on Thursday, Seoul said Moon will travel to Mount Paektu, the spiritual birthplace of the Korean nation on the Chinese-North Korean border.--AFP

THE ASIAN AGE

Thu, 20 Sept 2018

NASA's new website shows how space tech impacts everyday lives

Washington- NASA has launched an interactive website that allows users to tour through buildings to discover common items that the space agency helped improve -- such as water purifiers and selfie cameras. The showcased spinoffs are commercial products that apply NASA technology originally developed for studying and exploring space. NASA Home & City features about 130 spinoff technologies in a virtual space, allowing users to tour through buildings and rooms to discover common items that NASA inspired or helped improve. These "Our space technology continues to improve life on Earth," said Jim Reuter, acting associate administrator of NASA's Space Technology Mission Directorate. "NASA Home & City is a place of discovery for people, and especially students, who have ever wondered why space exploration should matter to them," said Reuter. The website showcases only a small sample of NASA spinoff and dual-purpose technologies, NASA said in a statement.

The spinoffs include water filtration systems originally designed to purify water for the Apollo astronauts. The silver ion technology purifies and softens water while inhibiting bacteria growth in filtering units. Today, manufacturers use this combined technology to create home-use water filtering systems that not only purify and soften, but also remove objectionable tastes and odours. Wind turbines designed for Mars and tested in Antarctica -- where access to solar power is scarce -- can be found generating power all over the globe. NASA spacesuits and firefighter gear use a similar fabric. The images NASA captures of distant galaxies or newly discovered stars has evolved greatly over the years.

THE ASIAN AGE

Thu, 20 Sept 2018

Air pollution linked to higher risk of dementia: study

Urban air pollution, mostly from vehicles, is associated with an increased risk of dementia, according to research published Wednesday.

The link remained even after heavy drinking, smoking and other well established risk factors for dementia were ruled out, the researchers reported in medical journal BMJ Open.

Worldwide, about seven percent of people over 65 suffer from Alzheimer's or some form of dementia, a percentage that rises to 40 percent above the age of 85.

The number afflicted worldwide is expected to nearly triple by 2050, posing a huge challenge to healthcare systems.

"Primary prevention of all dementia is a major global public health concern for the coming decades," the researchers wrote.

Teck check: Shock waves to revitalise

By B.R. SRIKANTH

With four start-ups turning out products based on shock wave technology, and a couple more on the anvil, Prof. K.P.J Reddy and his colleagues at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, are certain about cash registers ringing for a long time. One of these start-ups exported the first tranche of ‘SuperBull’ guns to South Africa for artificial insemination of farm animals, and could dispatch some for wild animals as well. Over 10,000 of these guns have been sold to farmers in Maharashtra, Haryana and Karnataka to enhance the output of dairies through artificial insemination. Artificial insemination is practised widely by the dairy industry, but these researchers have proved higher success rates using shock waves.

Another start-up, Super Wave Technologies, has ventured to help ONGC in stepping up the production of oil and natural gas through rejuvenation of old wells. The third start-up — Srushti Education Systems Pvt Ltd — has been marketing ‘Reddy Tubes’ (named after Prof. Reddy) to students of engineering colleges as part of a nationwide drive to create awareness about multiple applications of shock wave technology. And the last one — Pulsewave Bioinvention Pvt Ltd — focuses on gadgets for treatment of prostate gland enlargement, traumatic brain injuries, and several urological disorders. “I won’t be surprised if biotechnologists launch a start-up to employ this technology to increase the yield of crops through quick gene transfer,” says Prof. Reddy.

The team first developed a superior technique, refined by testing on several kinds of rocks and based on shock wave technology, to extract natural gas from deep under the earth. These researchers spent a lot of time sending shock waves into the rock and studying the cracks that open up as a result. Over the years, they have learnt to make these cracks at will and with precision. And their work caught the attention of the natural gas industry with ONGC signing up with their start-up to employ shock wave technology to open up fissures in rocks and old wells and thus increase the yield of petroleum and natural gas.

Soon, they figured out several uses for their technology, resulting in new start-ups, exploring a different business domain. In the field of medicine, Prof. Dhananjaya Bhat, professor of neurosurgery, Nimhans, Bengaluru, has been using a gadget based on shock wave technology to study traumatic brain injuries. “Civilians and those in armed forces are susceptible to brain injuries when blasts are set off by terrorists or during exercises. They suffer from loss of memory or speech a year or two later because the impact of shock waves show up later than usual. We have been using rats to study how blasts impact the brain and perhaps find a method of mitigation,” he told this newspaper.

Sans the technical jargon, a shock wave is a small area of high pressure and temperature in a gas or liquid that travels at supersonic speeds. The thickness of the area of high pressure and temperature is small, as small as one-millionth of a metre but it is enough to cause many physical effects when it hits something. Shock waves are produced whenever energy is released in sudden bursts. In nature, they are produced during lightning, earthquakes, explosions and by supersonic aircraft. Crackers produce weak shock waves. Master whip crackers can produce shock waves at the tip of the whip, strong enough for wild animals in captivity to whine. And on the topic of wild animals, Prof. Reddy says he has initiated discussions with experts at CCMB, Hyderabad, to explore the possibility of employing the ‘SuperBull’ to increase the population of endangered species. “Cheetahs are definitely one of them,” he added.

Their studies include fusion of fuels which power rockets and missiles and several strategic projects but their details are classified as they were funded by DRDO and Isro

This technology has found its way into tea plantations as well — drying of tea leaves often takes 16-18 hours — but when jolted with shock waves they dry up in 10 hours. Ditto with purification of water as all dissolved particles settle at the bottom so clean water could be siphoned off for drinking and cooking. “Some students have demonstrated that oil spills can be handled through shock waves. So other uses could be discovered in future,” adds Prof Reddy.

THE ASIAN AGE

Thu, 20 Sept 2018

Silver nanoparticles harming marine life

London: Silver nanoparticles, increasingly used in personal care products and the pharmaceutical industry, is toxic for fishes and may be harming marine life, a study has found.

Researchers from University of the Basque Country in Spain found that soluble silver cause short-term alterations (three days) and nanoparticles longer-term alterations (21 days).

In both cases the animals had purified themselves of the silver accumulated in their bodies after spending six months in clean waters, although inflammation of the gills was found to remain after being exposed to the metal.

What stands out among the main conclusions of the study is the fact that the distribution of the metal in the organs of the fish is influenced by the form (soluble or nanoparticles) that the silver takes in the water.

In the study, three groups of 50-60 adult zebrafish each were used in three aquaria. Silver nitrate was added to the first tank to produce water-soluble silver; 20-nanometre silver nanoparticles were added to the second; clean water was added to the third which was used as the control.

The groups in the contaminated tanks remained exposed to both forms of the metal for 21 days before spending a further six months in clean water for the purpose of studying the consequences of long-term exposure to silver.

A concentration of metal regarded as environmentally significant was used, in other words, a concentration that could be found in nature, for example at the outfall of wastewater from treatment plants.

The accumulation of a substance is the first step for intoxication to take place.

It can be deduced from the analyses that the fish accumulate similar concentrations of metal after being exposed to soluble silver and silver nanoparticles, researchers said.