



Review and Prospects of Internal and External Situations

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Public Security Intelligence Agency

Upon the publication of the “Review and Prospects of Internal and External Situations” (2021 Edition)

Director-General
Public Security Intelligence Agency

WADA Masaki

Today, the domestic and international situation surrounding Japan is changing rapidly on a daily basis, and in particular, the global spread of a new type of coronavirus infection is causing instability in the existing social structure and international order, which in no small way affects the security environment of Japan. In addition, as the confrontation between the US and China intensifies in various areas, including the economic field, there is growing concern in Japan about the outflow of technology from the perspective of economic security. To deal with the new social anxieties and threats created by these changes, it is even more important to grasp the signs and to respond quickly and appropriately.

The Public Security Intelligence Agency (PSIA) has a mission to ensure public security, and based on the Subversive Activities Prevention Act and the Act on the Control of Organizations Which Have Committed Indiscriminate Mass Murder, we conduct strict and proper surveillance of the so-called Aum Shinrikyo, and in addition, as a core member of Japan's intelligence community, we are contributing to various government policies by collecting and analyzing information on trends of various domestic and international issues that may affect the public security of Japan, such as international terrorism, the situation around Japan, the situation regarding economic security, and the trends of domestic organizations, and providing them to government agencies in a timely and appropriate manner.

Looking at the domestic and international situation in the year 2020, there are serious and significant threats to Japan's security outside of the country, such as the developments in North Korea that it still did not respond to denuclearization and has shown off its development progress by unveiling a new type of ballistic missile, as well as the ongoing number of international terrorist incidents all over the world. Also, China is striving to secure a diplomatic environment that is favorable to its own country while advocating "multilateralism" as its relations with the US become tenser over the spread of the new coronavirus infection, which is drawing attention in terms of its impact on Japan's diplomacy and security. Russia has implemented a constitutional amendment that will allow the Putin administration to prolong its life, and while continuing to intervene in international and regional issues externally and showing off its presence as a major power, as between Japan, it has not broken the stance of making the Northern Territories its “home territory”. On the other hand, there are some alarming trends in Japan, such as the so-called Aum Shinrikyo, which is still maintaining its dangerous nature 25 years after the sarin gas attack on the subway and is strengthening its resistance to surveillance disposition, and radical leftist groups are planning to expand their organization through various activities. Furthermore, as each country seeks to strengthen its cyber warfare capabilities, cyber-attacks targeting the defense industry, etc. have been discovered one after another at home and abroad, and the situation inside and outside Japan is still dire.

In addition, the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Kyoto Congress) is scheduled to be held in March 2021, and the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games are scheduled to be held from July to September in the same year. In order to contribute to the safe holding of these events, which are attracting attention from around the world, the PSIA will further strengthen its information gathering and analysis systems to prevent terrorist attacks and quickly identify suspicious trends.

In recent years, the importance of cooperation between the public and private sectors has increased further, and the PSIA will continue to make further efforts to disseminate information to the public. As part of its efforts to disseminate such information, the Agency publishes this document in January each year, summarizing various domestic and international trends related to public security during the previous year. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all of you for using this document and for your understanding and support of the work of the Agency.

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*  indicates the reference point.

New coronavirus infection spread to the countries around the world

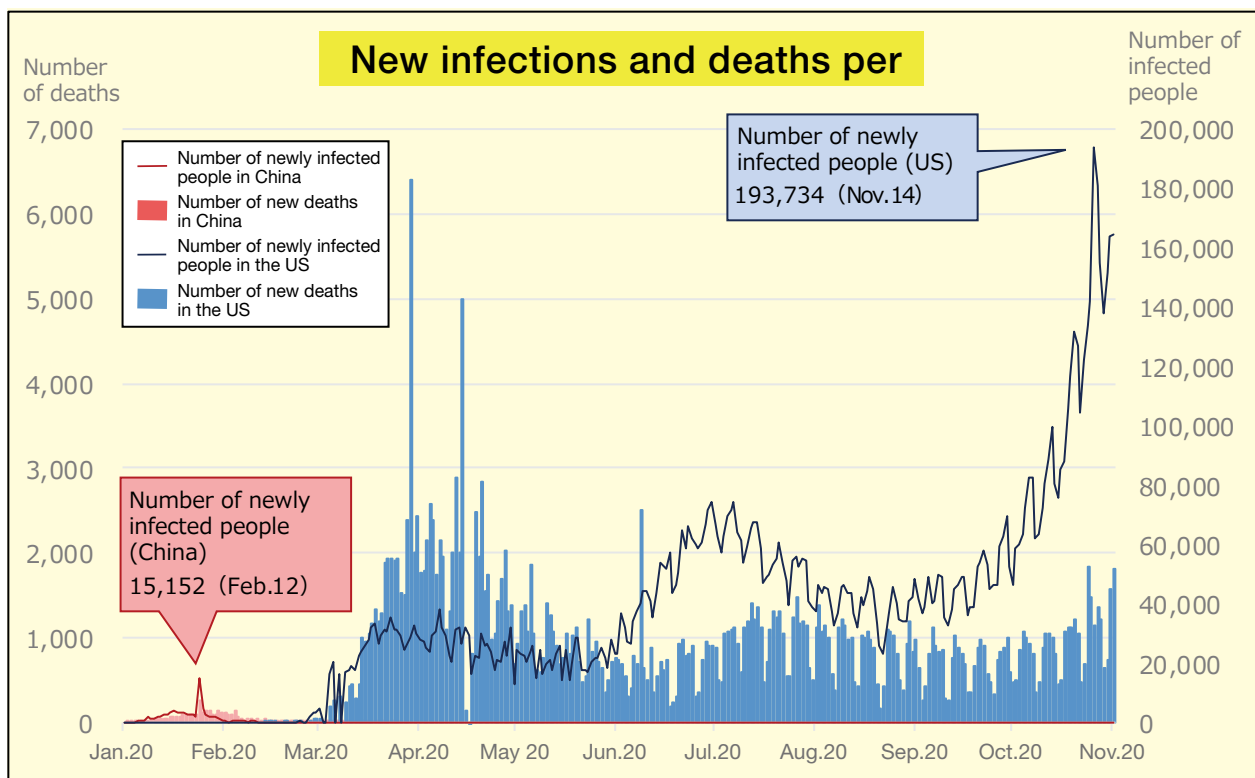
1 International Society Increasingly Divided as Infection Spreads

Infection spread rapidly across borders

In December 2019, an outbreak of a new type of coronavirus infection was reported in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, and since then, the infection has spread nationwide. In response to General Secretary Xi Jinping's directive (in January) that “the momentum of the spread of infectious diseases must be resolutely halted,” China took steps to control the spread of the disease by restricting the movement of Wuhan citizens, cutting off transportation to and from outside the city, suspending factory production and business activities, building temporary hospitals, and intensively deploying medical personnel to Wuhan. As a result of these efforts, and with the understanding that “the positive and upward situation

of infection prevention and control is spreading” (in February, General Secretary Xi), in late February China decided to gradually resume economic activities on the premise of thorough infection prevention. On the other hand, General Secretary Xi expressed his intention to continue to focus on the fight against the disease, saying, “We must not slacken off in the slightest, focus on the prevention and control of the infection that has become the norm, and exert ourselves to win overall victory in the struggle against the infection” (in September).

In response to the spread of the infection in China, North Korea, which shares a border with China, reportedly sealed its border as early as late January






Source: National Health Commission of China (China part, not including asymptomatic infected persons), World Health Organization (WHO, US part)

and took measures such as quarantining more than 30,000 people by September. In addition, the area was temporarily sealed off (in July) on the grounds that a person suspected of being infected had entered the country from the North-South military border. Even under these circumstances, North Korea consistently maintained that there was no one infected. On the other hand, in South Korea, the outbreak of a mass infection in a church in a provincial city led to a rapid spread of the disease (in February), but the government tried to contain the outbreak by strengthening its inspection system and monitoring the movements of infected people.

In Russia, after the first case of infection among its own citizens occurred in March, the spread of infection proceeded rapidly. Due to efforts to prevent infection, the number of newly infected people peaked in mid-May and began to decline at one point, but with the resumption of domestic economic activities, the number of newly infected people began to increase again in late September, and in October, the number of deaths per day reached a record high.

The spread of the infection reached Western countries, and in Europe, the number of newly infected people increased sharply from around March. While many people died, especially in Italy,

Spain, and the United Kingdom, European countries implemented measures to prevent infection, such as sealing off cities. After that, the number of newly infected people decreased, but it started to increase again around October.

In the US as well, efforts were made to prevent infection, such as by imposing urban blockades in some states, and the federal government declared a state of emergency on March 13, but the number of newly infected people has continued to increase since then, and the number of infected people was the highest in the world in March and the death toll was in April. In addition, the infectious disease has spread to countries around the world, including Brazil and India, and has spread since November. ( p.17 1-1, “North Korea faced further hardship due to new coronavirus infections and wind and flood damage, and struggled to maintain regime stability”;  p.28 2-1, “The Xi Jinping administration saw the spread of new coronavirus infections as ‘the most serious incident since the founding of the country’ and was determined to maintain stability”;  p.41 3-1, “Amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation allowed President Vladimir Putin to remain in office until 2036”).

International community divided over China's response

In China, the number of newly infected persons has decreased since late February, while number of infections has increased in other countries around the world. While the talk about the “China's responsibility” rose among the international community for the delay in the initial response to the new coronavirus infection, General Secretary Xi Jinping praised the “institutional superiority” of China's coercive measures, such as the restriction of the movement of Wuhan citizens, and instructed the government to provide external support, saying, “Strengthening international cooperation in quarantine is the role of a responsible major power” (in February). China dispatched medical teams and provided masks and other medical supplies to Iran, Iraq, Italy, and other countries where the infection was spreading rapidly (in February and March). In addition, in response to Cambodia's showing of an attitude of attaching importance to China, such as by

avoiding measures to restrict traffic with China, China made efforts to improve its image by appealing its position as a “supporting country” by sending a medical team to Cambodia for the first time in Southeast Asia (in March) and providing PCR test kits by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (in April).

While the recipient countries voiced their gratitude, China released a “white paper” on measures to combat the infectious disease, in which it stated that it had “dispatched 29 teams of medical experts to 27 countries and provided quarantine assistance to 150 countries” (in June).



In addition, China held a series of online international conferences to discuss the response to the new coronavirus infection with 13 African countries in June and 21 Arab countries in July, and the “joint statement” of these conferences included support for China's response to the new coronavirus

infection.

While China has been actively engaged in diplomatic activities to gain support for its own measures against the new coronavirus infection, US President Donald Trump referred to the virus as the “Chinese Virus” on Twitter (in March) and used the same expression to refer to China's responsibility at the 75th UN General Assembly (in September).

Furthermore, regarding China's response, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom, visited China at the end of January, when the outbreak was still spreading, and praised China's response and stated that travel restrictions to China were “not necessary” (in January). On the other hand, as the number of infected people in the US increased since late March, President Trump sent a letter to Director-General Tedros (in May) in which he complained that “repeated missteps by Mr. Tedros and WHO have cost the world dearly.” He continued to question the neutrality of the WHO, and on July 6, the US notified the UN that it would formally withdraw from the WHO after one year. In other countries as well, Australia called on the international community to conduct independent research on the origin of the

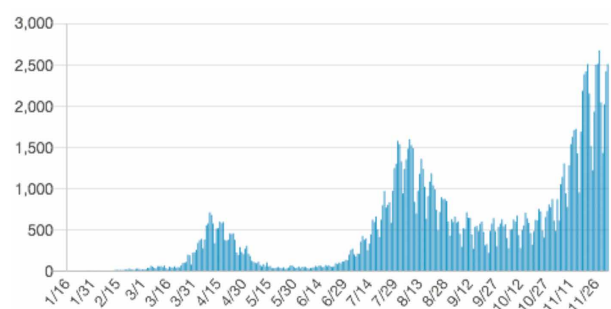
virus (in April), and European countries including Germany and Sweden supported this call.

In response to the reaction of Western countries, President Xi spoke out “against the politicization and stigmatization of new coronaviruses” at the aforementioned United Nations General Assembly (in September), and restrained Western countries. In addition, Russia also showed an attitude of defending China and WHO by emphasizing that “condemning China is an unproductive attempt” (President Vladimir Putin, in April) and that “we will continue to support WHO activities regardless of the position of other countries” (Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, in April). In this way, the international community is showing signs of division, such as the emergence of differences in the positions of each country over the response to the new coronavirus infection, and in particular, the relationship between the US and China became even more tense, involving issues in the fields of economy, security, and human rights. ( p.10 Special Feature 2, “Economic security related trends” and  p.34 2-3, “As tensions with the international community deepen, China worked to secure a favorable diplomatic environment for itself”)

2 Trends in Japan under the spread of new coronavirus infections

In Japan, a state of emergency was declared in response to the spread of the new coronavirus infection

In Japan, the first person infected with a new type of coronavirus infection was confirmed in January, and after that, as the infection spreads, the government declared on April 7 a state of emergency to seven prefectures (expanded to the whole country on April 16) based on the Act on Special Measures for Countermeasures against New Influenza, etc. Although the declaration was lifted on May 25, when the spread of the disease had calmed down, the number of newly infected people continued to increase and decrease. During this period, the government took various measures to prevent the spread of the disease and to maintain socioeconomic activities.



Number of "positive cases" in Japan (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare website <[https:// www.mhlw.go.jp](https://www.mhlw.go.jp)>)

In response to the spread of the infection, many event organizers refrained from holding large gatherings, while others had taken to the streets to criticize the government.

In response to the spread of the new coronavirus infection, while large-scale indoor and outdoor gatherings were cancelled or curtailed, radical leftist groups engaged in activities to criticize the government; for example, Chukaku-ha (Middle Core Faction of the Revolutionary Communist League), taking an opportunity of implementation of countermeasures against new coronavirus by the government, engaged in street propaganda activities such as “No to ‘Emergency Declaration’ without Compensation” and “Compensation for Wages and Livelihood Now!” (in April), and also conducted a protest action called “Let Us Live! Fighting May Day,” claiming that “the government is using the Corona situation to promote constitutional changes and war” (in May).

In addition, after the declaration of the state of emergency was lifted, the Japanese Communist Party resumed its previous activities, including actions in front of the Diet (Parliament) calling for the “resignation of the Abe administration,” and the

participation of the Party’s Diet members in protest actions in Fukushima Prefecture in response to the government’s policy of releasing ALPS-treated water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant (water purified by the advanced liquid processing system [ALPS] from water containing radioactive materials) into the ocean.

On Twitter, posts criticizing the government’s measures against the new coronavirus infection have been posted since late February, and in May, the number of posts against the bill to amend the Public Prosecutor’s Office Law has increased sharply. With regard to these criticisms of the government’s policies on SNS, the Japanese Communist Party’s Diet members posted with hashtags common to those postings, and the Party showed its sympathetic attitude.

In addition, radical leftist groups used the Internet to penetrate the workforce by posting many videos criticizing the government’s measures against the new coronavirus infection on video distribution sites.

C O L U M N

Amid corona scare, radical leftist groups claimed solidarity with protest actions against racism

Following the death of a black man in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in May, who was subdued by a white police officer, protests called “Black Lives Matter” spread to the US, the United Kingdom, Germany, and other countries around the world. Also, in the US, President Trump’s post on Twitter (in May) that “‘ANTIFA’ and the far-left were responsible” for the mobbing of some participants in the protests was widely covered.

This trend spread to Japan as well, and amid concerns about the spread of the new coronavirus infection, protest actions were held in Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka, Aichi and other prefectures across Japan,

with some participants holding up “ANTIFA” flags.

Under these circumstances, radical leftist groups in Japan took a negative view of President Trump’s comment, stating in one of their organ papers “Senki (Battle Flag)” (dated July 5) that “we see Trump’s reactionary view of history by calling the Antifa=anti-fascism a ‘terrorist organization’ without hesitation,” and in addition, they have called for solidarity with American workers regarding the protests in the US, and there is a possibility that they will expand their various movements and forces through involvement in discrimination issues in the future.

Economic security related trends

1 Trends surrounding economic security highlighted amid the increasingly fierce US-China conflict

In recent years, the confrontation between the US and China has intensified in a variety of areas, including politics, economy, diplomacy, and security. Behind this it can be seen that the US has strong concerns about the expansion of China's influence through investment and economic support based on its "One Belt, One Road" strategy and the strengthening of its military power through the acquisition of advanced technologies under its "military-civil fusion" strategy. As the outflow of technology and data, inward foreign direct investment, and other events that affect economy-

related security in particular become more prominent, the US and China are increasingly restraining each other through restrictions on trade and immigration.

In addition, countries centered on Europe have tightened restrictions on inward foreign direct investment in order to protect key industries and have excluded major Chinese telecommunications companies from the 5th generation mobile communications system (5G communications network), which indicates wide-spread trends attaching importance to economic security.

The US dissuaded China by tightening trade regulations in the information and communications sector

The US Department of Commerce announced a series of measures to restrict the supply of semiconductors and other products to a major Chinese telecommunications company that was subject to trade restrictions in 2019 (in May and August), and also added 38 of the company's affiliates to the list of companies subject to trade restrictions (in August), citing the need to further restrict the company's access to US technology.

Also, the US Federal Communications Commission designated two major Chinese telecommunications companies as "national security threats" and banned them from entering into certain new contracts, citing "China's attempts to conduct surveillance and large-scale industrial espionage activities in the US" (in June). In addition, President Trump showed his stance to strengthen regulations in the information and communication sector by issuing an Executive Order (in August) ordering the sale of the US business of certain Chinese communication companies that provide video sharing services, etc., due to the risk of information leakage such as

location information, and prohibiting them from doing business in the US if the business is not sold within a certain period of time.

Under these circumstances, the US State Department announced the "clean network" program to promote the elimination of Chinese products and services in the five fields of telecommunications, namely, carriers, app stores, apps, cloud and telecommunications cables (in August). Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stated that more than 25 member countries of the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are already participating in the program, and expressed his intention to further expand the network (in October).

It was also reported that an aide to the US President visited Europe to urge France, Germany, Italy, and the UK to exclude major Chinese telecom companies from their 5G networks (in July), and that the US government set up a \$1 billion line of credit for Brazil to purchase 5G telecom equipment from a competitor of a major Chinese telecom company (in October).

	Major US regulatory measures against China
Trading regulations, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Twenty-four companies, organizations, and individuals from China and other countries were placed on the Entity List (EL) for supporting China's procurement of military equipment (in May, US Department of Commerce) --Eleven Chinese companies listed on EL for involvement in human rights abuses and repression (in June, US Department of Commerce) --Twenty-four Chinese companies listed on EL for involvement in militarization of the South China Sea (in June, US Department of Commerce) --Published a list of 31 Chinese munitions companies operating in the U.S. based on the National Defense Authorization Act (in June and August, US Department of Defense)
Immigration restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Announced a presidential proclamation to suspend the entry to the US of Chinese researchers and international students above a certain level who have a history of belonging to an organization that implements and supports the "military-civil fusion" policy (in May, US President) --Announced that the visas of more than 1,000 Chinese researchers and students have been revoked to prevent the outflow of important technologies from universities and research institutes (in September, US Department of State)
Government procurement	Announced that the US government will enforce a regulation banning government procurement from domestic and foreign companies in the US that use products from five companies, including a major Chinese surveillance camera manufacturer, due to concerns about information leakage (in July, US Department of Defense, etc.)

The US was concerned about China's technology outflow and espionage activities, and had successively exposed the participants in the talent attraction program.

In the US, since the beginning of the year, there had been a series of arrests of people involved in universities and research institutions for making false claims about their participation in China's "Thousand People Plan" and other talent attraction programs. In addition, there were cases in which active officers of the People's Liberation Army studied in the US without revealing their military register, and allegedly collected information while conducting research (in July). A report submitted to the US Congress pointed out that many of China's plans for

science and technology transfer, such as its plans to invite personnel, were designed to contribute to the "military-civil fusion" strategy and advance the goals of the Communist Party of China by collecting technology and know-how that would improve the capabilities of the People's Liberation Army (in October), and expressed alarm over the outflow of advanced technology through academia and other relevant sectors.

In addition, various espionage cases were uncovered in various parts of the US, including a

Date	Summary of major uncovered cases of people involved in universities and research institutes in the US
Jan.28	University professor (nanotechnology) arrested for making a false application regarding participation in China's talent attraction program and illegally receiving a subsidy.
Feb.27	University associate professor (microfabrication technology) arrested for making false application on relationship with Chinese university in order to illegally receive public subsidy
Mar.10	Former university professor (physics) arrested for falsely claiming to be taking parental leave, participating in a Chinese talent attraction program, and illegally receiving salary from the university.
May 8	University professor (electronics) arrested for false application regarding relations with China when receiving public subsidy
May 22	University professor (rheumatology) arrested for falsely stating regarding employment by a Chinese university and illegally receiving public subsidy
Aug.23	University professor (colloid chemistry) arrested for making false applications regarding employment in China and illegally receiving subsidy
Aug.28	University researcher (computer science) arrested for destroying evidence of providing US technology to China

case in which a Singaporean national residing in the US was allegedly collecting information on US government and military personnel who had access to classified information under the direction of the Chinese intelligence agency (in July), and a case in which an American police officer was allegedly cooperating with espionage activities by a member of the Chinese Consulate General in New York (in September).

Against this backdrop, Federal Bureau of

Investigation (FBI) Director Christopher Wray stated that “the FBI is opening a new China-related counterintelligence case about every 10 hours,” and emphasized that Chinese intelligence activities are a major threat to the US (in July), and in addition, the US government ordered the Chinese government to close the Chinese Consulate-General in Houston, claiming that it was “a base for espionage and intellectual property theft” (Secretary of State Pompeo) (in July).

China showed its opposition to the US and launched countermeasures designed to roll back the US

China responded to the series of measures taken by the US to exclude Chinese telecom companies, products, and services by saying, “It is completely preposterous for the dirty-hand US to preach so much a ‘clean network’” (Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian, in August).

When the US issued a presidential order regarding the sale of the US business of certain Chinese telecommunications companies that provide video sharing services, etc., China revised its “List of Technologies Subject to Export Prohibition and Export Limitation” and added artificial intelligence (AI) and cryptographic security technologies to the list of technologies restricted for foreign trade (in August).

In addition, the “Unreliable Entity List” system, which imposes restrictions not only on the trade transactions of the relevant entities, but also on their entry, exit, and status of residence, was announced and came into effect immediately (in September), and the “Export Control Law” (enacted on October

17), which had been under discussion since 2017, added provisions for extraterritorial application and provisions suggesting retaliation against countries, etc. that have “harmed the security and interests” of China (in October).

In addition, China announced a new policy to promote the development of the semiconductor and software industries in order to increase self-sufficiency in high-tech products (in August), and established support measures in the areas of taxation and finance, investment and financing, and research and development, and Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, announced the “Global Data Security Initiative” (in September), which calls for secure handling of data and prevention of infringement of personal information, and called on countries to join the initiative. As stated above, China successively showed moves implying the aspect of countermeasures and actions against pressure from the US.

The growing emphasis on economic security in the international community

The European Union (EU) was wary of inward foreign direct investment in important industries and established a pre-screening system for the investment, triggered by the acquisition of a German robotics company with high technological capabilities by a Chinese company (in August 2016) and, as the new coronavirus infection spreads, the member countries were alerted to direct investment from outside the region in the pharmaceutical and

medical related industries (in March). Under these circumstances, regulations on inward foreign direct investment were tightened one after another in Germany, France, Italy and other countries. In addition, the EU published a report entitled “The EU’s Response to China’s State-driven Investment Strategy” (in September), which pointed out that European companies were suffering disadvantages due to investment and forced technology transfer by


Chinese state-owned enterprises, and appealed to member states that the EU needs to respond to China as a whole, not on a member state basis.

In addition, as the US called for the exclusion of Chinese companies from the 5G communication network, relevant moves spread mainly in Europe. The U.K., which had been willing to allow the introduction of Chinese telecommunication equipment, announced that it would prohibit the introduction of such equipment after 2021, and even if it had already introduced such equipment, it would completely remove them from its telecommunication network by 2027 (in July). It was also reported that

France had informally notified domestic telecom companies that they would not be able to renew their licenses to use the 5G network if they procured telecom equipment made in China, and also announced a policy to completely exclude Chinese telecom equipment from the network by 2028 (in July). Also in India, the military clashes in the Sino-Indian border region led to the banning of 59 (in May), 118 (in September), and 43 (in November) Chinese-made apps on the grounds that they were harmful to the country's sovereignty and public safety.

	Trends in the elimination of Chinese telecommunications equipment
Israel	Reportedly close to reaching an agreement with the US not to use Chinese technology in its domestic 5G network (in August)
Sweden	Prohibited the use of new Chinese-made equipment in 5G communication networks (in October)
Belgium	It was reported that equipment made by a Finnish company has been adopted for the construction of the 5G communication network (in October).

2 Public Security Intelligence Agency's efforts in the field of economic security

In the midst of these moves of the international community, economic security has become an important issue for Japan as well. In response to the growing concerns over the issue in Japan, the Public Security Intelligence Agency has been collecting and analyzing necessary information on economic security as well as counter-intelligence and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction ( p. 58 6, “Trends surrounding materials and other commodities for weapons of mass destruction”). In particular, it is important to prevent the outflow of technology and data to foreign countries, so the

Public Security Intelligence Agency collects and analyzes relevant information and provides the obtained results to relevant organizations, and as an initiative toward the promotion of public-private partnerships, the Agency is disseminating information to Japanese economic organizations, private companies, etc. through briefing sessions to prevent the leakage of important information.

The Public Security Intelligence Agency will continue to contribute to the government's policies on economic security by strengthening its collection and analysis of the relevant information.

For the security of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games (Tokyo Games), which were postponed due to the global spread of the new coronavirus infection, are

scheduled to be held in the summer of 2021, and we need to remain vigilant against terrorism and cyber-attacks.

Vigilance for terrorism in the wake of the Tokyo Games

In the past Olympics held in foreign countries, terrorist attacks and hostage taking occurred in September 1972 at the Olympic Village in Munich, West Germany, and in July 1996 at the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta, US. Such a large-scale international sporting event is an opportunity for terrorists to attract the attention of the entire world.

Therefore, when the Tokyo Games are held, it is necessary to be vigilant against terrorism not only at the venues of each sporting event, but also at so-called soft targets such as public transportation, accommodation facilities, and tourist attractions, as well as in urban areas outside the Tokyo metropolitan area.

Major terrorist incidents and plots during major international sporting events

Incidents and plots	Country Name	Month & Year	Case Summary
Terrorist incidents	West Germany (at the time)	September 1972	[Munich Olympics] An attack and hostage taking occurred at the Israeli athletes' dormitory in the Olympic village in Munich in the southern region, killing 12 people including 11 members of the Israeli athletes' team.
	US	July 1996	[Atlanta Olympics] A bomb attack at the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta in the southeastern region, killed two citizens and injured 112.
	US	April 2013	[Boston Marathon] Three civilians were killed and about 300 others were injured in a bomb attack at a marathon site in Boston in the eastern region.
	France	November 2015	[Friendly soccer match between France and Germany] A civilian was killed in a series of suicide bomb attacks near the venue of the game in the suburbs of Paris.
Terrorist plans	Brazil	July 2016	[Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games] (held in August 2016) A terrorist plot by 14 Brazilians during the Games was uncovered (announced by the Minister of Justice of Brazil).
	Saudi Arabia	October 2016	[FIFA World Cup Russia Asian Final Qualifier: Saudi Arabia vs United Arab Emirates (UAE)] (held in October 2016) A car bombing plot targeting the venue of the Saudi-UAE match scheduled to be held in Jeddah in the western region was uncovered (according to a Ministry of Interior spokesperson of Saudi Arabia)
	France	November 2016	[UEFA European Championship (Euro 2016)] (Held from June to July 2016) Terrorist plots against Euro 2016 etc. were uncovered in Strasbourg in the eastern region and Marseille in the southern region (announced by the Minister of Interior of France)
	Russia	April 2018	[FIFA World Cup Russia] (June-July 2018) 12 terrorist plots, including one against the World Cup in Russia, were uncovered (announced by the Federal Security Service Director of Russia)

Threat of cyber-attacks that could hinder smooth operation of the Tokyo Games

The Olympic and Paralympic Games are also exposed to the threat of cyber-attacks, especially becoming more apparent since the London 2012 Games in the United Kingdom (July 2012).

It is said that the power supply system could have been targeted by the attackers, although there was no damage that would have interfered with the operation of the Games.

Also, at the time of the Rio de Janeiro Games (August 2016) in Brazil, there was a case in which medical information (such as records of drug use for treatment purposes) of national athletes of each country was stolen from the database of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and exposed on the Internet. Furthermore, at the Pyeongchang Winter Games in South Korea (February 2018), the IT system supporting the Games operation was attacked by data-destroying malware, causing damage such as the temporary suspension of the official website (including the printing function of admission tickets)

and Wi-Fi service in the venue during the opening ceremony.

The US and UK governments determined that the aforementioned cyber-attacks on the Rio de Janeiro and Pyeongchang Winter Games were carried out by the cyber warfare unit (under the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces) of Russia, which was banned from participating in the two events due to the national doping certification by WADA (📰 P.54 5 “Trends surrounding cyberspace”).

In addition, at multiple games, individuals and organizations that carry out cyber-attacks for the purpose of social and political claims, called hackers, developed DDoS attack campaigns that advocate obstruction of the Olympics.

In light of these threats, it is necessary to be vigilant against cyber-attacks at the Tokyo Games by forces seeking to sabotage the Games, including those by state-sponsored entities.

Anti-Olympic and Paralympic forces continue opposition campaign

With regard to the Tokyo Games, forces claiming that “the Olympics will be a disaster that will destroy the host city” continued their campaign against the Games even after the decision to postpone the Tokyo Games, holding rallies and demonstrations calling for “the cancellation of the Olympics, not its postponement.” In addition, when the IOC President visited Japan in November, they held a protest action to appeal directly to him, saying “We don’t need the Olympics anywhere.” Domestic radical leftists were also participating in these activities, and it is

expected that the opposition movement will become more active as the Games approach.

Furthermore, right-wing groups and right-wing affiliated groups may seize the opportunity to appeal their own principles and claims regarding various issues such as the new coronavirus infection, territorial integrity, and history recognition, and may engage in activities such as denouncing officials of specific countries who visit Japan and advocating exclusion of foreigners.

Public Security Intelligence Agency to contribute to the success of the Tokyo Games through “intelligence”

The Public Security Intelligence Agency, under the “Special Intelligence Task Force for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games” established in 2013, is working to strengthen the system of collecting and analyzing relevant information across the entire agency, and is providing information that

contributes to the prevention of terrorism and the early grasp of various unlawful cases to relevant organizations as needed.

The Public Security Intelligence Agency will continue its efforts to the security of the Tokyo Games.

External Situation of 2020



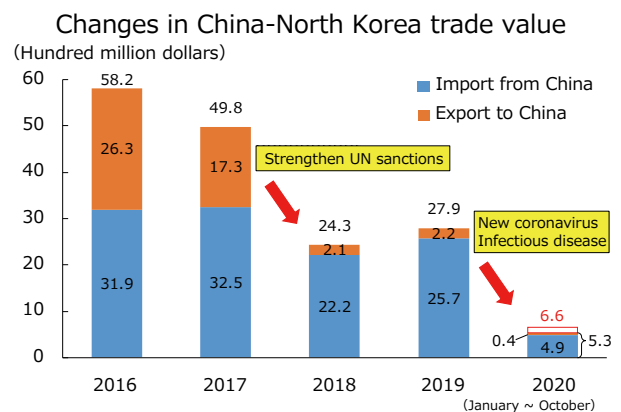
1-1

North Korea faced further hardship due to new coronavirus infections and wind and flood damage, and struggled to maintain regime stability

A big blow to the economy such as a sharp decrease in China-North Korea trade. Unusual announcement admitting difficulty in achieving economic goals

In response to the spread of the new coronavirus infection in China, North Korea sealed its border since the end of January, severely restricting logistics and human traffic. As a result, trade with China, which accounted for the majority of its foreign trade, decreased further from the time when trade with China decreased significantly due to the UN sanctions in 2017 (right figure) triggered by the missile launch and other factors, and factories and companies that relied on imports for materials and raw materials reportedly experienced a slump in their production activities. In addition, the construction of the Wonsan Kalma Coast Tourist Area and Pyongyang General Hospital, which they had been focusing on, was delayed, and the completion within the target date was not reported. Besides, the suspension of acceptance of foreign tourists, who were not subject to UN sanctions, was believed to have reduced its foreign currency earnings.

Against this backdrop, North Korea admitted that it was unable to achieve the goals of its “Five-Year Strategy for National Economic Development,” the final year of which was 2020, citing “a series of unforeseen challenges” (in August).



Figures in red are the forecasted amounts if the year-on-year rate of decline in the period from January to October continues for one year.
(Based on China's maritime customs statistics)

Worked hard to stop the influx of the new coronavirus infection and to recover from the damage caused by the torrential rains and typhoons, and demonstrated its “people-oriented” stance.

Since the declaration of the “state emergency anti-epidemic system” at the end of January, North Korea has thoroughly disinfected its facilities and conducted temperature checks and quarantine of its residents, and Chairman Kim Jong Un has repeatedly instructed to strengthen and tighten the quarantine system. North Korea emphasized that “there is no one infected” as a result of these efforts.

Also, when torrential rains and typhoons (in August and September) caused serious damage to

agricultural land and houses, Chairman Kim and other senior leaders of the leadership quickly inspected the affected areas and gave instructions for restoration, and dispatched not only the military but also many members of the Workers’ Party of Korea in Pyongyang City to the affected areas to engage in the restoration work.

Furthermore, Chairman Kim repeatedly expressed his consolation and gratitude to the residents in his speech at the military review ceremony

1 External Situation

commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea (in October) to promote his attitude toward "people first," and carried out "80-day battle" as the movement of

intensive production increase (October to December) to work on epidemic prevention measures and disaster recovery.

2 External Situation

North Korea strengthened the functioning of the Workers' Party of Korea and expanded the responsibilities and roles of its cadres

3 External Situation

4 External Situation

Under these circumstances, the Workers' Party of Korea frequently held various meetings, including the Politburo meetings, to discuss and decide measures for the new coronavirus infection and disaster recovery, giving the impression that various policies were collectively decided through discussions among cadres. Also, the North Korean media frequently covered the inspection of economic facilities and recovery sites by the Politburo Standing Committee members and other party officials,

increasing the presence of senior party officials.

It is assessed that behind these moves lay the aim to encourage the senior party officials by disclosing the party's collective policy-making process and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the senior officials involved in the decision, as well as an aspect of protecting the authority of Chairman Kim by shifting the responsibility for the slump to the senior officials where the economic development could not be seen.

5 External Situation

Focusing on ensuring regime stability in the wake of the eighth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea

6 External Situation

North Korea is scheduled to hold the 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea in January 2021, where the leadership will be elected and economic construction based on the newly formulated "Five-Year Plan for National Economic Development" will be undertaken. However, if the global epidemic of new coronavirus infections continues, in addition to

the UN sanctions, it is unlikely that the economic environment will improve fundamentally, and North Korea, having no other choice but continuing to rely on "self-reliance," is likely to strive to retain the support of the residents by focusing on improving the "people's livelihood."

1 Internal Situation

C O L U M N ①

Chairman Kim Jong Un's Health Issues

2 Internal Situation

3 Internal Situation

Regarding Chairman Kim Jong Un, the theory of possible change of his health condition suddenly emerged as it was not reported in April that he visited Kumsusan Palace of the Sun on Kim Il Sung's birthday (April 15), which had been indispensable every year since his administration started, and after foreign media reported that he was "in a serious condition after undergoing surgery" (CNN) and that "China has dispatched medical experts to North Korea" (Reuters).

However, on May 2, the North Korean media released a video of Chairman Kim's attendance at the completion ceremony of a fertilizer factory, thus dismissing the theory of health problems.

While Chairman Kim's activities were continually reported since then, it is also reported that he has been suffering from obesity in recent years and that he has been suffering from a chronic disease, so his health condition is a matter worth continuing to pay attention to.

North Korea's trade with China (January-October) decreased significantly by about 76% in value terms compared to 2019.

Of these, imports from China, especially of materials for manufacturing (plastics, man-made fibers, fabrics, etc.), decreased significantly, and this is believed to have contributed to the stagnation of the manufacturing industry in North Korea. In addition, imports of fertilizer also decreased significantly, which may have an impact on North Korea's agriculture in 2021. On the other hand, the decrease in edible oil, tobacco, flour, sugar, and medical supplies was small, suggesting that efforts were made for maintaining residents' living standards

and taking measures against the new coronavirus infection.

In terms of exports to China, there were large declines in almost all items, but the decline in watches and wigs, which were the main export items after the UN sanctions, was notable and seems to have led to a further decline in North Korea's foreign currency earnings.

If the global spread of the new coronavirus infection is prolonged, trade between China and North Korea is likely to remain sluggish for the time being due to the tightening of border controls, which is expected to hinder economic construction in North Korea.

Trends in North Korea's imports from China by category (January-October)

Top import items from China with declining amounts (in order of declining value)				
Rank	Item (Classified by Harmonized System [HS] code 2 digits)	Decrease (dollar) compared to the same period of 2019	Import value (dollar)	Compared to the same period in 2019
1	Plastics and its products	- 186.0 mil	35.8 mil	- 84 %
2	Man-made fiber filaments and their woven fabrics	- 133.2 mil	17.1 mil	- 89 %
3	Grains	- 72.6 mil	1.0 mil	- 99 %
4	Fabric (knitted)	- 65.1 mil	5.9 mil	- 92 %
5	Watches and their parts	- 60.5 mil	8.9 mil	- 87 %
6	Garments and accessories for garments (knitted goods)	- 57.7 mil	4.7 mil	- 93 %
7	Ceramic Products	- 51.5 mil	6.9 mil	- 88 %
8	Felt, non-woven fabric, string, etc.	- 46.6 mil	7.6 mil	- 86 %
9	Furniture, Bedding	- 45.8 mil	8.0 mil	- 85 %
10	Seafood	- 41.8 mil	4.7 mil	- 90 %
11	Paper, paperboard, pulp for paper manufacturing, etc.	- 37.2 mil	15.7 mil	- 70 %
12	Fertilizer	- 36.4 mil	5.5 mil	- 87 %
13	Artificial short fibers and their woven fabrics	- 36.0 mil	10.4 mil	- 78 %
14	Footwear, etc.	- 34.1 mil	5.7 mil	- 86 %
15	Edible fruits and nuts	- 33.5 mil	8.3 mil	- 80 %

Top import items from China in import value (in order of import value)				
Rank	Item (Classified by HS code 2 digits)	Import value (dollar)	Compared to the same period in 2019	Rank in the same period in 2019
1	Animal and vegetable oils and fats, cooking oil	79.9 mil	- 28 %	3
2	Cigarettes and tobacco substitutes	39.3 mil	- 45 %	5
3	Grain flour (mostly wheat flour)	36.6 mil	- 40 %	9
4	Plastics and its products	35.8 mil	- 84 %	1
5	Sugars (mostly sugar)	29.2 mil	- 14 %	23
6	Rubber and its products	24.2 mil	- 52 %	14
7	Medical supplies	18.5 mil	- 51 %	21
8	Organic chemicals	17.4 mil	- 56 %	20
9	Artificial short fibers and their woven fabrics	17.1 mil	- 89 %	2
10	Paper, paperboard, pulp for paper manufacturing, etc.	15.7 mil	- 70 %	13
11	Artificial short fibers and their woven fabrics	10.4 mil	- 78 %	16
12	Watches and their parts	8.9 mil	- 87 %	7
13	Inorganic chemicals, compounds	8.4 mil	- 62 %	32
14	Edible fruits and nuts	8.3 mil	- 80 %	18
15	Furniture, Bedding	8.0 mil	- 85 %	12

Trends in North Korea's exports to China by category (January-October)

Top export items to China with declining amounts (in order of declining value)				
Rank	Item (Classified by HS code 2 digits)	Compared to the same period of 2019 decrease (dollar)	Export value (dollar)	Compared to the same period in 2019
1	Watches and their parts	- 31.1 mil	6.8 mil	- 82 %
2	Feather products, wigs, etc.	- 24.6 mil	2.5 mil	- 91 %
3	Steel (ferroalloy, etc.)	- 15.7 mil	11.5 mil	- 58 %
4	Ore, slag, mineral ash	- 13.0 mil	5.6 mil	- 70 %
5	Optical equipment, medical equipment, etc.	- 12.0 mil	1.3 mil	- 90 %
6	Toys, exercise equipment, etc.	- 7.4 mil	0.7 mil	- 92 %
7	Footwear, etc.	- 5.3 mil	0.7 mil	- 89 %
8	Glass and its products	- 4.6 mil	0.3 mil	- 94 %
9	Special trading goods and unclassified goods	- 3.6 mil	3.4 mil	- 51 %
10	Inorganic chemicals, compounds	- 2.6 mil	0.3 mil	- 88 %
11	Leather goods, briefcases	- 1.5 mil	0.05 mil	- 97 %
12	Paper, paperboard, pulp for paper manufacturing, etc.	- 1.3 mil	0.1 mil	- 90 %
13	Tin and its products	- 0.8 mil	0	- 100 %
14	Plastics and its products	- 0.8 mil	0.1 mil	- 92 %
15	Basket weaving, etc.	- 0.7 mil	0.1 mil	- 88 %

Top export items to China in export value (in order of export value)				
Rank	Item (Classified by HS code 2 digits)	Export value (dollar)	Compared to the same period in 2019	Rank in the same period in 2019
1	Steel (ferroalloy, etc.)	11.5 mil	- 58 %	2
2	Mineral fuels (all electricity)	9.4 mil	- 1 %	6
3	Watches and their parts	6.8 mil	- 82 %	1
4	Ore, slag, mineral ash	5.6 mil	- 70 %	4
5	Special trading goods and unclassified goods	3.4 mil	- 51 %	8
6	Feather products, wigs, etc.	2.5 mil	- 91 %	3
7	Optical equipment, medical equipment, etc.	1.3 mil	- 90 %	5
8	Various chemical industry products	1.2 mil	+ 5 %	14
9	Toys, exercise equipment, etc.	0.7 mil	- 92 %	7
10	Footwear, etc.	0.7 mil	- 89 %	9
11	Fertilizer	0.5 mil	- 55 %	15
12	Inorganic chemicals, compounds	0.3 mil	- 88 %	11
13	Glass and its products	0.3 mil	- 94 %	10
14	Cigarettes and tobacco substitutes	0.3 mil	0 in 2019	
15	Musical instruments and their parts	0.2 mil	+ 21 %	28

(Based on China's maritime customs statistics)

1-2

Dissatisfied with the US negotiation stance, North Korea demanded a change in the stance toward the North

Forewarned of prolonged stalemate in negotiations, North Korea hinted at continued development of strategic weapons

In December 2019, at a full meeting of the Korean Workers' Party Central Committee, North Korea indicated that it expected the conflict between the US and North Korea to be protracted following the breakdown of the US-North Korea working-level consultations in October of that year, and suggested

that it would resume nuclear tests and ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) test launches, claiming that "there is no ground for us any longer to get unilaterally bound to the commitment to which there is no opposite party." In 2020, it continued to launch a series of short-range ballistic missiles (in

March), suggesting that these missiles were at the stage of actual deployment. Furthermore, at the enlarged meeting of the Party's Central Military Commission (in May), it presented "new policies for further increasing the nuclear deterrence of the

country and putting the strategic armed forces on a high alert operation," impressing upon us that it was improving its posture for the actual operation of strategic weapon

North Korea rejected summit before US presidential election, but curbed provocations, leaving room for dialogue to resume

When some media reports mentioned the possibility of a US-North Korea summit before the US presidential election (November 3), Kim Yo Jong, First Vice Department Director of the Workers' Party of Korea, issued a statement saying that "unless the US shows decisive change in its stance, the DPRK-US summit is not needed," while reserving the possibility as "depending on the judgment and decision of the two leaders," and she emphasized the position of seeking compensation, arguing that the US "major steps" in parallel with North Korea's actions for denuclearization is necessary. She also expressed her desire to obtain a DVD of the US Independence Day events and suggested that she might contact the US side herself (in July).

After the talk, North Korea did not mention negotiations with the US, and did not use the US-South Korea joint military exercises (in August) as a pretext to launch missiles or engage in other military provocations. In addition, Kim Jong Un sent a

telegram of condolence to President Trump on the occasion of his infection with the new coronavirus (in October), and North Korea was believed to watch the situation in the US closely in light of the possibility of President Trump's re-election. In addition, at the military review ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea (on October 10), North Korea unveiled weapons that appeared to be new ICBMs and SLBMs (submarine-launched ballistic missiles), showing off their continuous missile development. However, Chairman Kim, who made a speech, argued that these strategic weapons were "self-defense legitimate defense measures" and "not aimed at anyone," suggesting that he was trying to curb excessive stimulation of the Trump administration. After that, even as the election of former Vice President Biden was reported to be certain, North Korea did not react in any particular way and continued to sit idly by.

Although North Korea appealed for "support for China" in view of the confrontation between the US and China, its invitation to dignitaries on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Party did not materialize

Since the spread of the new coronavirus infection, there was a breakdown in the exchange of high-level officials between North Korea and China, and no Chinese dignitaries visited North Korea on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Party (in October).

On the other hand, North Korea sent a letter to

President Xi Jinping praising China's quarantine measures (in February and May) and appealed its friendly attitude toward China. In addition, when China decided to introduce the "Law of Safeguarding National Security in Hong Kong" (in May), North Korea showed its pro-China stance by issuing a speech supporting China's policy toward Hong Kong.

North Korea sought to resume negotiations following the inauguration of the new US administration, but may resort to provocative actions

North Korea is expected to seek to resume negotiations for the lifting of UN sanctions, etc., based on the need to improve its own economic situation, while monitoring the negotiating stance of the new US administration. In the process, North Korea may launch not only short-range missiles but

also medium- and long-range ballistic missiles in order to maintain its position as a “nuclear power” and to sway the US negotiating stance. In such a case, there is concern that North Korea’s ballistic missiles will pass over Japan, which will affect the security environment of Japan.

C O L U M N

New ballistic missile that appeared at military review ceremony

North Korea unveiled new ballistic missiles, including huge ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) and SLBMs (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles) labeled “Pukguksong [Polaris] 4” at the military review ceremony to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea (in October).

The new ICBMs were mounted on an 11-axle, 22-wheel TEL (launch vehicle) each, which were larger in both length and diameter than the “Hwasong [Mars] 15” (9-axle, 18-wheel), the largest ICBM North Korea had ever operated on a TEL, and it was pointed out that the new ICBM may have an extended launching range and be capable of carrying multiple

warheads.

In addition, the “Pukguksong 4,” which is believed to be a new SLBM, is believed to be in the same family as the “Pukguksong 1” and “Pukguksong 3” SLBMs, which are both ballistic missiles with solid fuel propulsion, and the correlation with the new submarine being built by North Korea is noteworthy.

Through this review ceremony, North Korea has shown that it is constantly developing weapons in pursuit of strengthening and diversifying its missile warfare capabilities. It is expected that North Korea will proceed to test launch of these new missiles in the future, and vigilance is required on the relevant developments.

1-3

North Korea continues to press for change in South Korea’s ‘follow-the-US’ stance

Not responding to South Korea’s call for dialogue, North Korea demanded halt to US-South Korea exercises and other ‘hostile acts’

Since the US-North Korea summit in Hanoi in February 2019 ended without an agreement, North Korea has not responded to South Korea’s calls for dialogue and exchange, and continued to take a cold attitude toward the Moon Jae-in administration of South Korea, which had been the “intermediary” between the US and North Korea, such as not mentioning relations with South Korea when Chairman Kim Jong Un reported on the immediate domestic and foreign policies at the full meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea in December.

Even in 2020, North Korea accused South Korea of not fulfilling inter-Korean agreements and continuing to conduct joint US-South Korean military exercises and the introduction of the latest US weapons, saying, “south Korea deserves ignorance and no respect,” and demanded the cessation of “hostile acts.” (in January). Also, when South Korea expressed concern over North Korea’s launch of short-range ballistic missiles, First Vice Department Director of the Party Kim Yo Jong issued a statement condemning South Korea’s response as “presumptuous behavior” (in March). Furthermore,

on the occasion of the second anniversary of the inter-Korean summit (in April), South Korean side called for cooperation in the field of health between

North and South Korea with an eye to the new coronavirus infection, but North Korea did not show any particular response.

Even though the Inter-Korean Liaison Office was blown up, deterioration of the situation was avoided by the apology of Chairman Kim Jong Un in the shooting of a fishery instructor

In June, in response to a South Korean defector group's dissemination of leaflets condemning North Korea (in May), First Vice Department Director of the Party Kim Yo Jong strongly condemned this and issued a statement suggesting retaliation, and also blocked communication lines between North and South Korea, including those between the military. Also, First Vice Department Director Kim Yo Jong announced beforehand that "a tragic scene of the collapse of the north-south joint liaison office would be seen," and three days later, North Korea executed blasting of the Inter-Korean Liaison Office in the Kaesong Industrial Complex. In addition, the General Staff of the Korean People's Army announced "military action plans" that included raising the alert level at the front lines and deploying military units to the Kaesong Industrial Complex and other areas. However, the Central Military Commission of the Party decided to put the plan on hold, and the plans were not implemented. Subsequently, along with the personnel reshuffling of senior officials in charge of foreign and security policy (in July), South Korea announced its readiness to cooperate economically, but North Korea did not respond and continued to ignore it.

Under these circumstances, according to an

announcement by South Korean side, a South Korean fishery instructor was shot dead by North Korean troops in the waters on the North Korean side of the Yellow Sea, and his body was incinerated (in September). In response, North Korea immediately sent a letter of notification to South Korea, conveying Chairman Kim's apology, but did not respond to South Korea's request for a joint investigation to uncover the truth or for the reactivation of the military communication line.

In this way, North Korea continued to ignore South Korea's calls, but at the same time, it showed consideration for the relationship between the leaders by sending a letter from Chairman Kim to President Moon Jae-in (in March and September), who was working to deal with the new coronavirus infection, and expressing "unchanging friendship and trust" (in March). In addition, at the military review ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea, Chairman Kim sent a conciliatory message to South Korea, saying, "I hope that the health crisis (caused by the new coronavirus infection) will be overcome and the day will come when north and south will hold hands again." (in October)

North Korea's moves vis-a-vis South Korea in June

4 th	Kim Yo Jong, First Vice Department Director of the Party, issued a statement, responding to the distribution of leaflets condemning North Korea by a South Korean defector group.
5 th	A spokesman for the United Front Department of the Party issued a statement, asserting that "you should keep in mind the statement warned by the first vice department director who oversees the project against the south."
9 th	Cut off communication lines between North and South Korea
13 th	First Vice Department Director Kim Yo Jong issued a statement warning that "A tragic scene of the complete collapse of the north-south joint liaison office would be seen." She also announced that "the right to take the next action against the enemy" would be transferred to the General Staff of the Korean People's Army.
16 th	Bombing of the North-South Joint Liaison Office
17 th	The General Staff of the Korean People's Army released "military action plans."
23 rd	The Central Military Commission of the Party decided to put the military action plans on hold.

While maintaining pressure on South Korea, North Korea watched the situation of US-North Korea relations and the next presidential election in South Korea

North Korea had long been dissatisfied with South Korea's pro-US stance and its refusal to substantially implement the inter-Korean agreement, and it is likely to continue to ignore South Korea if there is no significant change in South Korea's stance. However, depending on its own economic situation and the

progress of US-North Korea relations, it cannot be denied that North Korea may play the card for improving relations, such as cooperation in the field of health, in order to obtain support from South Korea, while keeping an eye on developments in South Korea toward the next presidential election in March 2022.

C O L U M N

First Vice Department Director of the Party Kim Yo Jong led the June crackdown on South Korea

The pressure on South Korea in June was led by First Vice Department Director Kim Yo Jong, the younger sister of Chairman Kim Jong Un, who is in charge of "looking after the affairs with south Korea."

In 2014, Kim Yo Jong was first introduced in the North Korean press as a "responsible activist of the Party Central Committee." Currently, as an alternate member of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee and the First Vice Department Director, her activities are reported to include accompanying Chairman Kim on field guidance and attending Party meetings. Kim Yo Jong seemingly took charge of mainly propaganda and agitation section as well as Chairman Kim's protocol. In 2018, she attended the opening ceremony of the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics as Chairman Kim's special envoy and handed over Chairman Kim's letter of intent to President Moon Jae-in. Since then, she has increased her presence in the field of diplomacy by

attending the North-South summit and the dinner meetings of the summits with the US and China, respectively. After the recent pressure on South Korea, she also announced a statement on relations with the US (in July), suggesting that she may be involved in North Korea's policy vis-à-vis the US as well.

In the recent pressure on South Korea, rallies in support of Kim Yo Jong's statement condemning South Korea were held every day in various parts of North Korea (in June), and it is assessed that holding the rallies had the effect of impressing upon North Koreans that Kim Yo Jong is in a leadership position.

Behind the rise of Kim Yo Jong, amidst the reports of Chairman Kim's health problems, it is assessed that Chairman Kim is aiming to further strengthen the regime by placing trusted relatives in the leadership, and Kim Yo Jong may possibly become a core figure to assist Chairman Kim.

1-4

North Korea still unresponsive to Japan-North Korea dialogue

Not responding to the call for the Japan-North Korea summit, North Korea criticized the Japanese new administration's "line succession" policy

Since May 2019, when then Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe called for unconditional dialogue with Kim Jong Un to resolve the issue of the abductions of Japanese nationals on various occasions, North Korea has denounced Japan's policy toward the North as "hostile policy" and has not responded to the call for dialogue.

Under these circumstances, when Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga took office in September, North

Korea repeatedly criticized the new administration, which advocates the succession of the Abe administration, through its external website. Also, after Prime Minister Abe's resignation announcement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of North Korea frequently posted commentaries on its website under the name of researchers at the Institute for Studies of Japan, claiming that the abduction issue had been "resolved in an impeccable manner"

(in September), and the ministry also dissuaded the new administration by taking up the issue of

“liquidation of the past” and Japan’s security policy. (📊 chart below)

North Korea continued condemnation of Japan, seizing on its response to Korean schools and security policy

Through the media and websites, North Korea claimed that some local governments of Japan temporarily excluded North Korea-aligned Korean schools from the distribution of masks as a countermeasure against the new coronavirus epidemic, and that Korean school children were not covered by the “tuition-free preschool education and nursing” system, calling these measures as “acts of discrimination against the Korean people,” and repeatedly demanded improvements in the treatment

of Koreans residing in Japan.

In addition, in response to Japan’s policy of considering alternatives to the land-based ballistic missile interceptor system “Aegis Ashore,” North Korea condemned Japan, claiming that the policy attempts to carry out full-scale consideration of possessing an “enemy base attack capability” and to possess a first-strike capability, and expressed its alarm.

While keeping an eye on the US-North Korea relationship and the relevant moves of Japan, there is a possibility that North Korea may explore the possibility of dialogue with Japan

For the time being, it is assessed that North Korea will focus on dealing with US-North Korea relations, and with regard to its relations with Japan, North Korea is likely to carefully assess the stance of Japan’s new administration toward the North, and the

possibility that North Korea may use the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics Games, in which North Korean athletes and officials will participate, as an opportunity to seek clues to dialogue, will draw future attention.

Commentaries under the name of researchers at the Institute for Studies of Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, North Korea

Issue Date	Title (Subject)	Issue Date	Title (Subject)
Aug.31	“Fabrication of ‘Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty’-Heinous Crime of Having Usurped Korean State Power” (“Liquidation of the past” issue)	Oct.16	“Extremely Dangerous Moves of Arms buildup” (Security policy of the new administration of Japan)
Sep.5	“Due obligation for the victims” (Treatment of North Korea-aligned Korean schools in Japan)	Oct.25	“Outright Challenge to International Society, Extreme Moral Turpitude” (Comfort women issue)
Sep.16	“Virulent Poisonous Weed Growing on Land of War Criminal State” (“Liquidation of the past” issue)	Oct.30	“Hot-blooded Outcry of Living Souls” (“Liquidation of the past” issue)
Sep.19	“Chief Culprit Who Undermines Peace and Stability in the Region” (Security policy of the new administration of Japan)	Nov.5	“East Sea of Korea—Original Name of the Sea of Our Country” (Notation of the Sea of Japan)
Sep.29	“Stupid Move of ‘Waiting One Hundred Years for Ocean to Dry Out” (Japan’s new administration’s policy toward North Korea, abduction issue) * Claims that the abduction issue is “resolved in an impeccable manner”	Nov.13	“Japanese Imperialists’ Crime of Seizing Korea’s Sovereignty—Unpardonable for a Thousand Years” (“Liquidation of the past” issue)
Oct.2	“Japan Unqualified for Permanent Membership of the UN Security Council” (“Liquidation of the past” issue)	Nov.20	“True Picture of Human Rights Peculiar to Japan” (Treatment of Korean schools)
Oct.9	“Do not Make a Laughing Stock of Itself Before the World” (Handling the Japan’s flag of rising sun shedding rays)	Nov.27	“Japanese Overseas Expansion Attempt Which does not Admit of Slightest Indifference” (Trend of Japan’s self-defense forces)

(Based on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of North Korea (www.mfa.gov.kp/kp/))

Corona disaster stalled Chongryon's organizations and activities, and impeded travel to and from North Korea

With the spread of the new coronavirus infection, the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (hereinafter referred to as Chongryon) was forced to cancel or postpone its regular events such as social gatherings, cultural and sports events, and charity events aimed at providing financial support for North Korea-aligned Korean schools in Japan, which significantly reduced the opportunities for activists and members to gather and raise funds. In addition, the Korean merchants and industrialists residing in Japan, who financially supported Chongryon, faced a downturn in business.

In addition, due to North Korea's restrictions on human traffic as a countermeasure against the new coronavirus infection, it was not possible for Chongryon to dispatch to North Korea celebratory delegations for the birthdays of Kim Jong Il (in February), Kim Il Sung (in April), and the establishment of the North Korean regime (in September), delegations from various organizations for the purpose of activist education, and students on school excursions from Korean schools, which hindered the appeal for loyalty to North Korea and the fostering of activists.

Efforts to mobilize organizations to support Korean residents in Japan and advocate for their rights

Under these circumstances, Chongryon worked to promote its presence as a "compatriot organization" and to increase support for the organization, under the slogans of "compatriots first" and "selfless devotion," by engaging in visitation activities such as distributing masks and disinfectant to the homes of Korean residents in Japan, as well as having its affiliate organizations of commerce and industry support the receipt of sustainable benefits for Korean merchants and industrialists residing in Japan.

Also, Chongryon proposed the "Five-Month Intensive Campaign" (in June to October), the intensive movement in preparation for the first convention in four years, the "Conference of Representatives of Branches of Chongryon-2020" (in November), and worked to rebuild its lowest echelon

units and strengthen door-to-door visiting activities. At the conference, the importance of strengthening the branches was reemphasized through the reading of a congratulatory message by Chairman Kim Jong Un and the conference report, and the momentum for revitalizing the branch activities was fostered by giving awards to those branches that were active.

In addition, there was a signature campaign ("One Million Signatures Campaign") calling for the application of the "tuition-free childhood education and nursing" to the kindergarten group of Korean schools, and school officials in various regions submitted the collected signatures to the relevant government ministries one after another (in June to August).


Restoration of the position of "First Vice Chairman" for the first time in 19 years

Chongryon held an enlarged meeting of the Third Session of the 24th Central Committee (in

September), where Chairman Ho Jong Man stressed that Chongryon is facing unprecedentedly serious

difficulties due to the effects of the Corona disaster, and emphasized its policy of continuing to work on tightening the ideology of activists, strengthening the organization, and supporting activities for Korean compatriots in Japan.

In addition, the meeting revived the position of

“first vice chairman” for the first time in 19 years, elected Vice Chairman Pak Ku Ho as First Vice Chairman ( COLUMN), and proposed a “new system of work” with Ho Jong Man as the “center of leadership” and Pak Ku Ho as the “center of work.”

Focus on recovery of Chongryon's organizations and activities stagnated by the Corona disaster

Chongryon is believed to continue to strengthen its support activities for the Korean compatriots in Japan, while striving to recover its organizational strength and normalize its activities. However, if the Corona disaster becomes more prolonged, the effects of financial deterioration due to a decrease in donations from Korean merchants and industrialists

residing in Japan may become apparent.

In addition, the reinstatement of the position of “first vice chairman” may be a move to prepare for the succession of the aging chairman Ho Jong Man, and the relevant moves of the leadership of Chongryon will draw future attention.

C O L U M N

“First Vice Chairman” position of Chongryon revived

Chongryon reinstated the position of “First Vice Chairman” after its Chairman for the first time in 19 years and appointed Vice Chairman Pak Ku Ho as First Vice Chairman at the enlarged meeting of the Third Session of the 24th Central Committee (in September).

The position of “First Vice Chairman” was formerly established at the 13th Congress of Chongryon in 1983 to assist the elderly Chairman Han Dok Su (76 years old at the time), and since then it has been held by Ri Jin Gyu (from 1983 to his death in 1995) and So Man Sul (from 1998 to his assumption of the chairmanship in 2001), but was abolished at the 19th Congress in 2001 when So Man Sul assumed the

chairmanship following the death of Han Dok Su (in 2001). In light of this, the latest establishment of the position of “First Vice Chairman” is thought to be aimed at preparing a system to assist the elderly Chairman Ho, who is approaching 90 years of age.

Pak Ku Ho, who was selected as the “First Vice Chairman” this time, is the youngest among the five vice chairmen at the time of his election, suggesting a generational change in the leadership. As former Chairman So Man Sul became Chairman after serving as First Vice Chairman, whether a successor system is to be built around First Vice Chairman Pak Ku Ho will draw future attention.

Transition of Chairman, First Vice Chairman, Responsible Vice Chairman

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Chairman	Han Dok Su (1958~2001)			So Man Sul (2001~12)	Ho Jong Man (2012~)
First Vice Chairman		Ri Jin Gyu (1983~95)	So Man Sul (1998~2001)		Pak Ku Ho (2020~)
Responsible Vice Chairman			Ho Jong Man (1993~2012)		



2-1

The Xi Jinping administration saw the spread of the new coronavirus infection as "the most serious incident since the founding of the country" and was determined to maintain stability

Xi's administration-wide efforts to control new coronavirus infections

The spread of the new coronavirus from Wuhan City in Hubei Province affected all activities in China's society and economy, including important political events such as the postponement (to May) of the National People's Congress (equivalent to the National Assembly), which is usually held in March.

The Xi Jinping administration positioned the spread of the disease as "the fastest and most widespread infection since the founding of the country, and the most serious sudden public health incident that is difficult to prevent and control (in February, General Secretary Xi) and the party and the government worked together to thoroughly curb it.

Guidance organizations such as the "Central Leading Group for Countering New Corona Virus Infectious Disease" headed by Premier Li Keqiang effectively "blocked the city" by restricting the movement of Wuhan citizens and blocking traffic in order to curb human-to-human transmission, and in addition to controlling the movement of residents in various places by introducing a smartphone application "Health Code" that determines the safety

against infection, measures such as stopping the production activities of companies were taken. During this period, the secretaries of the Party committees of Hubei Province and Wuhan City, where the infection had become serious, were dismissed from their posts (in February), citing "the need for infection prevention measures."

After late February, when the number of newly infected people began to decline, China took the step of resuming economic activities in stages while thoroughly preventing infection. General Secretary Xi personally went to the city of Wuhan and acknowledged that "the momentum of virus spread was basically suppressed" (in March), and in September, he flaunted the "success" of the Communist Party-led response to infectious diseases, saying, "The Party led the people in fighting the epidemic and achieved significant strategic results."

On the other hand, in the process of these measures, some intellectuals criticized the Xi administration for "covering up the spread of the infection," but these comments were suppressed by detaining the people involved.

Despite efforts to resume production activities as soon as possible, the economy was still halfway to recovery, and there were dark clouds over the achievement of the goals for the 100th anniversary of the founding of the party

The spread of the new coronavirus infection had a significant impact on the Chinese economy, and the GDP growth rate in the first quarter (January-March) recorded a 6.8% decrease compared to the same period in 2019, the first decline since 1992 when

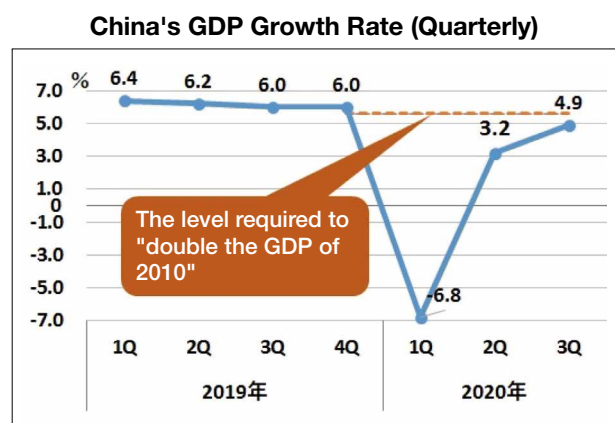
quarterly statistics were first published. Also, the National People's Congress (in May) took the unusual step of not setting a GDP growth rate target for 2020, citing that "China's development is facing factors that make it difficult to predict."

The Xi administration instructed the Chinese government to give priority to “stabilizing employment and guaranteeing people's livelihoods” in managing the economy in the midst of high uncertainty due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection (in May), and took measures such as drastically reducing taxes for businesses and promoting infrastructure investment. As the US indicated moves toward economic separation from China (decoupling), Xi proposed a “new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other (dual circulation)” (in May, General Secretary Xi), and indicated his policy of aiming for domestic demand-led economic development that is less influenced by the external environment.

The worst period for China seemed to be over, as its GDP growth rate recovered rapidly to 3.2% in the second quarter and 4.9% in the third quarter, and China was the only major country to post positive growth in the International Monetary Fund's full-year forecast (released in October). However, due to the global spread and reemergence of the new coronavirus disease, there was still uncertainty about exports, and in the domestic market, government-led industrial production and investment were said to have been key factors in boosting the GDP growth rate, while with respect to consumption, which accounted for about 60% of the growth rate, “we will strive to further accelerate the recovery” (in October, spokesperson of the National Bureau of Statistics),

and it was assessed that it would take a certain amount of time for the economy to recover.

Although the Xi administration was aiming to “double the GDP in 2020 compared to 2010” as a national goal in order to achieve the “full-scale building of a moderately prosperous society” by the “100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China” (2021), it was becoming difficult to achieve the GDP growth rate of 5.6% in 2020 that is needed to achieve the goal. Under these circumstances, with regard to the “poverty alleviation,” which was a “pledge” along with the GDP achievement target, the Xi administration appealed that the realization of the “moderately prosperous society” was near at hand, saying that “the problem of absolute poverty will soon be solved” (General Secretary Xi, in October).



Held an important meeting of the party and presented an economic strategy led by domestic demand

The Communist Party of China held a plenary session of the Central Committee (the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee) to guide the party's overall operations (in October). The session formulated a basic policy of China's independence in science and technology and expansion of domestic demand more heavily based on the domestic market with a population of approximately 1.4 billion as the

economic and social development strategy for the five years from 2021, and also proposed “reaching the level of a moderately developed country in terms of GDP per capita,” correction of the disparity between urban and rural areas, and expansion of the middle-income class as the long-term goal until 2035.

Toward the 20th Party Congress, the administration may face challenge to further improve the centripetal force of the administration.

The Xi administration would seize the opportunity of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Party (in July 2021) to promote China's development since the Party's founding and the "achievement" of the "full-scale building of a moderately prosperous society" as the Party's achievements, and at the same time, by hastening the implementation of the economic growth strategy using new technologies such as the 5G communication network and artificial intelligence (AI), China is assessed to be "paving the

way" for the 2022 National Congress of the Communist Party of China (20th Party Congress) to be held in a stable political environment. On the other hand, with the prospects for an end to the global spread of the new coronavirus infection unclear, the administration's future efforts will draw future attention to see whether the Party could further improve its centripetal force by managing the administration so that the people could experience economic prosperity.

C O L U M N

Possible dissonance within the leadership over economic policy and other issues

Faced with the extraordinary situation of the spread of the new coronavirus infection and the economic slowdown, a series of cases apparently emerged which were pointed out as possible "confrontation" within the Chinese leadership (see table below).

At a press conference after the closing of the National People's Congress (in May), Premier Li Keqiang said, "China is a developing country with a large population, and the annual per capita income is 30,000 yuan, but the monthly income of 600 million people is only 1,000 yuan." The media reported the view that this statement threw cold water on General Secretary Xi Jinping's appeal to "poverty alleviation." Furthermore, after that, in a treatise in the name of General Secretary Xi, which was published in the Party's theoretical organ-magazine, "Qiushi," the article described that "China's development space is unbalanced, and it is normal that there are disparities in gains among cities, rural areas, regions, and groups," and the media took up the description as "a

counterargument to Premier Li by General Secretary Xi" and pointed out that there was a "dissonance" between the two. In the same press conference, Premier Li said, "When we opened a street stall in one of the western cities, 100,000 people were able to find work overnight," as if he was encouraging street stall sales to improve the employment situation, which had deteriorated due to the new coronavirus infection. However, Beijing Daily (dated June 7) under the control of Beijing City carried a commentary denying Premier Li's policy saying that "the street stall economy is unfit to Beijing." As the Beijing City Party Committee Secretary is Cai Qi, who is said to have a close relationship with General Secretary Xi, the media also reported the view that there was "discord" between General Secretary Xi and Premier Li.

As for Premier Li's "1,000 yuan" comment, he seemed to merely express his opinion placing a significance on the income issue due to his position as Premier of the State Council, and it did not seem

Cases of the reported "confrontation" between General Secretary Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang

● Entrepreneurs Roundtable Discussion (in July)

The fact that Premier Li, who is in charge of economic policy, did not attend the roundtable meeting hosted by President Xi was seen as an omission of Premier Li by President Xi.

● "Beidou (navigation satellite system) No. 3" operation start ceremony (in July)

At the beginning of the ceremony, Vice Premier Liu He, the moderator, introduced the main attendees. After General Secretary Xi stood up and greeted, Premier Li also stood up, but Vice Premier Liu immediately read out the name of the next Vice Premier Han Zheng, and Premier Li missed the timing to greet and sat down in the awkward atmosphere. It was believed that Vice Premier Liu, who is said to be an aide to General Secretary Xi, harassed Premier Li.

● Regional inspection tour (in August)

It is believed that when General Secretary Xi visited Anhui Province and Premier Li visited Chongqing City at about the same time, Xinhua News Agency and other media reported only the inspection of General Secretary Xi earlier and intentionally postponed the report on the inspection of Premier Li.

to negate the administration's goal of "poverty alleviation, and as for the comment of "encouraging street stall sales," it was possibly a difference in policy priorities between Premier Li, who was trying to improve people's lives by increasing employment, and the Beijing municipal authorities, who had the

responsibility of protecting the landscape and public health as the capital city. However, press reporting that focus on such "dissonance" within the leadership in preparation for the 20th Party Congress in 2022 would be a matter of future attention.

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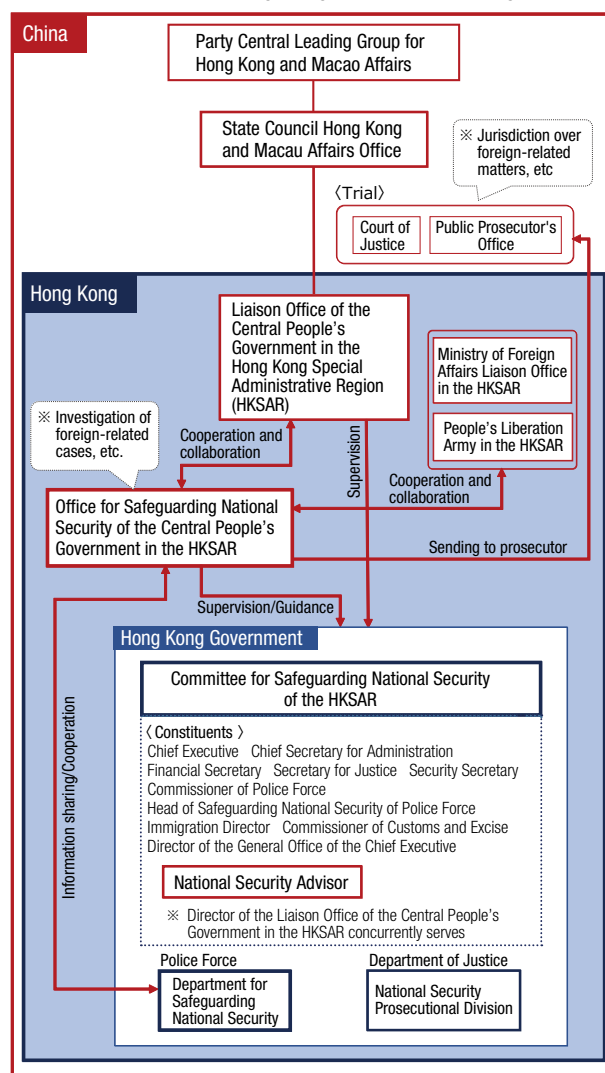
Hong Kong's "high degree of autonomy" at a crossroads with the enactment of the Hong Kong National Security Safeguarding Law

China Enacted Hong Kong National Security Safeguarding Law, and began full-scale intervention in Hong Kong governance

In response to the large-scale and prolonged protests against the revision of the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance in Hong Kong since June 2019, based on the policy of establishing a legal system for the management of Hong Kong decided at the Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (in October 2019), the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress enacted the Law on Safeguarding National Security in Hong Kong without going through the legislative process in Hong Kong and made the Hong Kong government to promulgate and execute it (in June).

The law punished "acts or activities that harm national security by means of secession, subversion against the government, terrorism, collusion with foreign countries, etc.," and the maximum penalty was life in prison. In addition, it allowed direct intervention in Hong Kong's security situation and judiciary by newly establishing security apparatuses of the Chinese central government in Hong Kong and allowing them to "exercise jurisdiction" and make a case subject to trial in mainland China under certain conditions such as situations where law enforcement by the Hong Kong government was difficult (right figure), with concerns being raised over "high degree of autonomy" in Hong Kong becoming a mere facade.

Overview of China and Hong Kong security-related organizations



(Based on the announcement by the Chinese authorities)

Arrests of key activists and postponement of Legislative Council elections dampened pro-democracy activities.

Around the time of the enactment of the Hong Kong National Security Safeguarding Law, the democratic activists who had led the protests announced that they would dissolve their organizations or suspend their activities, and some of them moved their bases of operations overseas.

In response, the Hong Kong government arrested activists who stayed in Hong Kong and advocated “Hong Kong independence” one after another, and also put out a wanted list for activists living abroad (in July). The government also increased the pressure by arresting (in August) activists with influence in the foreign media and others with a clear anti-Chinese government stance. These moves were seen as an attempt to have a “punishing a crime to make an example for others” effect on democratic activists. Furthermore, the Hong Kong government postponed the Legislative Council elections scheduled for September, which were expected to

give the democratic forces a large number of seats, for one year for the reason of measures against the new coronavirus infection (in July), and the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress adopted a decision on the disqualification of members of the Legislative Council (in November), and announced the disqualification of four democratic members of the Legislative Council who allegedly “asked foreign countries and others to intervene in Hong Kong” (in November). Fifteen pro-democracy members who opposed this submitted a resignation (in November), and the Legislative Council became overwhelmingly pro-Chinese. Although there were sporadic protests against the Hong Kong government's stance, the activities of the pro-democracy faction were stagnant due to the chilling effect of the Hong Kong National Security Safeguarding Law.

Amid growing concern in Western countries and elsewhere that the “one country, two systems” was becoming obsolete, China was promoting inclusion of Hong Kong

The US criticized the enactment of the “Hong Kong National Security Safeguarding Law,” saying that it would “transform ‘one country, two systems’ into ‘one country, one system’ and undermine the foundation of Hong Kong’s success (in June, Secretary of State Pompeo). Also, President Trump signed the Hong Kong Autonomy Act, which allows for sanctions against officials involved in infringing on Hong Kong’s autonomy, as well as an executive order to repeal trade-related preferential treatment for Hong Kong (in July). In addition, the UK also expressed strong concern over the “clear and serious

violation of the UK-China Joint Declaration” (Prime Minister Boris Johnson, in July).

In this context, China was poised to promote economic integration with Hong Kong, saying, “We must promote the integrated development and mutual promotion of Hong Kong and Macao with China” (General Secretary Xi, in October), and in the future, China is expected to promote both hard and soft policies toward Hong Kong, such as strengthening economic ties, while ensuring security and social control.

A string of Chinese companies listed on Hong Kong stock market, and China's growing presence

In the Hong Kong stock market, there have been a series of large listings by Chinese companies. As an example of the amount raised by initial public offering (IPO) exceeding HK \$ 10 billion (about 135 billion yen, as of the end of October), there were three cases in 2019, of which only one was Chinese company, but in 2020, there were already eight cases as of the end of November, all of which were Chinese companies. Chinese companies also accounted for about 80% of the market capitalization of all listed companies in the market (as of the end of October, right figure). Behind this lay the loosening of regulations in 2018, which lowered the barriers to entry in the Hong Kong stock market compared to the mainland Chinese stock market. In addition, as the US is showing a stance of strengthening audits of Chinese companies due to heightened friction between the US and China, it is assessed that increasing attention has been paid to the stock market in Hong Kong as a listing destination in place of the US, and there is also a view that it is becoming more attractive for Chinese companies that have already been listed on the US stock market to redundantly list on Hong Kong stock market as a risk diversification destination. On the

other hand, the fact that Chinese companies accounted for the majority of IPOs in the Hong Kong stock market, which recorded the world's largest fundraising amount in 2019, shows that Hong Kong, as an international financial center, is becoming increasingly dependent on mainland China.

Market capitalization trends of Chinese companies in the Hong Kong stock market



(Based on the announcement by the Hong Kong Stock Exchange)

Major Chinese companies listed or applied for listing in 2020 (as of the end of November)

Company name	Month of listing (month of listing approval)	Type of business	Amount raised in IPO (hundred million H.K. dollars)
JD.com	June	e-commerce	346
NetEASE	June	IT	243
China Bohai Bank	July	Banking	159
EPS Tigermed (Suzhou) Co., Ltd.	August	Pharmaceutical	123
ZTO Express	September	Logistics	113
Yum China Holdings, Inc.	September	Restaurant	173
GDS Holdings Ltd.	November	Data center	149
New Oriental	November	Education	116
Ant Group	Approved in October	Financial	-

(Based on the announcement by the Hong Kong Stock Exchange)

Relations with the US became tenser since the spread of the new coronavirus infection

In 2020, there was a momentum of improvement in the relationship between the US and China, with the signing of the “Phase 1 Agreement” (in January), which included the protection of intellectual property rights, the opening of financial markets, and the expansion of trade, but the spread of the new coronavirus infection in the US changed the situation dramatically. As the US stepped up its criticism of China over its initial response to the infectious disease, China engaged in a war of words, claiming that the virus originated in the US, saying, “It might be the US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan” (Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian, in March).

The friction between the US and China also intensified over security issues and human rights issues. In particular, over the South China Sea, Secretary of State Pompeo expressed his position that “China’s claims to its maritime interests in the South China Sea are completely unlawful” (in July), while Foreign Affairs Minister Wang Yi criticized the US for being the “biggest factor fueling

militarization in the South China Sea” (in September), further deepening the confrontation. Also in human rights issues, the US enacted the Uyghur Human Rights Act in June, which mandated sanctions against Chinese officials involved in the suppression of human rights in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and China also announced sanctions against US officials (in July). In addition, both the US and China dissuaded each other through military actions such as dispatching military aircraft around Taiwan and sanctioning officials over the closer relationship between the US and Taiwan and the enactment of the “National Security Safeguarding Law” in Hong Kong. In this way, as the US-China conflict spread to various fields, the US announced the closure of the Chinese Consulate-General in Houston due to the need to protect intellectual property rights (in July), and in retaliation, China also announced the closure of the US Consulate General in Chengdu, China (in July), further sharpening the conflict between the two countries.

While recognizing that the situation has deteriorated to “the most complicated phase since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and China,” China was eager to avoid a full-scale confrontation with the US

In China, against the backdrop of the growing friction with the US, it was widely recognized that “this is the most complicated situation since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the US” (Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in August), but on the other hand, there were successive calls from Chinese officials such as “China-US relations are the most important bilateral relations, and cooperation is the best choice” (Yang Jiechi, Member of the Political Bureau and Director

of the General Office of the Central Commission for the Work of Foreign Affairs, in August). In fact, looking at the various countermeasures taken against the US, China did not make the same preemptive moves as in the past and limited the content of its measures to the same level as those taken by the US, and these indicated that China was strongly conscious of balance (👉 table on next page), and was making efforts to avoid all-out confrontation.

China's Countermeasures against Major US Anti-China Regulatory Measures

US Response		China's Response	
Jun.22	Designated 4 Chinese media companies as "Foreign Missions"	Demand that 4 US media companies disclose information about their employees, finances, etc.	Jul.1
Jul.9	Announced sanctions against 4 Chinese officials and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Public Security Bureau for their involvement in human rights abuses in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, including freezing their assets in the US	Announced sanctions against 4 people on the part of the US for their interference in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (no mention of the nature of the sanctions)	Jul.13
Jul.22	Notified closure of Chinese Consulate-General in Houston due to protection of US intellectual property rights and personal information	Notified closure of the US Consulate General in Chengdu	Jul.24
Aug.7	Announced sanctions against 11 Chinese officials involved in violations of Hong Kong's autonomy, including freezing their assets in the US	Announced sanctions against 11 US officials involved in the Hong Kong issue (no mention of the nature of the sanctions)	Aug.10
Sep.2	Announced that Chinese diplomats would be required to obtain approval from the State Department when visiting universities and holding events	Announced that it would take measures equal to those announced by the US against the activities of US embassies and consulates in China, including the US Consulate General in Hong Kong, and their staff (no mention of the nature of the measures)	Sep.11
May to Aug.	Announced that 106 Chinese entities (Huawei-related, Uyghur human rights violation-related, South China Sea military basing-related, etc.) would be added to the entity list	Promulgated and enforced the "Unreliable Entity List Provisions," which the government had announced its intention to establish at the end of May 2019 (no specific reference to companies)	Sep.19

(Based on data released by the US Departments of State, Commerce, and Treasury, and China's Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Commerce)

China advocated multilateralism and sought broad-based cooperation with the international community

China widely called on the international community to "uphold multilateralism" and emphasized its contrasting stance with the US, which clarified "home country first".

With regard to the response to the new coronavirus infection, China provided medical supplies to all over the world in support, dispatched medical experts, advocated the idea of a "community of common health for mankind", and appealed for strengthening of international cooperation for the control of infectious disease epidemics (in May). In particular, China expressed its willingness to actively support developing countries from the standpoint of being "a firm member of the developing countries forever" (Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in September) by manifesting to give preferential provision of vaccines developed by China and reduce or exempt its debt.

With regard to the "One Belt, One Road"

initiative, which was being promoted as a national strategy, the "High-level Video Conference on 'Belt and Road' International Cooperation" was held (in June) to emphasize the idea of continuing to promote cooperation with other countries through the initiative, even as the impact of the new coronavirus infection on some projects was pointed out. In addition, China held the "China International Fair for Trade in Services" in Beijing as an international trade exhibition that actually gathered participants for the first time since the outbreak of the new coronavirus infection (in September) to express its intention to lead the global economic recovery in the future. Furthermore, Premier Li Keqiang called the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement by 15 countries including Japan and China (in November) "a victory for multilateralism and free trade".

With Russia, which was positioned as a "total

strategic cooperation partner,” China seized the opportunity of the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II to show off the “indelible historical contribution” of the two countries in winning the “world anti-fascist war” (in September), and in relation to North Korea, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers’ Party of Korea, General Secretary Xi sent a congratulatory message to Chairman Kim Jong Un, stressing that he would “work with our Korean comrades to develop China-North Korea relations firmly” (in October).

Behind these diplomatic activities, amid “growing uncertainties in the international situation” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, in September) due to the global spread of the new coronavirus infection and the growing friction between the US and China, it was believed that China aimed to curb international criticism of China and to gain broad support and cooperation for itself by impressing upon the world that it valued cooperation with the international community as a “responsible great power.”

Continued friction with neighboring countries over maritime and territorial sovereignty

Over the situation in the South China Sea, China showed that it did not recognize the sovereign rights of the countries within the “nine-dash line” by, for example, dispatching maritime research vessels to the exclusive economic zones of Vietnam and Malaysia (in April) without the consent of the other country. China also increased its coercive military activities, such as holding a series of simultaneous military exercises in the South China Sea, the East

China Sea and the Yellow Sea (in July to September).

Under these circumstances, a clash with India occurred in the disputed area on the border between the two countries, resulting in fatalities for the first time in 45 years (in June). China blamed India for the clash and stressed the need to ease tensions through dialogue, but the two countries subsequently continued to exchange accusations over incidents of firing in the disputed area (in September).

Recognizing that the US-China conflict would continue even after the US presidential election, China planned to expand its international support

China would hold the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party in 2021, and the Beijing Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games and the 20th Party Congress in 2022, and it is expected to seek to create a favorable external environment in order to ensure the stable holding of these important events. Under these circumstances, China, recognizing that the conflict with the US would continue for the time being even after the inauguration of the new US administration, is

expected to tackle US-related issues with an “endurance war” stance. On the other hand, on issues related to maritime and territorial sovereignty, China has upheld its stance of “resolutely defending its core interests,” and while continuing to have friction with the international community, China is expected to steadily try to gain more international support for itself through such actions as giving support and cooperation for measures against infectious diseases and economic reconstruction.

China's external publicity activities using SNS that is becoming more sophisticated and radical

For the purpose of defending its own claims and policies, etc., China has conducted external publicity efforts by using US social networking services (SNS), which it has restricted to use within its own country, since around 2019. In particular, as they became more active since March, when the new coronavirus infection spread rapidly in Europe and the US, their methods became more sophisticated and even some radical statements have been observed.

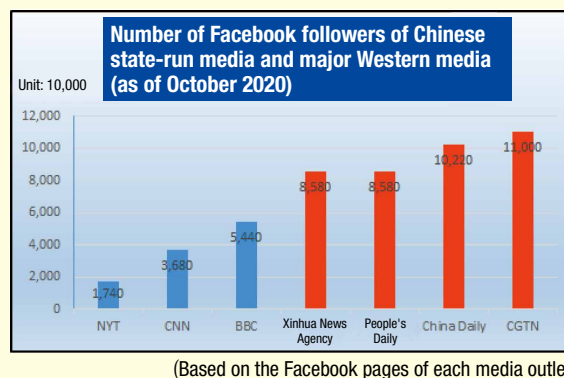
The Twitter account is also used by Chinese diplomats and others, and Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian's tweet (in March) suggesting that "the virus originated in the US" drew international attention. However, the basis for this was a "report" prepared by a researcher belonging to the Canadian non-profit organization "Global Research" (positioned by EU institutions as "sending out disinformation as well") and positioned as "pro-China" by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and others, based on postings on social networking sites in China, and it resulted in the widespread dissemination of information without scientific backing.

Chinese state-run media also have their own social networking accounts and are said to be working on "padding" the number of their followers in order to increase their authority and influence. For example, it has been pointed out that the "China News Service" signed a contract with a Chinese Internet company to increase the number of followers on its Twitter account by 580,000 (in July 2019).

On the Twitter pages of Chinese diplomats and Chinese diplomatic missions in various countries, there are some outgoing messages that could be inferred as insults to the other country. The Chinese

Embassy in Venezuela tweeted, "Put on a mask and shut up," in response to a Venezuelan parliamentarian's criticism of China regarding the new coronavirus infection (in March), and the Chinese Embassy in France linked the spread of the new coronavirus infection in Western countries to their political systems, pointing out on Twitter, "Why is it that old democracies like those in the West do not succeed?" (in April). This style of Chinese diplomacy has been called "Wolf Warrior Diplomacy," a reference to the title of a patriotic film about a hero struggling to defend China's national interests against its adversaries, and has caused friction with the international community.

Although China's outbound communications like these have not been successful so far, it has taken advantage of the characteristics of US social networking sites, which allow free expression, and what methods China may use in the future will draw attention.



2-4

China sought to build relations with Japan's new administration and maintain stable Japan-China relations

China aiming to stabilize bilateral relations, such as calling for cooperation in infectious disease control, even after the inauguration of the new administration

Since the beginning of 2020, China has been working to stabilize relations between Japan and China through government-to-government exchanges such as the 11th Japan-China Parliamentary Exchange Committee Meeting (in January) and the 15th Japan-China Strategic Dialogue (in January). However, following the spread of the new

coronavirus infection, various exchange programs had to be changed, including the postponement of President Xi Jinping's scheduled state visit to Japan.

Under these circumstances, China donated epidemic prevention supplies such as masks and protective clothing to Japanese local governments and companies, and emphasized the results of

cooperation with Japan in infectious disease control by saying, “both China and Japan maintained communication and supported each other through cooperation in infectious disease control” (Wang Yi, Foreign Minister, in July), and expressed the stance to promote economic recovery and maintain peace and stability in the region.

Even after the inauguration of Japan’s new administration, China continued to call for deepening bilateral cooperation under the stance of “continuing to deepen cooperation for infectious disease countermeasures and economic and social development (in September, spokesperson of the

Ministry of Commerce), and in a congratulatory message to Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, it called for “development of Sino-Japanese relations aimed at long-term stability and friendly cooperation” (in September, President Xi). Furthermore, at the time of summit telephone conference between Japan and China held for the first time after inauguration of Japan’s new administration (in September), China stressed to the effect that “both countries confirm cooperation on infectious diseases measures” and “early realization of reopening business-related parties' comings and goings.”

Donation of epidemic prevention supplies from China to Japan

	Chinese government	Provinces and cities in China	Chinese companies	Friendship groups	Chinese Embassy in Japan
Masks	700,000	about 8,940,000	about 5,270,000	92,000	about 645,000
Protective clothing	15,000	about 170,000	about 163,000	-	-
Face Shields	10,000	about 12,000	-	-	-
Protective Goggles	10,000	about 19,000	1,500	-	-
Surgical Gowns	5,000	5,000	-	-	-
Disinfectant	-	about 26,000	-	6,300	6,330

(Based on the announcement (on June 5) by the Chinese Embassy in Japan)

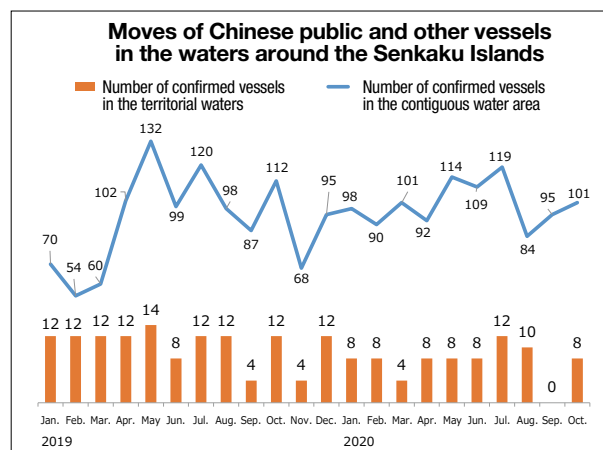
China upholding the principle position on the “historical recognition problem” and dissuading Japan over maritime interests

On the other hand, China repeated its previous assertions to Japan on the issues of historical recognition and maritime interests, which are pending between Japan and China.

In September, a ceremony was held to commemorate the “75th anniversary of the victory in the Anti-Japanese war,” attended by seven members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee, including President Xi, and at a “commemorative roundtable discussion,” President Xi said, “Facing the history of Japanese militarist aggression correctly and reflecting deeply on it is an important political foundation for the establishment and development of Sino-Japanese relations,” and upheld his position of seeking “correct historical recognition”.

With regard to maritime interests, under the claim that “the Diaoyu Islands and their attached islands have been China’s territory since ancient times”

(Ministry of National Defense spokesman, in August), in the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands, Chinese public vessels sailed in the contiguous zone for a record 111 consecutive days (April 14 to August 2), and also intruded into the territorial waters for a record 57 consecutive hours (in



(Based on the Japan Coast Guard website)

October). In addition, the “Digital Museum of China’s Diaoyu Islands” was set up on the website (in October), displaying historical materials and images

in line with China’s claim, in an effort to curb Japan’s territorial claims.

Against the backdrop of deteriorating relations between the US and China, China sought to build a relationship with Japan’s new administration from a strategic perspective

China seemed to be wary of Japan-US cooperation in the field of foreign policy and economic security amid the deterioration of US-China relations, and called on Japan to “work together to protect stable and smooth industrial and supply chains and a fair and open trade and investment environment” (President Xi in September). Also, soon after the inauguration of Japan’s new administration, the Chinese Embassy in Japan posted on its website a text titled “Some Perspectives on China-Related Issues” (in September), showing an attitude of trying

to gain Japan’s understanding of China’s position on matters such as the causes of the deterioration of US-China relations.

In the future, China is expected to take advantage of opportunities such as visits by its dignitaries to build relations with Japan’s new administration, and to strengthen its efforts to prevent Japan from becoming part of the “siege network against China” through such actions as the resumption of various exchange programs and practical cooperation using the economy as a lever.

2-5

As Taiwan sought to deepen ties with the international community, China stepped up pressure

The second Tsai Ing-wen administration was inaugurated, seeking to expand its presence in the international community while upholding the “status quo.”

In Taiwan, the 15th presidential election was held, and President Tsai Ing-wen of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was re-elected, defeating the then-mayor of Kaohsiung City, Han Kuo-yu of the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), the largest opposition party, and others, and the Democratic Progressive Party also maintained a majority in the Legislative Yuan election held at the same time (in January). In her inaugural address (in May), President Tsai once again rejected the application of the “one country, two systems” approach to Taiwan demanded by China, and indicated that she would uphold the “status quo in the Cross-Strait relations.”

Since the Tsai administration took office in 2016, Taiwan’s space for activities in the international community shrunk, in such ways that its diplomatic relations with other countries decreased, and its participation as an observer in the World Health Organization (WHO) General Assembly became

difficult. Under these circumstances, in 2020, there was a trend toward expansion of Taiwan’s presence in the international community by such ways that President Tsai stated that “change in the corona disaster is both a challenge and an opportunity” (in May), indicating her willingness to participate in the international community and strengthen relations with countries that share her values, while Taiwanese authorities actively provided medical support, and President Tsai participated in relevant online international events (📺 chart on next page).

In response, China dissuaded the DPP government and countries seeking to strengthen relations with Taiwan by such statement as, “we resolutely oppose to the encouragement and indulgence of outside forces for ‘Taiwan independence’ groups to conspire independence by making capital of epidemics” (Foreign Affairs Minister Wang Yi, in May).

Major Moves of Taiwan to Expand its Presence in the International Community	
Medical assistance for coronary disasters	Since April, masks were provided and quarantine experience shared in more than 80 countries (in June, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan).
President Tsai Ing-wen's participation in online international events	"Copenhagen Democracy Summit" (in June, Denmark), speech at a think tank (in August, US), "Indo-Pacific Leaders' Dialogue" (in August, Australia), "Forum 2000" (in October, Czech Republic)
Opening of Taiwan institutions overseas	"Taiwan Representative Office in Somaliland" (in August), "Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Guam (in October)

As US-Taiwan relations grew closer, China stepped up military intimidation

In 2020, the relationship between the US and Taiwan became closer in many areas, including the economy. In the area of “diplomacy”, the “TAIPEI Act” was passed in the US (in March) to support the improvement of Taiwan’s international status, and US Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar (in August) and US Undersecretary of State Keith Krach (in September) visited Taiwan. On the security front, the US decided to sell weapons such as air-to-ground missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles to Taiwan one after another (in May, July, October, November). On the economic front, actions such as an agreement to establish a “new economic dialogue” (in September) and signing of a framework for joint investment in infrastructure development in third countries (in September) were undertaken. President Tsai evaluated that “Taiwan-US relations became closer than ever before” (in August) and

expressed her desire to further deepen the relationship by such actions as strengthening security cooperation and concluding a free trade agreement (FTA).

China responded to these closer relations between the US and Taiwan by saying, “China needs to fight back appropriately against the strengthening of relations between the US and the DPP authorities” (People’s Daily, in September), and conducted a series of military exercises in the vicinity of Taiwan throughout 2020. Also, while China denied the existence of a median line in the Taiwan Strait (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, in September), the number of crossings of the median line by Chinese military aircraft was the highest in the past 30 years (Ministry of National Defense of Taiwan, in October).

China continued to take both hard and soft measures toward the realization of “peaceful unification”

China reiterated its hard-line stance against the DPP administration by such statement made at a roundtable discussion on the 15th anniversary of the enactment of the Anti-Secession Law stipulating the use of “non-peaceful means” against Taiwan (in May), “If the 'Taiwan independence' forces take selfish actions, we will use all means at our disposal to resolutely crush them” (Li Zhanshu, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress).

On the other hand, China announced a series of preferential measures for the Taiwanese people, including support for living expenses for young Taiwanese researchers (in August) and tax and other support measures for Taiwanese companies in China

that had suspended operations in response to the new coronavirus infection (in May). China also conducted online approaches for youth exchanges and business meetings, as face-to-face exchanges became more difficult.

While China would continue to strongly dissuade the DPP government from strengthening relations with the US and other countries, it would also continue to promote various cross-Strait exchanges in response to the corona disaster and to work for the realization of "peaceful reunification" based on its policy of “promoting the peaceful development of the two sides” (Government Work Report submitted to the National People's Congress, in May).



3-1

Amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation allowed President Vladimir Putin to remain in office until 2036

With the president's approval rating falling to a record low, the president likely face challenge to maintain his centripetal force ahead of the 2021 Lower House elections

In Russia, President Vladimir Putin, in his annual address at the beginning of the year (in January), announced his intention to work on constitutional reform, including the addition of a provision “banning the election of a president for a third term,” and the enshrining in the constitution of the “State Council” to decide on basic policies for domestic and foreign affairs. After the speech, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev (at that time), who met with President Putin, announced resignation of his Cabinet (in January), saying that he would “guarantee the President all options (for constitutional reform).”

Regarding the constitutional amendment, there were speculations initially that President Putin, who could not run for the next presidential election due to constitutional restrictions, would become the chairman of the State Council after he left office and rule the “cloistered government.” However, in the course of parliamentary deliberations, a provision to reset the past terms of office of current and former presidents was included in the amendment bill (in March), and the bill was amended to allow President Putin to continue to hold office until 2036 at the maximum.

Although President Putin sought to create the appearance of public confidence in constitutional reform by holding a “nationwide vote” in April, which was not legally required, the spread of the new coronavirus infection eventually forced a postponement of the “nationwide vote” until July.

The spread of the new coronavirus infection had a

serious impact on the economy and people's lives, and according to a survey by the independent polling organization Levada Center, President Putin's approval rating dropped below 60% from April to May, the lowest level ever recorded.

While the end of the infection was not in sight, the Putin administration pushed ahead in succession with a military parade to commemorate the 75th anniversary of its victory over Germany (in June) and a “national vote” (in July), and the constitutional amendment was passed with over 70% of the votes in favor (in July). The presence of various patriotic clauses in the articles and the raising of patriotic sentiment through military parades were believed to have helped the “national vote” win the affirmative vote. Also, in order to demonstrate that the trust of many citizens was gained, various efforts were made to increase the voter turnout, such as the introduction of online voting and multi-day voting.

On the other hand, the domestic economy was expected to deteriorate further in the wake of the corona disaster, and while a rapid recovery in the president's approval rating was not expected, President Putin was expected to continue his efforts to raise patriotism in preparation for the 2021 Lower House elections, and to try to maintain his centripetal force by dispelling domestic anxieties, such as by implementing a 5 trillion ruble economic reconstruction plan and appealing the results of the development of a vaccine for the new corona virus infection.

Russia to continue cooperation with China and intervention in international and regional issues amid uncertainties about improving relations with the US

In terms of relations with the US, there were scenes where US-Russian leaders fostered a harmony mood, as 2020 marked the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II and a joint US-Russian declaration was issued (in April) to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the “Oath of the Elbe,” when Soviet and US forces invaded Germany from the east and west at the end of the war and met at the Elbe River, and President Putin exchanged congratulations with US President Trump (in May) to commemorate the victory over Germany. However, no subsequent results were seen, and in May, the US announced that it would withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty, which provided for mutual surveillance by inspection aircraft between the parties, citing violations by Russia. On the other hand, with regard to the extension of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), which was due to expire in February 2021, the Russian side announced (in October) that it would accept the freeze on the number of nuclear warheads in the possession of both countries, which was proposed by the US as a condition for the one-year extension, and there is now a possibility that the expiration of the treaty will be avoided.

In Europe, criticism of Russia increased in August, particularly in Germany, for the use of a poisonous substance against anti-Putin opposition activist Aleksei Navalny, and in October, the European Union decided to introduce new sanctions against Russia.

On the other hand, in terms of relations with China, the first gas pipeline linking China and Russia, “Power of Siberia,” went into operation in December 2019, and there were progress in economic cooperation. Furthermore, there was also

military cooperation, such as, following the first joint military exercise by China, Russia, and Iran near the Holmes Strait in December of the same year, the People’s Liberation Army of China participated in the military parade commemorating the 75th anniversary of the victory over Germany in Moscow in June 2020 and also in the large-scale military exercise “Caucasus 2020” in southern Russia in September.

Russia was also expanding its presence in the Middle East and Africa, and when armed clashes broke out between government forces and Turkish troops in Syria (in February), where it continued to intervene militarily, Russia mobilized its Black Sea Fleet to dissuade Turkey and suppressed the clashes after consultations with Turkey, and in Libya, which was in a state of civil war, it was pointed out that Russia intervened through a private military company (May).

In addition, Russia was enthusiastic about maintaining its influence in the former Soviet Union region, and following its involvement in the situation in Belarus (👉 COLUMN 2 on next page), when the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh intensified in September, Russia held a series of consultations with the countries concerned and reached a ceasefire agreement under President Putin (in November).

In the future, Russia would seek ways to improve relations with the US while maintaining cooperation with China, as the escalation of the US-China confrontation was pointed out, partly due to the effects of the Corona disaster, and at the same time, it is assessed that Russia would continue to intervene in international and regional affairs while demonstrating its status as an “independent power” that does not belong to either camp.

The Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia honoring illegal intelligence officers (Illegals)

In January, in light of the fact that 2020 marked the “75th anniversary of the victory over Germany” and the “100th anniversary of the establishment of the foreign intelligence apparatus” in Russia (Soviet Union), Sergei Naryshkin, Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) of Russia, announced the names of seven illegal intelligence officers (Illegals) who entered the target countries by forging their nationality and engaged in espionage activities, and praised their activities.

Since then, promulgation and publicity activities regarding the past activities of Illegals were confirmed through television and books, and efforts related to the praise of Illegals by the SVR were continuing, such that, in July, a monument to famous Illegals was erected in a cemetery in Moscow City where high-ranking military officials are buried, and in September, another monument to them was also erected on the

grounds of SVR headquarters, and the unveiling ceremonies of the monuments were attended by high-ranking government officials.

These efforts were believed to have been aimed at boosting domestic patriotism through the praise of “heroes” in the past, inspiring intelligence officials who are still active overseas, and showing their willingness to continue to focus on foreign intelligence activities.

Even in Japan in January, a member of the Russian Trade Representative Office in Japan, allegedly belonging to the SVR, was referred to prosecutors on suspicion of attempting to illegally obtain a trade secret of a major telecommunications company (the case was later dropped). Vigilance, therefore, is required on unlawful activities by Russian intelligence agencies in Japan in the future as well.

Russia's growing influence over Belarus

In Belarus, over the presidential election (in August) in which the incumbent President Alexander Lukashenko was announced as the winner with more than 80% of the vote, large-scale protest rallies and demonstrations broke out in various parts of the country immediately after the election, calling for election fraud and the resignation of the president, resulting in many detainees and casualties due to clashes with the authorities.

In Russia, amid the increasing pressure on Belarus by Western countries, President Putin stated that the Belarusian people should resolve the situation without pressure from outside the country,” and dissuaded Western countries from supporting the

demonstrators, and announced a loan of \$1.5 billion to Belarus, which was in economic distress (in September).

Russia, while continuing to support the strategically important Belarus, which is located between its own country and the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), is assessed to press the country, whose administration was entertained doubts about its legitimacy over this presidential election and weakened its diplomatic position as well as its political base, for Russia-led integration under the Treaty on the Establishment of Belarus-Russia Union State.

Intergovernmental dialogue was maintained even though exchanges between various fields of the two countries were stagnant due to the corona disaster

Between Russia and Japan, due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection, mutual visits of officials and interregional exchanges between the two countries were greatly affected, such that the Eastern Economic Forum (Vladivostok), which then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had attended for four consecutive years, was cancelled, the opening ceremony of the Japan-Russia Year of Regional Exchange was postponed, and the 2020 “visa-free exchange” project had to be cancelled.

However, even after the corona disaster, intergovernmental dialogues between Japanese and Russian diplomatic officials at various levels were maintained in the form of telephone talks, and at the first summit talks between Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and President Putin after the start of Japan's new administration (in September), it was confirmed that negotiations for a peace treaty would be continued.

Russia emphasized the indivisibility of the Northern Territories in response to the revised Constitution's clause prohibiting territorial cession

On the other hand, Russia took a hard-line position on the Northern Territories issue. The revised Constitution, which was adopted after a “national vote” (in July), included a clause prohibiting the cession of territory. Although in the same clause, there was a “proviso” that border delimitation and demarcation with a neighboring country is an exception to the prohibition of cession, Governor Valery Limarenko of Sakhalin Oblast, who has “administrative jurisdiction” over the Northern Territories, stated that “a constitutional amendment that specifies Russia's indivisibleness will put an end to the territorial dispute” before the “national vote” (in June), and in Kunashiri Island, the unveiling ceremony of the stone monument with the same clause engraved was held in response to the “national vote” (in July).

Also, the Minister of State for Emergency Situations, Evgeny Zinichev, visited Kunashiri Island and attended the opening ceremony of the Distress and Rescue Center for dealing with disasters and accidents (in August). Minister Zenichev showed off

the fact that the Northern Territories are Russia's “own territory” by attaching to a stone monument in front of the center by himself a plaque with the words “The Russian flag must not be lowered once it has been raised” and “The Russian Federation guarantees the integrity and inviolability of its territory.”

In addition, from the Russian side, since the constitutional amendment, there were a series of words and actions that reemphasized the position of separating peace treaty negotiations and territorial issues, such as, “Peace treaty negotiations with Japan have nothing to do with border delimitation or demarcation” (in July, spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Maria Zakharova), and “We have always been in favor of the peace treaty, but not as a result of giving up our territories ”(in September, Vice-Chairman of the Security Council Dmitry Medvedev). The stance like these, which shook Japan's basic policy of resolving territorial disputes and concluding peace treaties, is likely to be maintained in the future.

Moves in the Northern Territories over “Day of the End of World War II”

In 2010, Russia designated September 2, the day Japan signed the surrender document, as the “Day of the End of World War II,” but revised the law in April by changing it to September 3 as the “Day of Military Glory.”

In revising the law, in addition to the fact that Sakhalin Oblast, which was the scene of the war against Japan, had requested that the law be revised on the basis of the fact that “Victory Over Japan Day” was celebrated nationwide soon after the end of the war, it is believed that the Putin administration supported the revision of the law as part of its efforts to promote patriotism on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the end of the war.

On September 3, the first occasion commemorating the revision of the law, various commemorative events were held in Etorofu, Kunashiri and Shikotan Islands in the Northern Territories. In Furukamappu of Kunashiri Island, military personnel march and the surface-to-ship missile system “Bal” were exhibited for the first time at the event. Furthermore, prior to the “Day of the End of World War II,” an international military technology forum to display military equipment and weapons was held for the first time in the islands of Kunashiri and Etorofu (August 27-29). The forum

seemingly became more like a place for relevant events linking the victory over Japan with the “End of World War II Day.” For example, in the island of Etorofu, an “exhibition commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the ‘Kurils’ (Kuril Islands and Northern Territories) from militarist Japan” was held, and in the island of Kunashiri, the head of the local administration stated at the ceremony that he “remembered the time when the Soviet army crushed militarist Japan and liberated the ‘Kuril’ Islands and southern Sakhalin.” In addition to related commemorative events, a Youth Patriotic Congress was also held in Sakhalin Oblast (August 30-September 4) with a view to victory in the war against Japan in mind, which was attended by Dmitry Medvedev, Deputy Chairman of the Security Council, via videoconference.

Regarding “the Day of the End of World War II,” there is a deep-rooted insistence on glorifying the victory over Japan, mainly among people involved in patriotic groups in Sakhalin Oblast, and in the future, the possibility of holding events in the Northern Territories with the attendance of Russian government officials will draw future attention.



4-1

Ongoing threat of international terrorism

In 2020, the “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL) continued its terrorist and propaganda activities even under the leadership of its new supreme leader, Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi, and the threat of terrorism by ISIL continued, as terrorist attacks by its affiliated organizations and their supporters occurred in various parts of the world.

ISIL showed a move to use the spread of the new coronavirus infection for propaganda activities, for example, it recognized that Western countries were busy with countermeasures against the infection and called on its fighters and supporters to prepare for terrorist attacks against Western countries (in March).

ISIL-affiliated groups in various regions continued their activities, especially in the Sahel region of Africa and Mozambique.

In European countries, the threat of terrorism by

ISIL continued, as terrorist attacks by alleged ISIL supporters occurred, and terrorist plots drawn up by persons who were allegedly in contact with ISIL senior officials in Syria and other countries were uncovered.

As for terrorist organizations other than ISIL, “Al-Qaeda” continued its propaganda activities and called for terrorism in the US and other countries. The “Taliban,” which was believed to be supporting “Al-Qaeda” in Afghanistan, signed a peace agreement with the US (in February). In the agreement, it was stipulated that the US side would withdraw its force in steps from Afghanistan, and the “Taliban” side would not allow “Al-Qaeda” and others to use Afghan territory for the purpose of threatening the security of the US and its allies. However, the impact of the agreement on “Al-Qaeda” remained unclear, as there was an observation that the “Taliban” and “Al-Qaeda” still had close ties.

C O L U M N ①

France Faces Terrorist Attacks Related to
Caricatures of Prophet Muhammad

The trial of 14 suspected accomplices in the January 2015 terrorist attack on the weekly newspaper “Charlie Hebdo” in Paris, France (12 persons including an editor-in-chief and 2 perpetrators were killed) began in September. The company reprinted a caricature of the Prophet Muhammad that had appeared in the past in a special issue on the day the trial began, and the editor-in-chief of the company expressed his determination in the newspaper, saying, “We will never give in” (September).

In response, “Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula” (AQAP), which admitted to committing the attack, issued a statement calling for reprisals against the company’s employees (in September), and “Al-Qaeda” also published in its organ-magazine an assertion by the Supreme Leader Ayman al-Zawahiri that the retribution for insulting the Prophet would be unbearable (in September).

In this context, two terrorist attacks related to

caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad occurred one after another in France. In the first case, a man from Pakistan attacked and injured a man and a woman with a knife in front of the former head office of “Charlie Hebdo” (now moved, address not disclosed) in September. It was unclear whether the perpetrator responded to the call by AQAP or not, but the perpetrator admitted that he was dissatisfied with the company’s republication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad and targeted the company. However, the man was said to have carried out the attack without knowing the fact that the company had moved, and the two victims, a man and a woman, were not employees of the company.

In the second case, a Chechen refugee attacked a male teacher at a junior high school in the Paris suburb of Conflans-Saint-Maur with a knife, cutting off his head and killing him (in October). In a class on freedom of expression, the teacher showed the students a caricature of the Prophet Muhammad that

had been published in the past by Charlie Hebdo, and the father of one of the students who found out about it distributed a video condemning the teacher. The man who carried out the crime was said to have shown interest in the video several days before the incident.

After the murder case of the male teacher, demonstrations were held calling for solidarity with the teacher and freedom of expression in Paris and other different areas across France. In addition, French President Emanuel Macron claimed, “We will not give up freedom of expression. We will not give up caricatures,” and this led to protests in Arab countries. Under these circumstances, a terrorist

attack with a knife struck a church in Nice, southern France, killing three people (in October), and in Saudi Arabia, at a ceremony attended by the French Consul General in Jeddah, Makkah Province in the west, a terrorist bombing struck injuring two people, and the “Islamic State of Iraq and Levant” (ISIL) issued a statement of crime, and ISIL-related “Amaq News Agency” reported that “the Consul General of the French government was the primary target, as the government wanted to continue displaying caricatures” (in November). There are concerns that more terrorist attacks would be carried out by Islamist extremists targeting French citizens and interests in France and abroad.

C O L U M N ②

Trends over far-rightists concerned by Western countries

In March 2019, a terrorist shooting attack took place at a mosque in Christchurch, southern New Zealand, by a man who opposed the acceptance of Muslim immigrants (killing 51 people). Regarding far-rightists like him, who justified racial discrimination and advocate exclusion of foreigners, their terrorism-related activities have become apparent in recent years, such as committing and encouraging terrorism and operating military training camps.

The increasing threat has been pointed out, such as that the Secretary General of the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO), Jurgen Stock, stated that the number of far-right-related incidents in Western countries had increased by 320% in the past couple of years (in February), and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee also noted (in April) that the frequency and damage of attacks by far-rightists had been increasing in recent years. It was believed that behind this lay the influx of immigrants, and that far-rightists who were opposed to this were connecting with their comrades through the Internet and sharing ideas.

Under these circumstances, far-right-related cases occurred one after another in Western countries, and in Germany, shooting incidents by a man who was said to have the idea of excluding foreigners occurred at two shisha (water tobacco) bars in central Hanau, killing nine people (in February). Also, it was said that the far-right ideology had permeated a part of the German army, and there was a case where weapons and explosives were found at the home of a special forces soldier who was said to be a far-rightist (in May) and the German Defense Ministry dismantled some of the special forces due to the existence of far-rightists (in July).

In the U.K., the “Sonnenkrieg Division” (SKD) and the “Feuerkrieg Division” (FKD) were designated as terrorist organizations (in February and July) because of their alleged links to the “Atomwaffen Division” (AWD), which was said to be a neo-Nazi organization in the US. Also, a 17-year-old boy who was said to have planned terrorism was convicted (in January), suggesting the existence of young men with a far-right ideology.

In the US, several members of the AWD and “The Base,” which was also said to be a neo-Nazi organization, were arrested one after another on charges of threats and attempted murder (in January and February), and several members of the far-right movement known as “Boogaloo” were arrested on the occasion of a protest demonstration against the murder of a black man by a white police officer for shooting a police officer and inciting violence (in May and June). Alleged supporters of the said movement were arrested for planning to kidnap Governor Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan State in the north (in October). Also, the US State Department designated the “Russian Imperial Movement” (RIM) as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT), the first white supremacist organization to be so designated (in April).

In the midst of these crackdowns, the AWD announced its dissolution (in March), but its former members established a new organization (in July), and “The Base” was said to be continuing to recruit young people online. In addition, RIM senior officials were said to operate militia training centers in Russia and give lectures online, and the relevant moves of far-rightists who were influenced by these organizations have been drawing attention.

Terrorism and propaganda activities continued under the new Supreme Leader

Even after the then Supreme Leader Baghdadi was killed by an operation by US Special Forces in Idlib Province in northwestern Syria in October 2019, and Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi was appointed as the new Supreme Leader, the “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL) continued to carry out propaganda activities such as disseminating the results of its fighting in various regions through the Arabic weekly magazine “Al-Nabaa” and other media, and carried out terrorist attacks in various parts of the world.

After the inauguration of the new Supreme Leader Qurashi, ISIL-affiliated organizations around the world issued statements pledging allegiance to Qurashi, and even in 2020, ISIL and its affiliated organizations appealed that they were still monolithic and maintained their power by issuing a series of criminal statements claiming that they would carry out attacks during Ramadan, etc., with the aim of waging a “war of attrition” to exhaust the security authorities.

In terms of propaganda activities, although ISIL had not yet issued a statement under the name of the supreme leader Qurashi, Abu Hamza al-Qurashi, the purported new ISIL spokesman, had issued sporadic audio statements. In a January audio statement, the spokesman called for terrorist attacks targeting Israeli interests. He also referred to the epidemic of the new coronavirus as “God’s punishment” for the Western countries and others, and called for the preparation of an offensive against “enemies of the faithful” in Western countries and others who were exhausted by the epidemic (in May).

Furthermore, ISIL resumed propaganda activities after a year and two months by the “Al-Hayat Media Center,” its public relations institution that used to publish its online foreign-language organ-magazines such as “Dabiq” and “Rumiyah” (in March), and distributed videos in English and Arabic calling on ISIL supporters living in Western countries, etc. to carry out “lone wolf” terrorist attack and recommending arson as a method (in July).

ISIL maintained a certain level of power in the territories of Syria and Iraq where it had put some areas under its control

ISIL was said to have about 10,000 fighters of the organization in Syria and Iraq, and about \$100 million in funds, even after losing its rebel-controlled areas in Syria and Iraq and changing its supreme leader. Also, about 10,000 fighters of the organization, including foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), as well as about 70,000 family members of these fighters continued to be detained in prison camps controlled by the “Syrian Democratic Forces” (SDF) in northeastern Syria and other areas. ISIL often insisted on the recapture of these fighters, and there were concerns about the threat of terrorism for this purpose, the recovery of ISIL’s power after the successful recapture, and the spread of the FTFs and their families to their home countries or third

countries.

In Syria, ISIL maintained a certain level of power in various areas, and carried out terrorist attacks against the SDF and the Assad regime forces, etc. along the Euphrates River in the eastern province of Deir ez-Zor, which was controlled by the SDF and the Assad regime forces, etc., as well as in the desert area that spreads around the central province of Homs.

In Iraq, in addition to such places as Diyala Province in the east and Kirkuk Province in the north, which were disputed territories between the Kurdish autonomous government and the Iraqi central government, they continued their activities over a wide area, such as carrying out terrorist

attacks against Iraqi and local tribal security forces in Anbar Province in the west.

Between March and May, in particular, ISIL fighters operating in both countries took advantage of the security vacuum created by the global epidemic of the new coronavirus infection and the slackening of security measures as the security forces of both countries were forced to respond to the measures against the epidemic, and increased the number of terrorist attacks against the security forces

and others, as well as carried out sophisticated terrorist attacks using various means of attack such as explosive devices and small arms.

Since it has been pointed out that ISIL has been planning to revive its operations in Syria and Iraq, ISIL is expected to continue its terrorist attacks against the security forces in both countries where the domestic situation is not stable, and to appeal its presence through various propaganda activities.

4-3

The “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL)-affiliated organizations that continued to carry out terrorist attacks around the world

In the Middle East and Africa, terrorism related to the “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL) continued to occur

In Yemen, an “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL)-affiliated organization continued to carry out terrorist attacks against the Shiite “Houthis” in the central Yemeni province of al-Bayda, claiming to have killed and wounded about 60 Houthi fighters in August, amid an observation that the organization was weakening in terms of its ability to carry out military operations and its finances.

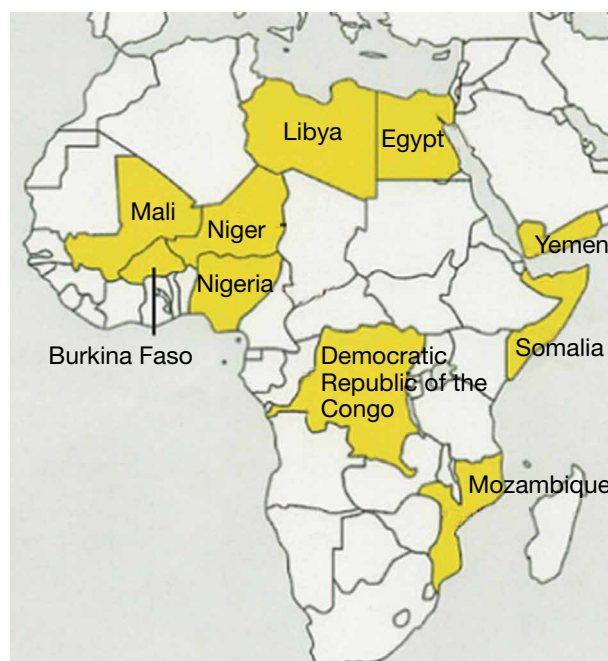
In Egypt, an ISIL-affiliated organization continued to carry out terrorist attacks against the military and security authorities in the northeastern province of North Sinai, including an attack against the military (in February) and a suicide bombing using a car against a security checkpoint (in July).

In Libya, while two opposing political forces were discussing a ceasefire, an ISIL-affiliated organization carried out a suicide bombing against Libyan National Army (LNA) forces in the southwestern region of Fezzan (in September).

In the Sahel region (📄 p. 51 COLUMN), ISIL-affiliated organizations continued to carry out terrorist attacks against the military and civilians in a wide range of areas, demonstrating the high level of terrorist capability, such as the attack on a military unit in Oudalan Province, northern Burkina Faso (in February), the attack on a military base in Mopti Province, central Mali (in February), the attack on a

village in Borno Province, northeastern Nigeria (in June), and the killing of a French aid worker in Tillabéri Province, southwestern Niger (in August).

In Somalia, an ISIL-affiliated organization was said to maintain a certain level of power and training facilities in Puntland in the northeast, Mogadishu, the capital, and Lower Shabelle in the south, and carried out bombing attacks targeting military vehicles as part of their “war of attrition” (in May).



Map of Africa

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), an ISIL-affiliated organization continued to carry out terrorist attacks against the military in various parts of the country, including an attack on a Christian village in the northeastern province of North Kivu (in May) and an attack on troops of the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in the same province (in June).

In Mozambique, an ISIL-affiliated organization

destroyed the city hall of Mocimboa da Praia in the northern province of Cabo Delgado (in March) and occupied the city’s base port after attacking the military base (in August). Since the port is close to the target area of a natural gas development project in which Japanese and Western companies have interests, vigilance is required on the future trends of the organization.

In the Asian region, the “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL)-affiliated organizations carried out terrorist attacks while under pressure by security authorities

In the Philippines, ISIL-affiliated organizations based in the Sulu Islands in the south of the country and parts of Mindanao continued to carry out terrorist attacks targeting security authorities, including an attack on the military in Maguindanao province (in March) and a clash with the military in Jolo Island in Sulu province (in April). In addition, the same organizations carried out a series of suicide bombings by two women in the urban area of Jolo Island, Sulu (in August). In the said country, suicide bombings have occurred every year since 2018, and it has been pointed out that suicide bombings may be spreading as one of the methods of terrorism. Also, there was an observation that several foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) were hiding in the country and collaborating with ISIL-affiliated organizations, and the threat of terrorism by the organizations continued to be a concern.

In Indonesia, as the security authorities stepped up their crackdown on ISIL-affiliated organizations, the authorities were successful in stopping many terrorist attacks, arresting more than 70 terrorist suspects in various parts of the country between January and July. However, ISIL-affiliated organizations continued to carry out small-scale terrorist attacks, such as the killing of farmers (in April and August)

and the stabbing of police officers (in June), even though they were put under pressure by the security authorities.

In Afghanistan, an ISIL-affiliated organization faced a situation where most of its members were driven back to Kunar Province in the eastern part of the country due to the intensified mopping-up operations by the foreign forces stationed in the country and the Afghan Armed Forces, etc., and its organizational strength was said to have shrunk from a maximum of 4,000 in 2019 to about 2,200. In the capital city of Kabul, a series of terrorist attacks were carried out one after another, including an attack on a memorial gathering for a Shiite leader (in March), an attack on a Sikh facility (in March), and a suicide bombing of an educational facility in a district with a large number of Shiite residents (in October).

In Pakistan, an ISIL-affiliated organization carried out a suicide bombing of a mosque in Quetta, southwestern Balochistan province (in January).

In the Maldives, a terrorist attack in which a police vessel was set on fire occurred in the island of Mahibadhoo in the South Ari Atoll, and ISIL claimed the attack as its first in the country through the Arabic weekly “Al-Nabaa” (in April).

In Western countries, terrorism related to “Islamic State of Iraq and Levant” (ISIL) still occurred, and threats continued

In Western countries, a terrorist attack by a man with a knife occurred in Streatham, south London, UK, and the ISIL-related “Amaq News Agency” claimed that it was committed by ISIL (in February). Also in Vienna, Austria, a shooting terrorist attack by a man of North Macedonian descent occurred, and ISIL issued a statement of the attack (in November). It was believed to be the first ISIL-related terrorist attack in the country. In addition, ISIL-related incidents of exposure occurred one after another, and in Germany, four Tajikistanis were arrested for communicating with ISIL senior officials in Syria and Afghanistan and planning terrorist attacks targeting US military bases in Germany (in April), and in Spain, a Moroccan was arrested for allegedly communicating with ISIL members in Syria and planning terrorist attacks (in May). Furthermore, in

the US, ISIL's influence seemed to continue, such as that two alleged ISIL supporters were arrested (in September) for plotting to carry out terrorist attacks against White House and other targets. On the other hand, regarding the return of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) who joined ISIL, a British FTF who returned from Syria was arrested in Spain on suspicion of joining the organization (in April), and a person who was allegedly transferring funds for the return of FTFs to Europe was arrested (in June).

ISIL and ISIL supporters continued to call for terrorist attacks against Western countries on the Internet, and there were concerns that terrorist attacks may occur in response to these calls, and vigilance is also required on the moves of the returning FTFs.

C O L U M N

The Sahel region where security was deteriorating

In the Sahel region, which extends to the southern edge of the Sahara Desert in Africa, in recent years, such groups as “Jama’a Nusra al-Islam wal-Muslimeen” (JNIM), an organization affiliated with “Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb” (AQIM), and “Islamic State in the Greater Sahara”, an organization affiliated with the “Islamic State of Iraq and Levant” (ISIL), have been activating their activities, and the number of victims of terrorism in the three countries of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger in 2019 was said to be five times that in 2016.

Behind the deteriorating security situation in the Sahel region, there was an observation that Islamist extremist organizations amplified anti-government sentiment among the local population and stirred up tribal conflicts in rural areas that were difficult to be governed by the central government, as well as inadequate border security by the countries concerned and insufficient military equipment. Also, it was said that Islamist extremist organizations demanded loyalty to their own organization in return for providing social services to residents.

In response to the deteriorating security situation, the international community, including France, the former sovereign state of the Sahel region, and the countries concerned in the region (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, etc.) stepped up their mopping-up operations, and they achieved some success, including the killing of AQIM's supreme leader, Abdelmalek Droukdel (in June), in an operation carried out by the French army in northern Mali. The countries concerned have also been working on



Major countries in the Sahel region (painted in yellow)

infrastructure development and judicial reform, among other things, in rural areas in order to bring the central government's rule to the rural areas where Islamist extremist organizations were active.

However, so far, Islamist extremist organizations have continued to carry out terrorist attacks despite mopping-up operations, and it has been pointed out that JNIM has the capability to expand its influence from Mali, its main area of activity, to Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal. In the Sahel region, since the beginning of 2020, the spread of a new coronavirus infection, the outbreak of a coup d'état in Mali, and other events that could lead to instability in the region have occurred, and there were concerns about the impact of these developments on the mopping-up operations being conducted by the countries concerned.

“Al-Qaeda” continued to call for terrorist attacks in the US and elsewhere through its propaganda activities

“Al-Qaeda” continued to conduct propaganda activities through statements, organ-magazines, and other media, and since March, it conducted propaganda activities to criticize Western countries, especially the US, in response to the spread of the new coronavirus infection and protests against racial discrimination in the US.

“Al-Qaeda” stressed that the spread of the new coronavirus epidemic was “God’s punishment” for the West, and called on Muslims to carry out jihad based on the teachings of Allah even as the epidemic spread (in March). The organization also repeatedly criticized the US, urging protesting Americans to “revolt” against the Trump administration and white supremacists over racial discrimination cases in the US, and once again naming the US as a top priority target (in June). Furthermore, the organization condemned the normalization of diplomatic relations with Israel by the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain as a betrayal of Palestine, suggested that the US was behind it, and called for terrorism against the

interests of the US, Israel, and others (in October).

In addition, the Supreme Leader Zawahiri released a video to coincide with the 19th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US, naming the US as a top target (in September), and called for reprisals against the French weekly newspaper, Charlie Hebdo, for insulting the Prophet Muhammad by reprinting caricatures of him in its newspaper (in September).

“Al-Qaeda” also highlighted the activities of its affiliated organizations in various regions, endorsing the Jama’a Nusra al-Islam wal-Muslimeen (JNIM) terrorist attacks against French troops in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger (in January), and praised the perpetrators of the December 2019 terrorist attack on the Pensacola Naval Air Station in the southern US by “Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula” (AQAP), and called on the organization’s supporters to carry out new attacks (in May).

“Al-Qaeda” is expected to continue its propaganda activities calling for terrorism against the US and other Western countries, and to increase its presence.

“Al-Qaeda”-affiliated organizations continued to carry out terrorist attacks around the world

The Yemen-based AQAP lost its senior officials, including its supreme leader Qasim Mohammed Mahdi al-Rimi, who was killed in a US airstrike (in January), but continued to carry out terrorist attacks targeting the Yemeni army and the “Houthis”, a Shiite militant group, in the southwestern province of Abyan and the central province of al-Bayda. Furthermore, AQAP declared that the organization was fully responsible for the terrorist attack (in December 2019) on the Pensacola Naval Air Station in the southern part of the US (in February), advocated further attacks on the US (in March), and showed its intention to terrorize Western countries, as the organization called for terrorist attacks against

the employees of the French weekly newspaper, “Charlie Hebdo,” for reprinting caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad (in September).

In the Sahel region, JNIM carried out bombing attacks against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and suicide bombing attacks against the French and Malian armed forces in Mali (in July), and also carried out a terrorist attack against Burkina Faso’s armed forces (in May), demonstrating its presence.

In the capital city of Mogadishu, the Somali-based “Al Shabaab” carried out a bombing attack targeting the convoy of the President of Somalia (in June) and

an attack on a luxury hotel where high-ranking government officials were staying (in August), while losing its senior officials during the military operations by US forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In addition, “Al-Shabaab” carried out terrorist attacks targeting US troops stationed in Kenya (in January), thereby continuing terrorism in both countries.

In Syria, the Tahrir al-Sham Organization (HTS), which announced its withdrawal from the “Nusra Front” and maintained a distance from “Al-Qaeda” while effectively controlling the northwestern province of Idlib Governorate, etc. agreed to a ceasefire with the Assad regime forces through the mediation of Turkey and Russia (in March). The said

organization has prioritized cooperation with Turkey and has worked for the survival of the organization.

On the other hand, Hurras al-Deen (HAD), which consisted of pro-“Al Qaeda” fighters who broke away from HTS, announced that it would continue to fight against the Assad regime forces even after the ceasefire agreement was reached, and carried out terrorism against the forces sporadically with pro-“Al Qaeda” organizations. In addition to the organizations established by old cadres who had defected from HTS, several pro-“Al Qaeda” organizations established new coalitions centered on HAD, but fighting broke out between them and HTS, which was wary of them (in June).

C O L U M N

While peace talks were underway, ties of the “Taliban” to terrorist organizations have been unclear

The “Taliban”, the former ruling force in Afghanistan, has continued to carry out terrorist attacks against the country’s military and security authorities. The number of administrative districts under the control of the “Taliban” increased to 75 out of 407 counties nationwide (as of November), an increase of seven counties since November 2019. The “Taliban” was said to have 55,000 to 85,000 fighters, reaching 100,000 people in total including non-combatants, with an annual income of \$300 million to \$1.5 billion. The “Taliban” still does not regard the current administration as a legitimate administration, and it has been unclear whether peace talks with the current administration would progress under the current situation where the “Taliban” has gradually been regaining domestic power.

The “Taliban” is believed to provide a base of operations for several terrorist-related organizations in Afghanistan. In particular, “Al-Qaeda” is believed to have a special relationship with the “Taliban”, as it was said to have received support from the “Taliban” in the country and cooperated with the “Taliban” in battle planning and training, just as it did during the “Taliban” regime after 1996. There was an observation that the hardline faction within the “Taliban”, the “Haqqani Network” (HQN), was in contact with senior “Al-Qaeda” leaders mainly in Helmand Province in the south of the country, and Ayman al-Zawahiri, the supreme leader of “Al-Qaeda”, was among them.

The “Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan” (TTP), “Jaish-e Mohammed” (JeM), and “Lashkar-e-Taiba” (LeT),

which originated in Pakistan, are said to be active mainly near the borders of the two countries where the control of the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan has been weak. Among them, the TTP is known for gaining combat experience with the support of the “Taliban” in Afghanistan, and then returning to Pakistan to carry out terrorist attacks.

Central Asian organizations, such as the “Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan” (IMU) and the “East Turkistan Islamic Movement” (ETIM), tend to operate under the radar in Central Asian countries where counterterrorism measures have been strict, while they have been active in conflict countries such as Afghanistan and Syria. In Afghanistan, these organizations are believed to be based mainly in the northern part of the country, where there are many ethnic groups such as Uzbeks and Turkmen, and supported by the same ethnic fighters in the “Taliban”.

The peace agreement between the US and the “Taliban” signed at the end of February stipulated that the US would withdraw its forces in Afghanistan in stages and that the “Taliban” would not allow “Al-Qaeda” and others to use Afghan territory for the purpose of threatening the security of the US and its allies. However, terrorist attacks against foreign troops stationed in the country, including US troops, continued to occur with unknown perpetrators, and suspicions arose in the international community that terrorist-related organizations, including “Al-Qaeda,” were behind them.



5

Cyber-attacks with increasing threat to national security

A series of cyber-attacks targeting the defense industry and other sectors were uncovered at home and abroad

Cyber-attacks aimed at interfering with business operations, stealing confidential information, and obtaining money, among other things, have become commonplace in Japan and abroad, and their methods have become increasingly sophisticated. In addition, the activities of malicious entities in cyberspace have posed a serious threat to the sustainable development of society and economy, as well as the safety and security of people's lives, as cyberspace has been expanding and penetrating further into society due to technological progress and changes in social structure.

Furthermore, the threat of cyber-attacks has become more serious from a security perspective, as states are believed to be strengthening their cyber-warfare capabilities, such as espionage and destruction of critical infrastructure, in order to achieve their political and military objectives.

In 2020, there were a series of cyber-attacks in Japan that appeared to be aimed at stealing confidential information, especially those targeting the defense industry.

A major electronics manufacturer, which was a supplier of defense equipment, announced a case of unauthorized access that occurred in 2019 (in January), and another major electronics manufacturer announced that its defense division's server had been unlawfully accessed from outside for several years since 2016 (in January). As a result of an internal investigation into the former case, a zero-day attack (an attack that exploits unknown vulnerabilities) on the company's China-based server was said to have been the trigger, and it was found (in February) that information containing "sensitive information" designated by the Ministry of Defense of Japan may have been leaked. Also, a major telecommunications company that also engaged in defense-related

business announced the possibility of information leakage due to unlawful access triggered by an intrusion into the server of its Singapore base (in May), and a major heavy industry manufacturer also announced a case of unlawful access triggered by social engineering (a means of unlawfully obtaining information by exploiting gaps in human psychology and behavior) via social networking sites to employees working from home (in August).


These incidents indicated that overseas bases, which tended to be less secure than domestic bases, were being used as a springboard for attacks, and that the telework environment, which was increasingly used by the Corona disaster, was being targeted as an opportunity for new attacks.

Outside Japan also, there were press reportings of cyber-attacks using social networking services to steal confidential information from the defense and aerospace industries in the US, Europe, the Middle East and others (in June and July). The Israeli Ministry of Defense announced (in August) that a cyber-attack on the country's defense industry had been launched through a contact on a social networking site, and that the attack was found to have been carried out by a state-sponsored cyber entity (hacker group) called "Lazarus."

There were also press reportings of cyber-attacks on critical infrastructures, such as a cyber-attack intending to intrude into the control system of a waterworks facility in Israel (in April), a cyber-attack causing system failure of a port in Iran (in May), and a distributed denial of service (DDoS) attack on the New Zealand Stock Exchange (in August).

Japan also needs to continue to be vigilant in order to protect its critical information and infrastructure from the threat of cyber-attacks.

The US and UK stepped up efforts to identify and publicize cyber attackers, and the EU applied sanctions for the first time

The US, UK and other countries have been more active in identifying and publicizing the perpetrators of cyberp-attacks (Public Attribution  P.57 COLUMN). In these efforts, the cases in which the state involvement of China, Russia and North Korea was pointed out are as follows.

CHINA

With regard to China, in addition to the involvement of its military and intelligence agencies in large-scale cyber espionage, it has been pointed out that the relationship between the authorities and cyber criminals is likened to a kind of symbiotic one.

The US Department of Justice announced the indictment of four members of the “54th Research Institute” of the People’s Liberation Army of China for hacking into “Equifax,” a major credit information company (in 2017) and stealing the personal information of about 145 million Americans (in February). The Department also announced the indictment of two Chinese nationals for repeated cyber-attacks for more than 10 years targeting governments, private organizations, and human rights activists in the US and abroad to steal confidential information (in July). The indictment pointed out that US biotechnology companies engaged in the development of vaccines for new coronavirus infections were also targeted, and that the defendants were engaged in information theft not only for their own financial gain, but also with the cooperation, support, and tacit approval of the Chinese Ministry of State Security.

In addition, the Justice Department announced (in September) the indictment of five Chinese hackers for their involvement in a series of attacks by a cyber entity called “APT41” on more than 100 targets around the world, including IT companies. While pointing out that one of the accused boasted of his close relationship with the Chinese Ministry of State Security, Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen criticized the Chinese government for deliberately letting domestic cyber criminals go free to help steal intellectual property from foreign countries.

In addition, the US government warned that China's cyber-based entities were engaged in activities that attempted to fraudulently obtain


intellectual property regarding vaccines, treatments, and testing for new coronavirus infections (in May). At the same time, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urged China to stop such malicious activities in a statement.

RUSSIA

In Russia as well, the involvement of military and intelligence agencies in cyber-attacks as well as cooperation between security agencies and cyber criminals has been pointed out.

The US Treasury Department announced sanctions against “Evil Corp,” a Russia-based cybercrime organization that targets financial institutions (in December 2019). The Department pointed to the direct cooperation between the organization’s leaders and the Federal Security Service of Russia (FSB) as evidence of the Russian government’s use of cybercriminals.

The UK, US, Georgia, and other countries determined that the massive cyber-attack on Georgia (in October 2019), which caused a series of destruction and disruptions, including defacing and shutting down government websites and disrupting state broadcasting, was carried out by the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia, and issued a statement of condemnation (in February).

The US and UK governments also identified the GRU’s “Main Center for Special Technologies (GTsST)” (Unit 74455), which subordinates cyber entities known as “Sandworm” and the likes, as the perpetrator of this incident as well as previous major disruptive cyber-attacks ( p.57 COLUMN) mainly targeting Ukraine. Furthermore, the governments of the two countries determined that the GRU unit carried out a cyber-attack disguised as an attack by North Korea in order to interfere with the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games (in February 2018), where the Russian team was excluded due to doping problems, and the US government announced the indictment of six members of the unit (in October). The British government also pointed out that the GRU unit conducted cyber reconnaissance targeting organizations related to the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The governments of the UK, Canada, and the US warned that the cyber entity “APT29” was almost certainly a part of Russian intelligence apparatuses, and that the entity had launched an attack on an organization that developed a vaccine for a new coronavirus infection, presumably to steal information (in July).

NORTH KOREA

In its annual report (released in September), the Panel of Experts of the United Nations Security Council’s North Korea Sanctions Committee noted that, along with “Lazarus,” “Kimsuky,” a cyber entity under the General Reconnaissance Bureau of North

Korea, was believed to be carrying out cyber-attacks aimed at stealing information by sending targeted e-mails posing as fake security alerts to UNSC diplomats and Panel of Experts members.

First sanctions imposed by EU

The European Union (EU) first applied the sanctions system introduced in 2019 as a diplomatic tool to deter cyber-attacks, and designated eight individuals and four organizations from China, Russia, and North Korea involved in past major incidents as targets to be applied the sanction system (in July and October).

APT Groups and Attribution

Among cyber-attacks, cyber-entities that persistently launch sophisticated attacks against specific targets, especially those that are assumed to be with state involvement or state-sponsored, are referred to as APT (Advanced Persistent Threat) groups. Security companies around the world give each APT group a unique identifier in order to detect and track its activities.

On the other hand, due to the nature of cyber-attacks, the source of the attack is not obvious, and its identification (attribution) is not easy. Therefore, it is more difficult to deter cyber-attacks than traditional

military threats, because the perpetrator state can easily deny the attack even if the attack is conducted under the involvement of a state.

As part of the efforts to deter and respond to such cyber-attacks by offsetting the anonymity and secrecy of the attacks, the governments of US, UK and others are stepping up their efforts in what is known as “public attribution,” which involves naming and criticizing the countries in question in a public forum (including prosecution and sanctions) upon identifying the APT groups involved in the attacks and the state actors behind them.

Links between APT groups and state institutions identified and disclosed by Western governments

Distinguished name of the APT group (in parentheses are examples of aliases)	Relevant state institutions	Examples of cyber-attack cases and targets involved
APT 1 (Comment Panda)	Unit 61398 of the Third Department of the General Staff Department (then) of the People's Liberation Army of China	-Information theft from six organizations in the US, including atomic power manufacturers (2006~14)
APT 10 (Stone Panda)	Tianjin City State Security Bureau of the Ministry of State Security of China	-Theft of technical information from US companies and government institutions (circa 2006~18) -Intrusion into IT management service providers (MSPs) around the world (circa 2014~18)
APT 28 (Fancy Bear)	85th Main Special Service Center of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia (Unit 26165)	-Information theft targeting the German Bundestag (2015) -Information theft and exposure targeting the US presidential election (2016) -Information theft and exposure aimed at anti-doping agencies (2016) -An intrusion attempt into the Wi-Fi of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) (2018)
Sandworm (BlackEnergy)	Main Center for Special Technologies (GTsST) of the GRU of Russia (Unit 74455)	-Large scale power outage in Ukraine (2015, 2016) -Theft of US presidential election voter information, etc. (2016) -“NotPetya,” a destructive attack in Ukraine and elsewhere (2017) -Interference at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics (2018) -Destructive attacks on Georgia (2019)
APT 29 (Cozy Bear)	Russian intelligence agencies (*)	-Intrusion into US political parties (2015) -Vaccine development company intellectual property theft (2020)
Lazarus (APT 38)	Laboratory 110 of the Third Bureau of the General Reconnaissance Bureau of North Korea	-System disruption and information theft at Sony Pictures (2014) -Theft of about \$81 million from Bangladesh Bank (2016) -Ransomware “WannaCry” (2017) -Unlawful withdrawals from ATMs around the world (2016~)

*According to the Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service, the aforementioned “agencies” were the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) and the Federal Security Service (FSB).

(Based on materials published by the US government, the UK government, the Council of the European Union, and the Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service)



Activities aiming to acquire materials and technologies, etc. that can be diverted to military use

Iran continued uranium enrichment activities in excess of its obligations under the “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action” and continued missile development, and vigilance is required regarding its activities of procuring and proliferating relevant materials

As a countermeasure to the withdrawal of the US from the “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)” (concluded in July 2015) over the nuclear issue (in May 2018) and the resulting re-imposition of economic sanctions against Iran, Iran had been taking measures to suspend the implementation of the JCPOA in stages since May 2019, and in January, as the “final stage” of the suspension, Iran announced its policy to proceed with its nuclear development without any restrictions on uranium enrichment stipulated in the JCPOA, such as the amount of enriched uranium stored, enrichment level, and research and development of centrifuges. Subsequently, Iran increased its stockpile of enriched uranium to about 12 times the amount specified in the JCPOA as of November. As for the enrichment level, it was pointed out that although it exceeded the specified value of the JCPOA, it remained lower than the 20% level that the country had achieved before the conclusion of the JCPOA (Report by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in November).

The IAEA requested inspections (in March and June) on the suspicion that Iran had conducted nuclear-related activities at undeclared sites in the country in the past. Iran initially refused to accept the inspection, but in August, it changed its position and agreed to accept the inspection.

With regard to the lifting of the arms embargo on Iran based on UNSC Resolution 2231, in August, the US submitted a draft resolution to the Security Council calling for an indefinite extension of the embargo, but the draft resolution was rejected and the arms embargo, which had lasted for more than 10 years, was subsequently lifted. Following this, Iran

stressed that “from now on, we can import and export necessary weapons without legal restrictions” (in October). In response, the European Union (EU) claimed to maintain its own arms embargo on Iran (in October).

It has been pointed out that Iran has been unlawfully procuring goods and technologies necessary for the development of weapons of mass destruction that it cannot secure within its own borders, and that it has been using various methods, including cyber-attacks, in its procurement activities, as it appears that the acquisition of such goods and technologies has become increasingly difficult due to the impact of sanctions over the years (in July, the German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution “Annual Report”). Iran indicated that it was promoting missile development, stating that it “will continue to manufacture and research missiles and other weapons based on its deterrence and defense strategy” (in August), and flaunted its achievements with the launch of the new “Qased” satellite launcher (in April), which carried the country’s first military satellite, and the release of the new “Haj Qasem” ballistic missile (in August). Vigilance is required on its procurement activities.

Furthermore, regarding the proliferation activities of weapons of mass destruction, etc., the UN Secretary-General's report on the implementation status of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 assessed (in June) that the cruise missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles used in attacks on Saudi Arabian oil facilities, etc. (in May and September 2019) were of “Iranian origin”, and vigilance is required on its proliferation activities as well.

China promoted the development of advanced weapons-related technologies, and vigilance is required on its moves to target foreign advanced technologies

While China has traditionally promoted “military-civil fusion” to encourage the entry of the private sector into the research and development of military technology, and has been working on the development of advanced weapons, President Xi Jinping stressed the need to accelerate the improvement of China’s defense science and technology capabilities to modernize its armed forces, saying, “We must accelerate the breakthrough of key core technologies and accelerate the implementation of key processes in national defense science and technology and weapons equipment.”(in July)

On the other hand, in a report titled “Military-Civil Fusion and the People’s Republic of China” (May), the US stated regarding China’s promotion of “Military-Civil Fusion” that China “is developing and acquiring key technologies through licit and illicit means. These include investment in private industries, talent recruitment programs, directing

academic and research collaboration to military gain, forced technology transfer, intelligence gathering, and outright theft,” and pointed out the dangers.

In the meantime, in relation to hypersonic weapons, also known as “game-changers,” it was reported in China’s state-run media (in June) that a research institute under the State Council had “developed a scramjet engine that burns continuously for 600 seconds” and that “this achievement may bring about significant progress in the development of hypersonic weapons in China.”

Advanced technologies that can be used for military purposes are being researched at Japanese universities and companies as well, and it has been pointed out that China is also targeting unpublished basic research. Vigilance, therefore, is required in Japan as well on various trends that could lead to the leakage of such technologies (📖 p.10, Special Feature 2, “Economic Security Related Trends”).

North Korea continued ballistic missile development; its procurement activities remain a concern

North Korea launched short-range ballistic missiles on four occasions (in March). Among them, the interval between the two launches of the short-range ballistic missile, which is called the “Super-Large Multiple Rocket Launcher,” was shortened compared to the time in 2019, indicating the improvement of the continuous launch technology. As for the launch of the short-range ballistic missile, which North Korea called a “tactical guided-weapon,” North Korea’s official media touted the improved accuracy and striking power of the missile, saying, “The accuracy of the guided-missile and the power of the warhead were clearly demonstrated.”

Also, North Korea unveiled intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) at a military review ceremony to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers’ Party of Korea (in October) (📖 p. 22 COLUMN), suggesting the possibility that

North Korea had continued to develop weapons of mass destruction, etc.

In addition, the Panel of Experts of the UN Security Council Committee on Sanctions against North Korea reported (in March) that “North Korea is still dependent on imports from abroad of materials for solid propellants, carbon fiber, guiding system components, etc.,” and noted that “Through its past six nuclear tests, the DPRK has probably miniaturized nuclear devices to fit into the warheads of its ballistic missiles” and that “The DPRK is continuing its nuclear program, including the production of highly enriched uranium and the construction of an experimental light water reactor” (in August). As North Korea pursues the development of weapons of mass destruction, there is a risk that it will continue to try to procure supplies and technology from overseas, and caution is required in this trend.

Internal Situation of 2020



1-1

Twenty-five years after the sarin gas attack on the subway, Aum Shinrikyo maintained its dangerous nature

Aum Shinrikyo still under the influence of Asahara

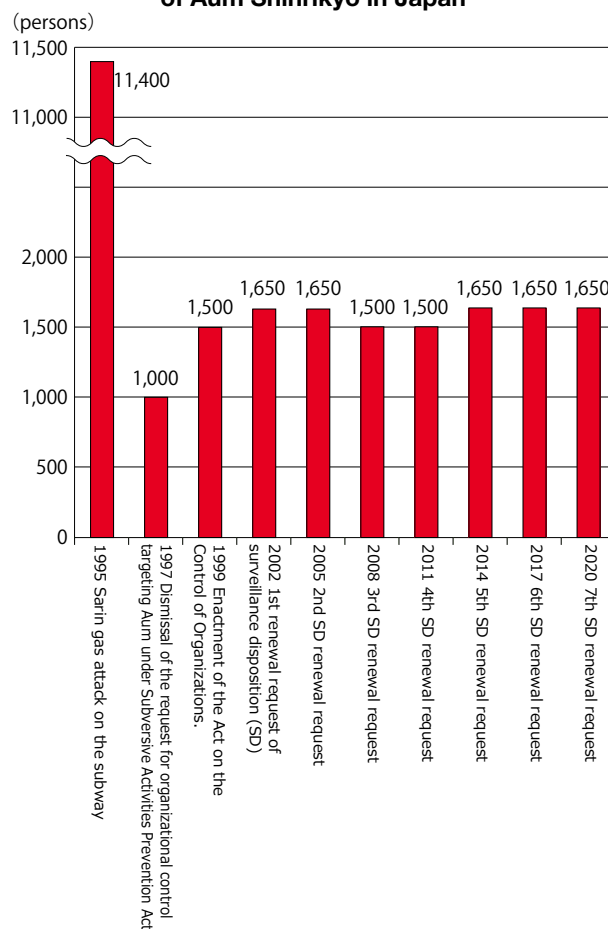
In 2020, the so-called Aum Shinrikyo continued its activities centered on the following groups: “Aleph”, which explicitly emphasizes absolute devotion to Chizuo Matsumoto, aka Shoko Asahara, the mastermind of the sarin gas attacks on the subway in Tokyo (in March 1995), the “group led by Yamada” (see note), which maintains absolute devotion to Asahara while keeping a certain distance from “Aleph” (herein both groups together are referred to as the mainstream group), and “Hikari-no-Wa,” which pretends to cast aside Asahara’s influence in order to avoid the surveillance disposition (represented by Fumihiro Joyu and known as the Joyu group).

Twenty-five years have passed since the sarin gas attacks on the subway, and during that period, Aum Shinrikyo branched off and split due to differences in its activity policy, and Asahara’s death sentence was executed (in July 2018), but no changes have been seen in its actual state where the mainstream group remains under the influence of Asahara, such as posting a photographic portrait of Asahara on their altars and the Joyu group posts a Buddhist painting that projects Asahara in the facility. And, Aum Shinrikyo still now maintains its dangerous nature, as seen in that the majority of live-in members of both the mainstream and the Joyu groups are those who were already the members even before the sarin gas attacks on the subway, and they continued to maintain dangerous “doctrines” that included content recommending murder and a closed society of superior orders and subjugation that enabled them to plan and prepare for the sarin gas attacks on the subway in an organized and secretive manner.

No major shifts in the number of members of Aum Shinrikyo have been seen even after Asahara’s execution, and as of 2020, the organization still had about 1,650 members in Japan and about 130 members in Russia.

Note: The “group led by Yamada” does not use any specific name of its own, so it is referred to by the name of its senior member.

Changes in the number of members of Aum Shinrikyo in Japan



Aum Shinrikyo that increased resistance to the surveillance disposition

Both the mainstream group and the Joyu group were found to have such problems as no reporting of matters, in whole or in part, to be reported and incorrect content of the report in reporting to the Director-General of the Public Security Intelligence Agency on the current status of their organizations and activities, which was required every three months by the Act regarding the Control of Organizations Which Committed Acts of Indiscriminate Mass Murder (Act on the Control of Organizations).

In particular, after the February report, “Aleph” did not report the assets of the profit-making entity (live-in members engaged in activities for the purpose of teaching yoga to the lay members and selling goods), which should be regarded as the assets of “Aleph”, and did not respond at all to repeated correction instructions from the Public Security Intelligence Agency. As a result, the amount of assets reported by “Aleph” decreased significantly from the end of October 2019.

In addition, at the time of on-site inspections based on the Act on the Control of Organizations,

members of both the mainstream group and the Joyu group continued their previous non-cooperative stance, such as ignoring questions from the inspectors or responding only with “We have no obligation to answer” or “As you can see.”

Furthermore, in response to the spread of the new coronavirus infection, the mainstream group took a stance of restraining the proper conduct of on-site inspections, such as resisting the entry of inspectors and their inspection activities, claiming that “You are here to infect us, aren’t you?” and “Don’t spread the virus.”

In spite of this resistance, the Public Security Intelligence Agency took all possible measures to prevent infectious disease and conducted proper and strict on-site inspections, confirming that the mainstream group displayed Asahara’s photographic portrait and kept many teaching materials containing Asahara’s statements, and that the Joyu group continued to display Buddhist paintings that projected Asahara.

Public Security Intelligence Agency submitted renewal request (7th) to Public Security Examination Commission

Based on the actual state of Aum Shinrikyo, the Director-General of the Public Security Intelligence Agency recognized that the organization was still at risk of committing indiscriminate mass murder and that it was necessary to continue to clarify the status

of its activities, and on October 26, the Director-General of the Agency filed a request (for the seventh time) with the Public Security Examination Commission to renew the period of the surveillance disposition for the group for three years.

Aum Shinrikyo 25 years after the sarin gas attacks on the subway

- The Ongoing Aum Shinrikyo Problem -

Twenty-five years have passed since the subway sarin attacks (in March 1995), and now Aum Shinrikyo (group) is still active centered on “Aleph,” the “group by led Yamada,” and “Hikari-no-Wa,” all of which are still under the influence of Asahara, and “Aleph” in particular is actively recruiting young people who have little knowledge of the sarin gas attacks.

On the other hand, the victims of the incident, their families, and the bereaved families are still suffering from the aftereffects of sarin gas poisoning, etc. and the pain of losing their loved ones.

The Public Security Intelligence Agency has been actively conducting awareness-raising activities, utilizing various media, in order to widely inform people in Japan and abroad that the problems surrounding Aum Shinrikyo are “currently ongoing.” We will continue to seek the awareness-raising activities while making cooperation with relevant institutions and other efforts.

[Main activities implemented in 2020]

- Produced awareness-raising videos (in Japanese and English) on the sarin gas attacks on the subway and the current situation of Aum Shinrikyo, and aired them on the official YouTube channel of the Public Security Intelligence Agency and on large screens in 14 locations nationwide, including Shibuya (Tokyo)
- Warning by government public relations using Internet media (smartphone version of “Yahoo! Banner advertisement,” etc.)
- Held a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, explaining the activities of Aum Shinrikyo to foreign journalists

Repeated cases of evasion of on-site inspections

While Aum Shinrikyo has been showing a non-cooperative attitude toward on-site inspections, since 2000, when the group was subject to the surveillance disposition, the Public Security Intelligence Agency has filed criminal charges against six cases (14 persons) of evasion of on-site inspections that were highly malignant (👉 table below).

In the most recent case, during an on-site inspection of the Fukuoka Fukutsu facility in January 2019, a live-in member of “Hikari-no-Wa” concealed

items to be inspected, and the Public Security Intelligence Agency filed a criminal complaint with the Fukuoka Prefectural Police for evasion of inspection, and the police arrested the live-in member (in February 2020).

The Public Security Intelligence Agency will continue to take strict action against such illegal acts, such as evasion of inspections during on-site inspections, by filing criminal charges among other measures.

Criminal complaint cases related to on-site inspections			
Date of on-site inspection	Facility	Contents of the accusation	Result
July 2003	[Religious organization Aleph] (Note) Osaka facility (Osaka, at that time)	A live-in member destroyed the objects to be inspected with a shredder machine installed in the facility, and was charged with evasion of inspection by the Osaka Prefectural Police.	8 months imprisonment, 4 years' stay of execution
May 2008	[Religious organization Aleph] Ikuno facility (Osaka)	Three live-in members refused to allow photos taken of objects to be inspected, and were charged with refusal of inspection by the Osaka Prefectural Police.	No prosecution (deferral of prosecution)
July 2011	[Aleph] Hokima facility (Tokyo)	A live-in member disturbed the inspection by shouting and yelling, and another live-in member assaulted a public security intelligence officer who was filming with a video camera by beating the video camera several times, and each was charged with obstruction of inspection and obstruction of execution of official duties by the Metropolitan Police Department.	No prosecution (deferral of prosecution)
Feb. 2016	[Aleph] Nagoya facility (Aichi)	Five live-in members took the objects to be inspected out of the facility, and were charged for evading inspection by Aichi Prefectural Police.	No prosecution (deferral of prosecution)
March 2016	[Aleph] Yokohama facility (Kanagawa)	A live-in member and one other person hid the objects to be inspected and planned to take them out of the facility, and were charged with evading inspection by the Kanagawa Prefectural Police.	Fine of 500,000 yen
			No prosecution (deferral of prosecution)
Jan. 2019	[Hikari-no-Wa] Fukuoka Fukutsu facility (Fukuoka)	A live-in member hid objects to be inspected, and was charged with evading inspection by the Fukuoka Prefectural Police.	No prosecution (deferral of prosecution)

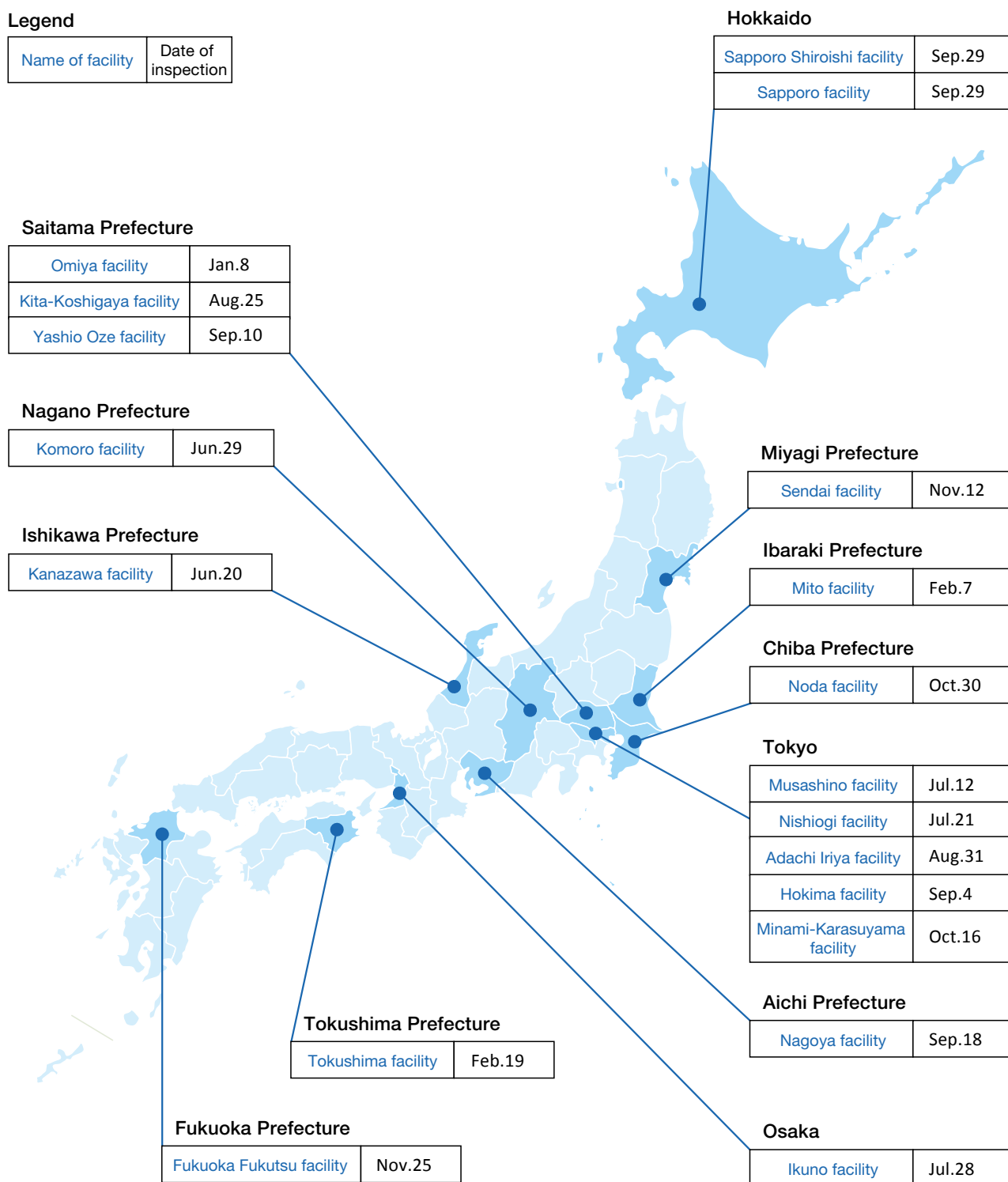
Note: In May 2008, the “religious organization Aleph” changed its name to “Aleph.”

Inspected facilities of Aum Shinrikyo

(January – November 2020)

Legend

Name of facility	Date of inspection
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“Aleph” developed activities nationwide to inculcate absolute faith in Asahara

“Aleph” continued to display Asahara’s photograph on the altar in the facility as before, and continued to provide guidance to inculcate absolute faith in Asahara by gathering lay members in facilities across Japan, albeit in limited numbers and at limited times, under conditions of concern about the spread of the new coronavirus infection.

In particular, at the “Intensive Seminars” held three times a year (in January, May, and September) and the “Birthday Festival” (in March) to celebrate Asahara’s birthday for the lay members, “Aleph” gave the lay members the same thorough guidance as before in order to inculcate absolute faith in Asahara,

such as having them watch videos of Asahara’s statements, and having them perform standing worship (repeated prostration while citing faith in Asahara).

With regard to Asahara’s second son, whom Asahara once nominated as his successor, efforts were being made to foster the momentum for his return to the activities of Aum Shinrikyo, such as that senior members of “Aleph” made statements emphasizing his “validity” as the successor, and held “Birthday Festival” (in March) to celebrate the second son's birthday, however, no concrete actions that would lead to its realization were not observed.

Even in the case of the Corona disaster, recruitment activities were conducted nationwide

During 2020, “Aleph” continued to conduct systematic recruiting activities across Japan to attract new members. In light of the Corona disaster, it actively adopted non-face-to-face recruiting methods such as social networking services, video communication systems, and Internet broadcasting. On the other hand, it continued to use the same methods as before, such as explaining the teachings

of Asahara without specifying the name of Aum Shinrikyo or Asahara’s name, or explaining conspiracy theories that denied the involvement of Aum Shinrikyo in the sarin gas attacks, in order to reduce the sense of resistance to the organization and induce people to join. As a result of these efforts, “Aleph” gained more than 60 new members in 2020.

The “group led by Yamada” was a small but active group upholding absolute faith in Asahara”

Although the “group led by Yamada,” which operated at a certain distance from “Aleph,” is smaller in size than “Aleph,” in the lawsuit against the Japanese government seeking the revocation of the sixth renewal of the period of surveillance disposition (in January, 2018), it has become clear that they are still maintaining absolute faith in Asahara, such that its senior members admitted (in March, 2020) that they were still studying the unique “doctrine” preached by Asahara, and that its lay

members were using teaching materials containing the “doctrine” in their activities.

With regard to the aforementioned lawsuit, the Tokyo District Court found that the decision to renew the period of surveillance disposition for the sixth time was legal and handed down a judgment rejecting the claim of the “group led by Yamada” (in September), but the “group led by Yamada” appealed against the judgment (in October).

In 2020, the Joyu group appealed to the outside world that it had casted aside Asahara, with Fumihiro Joyu criticizing Asahara through talk events by saying such things as, “Asahara had become addicted to his own delusions” (in February), and claiming that “I was gradually getting rid of Asahara’s mind control” (in February).

On the other hand, the Joyu group continued to display a Buddhist painting projecting Asahara in their facility, and even in the midst of concerns about the spread of the new coronavirus infection, the group continued to hold three “Intensive Seminars” a year (in January, May, and August) as usual, following a curriculum that was essentially the same

as Asahara’s in the past, and encouraged members to practice yoga as a “preventive measure against infection,” which Asahara claimed was important. Furthermore, under the title of “tour of sacred sites,” they repeatedly visited shrines and other places that the Joyu group had once positioned as “places associated with Asahara.”

In light of these activities, it is recognized that there has been no change in the actual state of the Joyu group that it is still under the influence of Asahara, even though they continued to promote efforts to “conceal Asahara” by pretending that they have externally eradicated Asahara’s influence.

C O L U M N

“Concealment of Asahara” declared “disguise work”

In a lawsuit filed by the “Hikari-no-Wa” (the Joyu group) against the Japanese government to revoke the decision to renew the period of surveillance disposition for the fifth time (in January 2015), the Tokyo District Court, the court of first instance, ruled that the government had partially lost the case by revoking the part of the decision that targeted the “Hikari-no-Wa” (in September 2017). However, the Tokyo High Court, the appellate court, reversed the part of the first instance decision in which the government lost, on the grounds that the “Hikari-no-Wa” met the requirements for surveillance disposition (in February 2019), and the Supreme Court, the final appellate court, upheld the appellate court’s decision and dismissed the “Hikari-no-Wa”’s appeal (in March

2020), thus confirming its defeat.

“Hikari-no-Wa” also filed a lawsuit against the government seeking revocation of the decision to renew the period of surveillance disposition for the sixth time (in January 2018), but the Tokyo District Court, the court of first instance, handed down a ruling dismissing the claims of “Hikari-no-Wa” (in February 2020), and in its reasons, it ruled that the various efforts claimed as proof that Asahara’s influence had been wiped out were nothing more than “disguises” to hide the fact that they were in fact continuing to be devoted to Asahara.

Incidentally, “Hikari-no-Wa” appealed the above judgment in dissatisfaction (in March).

Radical leftist groups worked to maintain and expand their organizations through criticism of the government's measures against the new coronavirus infection

Kakumaru-ha took advantage of the corona disaster to maintain and expand their organization

Continuing from 2019, Kakumaru-ha (Revolutionary Marxist Faction of the Revolutionary Communist League) attached importance to expand its organization and focused on acquiring union members to their own faction, centering on core industrial labor unions and public sector unions.

In response to the Japanese government's declaration of a state of emergency (in April) due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection, Kakumaru-ha conducted propaganda activities in the streets in Tokyo calling for "opposition to the continuation of the 'state of emergency' without livelihood compensation." In addition, the group criticized the response of the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO) to the corona disaster in its organ paper "Kaiho" (June 29 issue), saying, "they have not made any counterattack against the attack by the capitalists to dismiss and stop hiring."

With regard to labor movement, Kakumaru-ha, at the "69th Educational Research National Convention" held by Japan Teacher's Union in Hiroshima prefecture (in January), handed out such flyers as claiming "Don't allow the enforcement of 'patriotic' education and meritocratic education based on new educational guidelines," at the periphery of the convention venue, and, toward members of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation (NTT) labor union, made such an appeal as "Let's bring forth various left wing fractions inside the union," using

its organ paper "Kaiho" (May 4 issue). As for the East Japan Railway Workers' Union (JR East Labor Union), which was called by other factions as the "largest base of Kakumaru-ha," it was pointed out that "more than 2,000 members left the union and formed the 'JR East Japan Transport Service Workers' Union' in February," but Kakumaru-ha did not express its views in its organ paper or any other media.

In the grassroots movements, regarding the relocation of the US Marine Corps Futenma Air Station to Henoko in Okinawa, Kakumaru-ha mobilized activists for a protest by the opponents of the relocation in front of the gate of the US military Camp Schwab (in February) and called for "stopping the construction of a new base in Henoko." In addition, at anti-war, anti-base, and anti-constitutional change rallies and demonstrations held in various parts of Japan, Kakumaru-ha warned that "the danger of war is rising at once as the US and China have collided head-on," using the spread of the infection to its own advantage.

In the student movement, when the Maritime Self-Defense Force was dispatched to the Middle East (in February), Kakumaru-ha-affiliated the All-Japan Federation of Students' Self-Governing Association held a demonstration in Kanagawa Prefecture, calling for the "prevention of the departure of the Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyer."

Chukaku-ha focused on attracting economically disadvantaged workers and students

In response to the Japanese government's declaration of a state of emergency (in April) in dealing with the spread of the new coronavirus infection, Chukaku-ha (Middle Core Faction of the Revolutionary Communist League) advocated in its organ paper, "Zenshin" (April 27 issue) to "organize a grand united front to fight and survive the coronavirus crisis," and focused on capturing economically disadvantaged workers and students through various activities.

In the labor movements, Chukaku-ha set up the "Corona Task Force" within its affiliated labor union to engage in telephone consultations called the "Labor Consultation Hotline," and carried out propaganda activities in the streets throughout Japan to appeal to the public to "win 100% compensation for absence from work with the power of the labor union, and fight against the dismissal due to Corona," thereby calling on them to join the labor union. At a worker rally and demonstration, which Chukaku-ha positioned as the culmination of its activities for the year, the group appealed, "Let's unite the voices of anger swirling across the country and attack to overthrow the Suga administration" (in November).

In the student movements, Chukaku-ha's affiliate, All-Japan Federation of Students' Self-Governing Associations, held protest actions against the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Tokyo (in May and June) and the "July 4-5 All-Japan Student Action" in Tokyo and Kyoto (in July), calling for "free tuitions" and other measures.

Also, at the "81st Regular National Convention (in August), they argued, "Through the Corona crisis, a movement to rebuild self-governing bodies has begun at universities across the country. Let's create self-governing body in every university and fight against neoliberalism and the attempt to make Japan become a war-fighting state" (organ paper, "Zenshin" (September 7 issue)).

As for international solidarity activities, in past years Chukaku-ha has invited members of overseas labor unions, including those in South Korea, and dispatched its activists overseas to promote exchange, but due to the spread of the disease, the group decided to suspend these invitations and dispatches, and sent solidarity messages to each other. Also, claiming that the immigration detention facilities were "dangerous closed spaces" with "three densities" under the disease, the group repeatedly staged protests against the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau and other authorities, calling for the "immediate release of all detainees."

Under these circumstances, Chukaku-ha brought its chairman, Takeo Shimizu, to the stage for the first time in about half a century, since 1969, at the "Political Rally of the Revolutionary Communist League" (in September). At the rally, he said, "It is the power of the party and the class that I have been able to crush the oppression of the state power for a long period of time and carry out our clandestine activities."

The Liberation Faction of the Revolutionary Workers' Association decided that the declaration of a state of emergency was a "martial law situation" and staged protests against the dismissal of workers.

Kakurokyo Kaiho-ha Shuryu-ha (Mainstream Faction of the Liberation Faction of the Revolutionary Workers' Association) claimed that the Japanese government's declaration of a state of emergency (in April) due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection was a "martial law situation that suppresses rallies and struggles" in its organ paper, "Kaiho" (April 15 issue), and held protests in

front of the Prime Minister's official residence calling for "crushing of the formation of a martial law situation" and other actions (in April and May). In addition, it distributed masks and food and called for people to rally to the group as it carried out propaganda activities in the streets throughout Japan (in May). In the anti-war and anti-base struggles, the group claimed to "stop the deployment of troops to

the Middle East,” and appealed against the deployment of the Self-Defense Forces of Japan to the Middle East for the purpose of securing the safety of Japan-related ships, saying “the Self-Defense Forces members should refuse to go to the Middle East” around the Self-Defense Force bases (in February and May). Furthermore, in the struggle against Narita Airport (New Tokyo International Airport), it held rallies and demonstrations insisting on “stopping the extortion of agricultural land and abandoning the airport” (in May), and mobilized its activists for rallies and demonstrations organized by the Kitahara Faction of the Sanrizuka-Shibayama United Opposition League against the Construction of Narita Airport (in July, September).

Kakurokyo Kaiho-ha Hanshuryu-ha (Anti-mainstream Faction of the Liberation Faction of the Revolutionary Workers’ Association) held a protest and request action in Tokyo (in April), to support the livelihood of day laborers, arguing that “the path to cash income for day laborers and field laborers has been closed” due to the spread of the infection. Also, it mobilized its activists of the same group for propaganda activities in the streets in Tokyo (in

March and April) to impeach the government’s declaration of a state of emergency, and appealed, “We will continue to serve food and fight against the government.” In addition, in the anti-war and anti-base struggles, the group claimed to “crush the counter-revolutionary war in the Middle East” and carried out the “National Unified Action to Shatter the Japan-US Security Treaty and Overthrow the Government” (in June) in Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka and Okinawa Prefectures, and also mobilized its activists in the protests in Tokyo by the opposition to the relocation of US Marine Corps Futenma Air Station to Henoko, calling for “stopping the construction of a new base in Nago.” Furthermore, in response to the deployment of the Self-Defense Forces of Japan to the waters off Somalia for the purpose of fighting piracy, the group appealed in the vicinity of the Self-Defense Forces base and elsewhere to “shutter the overseas deployment of the Self-Defense Forces” (in January and April). In addition, in its struggle against nuclear power plants, the group held a demonstration against the construction of the Oma Nuclear Power Plant in Aomori Prefecture (in August).

C O L U M N

Developments in the “Yodo-go” group on the 50th anniversary of the hijacking incident

On March 31, 1970, nine activists of the Red Army Faction of the Communist League hijacked Japan Airlines Flight 351 (commonly known as “Yodo-go”) and entered North Korea. Even now, 50 years after the incident, the “Yodo-go” group and its supporters, including the perpetrators of the “Yodo-go” hijacking, are continuing their activities.

The perpetrators of the “Yodo-go” incident have appealed for public understanding and support for the group’s claim by, among other things, filing a lawsuit claiming national compensation against the issuance of the arrest warrants (the case was confirmed defeated in 2015) for withdraw of the arrest warrants for the abduction of Japanese citizens, which was a precondition for their return to Japan. In recent years, they have been using Twitter and the website “Welcome to the Japanese Village of Yodo-go” to claim that, “the alleged abduction of Japanese nationals in Europe is a false charge.” They also have been criticizing various policies of the Japanese government, criticizing the measures taken by the Japanese government to deal with the new coronavirus infection, saying that “holding the Olympics and the economy are more important than the lives and safety of the people,” while praising North Korea’s measures as “strict measures resulting

in ‘zero infected people’”.

Also, supporters of the “Yodo-go” group are planning to strengthen their efforts for the return of the perpetrators to Japan by regularly issuing its organ paper that provide not only information on the recent situation of the perpetrators in North Korea, but also appeal for support by introducing a lawsuit in which the wife of a perpetrator is seeking a reversal of the denial of the issuance of her passport so that she can see her husband in North Korea.

“Yodo-go” group members on the Interpol list

Shiro Akagi	Hijacking charge
Kimihiro Uomoto (Abe)	Hijacking and abduction of Japanese citizens charges
Takahiro Konishi	Hijacking charge
Moriaki Wakabayashi	Hijacking charge
Yoriko Mori	Abduction of Japanese citizens charge, etc.
Sakiko Wakabayashi	Abduction of Japanese citizens charge, etc.
Takeshi Okamoto	Hijacking charge

* The “Yodo-go” group claims that “Takeshi Okamoto is dead.”



3

JCP made efforts to promote its presence through policy proposals at the Corona disaster**JCP held its “28th Congress” and decided to focus on promoting the opposition parties' joint struggle and expansion of the party's strength**

In January, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) held the “28th Congress of the JCP,” the first in three years since 2017. At the Party Congress, it criticized the series of measures taken by the Abe administration as “the worst series of tyranny in the history of Japan, which no cabinet has attempted since the end of World War II in every field, including the Constitution and peace, livelihood and economy, democracy and human rights.” It then stressed that in order to overcome this situation, it is important for the opposition parties to overcome their differences in political positions to unite and aim for a change of government, and appealed for the development of the opposition coalition for the next general election, saying, “The opposition parties will unite on the same points with mutual respect and do their best to form a coalition government.” At the Party Congress, following the “27th Congress of the Japanese Communist Party” (in 2017), it again welcomed guests from other opposition parties and factions and provided them with an opportunity to address the Party Congress in order to make an

impression of the joint struggle.

At the convention, JCP also revised its platform for the first time since the “23rd Congress of the JCP” (in 2004), newly stipulating that it aimed to realize a gender-equal society, which it was working on for a long time, and clarifying its stance to be closer to the women. With regard to China, it pointed out that hegemonic actions such as the invasion of Japanese territorial waters by Chinese ships in the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands were becoming increasingly serious, and deleted the part of the decisions set at the “23rd Congress of the JCP” in which it evaluated China.

After the Party Congress, the Japanese Communist Party, pursuant to the decisions of the Congress and the revised platform, focused on activities to expand the Party’s organizational strength with the goal of increasing the number of Party members and the number of readers of its organ paper “Shimbun Akahata” by 30% compared to the time of the 28th Congress toward the 100th anniversary of the party’s founding in 2022.

Also focusing on infiltrating the unaffiliated voters who have caught the Corona disaster

In response to the spread of the new coronavirus infection, JCP pointed out that “the experience of the new coronavirus crisis has caused more people than ever before to turn their attention to politics,” and made efforts to encourage people, especially independents, to join the party. In this effort, it took up various policies set out by the government, and criticized the distribution of masks to all households and the response to the “Go To Travel” campaign (a stimulus package to promote the stagnated domestic

tourism), as well as making proposals to the government, either independently or jointly with other opposition parties. In addition, JCP, together with the Democratic Youth League of Japan (“Minsei”), a youth organization that has received support from the Party and has produced Party cadres, carried out activities to distribute daily commodities in various areas, and praised the activities, saying, “It is important to support and strengthen support for the ‘Minsei,’ as it has created

a link between the Party and the ‘Minsei’ and students.”

JCP criticized the Suga administration, which was inaugurated in September, as a regime that fully inherited the political stance of the former Abe administration, and clarified the confrontation stance. Also, regarding the next general election, it repeatedly appealed to the public, by “Shimbun

Akahata” and other means, that it was important to show the people the seriousness of realizing the change of government in the next general election, and stressed that it would fight for the victory of the citizens’ and opposition parties’ joint struggle and the rapid progress of the Party no matter when the general election would be held, and proceeded with the election preparations.



4

Right-wing groups and other organizations that were active in addressing the problems of the new coronavirus infection and other issues with neighboring countries**Right-wing groups focused on activities that capture the issue of new coronavirus infections and territorial issues**

Right-wing groups developed their activities focusing on the spread of the new coronavirus infection and territorial and historical awareness issues with neighboring countries.

Regarding China, in response to the spread of the disease, the intrusions of Chinese public vessels into Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands, and the enforcement of the National Security Safeguarding Law in Hong Kong, right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets around Chinese diplomatic missions in Japan and elsewhere, calling for "denunciation of China for spreading the Wuhan virus around the world," "Chinese ships should stop approaching to Japanese waters," and "the Communist Party of China should stop suppressing human rights." Also, while many right-wing groups refrained from propaganda activities in the streets during the declaration of a state of emergency due to the spread of the disease, some of them intermittently carried out propaganda activities in the streets criticizing the Japanese government's response in the vicinity of the Prime Minister's private residence and the Liberal Democratic Party headquarters during the declaration, claiming that "the government's border measures were delayed due to consideration for China, causing the spread of the disease." In addition, they caught wind of moves by Chinese President Xi Jinping to visit Japan as a state guest and called for "opposition to the visit," and also considered some Diet (Parliament) members to be "pro-China" and called for "resignation of Diet members who are scheming for Xi Jinping's state visit."

With regard to South Korea, propaganda activities in the streets such as "Stop South Korea's illegal

occupation of Takeshima" on "February 22nd Takeshima Day" (established as "Takeshima Day" by Shimane Prefecture's ordinance) and on "October 28th Takeshima Recapture Day" (the day South Korea refused to refer the issue of Takeshima's territorial ownership to the International Court of Justice) were held around South Korean diplomatic missions and other locations in Japan.

With regard to Russia, right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets calling for the "severing of diplomatic relations with the robber nation of Russia" in the vicinity of Russian diplomatic missions in Japan and other locations, mainly on "February 7th Northern Territories Day" (the day the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between Japan and Russia was signed) and "August 9th Anti-Russia Day" (the day when the Soviet Union abrogated the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact and invaded places such as Manchuria).

With regard to North Korea, in response to the issue of the abduction of Japanese nationals, right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets around the central headquarters of Chongryon (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan), calling for "North Korea to return the abducted Japanese people."

With regard to the imperial family of Japan, on February 23, the birthday of the first Emperor of Reiwa era, right-wing groups engaged in celebratory activities in various places, and also conducted propaganda activities in the streets to denounce the head of the local government who served as the chairman of the executive committee of the art festival held in 2019 for "allowing disrespectful exhibition in public facilities."

Right-wing affiliated groups criticized China and the Japanese government over the new coronavirus disease

Although many of right-wing affiliated groups tended to restrain their activities in the streets in response to the spread of the new coronavirus infection, some groups took the issues of the infection as well as the planned visit of President Xi to Japan as a state guest and developed activities to criticize China and the Japanese government.

Of these, against China, they conducted propaganda activities in the streets in the vicinity of the Chinese diplomatic mission in Japan and other places to appeal, “We will not forgive China for hiding information about the new virus,” and also filed a lawsuit for damages to hold China responsible. As for the Japanese government, protest actions were held around the Liberal Democratic Party headquarters and other places, appealing that “allowing Chinese people to visit Japan during their Spring Festival just after the blockade of Wuhan, China, caused spreading of the infection” and calling for “immediately cancelling Xi Jinping’s visit to Japan as a state guest.” In addition, a representative of a right-wing affiliated group ran (unsuccessfully) for the Tokyo gubernatorial election (in July), and during the election period, he conducted propaganda activities in the streets criticizing China and the

Japanese government on the issue of the infectious disease.

In terms of relations with South Korea and North Korea, right-wing affiliated groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets around the South Korean diplomatic mission in Japan and facilities related to Chongryon (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) and other locations to appeal that “Takeshima is Japan’s inherent territory” and “Chongryon should get out of Japan” in response to the territorial and historical recognition issues with South Korea and the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea. In addition, they protested against the rallies and demonstrations of leftist groups that were calling for “anti-Emperor System” and also protested against the “Kawasaki City Ordinance for Building a City of Respect for Human Rights without Discrimination” (enforced in July), which was the first ordinance in Japan to include criminal penalties for unjust discriminatory words and actions against people from outside Japan.

Incidentally, forces that criticized right-wing affiliated groups as “racists” engaged in protests against the group’s activities.

C O L U M N

Efforts of right-wing groups during and after the declaration of the state of emergency

Right-wing groups have been carrying out propaganda activities in the streets and celebratory activities all over the country every year on “Showa Day” (April 29) and “Constitution Memorial Day” (May 3). However, under the declaration of a state of emergency (issued in April), many of the groups refrained from propaganda activities in the streets and other activities that carried the risk of the spread of the new coronavirus infection. Although the trend of self-restraint continued for a while even after the declaration was lifted nationwide (in May), many right-

wingers resumed their activities in various areas from August onwards on “August 9th Anti-Russia Day,” “End of the War Day” (August 15), and “September 29th Anti-Communist China Day” (the day of the signing of the Japan-China Joint Statement) and in some areas, there were more activities than usual. In October, right-wing groups from the Chubu, Chugoku, Shikoku, and Kyushu regions joined the propaganda activities in the streets in the Kansai region, and large-scale united actions in which right-wing groups from various regions gathered were resuming.

Appendix

(Major domestic and international public security trends from Jan. to Nov.)

January

1st (Wed)

- The mainstream group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Aleph”) held intensive year-end and new year seminars (Dec. 27, 2019 – Jan. 5, 2020 in Saitama, etc.).
- The Joyu group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Hikari-no-Wa”) held intensive year-end and new year intensive seminars (Dec. 28, 2019 – Jan. 5, 2020 and Jan. 11-13, 2020 in Tokyo, etc.).

2nd (Thu)

- Right-wing groups conducted activities during the “visit of the general public to the Imperial Palace for the new year” (in Tokyo).

5th (Sun)

- In Manda, Lamu County, eastern Kenya, an armed group attacked a base used jointly by US and Kenyan forces, killing three Americans, wounding two others, and destroying aircraft and vehicles. “Al Shabaab” issued a statement claiming responsibility.
- Iran announced its intention to pursue its nuclear development program without any restrictions on uranium enrichment as stipulated in the “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action” (JCPOA), as the final step in the partial suspension of implementation of JCPOA.

9th (Thu)

- A delegation from the House of Representatives of Japan visited China and met with the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress of China, Li Zhanshu, in Beijing. Chairman Li said, “The National People’s Congress will work together with the Japanese House of Representatives and the House of Councilors to make a positive contribution to promoting China-Japan relations in the new era.”

10th (Fri)

- A bomb attack, probably a suicide one, took place in a mosque near Quetta in Pakistan’s southwestern province of Baluchistan, killing 15 people and wounding 19 others. The “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL) issued a statement claiming responsibility.

14th (Tue)

- The Japanese Communist Party held its 28th Congress (~18th, in Shizuoka).

15th (Wed)

- The US and China signed the “First Phase of an Economic and Trade Agreement” in Washington DC.
- Shigeru Kitamura, Secretary-General of the National Security Secretariat of Japan, visited Russia (~17th), met with Nikolai Patrushev, Secretary of the Security Council (on the 15th), and paid a courtesy call to President Vladimir Putin (on the 16th).
- Russian President Vladimir Putin announced his intention to work on constitutional reform in his annual new-year address. On the same day, then-Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev announced resignation of his Cabinet, saying that he would “guarantee the President all options (for constitutional reform).”

20th (Mon)

- A Chinese military aircraft flew over the East China Sea.
- A major Japanese electronics manufacturer announced that personal information and corporate secrets may have been leaked to the outside due to unauthorized access to its network by a third party.
- China’s General Secretary Xi Jinping ordered to stop the spread of new coronaviruses in Yunnan Province during his inspection tour.

22nd (Wed)

- In a lawsuit filed by the “Aum Shinrikyo Crime Victims Support Organization” against the mainstream group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Aleph”) for the payment of unpaid compensation, the Tokyo High Court upheld the first trial judgment (of Tokyo District Court in April 2019, ordering “Aleph” to pay approximately 1 billion yen) and dismissed “Aleph”’s appeal (“Aleph” appealed it to the Supreme Court on February 3).

23rd (Thu)

- Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, implemented an “urban blockade” by blocking traffic in the city and restricting the movement of residents (~April 8).

24th (Fri)

- Right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets calling for the “crushing of the Japan Teachers Union” against the “69th National Rally of the Japan Teachers Union for Educational Research” (~26th, in Hiroshima).

25th (Sat)

- In relation to the request by the Metropolitan Police Department for the appearance of a senior official and a former employee of the Trade Representative Office of Russia in Japan on suspicion of receiving confidential information from a former employee of a Japanese telecommunications company, the Russian Embassy in Japan posted on its official social networking site on the same day, “We regret that Japan has joined the wave of anti-Russian deception prevalent in the West.”

28th (Tue)

- Director of Russia’s Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) Sergei Naryshkin published names and biographies of seven “outstanding illegal intelligence officers (Illegals) of the motherland.”

30th (Thu)

- The Korean Central Broadcasting Station reported that North Korea has “declared that the hygienic and anti-epidemic system will be switched to a state emergency anti-epidemic system” as a measure to prevent the influx of the new coronavirus infection. Prior to this, the acceptance of tourists from China was suspended.

31st (Fri)

- A major Japanese electronics manufacturer announced that it had confirmed unauthorized access from a third party to part of its defense division’s internal server.

February

2nd (Sun)

- A man attacked passerbys with a knife in Streatham, south London, UK, wounding two people. The ISIL-linked “Amaq News Agency” claimed the attack was carried out by ISIL fighters (on 3rd).

5th (Wed)

- Fukuoka Prefectural Police arrested a live-in follower of the Joyu group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Hikari-no-Wa”) on charges of evading an on-site inspection by the Public Security Intelligence Agency conducted on January 31, 2019 (no prosecution (deferral of prosecution) on 21st).

6th (Thu)

- US President Donald Trump announced that the US conducted an anti-terrorist operation in Yemen and killed Qasim al-Raymi, the supreme leader of “Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula” (AQAP). AQAP acknowledged Raymi’s death and announced that senior AQAP leader Khalid Bin Umar Batarfi had taken over his post (on 23rd).

7th (Fri)

- On the occasion of the Northern Territories Day, right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets calling for the “recapture of the Northern Territories” (all over Japan).

8th (Sat)

- Right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets calling for the “crushing of All Japan Teachers and Staff Union (Zenkyo)” against the “37th Regular Convention of Zenkyo” (~9th, in Tokyo).

9th (Sun)

- Kakumaru-ha (Revolutionary Marxist Faction of the Revolutionary Communist League) held “general rally of workers’ anger” (in Tokyo).
- Four Chinese military aircraft flew from the Pacific Ocean to the East China Sea over the airspace between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island.

10th (Mon)

- The US Department of Justice announced the indictment of four members of the “54th Research Institute” of the Chinese military for stealing the personal information of approximately 145 million Americans from a major credit information company in the US through a cyber attack in 2017.

11th (Tue)

- On the occasion of the National Foundation Day, right-wing groups carried out shrine worship and held “Kigensetsu” celebration activities (all over Japan).

13th (Thu)

- At a meeting of a group preparing to amend the Russian Constitution, when one of the participants mentioned that Russia’s prohibition of ceding territory should be enshrined in the Constitution, Russian President Vladimir Putin said, “I like the idea, and I will ask the legal experts to draw it up in a proper form.”

17th (Mon)

- Ten people, including two police officers, were killed and 35 others injured in a suicide motorcycle bombing at a rally of a Sunni political party in Quetta, Baluchistan Province, southwest Pakistan. The perpetrators were unknown.

20th (Thu)

- The UK, US, Georgia, and other countries identified the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation as the perpetrator of a disruptive cyber-attack on Georgia (in October 2019) and condemned it. Both the US and UK identified the executing unit as the GRU’s Main Center for Special Technologies (a.k.a. GTsST, Unit 74455, “Sandworm,” etc.).

22nd (Sat)

- On the occasion of Takeshima Day (designated under a Shimane Prefecture’s ordinance), right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets calling for the “recapture of Takeshima” (all over Japan).

23rd (Sun)

- Right-wing groups carried out “Tenchosetsu” celebration activities all over Japan on the occasion of the Emperor’s birthday.

26th (Wed)

- Right-wing groups held memorial services, calling it “February 26th Incident Day” (all over Japan).

27th (Thu)

- In a lawsuit filed by the Joyu group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Hikari-no-Wa”) seeking revocation of the decision to renew the period of surveillance disposition (in 2018, for the sixth time), the Tokyo District Court dismissed “Hikari-no-Wa”’s claim (“Hikari-no-Wa” appealed on March 12).

28th (Fri)

- Shinzo Abe, then Prime Minister of Japan, met with Yang Jiechi, a member of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee of China, and confirmed that they would cooperate in the fight against the new coronavirus infection, and agreed to continue to communicate with each other for the success of President Xi Jinping’s state visit to Japan.
- A spokesperson for the Russian Black Sea Fleet announced that two frigates equipped with cruise missiles were being dispatched to the Mediterranean Sea via Turkish waters.

March

2nd (Mon)

- North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles. Both missiles flew about 240 kilometers and fell into the Sea of Japan.
- The Panel of Experts of the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee on North Korea released its annual report. It noted that North Korea relied on procurement of parts from outside North Korea to carry out its missile development.

3rd (Tue)

- Kim Yo Jong, First Vice Department Director of the Workers’ Party of Korea, issued a statement condemning the South Korean presidential office’s expression of concern over North Korea’s launch of short-range ballistic missiles (on February 2) as an “presumptuous behavior.”

5th (Thu)

- Russia, which supported Syria’s government, and Turkey, which supported the rebels, agreed to a ceasefire over the fighting between government forces and rebels in Idlib, northwest Syria.

6th (Fri)

- In Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, an armed group attacked a memorial gathering for a Shiite Hazara political leader, killing 32 people and injuring 81. The gathering was attended by many dignitaries, including Executive Director Abdullah Abdullah and former President Hamid Karzai. ISIL's "Khorasan Province" issued a statement claiming responsibility.
- Tahrir al-Sham Organization (HTS), which operated in northwestern Syria and other areas, agreed to a ceasefire with Assad regime forces under the mediation of Turkey and Russia.

9th (Mon)

- North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles. Both missiles flew about 200 kilometers and fell into the Sea of Japan.

10th (Tue)

- In a lawsuit filed by the Joyu group of Aum Shinrikyo ("Hikari-no-Wa") seeking revocation of the decision to renew the period of surveillance disposition (5th time in 2015), the Supreme Court rejected the appeal of "Hikari-no-Wa".
- In the deliberations on the constitutional amendment in the Russian Parliament, a clause was proposed to reset the terms of office of current and former presidents and to exempt them from the limit on the number of presidential appointments. The Russian Parliament adopted a constitutional amendment that included this clause (March 12).

17th (Tue)

- At a regular meeting with government ministers, Russian President Vladimir Putin mentioned that the "Russian Direct Investment Fund," a government-affiliated investment fund, would finance a joint venture between Japan and Russia to produce new test kits for new coronavirus infections.

18th (Wed)

- Four Chinese naval vessels sailed eastward in the waters southeast of Miyakojima Island, then northward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, heading for the East China Sea.

19th (Thu)

- The Russian Ministry of Defense announced that a training exercise was conducted by the Eastern Military District's helicopter search and assault group in the "Kuril Islands" (Northern Territories and Kuril Islands).

21st (Sat)

- North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles. Both missiles flew about 400 kilometers and fell into the Sea of Japan.

23rd (Mon)

- A Chinese military aircraft flew over the East China Sea.
- In Boma, Lak Province, western Chad, an armed group attacked the country's army, killing 95 people (92 soldiers and 3 residents) and wounding 47 soldiers. The security authorities in Chad pointed out that the attack was committed by "Boko Haram."

24th (Tue)

- A Chinese naval vessel sailed northeastward in the waters southwest of Shimotsushima, then sailed northward across the Tsushima Strait and temporarily entered the Sea of Japan. On the 25th, the same vessel sailed southward through the Tsushima Strait toward the East China Sea.

25th (Wed)

- A Chinese military aircraft passed over the southern part of Tsushima and flew over the area between the East China Sea and the Sea of Japan.
- At least 25 people were killed and 8 others injured in an attack and lockdown on a Sikh compound in Kabul, Afghanistan. ISIL's "Khorasan Province" issued a statement claiming responsibility.
- In a video message to the nation, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the postponement of a "nationwide vote" on constitutional reform scheduled for April 22 due to the spread of a new coronavirus infection.

29th (Sun)

- North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles. Both missiles flew about 250 kilometers and fell into the Sea of Japan.

April

7th (Tue)

- An armed group attacked a military base in Bampa, Mopti, central Mali, killing about 30 soldiers. "Jama'a Nusra al-Islam wal Muslimin" (JNIM) issued a statement claiming responsibility (on the 11th).

10th (Fri)

- Six Chinese naval vessels sailed southeastward from the waters southwest of the Danjo Archipelago, then southward from the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island toward the Pacific Ocean. On the 28th, the same six vessels sailed northward through the sea area between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island toward the East China Sea.

11th (Sat)

- A meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea was held in Pyongyang, North Korea. With Chairman Kim Jong Un in attendance, the meeting discussed measures to deal with the new coronavirus and elected First Vice Department Director Kim Yo Jong and others as alternate members for the Politburo.

12th (Sun)

- The third meeting of the 14th session of the Supreme People's Assembly was held in Pyongyang, North Korea. In addition to reporting on the status of the Cabinet's work and tasks, and adopting the state budget, the meeting made appointments to the Cabinet and state organs, and elected five officials, including Foreign Minister Ri Son Gwon, to the State Council members.

14th (Tue)

- "Marine Geology No. 8," an oceanographic research vessel of China's Ministry of Natural Resources, entered the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Vietnam and stayed there for a certain period of time to conduct research activities. The vessel entered Malaysia's EEZ (on the 16th) and stayed in the area for a certain period of time to conduct research and other activities.
- North Korea launched several short-range cruise missiles, which flew more than 150 kilometers and fell into the Sea of Japan.

15th (Wed)

- In North Korea, Chairman Kim Jong Un's annual visit to the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun (Pyongyang) on the occasion of the "Sun Festival" (Kim Il Sung's birthday) was not reported. Since then, the theory that Kim Jong Un's health is deteriorating has emerged.

17th (Fri)

- 11 soldiers killed, 14 wounded in clash between Philippine forces and “Abu Sayyaf Group” (ASG) in Patikul, Jolo Island, Sulu Province, southern Philippines; ISIL issued a statement claiming responsibility in the name of “ISIL East Asia Province.”

22nd (Wed)

- Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps announced the successful launch of the country’s first military satellite.

24th (Fri)

- The mainstream group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Aleph”) held intensive Golden Week seminars (~May 10, in Aichi, etc.).
- Russian President Vladimir Putin signed into law an amendment to the federal law “On Military Glory Days and Memorial Days of Russia.” The amendment adds “The Day of the End of World War II” (September 3) as a military glory day and abolishes “The Day of the End of World War II” (September 2) as a memorial day.

25th (Sat)

- Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump issued a joint declaration commemorating the 75th anniversary of the “Elbe Pledge,” the meeting of Soviet and US troops at the Elbe River in Germany at the end of World War II.

29th (Wed)

- Right-wing groups visited Musashino-ryo Mausoleum on the occasion of Showa Day and conducted activities to honor the legacy of Emperor Showa (throughout Japan).
- Three Chinese warships sailed southeastward in the waters north-northeast of Miyakojima Island, then sailed southeastward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, heading for the Pacific Ocean.

May**1st (Fri)**

- North Korean Chairman Kim Jong Un, who had been reported to be experiencing health problems, attended the completion ceremony of the Suncheon phosphorus fertilizer plant (his first appearance in 20 days).

2nd (Sat)

- The Joyu group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Hikari-no-Wa”) held intensive seminars during Golden Week (~6, 9-10, in Tokyo, etc.)

7th (Thu)

- Shinzo Abe, then Prime Minister of Japan, held a teleconference with Vladimir Putin, President of Russia. In addition to confirming the continuation of bilateral cooperation for the early containment of the new coronavirus infection, the two sides agreed to continue promoting consultations and cooperation between Japan and Russia, including peace treaty negotiations and joint economic activities in the Northern Territories.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump held a phone conversation to congratulate each other on the 75th anniversary of the “Victory over Fascism.”

12th (Tue)

- A bomb exploded during the funeral of a government official’s private soldier in Shewa, Nangarhar province, eastern Afghanistan, killing 32 people and wounding 103 others. ISIL’s “Khorasan Province” issues a statement claiming responsibility.

13th (Wed)

- In a joint statement, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) warned that Chinese cyber actors were attempting to illegally obtain information on vaccines for new coronavirus infections.

15th (Fri)

- The Taiwan Affairs Office of China’s State Council and other agencies announced tax and other incentives to support Taiwanese companies operating in China that had suspended operations due to the new coronavirus infection.
- The authorities of Sakhalin Oblast, Russia, announced an outbreak of a new type of coronavirus in Kunashiri Island (a resident of the Republic of Dagestan employed by a fisheries company in the island), and confirmed another case (a military officer stationed in the island) on the 20th.
- US Department of Commerce announced tighter export controls on Huawei and 114 related companies.

17th (Sun)

- In Puntland, northeastern Somalia, a suicide bomb attack took place targeting the vehicle of the governor of Mudug Region, killing the governor and three of his bodyguards. “Al Shabaab” claimed the responsibility.

18th (Mon)

- In his address at the opening ceremony of the 73rd World Health Assembly videoconference, Chinese President Xi Jinping said, “Let us join hands to build a community of human health and hygiene together.”

21st (Thu)

- The US announced its withdrawal from the Open Skies Treaty, which provided for mutual surveillance by inspection aircraft between the parties, due to Russia’s violation.

22nd (Fri)

- The 3rd Session of the 13th National People’s Congress held in Beijing, China (~28th).

26th (Tue)

- Commander of the US Africa Command Stephen Townsend mentioned Russian private military company’s involvement in the Libyan civil war.

28th (Thu)

- A major Japanese telecommunication company announced that there was a possibility that information related to its customers’ services was leaked due to unauthorized access to its servers.

29th (Fri)

- Three Chinese naval vessels sailed southeastward in the waters northeast of Miyakojima Island, then sailed southward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island toward the Pacific Ocean. On June 20, the same three vessels sailed northward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, heading for the East China Sea.

June**1st (Mon)**

- Chongryon (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) launched the “Five-Month Intensive Campaign” to strengthen organization in preparation for the “Chongryon Branch Representative Meeting—2020” (on Nov. 1).

4th (Thu)

- North Korea's First Vice Department Director Kim Yo Jong issued a statement condemning the distribution of leaflets condemning North Korea by a South Korean defector group (on May 31), and suggested retaliatory measures.

5th (Fri)

- French Minister of Defense Florence Parly announced that her country's armed forces had killed Abdelmalek Droukdel, the supreme leader of "Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb" (AQIM), in an operation in northern Mali on June 3. AQIM issued a statement acknowledging his death (on the 18th).

9th (Tue)

- North Korea announced it would cut off all communication lines between North and South Korea.
- In the suburb of Maiduguri in Borno State, northeastern Nigeria, an armed group attacked a village, killing at least 81 residents and injuring many others. ISIL's "West African Province" issued a statement claiming responsibility (on the 12th).

12th (Fri)

- "Hurras al-Din" (HAD), which operated in northwestern Syria and other areas, formed a coalition of pro-Al-Qaeda organizations called the "So Be Steadfast" Operation Room."

15th (Mon)

- A clash between the armies of China and India occurred in the disputed area on the China-India border. The Indian side announced that 20 of its soldiers were killed in the incident (the Chinese side did not disclose the number of casualties, etc.).

16th (Tue)

- The Governor of Sakhalin Oblast, Valery Limarenko, posted on his social networking site that a military officer stationed in Etorofu Island and a student who visited Shikotan Island from outside the island were confirmed to be infected with the new coronavirus. This was the first time that the infection has been confirmed on the two islands of Etorofu and Shikotan.
- North Korea blew up the North-South Joint Liaison Office in the Kaesong Industrial Complex.

17th (Wed)

- A spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that he would closely watch whether Japan would make concrete steps in the field of missile defense, which was directly related to the security situation in the Asia-Pacific region, after then Defense Minister of Japan, Taro Kono, announced his intention to suspend the deployment plan of the land-based Aegis system.
- North Korea's General Staff of the Korean People's Army announced "military action plans" against South Korea.

18th (Thu)

- The "High-Level Video Conference on 'Belt and Road' International Cooperation" was held in Beijing, China. In his ceremonial address, President Xi Jinping said, "We will build 'One Belt, One Road' together with high quality and promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind."

21st (Sun)

- A Chinese naval vessel sailed northeastward in the waters southwest of Shimotsushima, then sailed northward across the Tsushima Strait and temporarily entered the Sea of Japan. On the 23rd, the same vessel sailed southward through the Tsushima Strait toward the East China Sea.

22nd (Mon)

- A Chinese military aircraft passed over the southern part of Tsushima and flew back and forth over the East China Sea and the Sea of Japan.

23rd (Tue)

- North Korea's Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party of Korea decided to "suspend" the General Staff's "military action plans" against South Korea.

24th (Wed)

- Russia held military parades in about 30 cities across the country to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War, which had been postponed due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection. The parade in Moscow's Red Square was attended by foreign leaders, mainly from the former Soviet Union countries. From China, Wei Fenghe, State Councilor and Minister of National Defense, attended the parade, and the Chinese military guard of honor marched in the parade.

26th (Fri)

- A Chinese naval vessel sailed southeastward in the waters northwest of Kumejima Island, then southward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, temporarily entering the Pacific Ocean. On the 28th, the same vessel sailed northward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, heading for the East China Sea.

28th (Sun)

- Two Chinese military aircraft flew back and forth over Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island.
- The government of Russia's Sakhalin Oblast posted on its website a comment by the Governor of Sakhalin Oblast, Valery Lymarenko, that the proposed amendments to the Russian constitution, which would be subject to "nationwide vote" on July 1, clearly stipulated the indivisibility of Russia's territory and offered citizens the possibility of putting an end to territorial disputes.

30th (Tue)

- The Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress enacted the "Hong Kong National Security Safeguarding Law." The Hong Kong government promulgated and enacted the law on the same day.

July

1st (Wed)

- Russia held a "nationwide vote" on whether to amend the Constitution. The revised constitution came into effect with a majority of votes in favor (on the 4th). 86.21% of the voters in Kunashiri Island and 91.91% of the voters in Shikotan Island voted in favor of the amendment (the national average was 77.92%).

4th (Sat)

- China's state-run "China Central Television" and other media outlets reported that the Chinese military conducted military exercises in the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea.

9th (Thu)

- A former employee of a major Japanese telecommunications company, who had been indicted for illegally obtaining the company's trade secrets, was found guilty by the Tokyo District Court. The ex-employee mentioned that he carried out the illegal acquisition of trade secrets at the request of the former Deputy Representative of the Trade Representative Office of Russia in Japan.

10th (Fri)

- North Korea's First Vice Department Director Kim Yo Jong issued a statement on relations with the US, asserting that "unless the US shows decisive change in its stand, the DPRK-US summit is not beneficial."

13th (Mon)

- A Chinese naval vessel sailed southeastward in the waters northwest of Kumejima Island, then southward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, temporarily entering the Pacific Ocean. On the 18th, the same vessel sailed northward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, heading for the East China Sea.

15th (Wed)

- The Japanese Communist Party held lecture meeting commemorating the 98th anniversary of the party's founding (in Tokyo).

16th (Thu)

- At a regular press conference, a spokesperson for the Russian Foreign Ministry said that negotiations for a peace treaty with Japan had nothing to do with any delimitation or demarcation of national borders and that Russia's goal in the negotiations was to conclude a broader basic document than a mere peace treaty.
- The UK's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), in collaboration with intelligence and cyber security authorities in Canada and the US, warned that the cyber entity "APT29" was almost certainly part of Russian intelligence and that it was attacking an organization developing a vaccine for a new coronavirus infection.

21st (Tue)

- The US Department of Justice announced the indictment of two Chinese hackers. The indictment alleged that the defendants, not only for their own gain, but also in cooperation with the Chinese Ministry of State Security, repeatedly carried out cyber-attacks on sensitive information of organizations in the US and abroad for more than 10 years, as well as investigating vulnerabilities in the network of a US biotechnology company developing a vaccine for a new coronavirus infection.

22nd (Wed)

- In Borno State, northeastern Nigeria, an improvised explosive device (IED) targeting a Red Cross vehicle exploded, injuring several Red Cross workers and killing several civilians. ISIL's "West African Province" issued a statement claiming responsibility (on the 30th).
- The US State Department announced that it has ordered the closure of the Chinese Consulate General in Houston, Texas.

23rd (Thu)

- A spokesperson for the Russian Foreign Ministry responded to the description in Japan's 2020 "Defense White Paper" that "Russia continues to station Russian troops in and effectively occupies the Northern Territories, which are our own territory," saying that this was "unacceptable."

24th (Fri)

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China notified the US Embassy in China of its decision to revoke the permission for the establishment and operation of the US Consulate General in Chengdu, following the US notification of the closure of the Chinese Consulate General in Houston, Texas (on the 22nd).
- The US Department of Justice said it arrested a Chinese researcher for allegedly misrepresenting relationship with the Chinese military when applying for a visa.

25th (Sat)

- An emergency enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea was held in Pyongyang, North Korea. With the presence of Chairman Kim Jong Un, the meeting decided to shift the state emergency anti-epidemic system to a "maximum emergency system," including the sealing off of Kaesong, after test results showed that North Korean defectors who returned to Kaesong after crossing the military demarcation line were suspected of being infected with the new coronavirus.

29th (Wed)

- In a lawsuit filed by the mainstream group of Aum Shinrikyo ("Aleph") to revoke the decision to renew the period of surveillance disposition (in 2015, for the fifth time), the Supreme Court rejected the appeal of "Aleph."

30th (Thu)

- The European Union (EU) imposed sanctions, including travel bans and asset freezes, on six individuals and three organizations of China, Russia, and North Korea for their involvement in cyber attacks that posed a threat to the EU and its member states. This measure was introduced in May 2019 as one of the EU's cyber diplomacy tools, and this was the first time it has been applied.

31st (Fri)

- Hong Kong government postponed Legislative Council elections scheduled for September for a year due to the spread of a new coronavirus infection.

August

2nd (Sun)

- In Jalalabad, Nangarhar Province, eastern Afghanistan, an armed group attacked a prison, killing at least 39 people, injuring about 50, and many inmates escaped. ISIL's "Khorasan Province" issued a statement claiming responsibility.

5th (Wed)

- The Russian Minister of Emergency Situations, Yevgeny Zinichev, visited Kunashiri Island and attended the opening ceremony of the Distress and Rescue Center. At the ceremony, he placed a plaque on a stone monument with the words, "Once the Russian flag is raised, it must not be lowered."
- In Mocimboa da Praia, Cabo Delgado Province, northern Mozambique, an armed group engaged in fighting with the national armed forces of the country and occupied the port after the national armed forces withdrew (on the 11th). In a series of battles, at least 55 soldiers were killed and 90 wounded, and ISIL's "Central African Province" issued a statement claiming responsibility (on the 27th).

6th (Thu)

- Right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets criticizing the US atomic bombings on A-bomb Day (and on the 9th, in Tokyo, Hiroshima, etc.).

7th (Fri)

- A major Japanese heavy industry manufacturer announced that the names and e-mail addresses of its employees and other IT-related information were leaked as a result of unauthorized access to the network of a regional office of one of its group companies.

8th (Sat)

- The Joyu group of Aum Shinrikyo ("Hikari-no-Wa") held intensive summer seminars (~9th, 12th~16th, in Tokyo, etc.)

9th (Sun)

- Right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets calling for the “recapture of the Northern Territories” on the “Anti-Russia Day” (all over Japan).
- Presidential election was held in Belarus, and the Election Commission announced provisional results that incumbent President Alexander Lukashenko was re-elected with more than 80% of the vote. Protests broke out to protest the rigged election and to demand the President’s step down (on the 10th).

10th (Mon)

- Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen met with visiting US Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar.

12th (Wed)

- Israel’s Ministry of Defense announced that it had thwarted an attack by cyber-actor “Lazarus” on the country’s defense industry using social engineering on social networking sites.

13th (Thu)

- The 16th Meeting of the Political Bureau of the 7th Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea was held in Pyongyang, North Korea. It decided to lift the blockade of Kaesong. Also, by decree of the State Council, Kim Jae Ryong was dismissed as Prime Minister and Kim Tok Hun was appointed.

14th (Fri)

- U.N. Security Council rejected US-proposed resolution calling for indefinite extension of arms embargo on Iran.

15th (Sat)

- Right-wing organizations visited Yasukuni Shrine and Gokoku shrines on the day of the end of WWII, and participated in memorial services for the war dead (all over Japan).

17th (Mon)

- The US Department of Commerce announced that it was tightening restrictions on access to US-made technology and software for Huawei and its affiliates, and newly added 38 Huawei affiliates to its list of companies subject to trade restrictions.

19th (Wed)

- The Sixth Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea was held in Pyongyang, North Korea. It decided to convene the 8th Congress of the Party in January 2021.

20th (Thu)

- China’s Ministry of Science and Technology announced preferential treatment for young researchers in Taiwan, including living expenses.
- Iran unveiled its own-made new ballistic missile “Haj Qasem” and cruise missile “Abu Mahdi.”
- Alexei Navalny , a Russian opposition activist, was taken to a hospital after complaining of illness on a flight from Tomsk in Western Siberia to Moscow. His spokesperson mentioned the possibility that poison was used.

24th (Mon)

- Two women, believed to be widows of ASG members, blew themselves up in succession in Patikul, Jolo Island, Sulu Province, southern Philippines, killing 14 people, including soldiers, policemen, and residents, and wounding 75 others. Local authorities pointed out that the attack was committed by ASG.

26th (Wed)

- Iran agreed to accept inspections of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for facilities suspected of having previously undeclared nuclear-related activities with the IAEA in the past.

28th (Fri)

- A navigation warning by the China Maritime Administration revealed that the Chinese military conducted military exercises in the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea.
- The Panel of Experts of the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee on North Korea released its interim report. It pointed out that North Korea “through its past six nuclear tests, has probably miniaturized nuclear devices to fit into the warheads of its ballistic missiles” and “has dramatically shortened the launch interval of its ballistic missiles.” It also pointed out that “Kimsuky,” a cyber entity under the General Reconnaissance Bureau, has carried out attacks against diplomats of Security Council member countries and members of the Panel of Experts.

31st (Mon)

- Shinzo Abe, then Prime Minister of Japan, held a teleconference with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. President Putin expressed his gratitude for the great contribution to the development of bilateral cooperative relations in connection with Prime Minister Abe’s expression of resignation. The two leaders also confirmed the continuation of peace treaty negotiations.

September

2nd (Wed)

- Russian Deputy Chairman of the Security Council (and former Prime Minister) Dmitry Medvedev participated in an online dialogue with the participants of the National Patriotic Youth Forum “Islands 2020” and said, “We have always been supporters of the fact that such a peace treaty was ready, but all our land (the four northern islands) will remain with us.”

3rd (Thu)

- Commemorative events for Russia’s “Day of the End of World War II” were held in various parts of the Far East. Local residents and military personnel participated in the events in the islands of Etorofu, Kunashiri and Shikotan.

4th (Fri)

- The “China International Fair for Trade in Services” was held in Beijing, China (~9th). President Xi Jinping remarked in his ceremonial address, “We will continue to improve global economic governance and promote the inclusive growth of the world economy.”

6th (Sun)

- Chukaku-ha (Middle-Core Faction of the Revolutionary Communist League) held “Political Rally of the Revolutionary Communist League” (in Tokyo).
- Chongryon (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) held the Third Enlarged Meeting of the 24th Central Committee (in Tokyo). Vice Chairman Pak Ku Ho was elected as the First Vice Chairman.
- In Sousse, northern Tunisia, an armed group attacked the country’s border police, killing one border policeman and wounding another. ISIL issued a statement claiming responsibility (on the 7th).

7th (Monday)

- A firing incident occurred in the disputed area on the China-India border. On the 8th, the Chinese side accused the firing as “serious military provocation” as it was done by Indian troops. On the same day, the Indian side responded that the firing was by the Chinese side.

9th (Wed)

- In Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, a bomb exploded near the convoy of First Vice President Ali Abdullah Saleh, killing 10 people and wounding 16 others, including the First Vice President. The perpetrators were unknown.

16th (Wed)

- The US Department of Justice announced the indictment of five Chinese nationals for their involvement in a series of cyber attacks by the cyber entity “APT41,” which targeted more than 100 targets around the world, including IT companies. The indictment noted that one of the defendants boasted of his close relationship with the Chinese Ministry of State Security.

18th (Fri)

- The mainstream group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Aleph”) held intensive autumn seminars (~22, 25-27, in Hokkaido, etc.).
- Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen met with visiting US Under Secretary of State Keith Krach.

19th (Sat)

- China's Ministry of Commerce promulgated and enforced the “Unreliable Entity List Regulations” in accordance with the relevant laws, including the “Foreign Trade Law of the People’s Republic of China” and the “National Security Law of the People’s Republic of China.”

21st (Mon)

- A spokesperson for China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs denied the existence of a middle line in the Taiwan Strait, saying, “Taiwan is an inseparable part of China’s territory, and there is no so-called ‘Strait median line.’”
- Russia conducted a large-scale military exercise called “Caucasus 2020” (~26th). China, Iran, Armenia, Belarus, Myanmar, and Pakistan participated from outside the country.

22nd (Tue)

- Chinese President Xi Jinping said in his speech at the 75th General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly, “We have no intention of fighting a cold or hot war with any country.”

23rd (Wed)

- A Chinese naval vessel sailed southeastward in the waters northwest of Kumejima Island, then southward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, temporarily entering the Pacific Ocean. On the 26th, the same vessel sailed northward in the waters between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island, heading for the East China Sea.

24th (Thu)

- South Korea’s Defense Ministry announced that a South Korean fishery instructor was shot dead and his body incinerated by the North Korean military in the Yellow Sea.

25th (Fri)

- Prime Minister of Japan Yoshihide Suga held a telephone conversation with Chinese President Xi Jinping, and the two leaders agreed to continue discussions on the stability and development of Japan-China relations, cooperation in combating the new coronavirus infection, the early resumption of mutual visits of business persons, and close cooperation at a high level, including between leaders.

- A Chinese military aircraft flew back and forth over the area between Okinawa Island and Miyakojima Island.

- North Korea’s Workers’ Party of Korea United Front Department sent a letter of notification to the South Korean presidential office regarding the shooting death of a South Korean fishery instructor and conveyed Chairman Kim Jong Un’s apology.

- In Paris, France, a man attacked a man and a woman with a knife in front of the former head office of “Charlie Hebdo”, injuring both of them.

27th (Sun)

- The Russian Foreign Ministry issued a statement calling on Azerbaijan and Armenia to immediately cease military operations and hold talks to stabilize the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh over the military clashes.

28th (Mon)

- A navigation warning by the China Maritime Administration revealed that the Chinese military conducted military exercises in the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea.

29th (Tue)

- In a lawsuit filed by the mainstream group of Aum Shinrikyo (“group led by Yamada”) seeking revocation of the decision to renew the period of surveillance disposition (in 2018, for the sixth time), the Tokyo District Court dismissed and rejected the claim of the “group led by Yamada” (the “group led by Yamada” appealed on October 13).

- Right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets calling to “defend the Senkaku Islands to the death” on the so-called “Anti-Communist China Day” (all over Japan).

- Russia’s Eastern Military District announced the start of anti-landing force exercises in the “Kuril Islands.”

- Prime Minister of Japan Yoshihide Suga held a telephone conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin. They agreed to continue dialogue, including on the issue of concluding a peace treaty, and to develop Japan-Russia relations in a wide range of fields.

October

7th (Wed)

- Taiwan’s Ministry of National Defense announced that in 2020, the number of Chinese military aircraft crossing the median line in the Taiwan Strait reached its highest level in the past 30 years.

10th (Sat)

- A military review ceremony was held in Pyongyang, North Korea to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers’ Party of Korea. Weapons that were believed to be new intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) were unveiled.

15th (Thu)

- The European Union (EU) imposed a freeze on assets and a travel ban in the EU on Pavel Popov, a Russian Deputy Minister of Defense, and others in total 6 persons, as well as a national chemical research institute allegedly involved in the production of poison, in connection with the alleged use of poison on Russian opposition activist Alexei Navalny.

16th (Fri)

- Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan Toshimitsu Motegi and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov held a telephone conversation, and agreed to discuss various areas, including peace treaty negotiations and joint economic activities in the Northern Territories, based on the September 29 Japan-Russia summit.

- Russian Prosecutor General Igor Krasnov visited Kunashiri, Shikotan, and Etorofu Islands and held consultation meetings for local residents in each island.

- A Chechen man attacked a male teacher with a knife near a junior high school in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, northwest of Paris, France, and killed him by cutting off his head.

17th (Sat)

- China's Standing Committee of the National People's Congress enacted the "Export Control Law," making it possible to restrict exports for reasons of national security.

18th (Sun)

- The arms embargo on Iran imposed by the UN Security Council resolution was lifted.

19th (Mon)

- The US Department of Justice announced the indictment of six individuals belonging to the "Main Center for Special Technologies" of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (also known as GTsST, Unit 74455, "Sandworm", etc.) for carrying out a series of destructive cyber attacks against Ukraine, Georgia, and the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics. Also, the UK's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) announced that the said unit conducted "cyber reconnaissance" of organizations related to the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympic Games.

20th (Tue)

- The Russian Foreign Ministry said it is ready to maintain the current number of nuclear warheads if the US agrees to a one-year extension of the New START treaty.

- In Beni, North Kivu Province, northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, armed groups attacked Cambay Prison and two military bases near the prison, resulting in the escape of more than 1,300 prisoners. ISIL's "Central African Province" issued a statement claiming responsibility (on the 21st).

22nd (Thu)

- The European Union (EU) designated as targets of sanctions the "85th Main Special Service Center" of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (also known as GTsSS, Unit 26165, "APT28," "Fancy Bear," etc.), and one member of the unit, as well as the Director of the GRU, Igor Kostyukov, for their involvement in the cyber attack on the German Bundestag (in 2015).

23rd (Fri)

- The US Department of the Treasury designated as a target of sanctions the Russian government-affiliated research institute "Central Scientific Research Institute of Chemistry and Mechanics (TsNIIKhM) for its connection to Triton, a malware that unlawfully manipulates industrial control systems used in critical infrastructure.

24th (Sat)

- An attempted intruder blew himself up in front of an educational facility in a predominantly Shia Hazara district of Kabul, Afghanistan, killing 30 people and wounding 70 others. ISIL's "Khorasan Province" issued a statement claiming responsibility.

26th (Mon)

- The Director-General of the Public Security Intelligence Agency requested the Public Security Examination Commission to renew the period of surveillance disposition against Aum Shinrikyo (for the seventh time) in accordance with Article 12, Paragraph 1 of the Act regarding the Control of Organizations.

- The Communist Party of China held the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee in Beijing (~29th).

- A spokesperson for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the decision to impose sanctions on US companies, including Lockheed Martin Corporation, Boeing Defense, Space & Security (BDS), and Raytheon Technology, as well as related individuals and entities, after the US government notified the Federal Congress of its decision to sell arms to Taiwan (on the 21st).

28th (Wed)

- Right-wing groups conducted propaganda activities in the streets calling for the "recapture of Takeshima" on the "Day of the Recapture of Takeshima" (all over Japan).

29th (Thu)

- A man attacked worshippers at Notre Dame de Paris with a knife in Nice, southern France, killing three people.

- In Jeddah, Makkah Province, western Saudi Arabia, a man attacked a security guard at the Consulate General of France with a knife, injuring the guard.

November

1st (Sun)

- Chukaku-ha (Middle-Core faction of the Revolutionary Communist League) held "National Workers' General Rally" (in Tokyo).

- Chongryon (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) held the "Conference of Representatives of Branches of Chongryon-2020" (in Tokyo). North Korea sent congratulatory letter of Chairman Kim Jong Un.

2nd (Mon)

- A man opened fire in the center of Vienna, Austria, killing four people and wounding 23 others. ISIL issued a statement claiming responsibility (on the 3rd).

5th (Thu)

- In a lawsuit filed by the Joyu group of Aum Shinrikyo ("Hikari-no-Wa") seeking damages and an apology advertisement on the grounds that the Public Security Intelligence Agency had defamed its reputation by preparing evidence that distorted the facts in its request for renewal of the period of surveillance disposition (in 2011, 4th time / in 2014, 5th time), the Tokyo High Court dismissed the appeal by "Hikari-no-Wa" (final).

- The "China International Import Expo" was held in Shanghai, China (~10th). At the opening ceremony (on the 4th), President Xi Jinping said, "We will make the Chinese market a market for everyone and promote the recovery of the world economy."

7th (Sat)

- "Yodo-go" group and its supporters held a meeting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the "Yodo-go" hijacking incident (in Tokyo).

9th (Mon)

- Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that the leaders of Russia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia signed a joint statement declaring a complete ceasefire in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict starting the following day.

11th (Wed)

- The Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress adopted a decision on the disqualification of members of the Hong Kong Legislative Council, and in response, the Hong Kong government announced the disqualification of four democratic members of the Legislative Council. Fifteen democratic members resigned in protest.

15th (Sun)

- Fifteen countries including ten ASEAN countries, China, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan signed the “Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership” (RCEP) Agreement.

17th (Tue)

- In a lawsuit filed by the “Aum Shinrikyo Crime Victims Support Organization” against the mainstream group of Aum Shinrikyo (“Aleph”) for unpaid compensation, the Supreme Court rejected “Aleph”’s appeal. The appellate court decision (of January 22) ordering “Aleph” to pay approximately 1 billion yen became final.

24th (Tue)

- Foreign Minister of Japan Toshimitsu Motegi met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi during his visit to Japan and agreed to resume business exchanges between the two countries within the month. Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga met with Foreign Minister Wang on the 25th and confirmed the stability of Japan-China relations and cooperation in various fields.

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