

코비드-19 팬데믹 하 동북아 보건·방역협력체
NORTHEAST ASIAN PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE (NEAPHI)
UNDER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
: 남북 보건의료협력을 중심으로
FOCUSING ON INTER-KOREAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL COOPERATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION: THE BACKGROUND OF DISCUSSION

- **“Triple burden”**
 - (1) Strong economic sanctions against DPRK, (2) COVID-19 epidemic, (3) prolonged border closure
 - North Korea reports that as of September 2021, no cases of coronavirus have been reported.
- U.S. Biden government was inaugurated, but DPRK-U.S. dialogue has not progressed
- Warning lights are on for humanitarian situations such as food and health issues for North Koreans
 - Food shortage, 17.4% of the undernourished population under 5 (2020, VNR)
 - At the end of July 2021, imports of medicines (insulin, antibiotics, etc.) about 3 million dollars from China
- ROK's Moon Jae-in government proposes **“Northeast Asian Public Health Initiative (NEAPHI)”**
 - ROK, the United States, China, Russia, Mongolia and Japan are participating, but DPRK has not yet participated.
- It is necessary to look at the status of NEAPHI operation, meaning, limitations, and tasks for implementation.

II. THE DPRK'S COVID-19 OUTBREAK AND ITS RESPONSE

TABLE 1. TIMELINE OF MAJOR EVENTS RELATED TO THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC IN THE DPRK

Phase 1: Initial response period: January - February 2020	
Jan. 22	Suspension of foreign tourism.
Jan. 24	Transition to national state of emergency.
Jan. 25	Border closure.
Jan. 30	Withdrawal of personnel from Inter-Korean Liaison Office.
	Formation of the CPCH.
Feb. 13	Extension of quarantine period from 14 days to 30 days.
Phase 2: Partial mitigation: early March-September 2020	
Mar. 4	Chairman Kim Jong un's letter to President Moon Jae-in.
Mar. 6	Lower the level of quarantine measures for foreign nationals in Pyongyang.
Mar. 9	Quarantine lifted for some individuals.
Mar. 11	WHO Pandemic Declaration.
	Amendment of Infectious Disease Prevention Act.
Early Apr.	Partial or full opening of schools.
Jul. 21	The North Korean government blocked the entire Kaesong area and declared a "maximum emergency system" (Special level, Level 2) measure after a North Korean defector illegally crossed the DMZ and returned to North Korea's Kaesong.
Phase 3: Management phase through intensive testing: September 2020-present	
End of Sep.	A considerable scale of Covid-19 tests had been conducted and statistics based on these tests were released.
Dec. 2	Upgrade to Super-special level (Level 3)
Phase 4: Management phase through vaccination (? -?)	

THE DPRK'S COVID-19 OUTBREAK AND ITS RESPONSE

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Initial response period	Partial mitigation	Management Phase through Intensive Examination	Management Phase through Vaccination
초기 대응기	부분 완화기	집중 검사를 통한 관리기	백신을 통한 관리기
January—February 2020	Early March to September 2020	End of September 2020-Present	?-?

1단계: 초기 대응기
PHASE 1: INITIAL RESPONSE PERIOD

JANUARY—FEBRUARY 2020

2020년초-2월말

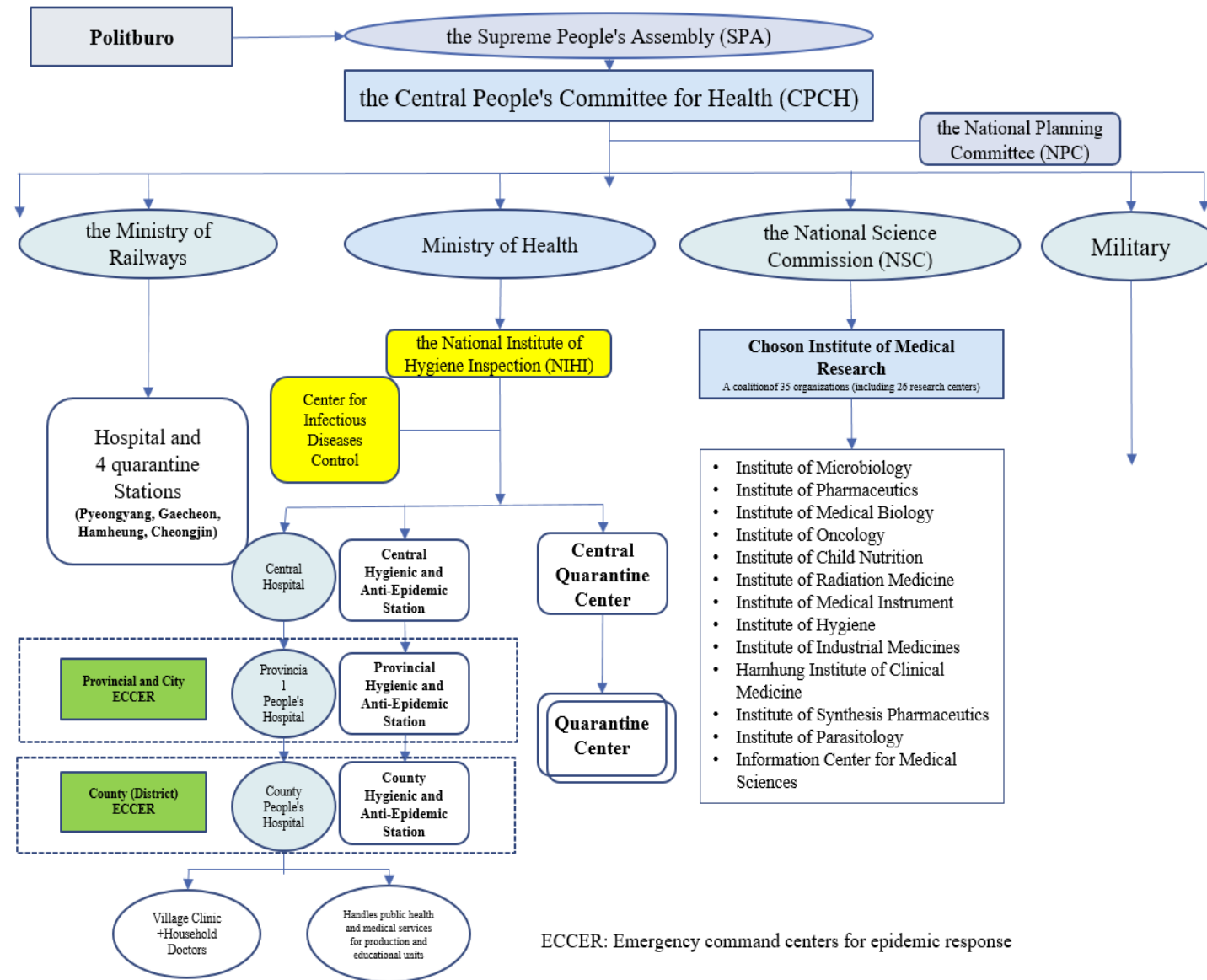


Figure 1. The DPRK's national emergency response system for epidemics

2단계: 부분 완화기
PHASE 2: PARTIAL MITIGATION

EARLY MARCH TO SEPTEMBER 2020

2020년 3월초-9월 중순

10

MAIN COMPOSITION AND CONTENTS OF THE REVISED INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREVENTION ACT (MARCH 2020)

- One chapter was newly established and eight additional provisions were added, and six chapters consisted of 53 provisions.

Chapter 1: Purposes, definitions, and principles

- The purpose of the law, definition of infectious diseases, and rules (detection and isolation of infectious diseases, blocking of transmission routes, vaccinations, prevention projects).
- Regulations on the organization of non-standing institutions for quarantine projects.
- Participation in infectious disease prevention projects through hygiene propaganda, strengthening the education of political thought, and clarification of the principle of popularization.
- Stated to develop exchanges and cooperation with international organizations in other countries.

Chapter 2: Management of infectious disease patients

- Investigation of infectious diseases, examination for detection of infectious diseases, notification, quarantine, and transportation of suspected patients.
- Patients and suspected patients' residence signs, access, treatment, and regulations to dispose of bodies.

Chapter 3: Management of infectious disease areas, facilities, and related personnel

- Legal regulations related to blocking the route of infectious diseases.
- Disinfection, insecticide, medium control, drinking water, sewage treatment, and toilet management.
- Regulations on control of intestinal infectious disease outbreak areas, disinfection of medical equipment, kitchen utensils, food handling workers, and checkups at nursery schools.

Chapter 4: Vaccination

- Vaccination target selection, plan, vaccination institution, side effects, related storage and transportation facility regulations.
- Veterinary quarantine agency's regulations on immunization and reporting of common infectious diseases for domestic animals.

Chapter 5: Emergency quarantine measures

- Definition of emergency quarantine: A preemptive and active quarantine in which an infectious disease can pose a great risk to the safety of the state, people's life, and socio-economic life and business.
- Central, provincial (directly controlled city), city (district), counties emergency command centers for epidemic response (ECCER).
- Specify the duties of the emergency quarantine organizations.
- The Central People's Committee for Health (CPCH) declares the transition to the emergency quarantine system and regulates the quarantine level.

- **Classification of quarantine: Classified into Level 1, Special Level (Level 2), and Super Special Level (Level 3) according to the transmission speed and risk.**

- **Level 1** refers to cases where there is a possibility of inflow to the country, and thus border passage and import of goods must be restricted, or movement to a domestic occurrence area must be restricted. In this case, medical surveillance measures for patients with infectious diseases and those who were in contact with suspected patients, restrictions on border crossings, animals and plants, and the import of goods, and restrictions on the movement of personnel, animals, and plants, and supplies to areas where infectious diseases occur.
- **Special Level (Level 2)** refers to cases where there is a real 'risk' of Covid-19. In this case, quarantine and medical surveillance measures for infectious disease patients and persons in contact with suspected patients shall be taken, and measures shall be taken to block the borders or relevant areas in Korea.
- **Super Special Level (Level 3)** refers to a situation in which Covid-19 is in danger of causing a fatal and destructive disaster. In the super-special level, all spaces, including borders, land, sea, and air, or any area in the country are restricted or prohibited as are collective gatherings, including events and conferences, and athletic events, performances, sales, study, and tourism.
- Disaggregation of quarantine organizations, detailed rules for roles by organization.
- Divided into quick-start quarantine, sealed off, and treatment teams.
- Expansion of application targets to foreigners.
- Including legal sanctions for violations of the obligations, prohibited acts and preventive measures of institutions, enterprises, organizations, citizens, and foreigners during the emergency quarantine period.

Chapter 6: Guidance, Control, and Penalty Regulations for Infectious Disease Prevention Projects

- Penalties for Violation of the Infectious Disease Prevention Act.
- In the event of damage or loss of facilities, medical equipment, and medicines in the infectious disease prevention department, it stipulates matters related to restoration and compensation for damages.

3단계: 집중 검사를 통한 관리기
**PHASE 3: MANAGEMENT PHASE THROUGH
INTENSIVE EXAMINATION**

END OF SEPTEMBER 2020-PRESENT

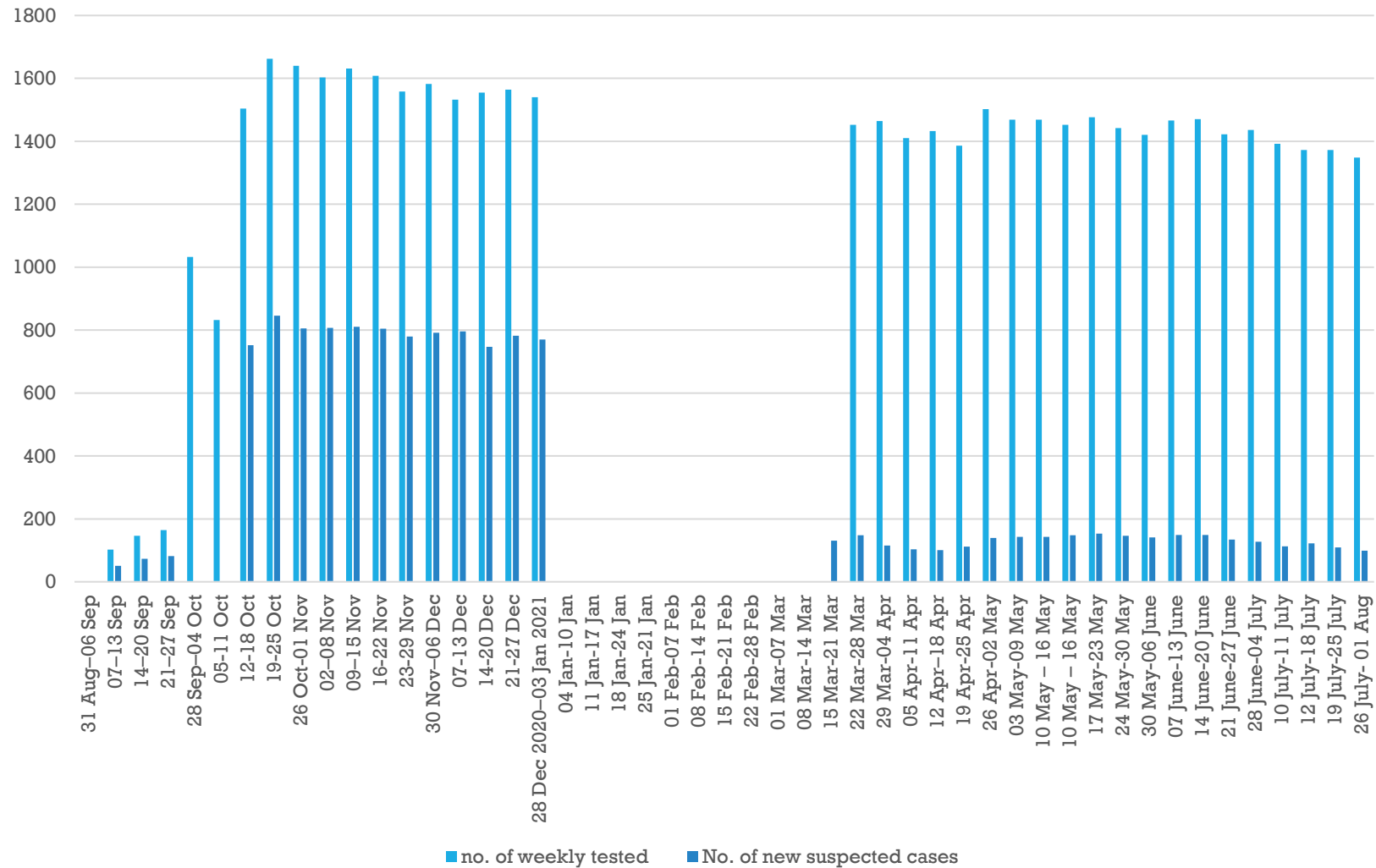
2020년 9월 하순-현재

PHASE 3: MANAGEMENT PHASE THROUGH INTENSIVE EXAMINATION

END OF SEPTEMBER 2020-PRESENT

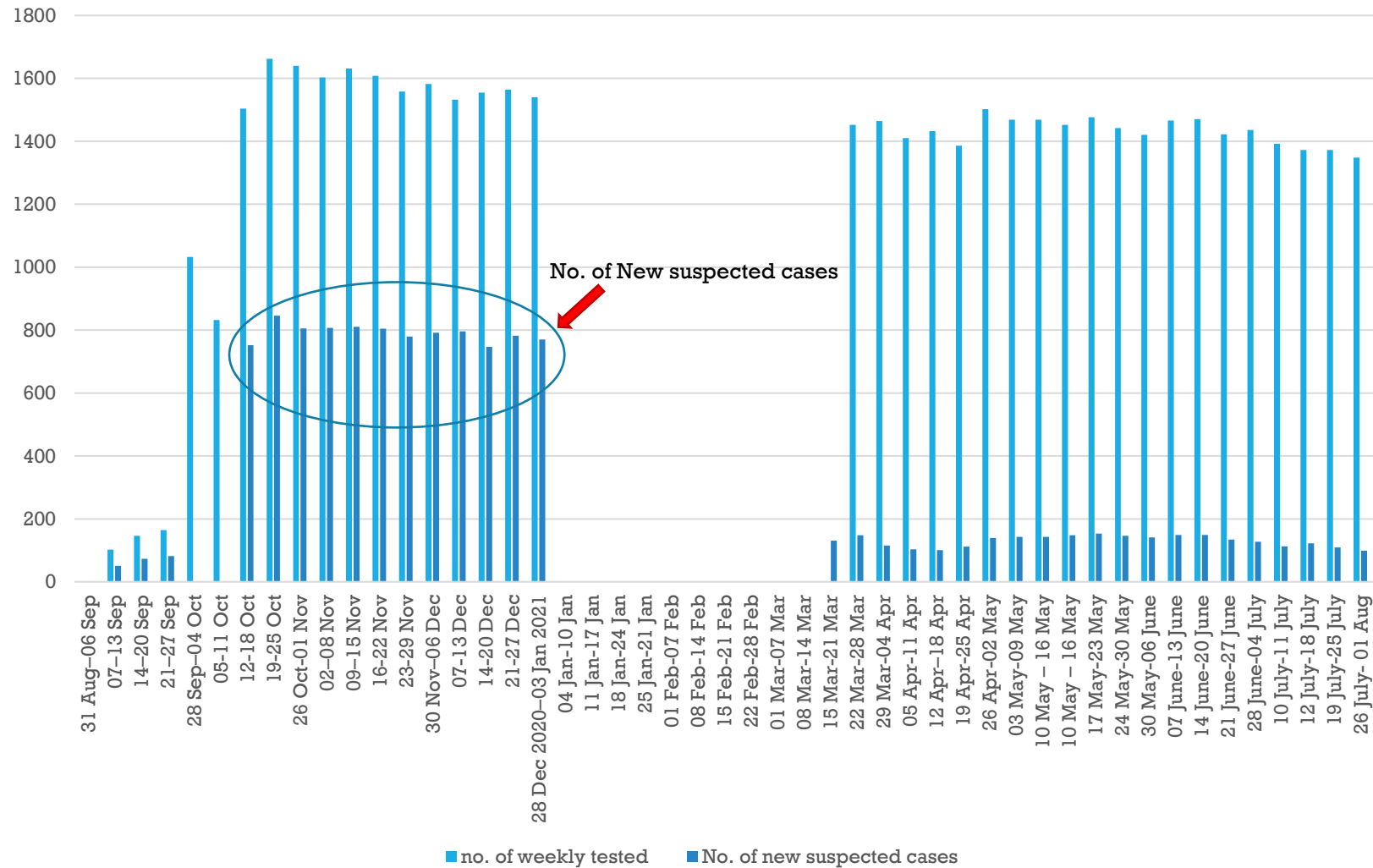
- China starts inoculating its own COVID-19 vaccine-Sinopharm from January 2021
- Although continuous testing for Covid-19 is being carried out, however,
 - Absolutely too few tests
 - Most of them are used for examinations of medical personnel.
 - ➔ Therefore, it is difficult to respond under surveillance in the same way as in ROK.
- Revision of the Disinfectant Materials Act
 - Establishment of legal basis for quarantine related to foreign trade
- High-level officials such as Chairman Kim Jong-un must have been vaccinated in March or May at the latest

Figure 2. Number of weekly tested, number of new suspected/SARS cases of the DPRK.



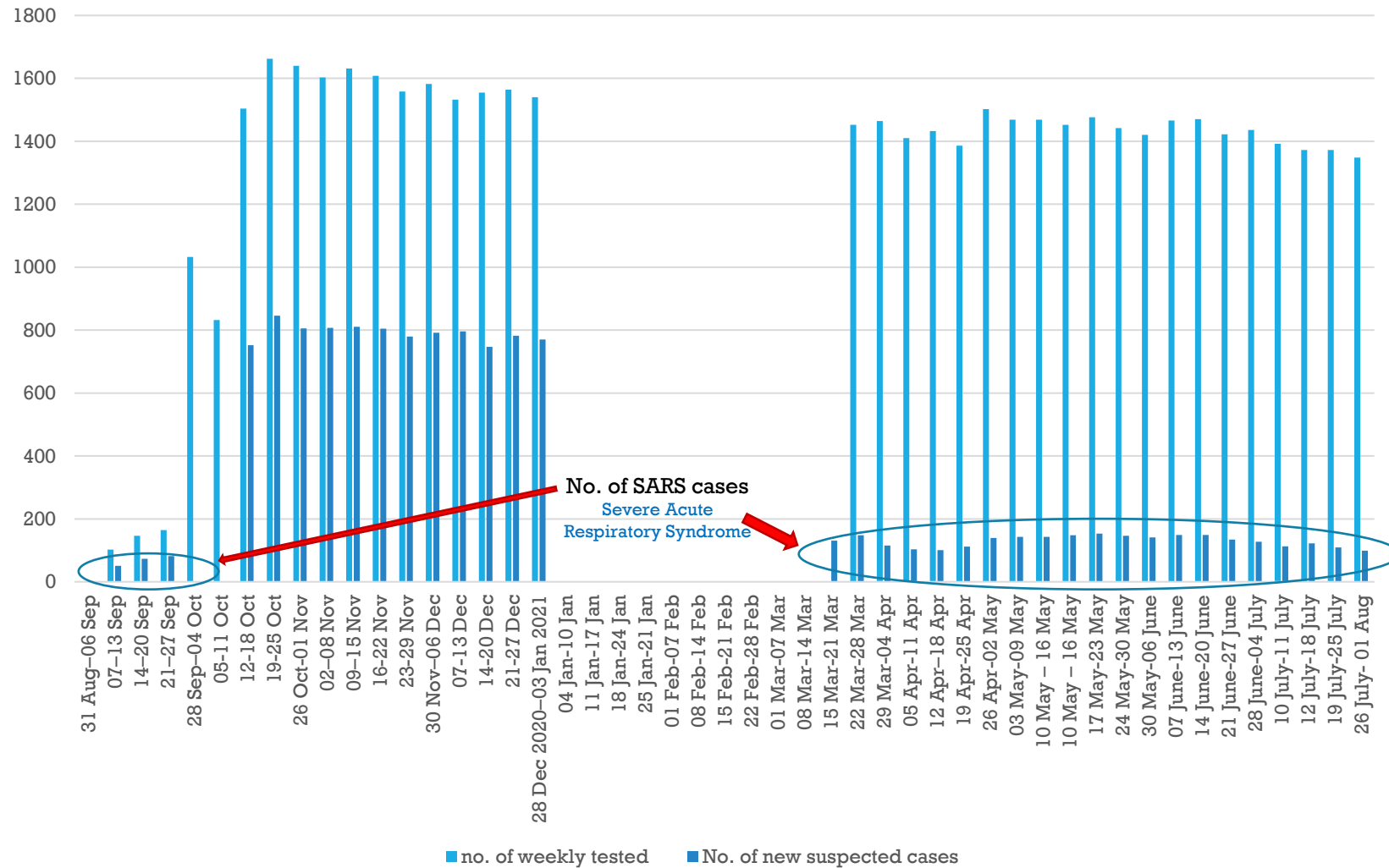
주: * 2021년 5월 15일부터 의진자는 독감유사 환자 수(이전엔 의진 사례).
 자료: South-East Asia Region of WHO, "Weekly Situation Reports," 2020; 2021,

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 자료: South-East Asia Region of WHO, "Weekly Situation Reports," 2020; 2021,

TABLE 2. COVID-19 INDICATORS OF DPRK (2021.6.20)

Indicators	DPRK (2021. 6.20)	ROK (2021. 6.20)	
No. of tests (A)	61,892	10,335,634	
Test rates (A/100000)	247.6	20,674	DPRK/ROK =1.2%
No. of confirmed cases (B)	0	141,621	
No. of <i>Uijinja</i> (suspected patients)* (B')	15,137	–	
No. of Confirmed case per 100,000 (B/100,000) (C)	–	283.2	
No. of <i>Uijinja</i> per 100,000 (B'/100,000) (C')	60.6	–	(C/C')*100 =34.0%
No. of death toll (F)	0	2002	
Fatality	0	1.32	

*“*Uijinja* (suspected patient)”: Person suspected of having an infectious disease, although there is no solid evidence, and Covid-19 like symptoms.

Source: WHO, Covid-19 Weekly Situation Report (Week #52).

출처: SHIN YJ, The DPRK's COVID-19 Outbreak and its Response, 2020-21 보완 재구성

The 6th National Veterans Convention

2020.7.22



The 7th National Veterans Convention

2020.7.26



4단계: 백신을 통한 관리기
**PHASE 4: MANAGEMENT PHASE THROUGH
VACCINATION**

(?- ?)

PHASE 4: MANAGEMENT PHASE THROUGH VACCINATION

- DPRK has early expressed its intention to join the COVAX Facility
- Initially, COVAX facility planned to distribute 1.9 million doses of Astra Zeneca (AZ) vaccine to North Korea in March and deliver 1704,000 doses by May.
- Since then, COVAX facility has stated that it has allocated 2.97 million doses of the Chinese-made CoronaVac vaccine to North Korea, and that it is awaiting a response from the North Korean authorities to this proposal.
- In early September 2021, the North Korean authorities said
 - “We are willing to provide Sinopharm, which the COVAX Facility has decided to support, to 'other countries where the COVID-19 situation is not good.’”
 1. Vaccination of less than 20 million people (<80%) is not effective in preventing the Covid-19 epidemic.
 2. Probably because they prefer vaccines from other companies.
 3. There seems to be an external propaganda purpose: “We have no problems”
- In conclusion, DPRK has not yet entered the phase 4.

III. 동북아 방역·보건협력체 NORTHEAST ASIAN PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE (NEAPHI)

PRESIDENT MOON JAE-IN'S KEYNOTE SPEECH AT THE 75TH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (SEPTEMBER 22, 2020, NEW YORK TIME)



동북아 방역협력체 5개국으로 출범...북한 불참.일본은 미정

송고시간 | 2020-12-29 15:51

| 한국의 유엔총회 제안 3개월 만에 한·미·중·러·몽골 참여로 시작



- “We propose a **Northeast Asian Health Initiative (NEHPI)** in which China, Japan, Mongolia, and ROK, including DPRK, participate together.
- A cooperative system in which several countries work together to protect lives and ensure safety will become the basis for DPRK's security through **multi-lateral cooperation** with the international community.”

III-1. BACKGROUND FOR PROPOSING NEAPHI

- In a situation where communication between the two Koreas is cut off
 1. There have been discussions and projects on Northeast Asian cooperation in various fields for a long time.
 - Northeast Asia Ecological Network, Life Community on the Korean Peninsula, Tumen River Forum, Mongolia International Tuberculosis Conference
 2. The need for a Northeast Asian cooperation body has been raised in the health and medical field as well (Shin Young-jeon, 2019)
 3. The health sector is the most non-political
 4. Cooperation is inevitable
 - Malaria, bird flu, African swine fever(ASF), forest pests, etc.
 5. To create a channel for resumption of communication through the health sector, which was previously agreed upon by the two leaders.
 - On September 19, 2018, the leaders of the two Koreas agreed to exchange information and cooperate on the issue of infectious diseases.
 6. In order for DPRK to open its borders and resume trade and tourism, inter-Korean cooperation in the health and quarantine sectors is inevitable.
 7. NEPHI is also an attempt at a multilateral approach.

정부, 동북아 방역협력체 참가국에 북한 심
단부

기사입력 2021.09.01. 오전 7:22 기사원문 스크랩 본문듣기 설정

2 3

요 북 가



(서울=연합뉴스) 최종문 외교통부 2차관이 2021년 8월 31일 화상으로 개최된 '동북아 방역·보건 협력체' 4차 화상회의에
연하고 있다. 2021.9.1 [외교부 제공, 재판매 및 DB금지]

III-2. NEAPHI'S ACTIVITIES SO FAR

- 2020.9.23 President Moon Jae-in proposed at the UN speech
- 2020.12.29 Launch Participation in Korea, US, China, Russia and Mongolia
 - North Korea and Japan not participating
- 2021.3.30 2nd video conference
- 2021.5.27 3rd video conference
 - Additional participation by Japan (North Korea not participating)
- 2021. 8. 15 President Moon Jae-in reiterated his speech at the 76th Liberation Day celebration
- 2021.8. Korea provides \$300,000 worth of supplies, including rapid antigen diagnostic kits, to Mongolia
- 2021.8.31 The 4th video conference



PRESIDENT MOON JAE-IN REITERATED HIS SPEECH AT
THE 76TH LIBERATION DAY CELEBRATION
(2021.8.15)

- “NEPHI is currently discussing cooperative projects such as information sharing, joint stockpiling of medical quarantine supplies, and joint training of COVID-19 response personnel.
- Now that it is clear that the threat of COVID-19 is by no means temporary, its importance is even greater.
- As we expand our cooperation, we will make every effort so that North Korea, a member of the East Asian Community of Life, can also participate.”

1. Sharing information,
2. Joint stockpiling of medical quarantine supplies,
3. Cooperation projects such as joint training of COVID-19 response personnel

SUNG KIM (US SPECIAL ENVOY FOR NORTH KOREA) VISITS SOUTH KOREA (JUNE AND AUG. 2021)

성 김(미 대북특별대표)의 방한 (2021.6.17, 8.21-24)



Sung Kim, US Special
Representative for North
Korea (Yonhap)

- "I continue to stand ready to meet with my North Korean counterparts anywhere at any time."
- "I discussed with South Korea several initiatives for engagement with North Korea, including the possibility of humanitarian aid to North Korea."

KEYNOTE SPEECH BY PRESIDENT MOON JAE-IN
AT THE 76TH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
2021.9.21

- Today, I once again urge the community of nations to mobilize its strengths for the end-of-war declaration on the Korean Peninsula and propose that three parties of the two Koreas and the US, or four parties of the two Koreas, the US and China come together and declare that the War on the Korean Peninsula is over.
-
- When South and North Korea are engaged together in regional platforms such as the Northeast Asia Cooperation for Health Security, a more effective response to infectious diseases and natural disasters will become feasible.
- As a community bound by common destiny on the Korean Peninsula, and as the members of the global community, the South and North, I hope, will come together to join forces.



KIM YEO-JUNG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE WORKERS' PARTY OF DPRK
24TH AND 25TH SEP, 2021



- “Several issues such as the reinstallation of the North-South joint liaison office and the summit meeting between the two Koreas can be resolved gracefully in the shortest possible time through constructive discussions.”

III-3. IMPLICATIONS

1. First, it is a paradigm shift in security.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has confirmed that a public health problem can do more than nuclear weapons can seriously harm human survival.
 - If the conventional security paradigm was hostile, it has shifted to a situation in which each country must cooperate to protect the security and safety of each country in the COVID-19 pandemic situation.
2. Second, the current COVID-19 pandemic has shown that economic growth is impossible without the establishment of a strong public health system.
3. Third, international cooperation is inevitable.
 - **“We are swimming in a single micro-bacterial pool.”** (Gro Harlem Brundtland)
 - Malaria, Avian flu and African swine fever etc. cannot be tackled alone.
 - In particular, cooperation with neighboring countries that share borders is essential.

[경향신문]



문재인 대통령과 조 바이든 미국 대통령이 21일(현지시간) 워싱턴 백악관에서 대통령 업무실인 오벌오피스에서 외교안보 분야 실무회담이 폐막한 후인 오찬 자리에서 회담을 하고 있다. 워싱턴(경향신문 기자)

III-3. IMPLICATIONS+

Korea-US summit

MAY 21, 2021

FACT SHEET: United States – Republic of Korea Partnership

• STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

- “Together, the United States and the Republic of Korea will:
- Support **the Global Health Security Agenda**, as steering group members, to improve global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease threats.
 - To facilitate this the ROK has committed **\$200 million** in new funding over five years to help address future health threats.”



- **The Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) Steering Committee**
 - Building “a new security alliance” centered on a pro-American states?
 - Asking Korea to play a key role in that organization
- The activities of **the GHSA Steering Committee** and **Action Package Working Groups** should not be instrumental in the international political space to expand US international influence.
 - **Health issues should not be a political tool/weapon!**
- Many countries and experts around the world disagree about what GHSA renders WHO incapacitated.
- As long as China is excluded, it is unlikely to be feasible, and it is difficult for Korea to actively participate.
 - Either it should act as a sub-organization of the WHO system, or China should participate.
 - The “NEPHI” in which China and Russia are currently participating, could be a means to prevent these concerns.
 - In that sense, DPRK should also participate.

III-4. LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF NEPHI

- Led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs → limited expertise in public health and medicine
- Meetings between people with lower authority (Manager level)
 - Even without meeting in person, DPRK can easily obtain relevant specialized information through the Internet, so it is necessary to create usefulness beyond the current video conferencing.
- It is necessary to develop a plan to secure a significant amount of financial resources/effective business plan
- It is necessary to develop proposals that DPRK can participate in.
 - Large-scale support through Korea or China/Russia such as the project to provide over 20 million people with Covid-19 vaccine
 - A support in a quiet way: The quieter the support method, the higher the probability of success.
- Develop a strategy to lead the active role of third-party countries, such as China, Russia, and Mongolia
- A strategy to differentiate roles from existing international organizations is required



THANK YOU