

# Koizumi, Kim Hold Second Summit Talks

Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il held summit talks for about an hour and a half at a North Korean state guest-house in the suburbs of Pyongyang on May 22. Koizumi returned to Japan with five of the eight family members of the five repatriated Japanese abductees. During the summit talks, Kim pledged to reinvestigate “from scratch” 10 other abductees North Korea claims are dead or never entered the country, while Koizumi proposed setting up an investigation panel in which Japan will also participate.

Judging that some progress was made on the abduction issue in the talks with Kim, Koizumi promised to provide North Korea with 250,000 tons of food aid and medical supplies worth \$10 million in one or two months. He said the aid will be supplied through international organizations for humanitarian purposes. The two leaders basically agreed to resume bilateral working-

level talks to normalize diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The five family members of the five repatriated Japanese abductees are the 22-year-old daughter and two sons, 20 and 16, of Chimura Yasushi, 49, and his wife Fukie, 49, and the 22-year-old daughter and son, 19, of Hasuie Kaoru, 46 and his wife Yukiko, 48. The five children arrived at Tokyo’s Haneda airport on the night of May 22 on board a government plane and were united for the first time in 19 months with their parents, who were abducted by North Korea in 1978 and repatriated in October 2002. The remaining three family members – Charles R. Jenkins, the American husband of Soga Hitomi, 45, and their two daughters – refused to go to Japan. Koizumi promised to arrange for the family to reunite in the near future in another third country.

Jenkins, 64, who deserted from the U.S. Army in South Korea in 1965, is reportedly

concerned that he could be handed over to the U.S. authorities if he comes to Japan.

Meeting the press in Pyongyang after the summit, in which some progress was made in negotiations on the abduction issue that had remained stalled since October 2002, Koizumi emphasized his resolve to continue efforts to bring the issue to a settlement. Koizumi’s visit to North Korea invited mixed reactions from the ruling and opposition parties and strong criticism from the families of the abductees and their supporters. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hosoda Hiroyuki indicated Japan would not agree to resume bilateral talks to normalize diplomatic ties until North Korea informs Japan of the results of the reinvestigation.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a large number of Japanese nationals went missing. As a result of investigations, Japanese law-enforcement authorities suspected that North Korea might have been involved in the incidents.