

# The Intergovernmental Relations for Sustainable Developments of Korea

JUNG, YOUNGDUCK\*

*Professor of Graduate School of Public Administration,  
Seoul National University*

## I. Introduction

Korea is again entering an era of local autonomy. After General Park Chung Hee seized power through a military coup in 1961, Korean local governments did not have substantial political and administrative decision-making power for 30 years. During an earlier period of the Republic, under the 'Local Autonomy Law' of 1949, Korean local governments had been locally formed policy-making assemblies whose members were locally elected by the inhabitants. For some time in that period even the chief executives of the local governments were elected by the area residents. In 1961, however, the military governments adopted the so-called 'Law Concerning Temporary Measures for Local Autonomy', which suspended the functions of all local assemblies, and the administrative heads of local units became appointive. Following that decision, local governing functions were controlled by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the respective provincial governors who were appointed by the President. There was, therefore, essentially no political decentralization at all in Korea from 1961 to 1991 (Jung, 1987: 526). In 1991, however, the local assemblies were reorganized. In addition to the locally formed assemblies, the chief executives of local governments were elected directly by residents in 1995. These direct elections have enabled the Korean local governments regain their nominal political decision-making power. In practical terms, however, there still remain a substantial number of central controls in the central-local government relationship.

---

\* *The author would like to thank Sang C. Choe, Derek R. Diamond, Jean-Pierre Dufay, Keunsei Kim, Grace I. Lee, David Mammen, Hui M. Ra for commenting on an earlier version of this article.*

Such centralized intergovernmental relations do not facilitate the local governments which are now seeking autonomous regional developments in Korea. Additionally, it is not desirable either for sustainable developments of Korea as a whole. Korea has accomplished remarkable economic growth through the so-called "administration of development" by extremely centralized government system since the early 1960s (Jung, 1981). Since the late 1970's, however, the centralized system has not been efficient for further developments in Korea. The scale of the Korean economy has increased so dramatically that the economy could not be planned and implemented efficiently by the central government. Also, as industrialization and urbanization have advanced, the social problems, especially local problems, have been too complex to be solved effectively by the central government. The socioeconomic changes and political development have degraded the efficacy of the 'comprehensive or synoptic' planning by the central government. It is time that Korean development is to be achieved effectively through diversifying developmental planning and implementation promoted by local governments. It is necessary that government functions and decision-making powers are decentralized for autonomous developments of each local government according to the various local conditions and preferences of the residents. This is the proper direction of intergovernmental relations for sustainable developments of Korea, facing the 21st century.

In this context, this paper will analyze the current status of Korean intergovernmental relations in relatively detail and propose direction for their future developments. After the current central-local governments relationships are analyzed, the relationships among the local governments will be discussed.

## **II. Central-Local Governments Relationships**

Since they were inaugurated in July, 1995, local chief executives elected directly by residents have made great efforts to promote autonomous regional developments and reform administrative apparatus. Despite their will and zeal, however, substantial changes are yet to be recognized. Neither diversity nor creativity exist in their regional development plans and administrative reform ideas. This is partly attributed by their lack of experience in autonomous local governments. However, the main reason for the paucity of changes in regional development and local administrative reform is excessive entrenched central controls. The central government has built a number of institutional arrangements to effectively control local governments. These institutional arrangements keep restrain the autonomy of the sub-central governments by setting the boundaries of regional development planning and the range of local administrative reform. The following sections describe the institutional arrangements of the central

government which obstruct the autonomous development and constrain the range of reform of local governments.

### 1. Local Reorganizations and Central Controls

Most Korean local governments carried out administrative reorganizations early this year, generally within six months just after their directly elected chief executives were inaugurated. It is considered that the local governments did their best, at least from the perspective of timing, in light of the fact that no proper 'standard operating procedures' were get developed during those administrative reforms. Some regional-level governments, including those of Kyonggi Province, Seoul City and Incheon City of the Capital Area, conducted their administrative reforms actively by organizing an *ad hoc* administrative reform committee with outside expert members.

Many local governments showed efforts to reorganize similar or duplicative agencies for efficient policy coordination and to reduce the bureaucracy. They tried to minimize the number and size of agencies which perform internal maintenance and control functions, and put more emphasis on agencies which deal with policy and program functions. In addition, they carried out reorganizations for adequate division of labor and coordination among administrative agencies.

Despite the reform efforts, however, there were many observable limitations. Most of the local governments set up mid- and long-term regional development plans or, at least, have promised election pledges. The results of the reforms of the administrative apparatus can not accomodate the execution of the planned policies and programs. The Korean local governments as well as the central government have too many levels of organizational hierarchy. They need to reduce some of these levels in order to make their decision-making processes more efficient and democratic. No such case of reducing the number of hierarchical levels has been found in the local reorganizations.

Another characteristic of the administrative reforms carried out by the local governments is that there are no significant differences among them. The Korean local governments have had so little time to practice autonomous public administration that they lack sufficient and effective ideas for administrative reform. A more fundamental reason of the almost uniform local reorganizations, however, is that the activities of the local governments are still tightly controlled by the central government.

First, all the local governments should keep the so-called 'Common Necessary Organizations' including a Planning and Management Office (PMO), Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB), Audit and Inspection Office (AIO), Civil Defence and Hazards Bureau (CDHB), Fire Fighting Headquarter (FFH). This is prescribed by the central government, according to the so-called "Prescription on the Administrative Organization

and the Number". This central prescription tends to work for the efficient central controls of the local governments rather than for the development of the local governments in themselves. For example, PMO, IAB, and AIO, among the common necessary organizations, are the counterparts of the so-called 'executive apparatus' of the central government, i.e., the Ministry of Finance and Economy (previously, the Economic Planning Board), Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Board of Audit and Inspection (Jung, 1996). The former, the local agencies, have been organized as the counterparts in the local governments for easy control by the latter, the central ministries. It is unreasonable that the central government orders the local governments to keep these agencies uniformly in the era of local autonomy. It is not desirable, for example, for all the local governments to have a PMO, which is the counterpart of the former Economic Planning Board in the central government (Kim, 1996). Some local governments may prefer a more collective mode of decision-making among the agencies to the hierarchical mode of decision-making and policy coordination by a PMO. Therefore, it is now more desirable to abolish the central administrative order of the common necessary organizations.

The central government also prescribes to the local governments what offices, bureaus, headquarters, divisions and officers the local governments are to have. For example, the City of Seoul is prescribed to have less than 15 offices, bureaus or centers. Kyunggi Province is allowed to have no more than 12 offices, bureaus or headquarters. Such prescriptions of the central government keep the local governments from planning more flexible and creative administrative reorganizations for their regional developments. Therefore, the centrally prescribed limits of local organizations should be abolished.

In addition to the limits, the central government requires that one bureau can be established only when more than 3 divisions are needed, one division only when more than 3 sections exist, and one section only when the office works demand requires more than 3 persons. This is to realize the so-called "Principle of Big bureaus and Big divisions." This rule may contribute to efficient policy coordinations among the agencies and to preventing the increase of high ranking positions. However, to apply the requirement uniformly to all local governments may have a very unbalanced and irrational effect. This requirement, for example, opens up the possibility of unnecessary artificial organizations. Therefore, this prescription should be abolished, also.

Finally, the local governments must get approval of the central government in advance before they can establish branches, centers, or public enterprises for a special project. If a local government wants to establish such functional units as public health centers, civil servant training institutes, research institutions, advisory institutions for local medium and small business, cleaning agencies, etc., it needs to be approved by

the Ministry of Home Affairs in advance. This requirement also can work against the autonomous local administrations. Therefore, this requirement should be revised too.

## 2. Central Controls on the Local Personnel Administration

All the local governments have attempted to restructure personnel administration following the reorganizations this year. But the personnel administration of the local governments was carried out within the institutional boundaries set up by the central government as well.

First, the central government is entitled to appoint the 'national public servant positions'. These public servant positions of the local governments are paid by the central government. Taking an example of the City of Seoul, 11 out of 17 Director Generals and another 14 positions, including 2 Administrative Vice Mayors and 1 Head Master of the Fire Service Academy, are state-employed positions, hence are appointed by the central government. In addition, the central government has the right to appoint 25 Vice Administrators in Seoul City Autonomous Districts. As a result, a total of 39 high level positions of the City of Seoul are at the mercy of the central government. As for the Kyunggi Provincial Government, 1 Administrative Deputy Governor, 8 Director Generals and 2 Fire Officers are all state-employed positions. The number of state-employed civil servants amounts to 42 when Vice Mayors of the 31 cities and counties within the Province are added to the list. Such an appointment power of the central government puts further limiting constraints on local government autonomy and, therefore, this responsibility should be delegated to the local governments in a near future.

Second, the central government applies the 'System of Total Number of Organizations' and 'System of Total Fixed Number of Persons' to the local governments. The former means that the maximum number of possible offices, bureaus, and divisions in the local governments is fixed, and the latter refers to that the maximum number of civil servants who can be added is fixed. These systems have been set up for purpose of keeping the size of local civil servants from growing. Of course, the local governments can practice their organizing and personnel administration "autonomously" within the limits of the fixed number. This number however has already been reached by all the local governments since long ago. Moreover, the central government has the right to judge whether or not the newly established local organizations are within their given limits and give their approval case by case. It is difficult under the given circumstances for local governments to organize any new administrative structure according to their regional development plans for implementation (Hah, 1996).

Such institutional arrangements are set forth by the central government under the name of restraining the size of staff of the local governments. In spite of this justification, the local governments should be given the power to decide for themselves. In this context, it is necessary to introduce post-factum and more flexible case-by-case control systems to curb the number of local civil servants and the size of the local organizations (Yu et al, 1995). These control systems might be less efficient than the pre and uniform control system, which is now practiced. The former is more desirable, however, for developments of the local autonomy system in Korea. By

<Table 1> Number of Civil Servants of the Selected Local Governments

	Seoul (1995)	Tokyo (1994)	Kyonggi (1995)	Kanagawa (1994)
Regional Population	10,596,000	11,790,000	7,438, 000*	8,228,000
Number of Civil Servants				
Total Civil Servants (A)	17,433	199,316	5,669	44,715
Fire Officers (B)	4,454		2,898	
Policemen and Teachers (C)		132,744		29,809
A - B	12,979		2,771	
A - C		66,572		14,906
Civil Servants (person) /Population (1,000 persons)				
A	1.7	17.0	0.8	5.4
A - B	1.2		0.4	
A - C		5.7		1.8

Note : \* is for 1994.

Source : Jung, 1996.

admitting the power to organize themselves and appoint their personnel to the local governments, the ultimate evaluation of the performance can be laid on the local residents. Diverse internal as well as external control devices are needed to be institutionalized for self-control at the local levels.<sup>1)</sup>

In any event, the size of local governments needs to be properly constrained. The local chief executives who have 3 year-terms tend to have a strong motivation to accomplish their proposed policies and programs easily by increasing staff and organizations during their office. It is difficult to expect them to be recognize that the size of public sector organizations, unlike private ones, cannot be reduced with ease.

The current staff size of the Korean local governments in proportion to the local population is small compared with that of developed countries. Apart from the Western countries including the Scandinavian countries and Germany, Korean local governments have maintained a relatively smaller size compared with even those of Japan. The number of civil servants for 1,000 residents in Tokyo City is about 6, whereas that of Seoul City is less than 2. Kanagawa Prefectural Government has about 2 civil servants per 1,000 residents, while Kyunggi Provincial Government less than 1 persons (see Table 1).

Despite these facts, it is not reasonable for the Korean local governments to increase the number of their staff to the level of Japan or other developed countries. Most developed countries have undergone the 'welfare state' policies, which were almost implemented by the local governments. This explains why the local governments in these countries have bigger administrative apparatuses than the central government (Jung, 1987). They are now striving hard to make a "small government". Contrarily, Korea has not undergone a welfare state yet, and needs to put more emphasis on the welfare functions of the state. Eventually, the implementation of welfare programs is to fall under the care of local governments. However, the Korean central and local governments, left with the examples of the Western countries, should seek ways to maintain a "small government" on the one hand, and increase social welfare on the other hand.

While restraining any increase of the local staff, the Korean local governments should be more actively involved in promoting the quality of their manpower. It is a well known fact that the Korean local staff lacks expertise the central government is known for having, with an exception of the City of Seoul. The Ministry of Home Affairs, which has managed local manpower, is mainly to blame for this. The local governments and the Ministry of Home Affairs need more active manpower development programs to improve the expertises and qualities of the local civil servants.

### **3. Central Controls on the Local Public Finance and Budgeting**

Local governments are limited by central controls in their financial managements and budgeting, also. First of all, the 'national tax' and the 'local tax' are stipulated by the law. In the case of the 'Regional Development Tax' enacted in 1992, the tax base and tax rates are specified by the central government law. The central government blocks any autonomous tax policy-making by the local governments, which should be entitled to get permission from the central government on the issues of tax item development and tax rates. As in the recent cases of the local attempts to establish the so-called 'Container tax', 'Tourism tax', and 'Environment tax', etc., it is very difficult for the local governments to develop new revenue sources (Hah, 1996).

Not only does the central government control the local tax policies, it also regulates other revenue sources of the local governments. Almost of the local fees and user charges are stipulated in detail by the central government. The Local Autonomy Law stipulates that the local governments can issue local loans, foreign loans or lotteries within the boundaries approved by the Home Minister.

In addition, the local governments are restrained to a certain degree when they practice annual budget preparations and executions. The estimations and the classifications of the local budget are stipulated to be dictated by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Besides, the annual budget should be prepared according to the 'Standards for Budget Preparation' of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Violating this guideline, they are to be checked through the administrative audit and inspection done by the central government, followed by the pertinent censure.

It is necessary to revise the approval system of the central government which interfere with autonomous local management. For more autonomous practice of local public finance, it is desirable to discard the central controls at least on the 'administrative items' (i.e., sub-articles and items) of the local budget, if not the 'legislative items' (i.e., chapters, sections and articles).

### **4. Centralized Allocations of Government Functions**

Aside from the policy tools like organization, personnel, and budget of the local governments under the central controls as discussed above, the contents of the policies and programs the local governments develop are checked by the central government. First of all, the central government comprehensively illustrates the so-called 'local affairs', which defines the scope of local programs. Currently there are 57 items for 6 areas all together. However, one third out of all the office works performed by the local governments are so-called 'delegated national affairs', i.e., office works delegated

to the local governments by the central government (see Table 2).

Moreover, the central government almost exclusively takes the regulatory policy-making power on the important civil activities, from licensing and approving land redevelopment projects to curbing the pollutions from local manufacturing companies. For example, the regional and basic local governments in the Capital Area should observe the 'Capital Area Maintenance Law' which has been enacted by the central government since the 1960s. This central control has prevented the local governments in the Capital Area from planning autonomous regional developments (Choe, 1996).

The Korean central government has not only controlled the activities of the local governments, but also has performed many government functions directly. As a consequence, Korea has kept a bigger central government in terms of the proportion to the local governments compared to the advanced countries. In terms of the ratios of staff and expenditure of the central to the local governments, Korea's have been much bigger than those in Japan (Table 3). Out of the whole expenditure in Japan, the central government accounts for 47%, whereas the local governments claims 53%. The national public servants are 26% of the whole and the local civil servants account for

<Table 2> Office Works of the Central and Local Governments

Year	Office Works			Total
	dealt directly by Central Government	dealt by Local Governments		
	National Affairs	Delegated National Affairs	Autonomous Local Affairs	
1994	11,744 (75%)	1,920 (12%)	2,110 (13%)	15,774 (100%)
1996	11,646 (74%)	1,246 (8%)	2,882 (18%)	15,774 (100%)
Change	- 98 (1%)	- 67 (6%)	+ 772 (5%)	

Source: Ministry of Government Administration, 1996, Unpublished Data.

**<Table 3> Expenditure and Staff of Central and Local Governments**

Country	Korea	%	Japan	%
<i>Civil Servants</i>	person (1995)		person (1995)	
Total (TCS)	889,762	100.0	4,505,342	100.0
Central (CCS)	558,489*	62.7	1,163,947	25.8
Local (LCS)	331,273	37.3	3,341,395	74.2
<i>Total Population (TP)</i>	45,427,000		124,764,000	
TCS/(1,000 × TP)	19.8		36.1	
CCS/(1,000 × TP)	12.3		9.3	
LCS/(1,000 × TP)	7.3		26.8	
<i>Expenditure</i>	billion won (1996)		billion yen (1994)	
Total	132,558	100.0	154,010	100.0
Central	85,308	64.0	73,082	47.0
Local	47,250	36.0	80,928	53.0

Note : \* includes 105 civil servants who are employed by the state but working at the local governments.

Source : Ministry of Home Affairs, 1996, *Summary of Local Budget: 47*; Ministry of Home Affairs, *Local Administrative Areas White Paper (1994~95)*; Ministry of Government Administration, 1995, *MOGA Yearbook: 43*; Japanese Management & Coordination Agency, 1996, *Statistics of Japan*; Japanese National Personnel Authority, 1995, *Civil Service White Paper: 331*.

**<Table 4> Types of Office Works**

Types	National Affairs		National Delegated Affairs		Autonomous Local Affairs	
	Planning	Implementation	Planning	Implementation	Planning	Implementation
Number of Office Works (%)	3,703 (32%)	8,041 (68%)	351 (18%)	1,569 (82%)	404 (19%)	1,706 (81%)

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, 1996, Unpublished Data.

as much as 74%. This indicates that many functions of the Japanese public administration are carried out by the local governments rather than the central government. In the case of Korea, the central government has a much larger staff and expenditure than the local governments. More than 60% of all civil servants and budget are employed and expended by the central government, and less than 40% by the local governments.

The heavy reliance on the central government in terms of government functions can be observed also from the number of office works under its charge. The number of office works directly managed by the central government reaches about 12,000 out of the 16,000 office works of the whole country, claiming about 75% (Table 2). The local governments deal with only one fourth of the whole office works of the country. As indicated above, the delegated national affairs account for 12% out of the whole office works which are taken care of by the local governments. Thus, the original office works of the local governments are only 13% of the whole public affairs of the nation. The local governments have a restricted scope of autonomy in doing the office works delegated by the central government. The existence of the delegated national affairs blurs the scope of the administrative responsibility and raises dispute between the central and local governments. The local governments are apt to give reduced services to their residents, in that they have to share its budget for delegated national affairs, because the central government does not always subsidize the local to cover all the expenses spent in the delegated office works. This makes the poor financial conditions of the local governments worse. It is desirable therefore to transfer the national delegated affairs to the category of the autonomous functions of the local governments. It will be easier to transfer at least the implementation functions of the delegated national affairs, which amount up to four fifths of all delegated national office works (Table 4). All the related organizations, staff and budgets should be transferred together when the functions move to the local governments.

The Korean central government carries out its functions not only by delegating some of them to the local governments as discussed above, but also by implementing the rest of them directly through its own local-level organizations, i.e., the so-called 'Special Local Administrative Agencies' (SLAAs). The central government agencies prefer the latter, simply because it gives them more power, staff, and budget. For this reason, each central agency has competingly established its own SLAAs. There exist about 8,000 such SLAAs in Korea as of the end of December, 1994 (see Table 5).

It is neither efficient nor democratic that most of the government functions are carried out by SLAGs such as this. It is not efficient because some of the SLAGs' businesses overlap with those of the local governments. SLAAs conduct their projects without any links to the related functions of the local governments, hence lose its integrity and synthesisism. It is not democratic because SLAAs attributes their administrative responsibility to the central government agencies as their principal. There are only a few ways for the local residents to participate in the decision-making process in SLAAs. Therefore, it is desirable that most of the functions performed by SLAAs should be transferred to the local governments. Along with this transfer, again their organization, staff and budget should be moved to the local governments.

**<Table 5> The Special Local Administrative Agencies**

Areas	Number	1st- level	2nd-or 3rd-level	Functions
Labor	58	19	39	labor
Tax	202	13	189	internal revenue & customs
Security	4,493	164	4,329	police, fire, immigration, public prosecution, prison
Trading	2,559	13	2,546	railroad, post
Others	603	107	496	land, environment, conscription, veterans affairs, statistics, forestry
Total	7,915	316	7,599	

Source: Ministry of Government Administration, *MOGA Yearbook*, 1995: 34.

### III. The Relationships among Local Governments

There was relatively less room for conflicts between the regional governments while the local governments did not have substantial political decision-making power. Since the local autonomy system were reintroduced, however, there have arisen many problems among the local governments. More conflicts may occur as the local governments competingly promote their own regional development in the future.

Taking the example of the Capital Regions, there have been a number of disputes among the Governments of Kyoggi Province, Seoul and Incheon Cities on the various issues from environment protection to water supply from and fee allotments for the 'Paldang Reservoir'. To solve the possible conflicts between local governments, the Korean central government has recommended the local governments to institutionalize two different types of arrangements, i.e., the 'Administrative Councils' (ACs) and the 'Autonomous Local Corporations' (ALCs). These institutions have not been put into practice effectively yet.

#### 1. Limits of the Administrative Councils

Since 1993, 5 'Regional Administrative Councils' have been established by 15 Regional Governments and 49 'Basic Local Administrative Councils' by 230 Basic Local Governments under the instruction of the Ministry of Home Affairs. These

**<Table 6> Administrative Councils for Korean Local Governments**

Year	Number of Councils	Number of meetings	Number of Agenda	Results		
				Agreement	Pending	Rejection
1993	58	86	295	178	85	32
1994	52	49	154	123	26	5
1995	54	32	108	73	30	5

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, 1996, Unpublished Data.

organizations, however, remain inactive as an institutional device reconciling local conflicts. As for 1995, the Administrative Councils were held only 32 times nationwide, of which only 73 out of 108 cases have reached successful agreements (Table 6). The 'Regional Administrative Council for Capital Area' has been organized by the Regional Governments of Kyunggi Province, Seoul City, Incheon City, Kangwon Province, and North Choongchung Province. However, only 2 meetings were held. Through these meetings, 11 cases were presented and 4 cases reached an agreement and 7 cases are still pending.

The inactivity of ACs is caused partly by their limited power of coordination among the local governments. On the one hand, ACs are given only the nominal right to coordinate policies of the related local governments by Article 146 of the Local Autonomy Law. On the other hand, the law also prescribes that if ACs fail to have the local governments reach agreements, the upper-level governments - i.e., the Regional Governments in the case of the Basic Local Governments, and the central government in the case of the Regional Governments - can intervene and arbitrate. In addition to the legal limits, the local governments have shown a tendency to prefer upper-level government's intervention in case of the failure of agreement through ACs. This is to pass the responsibility of the failure to other local governments or upper-level governments when the residents call them to account. The representatives of the local governments also tend to seek ACs where they speak for their own interests one-sidedly rather than discourse together to solve the common problems. They tend to regard ACs merely as a means of propaganda to show off that they are doing their best for the benefits of the electorates.

To be activated, first of all, ACs need to have an obligatory power to coordinate among their member local governments. Also, ACs need to be held regularly as an obligation, and they need to have a working committee to discuss agenda in advance. As a standing permanent committee, the working committee can induce constant

discussions and coordinations through ACs. Also, ACs need to have their own secretariats.

Another institutional constraint of ACs is their memberships are restricted to those who represent the executives of the local governments, keeping the representatives of the local assemblies from participating. Therefore, even the cases that the representatives of the local executives reach agreements through ACs tend neither to be approved nor supported positively by the local assemblies. To make ACs more effective, it is necessary to let the representatives of the local assemblies have membership.

## **2. Underdevelopment of Autonomous Local Corporations**

The local governments can establish ALCs with which they can deal with the common affairs together. This system, however, has not been actively utilized yet. There is only one ALC, the 'Capital Area Refuse Dump Management Corporation' (CARDMC). It was established in 1991 by the Regional Governments of Seoul City, Inchon City and Kyunggi Province, and 20 Autonomous Cities and Counties within Kyunggi Province, to set up and operate a joint waste disposal. This organization has attracted attention as an alternative to overcome the so-called 'NIMBY' phenomena prevalent in Korean society recently. It has been regarded also as an institution to solve common local problems such as 'the scale economies' more actively. Several problems have been pointed out in the prescription of the Local Autonomy Law on ALCs.

First of all, the establishment of the corporation is constrained. According to the Local Autonomy Law, ALCs can be established if the local governments need to deal with the affairs together or if the Minister of Home Affairs recognizes its necessity for public interests. Even for the former case, however, its establishment requires a final approval of the Minister of Home Affairs.

Another problem with the law is that the representatives of the Basic Local Governments cannot participate in the decision-making process of ALC. Only the Regional Government Representatives can be members of the corporation. The present 'Corporation Council', which is a legislative organ, of CARDMC is composed of 7 members including 4 representatives of the Regional Assembly and 3 General Directors of the Regional Governments. However, the Basic Local Government representatives cannot take part in the council. It is understandable in this context that the residents in the possible reclamation sites in the Capital Regions argue that their opinion is not sufficiently reflected in the decision-making process of CARDMC.

#### IV. On the Local Leaderships

As discussed so far, the Korean local governments are controlled by the central government through various institutional arrangements. The regional developments and administrative reforms cannot but be limited to a certain degree under this situation, no matter how much will and zeal the local leaders have. Therefore, any necessary measure that needs to be taken in terms of the developments of the Korean local autonomy is to reduce or abolish such institutional arrangements of the central government. It is not an easy task at all for one or two local governments to advocate this against the central government. It is absolutely necessary for the local leaders to cooperate in order to persuade or bargain with the central government.

Since the chief executives of the Korean local governments were inaugurated in July of 1995, they have done their best to develop their regions, through their individual ability and political backgrounds such as political party affiliations, and the socio-economic situations of each region. But one thing missing is that the local political leaders have been reluctant to cooperate with the chief executives of their neighbouring governments. Even when they come to face common issues or to bargain with the central government, they do not maintain cooperative relationships with other local political leaders, making efforts only for their own regions on the individual level.

It must be much more efficient for the local leaders to approach the common issues - especially those relevant in the relationship with the central government - by forming solidarity with other local leaders rather than by themselves (Sung, 1996).

<Table 7> Results of Local Government Elections in 1995

Political Parties	Democratic Liberal Party	Democratic Party	Liberal Democratic Federation	Non-Identified	Total
Chief Executives of Regional Governments	5	4	4	2	15
Local Assemblymen of Regional Governments	286 (49)	352 (38)	86 (8)	151 (0)	875 (97)
Chief Executives of Basic Local Governments	70	84	23	53	230

Note : ( ) are numbers of the proportional representatives.

Source : *Chosun Ilbo*, June, 30, 1995 as quoted by Sung, 1995.

The lack of cooperation among the local leaders is partly due to their different political party backgrounds. The chief executives and assemblymen of the local governments who were elected in the 1995 local election have almost diffused political party backgrounds (Table 7). Such diverse political backgrounds of the local leaders must have made them to be reluctant to cooperate with each other.

Another reason for the ineffective cooperation among the local political leaders is that they are interested in appealing to their voters by the achievements made by themselves more than anyone else.<sup>2)</sup> As described above, one of the reasons why the administrative councils and autonomous local corporations in Korean local governments have not been effective is that the chief executives are individualistic, not to speak of the above mentioned factors.

But the Korean people, who have just re-introduced the local autonomy system belatedly with the 21st century ahead after 30 years' absence, are too tired to wait for relevant intergovernmental relations by going through a process of many trials and errors. In this context, the role of the local political leadership cannot be overemphasized, especially those of the Capital Regions which are most influential in Korea.

It is often said that the local autonomy system is the seedbed of bearing political elites. A local political leader will be brought up to the nation-level if he seeks to solve the common issues of the local governments by cooperating with other leaders, hence he can contribute to developments of the belated Korean local autonomy system, not merely seeking development of his own region exclusively.

## Notes

- 1) Recently, much Korean press and, many university institutes have been conducting evaluation research on the performance of local governments. These efforts can be regarded as a significant external control system (SNU Korean Institute of Public Administration, 1996).
- 2) The political leaders tend to appeal to their voters through their own means. Even in the United States, which has a long history of a federal system, the governors of New York and New Jersey have experienced many trial and error losses due to their separate activities and ineffective cooperations concerning common issues. It was not until the unbearable period of time that they finally agreed to establish together the famous Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. I am indebted to Mr. Hugh H. Welsh, the Deputy General Counsel of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for this information.

## References

- Choe, S. (1996), "Direction and Strategy of the Capital Area Development in the Era of

- Globalization and Localization," Paper Presented at the Kyunggi Province Policy Seminar (Direction of the Capital Area Development in the Era of Globalization and Localization), June 27. (in Korean).
- Ha, H. (1996), "Directly-Elected Chief Executives of the Local Government and the Central Control," *Local Autonomy*. (January): 87-92. (in Korean).
- Jung, Y. (1981), "The Political Economy of Korean Development under the Park Government," *Journal of International and Public Affairs*. 2(2)(Spring/Summer): 173-183.
- Jung, Y. (1987), "The Territorial Dimension of the Developing Capitalist State: Measuring and Explaining Centralization in Korea," *International Review of Administrative Sciences*. 53: 517-44.
- Jung, Y. (1994), "Functional Allocations of the Central and Local Governments in Korea," *Sungkok Ronchong*. 25: 1379-427. (in Korean).
- Jung, Y. (1996), "Administrative Reform in the Era of Local AutoNomy," in Seoul National University, Korean Institute of Public Administration. *Proceedings of the KIPA Seminar # 96-3 (Evaluating One-Year's Practice of the Korean Local Autonomy System)*, (June). (in Korean).
- Kim, P. (1996), "Problems and Alternatives of the Local Personnel Administration," *Korean Journal of Public Administration Studies*. 4(4) (Winter): 51-89. (in Korean).
- Ministry of Home Affairs. (1996), *White Paper of Local Reorganizations*. vol. 1 & 2. (in Korean).
- Rho, C. (1995), "Direction for Development of the Capital Area Administrative Council," Paper Presented at the Seminar of the Presidential Committee of Administrative Reform (Developments of the Administrative Councils System), October 23. (in Korean).
- Seoul National University, Korean Institute of Public Administration. (1996), *Proceedings of the KIPA Seminar # 96-3 (Evaluating One-Year's Practice of the Korean Local Autonomy System)*, (June). (in Korean).
- Sung, K. (1995), "Reforms for Local Development and Decentralization," *Korean Political Science Review*. 29(4): 347-71. (in Korean).
- Tokyo Institute for Municipal Research. (1992), *Metropolitan Problems: Issues Confronting New York and Tokyo*. Tokyo: TIMR. (in Japanese).
- Yu, J. et al. (1995), "Effects of Decentralization of the Environmental Regulation," *Korean Public Administration Review*. 29(1): 3-21. (in Korean).