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Park calls for development of 'Saemaul Movement'

2016/04/20 17:09

SEOUL, April 20 (Yonhap) -- President Park Geun-hye said Wednesday that South Korea's Saemaul Movement that helped modernize its rural economy in the 1970s should be developed as a model for international development cooperation.

Park said the Saemaul Movement, or new village initiative, has served as a beacon of hope for many developing countries, citing that duplicating Seoul's own rags to riches experience can contribute to poverty eradication around the world.

Park made the comments in a meeting with more than 270 leaders of the Saemaul Movement at Cheong Wa Dae, South Korea's presidential office.



The rural development program initiated by Park's father, then-President Park Chung-hee, is credited with helping modernize the rural South Korean economy, turning it into the economic powerhouse it is today.

South Korea -- which has transformed itself from a key recipient of U.N. aid after the 1950-53 Korean War to a donor country -- has been sharing its Saemaul Movement experience with developing nations over the years.

Park received a big boost when the U.N. held a high-level meeting on the Saemaul Movement last year.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said the Saemaul Movement has spread in countries ranging from Asia to Africa "like a forest fire."

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