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Paul's summary

With Lee Myung-bak's **presidential term winding down**, a new series of corruption scandals is **surfacing**, involving **members of his inner circle**. This past Friday, prosecutors indicted Choi See-joong, former chairman of the Korea Communications Commission, and Park Young-joon, who was a former vice minister of Knowledge Economy. Charges of bribery and unethically **using their political influence** were brought down on both men who many considered to have had very close ties with the lame duck president.

The corrupt activities date back to 2004. As President Lee's former mentor, Choi has been accused of receiving more than half a million dollars in bribes for **securing construction contracts** for a local developer. That same developer has also been connected in bribing Park for **construction permits**. The list goes on with several of Lee's appointed lawmakers and family members **receiving money under the table in exchange for their political influence**.

It's sad to say that this isn't an isolated incident but a **reoccurring trend** in Korean politics for the past twenty years. **Cronyism runs deep in presidential races** where favors and aid are exchanged for key government positions later on. Only time will tell if the winner in this year's presidential election will have the **moral character** not to repeat the mistakes of his or her predecessors.

Key Words

1. 측근 close aide, associate, right hand man, members of one's inner circle
2. 권력형 비리 corruption scandle
3. 혈연, 지연, 학연 cronyism
4. 리베이트 kickback, money under the table
5. 도덕성 moral character, moral compass, morality
6. 도덕성을 높이다 have a straight moral compass; have a better moral character
7. 정치적 영향력을 행사하다 use one's political clout; use one's political influence
8. 고질병이다, 뿌리 깊다 ~ is a chronic disease; ~ runs deep; ~ is deeply rooted; ~ runs freely
9. 자기 주변 관리에 실패했다 failed to control his political family; failed to control his inner circle
10. 국민의 수준이 대통령의 수준을 결정한다 The president is only as good as the people who vote for him.
11. 영향력을 행사한 대가로 뇌물을 받다 receiving money under the table in exchange for one's political influence
12. 대선 과정에 혈연, 지연, 학연이 깊이 연관되다 Cronyism runs deep in presidential races

More Key Words

1. nepotism (가족 중심의) 특혜, 연고주의
2. favoritism 특혜
3. (비리 등이) 불거지다 surface
4. 건설 수주를 따 내다 secure construction contract
5. 건설 인허가 construction permit
6. 대통령 임기가 끝나가면서 with the presidential term winding down