

A decorative border with intricate, symmetrical scrollwork and floral patterns in a light beige or cream color, framing the central text on a yellow background.

# ANECDOTES OF KIM IL SUNG'S LIFE

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PYONGYANG, KOREA

JUCHE 96 (2007)

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**Kim Il Sung among the workers (April 1961)**



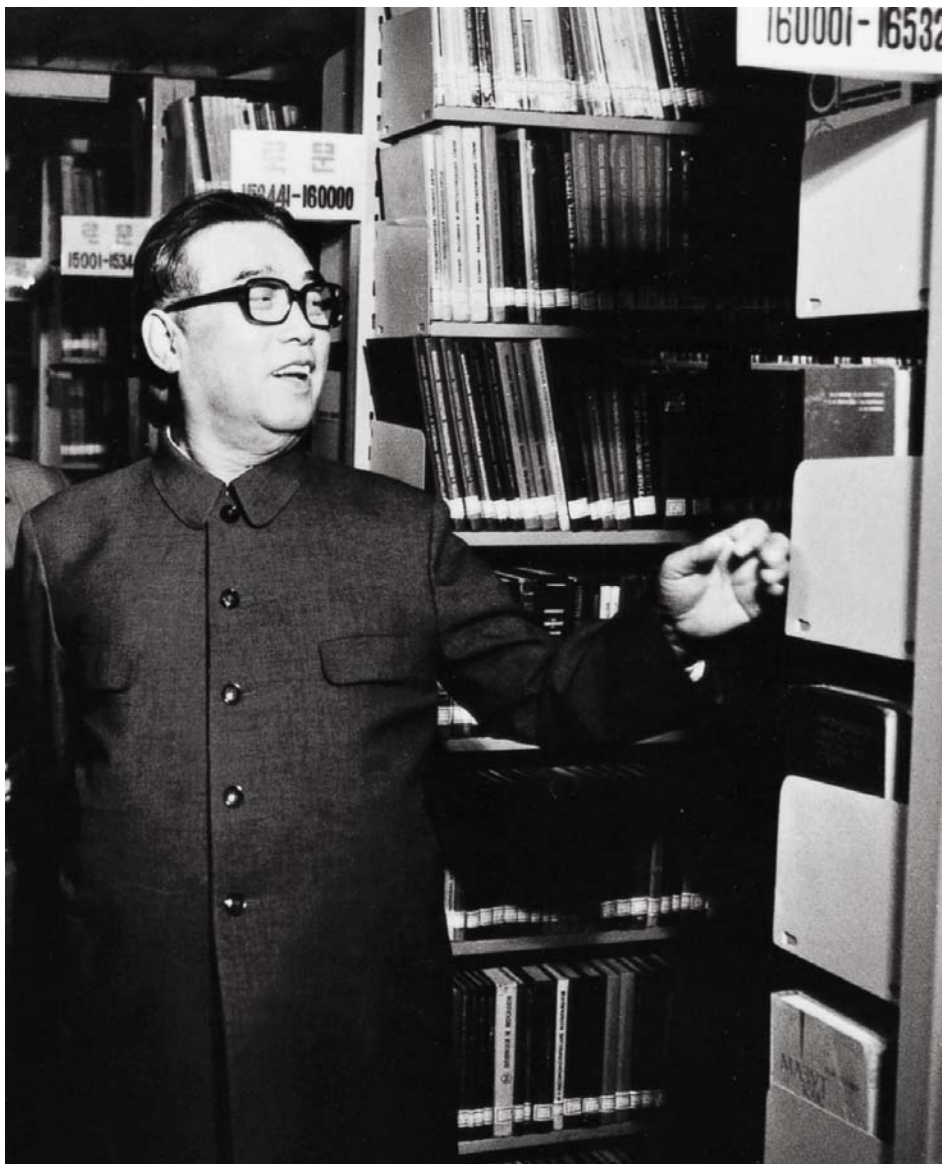
**Kim Il Sung talking with the farmers at Chongsan-ri,  
Kangso County (October 1958)**



**Kim Il Sung inspiring the workers at the Ryongsong Machine Factory to labour feats (March 1959)**



**Kim Il Sung inquiring into water supply on his visit to a farmer's house in Kyongsong County, North Hamgyong Province (June 1972)**



**Kim Il Sung looking around the bookshelves in the Grand People's Study House (September 1981)**



**Kim Il Sung on a visit to the Taedongmun Primary School on the day of the start of a new school year (September 1972)**



## FOREWORD

President Kim Il Sung (April 15, 1912-July 8, 1994), regarding “The People Are My God” as his lifetime motto, always mixed with the people, devoting his whole life for their benefit.

Many anecdotes related to his love for the people arose in his days of struggle during the protracted anti-Japanese revolution and his field guidance to every part of the country.

This book contains a selection from the many stirring anecdotes in his career.

2007

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## His Insistence on Visiting

On his way to the Mt. Paektu area from the Nanhutou meeting (a conference of military and political cadres of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army held in February 1936), Commander Kim Il Sung decided to drop in at the Mihunzhen secret camp in the primeval forests.

He came across the soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of the Independent 1<sup>st</sup> Division, and asked them to guide him there, but they balked at his request.

"No, you must not go there, General!" one shouted in alarm. "The whole of the Mihunzhen valley is typhoid-infested."

"No one can tell how many people have died there," another chimed in. "We cannot take you there. We cannot take that risk."

Earlier in the guerrilla zones they had experienced outbreaks of the disease, which had taken a heavy toll of lives.

**"Typhoid is a human disease," explained the Commander. "So man will get it under control. Man will prevail over the epidemic, and not vice versa, eh?"**

"Impossible!" protested the soldiers, digging their heels in the ground. "The disease sweeps away the strong and the weak alike. You know Company Commander Choe Hyon is a tough man, but he too has been sick in bed there for weeks."

**"Even that iron fighter?"**

The Commander was caught unawares.

**"Then I must go there at all costs."**

His tone was peremptory.

The men knew they could not talk him around, but they added that he might go there, but not to the typhoid ward.

Kim Il Sung arrived at the camp, and immediately headed for a cabin where some 50 typhoid cases were housed.

“Don’t come in! I beg you!” one shouted, scrambling out towards the door. He was Choe Hyon, now reduced to a skeleton.

Kim Il Sung came up to him and clasped his hands, which were being withdrawn beneath the blanket. Choe’s eyes were swimming with tears, and all the other cases were sobbing.

Later the wizened men recovered, supported by the warm love of Kim Il Sung, who was ready to cross even the threshold of death unhesitatingly just to save his comrades.

## A New Grave in the Snow

One day the main force of the Korean People’s Revolutionary Army engaged a Japanese “punitive” force near Limingshui, and destroyed it after fierce fighting. Then it swiftly left the spot on a forced march.

Suddenly a halt was ordered, and the soldiers slumped to the ground in weariness. They thought they were to have a break.

**“Comrades,”** said Kim Il Sung. **“We have one more thing to do. We’ve not buried a fallen comrade.”**

The soldiers tensed. It flashed through their minds that they had left a fallen comrade unburied in the rush to fight and then to depart.

The unit was now a good 40 km away from the site, a snowstorm raging fiercer and the way back hopelessly blurred.

**“We will go back and bury him,”** said the Commander firmly.

He turned around, and led the unit, wading through waist-deep snow. From then on, the Commander went without sleep or meals for two days until the soldier’s body was found. He burst into tears, gently stroking the body.

Snowflakes poured down on the frozen face of the deceased, never

melting. The soldiers dug the iron-hard ground, suppressing their sobs. Soon a grave appeared in the snow-carpeted thicket.

## **Mistake of an Old-Timer**

In the summer of 1936, the main KPRA force halted at a timber mill in the Mt. Paektu area.

The lumberjacks were overjoyed at the prospect of seeing General Kim Il Sung in the flesh. But they could not tell him from the other guerrillas, for they all looked alike in uniform.

“Which one is the General?” the workers asked one another, eager to see him even at a distance, but no one was confident except an elderly worker called the “old-timer.”

“Kim Il Sung is the greatest general of all. He can shrink distances,” he declared with a superior air. “So he must look out of the ordinary in age, manner or appearance. We must look for a man in a special uniform.”

The workers were eager to find a guerrilla who fitted this description, but to their disappointment they could not.

They spotted a man who looked out of the ordinary, and wondered if he was the General. The old-timer rebuffed them, saying, “Nonsense! He is the quartermaster in charge of supplying meals for the unit. I’ve even helped him prepare meals. Is it possible the General could be in such a uniform?”

The workers scurried about again, but failed to identify the General. Just as the unit was moving out. They pressed the old-timer to ask the “quartermaster.” He had no choice but to do so.

“Quartermaster,” he said, “would you please tell us which one of you is the General? All of us want to see him.”

The “quartermaster” did not answer, but only smiled. Then laughter

burst out from among the soldiers, to the embarrassment of the old-timer.

**“We are the Korean People’s Revolutionary Army fighting the Japanese imperialists,”** said the “quartermaster” gently. **“So Kim Il Sung too must be nearby.”**

“Nearby?” The old-timer gasped, plumping down on the ground. “Then you mean he is not here?”

He was raised to his feet by the real quartermaster, who whispered to him: “General Kim Il Sung is standing before you.”

Surprised, he looked at the “quartermaster” in ordinary uniform, who had a beaming smile on his face.

“Oh, General!” he exclaimed, kneeling down. “Forgive my mistake!”

### ***30 Yuan***

The following happened in the spring of 1937, when the main KPRA force was bivouacking in the forests near Donggang in China.

The soldiers on night guard duty brought some maize from a field yet to be harvested. It might have been a vast relief to the unit that had been making do with rice husks and water for days, but it was a grave offense, for they had not got permission from the field owner.

Kim Il Sung immediately ordered them to bring the owner.

Hours passed, and a gray-haired Chinese man was brought.

The Commander apologized and offered him 30 *yuan*.

“Why do you apologize, sir?” protested the owner. “A few knapsacks of maize amount to nothing. I must not be paid by the revolutionary army! If the villagers know, they will criticize me. I’ll not receive money or take the maize back.”

Kim Il Sung was grateful, but he finally persuaded the old man to take both the money and the knapsacks of maize. He asked some of the other guerrillas who was the Commander.

When he learned the name, he lamented over his “offense.” He brought out all his family members to pick maize, load it onto a horse-drawn sleigh and drive it to the unit.

Kim Il Sung could no longer decline his kind offer.

The old man volunteered the news that a lot of maize was available at an *insam* (ginseng) field some eight km away, and that he could help the guerrillas purchase it.

Thus the unit, several hundred strong, secured a supply of food and salt enough to last more than a month.

## Wedding of a Hired Hand

While he was active in the Changbai area, Commander Kim Il Sung once stayed at a hamlet called Jicheng. There he happened to get to know a hired farm hand called Kim Wol Yong. This man was honest by nature, but had remained a bachelor into his thirties because he was rootless and no family wanted to have him as a son-in-law.

One night Kim Il Sung lay wide awake, his heart going out to the youngster in shabby clothes and with bruised, gnarled hands.

**“I want to ask a favour of you,”** he said, on departure, to the owner of his lodging, old Jang. **“I spent a sleepless night, thinking about Kim Wol Yong. I want the old villagers to cooperate in getting him married.”**

The old man agreed.

The old villagers kept their promise. Through their good offices, the bachelor married a girl from another district in Shibadaogou. Her father said he was keen to have a man valued so highly by the General.

Informed of this, Kim Il Sung told his unit’s quartermaster to send choice fabrics and foodstuffs for the wedding.



“Do you really mean we must send wedding materials?” asked the quartermaster after some hesitation.

**“Sure. Don’t you agree?”**

“No, not really. You know how many of our comrades fell in battle after receiving only a bowl of rice at their wedding!”

**“My heart also bleeds, just to think of it. But look, Hae San! Should we allow other people to marry as miserably as we did? ... We are young Koreans who have taken up arms, determined to restore the nation. Could we not provide a good wedding table just for one man?”**

Immediately the quartermaster left for Jicheng with the wedding materials, and returned that day.

This story spread like wildfire throughout west Jiandao.

In late May the following year, while preparing to march into Pochonbo in the homeland, Kim Il Sung again visited Jicheng. He stopped at the home of Kim Wol Yong, and expressed his wish for the happiness of the couple.

## **The Aide Severely Criticized**

Immediately after Korea’s liberation, Kim Il Sung’s bedroom and drawing-room were quite simply furnished, with only an iron-framed bed and a round table respectively.

His aide purchased a bed, desk and carpet from a furniture store at Sadong. Everybody was glad that the rooms had become brighter.

That evening when he returned home, Kim Il Sung showed his displeasure.

**“Who brought them?”** he asked in an angry tone of voice.

“I did,” stammered the aide.

Kim Il Sung scolded him there and then that he was so concerned

about furnishing, and continued: You too know about the living conditions of the people. The country has been liberated, but the workers and peasants are still hard-pressed. If we lead a luxurious life from the beginning, we cannot continue the revolution. We never made revolution for the sake of our own luxury. At present, we must do our utmost to make the country rich and strong and the people well-off as soon as possible.

After a pause, he added firmly: **“Whoever we might be, we must not live above the people’s living standards!”**

## **A Surprise Request from a 70-Year-Old**

One day in 1946, well past midnight, an elderly official from a democratic party called on Kim Il Sung. Kim Il Sung held the 70-year-old caller in high regard.

The self-conscious official began his story diffidently, blushing: “I have an awkward request to make. I want to have some tonic like wild *insam* (ginseng) or young deer-antler.”

Kim Il Sung told him to go on, offering him a chair.

“Not long ago I remarried, but my young wife is displeased with me. General, please help me!”

This came as a real surprise from the lips of a 70-year-old!

But Kim Il Sung felt sympathy for him.

**“I’ll help you,”** he said soothingly. **“Then your wife will not humiliate you.”**

The caller’s face lit up, and he went back.

Some time later, Kim Il Sung sent him the items he had wanted.

A year went by and the old man had a son. Kim Il Sung was glad, and he attended the boy’s 100<sup>th</sup>-day dinner.

Nearly 50 years later, he recalled the old man, saying fondly, **“He used to tell me frankly about all the difficulties in his daily life.”**

## **Birthday and Wedding**

One day in the spring of 1946, following Korea’s liberation, an aide of Kim Il Sung called on Kim Jong Suk, the anti-Japanese heroine, to discuss arrangements for a dinner for Kim Il Sung’s first birthday after liberation.

But he found she was already tied up with the preparations.

The dinner had long been a concern of many people. Kim Chaek and other anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans had often called on her to press the point. They had said:

“While we were fighting in the mountains, we could not offer a proper birthday dinner for the General. Now we can fulfil our wish.”

“Perhaps he will object, mindful of the country’s situation. But, at all events we must present him with a dinner.”

This was why Kim Jong Suk had started her preparations in private.

One day Kim Il Sung noticed what she was doing, and asked her what it was all about. With some embarrassment, she answered, “You will soon have your first birthday after your triumphal return. I hope you’ll share the evening meal with your comrades from the mountains.”

**“Share the meal?”** repeated Kim Il Sung, and then, after a pause, asked her to prepare plenty of food.

The anti-Japanese veterans were overjoyed to hear this, and made sincere efforts to prepare a rich table.

The day finally came. When the veterans arrived to offer their congratulations they found a young man and woman seated before the table. They learned that the leader had turned his birthday

dinner into a wedding party for an unmarried veteran who had been orphaned as a child. They were overwhelmed with a sense of frustration.

“This is your first birthday after your triumphal return,” said Kim Chaek to the leader. “How disappointed the people will be to learn that we’ve not presented a dinner for you! They could have their wedding later.”

“**No more talk about my birthday,**” said Kim Il Sung with a smile. “**Forever!**”

He cast a fond, pleasant look at the couple.

He always took delight in the happiness of the people and of his revolutionary comrades.

## **The Chairman and a Pupil**

In July 1947, all schools were giving graduation exams, the first of their kind since the country’s liberation. A number of officials visited Pyongyang Primary School No. 2.

The building, dating from the period of Japanese colonial rule, had a narrow entrance hall and was pretty shady, with little sunshine streaming in. A girl of about ten years old with a “Duty” armband was seated before a desk. She saluted the officials in the style of the Children’s Union as they stepped inside. As one of them acknowledged it and was slowly walking down the corridor, she called in a ringing voice, “Would you please fill in the reception form?”

“**Reception?**” repeated the official, turning back. “**Yes, of course,**” he said, coming up to the desk and taking the reception book and a pencil from the girl.

Stepping over the low desk, he filled in the form as the pupil

required. Straightening up, he asked what else he had to write.

“Your name and occupation, sir,” answered the girl.

He again stooped and wrote: **“Kim Il Sung, Chairman of the People’s Committee of North Korea.”**

The girl’s face turned as red as a beetroot. “How foolish I am,” she said to herself, “not to recognize the General.”

## **An Order Issued to a “Boy Husband”**

A young man who had been wandering about in rags joined the army after the country’s liberation and served as a guard of Kim Il Sung’s office building.

One November day in 1949, he was summoned by the leader. He entered the office, and found some other guards there. They lined up and saluted the General. He shook their hands warmly and said that he would grant a furlough to all of them, who had married before joining the army.

The young soldier was surprised. He looked at the others from the corners of his eyes and saw all of them were married soldiers.

“How on earth did he know I’m married?” he said to himself, blushing.

He was the youngest among his colleagues, and in the fear that they might make fun of him as a “boy husband,” he had kept it secret that he was married, more than a year into his military service. But how could the General have possibly discovered it?

The soldier could never guess that Kim Il Sung had found a letter to his wife while checking his notebook.

That day the soldiers going on leave received a thick envelope each. Kim Il Sung shook their hands again after stressing, **“You must not open the envelopes before the train starts.”**

Then he told the young soldier: When you get home, you must

ask your wife to bring up your child to be a pillar of the country.

The soldier felt a catch in his throat.

As soon as the train started rolling, he took out the envelope and ripped it open. It contained 3,000 *won* and Kim Il Sung's written order that ran: "Before reaching home, you must buy wine, tobacco, a tobacco pouch and a pipe with this money. With the remainder, you must get clothes for your grandparents and mother. You must report upon this on your return."

Tears coursed down the cheeks of the young soldier.

## Oxen Returned by Train

The following incident took place one November day during the Korean war (June 1950-July 1953). At that time the Supreme Headquarters was situated at Kosanjin.

Supreme Commander Kim Il Sung, during his inspection of a unit directly under the Supreme Headquarters, found that it had slaughtered an ox. It was one of several stray oxen that had been rounded up and herded along by the soldiers on their march along the Kujang-Hyongsan road running through the Chongchon River ferry.

An officer replied, without much thinking, that the ox had been slaughtered because it had a broken leg.

Regarding this as a grave incident, Kim Il Sung gave him a good dressing-down.

He said that even though it was of course praiseworthy that they had herded stray oxen along over a long distance, it was very wrong to slaughter one merely because of a broken leg. He continued: **"The Americans are now randomly slaughtering animals in the occupied areas. If we too slaughter them on this**

**or that pretext, our country will be left with not a single ox. Don't you think so? It was terribly wrong."**

Awakened to the seriousness of his offense, the officer hung his head, his face turning crimson.

**"You should have treated the broken leg,"** continued Kim Il Sung. **"A broken ox-leg is just as easy to mend as a broken human bone. For our peasants, an ox is a family member. ... What did you think you were doing when you slaughtered an ox valued so much by the people? If you continue to behave like that, the word 'people' prefixed to the name of our army will make no sense."**

That night he sent a telegram to all the combined units banning the slaughter of oxen.

Some time later the oxen in question appeared at the Manpho Railway Station, on their way "home" with the re-advancing People's Army; they had left "home" with the retreating army.

"Transport the oxen?" cried the railway security chief in surprise. "What are you talking about? We are hard put even to transport the troops."

Finally, however, he had to concede, for the soldiers with the oxen produced a relevant order written by the Supreme Commander.

## **18 Chickens and an Egg Basket**

One night in November 1950, Kim Il Sung was staying in a humble farmhouse in Rimsonggol, Kosanjin.

His host, wanting to roast a few chickens for Kim Il Sung, went to the chicken coop. Hearing the flapping of the startled chickens, Kim Il Sung asked his aide: **"Who is killing chickens?"**

"Well, it is the old man of this house. He says he needs his chickens badly."

**“But why should he want to kill chickens at this time of night? You asked our host to do so, didn’t you? If he really needs chickens, let him take the chickens in the kitchen, which we bought, and leave his chickens as they are.”**

The old man, however, insisted on catching a few chickens and leaving them with the aide as a treat for Kim Il Sung. He added that more chickens, if need be, might be served to him.

Several days later, the old man was surprised to see that the chickens which he had given to the aide were still strutting around the coop.

Thinking this strange, he counted the chickens, and found that he still had all of his original 18 chickens.

Not long after, Kim Il Sung handed to his aide a warm egg which he had just picked out of the coop, and said, **“It is better to get the chickens to lay eggs than to eat them, isn’t it? Take this egg to the host before it gets cold.”**

Some days later, Kim Il Sung left Kosanjin. The aide returned to the host all the 18 chickens as well as a basket full of eggs.

## **Sentry in the Supreme Commander’s Fur Cap**

One winter evening in 1950, a sentry at the Supreme Headquarters was informed that Supreme Commander Kim Il Sung was coming back from an inspection of the front. He stood on high alert, peering into the blizzard.

When eventually the Supreme Commander’s car approached, the sentry saluted him and did not expect it to stop.

To his surprise, the car pulled in, and Kim Il Sung stepped onto the snowy road.



He approached the sentry and asked kindly: **“Don’t you feel chilly in this cold weather?”**

“No, sir,” replied the sentry robustly.

Kim Il Sung, however, was worried, thinking that it must be difficult to stand guard in such inclement weather. Moreover, he noticed that the soldier did not have a fur cap.

Kim Il Sung was ill at ease over the fact that the sentry had not been supplied with a fur cap because of the difficult and complicated situation during the temporary strategic retreat.

“I am all right, Comrade Supreme Commander,” said the sentry cheerfully once again, just to set Kim Il Sung at ease.

Grasping the hands of the sentry, Kim Il Sung stood against the snowstorm to shelter him, and said to his aide, **“Fetch my fur cap and gloves from the car.”**

The aide brought the fur cap and gloves, which Kim Il Sung gave to the sentry, and said, **“Take off your cap and put this one on.”**

“I am quite all right, Comrade Supreme Commander,” replied the sentry in high spirits, standing stiffly to attention.

Smiling knowingly, Kim Il Sung urged him to put on the cap.

The sentry, however, was still hesitant.

Kim Il Sung personally took off the soldier’s cap and put the fur cap on his head.

The fur cap, Kim Il Sung said, seems a little big for you, but it will do if it is tightened in the back. He pulled down the ear flaps and tied the string. He also took off the sentry’s gloves and helped him put on his own gloves.

“Comrade Supreme Commander...”

The sentry was too moved to say more.

Some time later, the officer in charge of sentry duty came, leading a relief team, and was surprised to see the sentry in a different cap.

“How dare you wear the fur cap of the Comrade Supreme Commander?” he asked, indignantly.

## Rice Sent to the Divisional Hospital

One day in early 1951, Kim Il Sung's uncle Kim Hyong Rok had a chance to go to the Supreme Headquarters and share a meal with his nephew Kim Il Sung after a long period of separation. Kim Hyong Rok was surprised to see the table spread with cooked millet without a grain of rice, dried cabbage soup and a small bowl of *kimchi*.

Although he was well aware of his nephew's frugal way of life, he was still worried as to what would become of the country if the latter's overwork day and night were to impair his health.

So he expressed his concern about his nephew's health.

Kim Il Sung said with a smile; **“Now that all the people are fighting against the Yankees, tightening their belts, I alone cannot live on white rice, can I? I feel at ease and have a good appetite when I live like the people.”**

Kim Hyong Rok thought it useless to insist. On returning home, he pounded in a mortar a small amount of rice he had kept and picked up grains of unhulled rice one by one. He sent the rice to the Supreme Headquarters with a note requesting that it be served to Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung, however, sent the rice to the divisional hospital located near the Supreme Headquarters.

Informed later of the fact, Kim Hyong Rok said to himself, his eyes brimming with tears: “He would not have done anything else, would he? Even though I knew it...”

## **The Supreme Commander in Ordinary Soldier's Padded Shoes in Summer**

One sweltering day in August 1951, Kim Il Sung inspected samples of military uniforms to be supplied that winter.

About ten suits of winter military uniforms, caps, gloves and padded shoes were exhibited on a display stand.

Guided by an official, Kim Il Sung inspected them one by one. Then he said, **“Let’s hear the opinions of the soldiers who will wear them.”** He called some soldiers, and made them try the uniforms on.

After checking the details of the lace-up padded shoes, Kim Il Sung said he would take a pair of padded shoes with him.

“What does he need them for?” the officials asked themselves.

The next day, they were surprised to see Kim Il Sung walking about, wearing the padded shoes.

Kim Il Sung went on wearing the shoes for more than a week.

One day, after a long spell of rain, Kim Il Sung walked along a muddy road to inspect the workplace of a squadron of sappers, still wearing the padded shoes.

Arriving at the place, he unexpectedly asked the sappers’ opinion of the padded shoes he was wearing, saying that padded shoes of that kind were expected to be distributed to all the soldiers in the coming winter.

The soldiers looked in wonder at the padded shoes for a little while, before saying with joy: “Comrade Supreme Commander! They are very nice.”

He urged them to pinpoint the shortcomings of the shoes, instead of merely approving them, so that he could get better ones made for them. He then aired his own opinion, saying, **“I have been wearing the shoes for several days, and found them warm and comfortable.**

**But they get wet easily. I am afraid they might freeze the feet.”**

Then, pointing at the rubber frame, he said: The rubber is so low that the cloth gets wet even on a road which is not so muddy. During the winter in our country sleet is frequent, and roads often become muddy due to thawing, and shoes get wet easily. Therefore, shoes, even if they are padded, may still freeze the feet if they are wet.

He then drew their attention to his finger marking the possible height of the rubber frame to be raised, asking their opinion.

Upon their approval, he beamed, asking them if such a height would make the shoes look shabby.

One soldier replied that as the height of the rubber frame was to be raised for the soldiers’ convenience, it would also be good to see if they became accustomed to it.

Kim Il Sung was pleased that this answer was the same as his own opinion. There and then he said, **“If you all approve, let that be the height of the rubber frame.”**

## **An Emergency Measure**

One August day in 1951, Kim Il Sung received a sad report from an official of the death of Ho Hon, the president of Kim Il Sung University, who had been killed in an enemy bombing raid while on his way to the opening ceremony of a new academic year of the university. Ho had been on a boat crossing a river in the dead of night at the time of the bombing. His body was still missing.

The official reported that the strong current of the river must have washed Ho Hon’s corpse out to sea. He added that it would be impossible to find it.

Kim Il Sung reproached him sternly, saying: How can you say that it is impossible to find him, a precious talent of the country?

However wide the sea may be, we must find him by all means, even if we have to search the bottom of the sea.

There and then, he took an emergency measure of mobilizing more than 3,000 soldiers for the search work.

It was not long after the enemy had launched an audacious “summer offensive.” In the light of the situation on the front becoming tenser and tenser with each passing moment, it was unimaginable to second such a large number of soldiers. On top of it, the severest flood in 30 years was sweeping the country.

Sixteen days later, the body of Ho Hon was recovered from the sea off Jongju.

Ho Hon was then accorded a State funeral in the presence of Kim Il Sung.

The bereaved family was quite overwhelmed, for the Supreme Commander had come to the funeral even though the situation at the front was very tense.

He said, **“How could I stay away when Mr. Ho Hon is going to the next world? I can not suppress my yearning for him.”**

He personally became a pallbearer.

## **Cabinet Decision No. 203**

On January 20, 1952, an official of the Ministry of Public Health was summoned by Kim Il Sung to the Supreme Headquarters. He presented to Kim Il Sung a written document on the measures to be taken against the US army’s germ warfare atrocities, and demanded a large amount of funds.

The official anxiously waited for Kim Il Sung’s reply.

To his utter surprise, Kim Il Sung said as follows:

**“At present, our people are fighting at the cost of their lives**

**for victory on all parts of the front and the rear. We must spare nothing for these patriotic and self-sacrificing people. Let us enforce the system of free medical care.”**

The official was dumbfounded for a while.

Smiling at the official’s surprise, Kim Il Sung asked him how much the people were paying for medical services.

The official replied that both blue- and white-collar workers enjoyed free treatment from the State and social insurance system, that farmers and private merchants paid outpatients’ fees and that the dependants of workers and office employees paid 40 percent of the price of medicine for outpatients.

**“Forty percent? ...”** Kim Il Sung said to himself and thought a while, before saying, **“As matters stand, we are in a hard situation. But we must enforce a free medical care system, in order to protect the people’s lives and promote their health. Nothing is more precious to us than the people’s lives.”**

On November 13, 1952, ten months later, the Cabinet published its Decision No. 203 “On Enforcing the System of Free Medical Service.”

Reporting on this decision, a foreign newspaper made fun of the American warmongers as follows:

“Although the United States has been devastating Korea with a shower of bombs, Korea has slapped the United States hard across the face with the huge bomb No. 203, which is as powerful as ten A-bombs.”

## **An Unexpected Running Match**

One morning during the Fatherland Liberation War, an operations officer of the Supreme Headquarters knocked at the door of Kim Il Sung’s office, barely suppressing a persistent feeling of anxiety.

There was no answer.

He knocked again, but there was still no answer. "Where has he gone?" the officer muttered.

The previous evening he had submitted to Kim Il Sung a document based on an urgent and serious report he had received on the war situation. The document revealed a new plan of aggression by the US imperialists and the ensuing rapidly changing situation on the front.

But Kim Il Sung was not in his office. The officer was ill at ease, with growing anxiety.

At that time, Kim Il Sung was in a corner of the garden, talking with a girl working at the Supreme Headquarters. The girl was the daughter of an anti-Japanese revolutionary martyr.

Supreme Commander: **"You are too fat. No one will marry such a plump girl as you, you know."**

Girl (blushing): "But someone is going to marry me."

Supreme Commander (laughing): **"You are too fat to run, so I am afraid no one will marry you."**

Girl: "But I can run faster than you, General."

Supreme Commander (laughing even more heartily): **"I can either ride a horse or take an aeroplane, if the occasion demands it, and I can also run 40 km ahead of you. Shall we race to the top of the hill to see who will win?"**

The operations officer, who was looking for Kim Il Sung, overheard them talking. He cast his peevish glance at the girl who, feeling at ease about the informal conversation, was indiscreet enough to talk casually with the Supreme Commander.

To his surprise, however, the girl started running towards the hill, with her fists clenched in determination.

Kim Il Sung watched her running till she was out of sight, and began to run after her.

The operations officer then became a witness of the unexpected "running race."

Kim Il Sung took the shortest course to the hilltop, like a

flying bird, jumping over shrubs and rocks. He did one lap of the hilltop, and returned to the starting point before the girl had even reached the hillside.

There was a burst of laughter.

Witnessing the composed and yet bold posture of Kim Il Sung, who had joined the bereaved girl in informal running, the operations officer felt his strain and uneasiness dispelled at once, like the thawing snow in spring.

## **The Leader and a Bare-Footed Boy**

One summer day in 1955, some children of Changsong County met Kim Il Sung on their way home from school and gave him the Children's Union salute. One of them had no shoes on.

The boy coloured with shame and tried to step back when Kim Il Sung looked anxiously down at his bare dusty feet. But the leader laid his hand on the boy's shoulder.

**“Whom do you live with?”** he asked.

“I live with my grandmother, mother and younger brothers.”

**“What about your father?”**

The boy hesitated to reply.

**“What about your father?”**

“He fell in battle during the war.”

The leader said no more, but hugged the boy. With a worried look, he said to his entourage: **“Look here. I haven't even given him a pair of shoes, but he has greeted me.”**

A while later he asked in detail where and how the boy was living. Parting with the children, he promised that he would drop in at their houses some time later.

The boy ran along to his house to inform his family of the



good news. When he was half way, he heard a car's horn hooting behind, and the leader's car pulled up beside him.

**"Get in,"** said the leader.

The boy hesitated, looking down at his bare feet.

The leader said, **"It hurts to walk on the stony road, doesn't it? If your feet become sore, you will be in trouble, unable to go to school."**

The boy turned his head away, tears welling up in his eyes.

When they reached the house, the leader greeted with the boy's grandmother and mother. Then he told his aide to take the three brothers and buy them shoes.

It was a long time before they returned with new shoes on. The leader, still standing in the yard, did not feel relieved until he felt the toes and heels of the shoes. The boy was so choked that he could barely stammer out, "Thank you for buying me shoes. I will study hard." Then he buried his face in the bosom of the leader.

## **A New Item of the State Budget**

The Cabinet meeting to discuss the draft State budget for 1957 went on from morning till late at night; the nation's financial situation was so acute.

Listening to the keynote speech, Kim Il Sung examined the draft item by item. All of a sudden, he asked in which category were included the educational aid funds and stipends for the children of Korean residents in Japan. The speaker hesitated to answer.

Kim Il Sung had instructed this particular item to be included. But those working on the draft could not come up with any measure to secure the funds, no matter how hard they tried.

Three years after the armistice, the scars of war wounds were still visible in the factories, farming and fishermen's villages and

towns. Even if a factory had managed to be rebuilt out of the debris, its equipment was a problem. Even when the bomb craters in the fields had been filled, the pumps to irrigate the fields were in short supply. So many people were still living in dug-outs, and there were so many wounded veterans and old and invalid people, that the State could scarcely look after them. Money was the biggest problem everywhere.

The speaker finally replied that, in view of the acute financial situation, that item had not been included in the State budget, but was to be specifically added to the short-term foreign exchange plan.

After a while, Kim Il Sung said firmly: No! We must send the funds, and that at once. Even if we can't build one or two factories, we must send the money for children's education to our compatriots suffering hardship in that alien land.

Dead silence hung in the room.

He continued, looking around: So long as there are compatriots in Japan and children who need education, we must continue to send them funds. Therefore, it must not be a temporary concern. We must set up a new budget item of "educational aid funds and stipends for the children of Korean residents in Japan," and maintain it as a permanent work.

This was how the new item was set up.

## **A Kind Man on the Road**

One evening in the summer of 1957, an old woman left for her son-in-law's at Sadanggol, Pudok-ri, Jaeryong County, South Hwanghae Province.

As she reached the main road, she heard the sound of a car's horn. A car drew up beside her.

**“Old lady!”** called a gentleman of noble bearing, climbing out. She turned, thinking he was going to ask the way. But his question was something unexpected.

**“Where are you going?”**

“To my son-in-law’s.”

**“Where does he live?”**

“At Sadanggol”

**“Are you going straight along this road?”**

“Yes, his house is near the road.”

**“Then get in.”**

The elderly woman was perplexed. Who might this kind-hearted man be?

The gentleman led her inside by the hand, placed her walking-stick and parcel on the back seat and closed the door for her. She cast furtive glances at him, for he looked familiar, but she could not decide who he was.

As the car went along, he asked her if she felt car sick, and how many children she had. Expressing his concern for her hard life, he wished that she would live long to see better times.

She was still searching her mind, thinking, “Who can this kind-hearted man be?”

At last, the car pulled up at the fork towards Sadanggol.

“How can I go, sir, without knowing who you are? You are so kind-hearted,” said the woman, hesitating to get off.

The man smiled, helped her get down and handed her her parcel and walking-stick. **“I wish you a long life, old lady,”** he said. **“Take care on the way.”**

Touched, the woman stood stock-still, and watched the car pull away.

Another car came behind, and a young man informed her that the man had been Kim Il Sung. She dropped her parcel and plumped down, saying: “Good heavens! I didn’t recognize the leader whom I had so much wanted to see.”

## “Un Dok”

One September day in 1961, Kim Il Sung visited the Pyongyang Hotel, where the delegates to the historic Fourth Congress of the Workers’ Party of Korea were staying, and had a talk with a woman delegate. When he asked her how many there were in her family, she hesitated.

An official standing beside answered that she and her husband had no children.

**“Only two of you? How old are you?”** the leader asked again.

She answered in a faint voice that she was 29.

Changing the topic, Kim Il Sung asked where her husband was working and how much her salary was. Then he studied her face carefully.

**“You don’t look well. Do you have any illness?”**

“No. I have just spent some sleepless nights, trying to finish my work before participating in the congress.”

**“You look sick although you deny your illness.”**

With a worried look, the leader continued: If you are really all right, why don’t you have a child at the age of 29? Surely you look sick.

She was at a loss what to answer.

Then he asked her if her husband did not complain about her failure to give birth.

She burst into tears, moved by his meticulous concern for her agony. She had always felt sorry for her husband although he had never complained.

The leader soothed her, saying that she must receive treatment, give birth and work harder in good health.

Later, he sent her medicine, and she recovered her health, gave birth to a child and named it Un Dok (Benevolence–Tr.).

## His Old Canvas Shoes

One summer day in 1965, on an inspection of Changsong County, Kim Il Sung summoned the officials of the Sinuiju Footwear Factory to discuss the supply of shoes for the people.

After stressing the need to produce attractive and durable shoes in large quantities, he showed his own canvas shoes to the officials, saying, **“Sinuiju brand, aren’t they? They are well made. Comfortable and durable, indeed.”**

The officials looked wide-eyed at the shoes, unable to remember when they had turned them out. The shoes were discoloured from many washings, the rubber at the toes was crumpled, and they had repaired insoles.

**“I bought them about five years ago, but I keep them because they have not worn out,”** said the leader.

The officials felt guilty of their lack of sense of economization. As they were working at a footwear factory, they would frequently change their shoes, slightly faded or worn out, for new ones.

## Care for a Disabled Soldier

One day in February 1968, Kim Il Sung visited the Mangyongdae Disabled Soldiers’ Fountain-pen Factory, to an enthusiastic welcome. In the maintenance shop, he examined products made by a lathe operator. He noticed that the operator was awkward in his movements, and asked him where he had been

wounded. As he expected, the worker answered that he had been wounded in the spine.

**“The spine?”** the leader’s face became longer.

**“In which battle?”** he asked.

“In the battle of Height 1211.”

**“Well, you are a hero of Height 1211.”**

He passed his hand all over the veteran’s back, asking where he had been wounded and if he felt pain in this or that part.

The veteran answered in a tearful voice that he was all right.

The leader asked him if he had a wife. Wiping away his tears, the soldier answered yes.

After thinking a while, the leader asked. **“Do you have any children?”**

“Yes, four!”

**“As many as four?”** Kim Il Sung’s face brightened. **“Good! Very good! I am glad to hear it.”**

He excitedly embraced the soldier. **“How good it is that you have children!”** he said with a beaming smile. He then asked the veteran to work hard and bring up his children well.

## **A Political Committee Meeting Turned into a Meeting of Pupils’ Parents**

One summer day in 1969, Kim Il Sung, on his way back from an inspection tour, told his driver to stop when he saw some children returning from school. He climbed out and called to them. They came running up with exclamations of joy, and greeted him. Caressing them with a fond look, the leader asked them which school they attended, what grade they were in and where their houses were.

**“Let me look in your schoolbag,”** he said, taking a bag off a

boy's shoulder. He opened the pencil-case, textbooks and notebooks. He praised the boy for keeping his textbooks clean and for his good handwriting. The boy was all smiles.

The leader asked the children if they studied together at home and how they liked their study group.

All said they liked it: One answered that they were sharing knowledge among themselves, and another that they were also sharing textbooks.

Kim Il Sung urged them again and again to study hard, before climbing into his car.

On the way, he said, as if to himself: **“Children are honesty itself.”**

But he was worried, because they were sharing textbooks. The boy's answer means textbooks are in short supply, he mused.

Some time later, the Political Committee of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea met to discuss the issue of textbooks.

Kim Il Sung said: We must print textbooks of good paper, even if we have to delay the printing of other publications. Then he set up a preparatory committee for the new school year with senior officials at central, provincial, city and county levels.

He said in conclusion, **“We are parents of pupils, aren't we? This Political Committee meeting is a meeting of pupils' parents, so to speak. Where will we be if we can't find a solution to children's education?”**

## **Making a Detour for Three Years**

One day in the early spring of 1970, Kim Il Sung left Pyongyang for field guidance in Onchon County. The car travelled along the Pyongyang-Nampho road, and was veering

in the direction of Ryonggang, when the leader told his driver to stop and drive toward Nampho, instead of Ryonggang.

“Aren’t you going to Onchon?” asked his aide.

**“Yes, I am.”**

The aide wondered. Onchon was 16 km away via Ryonggang township, but 24 km away via Nampho. Moreover, the leader always used to go through Ryonggang on his way to Onchon or back from there to Pyongyang. But now he was going to make a detour. The aide and the driver looked at each other with a questioning look.

**“I do not want to pass through Okto-ri,”** said the leader.

They were surprised, for he had always been glad to pass through Okto-ri, in Ryonggang County, where Hero Rim Kun Sang was living, whom he had known since the national conference of model farmers held during the Korean war. Back then, when Rim took the floor and said how he had invented a wide-row wheat sower, Kim Il Sung highly praised him for his diligence and devotion, calling him a “real farmer.” For nearly 20 years since then, he had treated him as his revolutionary comrade and dear friend.

Whenever he was passing Okto-ri, Kim Il Sung would tell the driver to go slowly and looked out as if in search of someone. Every time, Rim would run up and greet him, and they joyfully discussed farming, oblivious of the passage of time.

When the car turned towards Nampho, the leader spoke in a hoarse voice: **“I don’t want to pass Okto-ri because I won’t be able to see Rim Kun Sang.”**

Only then did the aide and the driver remember that Rim had passed away not long before.

When Kim Il Sung had learned that Rim was suffering from a terminal illness, he showed him every possible care, but finally death overcame the farmer-hero. The leader dried his eyes with his handkerchief at the heartrending memory.

For the next three years, Kim Il Sung always made a detour via Nampho on his way to Onchon.



## A Carp Pieced Together

One evening in September 1971, Kim Il Sung arrived at his residence from an inspection trip, and entered the dining-room together with three children of an official of Chongryon (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) who were staying there.

The youngest boy, aged 6, was seated beside him, and he boasted that he had caught a carp in a nearby lake in the afternoon, and that he had been the only one of his companions to do so.

The boy, indulging in the special care of the President, was a spoiled, wilful child.

On his return with the carp, he had allowed nobody to touch it, assuming the air of a hunter who had caught a tiger. "My carp is going to be served, and you'll see it's as big as my arm," he bragged to the President, lifting up his arm again and again. "**That big?**" said Kim Il Sung, urging him further and holding his arm upward. "**How could it bite the bait? Perhaps thinking it was safe?**" Inflated with praise, the child demanded that the cooked carp be brought immediately.

When the dish was served, the child suddenly burst into tears. He cried nonstop before crawling under the table and kicking his feet in the air in a tantrum. He was upset because the fish had been cut into slices, and so nobody could tell how big it was.

His brother and sister tried to soothe him, but in vain.

"**A bit too headstrong,**" said Kim Il Sung, chuckling. He proceeded to gather the slices together in order to form a whole fish.

"**Now come out,**" he said, gesturing to the child under the table. "**The carp is whole again. Oh, it's so big!**"

The boy stopped crying, crawled out and stole a glance at the table, wiping away his tears as he did so.

The fish was just as big again as when he had caught it. With eyes popping, he exclaimed,

“Grandfather, it’s the carp I caught. Please help yourself.”

The President gave a hearty laugh, and was soon joined by the others in his mirth.

## **The Best Site for a Building for the People**

One day in October 1973, Kim Il Sung was enjoying a bird’s-eye view of Pyongyang from Moran Hill.

**“What do you think should be built over there?”** he asked the accompanying officials, pointing towards Namsan Hill.

The officials were stuck for a reply, for they knew the history of the site.

Decades before, when the blueprint for the postwar reconstruction of Pyongyang was being worked out, the President had directed the layout with Namsan Hill as the axis. But he had insisted on leaving the hill vacant. It really was an enviable site, for it commanded an open view of the Taedong River in front, the Munsu Plain beyond, and the scenic spot of Moran Hill to the left.

Many buildings had since appeared around the vacant hill.

Once a designer, concerned for the site, submitted a plan for an impressive government building to be erected there. But Kim Il Sung rejected it immediately. He said there and then: Why should a government building, instead of a public building for the people, be constructed on such a good site in downtown Pyongyang?

The officials knew the President's attachment to the site, and they had not a ready answer to his question.

He said that the central square should be used for a building for the people, such as a museum, public hall, library or palace of culture.

Two months later, in mid-December, the President climbed the hill. Saying that it was high time to use the site, he proposed building a big library there, now that there were already a palace of culture and a students and children's palace in Pyongyang. The children would study in their palace and the adults would study in this library, he remarked. **"If a library is built here, the people will welcome it,"** he said.

This was how a magnificent building of Korean architectural style appeared on the hill, and Kim Il Sung named it the Grand People's Study House.

## **"Senior Mourner" for Jang Kil Bu**

In February 1974, Jang Kil Bu, mother of fallen anti-Japanese revolutionary fighter Ma Tong Hui, died, and the officials preparing her funeral service found that she had no family members to mourn for her. Her son, daughter and daughter-in-law had all fallen in the struggle for national liberation.

The officials were at a loss what to do, for it was the national custom that children of the deceased receive the condolers and hold the funeral.

They decided to ask Kim Il Sung for advice.

"You have arranged for a State funeral for Jang Kil Bu," they said, "but we have a problem selecting mourners. You know she has no children."

The President looked out of the window in silence. After a while, he said with regret that she might well have lived to be 100, but died before her time.

In fact, Jang had lived to 91, under the special care of Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung then volunteered to act as the senior mourner and asked generals of guerrilla origin to be the junior mourners.

“That would be unprecedented,” said an official.

But the President said firmly that he would do.

Next day the condolers were surprised to see five “sons” in generals’ uniforms and five “daughters-in-law” dressed in white mourning standing beside Jang’s coffin.

## **A Sick Call on New Year’s Eve**

Towards the evening of December 31, 1983, Kim Il (the then Vice-President) was surprised to hear that President Kim Il Sung would be arriving soon. He was confined to his sick-bed at home. He was moved at the announcement, for New Year’s Eve was a busiest day for the President.

The family was in a rush to tidy up his room.

After a few minutes, the President entered the room, and clasped Kim Il’s hands warmly.

“Leader!” exclaimed Kim Il, with a catch in his throat.

The President was there to inquire about his treatment after all the solicitude he had shown the sick man.

Kim Il answered the President’s questions, and added that he was sorry not to be fit to work.

The President said that Kim Il had every right to rest after all his services, and that he was satisfied to see the latter still endeavouring to work further.

The President recalled with deep emotion how they had met for the first time. But their innermost feelings from the decades-long, arduous struggle were too many for a single night.

Feeling sad to see his comrade wasted by illness, the President proposed talking more later and sharing a glass of wine on the New Year's Eve, and asked him if he was allowed a drink by doctors.

"I'm afraid not," answered Kim Il with a sigh. Kim Il Sung decided not to insist on a drink if it would be harmful to Kim Il's health. After a pause, he earnestly told Kim Il to battle his disease with perseverance. He tried to say something further, but turned his face, tears blurring his eyes.

Kim Il was moved by the leader's solicitude. "Leader," he said between sobs, "please take care of yourself. Now you are advanced in age. Please stop overworking yourself."

**"Thank you,"** the President said, overcome with emotion and getting to his feet. **"I have kept you sitting up too long. Now I'm going."**

But, he hesitated to leave. He was looking his comrade in the face, and after a while, said in a husky voice, **"We always saw New Year art performances together every year. But this evening I could not see one properly, with tears welling up, as you cannot be with me."**

The President clasped Kim Il's hands again.

## **A Martyr's Tomb in Taehongdan**

One spring day in 1985, a young official attending President Kim Il Sung came back from a tour of the revolutionary battlesites in the Mt. Paektu area.

Greeting him, the President asked him what his impressions had been, and the official replied candidly.

The President asked him if he had also gone to Taehongdan.

“Yes,” answered the official. “Pink azaleas were in full bloom in the wide plains. I felt as if I were a soldier of the Korean People’s Revolutionary Army that had marched into the homeland under your command during the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle.”

**“So you went to Taehongdan,”** said the President. Then he asked him if he had visited the grave of a fighter there.

The official was dumbfounded. He had never heard of such a grave.

Kim Il Sung expressed his regret that he had forgotten to tell him to lay a bouquet of flowers at the grave of fighter Kim Se Ok there. Referring to Kim Se Ok, the President said that he was taciturn normally, but as brave as a tiger in battle. Regrettably, the fighter did not live to see national liberation.

At lunch and dinner, Kim Il Sung again broached the subject in a tone of regret.

## **Telescope in His Office**

On December 31, 1985, an official was summoned by President Kim Il Sung. Entering the leader’s office, he stopped short at the sight of the President intent on looking through a telescope, oblivious to his presence. The official asked him what he was looking at. The President turned, and invited him to take a look. The official found that he could see the Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery on Mt. Taesong, the martyrs seeming to rush towards him.

He was choked with emotion.

The President said in a husky voice that whenever he thought of them, he looked at the cemetery and he regretted not having done better for them.

## **Pedigree Records and Royal Seal of King Wang Kon**

Early one morning in May 1992, President Kim Il Sung visited Kaesong, and looked round the historical remains and relics tirelessly. Then he made for the mausoleum of King Wang Kon, eight km northwest of the city.

After a meditative silence, he said that the mausoleum was too humble for the founder king of Koryo, the first unified state of Korea, that if we left it as it was, he would curse us, and that the historians should consult the architects on sprucing up the mausoleum.

The king's descendants were moved to hear this. After some sleepless nights, they decided to present the President with their pedigree records and royal seal, heirlooms which had been passed down for generations.

These 600-year-old relics had been preserved by members of the royal family who had fled the overthrow by Ri Song Gye of the Koryo dynasty in 1392.

**“Is it true Wang Kon’s family tree has been found?”** asked Kim Il Sung. **“A wonderful thing indeed, in these good times!”**

Examining the genealogical records and royal seal, he continued: Wang Kon was the founder king of Koryo. Koryo was the first state to unify Korea. That is the significance of my proposal to name a reunified Korea the Democratic Federal Republic of Koryo.

At the sight of the king's portrait, he laughed, saying that he was a very handsome man.

He took steps for the remains to be well preserved, and sent presents to the king's descendants.

## Tangun's Mausoleum

One late September day in 1993, President Kim Il Sung visited the tomb of King Tangun in the seat of Kangdong County.

The tomb, of relatively small size, had been much battered by the weather over the ages.

Looking round the dilapidated tomb with a sinking heart, he said, **"I thought the mausoleum would be magnificent, but now I find it puny. I thought it might have been restored somewhat during the 500-year-long Ri dynasty, but nothing seems to have been done."**

Observing that the site was not so good, he continued to say that the mausoleum should be rebuilt on a good site. He then proposed going to a site he had chosen desirable for rebuilding the mausoleum.

The presidential convoy pulled up at the foot of Mt. Taebak.

The President fixed his eyes upon a hillock, which had an open view in front and a trimmed shape.

**"The crest of this hillock, with the Munhung-ri dolmen, seems to be the best site for rebuilding,"** he said in a satisfied tone. **"It will be good to rebuild the mausoleum here, as it commands a far-reaching view just as the Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery on Mt. Taesong does, and is easy of access by car, for it will be near the road."**

"A wonderful site, indeed!" exclaimed an old scholar.



**“Right,”** said the President. **“How nice it will be if the mausoleum is erected here!”**

Afterwards he said, **“To rebuild the mausoleum in style is of great significance in demonstrating that Korea has a history spanning 5,000 years, that the Koreans are a homogeneous nation of the same blood since their emergence, and that Pyongyang is the native place of Tangun and the Korean nation.”**

He organized a committee for the reconstruction of Tangun’s mausoleum.

He detailed measures to carry out the project, and guided the designing so as to make the mausoleum worthy of the founder king of the Korean nation. On July 6, 1994, he examined and ratified the final blueprint submitted by the reconstruction committee.

This blueprint was signed by him just before the final document he ratified on July 7—the document on national reunification.

The reconstruction project was completed and the unveiling ceremony took place on October 11, 1994, the year he died (on July 8).

## **The Final Day of His Devoted Life**

On July 7, 1994, the day before his death, President Kim Il Sung was tied up with work.

In the morning he put his last signature to a document—one on the country’s reunification, and then directed flood-control measures. In the afternoon he provided guidance for foreign affairs and the construction of a heavy-oil power station. He was absorbed in work late into the evening, even forgetting his dinner.

“Father leader, you should have dinner,” an official pleaded, anxious for the President’s health.

**“I have no appetite somehow. More work will give me some, perhaps.”**

“How can you work when you have skipped a meal?”

**“Thank you for your care,”** said the President in a soft yet firm voice. **“However, you know we have mountains of work to do for the good of the people. If I rest, it will lay so much more of a burden on the shoulders of Supreme Commander Kim Jong Il. You see he does a tremendous amount of work, holding himself responsible for all the affairs of the country, major and minor. I cannot have a moment’s rest when he is working all night for the people.”**

The summer night was deepening, but the 82-year-old President was immersed in work, reading documents and making telephone calls. This turned out to be the final schedule of his lifelong devotion.

Later Kim Jong Il recalled how he had dedicated himself to the cause of the Party and revolution, the country and people.

**“The great leader passed away in his office while working energetically for the Party and revolution, the country and people. He died a martyr. He was the only leader in the world to have worked hard and completed all his work before his death. In this regard as well, he was the greatest man who ever lived.”**

## ANECDOTES OF KIM IL SUNG'S LIFE 1

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