



Kim Jong Il's View of the People

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Juche 113 (2024)

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Preface

The Korean people conferred on Chairman Kim Jong Il various appellations.

Among them is *people's leader*. This appellation is an epitome of the view on life and the people of Kim Jong Il, who devoted his whole life to the development and prosperity of the country and the happiness of the people.

His view of the people ran through with the love and devoted service for the people, and it was his theory of the revolution and his lifetime motto.

He always regarded himself as a son of the working people, and his mind was filled with the word *people*.

He set absolute worship of and the love for the people as his view on life and their demands and opinions as the absolute criteria for the revolution and construction. Regarding the people-first principle as his political creed, he relied on the strength and wisdom of people in dealing with every problem. The primary principle of his activities was to bring happiness to them.

With this view in mind, he did everything and went everywhere if he were to defend their destiny, and thought of his beloved people at home first even when an unusual product caught his eyes during his foreign trip.

So the Korean people extolled it as the life of the people's leader.

The Editorial Board introduces some of the anecdotes about his career, which show the image of the leader, a great man.

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1. People Are Heaven

Even If a Dam Has to Be Built with Gold

One day in June 1957, Kim Jong Il, in company with Premier Kim Il Sung, visited Haepo-ri, Singye County.

Arumour had it that the area was so scarce of water that a passerby was treated with a bowl of rice but not with a bowl of water.

After seeing the neighbouring mountains on a hill, Kim Jong Il went down to a valley.

From the hilltop, the woods looked quite lush, hinting the likely existence of a large water source, but there was only a small stream running.

Looking round his suite, he said regretfully that there was only a meager source of water and the water shortage was a problem for the area as the Premier had said.

He then climbed up the steep valley again, and looked at the opposite valley.

One of the suite said that a sufficient volume of water flew down that valley at every season.

Kim Il Sung surveyed the mountain terrain for a while, and conclusively suggested that a reservoir be built somewhere down the valley to collect all the water flowing down the two valleys.

Kim Jong Il said to a farm official that as the Premier had said, if a dam was built down there where the streams from both valleys converged, it would give rise to a large reservoir and that after its construction, priority should be given to the waterworks project.

The official was quite surprised.

In fact, farmers working on the plain had travelled as far as 8km to fetch water in the drought season. However, they had been more worried about the withering crops due to drought than their suffering from the shortage of drinking water.

So the official had in mind conducting an irrigation project before anything else after the construction of a reservoir.

Kim Jong Il asked him how much raw materials and fund it would take to conduct the waterworks project in the area.

The figure he reported was staggering.

If all houses in that vast area were to be provided with water services, it would demand a colossal amount of water pipes, let alone huge manpower.

At the time the country was experiencing an acute shortage of steel.

After thinking for a while, Kim Jong Il said in a resolute tone of voice:

Even if it would mean burying steel pipelines hundreds or thousands of miles long, not just dozens of miles, water services should be provided to the Miru area. Even if a dam has to be built with gold, we should undertake the reservoir project without fail. The farmers here must be experiencing much trouble from the shortage of drinking water. At present the demand for raw materials and fund is great in every part of the country for the implementation of the tasks for the first year of the five-year national economic development plan. This being the situation, we

are saving every penny, but we cannot spare anything if drinking water can be supplied to the people here.

This is how the Singok Reservoir, an inexhaustible source of water, came into being and crystal-clear water flew into every house in the Singye and Koksan areas.

Assessment of the People

One evening in April 1958, Kim Jong Il met a woman official of the Central Committee of the Democratic Youth League of Korea and had a talk about Ri Su Bok, a Hero of the DPRK.

Ri Su Bok had died a heroic death after blocking the enemy's firing pillbox with his chest to ensure the victory of his unit at the Battle of Height 1211 during the Fatherland Liberation War (June 25, 1950–July 27, 1953).

Some days before, Kim Jong Il had visited the hero's native place with members of the school's youth league committee.

He said to her, the youth league official, that the hero was a genuine patriot.

After being immersed in a thought for a while as if he was picturing the hero in his mind, he said:

I can't forget him in part because he opened up the route of charge at the cost of his life but more importantly because he laid down his life without hesitation for the sake of his one and only homeland. He loved infinitely his country liberated by Comrade Kim Il Sung and his fellow people who lived and worked, holding him in high esteem as their father. There was nothing but the leader, the country and its rosy future in his mind. This is why I highly praise him. In the days of the war and postwar rehabilitation, I was convinced that the hero's ideological sentiments are shared by a large number of our people including young ones and as long as it has such people,

our country will be ever-victorious. Nowadays some people claim that Koreans are low in cultural and technological standards and the enterprising spirit. I would like to tell them that Koreans are a greatest nation. Human history is often called that of struggle and creation, and the strength of a nation finds its intensive expression in the struggle to transform the old society and conquer nature. In the Fatherland Liberation War our people defeated the US imperialists and won great victory. Only five years had passed after the country was liberated and only two years after the birth of our Republic, but they beat the imperialists who had boasted of being the “strongest” in the world, and defended the freedom and independence of their country. This was a miracle unprecedented in the history of mankind. By defeating the US-led imperialist allied forces in the war, they struck the people the world over with admiration and enjoyed respect from them as a great nation.

His remarks such as *ever-victorious country* and *great nation* led the youth league official to a world of meditation.

Knowledge for the People

One day in May 1961 Kim Jong Il, who took part in the project of widening the road between Wasan-dong and Ryongsong with his fellow students, had a talk with them.

He said proudly that about ten days had already passed since they participated in the project true to Kim Il Sung's instructions, and as all of them had devoted their energy and wisdom, much progress had been made in the project and now the newly-extended road began to take shape.

Looking at the students' tanned faces, he continued:

Residents in the neighbouring areas, who saw us working, lavish praise on us. Nothing is more worthwhile than earning the people's praise and love. In the bygone days, students were regarded as "bookworms," who know nothing about labour. In fact, most of them were children of well-to-do families. A life of luxury and no work made them ignorant of labour. They did not understand that labour creates all social wealth and a working man should be respected as the best one in the world. Labour is a source of all social wealth. Labour is also obligatory in the upcoming socialist society. People praise us, students, because we are sincere in labour and do anything without hesitation.

His compliment brought a broad smile to everyone's face.

With a serious look on his face, he emphasized:

Comrade Kim Il Sung said that in old days there was a man who

could not even write a letter though he had mastered *Collection of Instructions by Confucius* and *Mencius* while studying at a village school, and knowledge that is not applicable to practice is of no use. Knowledge for knowledge's sake, knowledge that is not geared to serving the people is useless. We should acquire knowledge that would serve the people and learn how to operate a machine, build a house and do farming. Only then can we enjoy the people's love and serve them in good faith.

The students realized once again their duty in the university days.

Treasure the People's Property

One day in May 1961, Kim Jong Il, who took part in the project of widening the road between Wasan-dong and Ryongsong with his fellow students, had a break with them.

Availing himself of the opportunity, he said to them:

In order to become students loved by the people, we should value the property of the country and people.

Then, he told them what had happened.

That morning a granny turned up at the construction site, holding a bucket to carry coal that otherwise would have been wasted in the ground during the project.

However, some students prevented her for it might delay their work.

Seeing it, he read the old woman's beautiful mind of valuing the country's property, and, as an expression of apology for their misbehaviour, personally dug out the coal and put in the bucket, and carried it for her.

The grandmother felt too grateful.

He said that he was also a son of the working people, and asked her if her family ran out of coal.

She replied:

There is sufficient coal at home as we are supplied with it every month, but the coal was too good to remain buried there in the ground. If I dig it out and use it at home, that would mean we can

skip the supply that much and it would help the country even a little.

After narrating it to the students, he said:

I thought a lot after hearing what she had to say. We should learn from her, who valued the property of the country and people and was eager to contribute even a little to the development of the country. We students should be aware of the preciousness of the property of the country and people and make it our habit and part of our daily life to manage and use them with care from our university days.

Then he called a student involved in the night shift, and asked him how his shift members had done with the broken handle of the shovel of an old man.

“We fixed a new handle and gave it to him. And his attitude has changed completely.”

Kim Jong Il said with satisfaction:

Look. You won the hearts and minds of the grandfather with only a shovel handle, and in fact this is a priceless thing that could not be bartered for a thousand of shovel handles. A few days ago they had lunch at the grandfather's house near the construction site. After lunch they tried to give a helping hand to him by tending the flower garden in the courtyard and cleaning out a ditch under the fence. While digging out a big stone, they broke the shovel handle. They intended to return it as it was. This needs a serious consideration. Certainly, the old man wouldn't mind it for the handle was damaged while they were helping him in his housework. However, I saw to it that it was replaced with a new good one and dressed up before being returned to him. We must

not cause even a little damage to the people's property.

Stressing that to be a student loved by the people it was of paramount importance to emulate the noble virtues of Kim Il Sung, he told the following story.

In early 1933, Commander Kim Il Sung, leading the guerillas, went to a village on the Tuman River, and he stayed for days at an old man's house. Every morning he would go to the river, breaking ice with an axe and fetching water from it.

One day while axing the ice, he broke its handle, and the axe slipped into the ice hole.

He tried hard to retrieve it, but in vain. So he apologized again and again to the old man and paid generously for the axe.

Nevertheless, he did not get over it even after the elapse of 30 years for he had failed to return to the old man his cherished tool.

In the summer of the year before last, he asked a veteran fighter, who was going to Northeast China as a member of the group of visitors to old battlefields of the anti-Japanese armed struggle there, to drop in at the old man's house in the village and make an apology to him in his place.

The story was so amazing that the students were struck with emotion.

Kim Jong Il continued:

Indeed, Comrade Kim Il Sung is the people's leader, who devotes his life to his fellow people. The anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters, educated and trained by him, defended the people's lives and property at the cost of their lives and did not do harm to them in

the least. We should learn from his noble virtues. In this way, we can become genuine students who value the interests of the people more than our own and think about them before ourselves.

Keeping in mind his earnest instructions, the students resumed their work.

Chemical Factory with Fresh Air

One day in July 1965, Kim Jong Il visited a chemical factory.

After looking around it, he met the factory officials and discussed with them the production at the factory. Suddenly he stopped talking, seeing out of the window.

The compound was literally boiling under heat of the midsummer sun.

Kim Jong Il asked one of the officials what was supplied to the workers who were engaged in producing carbide. Apparently, he was recalling to his mind the workers he had seen working sweating before the blazing furnace in the morning.

The official answered that labour protection materials and nutritious foods were supplied to the workers.

Kim Jong Il said that carbide-producing workers must be provided with plenty of meat and oil, and that care should be taken of the workers' life to ensure smooth production.

Looking out of the window again, he asked whether the air smelt foul.

His eyes were still riveted on the smoke belching from chimneys.

Only then did the officials realize why he kept looking out of the window, but none was ready to make an answer.

At the time the factory concentrated its efforts on production and failed to pay close attention to the life and health of the workers, neglecting the arresting of the dust from the chimneys.

Looking at the officials, he said:

The dust from the chimneys, unless arrested, will pollute the air and affect the workers' health.

Pointing out their failure to take relevant measures though it was technically easy, he continued:

The area is a scenic place as the factory is washed by the Amnok River in the front and surrounded by mountains in the back. If the air is clean and the area is thickly wooded, it can be a fresh chemical factory. The factory compound should be laid out like a park.

Afterwards, the compound was turned into a park to the pleasure of its employees.

An Affectionate Call

One day in July 1966, Kim Jong Il visited the Pyongyang Textile Machine Factory.

Though he was busy with his field guidance at other units, he found time to visit it as he was reminded of the workers he had got intimate with during his internship at the factory while studying at university.

However, he could not see the workers whom he had expected to rush to him.

It was Sunday.

He looked a little disappointed.

While looking round the factory, he stopped before a lathe at the tool workshop, which was unusually glistening, and said:

This is Lathe No. 26 I operated. I cannot forget the days of labour I spent with this lathe as long as I live.

And as if recollecting those days, he remained silent for a while.

Then the door burst open and a man hurried in, saying hello to him. It was the head of the tool workshop.

“O, what a surprise!”

Kim Jong Il shook his hands, lighting up with joy.

He had a talk with him, asking how he had got along and why he came to work while others were on holiday. Then another man ran in.

He received the latecomer's greetings as well, and said he

could not have found time before though he had often thought of them.

Then, he asked: How are all of my workteam members?

He inquired after them, naming one after another.

He looked around various parts of the workshop. The workteam's changing room, the workshop information room, the flower bed and volleyball court in the backyard—all called forth deep reminiscences.

He said in retrospect:

Here we were given our daily work assignments, met for work reviews, and often held consultations of primary organization officials. At noon we sat around this table for lunch. Having a meal with one's friends gives one an appetite, and is enjoyable. In the old days the rich enjoyed sumptuous feasts, but they would not have tasted such a fine flavour of life as we did. Sharing a table at mealtimes, you can see what the others are eating and hear what they are worried about. Every evening dissemination of songs or artistic performance was held. I also arranged a picnic for the workers. This volleyball court was originally a vacant lot. We turned the lot into the present volleyball court. Here we used to play volleyball at lunch time. I often refereed the games, which was very exciting. After the game we would go to the washroom to wash hands and faces and resume work in high spirits.

An official of the factory said that his factory always regarded him as one of members of the tool workshop.

Laughing heartily, Kim Jong Il said:

You say that the factory always regards me as a member of

the tool workshop. So I can be called a master of this factory. I am a true lathe operator in the machine workteam. Although I am not here every day working at the machine, my thoughts remain with you.

Witnessing the revolutionary character, devotion and loyalty of the working class during the short period of internship, he nurtured his disposition as befitting a leader, and there was always the working class, the labouring people, in his mind.

Treasure to Be Most Valued

One day in August 1975, an urgent report came to the central headquarters from the Sanghwa Youth Coal Mine that three miners suffered burns by accident.

Three-degree burns on the whole body, complete shock and resuscitation impossible—this was the diagnosis.

That evening Kim Jong Il called a senior official of the Party Central Committee, and asked him whether he knew an accident had happened at the Sanghwa Youth Coal Mine and some coal miners were in danger.

“Yes, I was informed of it.”

“Why didn’t you report it to me immediately?”

“I was afraid it would make you worried ...”

Kim Jong Il grew angry and said:

Are you out of mind? It doesn’t matter whether I would be worried or not now that the lives of the miners are at stake. What is more important now than to snatch them from the jaws of death?

The official admitted his mistake.

Kim Jong Il asked what measures he had taken.

“I called the provincial Party committee and urged them to take strong measures.”

Kim Jong Il was too angry to continue to say. After a while, he reprimanded him:

The people are following our Party, calling it a motherly party,

and you have got no motherly affection at all.

The official could say nothing.

Instantly Kim Jong Il gave instructions on taking emergency measures to resuscitate the miners as soon as possible—enlisting competent doctors and effective medicines and flying a plane though it was midnight.

Unfortunately, the downpour of rain prevented a civil plane from taking off.

Kim Jong Il ordered to send a military aircraft.

This time he was informed that the miners were suffering pain from swollen body.

He called a senior official of the Party Central Committee and said:

The miners' bodies are swollen, and watermelon and beer are said to be effective for its cure. Watermelon and beer must be sent to them. Let's use a helicopter. What else can we use it for if not for this case? Watermelon and beer along with the medicines must be sent overnight by helicopter.

The patients recovered their health to some extent.

Kim Jong Il said that for complete recovery, they should be moved to a central hospital equipped with the state-of-the-art medical appliances and receive intensive treatment, and again ordered to fly a helicopter.

Thus another helicopter took off.

The three miners were miraculously restored to life.

Only then did Kim Jong Il relax and resume his work.

People-Oriented Viewpoint

One day in January 1980, Kim Jong Il, proposing building an ice rink in Pyongyang, said to officials:

If the ice rink is built in Pyongyang, we'll have completed all the projects which President Kim Il Sung had wished to have built.

The ice rink should be built well so that it can host even international games.

It would be a good idea to roof it so that it can be used even in summer.

The designers, true to his intention, pooled their wisdom and completed a unique style of design, symbolic of a skater's hat and skate blade.

One day, while going over the design, Kim Jong Il asked why the ice rink was designed to suspend its operation from June to October.

An official answered that they could not do otherwise as the cooling equipment, more expensive than that for freezing, had to be imported to cool the heated indoor air in summer.

Kim Jong Il gave instructions on working out a design, adding that if it would suspend its operation for five months a year there was no need to build it, and that he would have all the necessary cooling equipment provided so that it can be operated all the year round. And having found that the equipment for artificially changing the polluted indoor air was not foreseen in the design, he said:

We can never allow even a little amount of polluted air to remain

inside the ice rink. We should replace the 100 per cent of air in it with fresh air. The capitalists are attentive to the costs of construction and operation of a structure, but in our construction for our people money should not be taken into consideration. You should draw a design again with a people-oriented viewpoint.

Thus, the design modelled on a foreign country's was rejected.

Designers drew a design again with the standpoint that the ice rink for our people should be at the highest level.

The ice rink, which was designed to be operated in all seasons and be always filled with fresh air, was built on the Pothong River.

Carpet Removed and Coat Hanger Appeared

One day in January 1980, Kim Jong Il visited the Changgwang Health Complex before its inauguration.

In the front hall he looked around its interior, expressing his satisfaction.

Then he walked up to the second floor.

The sunny lounge of a public bath, furnished with modern athletic equipment like exercise bike, caught the eyes of those accompanying him. They were all smiles.

Kim Jong Il, who was looking at the equipment one by one, wore a regretful look on his face when he saw a carpet on the floor.

Officials watched the carpet carefully.

It was a top-quality carpet in those days, so they could not find any fault with it.

Kim Jong Il said:

It was wrong to have laid a carpet in the lounge of a public bath. The carpet would absorb dust and smell bad if it becomes damp.

Officials had thought that if the floor was covered with a quality carpet, it would make the lounge look brighter and more graceful, but paid no attention to whether it would be good in terms of sanitation and convenience for the people.

This time in the changing room, looking into a wardrobe, he said:

Two or three plastic coat hangers should be put inside the wardrobe.

Officials felt that they had missed coat hangers, which could be bought in any shop and which they used every morning and evening when changing their clothes.

Later the carpets on the floors of public bath lounges were removed and coat hangers appeared in the wardrobes.

A Thing for the Good of the People

One day in March 1983, Kim Jong Il met officials and said that they should pay close attention to the people's livelihood, adding:

Our Party raised the improvement of the people's livelihood as the supreme principle in its activities, and has always paid a close attention and set forth every possible way to this end at every period and stage of the revolutionary development. What is most important in improving the people's standard of living is to solve the food problem. As Comrade Kim Il Sung said on several occasions, people can bear shortage of clothes and homes, but they can never compromise with hunger. If different foodstuffs including side dishes are sold to the people in large amounts, it will make the people's diet richer.

And then, he made a mention of a newly-built seafood direct sales shop in Pyongyang.

The shop was built on his initiative.

He went to the spot to choose its site. And he personally established a system of directly transporting fresh fish from the eastern and western fishing stations, and solved the problem of the necessary means of transport. He also gave detailed instructions on the form and method of selling fishes so that the families to hold ceremonial parties including wedding could buy them first.

Thus various kinds of fresh fishes in the East and West seas including lockington, flatfish, octopus and Spanish mackerel were

transported to the shop every day for the capital's citizens.

Kim Jong Il resumed:

It was not for earning money that we set up the seafood direct sales shop. Whatever we do, we should do it for the people. When our officials do many things for the people, the latter will support the Party sincerely.

Then he set forth the task for building more similar shops in the capital city.

What Is Politics?

The CEO of a trading company in Macao visited the DPRK several times for joint venture.

February 20, 1988 was a happy day for her as a shop, which was to be operated jointly with her company, was inaugurated.

That day, to her surprise, she met Kim Jong Il at her shop.

Kim Jong Il congratulated her on the opening of the joint venture shop, appreciating her efforts.

Then he acquainted himself with the method of operation of the shop, and stressed that the shop should be laid out well and sell different goods, adding:

In the future the profits this shop earns jointly with the Macanese company should be directed to improving the living standards of the Pyongyang citizens.

While looking around the shop, he has thought of the people all the time.

She had already met him several times and knew well how deep and warm his affection for the people was. But the day's impression was extraordinary.

Kim Jong Il resumed:

As the restaurant to be built on Kwangbok Street would be operated with the national currency, there would be no need to calculate profit. We should not think of earning profits from the restaurant.

The Macanese, who had been accustomed to the capitalist way

of thinking, was dumbfounded. She could not understand him at all.

As if he had read her mind, Kim Jong Il said that he would have the profit from the restaurant remitted to her company.

She could not understand what he was saying.

The restaurant would never earn profit, and the Korean leader says her company will be given the profit from the restaurant. It would mean that his state would sustain damage. Is there such a country in the world? What is politics?

The politics she had experienced in the capitalist society was the one that gave birth to “the rich getting ever richer and the poor getting ever poorer,” and the statesmen she had seen were all imposters.

But in socialist Korea, the homeland of the Juche idea and people-centred country, politics was aimed at serving the people and the highest principle of activities of the state was also for the promotion of people’s well-being; to this end, the state was ready not to calculate profit even if that meant suffering financial damage. Politics that subordinates everything to the aspirations, demands and interests of the people and enforces policies with them as a criterion—this is just the politics of politics, the most genuine politics.

The more she thought, the more she felt that she saw a wonderland.

Kim Jong Il said to her that he would meet her again and that she should call on him without hesitation if there were any difficulty in her work, before leaving the shop.

Seeing him off, the businesswoman from Macao recollected the words *politics for the people*.

Song Should Serve the People

One day in March 1988 Kim Jong Il saw a variety performance given by the stage and film artistes.

After the performance was over, he spoke highly of the performance.

But pointing out a chorus given by an art troupe, he said:

How can the people sing the difficult lyrics which even experts find it hard to sing? Songs should be people-oriented so that they are easy for all the people to sing. A chorus, which is only shouted, is a chorus for the artistes, not for the ordinary people. I love the songs which the ordinary people can enjoy singing, not the ones only artistes can sing.

The officials, creative workers and artistes got a guilty conscience.

He continued:

However the holders of the title of People's Artiste sing it, a song cannot be called a work of national treasure unless the people accept it. It can be called a truly revolutionary and people-oriented song only when it moves the hearts of the people. Creative workers should discard the view of absolutizing only their works in disregard of the people's opinions.

Officials and creative workers learned a new definition of a work of national value.

Taking a song created in the period of the great Chollima upsurge as an example, he said:

The song still displays its vitality. Creative workers and artistes in the field of art and literature should think of all the Party members and other working people, their country and fellow people, not of themselves only.

That day the officials and creative workers realized once again that songs should serve the people and, accordingly, before creating an artistic work they should possess the spirit of loving their country and fellow people.

Noodles Garnished with Meat

One day in November 1999, while talking to officials about serving traditional foods at public catering facilities, Kim Jong Il broached the subject of beef flank-garnished cold noodles in flat vessel.

Officials were surprised, for such noodles were enjoyed only in the royal court in the past.

In those days the country was experiencing economic difficulties, and the officials thought it was next to impossible to serve noodles garnished with beef flank for the people.

As if he read their minds, he said:

It would be a good idea to garnish the noodles with chicken instead of beef flank. The Okryu Restaurant should serve the noodles to the people. If the noodle garnished with chicken is named noodles garnished with meat and sold, the people will be delighted. Since the Party is determined to build many modern chicken farms to solve the meat problem, it might be possible to serve the noodles in flat vessel with chicken to be produced from those farms and sell them to the people. As chickens to be produced by them are big, it would be possible to garnish several vessels of cold noodle with a chicken. The chicken meat for a vessel should be large in amount.

Then he asked about the price of noodles in a vessel served at the Okryu Restaurant.

After hearing the answer from an official, he said:

As I told you, you should have some noodles prepared and let the officials concerned try them and then have the Okryu Restaurant serve them to the people. You should ensure the quality of the noodles from the start.

Later the Okryu Restaurant began to serve the noodle garnished with meat, which was no less inferior to the noodles garnished with the beef flank.

Thinking of the People Even on His Birthday

One day in 2002 shortly after February 16, his birthday, Kim Jong Il met some officials.

It was at the foot of Mt Paektu that he met them.

The officials realized that he had spent his birthday far away from the capital city.

After exchanging greetings with them, he said he called them for a chat as they might have felt sorry to learn that he was giving on-site guidance while staying in the mountain area instead of celebrating his birthday.

He ushered them into a room.

In the room he said:

Our people and comrades planned to celebrate my birthday this year in a grand way. But I ensured functions of national level were not held to let our people take a rest. And because officials might be concerned with my birthday if I stay on in Pyongyang, I have come here without telling anybody of my destination and worked for some days here.

The officials were moved as they were reminded of President Kim Il Sung, who would continue his on-site guidance even when the people were enjoying his birthday in April.

What Filled His Mind

One day in August 2002, Kim Jong Il met officials, and said that ours is a really excellent people.

He was recollecting the great impression he felt after seeing the closing performance of the grand mass gymnastics and artistic performance *Arirang*, Kim Il Sung Prize winner, two days ago.

That day, as he appeared on the platform, all the performers and spectators raised cheers.

It was a scene that fully demonstrated to the world once again the might of the single-hearted unity of Juche Korea, in which the leader and the people were firmly united with a single ideology and purpose, of the great harmonious whole of the leader and the people.

Kim Jong Il continued:

When I appeared on the platform of the May Day Stadium to see the closing performance of the grand mass gymnastics and artistic performance *Arirang*, all the performers and spectators warmly welcomed me raising cheers. Seeing them, I felt once again our people are excellent. During the last military parade and public procession held in celebration of the 55th anniversary of the founding of the Party hundreds of thousands of people shouted hurrah and gave me a hearty welcome. At that time, too, I thought we have really a good people.

After pausing for a few minutes as if he were recalling the cheers of that day, he resumed:

In the days of the Arduous March our people supported the Party absolutely and followed it. Though they did not eat their fill owing to the shortage of food, they believed and followed only the Party and shared their lot with it. Whenever I feel difficult during work, I make up my mind to work harder for these excellent people. All the officials should work with devotion for our people, who are infinitely loyal to the Party.

People's Jacket

During his lifetime President Kim Il Sung enjoyed wearing closed-collar jacket.

The Korean people called it *people's jacket*.

There is a story why the jacket was called so.

One day in April 2003, Kim Jong Il, while recollecting the career of Kim Il Sung, said:

Because he always worked among the people wearing the closed-collar jacket, I said to him several times that from now on, I would work with all devotion for the people, putting on such jacket, so he should work wearing a Western suit and taking rest now and then.

The officials were moved to tears as their yearning for the President grew.

Reading their minds, Kim Jong Il continued:

The closed-collar jacket the President wore is called people's jacket because when the collars are closed, the part looks like the Chinese character meaning people. Just after liberation he and my mother saw to it that red stripes in the shape of the character were put on the sleeves of military uniform of the students of the Mangyongdae Revolutionary School with the hope that they would be true sons and daughters of the people. The red stripes on the sleeves of the formal uniforms of the service personnel have the same meaning. The President respected and valued the people at all times and in all places, and connected everything with them.

When our Party's revolutionary armed forces were developed into a regular army, he named it the Korean People's Army, saying that it should become a genuine army of the people that safeguards their interests. In our country many organs, units and objects including the state power organs and economic and cultural institutions are named after the word *people*. We should ensure that everyone is well aware of its profound meaning and devote themselves to the prosperity and development of the socialist motherland, in which they are its true masters.

Without Allowing Even a Slight Distance

One day in March 2006, Kim Jong Il visited the newly-built Pegaebong Noodle House in the seat of the then Samjiyon County.

Guiding him around the restaurant, the official, whose unit had built it, was anxious about the leader's appraisal. He was quite sure that he would not reject it because it looked flawless to his eyes.

Kim Jong Il expressed his satisfaction after looking around first the kitchen on the first floor.

There appeared an expression of delight on the face of everyone.

It was when he was guided into a dining hall.

Seeing the partitioned parts, he severely reprimanded the officials, saying that if the dining hall was partitioned, the quality of service might be different according to the social standings of the guests, and added:

The caste system has long been abolished in our country, but if a dining hall has compartments to serve the guests according to their social standings, people would not like it. And it will exert a negative influence on the young generation. I don't like it, either.

The officials stood still, feeling a qualm of conscience.

Saying that mistakes can be rectified, Kim Jong Il, as if he was going to change the atmosphere, asked the restaurant manager:

When can I have noodles here? When you have prepared noodles and invite me, I will come again. Today I haven't got ration tickets.

But next time I will take some.

“Please come again any time you want. If you come, we will serve you tasty noodles,” answered the manager.

With a smile on his face Kim Jong Il said emphatically that he, too, would take the noodles in the dining hall.

Photo Taken Against the Backdrop of a Chimney

One August day in 2007, Kim Jong Il inspected the Tanchon Smeltery.

After gazing at the smeltery for a good while, he praised its smart appearance.

This comment reminded the officials of the smeltery of how its renovation project had begun.

During the Arduous March production at the smeltery almost came to a stop because of the shortage of electricity and raw materials. The equipment was in such a poor state of maintenance that their operation, though intermittent, had a serious impact on the environment.

Upon learning about how things were going on in this smeltery, Kim Jong Il initiated renovating it as demanded by the new century, with the main emphasis on revamping the production lines in ways that would cause no pollution. Despite the difficulty of the economic situation, he adopted necessary measures for the project: sending a strong construction force and committing a large investment for upgrading the equipment.

The renovation work proved to be a good success, making the shop floor free from harmful gases. An animal house was set up in the compound of the smeltery, which was proof positive that the air was pure and clean. Seeing the increasing number of animals in the

house became a pleasant diversion for workers.

The post-renovation gas emissions were estimated to be much lower than the internationally agreed limit.

The fresh air circulating throughout the smeltery told of how Kim Jong Il prioritized the people's health.

As the officials were recollecting the bygone days, Kim Jong Il noticed a chimney some distance away and asked how high it was.

He had a reason to ask about it.

When construction of the smeltery was underway, Kim Il Sung came there for on-site guidance. He inquired about the height of the chimney and advised that the design should be revised to make it higher lest the local people suffer from pollution. Thus, the chimney was built 20 metres higher than originally planned.

Being shown around the production lines for several hours, Kim Jong Il lavished praise on the renovation work and commented that the smeltery was immaculate and it had no smell of harmful gases.

Then he said that the finishing touches should be given to the renovation work, adding in a humorous tone that a good undershirt would match up with a well-tailored suit.

The officials smiled happily.

Saying that he was very pleased to look round the smeltery, Kim Jong Il suggested posing for a photo with them.

The officials were overjoyed.

Kim Jong Il resumed that he would direct the scene, asking one of them what would be the best backdrop for the photo.

“A heap of products from the smeltery” was his reply. Kim Jong Il said no, noting that it would be almost invisible in the photo. Then pointing to the towering chimney behind a roasting furnace, he suggested that it would be better.

Stale smoke belching from the chimney once hung over the locality, but now the area was not affected by this health hazard.

Kim Jong Il had a photograph taken with the officials of the smeltery, and another with other officials in his company, both against the backdrop of the chimney.

2. His Most Respected Mentors

Good Mother

One day in August 1957, Kim Jong Il, accompanying Kim Il Sung on his trip for field guidance, dropped in at a polling station at Thaesong-ri, Kangso District, Nampho.

Kim Il Sung received a bouquet of flowers from a resident and waved back to the cheering crowd.

He gave the bouquet to an old woman and talked with the elderly.

Among them was an old woman, whose son had fallen in action as a regimental commander during the war.

She said to Kim Il Sung:

“Dear Premier! You look so thin. Please do not worry too much. No matter what the factionalists say about the living conditions of the people, we are all living in comfort. So, do not worry. Anyhow, it is we, not the factionalists, who will win in the end, is it not? You may rest assured that we support you, dear Premier.”

Kim Jong Il said to the entourage:

The mother of the late regimental commander has just railed at the factionalists, assuring the leader that our people are steadfast in their support for him. This shows that our people trust him as their father and they are firmly determined to follow him. The leader trusts the people and the people are determined to follow him to the last. This guarantees us victory. Our people are really good. No force in the world can match the solid unity of our people behind the leader.

An official said, “She is admirable. Among her three sons, who went to the front, the eldest son fell in action and the other two became disabled.”

Upon hearing it, Kim Jong Il said:

There are always good parents behind good men. The late regimental commander’s mother is excellent. The agricultural cooperative should take good care of her family. We should bring up the son of the regimental commander well so that he will succeed his father.

On later occasions Kim Il Sung recalled the old woman, saying that her words had encouraged him once again and made him determined to fight the factionalists to the finish.

Later, a feature film was created about this woman.

Have You Discussed It with Workers?

As the year 1975 began, the officials of the Central Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea (GFTUK) made concerted efforts to draw up an ambitious plan for the 30th anniversary of the Workers' Party of Korea.

In January Kim Jong Il summoned an official of the GFTUK.

He said that he found the time to talk with the official, who was representing the working class, as he wanted, asking him what they were going to do for the good of workers.

The official began to explain the plan they had made with so much effort.

After listening to what he had to say, Kim Jong Il spoke highly of their plan, and asked if they had discussed it with workers.

To the official, the question came as a great surprise.

Noting that he did not seem to be working properly, Kim Jong Il told him the following story:

Formerly, rice plants often collapsed at their ripening season in the countryside.

Kim Il Sung tasked agricultural officials and scientists with identifying the causes and taking necessary steps. However, this problem proved to be a hard nut to crack, remaining unresolved for years. Some officials argued that as grains of rice ripened, the upper part of the plants grew heavy and the rainy wind could bring them down.

It was a pity to let those precious grains go to waste when they almost ripened, having been cultivated throughout spring and summer.

In trying to find a solution to this problem Kim Il Sung travelled around the countryside—paddy fields in the lowlands, terraced fields in the intermediary zones and the highlands. He studied how the paddies in which rice seedlings had been transplanted early differed from the seedbeds where the transplantation had been done later. He also compared the amounts of manure and fertilizer, as well as the year-on-year weather conditions.

In doing so he never failed to seek advice from those working at cooperative farms—technicians, workteam leaders, sub-workteam heads and farmers in charge of water control—to say nothing of agricultural scientists.

While talking with the farmers, he found out that rice plants collapsed on the paddies where an excessive amount of nitrogen fertilizer had been applied. To cite an example, the site of a seedbed was fixed where the soil was mostly clayey, a place rich in nitrogen. Before rice seedlings were transplanted in this seedbed, a large amount of manure and then nitrogen fertilizer were spread. This made matters worse, which resulted in the rice plants falling at the ripening season.

Finishing his story, Kim Jong Il continued:

As you can see, the masses of the people hold the key to any problem. Go among workers and ask for their opinion about your plan. The opinion of workers is just the thought of our Party, which

is what our revolution demands. In a word, our Party does what the working class wants to do.

Informed of this, the officials of the GFTUK repented of their mistake and left their office for where workers were.

Consult the “Teachers”

One day in March 1975, during his field guidance tour of North Hamgyong Province, Kim Jong Il visited a farm in a remote mountainous area of Kyongsong County.

When his car arrived at a field, he got off and asked a leading official of the county Party committee if they had raised good crops the previous year.

“No, sir,” the latter said, remorsefully.

He continued: The per-hectare yield of maize was no more than 3.7 tons. Last year, when giving field guidance at Changsong County, Comrade Kim Il Sung phoned an anti-Japanese war veteran, who was here, asking about the maize harvest in this county.

Kim Jong Il said that the great leader was so much concerned about farming, adding that it was important to prioritize crop cultivation.

Looking about, he could see a few heaps of manure, as well as maize stubble from the previous winter.

It seems to me that you are not working hard to make full preparations for farming, he pointed out, underlining the need to secure enough manure to make humus cakes for maize seedlings, create seedbeds in a sunny place and produce humus cakes properly in the right season.

And he inquired about the species of crops under cultivation and said:

In order to raise good crops, it is important to distribute crops correctly on the principle of sowing the right crop in the right soil, as instructed by the great leader. The county must not indiscriminately dictate to the cooperative farms what species of crops they should plant. Instead, you should consult old farmers and conduct an in-depth analysis of soil composition field by field and plot by plot, before deciding on what species would be optimal for each field or plot.

The official felt guilty for having acted in an overbearing manner; actually, after being informed of poor yields, he often grew so anxious to force his subordinates to plant the species of crops he had chosen in disregard of the old farmers' opinions.

Reading his mind, Kim Jong Il stressed the need to encourage vegetable farming along with the cultivation of cereals and went into details about how to raise the soil fertility.

He continued to say:

Here it would be good to develop livestock farming by making effective use of the mountains, just as in Changsong County. This farm is in a remote mountainous area, so when the officials make good arrangements, you can surely produce plenty of milk and meat on your own by keeping a lot of grazing animals like sheep and goats.

The official blamed himself for having turned a deaf ear to the old farmers' advice about this.

Consult the solid, old farmers—this taught the revolutionary truth that the masses of the people are wise teachers and, when they are organized and motivated, there is nothing impossible to do.

People are teachers!—this became the official's maxim.

Whom Should We Believe in?

Back in 1976, the project of building a smeltery in South Hwanghae Province confronted a host of problems and came to a standstill.

One August day a leading official of the provincial Party committee went to see Kim Jong Il for his instructions on another pressing issue.

Kim Jong Il gave instructions on the above issue, and then asked the official how the smeltery project was going, adding that he had planned to summon him after being told about the numerous problems facing the province.

The official felt sorry for causing him concern over the project.

You must not expect too much at your first attempt, Kim Jong Il said with a smile, asking him to tell more about why they were making little progress in the construction.

After listening carefully to what the official had to say, he asked about the workers' opinions.

The official answered that he had not discussed it with the workers.

At this reply, Kim Jong Il looked surprised.

The official said: Officials in the province tried their best to resolve the problems, but in vain. So, I didn't think of discussing it with the workers because I believed they would not be much help in this regard.

Kim Jong Il said in a serious voice:

The great leader said that our officials should learn from the working class and resolve everything by relying on them. When pressing on with the automation project at the Hwanghae Iron Works and the construction of the large, long-distance conveyor belt at the Unnyul Mine, we trusted in the strength, wisdom and intense loyalty of our working class. So, we successfully completed these big and challenging projects. Mingling with workers is just the way to find a solution to any knotty problem.

The official was lost in deep thought, and after a good while, Kim Jong Il resumed:

You must go among workers and find a solution to any problem. Workers can do whatever they are determined to do. If you believe in and rely on them, there will be nothing impossible to achieve. What is important at the moment is that leading officials have firm trust in them. You should go back and inspire the workers with conviction, bringing their loyalty and spirit of self-reliance into full play. With firm conviction and loyalty, you can create something from nothing. We trust in the working class....

The official assured him that he would trust in the workers and discuss the problems with them to complete the construction of the smeltery ahead of schedule.

After Getting Feedback from the People

One day in June 1977, Kim Jong Il made a phone call to a leading official of the Pyongyang Municipal Party Committee, asking him about production at a noodle factory.

It was not long after the factory completed the assembling of equipment, which had been transported from a port on the east coast to Pyongyang according to Kim Jong Il's instructions.

The leading official told him that the first instant noodles were produced in mid-April, adding that the factory was inaugurated with due ceremony towards the end of May and it would soon start mass production.

Kim Jong Il paused for a moment and said that it would be better to ask the citizens for feedback on the noodles, advising that a noodle show should be organized for the purpose.

The official looked puzzled.

Kim Jong Il said to him: The noodles are for the citizens, so they should have a taste of the noodles first. As the noodles vary in kind, they should be boiled for some five minutes at the Mangyongdae Chonsok Restaurant or somewhere else before being served to the chairman and department directors for their comment. The noodles can be made with the addition of wheat or maize flour, and you should let them comment on those noodles. It is advisable to get feedback from the heads of neighbourhood units as well.

The official said yes, and returned.

Soon afterwards, there held a noodle show at the Mangyongdae Chonsok Restaurant, which was attended by the officials concerned and hundreds of the heads of the neighbourhood units in Pyongyang.

The citizens said, after tasting the noodles, that they were palatable, their strips were tough and it was easy to cook them.

Going over the document on their feedback, Kim Jong Il said that the instant noodles passed the test as the people liked them, before writing “passed” on the document.

This was how the mass production of instant noodles began.

Tribute Paid to the Workers

One day in May 2009, Kim Jong Il toured the mines in the Komdok area for field guidance.

The following happened at the then Taehung Youth Mine.

An official told him how his mine revamped the magnesia clinker production lines to meet the local conditions.

He was very satisfied with this, saying that doing so was the way to build up the Juche-oriented industry.

He went on to say:

You have managed to establish the Juche orientation in the production of refractories. This is a revolution, a great achievement of epochal significance in developing our country's industry. It is comparable to success in a nuclear test. The great leader would be very pleased to learn that the Juche orientation has been established in the refractory industry.

This had been one of Kim Il Sung's major concerns, and he had once called magnesia clinker white gold.

Kim Jong Il paused for a long while, looking as if recollecting how much the great leader had been concerned about it.

He resumed: The workers at the Taehung Youth Mine are adding glory to the Juche idea, the revolutionary ideology of the great leader, not verbally but in practice. They have proved its validity and viability through practice. They are laudable indeed....

As the officials were listening attentively, he praised that the

designers, technicians and workers, who had been involved in the project, were all heroes.

He continued that the mine should be renamed Taehung Youth Hero Mine.

The officials of the mine did not know how to thank him, as Kim Jong Il was looking at a chart showing the new lines for the production of refractories.

He walked up to the chart, again speaking highly of the workers at the mine.

He then said that as they were not with him there, he would instead pay tribute to the chart as a token of his respect for the workers.

He made a deep bow to the chart, the officials clapping their hands.

This tribute denoted his ennobling view of the people as his “God” and mentor.

3. Most Powerful Being

What Is Most Powerful?

During his stay in Mt Jangja in the days of the Fatherland Liberation War, Kim Jong Il carried out his daily routine without fail, including studying and playing at soldiers.

On the afternoon of one October day in 1950, he was to play at soldiers.

His friends gathered in a set place.

Before the start of the play, he asked what was necessary to win the war.

The children said loudly:

“Airplane!”

“Tank!”

“Artillery!”

“Warship!”

This time Kim Jong Il asked what was most powerful in the war.

“It’s airplane. It flies in the sky.”

“It is artillery. It shoots down the airplane.”

“No, it’s tank. The tank treads down the guns and anything else.”

Kim Jong Il found each was insisting that the weapons of the arms he was to fight with at the game was most powerful.

He asked the boy, who had said the airplane was most powerful, where it was made and by whom.

“Workers at the factory ...”

Kim Jong Il said:

It is man who makes aircraft, and it is also man who flies it.

He asked the same question to others.

They all exclaimed, “O, it’s all man!”

Affirming their answer, Kim Jong Il continued:

You are right. It is man who makes guns, tanks and warships. It is also man who fires guns, drives tanks and sails warships. Then what is most powerful in the world?

“Man!” all answered in unison.

Kim Jong Il had raised a question and led them to find a reasonable answer, teaching them the precious truth that the most powerful being in the world is man.

He continued:

You said that what is most powerful in war is plane, tank or gun, but I don’t think so. The most powerful being in this world is man. Without man, planes, tanks, guns and others cannot be made.

The children’s faces became bright as they felt the dignity that the strength of their own, the strength of man, is most powerful.

Following Kim Jong Il in high spirits, they walked to the ground where they were to play at soldiers.

All Can Become Heroes

It was one November day in 1973.

Kim Jong Il called a senior official of the Central Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea, saying that preparations should be stepped up to award the title of Labour Hero to all the members of excavator No. 7 of the Kumsan Pithead at the Ryongyang Mine, and that it was an auspicious event for the country. He then continued:

The men of the excavator are heroic men. Not a few, but all of them are heroes. Their working spirit is heroic and their feats are heroic. They deserve to be heroes.

The emotional news of the birth of a heroic workteam reminded the official of the events that took place in the previous few months.

When he was on a business trip to the Ryongyang Mine, he learned a really impressive fact.

Members of a workteam, who were discharged soldiers and operating excavator No. 7, had fulfilled their yearly plan ahead of schedule for ten years by displaying mass heroism and collective innovations while handing their stope over to backward workteams and working at stope with unfavourable conditions.

Immediately on his return, he reported this to Kim Jong Il.

Moved by the report, Kim Jong Il said:

It is laudable that the collective, not a few men, have displayed heroism. Their spirit of collectivism, the spirit of thinking not only

about their workteam but also about their mine is ennobling. This is a revolutionary spirit that can be displayed only in our country where the Juche idea has been applied comprehensively in all aspects of social life.

He reported this to Kim Il Sung.

Some days later he called the official again, and said that it had been long since he had seen the President so pleased.

If all our working class are prepared in this way, the revolution will emerge victorious. The excavator No. 7 operators at the Ryongyang Mine, by giving full rein to the collectivist spirit, set an example in transforming all members of society as required by the Juche idea. I think they are all heroic. If they all become heroes and a hero workteam is born, what a laudable and auspicious event it would be. Some of the men are said to have a few years' experience of working at the workteam. This does not pose a problem in recommending them as heroes. Ri Su Bok became a hero not because he had served in the army for long. Whether a man can become a hero or not does not depend on the years of his military service or working years, but on whether he has the spirit of working heroically for the Party and the leader, the country and the people, and whether the feats he has performed are heroic or not. I say once again. The title of Hero in our times can be won not only by outstanding persons or some selected persons; anyone, who has performed heroic feats for the Party and the leader, for the country and the people, can also win the title. Our people living under the care of our Party can all become heroes.

Some days later, the title of Twice Labour Hero was awarded to the workteam leader of excavator No. 7 and the title of Labour Hero to all other members of the workteam.

Fruition of Rewarded Trust

One day in May 1984, Kim Jong Il visited the Ryongsong Machine Complex in South Hamgyong Province without delay after giving field guidance at North Hamgyong Province.

Behind the visit that was not on his schedule was a story.

When he visited the Kim Chaek Iron and Steel Complex, he learned that it was not increasing the production of rolled steel because of the inadequate supply of cold rolls.

When he discussed it with officials, they were all of the opinion that a 10 000-ton press should be imported as it was not available in the country.

Kim Jong Il saw it from a different angle.

If we need a 10 000-ton press, we should build it by ourselves.

He had the workers of the Ryongsong Machine Complex in mind.

In the previous decades, they had built 3 000-ton and 6 000-ton presses and 8-metre turning lathes.

With this belief, he came to their enterprise.

He first dropped in at the press workshop.

Officials of the complex explained to him that the workshop was currently processing parts for the 6 000-ton press, adding with pride that their complex was going to build two more 6 000-ton presses.

After going through the workshop without any words, Kim Jong Il said:

In the past a 3 000-ton or 6 000-ton press could produce materials

needed by the different sectors of the national economy. But now that the economy of the country has grown, we need a 10 000-ton press, so I have come here.

The press was as high as a ten-storey apartment block, and had to be assembled with more than 70 200 parts of 3 070 kinds; the smallest one, a nut of its main column, was as large as the one to be transported by a truck. To put the operation of this extra-large equipment on an automatic footing, ie, to operate it with the help of a few buttons, the technical challenge was formidable.

There were only a few countries in the world that manufactured such a press at the time.

This overwhelming task had to be implemented by the Ryongsong Machine Complex.

Kim Jong Il earnestly explained the situation of the Kim Chaek Iron and Steel Complex and the urgency of cold rolls.

Officials of the Ryongsong Machine Complex grasped the Party's demand at once.

Kim Jong Il asked them straightaway:

Can you build the press?

“We will.”

Your enterprise must build it and dedicate it to the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Party next year, Kim Jong Il told them.

“That's for sure.”

Officials accompanying him were surprised to hear the straightforward answers by the enterprise's officials.

A little more than a year is left before the 40th anniversary of

the founding of the Party. Can they produce it by that time? If they manage to do it, it is really a miracle.

Trust in loyalty, technology, courage and mettle of the working class there, who were more excellent than others in the spirit of self-reliance—this was the source of miracle he was determined to bring about.

Speaking highly of their pledge, Kim Jong Il discussed with the enterprise's officials various measures related with the building of the press.

Before leaving the complex, he said in an encouraging, trustful voice with his fist held high that the Ryongsong Machine Complex is a powerful enterprise.

His trust brought about the miracle; the complex built a 10 000-ton press before the 40th founding anniversary of the Party.

No Less Significant Than the Building of the West Sea Barrage

A large salt works was built on the east coast of the country for the first time in its history, and started production.

In October 1999, Kim Jong Il visited the salt works.

Feasting his eyes on the salt works and expressing his great satisfaction with the dam, he said that South Hamgyong Province built it and that was as good as damming the sea, that it laid out the area inside the embankment effectively, and that it was a good idea to have designed to transport the salt produced by boat along a waterway.

Saying that the bay, where the Kumya and Tokji rivers empty into the sea, was walled off to build the salt fields, he spoke highly of the site of the salt fields.

He then continued:

It is not easy to build a salt works. To build it, it is necessary to build an embankment and stairway and lay out the area inside the embankment; if the soil of the fields contains much sand, it should be reinforced with clay and mud. You have said the embankment is over 20-odd kilometres long, the amount of earth removed millions of cubic metres and the stone slabs laid on the embankment hundreds of thousands of cubic metres. The local people, who took part in the project, are very laudable in their fighting spirit as they carried such large amounts of earth and stones on their backs. South Hamgyong

Province has done a great deal of work. That the province has carried out such a gigantic nature-harnessing project by its own efforts is no less significant than the construction of the West Sea Barrage. This shows that its revolutionary spirit of self-reliance is very high. It is a noteworthy event in the history of our Party that a modern salt works with a production capacity of tens of thousands of tons was built in the difficult period of the Arduous March and forced march. There is a Korean saying that joy comes after pains. If others work hard to transform nature like South Hamgyong Province, we will surely greet the day when we would lead a decent life so that we will not envy other people. Everything was in short supply and difficult in the face of the imperialist reactionaries' moves to isolate and stifle our country and of the severe natural calamities, but the people of South Hamgyong Province could set up this wonderful structure as they buckled down to the struggle with a do-or-die determination. The Arduous March and forced march we have followed through hard work have been rewarded.

It was the highest honour extended to the builders of the salt works and officials of the province.

Heroic Man

One day in November 2000, when it was snowing, Kim Jong Il visited the construction site of a dam on the Kumjin River in Jongphyong County.

In front of an artist's impression of the dam, the senior official of the county Party committee gave him a detailed explanation of the dam.

The dam was very large. It was designed to block the Kumjin River, which had flowed aimlessly for thousands of years, thus generating electricity, ensuring irrigation and preventing flood damage.

When he said that building the remaining section of the dam required 600 000m³ of earth, Kim Jong Il looked surprised, and said:

Then I would give wide publicity to you. I would like to make you known far and wide. In the past the locals of Jongphyong were called persons of distorted character. But on my current visit I have found they have done a good job.

I am very satisfied with the fact that the county is undertaking a large-scale project without giving any publicity. As it is doing this laudable project on a large scale, the state should help it. We should not merely praise it for its work; they say they are experiencing difficulty for the shortage of means of transport; we should solve the problem for them. Ten large 10-ton trucks would be sufficient.

After a moment of thinking, he said that it would not be enough, and that tractors, numbering ten, and excavators should also be supplied to the construction site.

The local official thanked him again and again.

With a smile on his face, he asked him if it was true an old saying that a stupid, tactless man catches a tiger was quoted during the project.

The official, a man of magnanimous disposition, had experienced many difficulties. What was worse was backbiting: Some said that it was impossible for the county to carry out such a large project by itself when the locals were not eating proper food in those difficult days, and others said that the man was stupid as an old saying goes that a stupid, tactless man catches a tiger; still others called him a fame-seeking man.

When he learned that all this was true, Kim Jong Il said with a smile on his face:

Some people, seeing the project underway, said that a stupid, tactless man catches a tiger. The project should not be viewed in that way. It is a stupid, tactless man who organizes his work on a large scale without any calculation. Construction of this dam is based on scientific designing and calculation. The quote from a proverb must have been a reflection of apprehension about the project to be done by the county itself. To see the county people buckled down to undertake the project by their efforts, I think they have iron nerves.

That evening Kim Jong Il learned in greater detail about the official from the senior official of the provincial Party committee.

And he noted that the man was very audacious as he was determined to implement the project by the efforts of his own county, and said emphatically:

He is a heroic man.

Later the senior official of the Jongphyong County Party Committee, who had been likened to the subject of a proverb, came to be known across the country as a heroic man, an audacious and courageous man.

Revolution and Comrades

One day in April 2004, Kim Jong Il met officials.

He said that it was 40 years since he started working on the Central Committee of the Party, and that the most impressive of the many memories was the memory of revolutionary comrades, adding:

In order to advance the revolution with success, one needs many comrades. True comrades are those who share the ideas, will and destiny. Without comrades, no revolution can be pioneered or advanced.

Then he said emphatically:

In this sense, it can be said that the revolution is comrades and comrades are the revolution.

After a while, he said to the excited officials:

When President Kim Il Sung was young, his father Kim Hyong Jik took him, on his own birthday, to a shop and bought him a pocket watch, saying, “Happy birthday, Comrade Song Ju!” Kim Hyong Jik called young Kim Il Sung “comrade” because he regarded his son as his comrade in the revolution, which surpassed the blood relationship between father and son. President Kim Il Sung later said that he had always kept the vocative in his heart, considering it as his father’s request that he become a revolutionary and fight against the Japanese aggressors to win back the country without fail. He treated me in his lifetime as his

comrade in the revolution, and I, too, always regarded myself as a revolutionary, a comrade, of President Kim Il Sung.

The meaning of Kim Jong Il's words developed from the preciousness of comrades to the affection among them.

Love given and accepted among comrades on the road of revolution is revolutionary comradeship. Revolutionary comradeship is absolute trust among them, the spirit of doing one's all, even sacrificing one's life, for the sake of one's comrades, and of boundless devotion for one another. As it is based on the community of ideas, will and fighting goals, revolutionary comradeship is an ideological emotion that is deeper and more ardent than the love of kith and kin and the intimacy between friends; it is the pinnacle of human love. Love among comrades is unity, and there is no power stronger than that of the unity of revolutionary comrades. Revolutionary comradeship is the basis of single-hearted unity, the moral strength of our Party and the driving force of our revolution.

Recollecting with deep emotion the history of ennobling comradeship Kim Il Sung wrote during the protracted, bloody anti-Japanese war, he continued:

That revolution starts by gaining comrades is a precious truth I have inherited. Since I value this truth, I love my revolutionary comrades most and believe in them as I do myself. Because he has comrades, Kim Jong Il exists; without them Kim Jong Il could not exist—this is my ideological creed. The belief that my comrade is me and I am him—this is my view of a comrade.

Old Buddhas under Rock Turned into Indomitable Fighters

One day in January 2009, Kim Jong Il crossed the high and rugged Masik Pass to give field guidance at the newly-built Wonsan Youth Power Station.

Looking round for a long time the large-calibre pressure steel pipelines, which were built down the steep cliffs, and the exterior and interior of units 1 and 2 of the station, which were producing electricity at full capacity, he expressed great satisfaction, and said:

Kangwon Province displayed spiritual strength more powerful than A-bomb in building the Wonsan Youth Power Station. The regional people have completed the construction of a huge power station in a short span of time with the infinite spiritual strength provided by the Party. Their spiritual strength is great. The Wonsan Youth Power Station is a product of this strength and its crystallization.

Giving the regional people all the credit for having built the monumental edifice, he continued:

The people of Kangwon Province are the pioneers of self-reliance and indomitable fighters, who created a new thing from nothing through a hard-fought struggle. Officials and people of the province have become masters of great spiritual strength and forerunners of self-reliance through the construction of this power station. This is a greater and more precious wealth. I am envious of them. Frankly

speaking, the state has failed to render much help to the construction of the power station, but this province built it by its own efforts. I offer thanks to you.

Feeling grateful, a senior official of the province said that the people of Kangwon Province had been called from olden times old Buddhas under rock, but now it seemed they have to clear themselves of the ill fame.

An old Buddha under rock means a good-for-nothing man.

Laughing heartily, Kim Jong Il said:

That nickname has become out of date now. If officials of the capital and provinces come here, they will learn from the work style of the officials of Kangwon Province. They should visit the power station and learn from the experience and lessons officials of this province gained in its construction and their revolutionary spirit of self-reliance and revolutionary method and style of work.

Thus, those, who had been called old Buddhas under rock, have become indomitable fighters of socialist Korea.

Tideland Reclaimed for Crop Cultivation

One day in July 2010, Kim Jong Il visited the reclaimed Taegyedo tideland.

The tideland, which was reclaimed by building dams in the waters off Yomju and Cholsan counties according to the initiative and plan of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il for nature transformation, was the largest one reclaimed by that time in the country.

Enjoying a panoramic view of the reclaimed tideland equivalent to the area of the land under cultivation in one county, he said:

The Taegyedo tideland reclaimed on the West Sea is a great monumental edifice in the era of the Workers' Party. By reclaiming the tideland, we clearly showed the whole world what miracles are wrought in Juche Korea and proved in practice the immutable truth that Juche Korea does anything it is determined to do.

The words of Kim Jong Il resounded along the sea.

When the project was started, many people said that the part of the sea walls that had collapsed in the past could never be repaired and claimed that even if the repairs were launched, it would take decades.

But the workers, who cherished it as their faith that victory will be won as Kim Jong Il was determined, worked a miracle of finishing the project in some years.

In those days Kim Jong Il visited the construction site twice, giving his opinions on the project and encouraging the workers.

Bearing in mind his promise to meet again on the day of victory, the workers braved the difficulties and hardships facing them.

Picturing in his mind their feats and efforts, Kim Jong Il said that the reclaimed tideland is associated with the heroic feats and patriotic spirit of the builders.

His glance stopped at a structure bearing the slogan, “When the Party is determined, we can do anything!”

The structure had been set up where the final damming up was undertaken.

After looking at the slogan for a while, Kim Jong Il said:

The slogan “When the Party is determined, we can do anything!” was raised by the People’s Army in the 1980s. Now we should raise a new slogan, “Korea does what it is determined to do!”

Feasting his eyes on the endless reclaimed tideland, he said:

I cannot find words other than really great the more I look at the reclaimed tideland. In a certain sense, the project can be considered larger in scale than the building of the West Sea Barrage. To see the reclaimed tideland, I feel more moved than when I saw the completed West Sea Barrage. By finishing the project, North Phyongan Province has brought about a proud labour achievement dedicated to the Conference of the Party. No gift other than this dedicated to the conference would be greater and more wonderful. I extend special thanks to the employees of the North Phyongan Provincial Tideland Reclamation Complex, their family members and the helpers who have successfully completed the project. They worked well as befitting the descendants of Comrade Kim Il Sung.

My overall appreciation of those, who have reclaimed the Taegyedo tideland, is that they have worked well as befitting the descendants of Comrade Kim Il Sung.

He then proposed conferring the Order of Kim Il Sung on the North Phyongan Provincial Tideland Reclamation Complex and the Kim Il Sung Prize on the Taegyedo Tideland Reclamation Design.

Kim Jong Il's View of the People

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