

# Kim Jong-il

Presidential palace, Pyongyang

Born : 16 February 1941, Soviet Siberia

(but officially at Mount Paektu, northern Korea, in 1942)

## NORTH KOREA

Chairman, National Defence Commission

General secretary of Korean Workers' Party



## Training/education

**1970s:** Courses in English at University of Malta.

**1964:** Political economy degree from Kim Il-sung University (official version).

**1950s:** Namsan School, Pyongyang, for children of party officials (official version). Studies in China during Korean War.

**1948:** Primary school in Pyongyang after early childhood in Soviet Union.

## Professional experience

**September 2004:** Orders an elite army unit to patrol the Chinese border to stop refugees leaving North Korea. Dozens executed trying to flee the country.

**June 2004:** Proclaims radio sets as “new enemies” of the regime and increases measures to ensure they cannot pick up foreign stations.

**January 2003:** Withdraws from Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and resumes military nuclear development programme.

**1990s:** At least two million North Koreans starve to death in famine caused by economic policies and bad harvest. Kim refuses to admit the humanitarian disaster.

**1999:** Orders increased surveillance of typewriters and photocopiers to prevent anti-regime propaganda.

**1997:** About 100 associates, including journalists, of chief theoretician of official Juche ideology sent to concentration camps after he defects to South Korea.

**1996:** Sends TV journalist Song Keum Chul to concentration camp.

**1994:** Assumes full powers on death of his father, “The Great Leader” Kim Il-sung.

**1982:** Proclaimed “The Dear Leader” by the regime. Takes control of state security after sending its head, Kim Pyong-ha, and hundreds of associates to concentration camps.

**1978:** Organises kidnapping of South Korean film director and his actress wife to make propaganda films.

**1969:** Named deputy head of the party’s Propaganda and Agitation Department.

## Hobbies/interests

Personality cult, films (has collection of 20,000), armoured trains (never travels by air) and watching US basketball championships (banned for other North Koreans).