

People's Leader

President **Kim Il Sung** (1912-1994), father of socialist Korea, is the people's leader.

“Go among the People!”

As he wrote in his reminiscences *With the Century*, President Kim Il Sung regarded the slogan “Go among the People!” as his lifelong motto from the first days when he embarked on the road of struggle for the country and the people during Japan's military occupation of Korea(1905-1945).

Already in his early days of revolutionary activities he authored the Juche idea, which asserts that the master of the revolution and construction is the masses of the people and they are also the driving force of the revolution and construction, and, on the basis of this, put forward the Juche-oriented line of the Korean revolution.

As he placed absolute trust in the inexhaustible strength of the masses he founded the Anti-Japanese People's Guerrilla Army (the predecessor of the Korean People's Army) on April 25, 1932, and organized and led the anti-Japanese armed struggle for over a decade with neither the backing of the state nor the support of a regular army. He always taught the guerrillas that as fish cannot live without water, so the guerrillas cannot live without the people, a dictum which became their most important motto. Enjoying the devoted affection and assistance of the people, the guerrillas defeated the Japanese imperialists and achieved the historic cause of national liberation (August 15, 1945).

In the Korean war (1950-1953) started by the United States the Korean army

and people inflicted a defeat on the US imperialists, who had been boasting of being the “strongest” in the world, for the first time in their history. After the war the Americans clamoured that Korea would never rise again even after 100 years, but the Korean people finished the postwar rehabilitation in less than three years and carried out the gigantic task of industrialization in only 14 years, thus building up the country into a socialist power, independent in politics, self-supporting in the economy and self-reliant in defence. All these miraculous achievements were accomplished by the leadership of the President, who, cherishing the idea of “The people are my God,” gave the fullest play to the inexhaustible strength of the people.

His journey for the people was associated with many legendary tales.

Saying that he must visit every place where there are people, he continued his trip of on-the-spot guidance, personally pushing his car stuck in the mud. When visiting a farm, he stepped into a wet paddy field to feel the depth of tilled soil; when visiting a mine, he said that he would rather not come than not meet the miners down at the face and walked down the narrow passage of a pit under the dim light of a hand-lamp despite the exposure to water drippings from the ceiling.

In his lifetime the President often said to the officials that going among the people is to take the elixir of life, while not doing so is to come in for poison.

It is therefore not without reason that while answering the questions raised by a journalist delegation from CNN International in April 1994, in the last period of his life, he said it was his hobby to mix with the people and talk with them.

Benevolent Father of the People

After visiting the DPRK and witnessing its reality in which blood ties between

the leader and the people have been forged, Takeo Takagi, adviser to the editorial board of the Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun*, wrote in his travelogue:

“The DPRK is, indeed, a country where the leader and the people are united harmoniously. Even a father and his offsprings can never be attached to each other like this. Everywhere I saw people following their President and shedding tears of gratitude for his benevolence.”

President Kim Il Sung was such benevolent father of the people that he established in the country a unique people-centred socialist system, in which people are masters of everything and everything serves them.

One year when he came back from his field guidance tour to a local area, the President saw that a project was about to begin for paving the road in the compound of the Kumsusan Assembly Hall where he was attending to his office. No sooner had he witnessed it than he summoned the officials concerned and told them to stop the project immediately. He said that he felt sorry to see people feel inconveniences in their life, so he was walking even along the paddy ridges to make them better off, although it was too much for his old age. He then continued that if they had known his mind, they must have proposed paving the road to a school in a mountainous village instead.

It happened in June 1994 when Kim Il Sung was on a voyage with the former US President Jimmy Carter, who was visiting the DPRK, and had a friendly conversation with him. As the liner was making its way out of Pyongyang, Kim Il Sung told one of his suite to have the ship slowed down. Seeing his American guest wondering why, he said, pointing to some anglers at one side of the river, that if the liner ruffled the water at a fast speed, it may bother the anglers, adding that they would better said a bit slower for the anglers' convenience.

That is why the Korean people keep eternal memory of President Kim Il Sung and hold him in high esteem although years go by.