

## **Kim Il Sung and His Unceremonious Way of Approaching His People**

A fine art work attracts the attention of visitors to every kindergarten and crèche in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The work depicts President Kim Il Sung sitting on a bench in a park with a broad smile on his face and children around him, one of them wearing his hat tilted to one side and another whispering to the President with his arms around the latter's neck.

This fine art work shows in a concentrated way the relations the President maintained with his people including the children.

In October 1971 Ryokichi Minobe, the governor of Tokyo, visited Pyongyang. While looking round several places in the DPRK, he was deeply impressed by the ever-changing scenery of the socialist country, but what was incomprehensible was the fact that the President was visiting factories, farms and all other places as he chose. It was natural for him to feel such a doubt as, though he was the chief executive in the capital city of a country, he was afraid of walking on a street at will.

When he was meeting the President, he asked the latter about it. Kim Il Sung answered: Why should I feel afraid of the people when I do good things for them? I am alright wherever I go; I go to the sites where workers are building houses and to the factories; when I visit the rural areas, I sometimes sleep there before coming back.

Clear enough, he was the supreme leader of the people and a distinguished statesman recognized by the world, but no gap existed between him and his people.

His most precious and pleasant moment was when he was with the people. When he was too busy to pay a call on the people and children, he would feel something lacking in life. When he saw officials reprimanding the people for coming to see him, he would reprimand the officials.

Once he told the officials who were assisting him:

I have one thing to emphasize in front of you; do not interrupt me meeting the people without reserve; when I visit a factory, workers flock to me to have an unreserved talk, and when I go to rural areas, I sit knee to knee with farmers to talk with them; you must not check this; people like to see me and I want to have a talk with them; I feel happy to meet with the people and the people regard seeing me as their happiness; of course, you may be worried about my personal security; but it is a needless worry; our people believe in the Workers' Party of Korea and uphold it sincerely and I firmly believe in and respect them.

He had no particular time and place to do his official work.

The time when he was with the people was his working hours, and the place where he met them was the one where he dealt with the affairs of the WPK and the state. He was always with the people unreservedly in every place where the people were, including factories, countryside, mines, fishing villages and other production sites, dwelling houses, dormitories, meeting halls, schools, and even under a tree on the roadside, on the earthen verandah under the eaves of a rural house and on a moving train.

At farms he would sit on a straw mat on an untidy threshing ground or on the grass to discuss farm work with farmers; at factories he would discuss the matter of production with workers under a tree.

One day, he met farmers who were weeding a field. He led them to the shade of a tree, himself sitting under the scorching sun, and said, "Shade should be available for you, farmers, who are working sweating in the field. I am fine here."

The editor-in-chief of Indian newspaper *Indian Times*, who was on a visit to Pyongyang to congratulate the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Kim Il Sung, went to a province of the country to see him who was then on a field guidance trip.

After greeting him, the President said: I don't like celebrating my birthday; if I were in Pyongyang, officials and many other people would come to congratulate me on my birth anniversary; so in order to avoid it and also to guide provinces on the spot I've come here; I prefer to be with workers and farmers to be participating in a birthday party in Pyongyang.

As he attached great importance to human aspects of the ordinary people and treated them unreservedly, his prestige, authority and reputation stood higher and his noble personality left a deep impression on the minds of the people the world over.