

KIM JONG IL:

**Anecdotes of His
External Activities**

Foreign Languages Publishing House

DPR Korea

Juche 112 (2023)

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Foreword

Kim Jong Il, eternal Chairman of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, conducted energetic external activities throughout the days of leading the Korean revolution.

In particular, he put great efforts into developing the DPRK-China relationship, which has long historical roots, and opening up a new chapter of the bilateral friendly relationship with socialism as its core. And attaching importance to the fresh development of the traditional DPRK-Russia relationship, he laid a foundation for developing the DPRK-Russia friendly relationship.

During those days his great ideas, outstanding personal traits and ennobling sense of obligation were fully demonstrated. The affability and tender feeling still move the people of the world as well as the Korean people.

The Editorial Board introduces some of the anecdotes related with the external activities he conducted for the development of relations of friendship between his country and China and Russia.

Contents

In the Days of DPRK-China Friendship	5
1. For the Consolidation of DPRK-China Friendship.....	6
Warm Applause	6
<i>Glory and Victory to the Communist Party of China!</i>	8
Two Hongqi Cars	10
The Great Golden Hall Resounds with <i>Paeon to the Motherland</i>	12
2. Profound Knowledge	15
Not Mine, But Depth Bomb	15
Argument About Bird's Nest Broth	16
Mistakes by an Interpreter and a General Manager	17
By the End of a Luncheon	19
3. Ennobling Sense of Obligation	21
Postponing a Visit to the Forbidden City	21
Suggestion and Rejection	22
Tears of Gratitude of Deng Yingchao	23
Ten Minutes and Two Hours	25
4. Always for the Good of His People	27
At a Farm and at a Banquet	27
Putting Off a Visit to a Scenic Spot	29

5. Mysterious Natural Phenomena	33
Wonder Done by Heaven	33
Rain After a Long Spell of Drought	34
Another Wonder Done by Heaven	35
In the Days of DPRK-Russia Friendship	37
1. Warm Human Feelings and Sense of Obligation	38
Admiration of Umalatova	38
Friendship Is Fostered Through Frequent Visits	39
Determination of an Old Scout	42
“To the Memory of V. I. Lenin, Kim Jong Il”	44
A Wonder of Nature	47
Koltsova Regains Youth	49
2. Attraction and Reverence	51
Yazov’s Admiration	51
For the People	52
The Bells Peal at the Orthodox Church	54
At a Merited Division.....	55
In the Far East of Russia	57
The General Manager Admires	62
Presents—Orlov Stallions	63
By the River Bureya	65

A New Legend of Lake Baikal 69
Always Thinking of People 74
Sincerity of the Russian Leadership 76

In the Days of DPRK-China Friendship



1. For the Consolidation of DPRK-China Friendship

Warm Applause

In June 1983 Kim Jong Il paid an unofficial visit to China.

The general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China hosted a reception at the Great Hall of the People on the evening of the day of Kim Jong Il's arrival in Beijing.

Putting aside the written speech, he said that he would say what was in his mind that evening, and continued: I am particularly pleased to greet you, esteemed Comrade Kim Jong Il. Your visit will further strengthen the friendship and unity between our two parties and two countries. I hope that you would feel at home during your visit to my country and spend merry and pleasant days.

Kim Jong Il took the platform amid a warm applause of the participants.

He first said that he was pleased to meet his Chinese comrades again in Beijing one year after his meeting in Pyongyang in April the previous year, and continued: The deepening of friendship between the leaders and peoples of the two countries, transcending diplomatic customs and conventions, through frequent visits is not only because the two countries are close geographically; it is because we are linked by friendly feelings and our trust in each other is sincere.

Speaking highly of the successes achieved by the CPC and the Chinese people through a protracted bloody struggle and noting the invincible stability of DPRK-China friendship, which had overcome the trials of long history, he continued:

The special close relations of friendship which Comrade Kim Il Sung had established with Comrades Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping from his early years have firmly guaranteed the invincibility of friendship and unity between the parties and peoples of the two countries. The blood-sealed ties forged in the common cause at the cost of blood and lives, will be immutable in any trials. The great DPRK-China friendship which has been built with vigour and vitality, overcoming all sorts of trials over more than 50 years, is now developing with youthful vigour.

His speech was interrupted several times by applause.

He added that DPRK-China friendship should be carried forward through generations, that this was an essential requirement of the fundamental interests of the revolutions of the two countries, that the Korean people would stand in the same ranks with the Chinese people forever for the common cause of opposing imperialism and building socialism, and that that was the firm will of the Workers' Party of Korea and the invariable faith of the Korean people.

The general secretary of the Central Committee of the CPC expressed thanks to Kim Jong Il for making a good speech.

Glory and Victory to the Communist Party of China!

In June 1983, while staying in Shanghai, China, Kim Jong Il looked round various factories, enterprises and a port, and visited the site of the first congress of the Communist Party of China.

In July 1921, the founding congress of the CPC was held in the house in the French concession.

There were thirteen persons present at the meeting, all representing the Party members across the country. During the meeting, the delegates noticed that the police were watching the house. They immediately left it, and went to Jiaxing County, Zhejiang Province, where they resumed the meeting. The congress adopted the Party's Rules, elected the leadership body and declared the founding of the Communist Party of China.

After acquainting himself with the history of the museum in detail, Kim Jong Il said that the CPC is a revolutionary party, which has glorious traditions and rich fighting achievements and experience and leads the Chinese people to victory, and that the Chinese people won victory in the people's revolution and built a powerful socialist state through a protracted and arduous struggle under the leadership of the CPC.

The Chinese officials expressed deep thanks to Kim Jong Il for his sincere remarks.

After looking round the museum, an official of the museum showed a visitors book to Kim Jong Il in the reception room.

The book contained the letters left by President Kim Il Sung on December 5, 1958.

The official said, “The original is kept separately and its copy is shown to the ordinary visitors lest the letters written by President Kim Il Sung be discoloured. As you, Comrade Kim Jong Il, have come, we have taken out the original.”

Kim Jong Il read Kim Il Sung’s handwritten words with deep emotion.

The official went on: Comrade Kim Il Sung visited the museum 25 years ago, and you, Comrade Kim Jong Il, are visiting it this time. This is a great honour for us. We hope that you will leave your writing to commemorate this event forever.

Kim Jong Il wrote: *Glory and victory to the Communist Party of China, which is making strenuous efforts to build a modernized socialist power and accomplish the communist cause! Paying noble tribute to the great Communist Party of China. Kim Jong Il. June 8, 1983.*

As the sentence, though not long, reflected his valuing of DPRK-China friendship and ennobling sense of obligation for the Chinese comrades-in-arms, who were struggling together with their Korean counterparts for their common cause, all those present there applauded.

Two Hongqi Cars

One May day in 2011, as part of his China trip, Kim Jong Il visited Changchun, the provincial capital of Jilin Province, and looked round China Automobile Group No. 1.

Back in August the previous year, when touring the province, he had recommended that the Chinese side cancel the prearranged visit to this country's biggest auto maker. The reason was that with the heavy rain showing no sign of subsiding, he was afraid that the public security officers and many other people involved might catch a cold.

Seeing the accompanying officials from the province and the automobile group, among others, very sorry, he had promised to visit the group later.

The management staff and other employees were lining up to welcome the guest.

Walking past the cheering crowd and waving back to them, Kim Jong Il was guided to the group's showroom.

It was quite an impressive display showing typical models of Hongqi cars, which the group with a long history has produced since its inception. Standing out from all other exhibits was the one which in April 1975 took Kim Il Sung and Deng Xiaoping across Tiananmen Square, amid loud cheers from Chinese citizens.

Kim Jong Il gazed reflectively at the car and thanked the group's employees for preserving it for scores of years.

One of the hosts showed the visitor a photo taken at the square that day and offered it as a souvenir. The photo was titled, “Welcome the guest of honour from Korea with Hongqi.”

Kim Jong Il received the gift, saying thank you.

He was then shown around the shop floors for Hongqi cars and Jiefang trucks in turn, while learning in detail about their modernization and production.

The last leg of the tour was a hall in which one of the group’s best cars stood.

Here the secretary of the provincial party committee said to the guest: Your visit is a great encouragement to the whole group. It is a great honour for us to offer this newly-designed, latest model to you, considering that your inspection trip in Korea continues all year round. This vehicle reflects our best wishes for your good health and our warm welcome to your current visit.

Kim Jong Il said: Thank you for your sincerity.

The chairman of the group gave him a brief account of the car’s performance, particularly its merits—low level of noise inside, better soundproofing effects than Mercedes Benz, passenger seat of an optimal design, etc.

When his explanation was over, Kim Jong Il said: Thanks for your kindness. I will take this gift as a symbol of DPRK-China friendship. I am now driving this car myself on my way back home. Would this be okay?

At this deadpan humour the chairman stood nonplussed for a moment. Sensing that such a jocularly had something to do with

the car's performance, he replied self-confidently: You can rest assured. But I have a favour to ask of you before you leave. Would you please be kind enough to pose for a photograph with us against the background of this car?

Kim Jong Il said: Okay. I will do so before getting in the car.

With a broad smile on his face, he had a photograph taken with the hosts. Then they got in, Kim Jong Il sitting side by side with the party secretary in the passenger seats and praising the car's excellent performance.

Before taking leave, he said: As this Hongqi car is associated with the sincerity of the Chinese people, I will have it displayed at the International Friendship Exhibition House for our future generations to see.

His words reflected his will to carry forward the friendship between the two countries forever.

The Great Golden Hall Resounds with *Paeon to the Motherland*

Kim Jong Il's May 2011 China tour culminated with a banquet arranged by General Secretary Hu Jintao at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

It was held at its best banquet hall, also known as the great golden hall. In view of diplomatic conventions this event was quite an oddity—a dinner mingled with an artistic performance. The Chinese side did

not follow the custom of a performance coming after a banquet.

Included in the programme were Chinese and Korean songs, world-famous music pieces, etc.

Kim Jong Il praised their high artistic levels, saying: This performance is really elegant and ennobling. The porcelain-shaped backdrop in particular is anything but usual.

Beaming, Hu Jintao said: I know you are well-versed in art, so I was very concerned about how you would appreciate it. I instructed my staff to do their best. I am really happy to hear that you like it.

Kim Jong Il said: By the way, the Chinese TV series *Mao Anying* is very impressive. I could hardly hold back my tears while watching it.

Hu Jintao nodded, resuming: I watched it at home with my son, daughter and grandchildren. I realized once again the important role art and literature would play in teaching children how China-Korea friendship has evolved.

While the performance was going on, Kim Jong Il had talks with the Chinese cadres including members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC.

One of the Chinese cadres said to him: I have heard that Korean artists reproduced the Chinese opera *The Butterfly Lovers* under your guidance and it is now a massive hit, being as excellent as your reproduction of *The Dream of the Red Mansions*. This is my second formal invitation. It would be great if the Koreans could perform *The Butterfly Lovers* in China as soon as possible.

Kim Jong Il agreed, saying: I will make sure that they come

here soon. Previously, the Korean troupe for *The Dream of the Red Mansions* stayed so long in China. I am afraid that this time they might cause you much trouble if they have to stay as long.

The Chinese cadre assured him that the work was so good that they would not mind their long stay.

The banquet lasted for almost two hours.

Then, to everybody's surprise, Kim Jong Il said that he wanted to hear *Paeon to the Motherland*, adding that it was his favourite Chinese song.

Created on the first anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, this song was widely popular among its people, since it reflects their desire to achieve national prosperity under the five-star red flag.

The singing began, all officials present joining the singers and the great golden hall echoing with the loud chorus and cheers.

The song led the festive mood to the climax in an instant.

2. Profound Knowledge

Not Mine, But Depth Bomb

In June 1983 Kim Jong Il visited a base of the Beihai Fleet of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, which was situated in Qingdao.

When he was aboard a destroyer, its captain explained to him in detail the equipment of the warship.

But then there happened an awkward thing.

As the captain explained the equipment, instruments and weapons to which electronic technology was applied, the interpreter of the Chinese side had trouble interpreting what he was saying.

Though he was very good at Korean, he often cocked his head and looked at his Korean counterpart as if asking for help. He was seemingly not familiar with military technical terms.

But the interpreter of the DPRK side was not well-versed in military terms, either.

A similar thing happened when the captain explained the vessel's weapons and equipment.

The Chinese interpreter said at first it was a torpedo and then a mine, before trailing away.

The accompanying officials were puzzled.

Kim Jong Il, looking at the interpreter with an understanding smile, said: It is not a mine, but a depth bomb. And that one we had a

look at a short time ago is called acoustic detector.

He proceeded to explain the mission of a destroyer and the weapons and equipment on it and, pointing to the large and small warships at the dock, specified their types and tonnage.

Then he continued: In modern naval warfare, submarines under the water pose a greater threat than warships floating on the surface. Destroyers of a fleet are mostly used to destroy enemy submarines. Because the destroyer is equipped with acoustic detector, it can locate the enemy submarines under the water, and after locating an enemy vessel, it fires depth bombs under the water to destroy it.

Argument About Bird's Nest Broth

One day in June 1983, a train was running from Qingdao to Nanjing carrying Kim Jong Il on a visit to China.

At mealtime, bird's nest broth was served.

A man of the party put a question, saying: Bird's nest broth is a rare and high-quality dish, and the Chinese serve it only to distinguished guests. Swallows, the owner of the nest, are not ordinary swallows. They live on gravelly islands in a southern part of China. Then what can they make their nests with on islands without trees, grasses and soil?

An argument broke out over the dish.

Each of the officials of the two countries came up with their opinions.

Their assertions were divided into two in general: One was that swallows made nest with saliva they spat, and the other was that they made it with fish.

Each group claimed that their assertion was right.

Looking at them, Kim Jong Il said that he had heard an official of his country telling he had seen fish eyes in the bird's nest broth he had been served during his visit to China.

"It's true. He even saw fish bones," an official chimed in.

Kim Jong Il and all the others laughed.

The argument resumed in the restaurant car of the train returning from Shanghai to Beijing.

At that time Kim Jong Il said: It seems that the argument about bird's nest broth is not yet over. I think we should put an end to it as our visit to China is drawing to a close. I think swallows are making nests with fish bones mixed with their saliva. My opinion seems to be a compromise of the two assertions, but I think that is true.

Then he laughed a hearty laugh.

The officials clapped their hands in agreement.

Mistakes by an Interpreter and a General Manager

In June 1983, Kim Jong Il visited a canned food factory in Shanghai.

Walking round the factory, he, referring to the importance of

sterilization at foodstuff factories, asked an official of the factory how the factory was sterilizing cans.

The official explained and the interpreter interpreted what the official had said: We sterilize them for eight minutes at 120°C.

Looking puzzled at the answer, Kim Jong Il wondered aloud, “120°C? I think it should be four to five degrees higher than that.”

Embarrassed, the interpreter asked the official what the temperature was, and blushed and said apologetically, “I have made a mistake. The temperature is 124°C.”

He had not heard the temperature correctly due to the noise of machines.

Nodding affirmatively, Kim Jong Il said that eight minute at 124°C would be enough to sterilize them.

Seeing them, the Korean officials accompanying Kim Jong Il recalled the day when they had visited the Tsingtao Brewery with him a few days before.

That day Kim Jong Il asked the general manager of the factory what kind of antiseptic was applied on the inside wall of the can and if the antiseptic changed the taste of beer.

Perplexed by his expert-level questions, the general manager answered in spite of himself that it did not affect the taste of beer.

Kim Jong Il asked again if it was true.

Now having realized that Kim Jong Il had unusual knowledge, the general manager said, “In fact, the taste of beer changes a little. Our factory is now trying to solve this problem.”

By the End of a Luncheon

When Kim Jong Il visited China in May 2011, the Chinese side hosted a luncheon for him on a sightseeing boat on Lake Jingbo, a tourist attraction in the country.

As the luncheon was drawing to a close, the performers of a local art troupe sang a Korean song enthusiastically after Chinese songs, decorating the end of the luncheon.

Kim Jong Il clapped his hands and, pointing at a woman playing *cheng*, a Chinese board zither, asked a Chinese official what were the clips that were fixed on her fingernails.

“They are called *daimaojia*, made of the shell of a tortoise that occurs in a tropical sea.”

Kim Jong Il nodded, and said:

It is *daimaojia*. So you mean the days have gone when the stringed instruments were plucked with fingernails. Thank you for performing many good songs for me.

Kim Jong Il was beaming, and an official from Heilongjiang Province asked him if he would not mind listening to another piece of famous Chinese music played with *cheng*.

Kim Jong Il said that though time was pressing, he would like to listen if it was a famous song of China.

As the guest agreed, the Chinese official was overjoyed, and he motioned to the musician.

The peculiar sound of the instrument rang out in the boat.

After listening to the first few bars of the tune, Kim Jong Il said that it was not a Chinese one.

This remark came as a great surprise to both Chinese and Korean officials, as well as the artistes.

With a smile on his face, Kim Jong Il said: This is a famous song of Britain.

“I thought it was a Chinese one,” admitted the official, feeling himself blush and marvelling at Kim Jong Il’s knowledge of music.

3. Ennobling Sense of Obligation

Postponing a Visit to the Forbidden City

After completing his first day's schedule in Beijing during his visit to China in June 1983, Kim Jong Il said to the officials of his party: I think we need to change our schedule. We'd better postpone the visit to the Forbidden City scheduled for tomorrow afternoon till our visit to provinces. Please ask the Chinese side for permission.

The officials were puzzled. They thought that he had a very pressing issue to deal with.

But, to their surprise, the reason was his concern for the health of the Minister of the People's Armed Forces who was a veteran of the anti-Japanese revolution.

He said: He might be tired because he has been on a train since he left the homeland, and on top of that weather forecast says that the temperature in Beijing would be higher tomorrow than today. We should value veteran revolutionaries and take good care of their health.

When the delegation was climbing Jingshan that day on a visit to it, Kim Jong Il advised the old minister to stay behind and have a rest as it was hot. And before leaving the country for the visit, he had taken the measure of assigning a nurse to him on a mission to look after him during the visit and attaching a car for his exclusive use to the China-bound train.

The officials requested the Chinese side for the postponing of the visit to the Forbidden City.

It was a special request that went far beyond diplomatic conventions.

The Chinese officials concerned were impressed to see the leader of a country suggest changing the schedule of a visit to a foreign country just because of the health of an old revolutionary.

Suggestion and Rejection

In June 1983 Kim Jong Il left the Beijing Railway Station for a visit to provinces.

The general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China accompanied him.

The general secretary was very busy as he had just returned from a visit to European countries and the First Session of the Sixth National People's Congress was to open soon.

Considering this, Kim Jong Il had had officials concerned inform the Chinese side several times of his opinion that the general secretary would not accompany him on his visit to provinces.

But each time the general secretary said that he must go to Qingdao and Nanjing with Kim Jong Il as he had decided, and that he would go there, guide him around a newly-built hotel and see everything was perfect for him.

Before leaving for provinces, Kim Jong Il suggested to the general secretary three times that he could visit provinces together

with other Chinese officials.

“No, Comrade Kim Jong Il, the decision once made is final. I’ll accompany you to Nanjing. I won’t compromise.”

Kim Jong Il asked him again to do as he wanted.

“You can have a discussion and change your plan, can’t you?”

“Do you force it on me?”

“No, I don’t. I’m just asking.”

“If we are to change a decision through discussion, we will have to have a vote. Then I will exercise the general secretary’s power of veto.”

The general secretary even waved his hand as if he was exercising the veto then and there.

Thus, the general secretary accompanied Kim Jong Il on his visit to provinces of his country.

Tears of Gratitude of Deng Yingchao

In June 1983 Kim Jong Il visited the home of Deng Yingchao, Zhou Enlai’s wife and chairwoman of the National Committee of the People’s Political Consultative Conference of China.

Overjoyed to have Kim Jong Il at her home, the Chinese veteran revolutionary, now advanced in her age, said, “As you, Comrade Kim Jong Il, visit me, my home and garden are shining in the rays of friendship.”

When Kim Jong Il stood up with due respect to offer his greetings to her, she hurriedly rose up and repeatedly asked him to

sit down, holding his hands in hers.

But as he would not sit down, she said that she would stand, too.

He told the old lady to sit down.

She also repeatedly asked him to have a seat.

Sitting down, Kim Jong Il said to her: When I was leaving for China, President Kim Il Sung asked me to convey his best regards to you. He was deeply concerned about your health as you are advanced in age.

Deng Yingchao was deeply moved to tears.

Looking back, when she had visited the DPRK four years before, Kim Il Sung personally had come to the airport and received her.

He had arranged a grand banquet in honour of her and made a speech at it. He had also accompanied her to Hamhung and attended the unveiling ceremony of the statue of her husband Zhou Enlai and the monument to him built at the Hungnam Fertilizer Complex.

At that time, she had extended her heartfelt thanks to Kim Il Sung, expressing her pleasure and emotion at seeing her most intimate comrade-in-arms again in Korea.

Kim Jong Il said to her that her husband was a great revolutionary and had done a lot for the friendship between the DPRK and China.

Tears of emotion running down her cheeks, Deng Yingchao said, "I'm delighted that Comrade Kim Il Sung, who is the great leader of the Korean people and an intimate friend of the Chinese people, still cherishes the feeling of comradeship with Zhou Enlai and is concerned for me. I'll remember forever what you have just said."

The scene was so moving that the Chinese interpreter was unable

to speak, and so the Korean interpreter interpreted her words instead.

Time passed, and Kim Jong Il had to leave.

Despite Kim Jong Il's repeated dissuasion, Deng Yingchao insisted on seeing him off outside, saying that she could not see such a dear guest off inside.

Bidding farewell to Kim Jong Il in the garden, Deng Yingchao said earnestly, holding his hands, "It is most auspicious that you have visited my house. I wish you will come frequently to see me."

Then she waved her hand until the car carrying Kim Jong Il could not be seen.

Ten Minutes and Two Hours

In June 1983, Kim Jong Il met Deng Xiaoping, director of the Central Advisory Commission of the Communist Party of China, in Zhongnanhai in Beijing.

On the very day of Kim Jong Il's arrival in China, Deng Xiaoping asked officials concerned about the health of Kim Jong Il and expressed his desire to meet him as soon as possible.

When he met Kim Jong Il, he expressed his joy at meeting him, holding his hands for a long time.

Present at the talk that followed were all the veteran cadres of China.

Kim Jong Il said that he was pleased that the Chinese leading officials including Deng Xiaoping met him although they were busy working on the National People's Congress and despite their advanced

ages, and conveyed greetings of President Kim Il Sung to them.

He then expressed his thanks to Deng Xiaoping, saying that he, as an outstanding leader of the Chinese revolution, had performed great exploits from the initial days of the Chinese revolution to the present days when socialist modernization was being stepped up, and that he was invariably and resolutely supporting and encouraging the Korean people in their revolutionary struggle, valuing the comradely and friendly relations with Kim Il Sung.

That day the talk lasted for more than 40 minutes.

After the talk was over, Deng Xiaoping hosted a luncheon for Kim Jong Il.

Kim Jong Il expressed his thanks.

The luncheon also took long hours.

Saying that it was too late, Kim Jong Il continued: When I was leaving my country, President Kim Il Sung, concerned about your health, asked me to talk with you for only about ten minutes. But I have failed to do so. My worry is how I can explain my failure to him when I return home.

Expressing his gratitude, Deng Xiaoping said, "I am happy to meet a welcome guest. This has promoted my health. I can live long. On your return home, you can tell President Kim Il Sung the truth."

That day the meeting with Deng Xiaoping lasted for more than two hours, not ten minutes.

4. Always for the Good of His People

At a Farm and at a Banquet

In May 2011, Kim Jong Il visited Lake Jingbo. Immediately after the visit, he went to the Hailin Farm, which was about three hours' drive from the lake.

Built in the 1950s by volunteers who had come in response to the call of the Communist Party of China to reclaim Beidahuang, the farm had been turned into a major agricultural and livestock production base of China.

After being briefed on the farm at its management building, he dropped in at the house of a young couple.

He asked them about their living conditions—how many members there were in their family, how many square metres their house occupied, how much it had cost them to buy the house and whether the biogas stove worked well, before wishing them a happy life.

Then he proceeded to the cattle farm, where he inquired into the production and management of the farm in detail.

“What breed of cow is it you are raising in this farm?”

“It's Holstein from Australia.”

“What is the daily feed unit per cow?”

“A cow eats 20 kilograms of fodder and gives 30 kilograms of milk a day.”

“20 kilograms of fodder and 30 kilograms of milk?”

Kim Jong Il cast a suspicious glance at the farm official.

Realizing his mistake, the official corrected his answer.

“It’s 30 kilograms of fodder, not 20 kilograms, and 20 kilograms of milk, not 30 kilograms. Ten kilograms out of the 30 kilograms are grain fodder.”

He did not realize what his real mistake was.

Kim Jong Il had asked him about the feed unit, not amount of fodder.

But he continued to talk with the official with a smile on his face.

He asked how they reproduced the breed, what the annual selection rate of cows was and which kind of grain they fed the cows.

After hearing the answer, he said that the farm could be said to have established a complete food production cycle.

Then he wished that the farm would steadily improve its management and achieve a greater success in the future.

That evening a banquet was given in honour of him at a hotel in Mudanjiang.

At the banquet, the Chinese senior officials from the capital and the province said that President Kim Il Sung had left bloody traces in Lake Jingbo while waging the anti-Japanese armed struggle in Northeast China in the 1930s, that that day General Secretary Kim Jong Il was sharing warm feelings with them and designing a beautiful future of China-DPRK friendship while recollecting the great exploits of President Kim Il Sung on Lake Jingbo, a symbol of the roots and traditions of China-DPRK friendship, that it impressed them

deeply and encouraged them, and that it was the sacred responsibility and duty of all of them to develop the China-DPRK relations down through generations as required by the new century and new situation, true to the ennobling intentions of the top leaders of the two parties.

Kim Jong Il expressed his thanks to them.

Then he called the secretary of the provincial committee of the CPC, and asked him in a low voice: I failed to ask a question when I was looking round a cattle farm house. How does the farm provide heating for the houses? Isn't it electric heating?

The secretary looked confused at his unexpected question which was quite incongruous with the cheerful atmosphere of the banquet. But soon he realized that the question was an expression of the DPRK leader's concern for his people's livelihood. Deeply impressed, he answered, "No. It is not electric heating. There is a 6 000kW biogas power station behind the farm. The farm generates steam with the heat produced at the station and uses it in heating all the houses."

Saying it was a good thing, Kim Jong Il nodded slightly.

He always thought about his people whether he was at home or on a foreign tour, and did his best to provide them with a more civilized and affluent life.

Putting Off a Visit to a Scenic Spot

In May 2011 Kim Jong Il visited Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province in East China.

An old port city situated on the coast of the Grand Canal which links the Yangtze River with the northern and southern regions, Yangzhou is one of the major tourist attractions in China for its beautiful scenery. President Kim Il Sung was there in October 1991 during his last visit to China.

Staying the whole day there, Kim Jong Il visited several places, and he attended a banquet arranged for him.

The following happened that day when the Chinese officials tried to have him see the sights on Lake Shouxi.

Lake Shouxi in Yangzhou is not a big artificial one, but it is noted for its spectacular scenery. The name of the lake carries the meaning that it looks like a slender and beautiful girl. It is said that the successive Chinese emperors often visited here, and in particular, Emperor Qianlong of Qing China six times.

When President Kim Il Sung visited China, he enjoyed sightseeing here aboard tourist boat *Qianlong*.

So, the Chinese officials planned to show Kim Jong Il the lake and made careful preparations with the utmost sincerity.

They removed rail pickets to allow battery cars to run freely, laid out better flower beds, forbade all tourists to enter the lake area. And they set the time of his visit as the afternoon of that day.

But Kim Jong Il sent his accompanying Korean officials to the lake, and he visited the Huarun Shuguo Supermarket, which was not included in the itinerary of the visit.

He devoted much time to inquiring about the varieties and quality of fruits, vegetables, frozen foodstuffs, confectionery, cooking oil and

dairy produce, as well as the mode of business management of the supermarket.

The lake, a must for the visitors to Yangzhou, was waiting for Kim Jong Il, but he turned his way to the supermarket with a thought of improving the living standards of his beloved people back in the homeland.

That evening and also the next morning, when Kim Jong Il was leaving Yangzhou, the secretary of the Yangzhou City Committee of the Communist Party of China expressed her regret for having failed to show him the lake.

Kim Jong Il made a promise that when he would visit China in the future, he would come to Yangzhou without fail and look around the lake.

The city party secretary told the Korean officials: When he visited the Huarun Shuguo Supermarket, he asked us to go back to the cooking-oil counter after looking round all the counters on the second floor. At the oil counter he inquired about what kind of oil the local citizens liked better. When I replied that they liked to eat soya oil, he took a bottle of soya oil in his hand and asked again if it was refined and what trademark it was. Looking at him, I learned that he was the genuine leader of the people.

On the train to Beijing, Dai Bingguo, State Councilor of China, said: During your visit to Yangzhou, you failed to look round Lake Shouxi. Yangzhou never allows building high-rise apartment houses around the lake, so one can feel as if he were in the grand Mother Nature. It is quite regrettable that I have failed to ensure even a

moment's rest for you there.

Kim Jong Il said with a smile: Yangzhou is an elegant and civilized city, a good combination of classic beauty and modern taste. The city is properly conducting the work of preserving its long history and cultural traditions. Though I have not seen the lake this time, there should be somewhere I have not visited, so that I can go there next time.

Dai Bingguo said: I will convey to the officials of Yangzhou that you have said you will see the lake next time without fail. Then, they will be very pleased.

5. Mysterious Natural Phenomena

Wonder Done by Heaven

Kim Jong Il paid an unofficial visit to the People's Republic of China in early May 2010.

Tianjin, the second leg of his visit to Northeast China, is one of the four municipalities in China. And the Port of Tianjin, which Kim Jong Il was scheduled to visit, ranks fifth in the world and third in China in its scale.

Unlike Dalian, which Kim Jong Il had visited for two days, much rain had been falling in Tianjin from a day before he would arrive there, and the rain and a strong wind continued even at dawn.

To everybody's surprise, it stopped raining in the central part of the city a short while before he arrived at the Tianjin Railway Station. But it was still raining in the port area, even though the time of his arrival to the port was approaching. The wharf was a sea of water. The Chinese side made a plan to show him the port by car.

Then, something unexpected happened.

As he left for the wharf after hearing the explanation of the history, prospect and sand table of the port at the Port Authority building, it stopped raining in the area of the wharf.

The accompanying Chinese officials tilted their heads dubiously, but felt it fortunate to show him the wharf not in the car.

Kim Jong Il got off the car, and made the rounds of the Tonghang container wharf and an international passenger wharf under construction.

The Chinese officials explained to him that they planned to dig the bed of the tideland about 20 metres deep so that large cargo vessels could enter and to build an international passenger wharf in such a way.

Appreciating it as a gigantic project for transforming nature, Kim Jong Il said that the construction of the port clearly showed once again how great human strength was.

It took him about 40 minutes to look round the two wharfs.

In the meantime, it was still raining in the sea near the wharf but not on the course of his visit.

No sooner had he wound up his visit to the port and left the port area by car than it resumed raining in the wharf.

As for the mysterious natural phenomenon of that day, the Chinese people said: In Korea there are many books dealing with rare natural phenomena related to Kim Jong Il. Today's weather phenomenon is not irrelevant to it. This can be regarded only as a wonder done by heaven.

Rain After a Long Spell of Drought

The following happened when Kim Jong Il visited China in May 2011.

In spring that year, an unusually severe drought hit China. Small

rivers almost dried up, and the water level of big rivers and lakes dropped by far.

The water level of Lake Jingbo, which was a leg of Kim Jong Il's itinerary, was so low that the sightseeing boat was unable to drop its anchor at the wharf.

The Chinese officials wondered if they could show him the beautiful scenery of the lake as it was.

As an emergency measure, officials of Heilongjiang Province set up a temporary gangplank along the distance of scores of metres from the wharf to the sightseeing boat, and uninstalled the narrow and steep staircase to the second floor of the boat, which would be used by Kim Jong Il, and installed a wide and gently-sloping one in its place.

They thought ill of the sky, expecting no luck.

To their surprise, it started raining much on the vast plain of Northeast China from a few days before Kim Jong Il visited the lake.

The water level of the lake rose by 60 cm on average every day.

The lake counts as one of the most famous tourist destinations in China. The name of the lake has a meaning that the water surface of the lake looks like a flawless mirror, and the landscape became more beautiful for the mountains were washed clean by the rain after a long spell of drought.

Another Wonder Done by Heaven

In May 2011 Kim Jong Il visited Yangzhou in Jiangsu Province

in the eastern region of China.

Also in Yangzhou it did not rain for three months in spring.

Even in this spring month, the temperature rose to 36°C in daytime, making the people feel choked and sweat profusely.

“It is terribly hot. Has the water in the sky dried out?” Some people cursed the broiling sun in the sky, but in vain.

But the day when Kim Jong Il arrived at Yangzhou, much rain fell.

And next day when he started visiting several units in the city, the temperature dropped a little more and a gentle breeze blew.

“General Kim Jong Il has brought rain and welcome breeze,” said the local people.

Earlier, seeing the water level of Lake Jingbo rising up from a few days before Kim Jong Il visited the lake, a Chinese official had thought it as merely a wonder of heaven.

But experiencing the marvelous natural phenomenon once again in Yangzhou, he said to the Korean officials, “The Korean people praise General Secretary Kim Jong Il as a man born of heaven, and he is literally a heaven-sent man. This year, the Yangzhou citizens worried much because of the long spell of drought. And the temperature went up to 36°C in daytime for several days. But on the day when the General Secretary arrived at Yangzhou, much rain fell and the temperature went down, making the local people feel cool and happy. This is not a mere natural phenomenon but a wonder of heaven which recognizes the great man.”



**In the Days of
DPRK-Russia Friendship**

1. Warm Human Feelings and Sense of Obligation

Admiration of Umalatova

Chairwoman of the Peace and Unity Party of Russia Sazhy Umalatova was an energetic politician with a strong sense of justice.

One February day in 1999, Kim Jong Il met the Russian figure at the foot of Mt Paektu in the northern part of Korea.

That day it was freezing outside.

Kim Jong Il walked out of his lodgings to greet the guest and apologized for making her travel such a long distance.

She congratulated Kim Jong Il on his birthday, though belatedly, and said that she witnessed things were going more briskly in his country than the previous year.

Now the Korean people are striving to solve everything in the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance under the slogan of building a powerful country, he noted, adding that they were concentrating efforts on potato farming to ease the strain on food supplies. He reminded her that the Soviet Union had defeated Hitler-led fascist Germany as it had averted famine thanks to the large-scale potato cultivation in Siberia.

The chairwoman expressed her views on the activities of her party and other Russian parties.

After listening attentively to her, Kim Jong Il said that he liked

most those who were prepared to advance head-on with the resolve to meet any challenge from any formidable enemy. I never forgive anyone who looks down on our country or tries to impair its dignity. To fight them death-defyingly until they surrender is my conviction and will. The United States, disheartened by this fighting spirit, does not dare to provoke us. I am determined to fight it to the end if it dares to attack our country. Poorly armed as it was, the anti-Japanese guerrilla army, headquartered in Mt Paektu, defeated its formidable enemy on the strength of its indomitable revolutionary spirit. As we are possessed of the revolutionary spirit of Paektu, we do not fear any strong enemy.

In talking about life he joked intermittently, but was vehement in his denunciation of the imperialists and renegades to the revolution.

That day the chairwoman said to a Korean official, “The respected Comrade Kim Jong Il is an outstanding statesman, a brilliant military strategist and a great man sent from heaven. His spirit and faith, his will and courage are all reminiscent of Mt Paektu.”

Friendship Is Fostered Through Frequent Visits

Luncheon on the Sea

There was a Russian figure who would frequent the DPRK. He worked in Siberia as first secretary of a provincial committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union before taking an important post at its Central Committee. He was a long-serving politician,

magnanimous and audacious.

One day in August 1999, when he visited the DPRK again, Kim Jong Il arranged a luncheon in his honour on a sailing boat on the East Sea of Korea.

He had summoned an official concerned the day before and said: During the guest's previous visit I promised that I would have a rest with him next time, but I could not spare time to do so because of the tight schedule for my field inspection trip. He would be very sorry if he should go back without seeing me this time. You should prepare a luncheon on a boat at a seaside resort next morning.

The official consulted the weather station, which forecasted heavy rain and strong wind for the next morning.

But Kim Jong Il dug his heels in, saying that a luncheon on a stormy sea would be an unforgettable memory.

The Russian guest was deeply moved by the story.

Kim Jong Il said to him on the boat: I am sorry that though I looked forward to seeing you during your current visit, I could not afford time because of the tight schedule. It seemed to me that there would be no more opportunity if I did not meet you today. So I arranged a luncheon in your honour despite the foul weather. I wish this would leave a good impression on you. Drinking may be more enjoyable in such weather.

When he took out a bottle of cognac, the guest exclaimed in wonder, "Isn't that Georgian cognac?"

The host said with a friendly smile, "This is what you sent me last time. It would be no fun to drink it alone, so I have kept it to share it

with you when you come again. Let's drink it together to celebrate our meeting.”

He opened the bottle and filled a cup for the guest.

The latter did not imagine that Kim Jong Il had been keeping the cognac until then.

The host said to the hesitant guest, “Why? I have heard that the Siberian people drink on both happy and sad days. Cheers.”

“Visit Pyongyang Freely”

Kim Jong Il once met the Russian figure again. Their talks lasted several hours.

The following is an excerpt from their talks.

Kim Jong Il: Promise me that next time you will bring your wife and all other members of your family with you.

Guest: I am obliged to you, but ...

Kim Jong Il: Then I can taste the dishes cooked by your wife. I will give generous marks for them, so you don't need to worry. Be sure to come with her.

Guest: I don't worry about the marks, but all of my family will make a platoon. You know I am too old to be a platoon leader. I will bring some of them.

Kim Jong Il: You seem to think that it might be a burden on us. Even a company would do as all of you are friendly guests. I assure you that they will be entertained well. I will have air tickets sent to you. What is the hobby of your wife?

Guest: She likes reading and seeing opera.

Kim Jong Il: In Pyongyang you can enjoy revolutionary operas such as *The Sea of Blood* and *The Flower Girl*, as well as performances given by the Pochonbo Electronic Ensemble and the Wangjaesan Light Music Band. The admission price is higher for friendly guests than for unwelcome ones. Don't you mind it?

All laughed at this joke.

The guest was so fascinated by his humorous and witty remarks that he was unaware of the passage of time. "I am afraid I am taking up too much of your time," the guest said apologetically.

Kim Jong Il said that he was all right and he could make up the loss of time. He continued that he should visit Pyongyang freely, taking it as his own hometown, and stressed that friendship would be fostered through frequent visits.

"Thank you. Sure enough, I will come again," said the Russian figure.

Determination of an Old Scout

In September 1999 Kim Jong Il met Karpov, first secretary of the Writers Union of the former Soviet Union, who was on a visit to the DPRK.

Years before, Karpov had met Kim Jong Il several times and got to know him well on his visit to the country together with Yazov, the defence minister of the former Soviet Union.

During the Second World War, as a reconnaissance platoon leader of the Red Army in his twenties, he was awarded the title of Hero of

the Soviet Union for the feats he had performed in the battles against the fascist German aggressors. After the war he wrote non-fiction novels *Commander*, *Capture* and others based on his experiences as a scout. But, now in his seventies, he would be easily moved to tears.

Kim Jong Il said to him: The first guest to this holiday camp was the late Comrade Novichenko. Now that he cannot come here again, I am glad to see another Russian friend like you, Comrade Karpov. I told you to come every year, but you have come only now.

His words made Karpov feel relaxed and wear a happy smile on his face.

Karpov had been writing a book *Generalissimo Stalin* for years. Although the manuscript was not yet finished, he said that he wanted to show Kim Jong Il at least one chapter, titled, *Military Strategist*, in which he wrote about Stalin's exploits.

Satisfied, Kim Jong Il highly praised it as an expression of determination, as befits a scout, to have decided to portray Stalin as a great military strategist.

He said: Because the Russian opportunists and renegades have made many bad remarks to disparage Stalin's historic achievements, you should write well the book *Generalissimo Stalin* in order to put to rights the distorted history and give a correct understanding to the coming generations. The book is significant because it will go to press when we see in the 2000s, and it is all the more so as you have written it based on the objective viewpoint after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"I will prove worthy of your expectations," said Karpov in a grateful manner.

Kim Jong Il said: Writers should be pacesetters in awakening the masses of the people and encouraging them to turn out in the struggle. It is the Juche idea that teaches us that we can emerge victorious only when we believe in their strength and rely on them in carrying out the revolution.

The serious conversation was drawing to a close.

The veteran felt very sorry to leave, and wished Kim Jong Il good health.

When Kim Jong Il embraced him, he finally burst into tears.

Kim Jong Il said soothingly, “Come on. You were a brave scout. On my own behalf, I officially invite your sons and daughters. You should all agree a period of vacation and come together next time. And please take care of yourself.”

Karpov was so moved that he could not say a word.

On the day of his return home, he told the officials of the DPRK that he would become General Kim Jong Il’s disciple, regarding him as his spiritual mainstay, and would cherish him in his mind for the rest of his life.

“To the Memory of V. I. Lenin, Kim Jong Il”

In August 2001, a shocking event took place in Red Square in Moscow, Russia.

Kim Jong Il visited the Lenin Mausoleum and paid tribute to him.

In the morning, when telling the accompanying officials the day’s

itinerary, he said: Today we are going to visit the Lenin Mausoleum after laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The officials were reminded of what had happened in the train running to Moscow some days before.

A senior official had brought up a serious and sensitive issue of diplomatic practice. He was concerned about what would happen if Kim Jong Il visited the Lenin Mausoleum.

In the former Soviet Union Red Square, where Lenin is preserved in his lifetime appearance, had been regarded as a sacred place of the world revolution as well as of the country. So party and state leaders of the socialist countries considered it as a common practice of morality to visit the Lenin Mausoleum and pay tribute to the great leader of the international working class and the founder of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet state.

But, after the Soviet Union collapsed, the custom also died out. Slanders on and insults to Lenin were officially allowed, and an overt argument arose on demolishing even the mausoleum, frequently resulting in serious conflicts in the political and social circles.

Under these acute circumstances, it was no wonder that the senior official had expressed their concern about the visit to the mausoleum.

But Kim Jong Il had said: I will visit the mausoleum without fail, no matter what others may say. I was told that, after the Soviet Union collapsed, none of the many state and party leaders and other politicians did so on their visits to Russia. I am going to visit it with a sense of moral obligation of a true revolutionary to the leader, regardless of diplomatic convention or any condition. If anyone finds fault with my

visit, they would prove themselves to be preposterous and vulgar in terms of moral obligation. A gem sparkles even in mud. When the tomb of the leader of the world working class is deserted and debased by a confusing medley of ideas, our visit on our terms will show what the noble moral obligation of genuine communists is, and it will be known to the whole world.

Expressing his will to visit the mausoleum as the first item on his itinerary, he had said resolutely that no matter what others might say, he should visit the Lenin Mausoleum as planned.

Kim Jong Il left the guesthouse in the Kremlin at about 10:00.

When his motorcade reached Red Square, the accompanying officials were surprised.

The Russian side had not informed them of the formalities of the visit until that morning, but they had got ready for the reception and even had the honour guard lined up for a review.

The mausoleum, which had not been visited by any party, state or government leaders over the past ten-odd years, and Red Square, which lost its solemnity with Honour Guard Post No.1 removed, were brimming with a sense of occasion.

Kim Jong Il moved his steps slowly over the flagstones in the bright midsummer sunlight towards the Lenin Mausoleum with a serious look on his face.

In front of him were marching young Russian soldiers carrying the wreath he had prepared.

Although it was a short distance, journalists from Russia and all over the world moved quickly to capture the moment of history.

When the soldiers put down the wreath and stepped aside, Kim Jong Il walked up to it and arranged the ribbon.

On the ribbon were written the following letters, “To the Memory of V. I. Lenin, Kim Jong Il”

His silent tribute to the memory of Lenin assumed great solemnity and nobility.

The news of his visit to the Lenin Mausoleum shocked the world.

“Noble tribute Kim Jong Il, leader of the socialist cause in the 21st century, paid to the pioneer of the socialist cause in the 20th century, constitutes a stirring event that showed his outstanding moral obligation as the leader of the cause of global independence.”

A Wonder of Nature

In August 2001, it rained from dawn on the Neva River in Russia.

The officials accompanying Kim Jong Il on his visit to St Petersburg were busy preparing to leave the city in the morning.

When breakfast was over, Kim Jong Il said that they should visit the Piskaryov Cemetery without fail before leaving.

The cemetery is a place where the Soviet soldiers and citizens who had died in battles to defend Leningrad were laid to rest.

The visit had not been included in the itinerary. The officials remembered what had happened on the Trans-Siberian train to Moscow.

Kim Jong Il told them why he intended to visit St Petersburg, and continued: The city is a significant place to which President

Kim Il Sung paid a historic visit, establishing ennobling internationalist ties with it. The city is associated with the history of Lenin's revolutionary activities and the history of heralding the October Socialist Revolution by the gunfire of the cruiser *Aurora*. Leningrad is a heroic city that overcame the 900-odd-day blockade by the fascist German and Finnish armies. The defenders fought to the end with a do-or-die spirit that they could never yield to the enemy their city which was named after Lenin and permeated with the blood shed by the forerunners of the October Revolution. Therefore, everybody, if he is a revolutionary, should never neglect St Petersburg. If I don't visit the city, what should I visit? As for the city, its citizens should never forget the fighting spirit displayed in their city during the October Socialist Revolution and the Second World War. Good traditions and precious struggle achievements should be inherited properly.

Kim Jong Il wanted to visit the cemetery with such an ennobling will and intention of preserving and inheriting the traditions and a heart of mourning for the fallen.

When his motorcade reached the entrance to the cemetery and he got out of the car, it suddenly stopped raining and began to get bright and clear.

He headed for the monument *Homeland-Mother* at the entrance to the cemetery. Marching in front of him were young Russian soldiers carrying a wreath with reverence.

The Eternal Flame was flaring up in front of the monument.

Kim Jong Il laid the wreath and paid a silent tribute to the memory

of those fallen in the battles to defend the city. Written on the ribbon of the wreath was “To the Memory of the Heroic Defenders of Leningrad, Kim Jong Il.”

He then wrote on the visitors book: *We will never forget the tragic losses suffered in Leningrad, August, 7, Kim Jong Il*

When he got in the car, it began to rain again. The sky seemed to shed tears, deeply touched by the lofty traits of Kim Jong Il.

Koltsova Regains Youth

In July 2008, Kim Jong Il saw a performance given by the Beryozka Dancing Troupe of Russia on a visit to the DPRK.

He said: The Beryozka Dancing Troupe is highly competent. It is a prestigious art troupe known to the world. Its dances are all full of Russian emotions and based on national and patriotic contents.

Kim Jong Il recalled his meeting with Koltsova, the head of the troupe.

She was a dancing star in Russia who had spent her entire career in the troupe.

In the former Soviet Union, the young beautiful dancer had attracted wide audience at home and abroad through elegant and characteristic artistic representation. She even had starred in the film *A Girl in Spring* and become popular even among the amateur dancers in the remote areas of her country.

However, Koltsova faded in the people’s memory as she grew older.

She was now nearing seventy.

At this time she was invited by Kim Jong Il to visit Pyongyang with her troupe.

When he met the leading officials and dancers, he recalled that Koltsova had played the leading role in the film *A Girl in Spring* produced in the former Soviet Union, and said that he would arrange for the film to be broadcast on TV, urging them to watch it while they were in Pyongyang.

Soon afterwards, people saw young Koltsova on TV. She watched the film twice with deep emotion.

When she met Kim Jong Il again, she said: I am going to be seventy in a few years, but I still want you to remember me as the heroine of *A Girl in Spring*. I still keep my Communist Party membership card.

Full of vigour, she went back to Russia and put her heart and soul into maintaining and developing the national cultural traditions of Russia. She visited the DPRK with her troupe almost every year.

Kim Jong Il's humane feelings brought back the youthful vigour and creative zeal to the old Russian star in the twilight of her life.

He said warmly: The dancers of the Beryozka Dancing Troupe are admirable. When American style is rampant over the world and the western culture and rock music are expanding their influence, the troupe continues to create and stage national and patriotic works. This fact alone shows that the troupe is sound.

Thanks to Kim Jong Il who treasured and put forward anyone with a heart of love for one's country and nation, Koltsova regained the spring of a girl at the age of seventy.

2. Attraction and Reverence

Yazov's Admiration

Dmitry Yazov, former defence minister of the Soviet Union, was called “military encyclopedia” in the country’s military circles. He knew all there was to know about military affairs as he built his career from a soldier through platoon leader, company commander, battalion commander, regiment commander, division commander, corps commander and military district commander.

He once surprised US Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci.

During talks with the US defense secretary, the subject of the American Civil War came up. He told the American which battle had been fought in which way, which general played which role and the strategic merits and demerits of the two belligerent forces.

Carlucci was surprised that the Russian was better informed than himself, the US Defense Secretary, of the Civil War, and described the Soviet Defence Minister as a “military encyclopedia.”

This episode provides a glimpse into his profound knowledge. That was why he was inwardly proud of being called a “military encyclopedia.”

In July 1998, he met Kim Jong Il on his visit to the DPRK.

Kim Jong Il personally paid a visit to the guesthouse.

“How do you do? I’m glad to see you.”

“How do you do, esteemed Comrade Kim Jong Il? I’ve long looked forward to seeing you. Thanks for your warm affection and solicitude, I’m as fit as a fiddle.”

Smiling broadly, Kim Jong Il posed with him for a photograph and then talked with him. The conversation lasted for nearly five hours. They talked mainly about military affairs.

Kim Jong Il’s military knowledge struck the Russian with wonder. He was familiar with not only a single arm or service but all the arms of all the services, with modern military science and cutting-edge equipment, with the strategy and tactics of modern warfare, and even with combat action—in fact, with every military sphere.

Yazov, taken aback by Kim Jong Il’s military wisdom and talent, said: Today I’ve graduated from a military academy. Your wide-ranging military vision and profound knowledge beat me. You’re a giant not only in statesmanship but also in the military field. Let me become your disciple.

Later he wrote in his memoirs: Comrade Kim Jong Il is the real God of the world, even in military affairs.

For the People

In August 2001 Kim Jong Il visited the Kirov Plant in Russia.

In the general exhibition hall, the general manager explained to him the various kinds of vehicles produced at the plant, even the industrial secrets like the technical specifications of a bulletproof car.

He also showed the guest the performance of the vehicles on the outdoor tracks, and arranged a party in all sincerity.

Kim Jong Il told the accompanying officials to have a drink offered by the Russians, and had a talk with the mayor of St Petersburg and the general manager.

Then he looked at his watch and told the accompanying officials to have refreshments in a hurry and get prepared to leave, saying that the train for Moscow would leave soon.

“We will rearrange the departure time. Please have some more rest,” said the mayor.

The officials accompanying him also suggested readjusting the schedule, saying that it was too tight.

But Kim Jong Il said in a low tone of voice: I understand your feelings. But we are here for work, not for rest. I am also the father of a family before being the leader of a country. I have a beloved wife and children, too. I have the country and the people that I love. I came here to Russia far away from my dear country, my people and my family. We should work for them.

The officials were deeply moved.

The mayor asked for interpretation of his words.

He also dried his tears with his handkerchief.

Kim Jong Il said: Come on. Let's leave.

The Bells Peal at the Orthodox Church

It happened one August day in 2002, when Kim Jong Il was touring the Far East of Russia.

As the train was approaching Khabarovsk, he said that he wanted to visit the St Bishop Innokenty of Irkutsk Church of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The officials accompanying him wondered why. They could see no reason why he, an atheist, was interested in an Orthodox church.

One of them said to him, “It is a place for religious believers, isn’t it?”

Kim Jong Il replied: I am not a believer, but I want to go there because religion is an object of politics.

Noting that they didn’t need to take his idea strange or surprising, he went on: The Russians like this religion, so there can be nothing wrong with our visit to the church. We must not think in a narrow-minded way but respect other nations’ customs. Going round the church, we can get familiar with the Russian folklore and the people’s innermost feelings, particularly their way of thinking, aspirations and wishes. It will be good for us to have a general understanding of the Orthodox followers in Russia, who I have heard total 60 million.

He pointed out that a statesman must have a profound knowledge of religion, before giving a brief account of how the Russian Orthodox Church evolved and developed. Then he emphasized that the Russian

Orthodox Church, recognized as the biggest of the world's 15 Orthodox churches, had a striking impact on the country's political circles.

Upon arriving at the church, he paused and took a look around the church building, when bells clanged from somewhere.

All eyes turned towards where the deep-toned sound came from.

The director of the church, pointing at the bell tower, said that the bellmen were ringing the bells as a token of welcome to the Korean guest. He continued that only professionals with a bell college diploma were authorized to ring the bells and those on the bell tower were the best ones.

The priest added that even though Orthodox discipline prohibits bell ringing before the noonday sun appears, they decided to ring the bells on the morning of that day.

Then he made an embracing gesture with his hands and threw them up, exclaiming, "The Sun has come to our church and it is only natural for us to ring the bells in greeting."

The welcoming sound echoed long in the sky over Khabarovsk.

At a Merited Division

Kim Jong Il's August 2002 Russia tour included a visit to the Volochayevka Division of the Far Eastern Military District.

Formed in 1917, the year of the October Revolution, it has earned a well-deserved fame for its distinguished services, especially during the Civil War and Second World War.

Kim Jong Il was guided around its museum where the honoured combat equipment were on display. Then he suggested that they go to the mess hall, saying that for young soldiers, nothing was more important than a rich meal.

In the kitchen they could see big pumpkins, cucumbers, tomatoes, and the like, which the guide said had been brought from the division's sideline farm. The visitor praised its officers for striving hard to feed their men better, noting that good-for-health edible herbs would abound in the surrounding area and they would be helpful in enriching the soldiers' diet.

One of the Russian officers said that during their stay in Korea they had visited a Korean People's Army unit, which had been inspected by him, and they had learned a lot about vegetable farming there.

And he asked the Korean leader to write something in the visitors book.

The latter readily agreed and wrote in the book: *Glory to this division for carrying on its great tradition. August 22, 2002. Kim Jong Il*

The officer presented a stonecraft inscribed with the photographic image of an Ussuri tiger as a gift to the guest.

By coincidence, the gift offered by the Korean delegation was a painting of a Korean tiger.

As "Korean tiger" was to be given in return for "Ussuri tiger," the gifts seemed to be losing their significance.

The Russians looked sorry that their sincere efforts to prepare the gift were coming to naught.

In trying to lighten the mood, Kim Jong Il said: Our “scouts” did a good job as they advised on an exchange of “tigers.” We have already known what your gift is.

The joke gave rise to a burst of laughter, the Russians being moved by his witty humour.

In the Far East of Russia

The following episodes happened during Kim Jong Il’s August 2002 visit to the Far East of Russia.

Aren’t They Out of Job?

Kim Jong Il visited the Gagarin Komsomolsk-on-Amur Aircraft Complex.

Seeing the range of products displayed in chronological order, he gave the officials in his company a brief explanation of the planes that distinguished themselves in the Second World War and some others that were similar to those driven by the Korean pilots during the Korean war.

Then he asked an official of the complex in detail about the performance and specifications of the latest models, and praised it for its substantial contributions to strengthening the country’s defence capability and updating its air transport.

The general manager of the complex guided the guest to the shop floor, which had been out of bounds to outsiders.

At the chamber for designing, the first process of manufacturing, Kim Jong Il watched some designers working with computers. The general manager said that there had been hundreds of designers in this chamber but the extensive use of computer led to a radical drop in the number.

Kim Jong Il asked, smiling genially: Then what about those numerous designers who were made redundant? Aren't they out of job?

The Russians smiled broadly.

The general manager answered, "Most of them learned skills in other fields and found jobs in this place dear to them. Thank you, esteemed Comrade Kim Jong Il, for caring about our designers."

Iron Staircase and Tribute

Kim Jong Il went to the Amur Shipbuilding Yard after leaving the above aircraft complex.

After going around the hall where the requisite equipment, tourist boats and other products were on display, he was guided to the repair shop for large vessels.

Standing in front of a ship under repair, he learned about how work was going on there and then offered to get aboard the ship.

The general manager stood nonplussed, since many people were at work on the dozens-of-metres-high hull and the only way to the top was walking up an iron staircase, both narrow and steep.

He warned the guest of the dangers involved, saying that though inspecting the site very often, he had rarely ascended the stairs himself.

Kim Jong Il said: You don't have to worry about me. A Korean saying goes that seeing once is better than hearing a hundred times. I think we should all go up there.

Saying this, Kim Jong Il led the way, and the general manager followed behind, climbing the rain-soaked stairs numbering far more than a hundred.

Hours passed, and Kim Jong Il was about to leave.

The general manager said somewhat hesitantly, "It is the source of the greatest honour and pride for us to have you here. I have a favour to ask of you. Would you please write something as a memento of this visit?"

This unexpected offer caught his entourage off guard, and Kim Jong Il said, still smiling, that he would be willing to do so and told the general manager to bring a book.

A table and a chair were brought shortly afterwards.

Kim Jong Il sat on the chair and picked a pen.

After pausing for a moment, he wrote: *I pay tribute to the workers of this shipbuilding yard with a long history and a glorious tradition. August 21, 2002. Kim Jong Il*

There was a burst of applause, the journalists hurrying to take a picture of what he wrote in the book.

Unusual Interview

It happened on the cruise liner carrying Kim Jong Il back from the Cosmos Children's Camp on Shargol Island.

While a party arranged in his honour by the accompanying Russian

officials was going on, he called a Russian woman, whom he had met in Pyongyang.

She was a journalist named Olga Petrovna Malteva, who in February the same year had visited Pyongyang as a member of the delegation led by the chief presidential delegate to the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia.

When he came to the delegation's lodging, she asked him some questions.

One of them was "Who is the person whom you think is the most precious and closest to you?"

Kim Jong Il replied: That is my mother who passed away when I was very young. She was a revolutionary fighter, whose wish was that everything would go well with her son. I owe a great deal to her.

Olga's next question was "What impressed you most during your last Russia tour?"

Kim Jong Il answered that what remained vivid in his memory was his meeting with President Putin and the Russians' hospitality, adding: From their eyes I could read their kindness to me. I appreciated it.

Upon being told that she was called by the Korean leader, the journalist rushed to him.

"Oh, Olga!"

Kim Jong Il welcomed her.

Then he jokingly asked what were her next questions and if she brought her handbook and ballpoint with her, offering her a seat.

The journalist began to ask questions, this time out of her own curiosity.

“What is the purpose of your current visit to the Far East?”

Leaning back in his chair, Kim Jong Il said: The relations of friendship between the Russian Federation and the DPRK have a long history, and the notable landmarks include the recent summits—one in Pyongyang in July 2000 and the other in Moscow in August 2001. It would be wrong to say that the bilateral friendly relationship has been restored, since it is now developing on a new level. There is a pressing need for establishing this relationship based on the principle of mutual benefit. The most realistic course of action to this end is to strengthen economic and cultural cooperation between the Far East and the DPRK. I believe this will pave the way for our more significant cooperation in the future.

This time Olga asked why he chose to travel by train, not plane.

Kim Jong Il replied: Traveling by plane, I can do nothing but meeting with politicians. I want to see with my own eyes what are good or not so good in Russia.

“What is your first impression of this Far East trip?” was her third question.

He replied that he was happy to gain firsthand experience there, adding: I appreciate the Russian hosts for being kind enough to show me anything excellent. Here I have met some people, both open-minded and hospitable, and they are willing to share their work experiences.

Other Russians present listened attentively to their one-on-one talks, all looking deeply impressed.

After the interview was over, Olga thanked the Korean leader.

The General Manager Admires

In August 2002 Kim Jong Il was guided to a trade port of a company limited in Vladivostok, Maritime Territory of the Russian Federation.

The general manager of the port received the guest with warm hospitality, putting up a large-sized board welcoming him at the entrance, selecting a beautiful girl to present a bouquet of flowers and say greetings to him in Korean, and accompanying him all the way around the port.

At a luncheon arranged in honour of the Korean leader, he said: Comrade Kim Jong Il, I am afraid that I do not know what to say first in front of you. As the general manager, I regard it as a blessing for us to have you here, a great leader with profound knowledge of transport as well. I propose a toast to the good health of the great Comrade Kim Jong Il who is striving hard to develop the relations between the two countries.

Kim Jong Il thanked the speaker for his speech and said: I have always respected the Russian people. Do you know why I have come here by train? It is because I want to know about the Russians and feel the Russian spirit. This is what I am here for. In fact, people do not change. They remain strong, friendly and iron-willed.

Then he went on: I have become convinced of this while touring the munitions factories in Komsomolsk-on-Amur and Khabarovsk. There I could feel the Russian people's intellectual and physical strength.

Their spirit remains as strong as ever. Perhaps, there may be few who know why I stood for an hour or so hearing the sound of a bell at the Khabarovsk church. I wanted to feel the Orthodox spirit cherished by the Russian people.

Commenting on a political party's role, he stressed that parties should not lord it over people or be separated from them and they should instead be literally among them.

The general manager presented him with a latest-model maritime barometer equipped with such requisites as a compass, a clock, an air gauge and a thermometer.

Later, he said to Russian journalists: My admiration for the Korean leader has grown stronger. Indeed, he is a veteran statesman with practical knowledge. It would be hard to find such an outstanding leader elsewhere in the world.

Presents—Orlov Stallions

In February 2003, a ceremony of conveying a congratulatory message and presents from Putin to Kim Jong Il was held at the Russian embassy in Pyongyang in the presence of the DPRK leader.

The presents were three Orlov stallions.

Being indigenous to Russia, Orlov horses count among the world's best racers for their cleverness, bravery and sturdiness. Russia is very strict about taking these horses out of its territory, only allowing geldings to be sent abroad.

The above stallions were uncastrated ones.

Then how come the Russian president made an exception in favour of the Korean leader?

In mid-January that year, when the DPRK was the focus of the world's attention after its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Russia notified that it would send its deputy foreign minister as a presidential envoy to discuss the nuclear issue.

Kim Jong Il accepted this offer.

In talking to the presidential envoy, he gave the Russians a clear idea of the Korean peninsula nuclear issue by throwing light on its essence, the DPRK's principled and consistent stand, and ways for its settlement.

Back home, the envoy conveyed Kim Jong Il's views to Putin.

Having met with the Korean leader in Moscow and Vladivostok, the Russian president decided to send him a congratulatory message and Orlov horses on the occasion of the latter's birthday.

The Russian ambassador said at the above ceremony that according to Russian customs, a white horse is presented to a triumphant general, adding that those white stallions came there carrying his president's wish for Supreme Commander Kim Jong Il's victory and successes.

Those who tended the stallions on the way to Pyongyang said that by order of their president, they had selected the best and the most adaptable of Orlov horses and looked after them with due care. They added that they took great pains in doing so, but as horse-keepers, they felt honoured to have the experience of a lifetime.

By the River Bureya

Kim Jong Il paid an unofficial visit to Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation in August 2011.

As his third visit to Russia in the new century, this was a landmark in the history of DPRK-Russia friendship, which contributed greatly to developing the traditional friendship between the two countries to a new high.

The following happened when he was at the Bureya Hydroelectric Power Station in the Far East.

A power giant with a total generating capacity of more than two million kW, it sits among the rugged mountains, so no foreigner had ever visited this out-of-the-way power station.

Strength of the People

Kim Jong Il was shown around the generator room before mounting the observatory.

Praising that the room was kept in good condition, he knocked on one of its walls and asked if it was a panel structure.

The general manager replied yes.

Then the guest asked the height of the dam of the power station.

“It’s 140m.”

Then he asked about the fall.

“It’s 120m.”

He asked whether it was the largest high-head power station in Russia.

“The largest high-head power station in Russia is the Sayano-Syushensk Power Station. Its dam is 240m high.”

Then he asked whether the lake does not freeze in winter.

“It freezes in the upper reaches but it doesn’t here, so there is no hindrance to power generation.”

His next question was the place of origin of the generating equipment.

“It was made in Russia.”

Looking at the power distribution equipment, he said he thought it was from another country.

“Yes, it was imported from Switzerland.”

Now looking at the trusses on the ceiling, he said they looked good.

One of the Russian officials asked him to write something in the visitors book.

Gladly complying with their request, Kim Jong Il opened the visitors book.

There were writings by the former Russian president and some leading officials of the government.

Kim Jong Il wrote the following: *The strength of the Russian people who conquered the nature of Bureya is inexhaustible. August 21, 2011. Kim Jong Il*

All Russian officials applauded, some taking photographs of it.

The general manager said, “No Russian has ever written anything like this on the book. It is very meaningful. We will make sure that this writing goes down in the history of the Bureya Hydroelectric Power Station.”

Peaches and Pickled Cucumbers

A luncheon was hosted by the governor of Amur Province at the power station in welcome of Kim Jong Il’s visit.

The table was overlaid with a wide variety of dishes.

Gazing at the table, the chief presidential delegate to the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia nudged the governor and nodded with a smile as a token of satisfaction.

The guest asked the governor whether all the fruits and vegetables on the table were from Amur.

The governor replied yes and then the chief delegate affirmed.

Kim Jong Il asked: I see. Then you mean these peaches are also from Amur. Am I right?

This question embarrassed the governor, because the fruits were an exception.

Looking abashed, the governor answered: Frankly speaking, these peaches were imported. But how did you know that? You are marvelous.

Now Kim Jong Il said: No. To my knowledge, the soil in this area is not fit for growing peaches, and I once saw such fruits in China. So I was curious.

Hearing his words, both the governor and the chief delegate looked

impressed.

Then, he asked again why he could not see pickled cucumbers on the table.

Pickled cucumbers, as well as pickled herrings, are indispensable dishes for the Russians who usually drink much and often.

The governor said that the cucumbers were on hand, adding that they had thought the food was not a good fit for the luncheon.

The guest said: You did not prepare pickled cucumbers for this meal. This means you are not going to drink.

“Oh, no. They will be ready in a moment.”

The dish was brought in, but the two hosts kept sipping at their glasses.

The guest asked the chief delegate why he didn't drink.

“Our president instructed me that as an official accompanying you, I must never drink.”

The guest said: Then you should do as you are instructed. But the governor is allowed to drink.

The governor said, “I dare not, as my senior cannot drink.”

Kim Jong Il said jokingly: Okay. I will not press you. Please come to my country some day. This is my formal invitation. While in my country, you must follow my instructions. I will see how much you can drink then.

All present laughed.

The banquet proceeded in a family-like atmosphere.

A New Legend of Lake Baikal

As the world's deepest lake, Baikal is sandwiched between the Buryat Republic and Irkutsk Province in southern Siberia.

Formed through several stages of sedimentation for tens of millions of years, the lake began to be known to the world by the people of Russia and Buryat who reclaimed Siberia in the latter half of the 17th century. It is famous for the 40 or so metres-deep transparency of its water, unique scenery, rare species of plants and animals, and old legends.

In August 2011, as part of his Russia trip, Kim Jong Il came to see this lake.

It Is Quite Strange!

It is a three or so hours' drive from Ulan-Ude, the capital of the Buryat Republic, to Lake Baikal.

The motorcade carrying the Russian officials left first, and the cars carrying the president of the Buryat Republic and the chairman of the People's Hural, who were accompanying Kim Jong Il, were following behind. Strange enough, they often craned their necks.

What's wrong with them?

The Korean officials sensed that both the Russian leaders had something in their minds all along.

During a break they could understand what it was.

One of the Russian leaders said to Kim Jong Il: Your Excellency, it is quite strange! A couple of hours ago, the officials, who went to Lake Baikal before us, informed me that the lake is now calm again.

The other added, “He is right, sir. Yesterday it rained heavily. Some hours ago, a stormy wind howled all over the lake.”

“To the Buryats, the lake is a holy place. It seems to be welcoming you by suppressing the monstrous waves.”

“I fully agree with him. If you were not coming here, such a miracle could not happen.”

“Obviously, this is a token of warm welcome to you.”

“Why don’t we have a drink before leaving here? This is our earnest request.”

Kim Jong Il said with a smile: There are several Russian hosts here and I don’t think I myself can cope with your repeated offers for a drink. If all of you want a drink now, let us have only one cup each.

Both the president and the chairman looked very pleased.

After every glass was poured out, the chairman acted curiously, dipping his left ring finger into the glass and pointing it in four directions—east, west, south and north.

Kim Jong Il asked: What does it mean?

The Russian replied that according to a local custom, such a behaviour is needed to get approbation before entering the sacred lake.

Kim Jong Il asked him again: Should I do so as well?

“No, sir. I have done it in your stead.”

Kim Jong Il laughed.

After a while, they went on their way.

“Mongolian Spot”

Lake Baikal, a grand natural lake, is a famous tourist attraction in Russia.

Surrounded by green low and high mountains and with clear water, dozens of metres of which can be seen through, the lake contains nearly 20% of the world’s freshwater. Occurring here are many rare animals including Baikal seal, Baikal white salmon and sturgeon, and three-quarters of the animals and plants are known as endemic species.

Kim Jong Il got aboard the passenger ship *Emperiya*, and had a talk with the Russian officials.

Affirming that the water of the lake was so clear that even humans can drink, he said: The water and scenery of the lake are similar to those in Ryanggang Province of our country. The people of Buryat call Lake Baikal a sacred place, and we Koreans call Mt Paektu in Ryanggang Province the sacred mountain of the revolution. You have said that today is a glorious day when Lake Baikal, a sacred place, has greeted the distinguished Korean guests. Thank you for the remark. This lake is a pride of the world. You should preserve and manage the lake and its surrounding natural environment well so as to hand them over to the coming generations and to ensure that they make a great

contribution to the living and wellbeing of the Russian people.

When he saw on the table of luncheon the smoked Baikal white salmon, Kim Jong Il asked the president of the Buryat Republic whether there were many white salmons in the lake.

“They are estimated at a billion.”

Kim Jong Il then asked how many of them they caught a year.

“About 200 million.”

The guest asked again how they preserved its resources.

“We hatch eggs artificially and release the fry.”

Kim Jong Il said: In our country, too, we hatch fish eggs on a large scale and release the fry into rivers and lakes. To protect the resources of one’s country is a patriotic undertaking of eternal significance for the living of the people and the coming generations.

At that time, the chairman of the People’s Hural said that the Buryats had a blue lentigo on the waist when they were born.

All were dumbfounded at the sudden broaching of the subject.

But Kim Jong Il said with a smile: I know about it. It is not a lentigo but a spot. It appears on the hip, not on the waist. It is called *Mongolian spot* in international academic circles. The Buryats are a branch of the Mongolians.

All those present exclaimed.

Forty Minutes on the Train

It was towards evening when Kim Jong Il returned to his train at the railway station after winding up the day’s schedule.

When the Russian officials were going to say farewell to him, he

proposed drinking Korean beer in his train as they had done so much for him.

Expressing thanks to him, the Russians got on the train.

The president of the Buryat Republic, who was entering Kim Jong Il's train office, asked in astonishment, "Is this your train office?"

Saying yes, he asked him whether anything was wrong.

"I've thought your train is an armoured train. I was deceived by journalists."

An armoured train, Kim Jong Il wondered, asking whether he thought so.

"Oh no, it's a normal train. You've travelled 4 000km-long distance by this train. It must have bumped frequently. You should have had the train stopped when you went to bed at night, but ..."

Kim Jong Il said with a smile: I am now accustomed to having a rest on the bumping train.

The president fell into a deep thought, nodding silently.

Then Kim Jong Il talked with the Russian officials, offering the Korean beer.

He asked them how they liked the Korean beer.

"It's refreshing. Wonderful beer."

Kim Jong Il asked: I've heard you Buryats eat so much lamb that you are fat. How often do you eat lamb a year?

"All the year round."

He now asked how they eat the lamb.

"By boiling and roasting it."

He wondered aloud whether the climate in Buryatia is continental.

“Yes, it’s a severe continental climate. Though it is situated in the north by latitude, the temperature difference between day and night is very big and the percentage of sunshine is very high, a rarity in the world. More than 300 days of the year are sunny.”

Kim Jong Il said assuredly that watermelon farming would be successful.

“You’re right. How do you know about it?”

He answered: There is a place called Musan in the northern part of my country, and watermelon farming is particularly good there. It is similar to this place in temperature. Enjoy the beer. Don’t worry. I won’t make a beer addict of you.

“Thank you, I’ll drink to my fill on this happy day.”

The train was full of a friendly atmosphere.

The 40 minutes on the train was a time, when the friendship between the DPRK and Russia was further deepened.

Always Thinking of People

In August 2011, Kim Jong Il changed his schedule for visiting the Zabaikal Folk Museum, and instead visited the supermarket Megatitan, a commercial centre in Ulan-Ude.

As the schedule was changed suddenly, the supermarket was crowded with many local people as usual; but Kim Jong Il looked round its counters one by one.

Then he acquainted himself in detail with the supply and sale of products from the manager of the supermarket and other Russian officials—whether the goods on sale were domestic products or imports, how many kinds of cooking oil they sold, what kinds of cooking oil were not available, whether they sold live fish, what was the amount of bread bought by the local people, how many people came to the market a day and what were the daily sales.

After understanding its actual situation in detail, Kim Jong Il told the accompanying Korean officials: There are some yellow-coloured cooking oils in this shop. They seem to have not been refined well. We should properly refine the cooking oils without fail for the people. If cooking oils are extracted by supercritical method, the extraction rate will reach 98 percent, and quality cooking oils at that. It is said that the supermarket prepares bread, birthday cake and other various foodstuffs by itself to sell them. If they are in short supply, the supermarket cooks them by itself; their amounts total three or five tons a day, they say. Russians are good at baking bread. They say that if milk is sterilized at the temperature of 138°C and packaged in bottle, it does not go rancid for six months at normal temperature. If this technology is introduced, there will be no problem for us to sell milk in our shops on a regular basis. This supermarket is selling various kinds of processed pork such as meat, bacon and salted lard as required by the customers. It looks like a meat shop. We are going to open a shop like this one. We should introduce good points of others. While striving to increase the production of goods, we should import goods from other countries for our people. We cannot satisfy the demands of the people for the

goods only with those produced in our country. We should stock the Pyongyang Department Store No. 1 with foreign goods as well as our own products.

Sincerity of the Russian Leadership

In August 2011 Kim Jong Il paid an unofficial visit to Siberia and Far Eastern region of Russia.

Russian President D. A. Medvedev sent his envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District to the Khasan Railway Station, so that he could guide Kim Jong Il during his visit to Russia, and came to Ulan-Ude, capital of the Buryat Republic, thousands of kilometres away from Moscow, postponing his holiday.

Medvedev gave a special order that the Academy Ensemble of the Interior Security Forces of the Ministry of the Interior, which is well known among the Korean people through its several visits to the DPRK, went to Ulan-Ude to stage a special performance and concluded the performance with the immortal revolutionary song *Song of General Kim Jong Il*. Then he took with him ten bottles of world-famous wine he had collected himself, and put them on the table at the banquet held in celebration of the DPRK leader's visit to Russia.

He also saw to it that the president's administration took full charge of the work related with the DPRK leader's visit to Russia. Although working-level officials of both sides had agreed in advance that the DPRK-Russia summit meeting and talks would be held in the office

building of the Buryat Republic in Ulan-Ude, he changed the place into the presidential guesthouse in the city's suburb, and instructed a senior official of the Department of Protocol of the president's administration to make necessary preparations there.

He personally selected a pair of binoculars, a traditional sword of Buryatia and several cartons of wine, made in Russia by introducing the French technique, and presented them to Kim Jong Il.

He had many photos taken with Kim Jong Il; whenever he had a photo taken with him, he had it immediately posted to the presidential website, and showed him the photo on his smartphone.

Before taking leave of him, Kim Jong Il expressed thanks to him for the warm hospitality and special favour during his visit to Russia.

The Russian president said that he would think of Kim Jong Il on his way back to Moscow that evening, that he sincerely hoped to see him again in Pyongyang or in Moscow, and that he would do his best to implement the agreement they had made.

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