



Kim Jong-II: North Korea's Dear Leader

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Kim Jong-il has been the subject of intense interest and fear in recent months. He has been demonised as 'Dr Evil' for his nuclear programme which puts Korea on a collision course with the US. For this reason, the world has a stake in understanding this man and his little-known country. This account aims to tell the compelling story of Kim Jong-il and the country he leads, exploring the pressing question of how he manages to hold onto power in a country that is ravaged by famine and poverty. Unravelling the myths, mysteries, and fallacies that surround this small, desperate country, this fascinating story includes rare photos of Kim Jong-il and his brutal regime.

Kim Jong-II: North Korea's Dear Leader Details

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From Reader Review Kim Jong-II: North Korea's Dear Leader for online ebook

Patrick Jung says

The book begins with a rather condensed fact-spewing and number-churning chapters that was rather hard to stomach. And after that the story settled down to more stable reading. I thoroughly enjoyed reading the later chapters, learning a great insight about the Dear Leader himself. It showed the 'great' life of him and what he wants, what he needs and what is the solution. Actually right now, the dear leader is dead. As a person from a divided country, I really think that Michael Breen (Author) has done really good job describing Kim Jong II. North Korea has been described by experts as the most dangerous country in the world. The only Asian state on US President George W. Bush's famous "Axis of Evil", it stands threateningly outside the community of nations.

For most of the world, communism is now ancient history. But in North Korea, it is still very much alive. Indeed, the communist personality cult that still holds the country together is arguably more fanatical than any other before it.

The unlikely object of worship for the country's 23 million people is Kim Jong-il, the pudgy and reclusive son of former dictator, Kim Il-sung. Little is known about Kim in the fraternity of international leaders, except for one rather disturbing fact: under his leadership, his country has become the first to withdraw from the international system of controls on nuclear weapons, which has put Kim Jong-il on a collision course with the United States.

What makes this especially remarkable and worrying is that this country with aspirations to become a nuclear power, has all but collapsed economically. Its people are so impoverished and malnourished that they are, on average, several inches shorter and many pounds lighter than people of the same age living across the demilitarized border in rival South Korea.

Kim Jong-il is the one fat man in the whole country.

How long can he continue in power? What stops his regime from collapsing politically? Will his reign end in nuclear warfare or will he go quietly? Or will he surprise us all and start true reconciliation between the two halves of the Korean peninsula? The answers, Still a mystery

Alessio Suraci says

Un po' datato (tratta fino al periodo di Kim jong-il), ma interessante da leggere; inoltre tratta questioni che non vengono solitamente analizzate in altri libri che parlano della Corea del Nord, qual ad esempio il mercato, l'economia, la divisione 39 ecc. ecc. . Consigliato a chi è interessato alla questione Coreana

Lorraine says

Learn about the most insane political leader on the planet.

Judy Vasseur says

Evil? Mad? Suffering from low self-esteem due to his 5'2" stature? A brat? Or a malignant narcissist? He's

been called Dear Leader, Leader of Steel, Glorious Sun of the Twenty-First Century, Everlasting Sky and the list goes on.

Find out why The Dear Leader is “...the only Fat Bastard in the whole country” while the people of North Korea starve to death, are tortured in the prison system, and live a grim day to day existence.

I like his jacket though.

Kelly says

Mike Breen was writing about the Dear Leader and North Korea long before it became trendy. Few Westerners have had such access to Korea - north and south - as he has; still fewer can provide insight to the country in such an accessible way. He has a lightness of touch, and the ability to give us the insiders' perspective all the while understanding the outsider's point of view.

Casper Veen says

Overall a good biography of Kim Jong-il by an erudite and experienced author. The book does feature some questionable anecdotes and statements which are not all adequately credited with sources, which is always a dangerous thing to do, but even more so with North Korea. But overall, a nice and worthwhile book.

Clement Ting says

For those North Korean enthusiasts like me, it is perhaps not the best book around. The book is basically a summary of various other books coupled with some commonly found information that can be sourced from Wikipedia.

Nonetheless, I gave it a 4 instead of a 3 because it has done well in painting a glimpse of a picture especially for those who can be clueless about the country. The topics that it has summarized ranges from KJI's birth, family, teachers, accession, woman, his secret capitalist nature, nukes and gulags just to name a few.

I personally prefer books that elaborates further and not just scratch on the surface area with some bonus details which the author personally encountered or discovered. Unfortunately for me, the book can only be served as a compact dictionary but insufficient to drive out my curiosity for the country.

Joshua says

Interesting but had some redundant information. It all depends on how many books you want to read about N.Korea. This one is OK.

Brendan says

Back in 1998, British journalist Michael Breen published *The Koreans*, a breezy look at life on the southern half of that most perilous of peninsulas. In *Kim Jong-il: North Korea's Dear Leader*, he shifts his sights northward, poking around the infamous “rogue state” and gathering up insights about its leader, a man *Newsweek* dubbed “Dr. Evil” and George W. Bush, in a customary nod toward diplomacy, called a pygmy.

The insults get tiresome after awhile. Breen refers to Kim as, variously, “a fairy in a tutu,” a “brat,” a “freak” and a “Fat Bastard.” He suggests that he is “mindless,” that he “may as well be from outer space,” that he “couldn’t drop and give you ten if his life depended on it” and that he “gives new meaning to the term ‘bad hair day.’”

But there are bigger problems, as well. For instance, there is the oft-repeated claim that we don’t, perhaps can’t, actually know anything about North Korea. Breen quotes (twice) an official who calls the state an “intelligence black hole,” where reliable information is impossible. Yet the author never manages to reconcile this position with his curiously omniscient subtitle: *Who He Is, What He Wants, What to Do About Him*.

Reports Breen: “As many as three million people may have died of famine” due to flooding in the mid-1990s, so that much of the north’s “population is in rags, literally living off grass, and struggling in heartbreaking misery.”

That’s horrible, but Breen makes no attempt at showing us how he knows that. Maybe he can, however, drop and give us ten.

God ahead, Michael. Let’s see it . . .

Fakhrina says

The book begin with a rather condensed fact-spewing and number-churning chapters that was rather hard to stomach. And after that the story settled down to more stable reading. I thoroughly enjoyed reading the later chapters, learning a great insight about the Dear Leader himself.

Reza Amiri Praramadhan says

A murderous buffoon who reported for scoring a hole-in-one in his first game of golf, who kidnapped South Korean filmmaker couple in order to improve North Korea film industry, who indulged in luxury while his people starving, Kim Jong-il was indeed a bizarre character. He managed to maintain an iron grip on his people by using heavy propaganda, putting them into gulag, and maintained some secret way to earn all the money to maintain his high-maintenance life. While I regard him as a crazy man, I also believe that his son is capable to reach the same level with him, if not crazier.

Sanity Assasin says

a bit of a short read and while it is mostly informative i think it's been packed out with alot of conjecture also. i guess a writer can only state his opinions about a subject especially so when there isn't much to go on about mr illusive but to fill half the book with them is a bit... he should've wrote a book about himself and his visits to north korea maybe as opposed to a case study. still, worth a read if you're interested in the subject

Anne says

wow

Ryan Michele says

Super overview for anyone interested!

Michael says

Having wanted to read this book for some time and having read other books on North Korea I'd say this book does give a more than most balanced account of the late leader of North Korea, Kim Jong Il. From the formation of the Kim dynasty to the famine and current nuclear weapons incident (which nowadays is an ongoing topic in the news) I really enjoyed reading this book and finding out that information.
