



Peerless Guerrilla Hero

There are a number of famous guerrillas in the world history of war.

But it is hard to find such guerrillas as those of Korea, who defeated the enemy much stronger in terms of strength in such severe conditions and for such a long time in the world history of guerrilla warfare.

Peerless Hero

In the first half of the last century the situation of Korea was very miserable under the military occupation of Japan.

It was a colony where literally everything was controlled by the Japanese; state sovereignty, territory, resources and even the right to existence as a nation were violated by the imperialist state.

Independence of Korea at that time seemed bleak under the oppression of Japan that was boasting of being one of the five military powers in the world.

At this time of agony there was a man, named Kim Il Sung (1912-1994), who believed that the Japanese aggressors could be defeated.

As a son of the Korean nation, he founded in 1932, at the age of twenty, the Anti-Japanese People's Guerrilla Army, and declared a war against Japan with a firm determination to liberate his country without fail.

From that time the Korean guerrillas led by General Kim Il Sung wrote a heroic epic in the history of the struggle for the liberation of their country, eating and

sleeping in the open and overcoming all difficulties and ordeals of every description.

Indomitable Guerrillas

What should be mentioned first when speaking about the Korean guerillas is the fact that they fought in the most arduous conditions.

They could not rely on support from a state and regular army at all.

Everything including food, weapons, ammunition and clothes had to be obtained by themselves.

With the spirit of self-reliance, they attacked the enemy and captured weapons, food and other supplies from them; they built arsenals in the mountains and made bombs and even wooden guns.

In winter the temperature in the northern part of Korea and Manchuria of China, the main theatres of struggle by the guerrillas, is sometimes under 40°C below zero and the accumulated snow is deeper than a man's stature.

It may be rather favourable to fight a guerrilla war in Africa or Latin America where there is no cold winter and one can enjoy a certain degree of benefits of nature.

This notwithstanding, guerrilla warfare is not easy in these regions.

When Cuban leader Fidel Castro visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, he asked Kim Il Sung how he had solved the problem of food in the days of the guerrilla warfare.

Since he had conducted guerrilla warfare in Mt Sierra Maestra, he was much interested in the way the Korean leader had solved the problem.

It is indeed beyond imagination that the Korean guerrillas fought the large contingents of enemy troops almost every day, sometimes eating snow in winter as they had run out of provisions.

General Kim Il Sung was always in the vanguard of this bloody struggle.

Sharing weal and woe with his soldiers, he awakened them to their ennobling mission for liberating their motherland, and instilled in them the conviction in sure victory.

Under the most severe conditions, in which others must have yielded easily, the Korean guerrillas fought with conviction in victory and optimism about the future, emerging victorious at last.

Later the guerilla war veterans recalled that they could overcome the severe difficulties because they had cherished absolute trust in their commander General Kim Il Sung and an indomitable faith.

It is also important to note that, upholding Kim Il Sung's idea of army-people unity that "Just as fish cannot live without water, so the guerrillas cannot exist apart from the people," the guerrillas did all things for the benefit of the people and the people supported them with all sincerity

Elusive Tactics of Guerilla Warfare

General Kim Il Sung was well known as a guerrilla commander associated with

many legendary tales, all produced by his ingenious guerilla tactics.

At that time the Japanese described the Korean guerrillas as “a drop in the ocean.”

The Korean guerrillas armed with light weapons only paled in comparison to Japan, the “leader” of Asia and one of the military powers in the world, which had the one-million-strong Kwantung Army in Korea and Manchuria of China.

But every battle between those two forces ended in the victory of the Korean guerrillas, a fact transcending the conventional concepts and common sense.

The secret was the ingenious tactics of General Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung always took the initiative and defeated the enemy forces, who had numerical and technical superiority, by dint of strategic and tactical superiority. He could do so as he had created and applied unique and mysterious tactics not known in the military textbooks of warfare, ancient or modern, Eastern or Western.

The lure and ambush tactic, telescoping tactic, the tactic of marching 1 000 *ri* at a stretch and others are the acme of mysteriousness and resourcefulness.

The so-called military generals of Japan, once caught in one of those tactics, had to swallow a bitter pill.

Legendary tales about the tactics of appearing and disappearing with preternatural swiftness, soaring above the sky and sinking into the earth and shrinking distances spread across Korea, leading the people to cherish national dignity and pride and look forward to the day of their liberation.

At last Korea was liberated on August 15, 1945.

The glorious name of General Kim Il Sung, who led the Korean guerrillas to victory, shook the world as well as Korea.

It reminds us of the remarks made by Mark W. Clark, commander-in-chief of the UN forces, who lamenting that he had gained the unenviable distinction of being the first United States army commander in history to sign an armistice agreement without victory. He said: Kim Il Sung performed wonderful exploits as the commander of a guerillas army that fought against the Japanese army for many years; many people respected his name and his name became the symbol of patriotic deeds in Korea.

Korea's Victory in the War against Japan

August 15 is a day of special importance in Korea's history. This day 76 years ago Japan's military occupation of Korea came to an end, resulting in latter's liberation. In other words, this was the day when the Korean People's Revolutionary Army won victory in the war against Japanese imperialism.

Then, what is the reason for the victory?

The first reason is the KPRA's ideological and mental superiority and its adroit strategy and tactics.

When he launched an anti-Japanese armed struggle under the banner of the Juche idea, General Kim Il Sung, commander of the KPRA, believed that the army's ideological and mental superiority would be decisive of the victory or

defeat in the war. From the first days of the war he paid primary attention to making his army a group of persons strong in ideology and faith and led them to give the fullest play to heroic mettle in the sacred national liberation war.

The anti-Japanese armed struggle produced many examples illustrating how strong the KPRA's soldiers were in ideology and faith. One of them blocked an enemy pillbox with his own body to open the way for his unit to charge and the other cut his own tongue amidst the enemy's torture to maintain his revolutionary principles. There was also a woman fighter who, though deprived of her eyes through the enemy's torture, shouted "I can see victory in the revolution!" just before her execution.

General Kim Il Sung paid great efforts to strengthening the KPRA into an army which was superior in terms of strategy and tactics.

During the anti-Japanese armed struggle he created a variety of guerrilla tactics—harassment operations behind enemy lines, tactic of provoking in the east and attacking in the west, 'telescope tactic' of inducing enemy units to fight each other, concentration and dispersion of force, concentrated attack by a large unit and surprise attack by small units, swift manoeuvre, tactic of allurement and ambush and circuit tactic.

Repeatedly hassled by the subtle tactics of the Korea's guerrilla army, the enemy complained that they were nowhere to be seen in their army's books on military arts or tactics.

The second reason is the unity between the guerrillas and the people and the spirit of self-reliance.

Kim Il Sung defined the slogan "As fish cannot live without water, so guerrillas cannot live without the people" as the mode of existence and principle of activities of the guerrilla army. When his army dropped in at a village, he always shared sweats and bitters with the villagers, saying he was also a son of the people—sometimes chopping firewood and other times fetching water for the villagers.

All the officers and men of the KPRA associated the value of their existence with the people.

The trait of army-people unity was a factor that enabled the Korean guerrillas to emerge victorious in the fight even without any support from abroad.

Commander Kim Il Sung encouraged his men to resolve all the problems arising in the guerrilla war by themselves, upholding the slogan of accomplishing the Korean revolution by their own efforts. The Korean guerrillas repaired weapons of various types and manufactured the Yongil bomb and wooden guns by themselves in the arsenals in forest. The spirit of self-reliance ushered in a new age of creating something from nothing in the Korean people's history of struggle for national independence and it constituted a major spiritual factor in accomplishing the great cause of victory in their war against Japan.

Kim Il Sung's exploits of defeating formidable Japanese imperialism under arduous conditions in a 15-year-long bloody guerrilla war and accomplishing the cause of Korea's national liberation will shine forever in history.