

Memories of the Great Man (1)

Always among the People

President Kim Il Sung (1912-1994) is well known as an outstanding statesman in the 20th century and the founder of the Juche idea. What kind of person was he? This motivated Takagi Takeo, a prominent Japanese writer, to pay a visit to the DPRK in December 1971.

As he put it, Takagi did not come with goodwill. He sought to experience the DPRK first-hand, checking on the practical value as a guiding idea of the Juche idea spreading throughout the world, as well as its theoretical pragmatism and its gist, and delving into the personalities of Marshal Kim Il Sung who founded this idea.

Takagi travelled around the DPRK and he felt as if he found out a new oasis. Despite the fact that it sustained terrible destruction in the Korean war (1950-1953), the DPRK had risen in a short time making remarkable achievements across the economy and society, a success that would be unthinkable in the Western countries boasting of “modern civilization” and “high growth.”

Takagi was invited to a New Year performance of Korean children for greeting 1972. After seeing Kim Il Sung among the children, he said: “Already last evening I discovered what the Juche Idea is all about and what kind of person Kim Il Sung is, as I saw him floating on a stream of the children.”

The more he visited, the more he was surprised and excited. He could not resist his impulse to meet Kim Il Sung who initiated the Juche idea and translated it into reality, bringing about epochal changes.

Reading his mind, Kim Il Sung took time to receive Takagi and his party from Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun* on January 10, 1972, though he was busy with his New Year schedule.

Takagi told him that what impressed him most during his tour of the DPRK was that the President always went among the people to guide them.

When he went to the countryside, Kim Il Sung unceremoniously sat knee to

knee with farmers to discuss farming with them. During his visit to a factory, he dropped in at its workers' hostel to learn about their dietary life. And he often visited dwelling houses and talked with the housewives about their livelihood.

Kim Il Sung said in a modest voice: I go among the masses to learn from them rather than guide them. At hard times in particular, we need to go deep among the people and discuss all matters with them and seek their advice. The masses of the people are teachers. We always learn from them.

President Kim Il Sung was such a man.