

## Bell of Yonbok Temple, World Cultural Heritage

There is a big bell at Namdae Gate in Kaesong City of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The bell was cast in 1346 in the period of Koryo (one of the feudal states in Korea that had existed between 918 and 1392) and hung at the Yonbok Temple in Kaesong, the then capital of Koryo. It was moved to Namdae Gate after the temple was burnt down in 1563.

With its mouth 1.9m in diameter, the bell is 3.12m high and 0.23m thick and weighs about 14 tons.

It differs from other bells in the period of Koryo in shape, pattern and distribution.

A few thick lines around the waist of the body divide the bell into the upper and lower parts. Engraved on the upper part are Buddhist images and scriptures, patterns and the name of the bell. The rhythmically wavy frame of the lower part is graced by embossed designs of fish, dragon and other animals.

The dragons decorating the ring of the bell are so vivid that they seem to be brought to life.

The surface ornaments are exquisite, elegant and imposing. It is said that the tolling was clear enough to be heard as far as over 40km.

The bell, cast in copper alloy, showcases the metal workmanship of the Korean ancestors.

As one of typical cultural heritage items of the Korean people, the bell was added to the list of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage in 2013, together with other historical and cultural relics in Kaesong



Bell of Yonbok Temple in the DPRK's Kaesong City is on the world cultural heritage list.