

President **Kim Il Sung** and Nation Building

President **Kim Il Sung** (1912-1994) was the founder of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Having embarked on the road of revolution in his teens with an ambition to win back his lost country, the President liberated Korea on August 15, 1945 by leading to victory the 15-year-long fierce armed struggle against the formidable Japanese imperialists, with neither state backing nor support from a regular army. The struggle was unprecedented in the history of the world's national liberation struggle.

As a result, broad prospects for building an independent, sovereign state were opened for the country.

In the international political arena around that time, American-style "democracy" and Soviet-style democracy were regarded as the political mainstream.

However, **Kim Il Sung** did not follow the mainstream. In the past the Korean people had been subjected to maltreatment and exploitation with no freedom and rights for a long time under the feudal system and the colonial rule by the Japanese imperialists.

We should not follow the political trend, divorced from the people's interest and demands. The present stage of the Korean revolution is an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution. We must adopt progressive democracy, which is neither Soviet-style democracy nor American-style "democracy," but instead suitable to the specific conditions of Korea. Only after taking the road to progressive democracy will we be able to bring our people genuine freedom and happiness and achieve full independence and sovereignty for the country by closely uniting wide sections of patriotic and democratic forces. This was his stand on building a country.

Based on the experience he had gained while building a people's revolutionary government, which championed the people's rights and freedom, in the guerrilla bases during the anti-Japanese armed struggle, **Kim Il Sung** advanced the line of nation building suited to the actual conditions of Korea and wisely led the struggle to realize it. Under his leadership the law on the agrarian reform, labour law, law on sex equality and law on the nationalization of major industries were proclaimed and other democratic reforms were enforced. And a solid foundation for building a nation was laid through democratic elections. He firmly rallied the broad sections

of people from all walks of life—workers, peasants and intellectuals—and encouraged them to turn out as one in the effort to build a new Korea.

As a result, the DPRK, the first people's democratic state in the East, was founded on September 9, 1948. **Kim Il Sung** was elected head of state and premier of the Cabinet according to the unanimous will of all the Korean people.

At a mass rally of Pyongyang citizens held to celebrate the establishment of the DPRK government, he said: From now on, as a full-fledged nation with a government of their own our people will always be protected by this government and have dignity, rights and honour as citizens of the DPRK.

The founding of the democratic, independent and sovereign state by **Kim Il Sung** made it possible for the DPRK to develop into a socialist state centred on the masses of the people, a powerful nation independent in politics, self-supporting in the economy and self-reliant in national defence.