

Comrade Kim Il Sung's Struggle to Establish Principles of Juche in Development of DPRK

Michael Vikulin

President, Moscow Society for the Study of Kimilsungism–Kimjongilism,
Russia

The history of the Korean revolution and the founding of the DPRK are closely intertwined with the Juche principles, which were formulated by Comrade Kim Il Sung. The struggle for the establishment of the Juche principles, led by Comrade Kim Il Sung, propelled the Korean revolution and contributed to the construction of socialism in the DPRK.

The emergence of the Juche idea is an important event for the Korean communist movement and the Korean revolution as a whole. With the adoption of the Juche idea, the Korean communists were able to surmount challenges such erroneous views as factionalism and kowtowing to big countries, dogmatism, and revisionism.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia, Marxism-Leninism began to spread in Korea. In 1925, the Communist Party of Korea was established. However, the Japanese occupation and internal factional strives posed significant challenges, leading to the imprisonment of many of the party's prominent members. As a result, by 1928, the party ceased to function.

During this challenging period, Comrade Kim Il Sung embarked on the revolutionary path. He actively joined the communist movement in 1926 a time when both the communist and national liberation movements were going through hard times. It became increasingly evident that the old approaches were improper, prompting the need to reassess the experiences of the struggle against Japanese imperialism.

From the first years of his career as a communist revolutionary, Comrade Kim Il Sung formulated the main principles of the Juche idea: that revolution is the work of the masses, achievable only through the active participation and support of the masses. At the same time, he emphasized that the revolution must be carried out based on internal capabilities rather than external assistance.

Having independently studied Marxism-Leninism, Comrade Kim Il Sung established the "Down-with-Imperialism Union" (DIU) in October 1926, marking the creation of the first genuinely revolutionary communist youth organization in Korea. On October 17, during the founding meeting of the DIU, Comrade Kim Il Sung delivered a

report titled “Let Us Overthrow Imperialism”. It was within this report that Comrade Kim Il Sung formulated the principles of self-reliance and the centrality of the masses, forming the bedrock of the Juche idea.

“In view of the historical lesson of the anti-Japanese struggle, we must destroy Japanese imperialism and achieve the genuine independence of Korea on our own, through a mass movement, not through the efforts of some persons of the upper crust, and by relying on the strength of our own people, not on any foreign forces.”

Comrade Kim Il Sung continued to reflect on the state of the revolutionary struggle in Korea. In his memoir, *With the Century*, he recounts the process through which he arrived at the Juche idea. It was the autumn of 1929. Comrade Kim Il Sung was arrested by the police and detained in Jilin prison, affording him ample time for contemplation. In the prison, Comrade Kim Il Sung reassessed the Korean people’s struggle and ultimately reached a profound realization: that revolution will emerge victorious only when it is undertaken on one’s own responsibility and by the efforts of one’s own people, and that all the problems arising in the revolution must be solved independently and creatively. This was the starting point for the development of the Juche idea

Comrade Kim Il Sung announced his ideas in 1930. On June 30, he delivered a report titled “The Path of the Korean Revolution” at the meeting of the Leading Personnel of the Young Communist League and the Anti-imperialist Youth League. In this report, he emphasized that the Korean revolution could only be carried out by the Korean people themselves under the leadership of communists based on the realities of Korea.

Comrade Kim Il Sung said:

“Drawing on this lesson we regard it as most important to take the firm standpoint that the masters of the Korean revolution are the Korean people and that the Korean revolution should by all means be carried out by the Korean people themselves in a way suited to the actual conditions of their country.”

From these words it can be seen that in 1930, Comrade Kim Il Sung was already fighting for the liberation of the Korean people from the oppressive grasp of Japanese imperialism on the basis of the Juche idea, which emphasized the reliance on the masses and on their own strength.

Based on the Juche idea, Comrade Kim Il Sung spearheaded the struggle of the Korean people for national liberation. In 1945, the country was liberated from the Japanese imperialists. In 1948, Comrade Kim Il Sung founded the DPRK. From the very beginning, the country was led by Juche-inspired communist.

From 1950 to 1953, the DPRK confronted the aggression of the American imperialists. Through the sagacious leadership of Comrade Kim Il Sung and the adherence to the principles of Juche, the nation achieved victory, safeguarding its

freedom and national independence.

On December 28, 1955, Comrade Kim Il Sung delivered a speech titled “On Eliminating Dogmatism and Formalism and Establishing Juche in Ideological Work”. This marked a pivotal moment when the principles of Juche started to be established in all fields of the revolution and construction. During the speech, Comrade Kim Il Sung introduced the concept of “Juche in ideological work”. Let us consider the quote.

“What is Juche in our Party’s ideological work? What are we doing? We are not engaged in any other country’s revolution, but solely in the Korean revolution. This, the Korean revolution, determines the essence of Juche in the ideological work of our Party. Therefore, all ideological work must be subordinated to the interests of the Korean revolution. When we study the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the history of the Chinese revolution, or the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism, it is entirely for the purpose of correctly carrying out our own revolution.”

Thus, Comrade Kim Il Sung noted that the Juche idea and the Korean revolution are not isolated entities, but rather are enriched by the collective history and experience of the communist and revolutionary movements of the whole world.

To summarize, Comrade Kim Il Sung initially formulated the principles of Juche as early as 1926. These principles made it possible to organize the masses to fight against the Japanese imperialists. After the founding of the DPRK, Comrade Kim Il Sung extended the principles of Juche to the entire state administration. Firm adherence to these principles allowed the DPRK to achieve success in the construction of socialism, as well as to defend socialism and confidently follow the path of building a powerful socialist state.