

Kim Il Sung and Sukarno

Rachmawati Sukarnoputri, a daughter of Indonesian President Sukarno, wrote in her memoirs: My father Sukarno respected President Kim Il Sung of the DPRK; if you want to know about my father, please know first about President Kim Il Sung, his best friend; this is my answer and my “discovery.”

While searching for a path for his country to take after it won its independence from colonialists, Sukarno came to hear about Kim Il Sung (1912-1994). Having created the Juche idea, the guiding ideology of the era of independence, and defeated two formidable imperialist forces, Kim Il Sung established the first socialist state in the East and was building his country with small territory and population into a fully independent and sovereign state free from any political and economic subjugation to others.

The first GANEPO (sports games of developing countries) held in Indonesia in November 1963 at the proposal of Sukarno marked an occasion in which he and Kim Il Sung forged their friendship and their countries deepened their mutual friendly relations. Deeply aware of the position and importance of the games in cementing friendship and unity among the people in Asian, African and Latin American countries and in their common struggle against imperialism, Kim Il Sung paid close attention to their preparations and sent a kind message to Sukarno in the run-up to their start.

Sukarno visited the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in November 1964. Kim Il Sung personally came to the airport to welcome him.

At the talks that followed he clarified the way ahead of the anti-imperialist, anti-colonial and non-aligned movement and called upon his guest to join efforts for the strengthening of the anti-imperialist independent force.

Witnessing, during his stay in the DPRK, the development and economic successes it had achieved in the spirit of self-reliance under the leadership of Kim Il Sung, he was deeply impressed and realized that his country, too, should move towards building a self-supporting economy.

Attracted by Kim Il Sung who treated him as an old friend, he asked him to visit his country.

Kim Il Sung accepted his sincere request. His visit was slated to be made on the occasion of the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the Bandung

Conference.

Unfortunately, however, Kim Il Sung contracted an illness prior to his departure for Indonesia and a complicated situation was created in southeast Asia. Officials tried to dissuade him from the visit. But he set out on the journey to Indonesia, saying that it would be inappropriate if he postponed his visit to Indonesia when President Sukarno had invited him and visited him first, so eager to meet him.

The Indonesian President accorded Kim Il Sung unprecedentedly sincere hospitality during his visit to his country in April 1965.

He personally handled all security work for his guest and arranged grand welcoming ceremonies to honour him. He even invited him to a session of the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly of Indonesia to which none of heads of foreign states had been invited. And he ensured that the Order of the Republic of Indonesia 1st Class was conferred upon Kim Il Sung. When he took his guest to Bogor botanical garden boasting its history spanning more than a hundred years, Sukarno showed him a rare orchid bred by the garden through hard work of scores of years and told him that he would like to name the flower Kimilsungia.

In October 1965 Indonesia was plunged into a political upheaval. Sukarno was shorn of all power and remanded in custody. Even his former friends shunned him. But Kim Il Sung remained faithful to his friendship with and obligation to him.

In August 1968 he arranged for the DPRK ambassador in Indonesia to visit him and console him. And in 1970 when Sukarno was spending his remaining days in hospital, his condition having turned for the worse, Kim Il Sung sent the DPRK ambassador to visit and comfort him.

Recollecting his meetings and friendship with Kim Il Sung, Sukarno said that President Kim Il Sung was the greatest and most outstanding man filled with warm humanity and that the world had never witnessed such a great man as him.