

■ **Feb 1941:** Born either in Siberia, when his father, **Kim Il-sung** was in exile or in **1942** at his father's guerrilla base in North Korea

■ **Jun 1950:** Soviet-backed Kim Il-sung attacks South Korea, triggering Korean War



■ **Jul 1953:** Korean War ends in truce without formal peace agreement. North and South still technically at war

■ **1964:** Kim Jong-il graduates from university

■ **1970s-80s:** Appointed head of North Korea's special forces. Allegedly linked to 1986 bombing of **Korean Airlines** jet, killing 115 people

■ **1973:** Heads cultural division of **Korean Workers' Party**

■ **1978:** Organizes kidnapping of South Korean film director and his actress girlfriend in bid to improve North Korea's film industry

Kim believed to have library of 20,000 movies. Favourite characters are Rambo and James Bond

■ **1980:** Officially designated successor to his father. Appointed commander of army, which becomes his main support base

■ **1991: Fall of Soviet Union.** Vital source of aid begins to dry up

■ **1993:** Kim takes over responsibility for nation's defence



North Korea's mystery man

Kim Jong-il – the leader of North Korea's totalitarian regime – assiduously follows international events on cable TV and the internet. He enjoys horse riding, watching and directing movies, driving fast cars, and has a reputation as a drinker, favouring cognac and white wine



Height: 5 feet 3 inches

Wears platform shoes and bouffant hairstyle



2001: Publishes book On the Art of Cinema



■ **1994:** Death of Kim Il-sung. Famine kills as many as two million people in North Korea

■ **Oct:** U.S. President **Bill Clinton** forges pact with Pyongyang to abandon its atomic weapons programme in exchange for fuel aid and help to build two reactors



■ **Nov:** Republicans gain control of U.S. Congress – Clinton's pact grinds to virtual standstill

■ **1997:** After mourning period Kim becomes head of state. Under his **military** first policy army gets first choice of resources

■ **1998:** Kim initiates **missiles for nuclear technology** deal with Pakistan and launches Taepo-dong-1 missile over northern Japan

■ **1999:** Kim's alleged **supernote** scam takes off. Extremely high-quality copies of foreign currency – U.S. dollars, Japanese yen, Thai bahts, and later, euros – start circulating through North Korean **Zokwang Trading Company** in Macau

■ **2001:** Pyongyang sends condolences to U.S. President **George W. Bush** following 9/11 attacks

■ **Jan 2002:** President Bush brands North Korea, along with Iraq and Iran, as part of **axis of evil**



■ **Oct:** U.S. halts oil deliveries. With invasion of Iraq looming, Kim becomes increasingly convinced Bush wants to overthrow him

■ **2003:** U.S. threatens sanctions. Pyongyang resumes nuclear weapons programme and expels United Nations inspectors

Kim's favourite drink – Hennessy VSOP cognac

■ **2004:** In explicit threat, Kim warns that South Korea and Japan will be immersed in **nuclear sea of fire** if U.S. attacks North Korea

■ **2005:** U.S. imposes financial sanctions and accuses Kim of complicity in currency counterfeiting and money laundering

■ **Jan 2006:** Pyongyang says it won't continue nuclear talks unless U.S. lifts financial sanctions

■ **Sep:** In speech to UN General Assembly, Pyongyang again blames U.S. financial sanctions for deadlock in nuclear talks

■ **Oct 9:** Kim orders **nuclear weapon test**

