Feb 1941: Born either in Siberia, when his father, Kim II-suna was in exile or in 1942 at his father's querrilla base in North Korea ■ Jun 1950: Soviet-backed

Kim II-sung attacks South

Jul 1953: Korean War

ends in truce without formal

peace agreement. North and

South still technically at war

graduates from university

■ 1970s-80s: Appointed

forces. Allegedly linked to

1986 bombing of Korean

1973: Heads cultural

Partv

head of North Korea's special

Airlines jet, killing 115 people

division of Korean Workers'

■ 1978: Organizes kidnap

and his actress girlfriend in

bid to improve North

Korea's film industry

of South Korean film director

1964: Kim Jona-il

Korea, triggering Korean War

## North Korea's mystery man

Kim Jong-il – the so-called *Dear 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

■ 1999: Kim's alleged supernote scam takes off.

Extremely high-quality copies of foreign currency - U.S. dollars, Japanese ven, 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 Irag 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. Kim resumes nuclear weapons programme and expells UN inspectors

Kim's favourite drink -Hennessy VSOP cognac 2004: Kim threatens

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

Oct 2006: North Korea conducts underground nuclear test blast

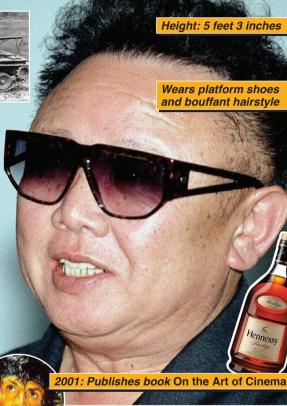
2007: Pyongyang agrees to give up its

nuclear programme in

return for aid Jun 2008: Pyongyang

hands over details of its nuclear facilities

Sep 9: Rumours that Kim may be gravely ill spread after he fails to appear at 60th anniversary parade



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

Oct: U.S. President Bill **Clinton** forges pact with Pyongyang to

as many as two million

people in North Korea

abandon its atomic weapons programme in exchange for fuel aid and

help to build

two reactors

virtual standstill ■ 1997: After mourning

1994: Death

of Kim II-sung.

Famine kills

period Kim becomes head of state. Under his *military* first policy army gets first choice of resources

Nov: Republicans gain

control of U.S. Congress -

Clinton's pact grinds to

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

Pictures: Associated Press