

# South Korea prepares for “Madam President”

Park Geun-hye, of the Saenuri – or New Frontier Party – is to become South Korea’s first female president. She will preside over a country which has the highest level of gender inequality in the developed world

■ **Park Geun-hye**, 61, is daughter of former President **Park Chung-hee** – his authoritarian rule lasted from 1961 to his assassination in 1979

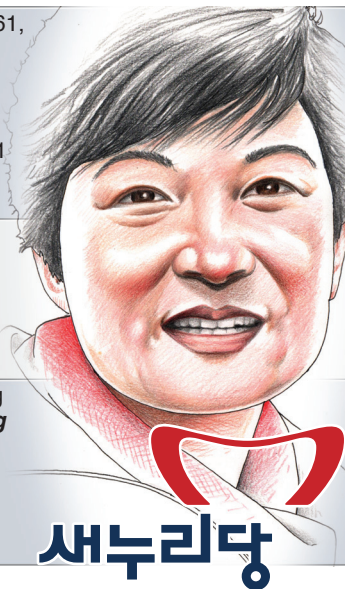
■ She served as First Lady after her mother was killed in 1974 by assassin’s bullet meant for her father

■ Holds engineering degree from **Sogang University** in Seoul. First elected to South Korea’s National Assembly in 1998

■ Park has never married and has no children – she says that her life will be devoted to her country

■ She publicly apologized in 2012 to those who suffered under her father, but did not fully renounce his rule, alienating some younger voters

■ Park has pledged to redistribute wealth, reform South Korea’s family-run conglomerates and seek dialogue with North Korea



## SOUTH KOREA’S GENDER GAP

Score  
Rank (out of 135 countries) (scale of 0-1)

|  |            |              |
|--|------------|--------------|
| <b>Overall</b>                         | <b>108</b> | <b>0.636</b> |
| Economic participation and opportunity | 116        | 0.509        |
| <b>Education attainment</b>            | <b>99</b>  | <b>0.959</b> |
| Health and survival*                   | 78         | 0.973        |
| <b>Political empowerment</b>           | <b>86</b>  | <b>0.101</b> |

Sources: World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index, wire agencies

\*Maximum score 0.980

Illustration: Bob Hoare

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