

# North Korea Leader Dies

This past weekend Kim Jong Il, known in his country as “dear leader” and strict ruler of communist North Korea, died of a heart attack at the age of sixty-nine. One of his sons appears to be in place to succeed him.

CNN

*Kim Jong Il had led North Korea since 1994, when his father – the nation’s founder, Kim Il Sung – died at age 82. During his 17 years in power, the country suffered a devastating famine even as it built up its million-strong army, expanded its arsenal of ballistic missiles and became the world’s eighth declared nuclear power.*

*The news of his death spurred South Korea, which remains technically at war with the North more than five decades after their 1950-53 conflict, to put its military on high alert. But across one of the world’s most heavily fortified borders, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak told his citizens “to go about their lives” in the meantime.*

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# North Korea Attacks An Island

(Wall Street Journal) On Thursday, some residents returned to assess the damage on the battered island, which lies about 10 kilometers south of the North Korean coast and is also home to a South Korean marine base. Most of the 1,200 civilian inhabitants had been evacuated the day before. The North’s barrage Tuesday—a rare blow falling on civilian targets—delivered a serious jolt to South Koreans, many of

whom had come to discount the possibility of serious violence after living for decades with belligerent rhetoric from the North.