

No Guarantee of Succession in North Korea

The Daily NK is reporting (<http://www.dailynk.com/english/read.php?cataId=nk01800&num=7093>) on comments by Kim Young Hwan on his estimate of the successful succession of Kim Jong Eun upon the death of Kim Jong Il.

“At this moment China is tolerant of the Kim Jong Eun succession system and there are no discernible domestic obstacles standing in the young man’s way. However, considering all factors, the chances of the process being smoothly carried through to its conclusion are exceedingly slim, according to a prominent South Korean researcher.

Kim Young Hwan of Network for North Korean Democracy and Human Rights (NKnet) says he believes there is less than a 10% chance of the succession system being smoothly established and only a 20-30% chance of it muddling through, whereas the possibility of a critical crisis is far higher at between 60% and 70%.”

Please read the entire article for important details and the six reasons the succession will not work.

Analysis. Why Kim 3 won't succeed Kim 2, at least perhaps not for very long, isn't really all that important. What is important is that the death of Kim Jong Il will almost certainly lead to almost immediate instability on the Korean peninsula. If Kim Young Hwan is aware of these six reasons why Kim 3 can't hack the program, so is Kim 2.

The Kim 1 to Kim 2 succession was rocky enough even with Kim 2's advantages as listed in the article. At some point, Kim 2 may decide that Kim 3 can't handle the program. What he does then is anybody's guess. The only other capable son is his oldest son who is living in the PRC and has pretty much rejected daddy's way of operating. It may be that the PRC is keeping him around as a fall back position in case the People's Liberation Army has to go south and actually liberate people. They might install Kim's older son as the heir until they can get things straightened out and get Korea unified.

Or Kim 2 decides the succession thing won't work and “burns the house down”.