

A Famous Flower Singing the Praises of a Great Man

In this world there are many flowers that make people feel joyful and lively with their beauty and fragrance. But few of them can rival Kimjongilia which is associated with a great man's name and blooms in the hearts of the people for its appearance and meaning.

Mototeru Kamo, a famous Japanese horticulturist, had had a life-long dream of breeding a new species of flower which can represent the era, and he finally succeeded after over 20 years' struggle. He knew Kim Jong Il of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who had developed the Juche idea and opened a new history of creation and construction, was a great man steering the times. He named his new flower species after him, and presented it to Kim Jong Il as a gift in February 1988.

In February 1989, a year later, a festival of political songs was held in Germany. Kimjongilia appeared on a flat-screen display in the festival arena. Its beautiful appearance raised a storm of cheers and applause.

In May 1991, the 12th International Horticultural Show was held in former Czechoslovakia, and presented there were over 820 species of flowers from 130 flower-producing companies, groups and institutes from over ten countries, all of which were famous as world-class flower-producing countries. In the global competition, where the most famous and beautiful flowers of each country and the newly-bred ones were displayed, Kimjongilia was awarded the special prize and gold medal and took the first place. Even the jury exclaimed that the flower was the best of all. Tens of thousands of people visited the Kimjongilia exhibition house every day, and they said the birth of this flower was a joy and pride of humankind, and that it should be awarded a "king" prize, not a special prize and a gold medal.

Thus, Kimjongilia gripped the hearts of the people in its debut in international competition.

In March 1995, an international horticultural show was held in Sweden. Over 160 organizations, companies and associations from 17 countries including the DPRK, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Switzerland participated in the show and

Kimjongilia again caused a sensation for its extraordinarily large flower, deep-red petals, a thick stem holding up the flower and heart-shaped green leaves.

A journalist of Sweden said: I have seen many flower shows as a journalist but I have never been excited like today; I will grow Kimjongilia with sincerity and introduce it on papers with the name, Kim Jong Il.

European flower experts, who had exhibited the flowers in the show, asked for cooperation in cultivating the flower, and horticultural businessmen proposed joint cultivation and ways of growing the seedlings on a large scale.

Some insisted on establishing a permanent institution for the propagation of Kimjongilia.

Finally, on March 30, 1995, the Nordic Kimjongilia Association was formed, and later Kimjongilia fanciers society was established in Japan.

Kimjongilia greenhouses were opened in Madagascar in June 1994, in Yanji, China, in February 1995, and in Ulan Bator, Mongolia, in November 1997.

On the authorization of the International Society for Horticultural Science, the American Begonia Society registered Kimjongilia as new species No. 991 in August 2004.

During 2019 Beijing World Horticultural Expo in China which started in April, many people visited the DPRK Pavilion in the World Horticultural District.

A related person from Shandong, China, said: This is the first time for me to see Kimjongilia and it is very beautiful; it is amazing, and I would like to know how to grow it.

People who visited the DPRK Pavilion said unanimously that the flower reminded them of Chairman Kim Jong Il's vigour and enthusiasm, generosity and personality.