

Kim Jong Un Bans Christmas, Forces Worship of Grandmother

North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un is banning Christmas and forcing the entire country to celebrate the birth of his grandmother instead.

Many North Koreans already pay homage to Kim Jong-suk or "Sacred Mother of the Revolution," who was born on Christmas Eve in 1919. However, Jong Un is taking further steps to ban any celebrations of the birth of Christ.

Not only are the citizens being required to worship the wife of North Korea's first dictator and the mother of former leader Kim Jong II, they can no longer erect Christmas trees or display any religious symbols on trees.

The North Korean leader went as far as threatening South Korea in 2014, for its plans to erect a Christmas tree along its border.

The tree was never put up.

Experts say that this ban is a form of religious persecution, as North Korea has clamped down on all Christian activities in the country.

"Under the rule of Kim Jong Un, North Korea remains among the world's most repressive countries. All basic freedoms have been severely restricted under the Kim family's political dynasty," Humans Rights Watch wrote in a recent report on North Korea.

"The DPRK ostentatiously treats anyone of faith, but especially Christians, as hostile," Doug Bandow, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, wrote. "Believers place loyalty to God before that of the North Korean state. Churches allow

people to act and organize outside of state entities. Christianity also has ties to a world seen as almost uniformly threatening by Pyongyang.” {eo}

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