



Sun Myung Moon is mourned by sister in North Korea

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The youngest son and successor to Sun Myung Moon had a tearful reunion with his North Korean aunt as they mourned the death of the Unification Church founder in Pyongyang, a church official said.

Hyung Jin Moon, successor as the leader of the church, met with Hyo Sun Moon in the North Korean capital Friday when the elderly woman visited an altar set up by authorities for Moon, church official Park Sang-Kwon told journalists.

Hyung Jin and Park returned to the South yesterday.

“(She) showed deep sorrow, shedding tears,” Park said. About a hundred of Moon’s relatives live in the North, said Park, who is also president of an automaking joint venture the church established in North Korea in 1999.

Moon was born in 1920 in Jongju City in the North’s northwestern province of North Hwanghae where the church has restored Moon’s old home.

The mourners brought with them a wreath sent by North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un to the bereaved family, who also conveyed his “deep condolences” according to the North’s state media.

The late Reverend Moon was also conferred the “National Reunification Prize” by the Presidium of the Supreme People’s Assembly, Pyongyang’s Korean Central News Agency said. The Supreme People’s Assembly is the communist state’s rubber-stamp parliament.

But Kim Jong-Un did not meet Hyung Jin to convey his condolences in person, Park said. Although a staunch anti-communist, Moon began building a relationship with North Korea in the 1990s.

He met with then leader Kim Il-Sung in 1991 in Pyongyang for talks on economic exchanges and visited Jongju for family reunions. Kim Il-Sung then ordered the restoration of Moon’s birthplace.

A church-affiliated firm, Pyeonghwa (Peace) Motors, established a joint carmaking business in the North’s Nampo City near Pyongyang in 1999. The church built its “World Peace Centre” in the capital in 2007 and operates a hotel there.

Sun Myung Moon, the self-styled messiah who founded the church famed for its mass weddings and business empire, spanning cars to sushi, died Monday at the age of 92 due to complications from pneumonia.

The church’s business empire spans dozens of firms involved in construction, heavy machinery, food, education, the media and even a professional football club.

Most notably, it owns the Washington Times newspaper and the United Press International news agency. AFP