

# INSIDE PYONGGYANG'S GULAGS

In 1980, after Kim Jong-il's succession there was a purge of officials from the Workers Party of Korea – More than 100,000 people were sentenced to hard labour in eight camps. Exactly 30 years later the ruling party announced that Kim Jong-un, the youngest son of leader, Kim Jong-il was appointed a four-star general. Since then the number of executions in the country has risen and it is widely believed the numbers being sent to political prisoner camps are once more on the rise.



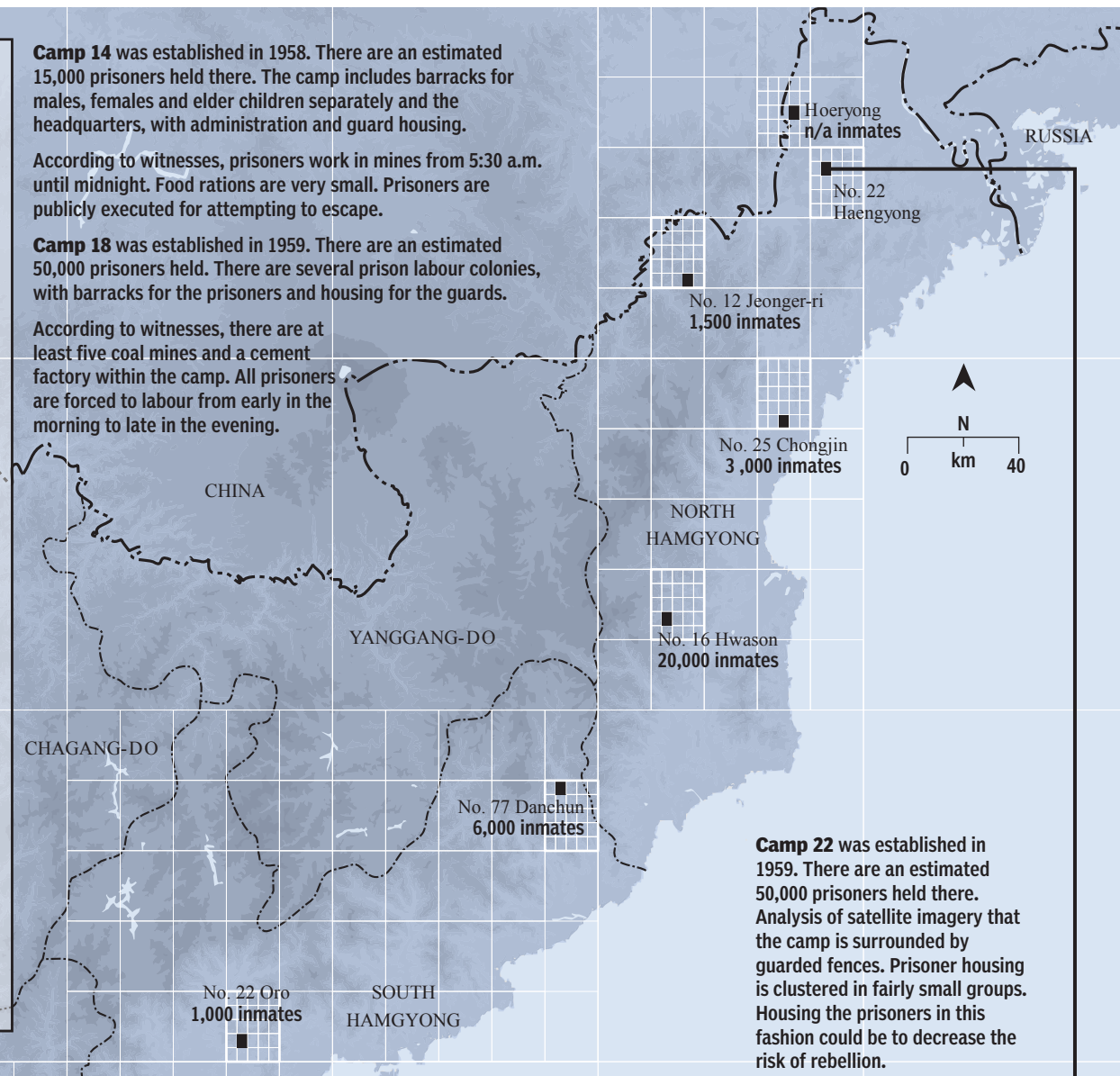
Satellite image of Political Prison Camps 14 & 18 in central North Korea taken on Feb. 8, 2011.

**Camp 14** was established in 1958. There are an estimated 15,000 prisoners held there. The camp includes barracks for males, females and elder children separately and the headquarters, with administration and guard housing.

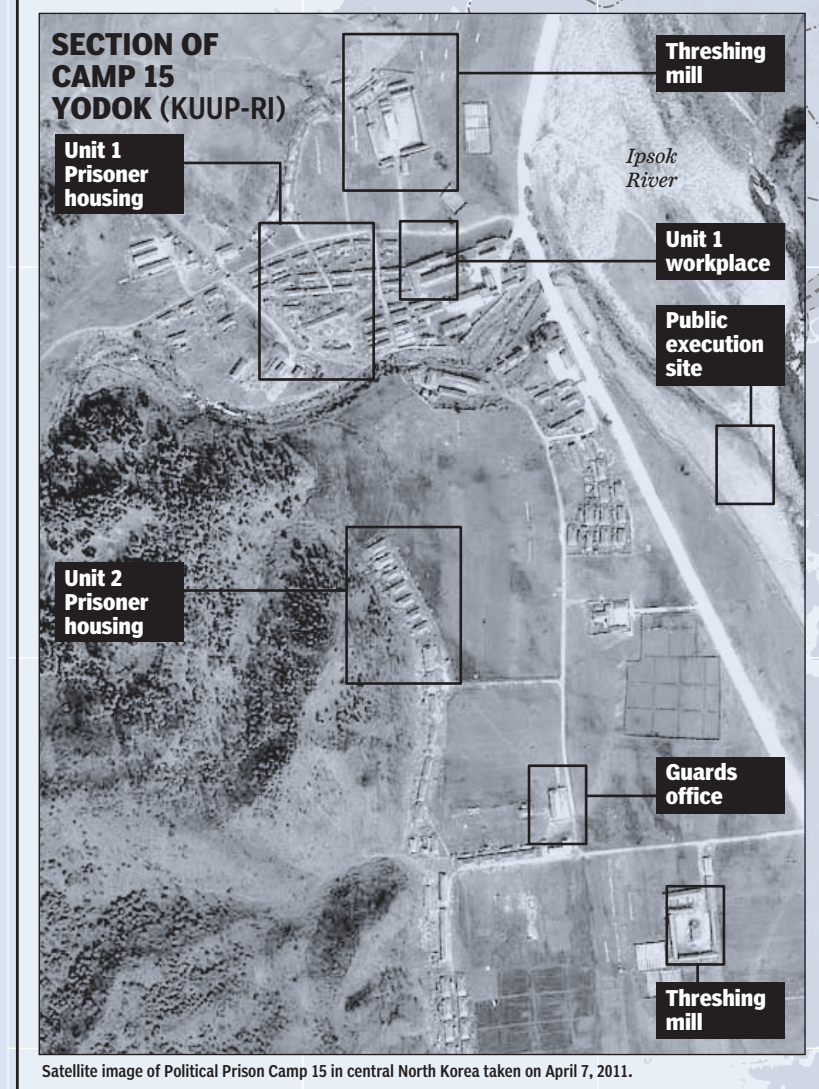
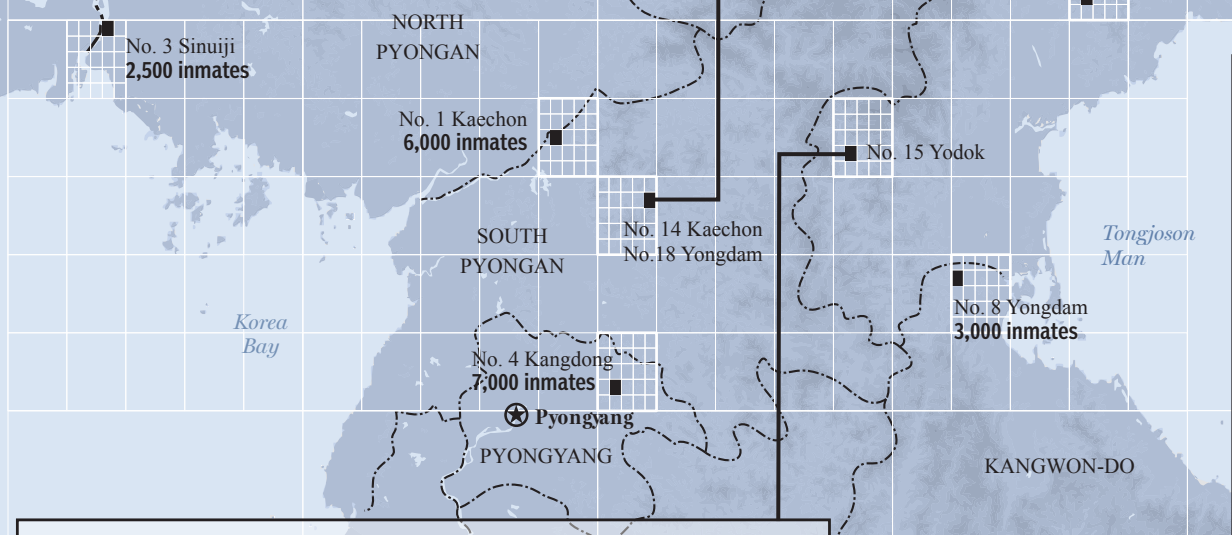
According to witnesses, prisoners work in mines from 5:30 a.m. until midnight. Food rations are very small. Prisoners are publicly executed for attempting to escape.

**Camp 18** was established in 1959. There are an estimated 50,000 prisoners held. There are several prison labour colonies, with barracks for the prisoners and housing for the guards.

According to witnesses, there are at least five coal mines and a cement factory within the camp. All prisoners are forced to labour from early in the morning to late in the evening.



**Camp 22** was established in 1959. There are an estimated 50,000 prisoners held there. Analysis of satellite imagery that the camp is surrounded by guarded fences. Prisoner housing is clustered in fairly small groups. Housing the prisoners in this fashion could be to decrease the risk of rebellion.

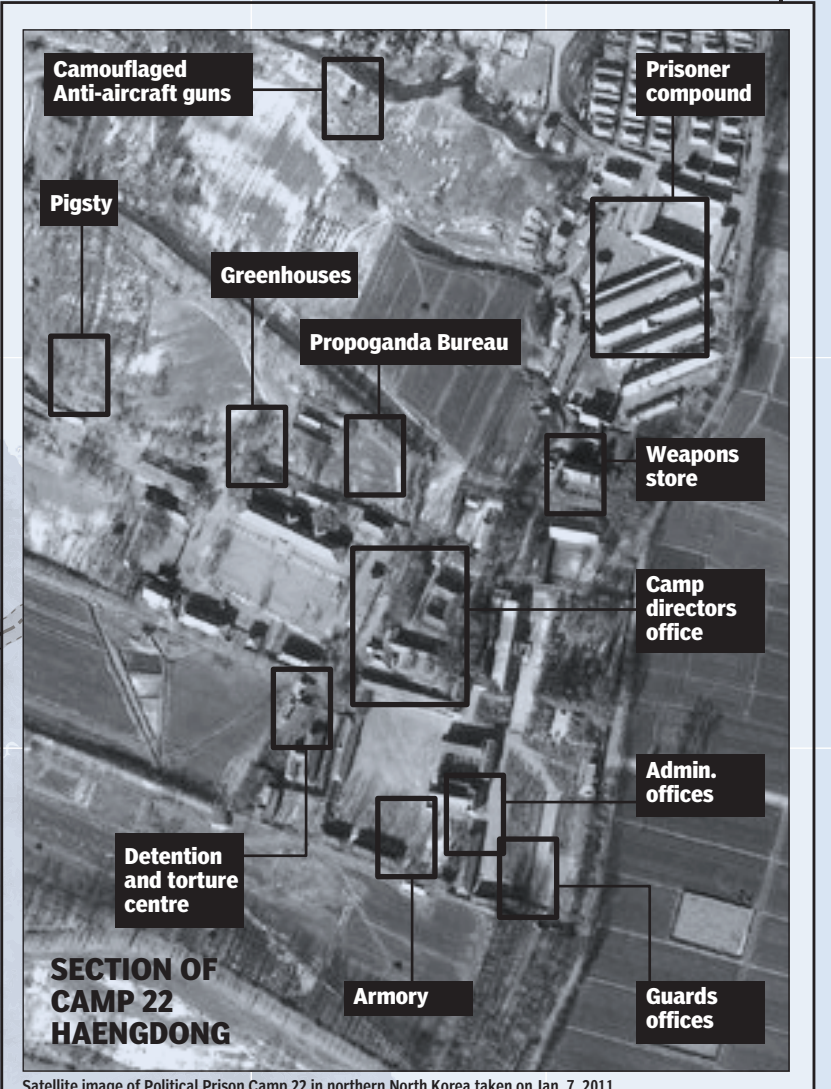


Satellite image of Political Prison Camp 15 in central North Korea taken on April 7, 2011.

**Camp 15** is split into a Total Control Zone and a Revolutionary Zone. The Total Control Zone is for people whom the authorities perceive to have committed anti-regime crimes or who were denounced as being politically unreliable. These prisoners are never released. Around 30,000 prisoners are held there.

The Revolutionary Zone is to punish people for less serious political crimes. These prisoners are eventually released after serving their sentences. Around 16,500 prisoners are held there.

The camp is surrounded by a four-metre barbed-wire fence and walls with electric wire, and watchtowers in regular intervals. The camp is patrolled by 1,000 guards with automatic rifles and dogs.



Satellite image of Political Prison Camp 22 in northern North Korea taken on Jan. 7, 2011.



- ### THE CRIMES OF THE INMATES
- Criticizing the leadership
  - Officials who failed in the implementation of policies
  - Contacting South Koreans
  - Being part of an anti-government group
  - Listening to South Korean broadcasts
  - Un-repatriated prisoners of war from the Korean War
  - Anyone caught crossing the border into China illegally

- ### THE CAMPS
- #### THE TOTAL CONTROL ZONE CAMPS
- Contain those whom the authorities perceive to have committed serious crimes, including anti-regime crimes. No one is ever released.
- #### THE REVOLUTIONARY ZONE CAMPS
- Contain those who have committed less serious crimes, such as being critical of government policy, and border-crossers. Sentences can be from a few months to 10 years.

- ### THE CONDITIONS IN THE CAMPS
- Temperatures can dip to -40C in South Hamkyung province where Kwaniso 15 is based. In most camps there are no blankets
  - One latrine for every 200 people
  - Lack of adequate access to medicine. There are no doctors in the Total Control Zones, and those doctors in the Revolutionary Zones are prisoners
  - All inmates have witnessed at least one public execution

- ### THE TORTURE
- EXECUTIONS: Either by shooting or hanging.
  - SOLITARY: The minimum period in the cell is one week.
  - IMMERSION: A plastic bag placed over the head and then submerged in water.
  - HUNG AND BEATEN: Hands and feet tied behind them then their bodies strung up by the wrists.

- ### KEY CAMP STATISTICS
- The total number of political prisoners is estimated to be 200,000.
  - Only three people are known to have EVER escaped from total control zones and managed to leave the country.
  - An estimated 40% of inmates die from malnutrition.