

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/north-korea-north-korean-coverage-of-jang-s-19-12-2013,45648.html>

Asia - North Korea

Programmed terror

North Korean coverage of Jang's "treason" tantamount to mass intimidation

19 December 2013

Reporters Without Borders is disturbed by the North Korean media's response to the arrest of Kim Jong-Un's uncle, Jang Song-thaek, and the extraordinary coverage given to his subsequent execution on 12 December.

On 9 December, the propaganda media began suppressing any appearance by Jang in films or photographs, as if he had never existed. Then, in the days that followed, his arrest, trial and execution received detailed coverage in the Korean and English-language print and broadcast media.

"Although only to be expected from one of the world's worst dictatorships, such manipulation of news and information is disturbing," Reporters Without Borders said.

"The extensive and indeed staged coverage of this execution coinciding with the hyped coverage of the second anniversary of [Kim Jong-il's death](#) had the hallmarks of a intimidatory message to the entire Korean population and the international community.

"This propaganda has highlighted the harshness of a regime that has not hesitated to execute one of the party's most senior officials, a four-star general and uncle of the currently leader. Such an atmosphere of terror will weigh heavily on the little freedom of information remaining in such a closely-watched society."

On 9 December, the state media reported Jang's arrest and the charges against him in detail. In the hours preceding the announcement, the *Korean Central News Agency (KCNA)* took care to suppress his image.

The main reports about Jang were reportedly removed at 5 a.m. only to reappear a few hours later. *Rodong Sinmun*, the official newspaper of the party's central committee, and [Uriminzokkiri](#), a website based in China that is used to circulate party propaganda abroad, [suppressed almost all reports](#) mentioning Jang, nearly 20,000 mentions in *Rodong Sinmun's* case.

Jang was also edited out of a TV documentary, while [35,000 Korean-language articles](#) and 65,000 foreign-language articles (in English, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese) were removed from the *KCNA* website. The *KCNA's* archives now only go back to October 2013. Kim Jong-un's uncle and mentor and No. 2 in the government hierarchy, Jang was arrested during a meeting of the party's political bureau on 9 December. Three days later, he "confessed to his crimes" to a military tribunal, which found him guilty of "conspiracy against the state" and ordered his execution.

A *KCNA* report on 13 December gave a detailed account of the previous day's trial ending with the court's decision to sentence Jang to death. The final paragraph reportedly tersely: "The decision was immediately executed."

North Korea is ranked 178th out of 179 countries in the 2013 Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#).



■ 2013년 10월 7일 방영(강성택 삭제 전 영상) / 6분 05초



■ 2013년 12월 7일 방영(강성택 삭제 영상) / 영상대체



■ 2013년 10월 7일 방영(강성택 삭제 전 영상) / 9분 50초



■ 2013년 12월 7일 방영(강성택 삭제 영상) / 자르기 및 확대

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