



Kimjongsuk is a county within Ryanggang Province and has a 2021 estimated population of 45,472 at a 0.5% annual growth rate.

The county was once part of Samsu County but was given its own separate administration in 1952 and was called *Sinpa*. In 1981 it was renamed Kimjongsuk after Kim Jong-il's mother, Kim Jong-suk. She died in 1949, possibly while giving birth to a stillborn. This was done, in part, to help elevate Kim Jong-il's own position within the Kim family [cult of personality](#), as he worked to consolidate his role as the successor to Kim Il Sung.

The Sinpa Revolutionary Site is located in the middle of town and commemorates Kim Jong-suk's life and anti-Japanese activities. The whole site covers roughly 4 hectares. There is also the Janghang Revolutionary Museum at 41.390653° 127.739556°.

Kimjongsuk lies at the foot of a small mountain and at the confluence of the Jangjin and Yalu rivers. The Jangjin cuts the county in half. Its source is near Hwangcho Pass, 135 km to the south in South Hamgyong Province.

Due to the importance of the Jangjin River (and that it reaches deep into the heart of northern Korea), the river has four identifiable historic forts built along its banks. Two of them are within Kimjongsuk County. There is another fort, along the Yalu, at 41.411210° 127.846821°.

Kimjongsuk, as Sinpa, was never a major city, but it does have a history going back to at least the 1440s as a village on the frontier of Joseon Korea.

Economy

The cornerstone of the local economy is timber. The mountainous terrain leaves little room for agriculture (although a limited amount does exist), but the area has an abundance of trees. The Jangjin River provides transportation for rafts of logs that have been tied together and floated downstream to Kimjongsuk and to the Yalu for further transporting.

The county also has small mines that extract a range of minerals including molybdenum, gold, copper, silver, lead, zinc and tungsten. The largest of these mines is the Sinpa Youth Mine in Ryongha (41.278838° 127.532908°).

The Jangjin River is also a source of hydroelectric power, but nearly all of it is produced upriver, outside of the county.

Transportation is limited to one railway, the Pukbunaeryuk Line, which runs east-to-west along the Yalu and a single highway that follows the railroad. Transportation in the interior of the county is limited to narrow dirt roads and very small boats on the Jangjin.

Since 2008, at least seven apartment blocks and 43 houses have been constructed in the town itself, plus ~20 renovations. Throughout the county, there's been at least a further 38 home constructions and renovations.

The county has one known market that is only 530 sq. meters in size.

Military

There are no identified, active military sites in the county. Counties in the north of the country tend to have fewer military resources deployed there, and most are limited to those northern cities that have an important industrial base or are part of the country's missile program (like the small village of Yeongjeori in neighboring Kimhyongjik County).

Within the county, the Sino-DPRK border is secured by a double row of fences and guard posts every 50-100 meters. The border fence was reconstructed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to prevent the virus being carried into the country by people crossing the border, and to further restrict movement out of North Korea.

***Originally created for An AccessDPRK Patreon supporter. Free online access has been granted by the patron. This city brief has been edited for tone, context, and added references when needed.**

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