



Choe Ik-gyu [also known as Choe Sang-gun]

Current Position: Department Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP  
Member, KWP Central Committee  
Delegate (deputy), 12<sup>th</sup> Supreme People's Assembly (Representing Electoral District #73)

Born: 26 February 1934, Hwadae County, North Hamgyong Province

Education:

baccalaurate, Russian Language and Literature, Kim Hyong Jik University of Education  
(formerly known as the Pyongyang University of Education)

Positions Held:

1954: Lecturer, Russian Language, Pyongyang Labor Academy (a school of KIS University)

1955: Deputy Director, Korea Film Studios

1956: Department Director, Korea Film Studios

1957: Appointed, Department Director, Film Division, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP

Mr. Choe retained the directorate of the Film Division until 1969, by which time operational management of the Film Division had been franchised by Kim Jong il. This was Mr. Choe's first, of four, dismissals from the Propaganda and Agitation Department, although he may have been caught in the loyalty inspections of the late 1960s. Mr. Choe and General-Secretary Kim are quite close because of their filmmaking activities.

1972: Delegate, 5<sup>th</sup> SPA

Appointed, Vice Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP

1974: (March) Film Director, Korea Film Studios

1977: Removed from position as Vice Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department

Mr. Choe seems to have been caught up in the purges and trials of Central Committee members and executives from 1977 to 1978.

1979: Artistic and Department Director, Mansudae Art Theater

1982: Appointed, Vice Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP

Choe Ik-gyu was tasked to work with Shin Sang-ok and his ex-wife, Choi Eun-hee, the South Korean film director and actress kidnapped by the (then-) KWP Operations Department from Hong Kong and brought to make films in the DPRK. Mr. Choe is a significant character in the memoir authored by the couple after they eluded North Korean custody on a trip in Austria.

1985: (February) Director, Korea Film Studios

1986: Removed as Vice Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP

Mr. Choe was suspended from his position in the Propaganda and Agitation Department because he had responsibility for the late Mr. Shin and Ms. Choi, who had escaped while under Mr. Choe's direct supervision in central Europe.

1988: Re-appointed, Vice Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP

1991: (April) Appointed, Permanent Member, Central Committee, General Federation of Korean Literature and Arts Unions  
(September) Vice Chair, Central Committee, General Federation of Korean Literature and Arts Unions

1993: Removed, Vice Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP

1999: Re-appointed, Vice Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department

2003: (September) Delegate (Deputy), 11<sup>th</sup> SPA  
Appointed, Minister of Culture

2006: Resigned, Minister of Culture  
Appointed, Vice Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP

2008: Appointed, Department Director, Propaganda and Agitation Department, CCKWP

2009: (April) Delegate (deputy), 12<sup>th</sup> SPA (Representing Electoral District #73)

Choe Ik-gyu, in coordination with the KWP Party History Institute, is managing and directing a multi-part biographical documentary on the life of Kim Jong-il, *I Will Add Glory to Korea*. He has been seen and accounted for by the Korean Central News Agency, escorting General-Secretary Kim on several guidance tours, particularly in the Spring of 2009. Mr. Choe was also compiling documentary footage for the documentary. Short films directed by Mr. Choe of General-Secretary Kim's guidance tours in March and April have been shown in the DPRK, China and are available in several online media sources. There are also reports that Kim Jong-chol, the elder of General-Secretary Kim's sons with Ko Yong-hui, works in a mid-level position in the Propaganda and Agitation Department, which implies that Mr. Choe takes an active role in supervising and educating the young Mr. Kim.