

North Korea Silent Reading

North Korea is home to more than 25 million people, who live under a form of communist rule, which strictly controls all areas of daily life.

People have to ask permission to travel around and it's difficult for visitors to enter the country too.

All TVs and radios are tuned to state channels and people caught listening to foreign broadcasts face harsh punishments.

These controls mean that most North Koreans may have little or no idea of world events, or how their country is thought of by the outside world.

Most North Koreans are extremely poor with things like fridges, washing machines, and even bicycles, hard to come by. Many people rely on aid agencies, such as the United Nations, to provide food because there is not enough to eat in the country.

However, North Koreans who demand more from their government, demand a change in leadership, or those that just try to escape, are brutally punished and sometimes killed.

An Amnesty International report estimated that hundreds of thousands of people have been put in prison and labour camps because they have disagreed with the government.

North Koreans seem to cheer and praise their leader at big public events but it's difficult to know the reasons for this because it's not possible to speak freely to people living there.

The North Korean government says it's because Kim Jong-un is very popular with his people.

From an early age, North Koreans are taught that their leaders are like all-powerful gods.

But others argue that people could be cheering Kim because they are worried that they would get in serious trouble if they didn't.

Questions:

1. What are at least three difficulties for North Korean people in their daily life?
2. Name at least one thing you can receive punishment for.
3. Why is it difficult to know the reasons why many North Koreans praise their leaders?
4. What do you think the people of North Korea believe is true about their leader?