

**North Korean Leader's Fund Manager Makes First Public Appearance In 7 Months**  
**Bernama**  
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SEOUL, Aug 8 (Bernama) -- The head of a shadowy North Korean agency charged with managing slush funds for leader Kim Jong-il has appeared in public for the first time in seven months.

Jon Il-chun accompanied Kim on an inspection tour of a factory, the North's state television reported on July 29, which was monitored by Yonhap News Agency.

Jon, who has rarely been exposed to media, was last seen on Kim's trip to a food factory in Pyongyang in December last year.

He heads Office 39, which has often been referred to as Kim's "personal safe" for its role in raising and managing secret funds for the aging leader. The office is also believed to be involved in counterfeiting US\$100 bills and drug trafficking.

In August last year, the United States blacklisted Office 39 as one of several North Korean entities to come under new sanctions for its involvement in illegal deeds such as currency counterfeiting.

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