

Kim Jong-Un Named *The Onion's* Sexiest Man Alive For 2012 [UPDATE]

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The Onion is proud to announce that North Korean supreme leader Kim Jong-un, 29, has officially been named the newspaper's Sexiest Man Alive for the year 2012.

With his devastatingly handsome, round face, his boyish charm, and his strong, sturdy frame, this Pyongyang-bred heartthrob is every woman's dream come true. Blessed with an air of power that masks an unmistakable cute, cuddly side, Kim made this newspaper's editorial board swoon with his impeccable fashion sense, chic short hairstyle, and, of course, that famous smile.

"He has that rare ability to somehow be completely adorable and completely macho at the same time," *Onion* Style and Entertainment editor Marissa Blake-Zweibel said. "And that's the quality that makes him the sort of man women want, and men want to be. He's a real hunk with real intensity who also knows how to cut loose and let his hair down."

Added Blake-Zweibel, "Ri Sol-ju is one lucky lady, that's for sure!"

With today's announcement, Kim joins the ranks of *The Onion's* prior "Sexiest Man Alive" winners, including:

- 2011: Bashar al-Assad
- 2010: Bernie Madoff
- 2009: Charles and David Koch (co-winners)

- 2008: Ted Kaczynski
- 2007: T. Herman Zweibel

The Onion's commemorative "Sexiest Man Alive" issue will be available on newsstands everywhere this Friday and contains a full 16-page spread on Kim.

UPDATE: For more coverage on The Onion's Sexiest Man Alive 2012, Kim Jong-Un, please visit our friends at the People's Daily in China, a proud Communist subsidiary of The Onion, Inc. Exemplary reportage, comrades.

Onion: We just fooled the Chinese government!

By the **CNN Wire Staff**

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Sorry China, Kim Jong Un not 'sexiest'

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- Onion editor: Tricking China has a "certain delightfulness"
- A Chinese news site takes an Onion satire for a real story
- The Onion declares North Korean leader Kim Jong Un "sexiest man alive"
- People's Daily Online runs portions of the Onion story and 55 photos of Kim

(CNN) -- China, as one Twitter user wrote Tuesday, has been fooled by the "mysterious Western art of satire."

The merciless comedy website The Onion has declared North Korean leader Kim Jong Un the "sexiest man alive for 2012." And it appears China's People's Daily Online has taken the story seriously.

"I love this one," Onion editor Will Tracy told CNN. "It has a certain delightfulness to it."

The Chinese story reprinted satirical comments describing Kim's "air of power that masks an unmistakable cute, cuddly side," his "impeccable fashion sense, chic short hairstyle, and," the story says, "that famous smile."



A Chinese state-run site was fooled Tuesday by a satirical story that declared North Korea's Kim Jong Un the "sexiest man alive."

The story on People's Daily Online on Tuesday illustrates the mutual backscratching that China and North Korea exercise through their government-run media. The incident also shows foreign media outlets' difficulty in navigating The Onion's brand of satire.

The Chinese website had underscored its story by including its own 55-page photo gallery to accompany the text, which was published in both English and Chinese. But the pages and the images were no longer available Wednesday.

A woman responding to a call Wednesday to the office of the website said it was "impossible that the People's Daily will quote from any unreliable media -- we do verify our news and sources."

The woman, who declined to identify herself, noted that the item had been removed.

The People's Daily Online has a separate office from the print version of the Chinese Communist Party's main newspaper.

Tracy said he's not surprised when legitimate news sites fall for his high-level tomfoolery, but this was the first time The Onion had named a "sexiest man alive." "We knew it would get a response," he said "but we didn't expect it would get life from abroad."

A satirical post on The Onion congratulated the People's Daily for its coverage.

The site "has served as one of the Onion's Far East bureaus for quite some time, and I believe their reportage as of late has been uncommonly fine, as well as politically astute,"

said The Onion's Grant Jones in a e-mail statement. "May our felicitous business association continue for centuries to come."

Earlier Tuesday, The Onion pointed readers to the Chinese website: "please visit our friends at the People's Daily in China, a proud Communist subsidiary of The Onion, Inc. Exemplary reportage, comrades."

Twitter users went wild over the editorial faux pas. "It makes me cry from another room!" Tweeted Francesca Ulivi @fraubass.

"Not sure they know this was a joke," wrote @loweringthebar.

"Curse of the #Onion again," said Colin Freeman @colinfreeman99.

Yes. Again. If this scenario sounds familiar it's because The Onion is no stranger to fooling government-run news outlets.

In September, an Onion satire fooled Iran's semi-official Fars News Agency. [Fars published an Onion story](#) claiming that a Gallup poll found that rural white Americans preferred Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad over President Barack Obama.

On the Chinese microblog Sina Weibo, netizens made their own teasing comments about People's Daily.

"Foolish foreigners, the party paper was born to be funny," wrote @sheldon-BaiBai.

"The world was fooled by the People's Daily, because no Chinese believes this paper," wrote @Hai_Dao_Wu_Bian.

The Onion never writes its stories with the intention of fooling government agencies, Tracy said. But "it's great when it happens. We hope it happens more often."

This prank, he said with obvious glee, may turn out to be the legendary Onion fake story that veterans will talk about for years to come. "We essentially just fooled the government of China."

CNN's Jethro Mullen and CY Xu contributed to this report.