

Beat: Miscellaneous

China's Communist Party newspaper falls for fake news story

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USPA News - The newspaper of China's Communist Party on Tuesday reported on a fake news article from The Onion which named North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as the sexiest man alive. It comes two months after an Iranian news agency also fell for a fake report from the satirical news publication.

The People's Daily newspaper, which is published in fifteen languages, posted a story with the headline: "North Korea's top leader named The Onion's Sexiest Man Alive for 2012." The story was published in both English and Chinese and included a tribute with 55 photos of the 29-year-old leader. The Onion posted the original article on November 14, but The People's Daily newspaper did not pick it up until Tuesday, apparently unaware it came from a satirical news publication. The fake news article praised Kim for his "devastatingly handsome, round face, his boyish charm, and his strong, sturdy frame", calling him 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," The Onion wrote in its article on November 14, describing Kim as "completely adorable and completely macho at the same time." The Onion article also listed prior Sexiest Man Alive winners, although the organization did not actually publish such reports in earlier years. It said it previously chose Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in 2011, disgraced financier Bernie Madoff in 2010, Charles and David Koch in 2009, Unabomber Ted Kaczynski in 2008, and fictional The Onion publisher T. Herman Zweibel in 2007. Tuesday's article in The People's Daily was completely accurate, however. The article correctly said The Onion named Kim as Sexiest Man Alive for 2012, but left unsaid that The Onion is a satirical news publication. As such, The Onion Editor Will Tracy praised the Chinese newspaper for its reporting. "We are pleased that one of our many fine Communist subsidiaries, the People's Daily in China, has received accolades for its coverage of our Sexiest Man Alive announcement," Tracy said. "The People's Daily 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. May our felicitous business association continue for centuries to come." The People's Daily newspaper could not immediately be reached for comment. The article remained available on Wednesday morning and was still prominently visible on the website's front page as a top story. The Onion was founded in 1988 and, in addition to its website, also publishes satirical articles in a print edition. Iran's semi-official Fars news agency also fell for a fake story from The Onion in September when it claimed that a recent Gallup Poll found that rural whites in the United States would rather vote for Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad than for incumbent U.S. President Barack Obama. And in September 2009, two Bangladeshi newspapers were forced to apologize after they reported that U.S. astronaut Neil Armstrong had told a news conference that the Moon landings were an "elaborate hoax". The Bangladeshi reports were based on a story published by The Onion.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-279/chinaund39s-communist-party-newspaper-falls-for-fake-news-story.html>

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