How Did Two Koreas Emerge from One?

Two countries, one people - no peace
There is still no official peace between North and South Korea, despite the Korean War ending more than 60 years ago. Citizens remain separated by the "demilitarized zone" (DMZ), one of the most heavily armed borders in the world. Around 600,000 South Korean and 28,500 US troops face off against an estimated 770,000 North Korean soldiers stationed within 80 kilometers of the DMZ.

Cold War relic
North Korea was founded as a communist country with support from both the Soviet Union and China, but over the years North Korea's government has shifted away from the tradition of Marx and Lenin. Now, Juche or "self-reliance" and a "military first" policy are the guiding principles of the Kim dynasty.

Families divided
The forced separation of the Korean people split up many families. More than six decades on, some of those connections are starting to fade. Still, there are more than 70,000 people waiting to take part in government-backed family reunions.

A legacy of human rights abuses
Observers, including the UN and Human Rights Watch, have roundly criticized North Korea for human rights abuses including mass imprisonment, murder and enslavement. But, North Korea claims its citizens "enjoy genuine human rights". The reclusive country argues human rights exist for the good of the state and say the rights of the individual could never replace the rights of the collective.

Cut off from the world
In North Korea, all media is closely controlled and possessing foreign books and music or listening to broadcasts from across the border can result in prison sentences. People also have a skewed view of western culture - hamburgers were invented by Kim Jong Il in 2009.