



**NORTH KOREA
TODAY**



GOODFRIENDS



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[Hot Topics]

Ministry of Electrical Industry to Prioritize Electricity Supply

North Korea's Ministry of Electrical Industry (전력공업성) issued a new January 18th policy to the nation's cities and counties. The main theme of the new policy is that electricity will be supplied based on an assessment of the nation's electrical output from all the hydroelectric and the coal-powered plants. Any industry with low or negligible production will be prohibited from receiving any electricity. Public enterprises and their units will not receive any electricity. Instead, only those factories producing in accordance with the national plan will be given priority for receiving electricity. The Ministry of Electrical Industry will also conduct evaluations of the regional supply and demand for electricity. Additional hydroelectric plants will be built as required by the evaluations. *Ahnbyeon* County of *Kangwon* Province, *Taechun* County of North *Pyongan* Province and *Geumya* County of South *Hamgyong* Province have been reported to have ample hydro-power resources available, and consequently a decision was made to build additional hydroelectric plants in those counties.

New Provincial Electricity Inspections to Begin

The Ministry of Electrical Industry has also started provincial electricity inspections in order to carry out the January 18th Policy. Inspections will be conducted among the provinces of North *Hamgyong*, South *Hamgyong*, *Kangwon*, *Ryanggang* and *Jagang*. The provinces of South and North *Hwanghae* and North *Pyongan* will conduct inspections within themselves. Favoritism and corruption between inspectors and residents is considered to be so spread widespread that secondary inspections from new inspectors were deemed necessary to eliminate such practices. This is the main reason for the new policy. These inspections will be conducted by provincial parties, the police, prosecutors' offices and courts. The new type of inspection is expected to be more thorough and meticulous than any that have come before.

An inspector claimed, “We were given special legal authority to investigate and judge anyone who violates any regulations concerning usage of electricity, including those managers of factories and those individuals who waste electricity.” He added that “such people will receive strong measures and punishments”

Violators of Electricity Regulations Treated As ‘Traitors’

North *Pyongan* Province decided to conduct thorough electricity inspections throughout the province until the end of March. Electricity output from the *Soopoong* Electrical Plant is low because of insufficient rainfall last year. This low output is causing problems in supplying electricity. In some areas, even the factories of the second economy are experiencing hardship. As the inspections in these areas progress according to the January 18th Policy, those factories and individuals who illegally draw electricity appear to be treated as “traitors.”

A “Graphite mat” is the item that is confiscated most often during inspections. It is a sort of North Korean style electric blanket. *Oh Young-cheol* (34) of *Pyongsung* explains, “It looks like a thick vinyl mat, 50 centimeters wide and 2 meters long. When the mat is plugged into a socket and spread on the floor, it heats up to 22 degrees Celsius and feels like the heated floor of traditional Korean ‘*Ondol*.’ It costs 15,000 NK Won a mat. It is mainly used by party leaders, judges and some rich individuals, but it consumes so much electricity that it has been confiscated in large numbers during the current inspections. According to an inspector at *Nampo*, “consumption of electricity is so out of control that some restrictions are necessary. Use of precious electricity should be controlled, even to the watt.” He added, “These new thorough inspections started because of a severe shortage of electricity to factories in the second economy.”

Electricity Inspections Prohibit the Use of Rice Mills and Noodle Making Machines

Electricity inspections in the Northern Central Labor District, *Ryongchun* County, North *Pyongan* Province forced residents to stop using rice milling machines and noodle making machines, to great complaint. Now, milling stations cannot process rice and corn, instead, residents have to pound the grain by hand. The loss of the noodle making machines has become a huge inconvenience, because residents cannot produce corn noodles.

Many of those illegally drawing industrial electricity have been caught. Most of them are released after paying fines. A woman, *Kim Bok-nam*, was caught last month illegally drawing electricity from the factory her husband works for in order to process corn for noodles. In order to resolve the matter quietly, she ended up paying three times as much as the legal fine. If you are caught in the current inspections, signing the deposition and paying the fine is not the end of the matter. Your employer is notified and you are criticized. In addition, the whole apartment complex in which you live is disconnected from the electricity grid. Therefore, violators are willing to spend as much money as necessary to secure their release without causing any further problem. Some time ago, Ms. Kim’s sister *Hyang-nam* had to pay a bribe of 10,000 NK Won for using the electric rice cooker. The legal fine was 2,000 NK Won, but she was willing to spend more to keep things quiet.

[Food]

Gimchaek Iron Work Factory Supplied 15 days Worth of Food for the February 16th Holiday

On February 16th, Gimchaek iron works factory in *Chungjin* City, North *Hamgyong* Province distributed 15 days worth of food for the holiday. They supplied 0.5kg of unglutinous rice and 5.5kg of whole corn. They also distributed around 1kg of corn noodle depending on the number of family members and the class. Besides food, one bottle of alcohol and 200g of bean oil were supplied specially for the holiday. 50g of bean oil was deducted for each day of work missed but the alcohol was distributed no matter how many days they missed work.

Meanwhile, *Chungjin* City Party has been frantically preparing presents for children such as sweet bean treats, candy, gum and wheat gluten. Due to the shortage of raw materials causing certain food factories to stop, the city took emergency steps by borrowing 15 MT of wheat flour from *Gimchaek* iron works. The wheat flour was taken from an emergency supply set aside for use in farming during difficult periods. The City Party plans to repay with corn and sent the wheat flour to the food factory. The holiday presents which were made after much meandering were distributed to the students two days ago, on the 14th. On that day, each school delivered gift boxes containing five kinds of snacks to all the children while workers from the district party watched. Based on the worker's reporter, the City Party reported to the Central Party about the presents supplied the following day.

Providing No Holiday Presents Implies 'Failure'

On Jan 27th, the Central Party held a formal meeting with the leading secretaries and Chairmen of the People's Committee of each Province Party. At the meeting, they raised the problem of gift production for the Feb 16th and April 15th holidays. Because the government failed to offer raw materials for food, each worker has to solve the problem depending on the regional conditions. The point was that they must be able to provide holiday presents for their children no matter what. If they fail to do so, the party will consider the worker as incapable and in some extreme cases may even result in the worker being fired. The workers who participated at the Central Party meeting went back to their region, held a Province Party meeting and explained what was discussed in the Central Party meeting. The leading Secretary of North *Hamgyong* Province ordered that a sample gift be sent to the Province Party government by Feb 15th, one day before the holiday which is Feb 16th. He said that he would evaluate the workers after viewing the sample gift. *Hoeryong* City of North *Hamgyong* Province sent 15 kinds of sack in their sample, but in fact only supplied 5 kinds of snack in the gifts to the children.

***Hamheung*, Returnee from Japan (귀국교포) Provides Candy Gifts**

Hamheung City, South *Hamgyong* Province, was not able to prepare food for the 2.16 Holiday. The City Grain Policy Bureau (시량정부) suggested the distribution of at least 5 days worth of food, but the food in reserve was enough for only about two days. Unfortunately, the plan to distribute 5 days worth of food was cancelled. The situation for children's holiday gifts was no different. There is no question about shortage of raw materials since there is no food. City Party collected flour from each trade company as a last

resort. Fortunately, a returning North Korean from Japan provided 20 tons of sugar for free, enabling the production of candy. Students from all the different schools receiving these gifts had big smiles on their faces, a first in a long while.

40% of Workers at *Jaedong* Coal Mine in *Sungchun* County Surviving on Grass

Porridge

It was found that 40% of workers at the *Jaedong* Coal Mine in *Sungchun* County, South *Pyongan* Province, were surviving only on grass porridge. Located in the new *Sungchun* Labor District, *Jaedong* Coal Mine has approximately 8,000 workers. The problem was pointed out at the place where workers gathered after listening to the New Year's Combined Editorial. The participants were not hesitant to talk about what they always wanted to say. "They make us work every time without paying us properly. Do high ranked officials know about this situation?" one worker asked. Someone responded, "Since they eat so well, they do not care how others are doing. What do we get after all our work in these harsh conditions?" Another worker questioned, "Why do we have to put our lives at risk doing work when we can't even eat?"

The workers said, "We received oil, meat, sugar, alcohol, and other stuff every day even during the Arduous March, but the provision stopped 4 years ago." There have been numerous complaints amongst the workers regarding the lag of provision for food and supplementary nutrition. One worker (40s) at the Coal Mine said, "19 miners died last year alone, 120 family members died of various diseases after suffering from the extreme hunger. Currently, 20% of the workers are undernourished. Lack of power and willingness to work directly translate into decrease in productivity. *Jaedong* Coal Mine's produces about 36,000 MT of coal per month but it is continuously decreasing. Currently, the most urgent needs are to secure food for the workers and repair the aging infrastructure.

[Economy]

A Metal Commodities Factory in *Danchun* Closed

At the end of last year (2008), a metal commodities factory in the city of *Danchun* in the South *Hamgyong* Province, closed due to lack of raw materials and financial difficulties. The 300 factory workers had nowhere else to go for work. On average, only ten workers came for work because the factory hadn't been running smoothly due to the lack of raw materials. These workers were affected the most by the closing of the factory. They did not have anything as a sideline so they depended on the wages they occasionally received.

Hwang Mi-sook (40s), who worked at the factory until last year, sighed as she talked about the factory. She had made her living by selling nails, but the closing was a severe blow to her because there is nothing to sell anymore, "The factory mostly produced metal buckets, metallic washbowls, and metal plate nails. The metal plate nails were not actually nails but were cut into the size of a nail. The metal plate nails had no heads but were only cut to have a sharp head. Therefore, they get easily bent when driven into a wooden board. However, people purchased the nails at the markets because they could not find quality nails. Business was good." *Joo Gyeong-mi* (49 years), who also used to sell factory products, said, "The factory manufactured some metal products even when raw materials were not plentiful.

However, the factory was totally shut down last year. When there weren't enough materials, the factory used to wait until it found the materials and then manufactured some products. Then it sold some products and then purchased the materials again. However, I feel sorry we cannot even expect this kind of business cycle anymore."

Clock Factory in *Danchun* Files for Bankruptcy

A clock factory located in the city of *Danchun*, South *Hamgyong* Province, has filed for bankruptcy due to lack of operating funds. All 200 workers, except those who have found work in other factories, are now unemployed. Although the workers have lost their jobs, there doesn't seem to be a significant blow to their lives because only about five workers came to work daily. 40-year-old *Jo Myong-kyu*, has been working at this factory for over 10 years: "Over the 10 plus years that I have worked here, there has never been food rationing. We have long been engaged in trading business to survive." He also said, "Many companies went door-to-door, searching for workers and advertising the job openings, but they could not even find the trace of their workers because many were out of town and engaged in trading to find some food." The fact was the workers had already quit even before the layoff.

One worker (50 years old) said, "The factory needed to make products, sell them, then use the money to secure the material for the next production, but that didn't happen. Because there was no production, no one was willing to provide material. After all that hard work, we have no choice but to abandon the factory." Also he said, "Those factories that barely managed since the Arduous March got bankrupt during the previous food shortage period. This created unprecedented number of unemployed workers. Now there were rumors of the market closing down and it worried many people. 'We are all going to die now. How will we survive?' It is a great relief that the market is still open today."

If Absent from Work, Produce from Small Patch Farm Is Forfeited

One factory in *Booyoon* District, *Chungjin* City, North *Hamgyong* Province is considering a measure to deal with a large number of absent workers. The management of the factory is collecting produce from the small patch farm of absentee workers, then distributes it to those who came to work. When workers protest, the management said, "all produces that had been farmed while absent from work belong to the factory. If you don't want to give, come to work." *Jeon Myong-ho* (40s) said, "It was the factory executives who told us that as the government cannot give food ration, try to farm as many small patches as you can. They told us that they would consider the products from small patch farm as substitute rationing. Now they want us to give up all our products and distribute them to others because we didn't come to work. I don't know what to say."

Kang Yang-hee (40s) said that the small patch farming is not going well in her area. "Vegetables don't grow well so I couldn't make winter *Gimchi* last year. The worker's diet is pitiful beyond expression." Kang said they are having a tough life, and said, "If we don't go to work for a week, the factory security guards visit the workers' houses and send them to worker training center where the workers receive education while doing hard labor for two months." If they don't want to give up the produce, they have to go to the center. Workers are saying that, "we wish they tell us to come to work while giving rations."

[Politics]

March 8 Election Advertisement, “Everyone Should Exercise Citizens’ Honorable Voting Privilege”

The Party Registers continue to give more directions to all cities and counties for the upcoming “Election for the Representatives of the Supreme Peoples’ Assembly on March 8.” They especially emphasized the importance of participation of all citizens over the age of 18. According to the direction, “We need to emphasize the importance and true perception of the election. Also, everyone should have citizens’ awareness and vote in favor without any omission. Everyone should exercise and practice their honorable citizen’s voting privilege.” In addition, there has been an establishment of an Election Atmosphere Formation Business. They instructed all cities and counties to gather all Youth Alliance Art Propagation (청년 동맹 예술 선전대대), *Dong*-office DWU’s Propagation (동사무소 녀맹 선전대), all factories’ and all enterprises’ propagation to form energizing election atmosphere. Cities created propaganda workers and directed people, “to make progress under operational propaganda activities.” They also intensified security. The Security Agency commanded the importance of security for the polling place of the district. They also included, “There should be two security guards and sentry guards posted by the entrance of the district polling place.” The party workers should strictly secure the polling place to prevent any political conflict or disruption and guarantee secure success of election for the Representatives of the Supreme Peoples’ Assembly. In the meantime, the Resident Registration Department and Civic Registration Department of the Police Station (보안서 주민등록과와 공민등록과) is investigating if anyone is missing from their neighborhood units meeting of *Dong*-office.

Anyone Crossing the River Will Be Prosecuted as National Traitor”

During the Crowd lecture meeting held in *Chungjin* City, North *Hamgyong* Province, they announced, “Anyone crossing the river will be prosecuted as a national traitor.” During this lecture, they also warned, “If you go to China, the South Korean CIA (안기부) working in China will send you to places like Hawaii for special training and send you back to your country of origin. Also, they secretly kill ‘unfitted’ people during training. We don’t know how many people have died so far. Therefore, don’t even think about escaping the country.” They added, “Don’t help anyone who associates with China through cell phones or anyone who leaves the country. We will execute anyone who violates this or tries to escape.” In addition they posted that they will suspend all side street businesses and locust sales starting on February 1st along with the river crossing problem.

At Least Hundred Thousand Won Fine Imposed to Those without Travel Pass in the Border Region

Beginning the 9th of this month, those without a pass are being sent to jail in the border region indiscriminately. One has to pay at least 100,000 NK won in order to be released from jail. This is a strengthened measure before the February 16th holiday. Even those with passes have to verify in detail the destination and the purpose of their travel if they are from outside the region. Those who visit family or relatives for the event such as a marriage or a 60th birthday party can stay only a day or two. People visiting without special events are questioned separately at a police station. Meanwhile, the security authorities are beefing up

the security by sending reinforcement forces in the vicinity of the border. The police check on people passing by and perform inspections of the lodgers several times a day for the houses in the vicinity of the border.

[Society]

Young Men Volunteer to Help a Burn Victim

In *Woonjeon*-town, *Woonjeon* County, North *Pyongan* Province, there was an accident in which a farmer who was mobilized to road construction work got burned on his arms and legs due to carelessness with gunpowder. The patient was transferred urgently to the *Sinuiju* hospital. The patient's condition was very serious with 40% of his body being burned. The village party secretary pleaded to the young men who were mobilized in the road construction for emergency skin grafts and blood donation. In response to his plea, about 70 young people volunteered to help. However, only 30 people can ride in the vehicle. So, the rest of the young men had to be turned away. Those who were selected arrived at *Sinuiju* hospital after 3 hours. It usually takes 5 hours from *Woonjeon*-town to *Sinuiju*, but they left at 4 in the morning and arrived at 7 AM.

The aspiration of the young men who tried to save the lives of people caused a huge sensation in the area. The village party secretary said, "It really brings tears to my eyes when I see the courage of youths." The residents were also touched and exclaimed, "In this busy life, taking care of my own body is a difficult thing. We are really moved by their willingness to donate their blood and skin without hesitation for people they don't even know. This must be the virtue of our countrymen."

An official in *Woonjeon* County said, "I thought our virtue of helping each other has disappeared after the Arduous March. It is very hard to describe the exhilarating feeling when I see the virtue still alive." The residents at *Woonjeon* town agreed that, "It is not easy to see this kind of thing happening in a society where you have to stay healthy in order to survive. Even though we have difficult lives, we are happy to know that our unique virtue is still maintained. Some farm members were on the verge of tears and said, "We thank them. We really thank those young men. They must be very busy making ends meet for their own family, but they volunteered to donate their own blood and flesh without hesitation." The village secretary said, "We do not have things to compensate the young people, but we want to let the world know about their character as much as we can." He swore that he will tell everyone he meets about the young men's exemplary behavior."

***Daedongmoon* Cinema in Pyongyang Crowded with People**

The *Daedongmoon* cinema's renovation in *Pyongyang* last year is drawing a big crowd every day. Since the New Year, a *Daedongmoon* cinema has continuously been featuring foreign films. Although there are two 500-seat halls, many people are unable to buy tickets because of people lined up in front of the ticket booth since 9 in the morning. War veterans, disabled veterans, and those who have performed distinguished services are given special preferential treatment for ticket purchases. Those who don't fall into those categories often end up buying tickets for a premium price in the black market. Now there are people who buy tickets deliberately for the purpose of selling them at the black market price.

Mr. Kim (in his forties) who came to the cinema before the February 16th holiday said, "I never knew that there were so many film enthusiasts in *Pyongyang*." It was a wave of people even though police and order-keeping crews had complete control. Police officers were sitting at the edge of the 600 seats to prevent people from recording the movies with their digital cameras." An official living in the middle town area said, "It is strange to see everyone regardless of gender or age eager to watch foreign movies." He speculated the reason as, "Because they want to know the world." I think that is the reason because no matter how hard they try to crack down on foreign media in order to prevent infiltration of bourgeois ideology and culture, the reality is that those who are supposed to control the foreign media want to watch them first. A woman in her thirties who went to *Daedongmoon* cinema said, "Wanting to know and see is human nature. Trying to suppress it by force will not work."

Ms. *Choi* (in her forties) who lives in *Seongyo* District talked about the movie theater as a story of a far-away land. She said, "We are busy earning meals for the day. What in the world is a movie?" A fellow woman (in her 40s) who works with Ms. *Choi* said, "I heard that old veterans and disabled veterans sell the movie tickets to buy meals. That is fortunate for them because they at least have that privilege." She added that there is a huge gap between the haves and have-nots in *Pyongyang*. She said, "It costs ₩3 to have a bowl of noodles at the *Pyongyang* Cold Noodle corner at the *Koryo* Hotel. The price of noodles in the basement bathhouse is ₩5. There are a lot of people in *Pyongyang* who come here to bathe and eat noodles. Sometimes the whole family comes in a taxi to come and eat. It may not be a big deal when you think of it as people doing whatever they can to afford. However, I feel something is wrong when I think about those who cannot even afford to eat corn meal."

[Women/Children/Education]

A Big Burden for Family Led Divorce

Ahn Jeong-Ok (30) who lives in *Geunhwa-dong, Sinuiju*, North *Pyongan* Province, has to dodge police in order to do the peddling. She is solely responsible to feed a daughter who goes to a day care center, a mother-in-law, and her husband. Her husband does not have a regular job and spends time on playing solitaire card all day. Although the mother-in-law collects some wilted radish leaves from time to time, she is the one who really brings home bacon. She earned 10,000 NK won by selling 10 pairs of shoes on the day before the holiday, 'February 16'. She said "I usually earn at least 5,000 NK won a day on average. If I got caught in the crackdown, everything is lost. But I have to do the peddling to survive." Currently the situation has changed and living expenses are so high, so her earnings are not enough to buy sufficient corn. She said that she also considered getting a divorce because it was tough to support all families. "We, business people, talked between us that if we got divorced a long time ago we would have become wealthy by now. But without me my families will go hungry, so what do I do?" She laughed.

"I'd rather do 'Long Distance Peddling (달리기 장사)' than lose my Husband and Money"

Han Hong-Seop (in her fifties) lives in *Namsong-dong, Sinuiju*, and sells shoes to support her family. She is the sole bread winner for her mother-in-law, husband, a daughter (a senior in a college) and a son in junior high school. Because the business is so slow, at the end of last year she did the long distance peddling, going all the way to *Pyongsung*. She went to *Pyongsung* market and bought shoes worth 500,000 NK won, sold them all in 15 days, and got 100,000 NK won profits. She said "It was the first time I went to *Pyongsung* market. The shoes section of *Pyongsung* market was as big as the whole *Namsong* market. It was really amazing to me. I've never seen such a big market in my life.

She said, "I wasn't going to do the long distance peddling because I was sick and doing the long distance peddling gets complicated with gas price and other expenses. But I've determined to do it because I need to take care of my family and help my daughter graduate." When questioned if she wants her husband to do the long distance peddling she became serious and said: "Women always try to save money by not having meals to save 500 NK won. However, men have tendency to spend lots of money on drinks, side dishes with alcohol, and cigarette. On top of it, some women are likely to chase after businessmen for money because businessmen carry around big money. If my husband has an affair, I am going to lose my husband and money so I rather do the peddling business myself. There are no businessmen who are not having an affair during the peddling. Poor women chase after men that seemed to have some money. I would rather do the peddling myself to avoid the disastrous situation."

[Accidents]

Disabled Veterans Assault a Railroad Station Worker

Last February 9, violent event happened at *Pyongsung* Station, South *Pyongan* Province. About 3-4 disabled veterans were trying to get on a train without tickets and the railroad staff stopped them. These veterans, wounded in their legs, assaulted the railroad staff and knocked him senseless. Other security staff ran to the scene but because the veterans were too excited and angry it was difficult to approach them. It was necessary for eight police officers from *Pyongsung* Station to quell the situation. The passengers who were watching the scene had different opinions: some said, "No matter how angry they were, they should not have beaten him almost to death," while others expressed their understanding of those disabled veterans, saying that "they just took out their dissatisfaction to the society to the station worker."

[Commentary]

How Long Are They To Rely On Electricity Inspections?

Some time ago, the so-called the 'January 18th Policy' was issued, a policy to supply electricity according to specific priorities. Additionally, any individual, factory, or enterprise drawing electricity without permission was to be punished severely. Even the expression 'traitor' was used to describe those who violate electricity regulations. Redoubled inspections have started, although the results have yet to be seen. All of these stringent measures regarding electricity have started this year.

The problem lies in the fact that these new thorough inspections, like any other inspections, are only short-term solutions. Unless structural issues are resolved, the problem will persist, regardless of what policies are issued. All inspectors are well aware of this fact.

Among all of the recent concerns, the issue of electricity distribution exemplifies exactly what is flawed in the current system. The electricity distribution stations belong to each provincial party, each city party and each county party. Every worker has party associations wherever he resides (in his province, city or county). All party instructions, tasks and awards occur within the party system. Naturally, the influences of the local party will be as strong as that of the Central Party.

Even when the Ministry of Electrical Industry sends an instruction to supply electricity to a designated factory, the local party's requirement must be satisfied first. Therein lays the structural problem. Here is an example. *Gimchaek* Steel Mill is located in the *Songpyong* District of the City of *Chungjin* in North *Hamgyong* Province. This mill is a Special Enterprise under the direct control of the Central Party. The Central Party may give the *Gimchaek* Steel Mill the highest priority for receiving electrical power, but the other requests for electricity by the local party leaders in the *Songpyong* District cannot be ignored. Employees of the electricity distribution stations do not have much choice, at the end of the day they are still local party members with their lives rooted in the city. Consequently, the electricity is distributed all over the city, causing drops in voltage, which is the reason for 'electricity of poor quality.' At times, factory equipment malfunctions and even suffers damage due to the irregular supply.

This example points to the core problem of the 'January 18th Policy.' Everything may look fine during the inspection period, but what will happen afterwards? The same problems will repeat themselves. Of course, North Korean authorities are trying their best to solve the problems by increasing electricity output. There are plans in place to repair the existing plants and build new ones, but how are they going to secure the financial resources for such large projects?

Situations like the current electricity shortage in North Korea are exactly why we lament the current state of confrontation between North and South Korea. Both North and South Korean authorities realize that there are so many areas in which they can cooperate and yet neither side tries to stop confrontation. Rather, with their swords drawn out, tension can only increase. Nobody seems to care about the situation where North Korean residents suffer because of a lack of electricity to the extent that they cannot have their grain processed for meals. Problems with electricity are something that could be resolved easily with cooperation between the North and South. We urge both Northern and Southern authorities to stop their confrontation. Please pay attention to the suffering North Korean residents, barely hanging on in the everyday struggle to survive. 🌸



Good Friends: Center for Peace, Human Rights and Refugees



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Good Friends– An International NGO for Peace, Human Rights and Refugees

Good Friends provides relief works for international refugees to become all lives' friend, peace movement to fundamentally resolve disputes and conflicts that human beings face, and human rights movement to protect human rights

Good Friends has been providing information on food shortages in North Korea, raising funds for humanitarian assistance, dispatching activists to national border areas between China and DPRK and having them investigate local situations, and publishing reports on food shortages in North Korea.

Now Good Friends USA intends to improve humanitarian and human rights situation of North Korean residents and to inform this situation to the international community by

- 1) collecting information on severe food shortages and bad situations in health, education, and transportation and providing them to other humanitarian aids organizations so that they can support North Korean people effectively.
- 2) investigating current situations of North Korean refugees in China, and providing protections and aids for them.
- 3) assessing human rights violations occurring in North Korea, informing them to the international societies, and requesting the North Korean government for improvement on human rights and living conditions.

Also, Good Friends USA publishes the newsletter [North Korea Today \(English edition\)](#) to inform the international public.

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