



GOODFRIENDS



Weekly Newsletter

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["Good Friends" aims to help the North Korean people from a humanistic point of view and publishes "North Korea Today" describing the way the North Korean people live as accurately as possible. We at Good Friends also hope to be a bridge between the North Korean people and the world.]

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**[Hot Topics]**

Amid Warnings from the Party, *Yangduk* County Is Reminded of the Flood 3 Years Ago

Torrential Downpour Submerges Fields in *Hwanghae* Province

*Gimchaek* City Calls for Immediate Repairs of Flood Damage

Residents in *Pyongyang* Rebuilding after Flood

**[Food]**

Desperate Farmers Borrow Food against Future Food Rations

Semiannual Crops Collected for Army Provisions in *North Hwanghae* Province

Famers in *Ryonggang* County Eke Out Scanty Livelihood with Only One or Two Meals per Day

**[Economy]**

*Hwanghae* Steel-Manufacturing Plant Collects Scrap Iron to Increase Production

Car Enterprise in *Sariwon* Lost Money Earned from Scrapping Cars in a Swindle

No Compensation for Confiscated Sales

**[Politics]**

*Chilbong* Checkpoint Notorious for Illegal Fines

Central Party Sends Anti-Socialist Investigative Patrol to National Border

### [Society]

Direness of Food Shortage Is Unprecedented, Says Official in *Pyongyang*  
Arduous March is Now in *North Hwanghae* Province

Son Kills Himself and His Family after Treating His Father with Contempt

### [Women/Children/Education]

Youth Soccer Team Established at *Joongang* Athletic Institute in *Nampo*

Health Examination Result Shows *Gilju* Elementary Students Suffer from Tuberculosis

### [Accidents]

Tunnel Collapse in *Kaechon* Mine Caused Death and Injuries

### [Editorial]

Surplus Rice Stock Should Be Sent to Save Lives!

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### [Hot Topics]

**Amid Warnings from the Party, *Yangduk* County Is Reminded of the Flood 3 Years Ago**

On July 16th, there was a downpour in *Yangduk* County, *South Pyongan* Province. The County Party reminded residents of the flood that occurred at this time 3 years ago and which caused tremendous casualties. The party's warning increased awareness of the seriousness of the weather. The *Yangduk* County Party mobilized the propaganda van, made a tour of each village and warned that "there is a great risk of casualties like those we suffered 3 years ago." The Party also insisted that "preventive measures must be planned since there may be an embankment that collapses or a landslide along the railroad in mountainous areas." People also voiced concerns over whether this downpour may aggravate the food situation. Due to the low temperature phenomenon, farms in *Yangduk* County have suffered serious damage, as the corn was not able to grow well. The residents voiced their worries, saying, "If there is no governmental aid and if the Province does not purchase food from outside, we may end up seeing dead corpses throughout the countryside and the cities, just like during the massive famine of the mid 1990s. Considering the farming situation thus far, it is obvious that next year's food price will rise higher than it has this year."

**Torrential Downpour Submerges Fields in *Hwanghae* Province**

The *South* and *North Hwanghae* Provinces, including *Kaesong* City and all of *Kangwon* Province sustained serious flood damage as a result of the downpours since July 20th. A village was submerged underwater and the

road and the railroad were destroyed in some parts, paralyzing traffic. In addition, many fields became completely submerged, severely damaging the crops. Some fields were fully washed away by the flood, making it impossible to harvest. The farmers were worried during the sowing season in April and May because it did not rain enough. Now, they are worried about the flood damages and whether there may be any yield in the fall. A farm worker in *Kaesong* City expressed concern that the yield may decrease more than 30% from the last year.

### ***Gimchaek* City Calls for Immediate Repairs of Flood Damage**

*Gimchaek* City in *North Hamgyong* Province also sustained flood damage when there was a torrential downpour on July 21st. Nearby roads and railroads were destroyed or blocked and fields were submerged underwater. The *Gimchaek* City Party immediately made a general mobilization of the laborers, farm workers, Democratic Women's Union (DWU) members, students, and soldiers for a restoration operation. The people who worked to restore the flood damage reconstructed bridges, railroads, and the roads which were destroyed by the water. They also dug a ditch in order to drain water which had stagnated in the fields. The mobilized residents mended the fallen crops and worked to arrange the fields carried away by floods. The land which had become difficult to harvest was rearranged so farmers could gather fall radish and napa cabbage.

Due to these flood damages during the rainy season, damages which occur almost every year, the *Pyongyang* government established a 'Flood Damage Prevention Command' in each province and special city. The government spread the preventive measures thoroughly and shored up the bridges in regions where flood damage was predicted. Still, the at-risk regions were not able to avoid flood damages this year.

### **Residents in *Pyongyang* Rebuilding after Flood**

Residents in *Pyongyang* are being given resources to work in flood-devastated areas. The *Pyongyang Sangwon* Cement Plant is sending cement, water pumps, sandbags, shovels and electric wires to flooded sites for restoration. Authorities in *Pyongyang* will be paying special attention to ensure that no one ignores rebuilding work duties to maintain individual businesses and small gardens. They announced that any official who fails to rebuild well will be punished by law.

## **[Food]**

### **Desperate Farmers Borrow Food against Future Food Rations**

Farmers in *Sagu-ri* collective farm in *Chungam* District, *Chungjin* City in *North Hamgyong* Province are borrowing food against future food rations on the condition that they would pay back twice the amount borrowed once they receive food provisions at the end of the fall harvest. In other words, if they borrow 100kg of whole corn they would need to pay back 200kg in the fall. The desperate farmers claim that they cannot worry about the future at the moment; their only concern is to obtain 200-300kg of corn to satisfy their current needs. They are pessimistic about their abilities to pay off their debt in the future; however, in order to eke out a living today they are restlessly looking for food to borrow against an uncertain tomorrow.

Farmers who are unable to borrow food from agencies such as the Foreign Currency Agency receive advances from their collective farms, which are taken out of their future food rations. However, for farmers belonging to the *Kuyeon* collective farm in *Bongsan* County, *North Hwanghae* Province, which ran out of food, are barely eking out a living on porridge mixed with grass. Many families have prematurely harvested and consumed the corn before it has grown big enough to eat. Farmers who cannot borrow food in advance receive 10kg of barley from their work units on a condition to deduct their shared amount at the end of the harvest season.

The food situation for the soldiers' families is as dire as the rest of the country. Even households of many high ranking officers at a divisional reserve force headquarters in *Saebyu*-town, *Saebyu* County, and *North Hamgyong* Province have run out of food. They have placed similar requests to an army divisional support bureau to distribute whole corn provisions in advance some going as far as December.

### **Semiannual Crops Collected for Army Provisions in *North Hwanghae* Province**

The food situation is getting worse and worse in the farm villages of *North Hwanghae* Province. Generally, this region is known to be a rich grain district as well as being a national border zone, which has supported a large amount of army provisions. Recently, even semiannual crops such as potatoes and barley are being collected for the army leaving very little for the farmers. As a result, there have been an increasing number of households that are either barely surviving on grass porridge or suffering from starvation.

Farmers from *Seoheung* County, *Shingye* County, and *Hwangju* County in *North Hwanghae* Province have run out of food much earlier as compared to the year before, which allowed them to harvest potatoes and barley mid year before the end of the harvest season. Unfortunately they had to give up these newly harvested crops to the nearby military unit and they themselves had to collect edible grass for their porridge. The farmers petitioned their

current situation saying “We work very hard to grow these potatoes since early spring, but we never have enough to eat.”

Despite the farmers’ current food shortage and discontent, every county party is racing to secure the army’s target provisions. The county parties repeatedly ordered the farmers to give up 80% of their harvested crops to be sent to the military. Some of the leading secretaries from the county parties requested the farmers to sign on the memorandum that they would pledge to accomplish the requested army provisions. The repeated orders to secure the army provisions indicate the urgency of the food shortage situation within the military units. With the increasing number of military units without food, each military support bureau has placed a request to the provincial party for more food supplies.

In *North Hwanghae* Province, the leading provincial secretary had a meeting with the leading secretaries from city and county parties, a party commissioner, and managers of farm collectives and ordered them to send all newly harvested potatoes and barley to the military units. They were further instructed that they should not allow the armies to starve even if it means that the farmers will have to suffer the consequences. In some collective farms, managers who distributed the prematurely harvested potatoes and barley to the families without food were summoned by the organization and the guidance department within the county party to write a self criticizing memorandum and eventually got fired.

### **Famers in *Ryonggang* County Eke Out Scanty Livelihood with Only One or Two Meals per Day**

The food situation in the *Ryonggang* district of *Ryonggang* County, *South Pyongan* Province, has been deteriorating. In the case of Work Units 3 and 7, many households have little food left. Only a few households manage to eat three meals of corn porridge a day. Many households eat one meal or two meals at most per day. The lack of food has increased the absentee rate for work. No one, or only one person, in the households without food goes to work.

### **[Economy]**

#### ***Hwanghae* Steel-Manufacturing Plant Collects Scrap Iron to Increase Production**

The 150-day battle headquarters in the People’s Council of *Northern Hwanghae* Province, has decided that the *Hwanghae* Steel-Manufacturing Plant will extensively collect scrap iron and old metals to increase the production of its steel products. The leading secretaries of the cities and counties and the chairs of the People’s Councils said, “In line with building a strong country in 2012 and to push the 150-day battle hard in every aspect,

we pledge our loyalty to the great leader, *Kim Jong-Il* by contributing to building the strong country by completing the production of all the products."

As the current production goal was not met, the headquarters emphasized, "Each factory, enterprise, *Dong* and *Eup* Office, Women's Democratic Union in each city and county, *Northern Hwanghae* Province, and students of elementary, middle, college, and vocational schools must donate ten kilograms of scrap iron and old metals per person. Police stations and City Party Administrations of each city and county are no exceptions in terms of systematically collecting scrap iron and old metals." If they do not fulfill the quota, the Department of Justice at the People's Council of each city and county will investigate those who are in charge of the collection task.

The total amount of scrap iron and old metal collected was approximately 4,000 tons by June 25. It was transported to the *Hwanghae* Steel-Manufacturing Plant from June 26 to June 29. Elementary schools in *Sariwon* are trying to find a way to achieve their allotment. They even collected 300 *won* from each student.

#### **Car Enterprise in *Sariwon* Lost Money Earned from Scrapping Cars in a Swindle**

A car enterprise in *Sariwon*, *Northern Hwanghae* Province, scrapped seven cars to get iron scrap and old metals but was swindled the payment. It was approximately 4.5 million *won*, which was paid for scrapping cars after detaching useful parts. The manager, the chief engineer, and the secretary of the Workers Party decided to use the money to purchase a ten ton truck. On July 2, they made a contract with an employee of a trading company at the 7th General Foreign Currency Earning Company in *Pyung-sung*, but haven't heard from him by early August. They called the company and have been looking for him everywhere but failed to find him. There have been controversies among the enterprise workers. Some say, "It's a fraud," while others think, "No, the workers of the car enterprise are lying after they already embezzled the money."

This case was presented to the City Party and the People's City Administration Council and investigated by the public prosecutor's office. It is concluded that the contract turned out to be a fraud. The City Party thus said, "This fraud occurred because the enterprise ran its business according to the capitalistic management style," and began to investigate the ideology of the enterprise managers. The Ministry of Justice at the People's City Council decided to legally punish the manager and the chief engineer at the enterprise for the violation of labor administration rules and safety regulations.

### **No Compensation for Confiscated Sales**

Authorities of *Hoeryung City, North Hamgyong Province* forced ineligible merchants to forfeit merchandise to the government procurement stores. Merchants under the age limit and/or those who sold banned items surrendered merchandise to the City's Market Regulation Office, which is similar to a goods consignment store. City Authorities made an agreement with the merchants to give back part of the sale profit to the merchants; however, this agreement has yet to be honored.

*Cho Jeong-Hee (40's)* said, "They don't give us any commission, even on the items that have already been sold. When we point this out, they make excuses saying that they sold the items on credit."

*Lee Jeom-Rye (40's)* said, "When I asked for my share of the sales profit, they said it takes time to check the sales, or that the managers will pay me back later, just to delay payments." She also added, "Even though private merchants supply the merchandise, people prefer to go to the market to shop rather than the government procurement stores. When the government sells anything, they should pay the merchant who supplied it."

One of the sales staff in the government store said, "In addition to all the reasons we told the merchants, we cannot pay them because we buy other items with the sales profit and are short on money." Because merchants have not been paid for their confiscated items, they cannot start other sales, which is seriously affecting their livelihood.

Some merchants made a report to the City Party and City People's Council business department. Receiving no reply, they recently made another report to the Provincial Party. The Provincial Party gave an order to the Provincial Public Prosecutors Office to investigate the management of the City Market Regulation Office. In turn, the Provincial Public Prosecutors Office relegated the order to *Hoeryung City's* Prosecutors Office. Unfortunately, they did not fully investigate this matter because the City Party sheltered it saying that, "...there will be no specific illegal activities." The City's Administrative Office and the Market Regulation Office were ordered to do self investigations convening managers of each department.

The self investigations conducted from, July 10th to the 18th, revealed that there were fewer items on display compared to the items supplied, and the sales profit was extremely low. When questioned, the sales assistants confessed that they sold the items on credit or took part of the profit for their own business.

When the corruption of the sales staff of the state-run stores was discovered, the City Party fired the managers and the sales staff of the government procurement stores, such as in the cases of the *Osan* and *Seongcheon* stores. Fired employees were sent to the Labor Discipline Center, and managers in the Market Regulation Office were severely criticized.

### [Politics]

#### ***Chilbong* Checkpoint Notorious for Illegal Fines**

The *Chilbong* checkpoint, in *Wonsan*, *Kangwon* Province, has an appalling reputation for unreasonably strict customs inspections. The checkpoint's main purpose is to inspect vehicles operating from *Wonsan* to the cities of *Pyongyang*, *Sariwon*, and *Haeju* and is infamously known as "the worst checkpoint in the district." When merchants need to pass this inspection point, they are dismayed at having to pay passage fee of ten to twenty thousand won. According to some, "anyone who works at this checkpoint can easily make twenty million won a year." In other words, workers of this checkpoint abuse their power to extort money. If merchants do not pay the fees, they can suffer even bigger loss because the inspectors can use anything to put them in trouble. However, this checkpoint is also known for its excellent performance in apprehending criminals. In many cases, inspectors let vendors pass by accepting payoffs, but they have a high rate of arrests because of stringent inspections with warrants to search for criminals.

On July 21st, a drug-trafficker disguised as the head of a trade company affiliated with the Police Department of People's Defense Ministry was arrested at this checkpoint. His operations extended to *Wonsan*, *Pyongsung*, and *Kaesong*, using fraudulent identification documents and vehicle certificates. Three years ago in *Sariwon*, *North Hwanghae* province, he was previously arrested on drug charges but avoided indictment through bribery. However, he was arrested again this time at *Chilbong* checkpoint where officials found large quantities of cleverly concealed drugs and ginseng in his vehicle. He was immediately detained and sent to the Provincial Police Department. With this news, a police officer of *Wonsan* praised *Chilbong* checkpoint by saying, "They will receive high evaluation marks for this drug bust."

#### **Central Party Sends Anti-Socialist Investigative Patrol to National Border**

Due to continuing illegal conduct at the national border, the Central Party has once again dispatched the Anti-Socialist Conscience Investigative Patrol. The Party decided to interrogate several officials saying, "Illegal conduct in the cities and counties around the national border have not decreased. In many cases, high ranking officials are involved. They should refrain from

illegal business practices to set an example to the people, so that they too do not pursue unlawful behavior." For this reason, the National Security Agency has selected and sent agents with good performance records as well as students from *Kumsung* Politics College (School for Government Officials) who showed high academic achievement to these locations in secret.

According to the Anti-Socialist Conscience Investigative Patrol, about 60 officials of *Sinuiju*, *North Pyongan* Province, have already been thoroughly questioned and/or arrested. Most of them are being held on suspicions of "abuse of power, illegal patronage or accepting bribes in contraband crimes." Upon confirmation of illegal practices, punishment results in forfeiture of the guilty party's houses and belongings and expatriation that extends to members of his family. A police officer said, "About twenty officials were formally charged for misconduct and they may even face execution by a firing squad." Other districts are also investigating with similar extremity as in *Sinuiju*.

### [Society]

#### **Direness of Food Shortage Is Unprecedented, Says Official in *Pyongyang***

A high-ranking official in *Pyongyang* said, "This year, the severity in food shortages is unprecedented." Deeply concerned, he added: "This year's harvest marks an all-time historic low. We have conducted agricultural surveys and found that crops haven't done well since the spring seeding in comparison to years past. We had unusual weather beginning in late May and lasting throughout June, having abundant rain for many days. Sunny days were rare, taking a serious toll on corn farming in the mountainous areas up north and in *Kangwon* Province. With cold winds and continuous rain, corn fields were flooded resulting in poor growth. Additionally, due to damages from swarms of insects and ineffective pesticides, a lot of corn crops failed. Other regions were also heavily damaged by the flood. We have had a lot of rain through mid-July, which also makes difficult to work in the fields."

"If this continues, it is expected that the annual yield will decrease by as much as 20-30% from last year's harvest. The national food reserves will not be enough to provide standard military rations. This means there will be no food at all to distribute to ordinary citizens. Due to the economic sanctions against us and no international aid this year, we are entirely dependent on our own harvest of potatoes, wheat and barley. But the gap between the supply and the demand is enormous. Reading the reports coming from

subordinate offices, I see that the majority is aware that this year's harvest is a disaster. Everyone is worried about how to survive."

"Some people cling to superstitious beliefs, saying that this year's leap month in the lunar calendar brings bad luck in the harvest. Others claim that it is not the leap month but the hunger of the farmers themselves which prevents them from working efficiently even if they had fertile land and a good year with good luck. Reports coming from the countryside include complaints of 'Students and other mobilized people are working in the farms without any fertilizer. How can we produce a lot while relying only on nature?'"

"There are exasperated words from people who are frustrated by the current situation, 'Everything should collapse, as soon as possible, with nothing left behind.' The Central Party is still emphasizing its ideology, but I cannot help but worry when I see the public's opinion. The government should import food in preparation for the possibility of sky-rocketing food prices. Otherwise I think there will be grave consequences beyond imagination."

#### **Arduous March is now for *North Hwanghae* Province**

A Provincial Party member in the *North Hwanghae* Province has been traveling from farm to farm conversing with local farmers about their hardships. Most of the farmers agree that this is one of the most difficult times that North Hwanghae Province has yet to face. The member says, "There are many farmers who say that it is harder now than the 1990's to maintain a family. It is especially more difficult for families living with their parents' parents or many children." He also added that there is an increasing amount of cases where younger generations are kicking out their own parents from the household.

#### **Son kills Himself and His Family after Treating His Father with Contempt**

*Kim Hak Chul* (alias, 40's) a worker at a furniture factory of *North Hwanghae* Province killed himself along with his family. According to a company official the circumstances of the case were. "The furniture factory worker *Kim Hak Chul* had been treating his father with contempt because his father was being perceived as burdensome and not contributing to the family. On June 27th *Kim's* father could not stand it anymore and went to the town office weeping. He told the secretaries that he could no longer live with this kind of treatment from his son and that he would like to be sent to a senior home. After listening to *Kim's* father, the secretaries visited the *Kim's* home and spent the day educating *Kim* and his wife. The secretaries also contacted *Kim* and his wife's factory to inform them of the situation and also obtained from the couple a pledge that they would take a good care of their father. After all these events, *Kim's* father returned home.

However, during the 150-day battle, *Kim* and his wife were made into examples of how to instill proper manners within the people. Although the government frequently engages in image campaigns, *Kim* and his wife were put under the radar at work and also at community meetings, putting them under constant stress. On top of the stress, it became increasingly difficult to support the family. Out of anger, *Kim* mixed rat poison into a soup and killed all of his family members including himself. Only his 11-year old son survived when he came home late after digging up medical herbs from the mountain. After finding his family members dead, the son quickly called for help but no one was able to be revived." According to the people cases where parents' parents are being treated with contempt are increasing due to the shortage of food.

### **[Women/Children/Education]**

#### **Youth Soccer Team Established at *Joongang* Athletic Institute in *Nampo***

*Joongang* Athletic Institute in *Nampo*, *South Pyongan* Province, plans to have a youth soccer team for children eight years and older with the purpose of improving the nation's physical education. They will be trained to be the nation's athletes. The youth soccer team is to be financially supported by the government. The athletes picked out for the youth soccer team are expected to study in the morning and practice soccer in the afternoon.

#### **Health Examination Result Shows *Gilju* Elementary School Students Suffering from Tuberculosis**

In *Gilju* County, *North Hamgyong* Province, the elementary students had a health checkup. The result of *Gilju* Elementary school (located in *North Hamgyong* Province) students health check-up shows that they are suffering from tuberculosis the most. From July 22nd through 24th, all students of the school had a medical checkup and it turned out that there were ten tuberculosis patients, ten permeation patients, three patients who needed to be isolated immediately, seven pleurisy patients. This is the second check-up since last year and the tuberculosis patients have increased compared to the previous year.

Although the increasing patients have hygiene problems, their nutrient malfunctions are an even more urgent problem. The teachers said, "In the summer there are many vegetables but we are giving the students just salted radish and bean paste soup. Now there are not even tofu beans, so we cannot feed them bean soup, which we used to give them once a week. On July 15th and 16th, we ran out of food, and the students had two meals of only potatoes every day. As a result, students who were healthy are getting sick as well as students who were already sick are getting worse."

## [Accidents]

### **Tunnel Collapse in *Kaecheon* Mine Caused Death and Injuries**

On July 6th, there was an accident in the 2nd tunnel at the *Kaecheon* United Mine Enterprise in *South Pyongan* Province. The blind end in the mine gallery collapsed, overwhelming six miners to death. Four other miners were trapped inside. The rescue began right after the accident, and the tunnel was reopened in 42 hours. The four survivors were unconscious and immediately sent to the *South Pyongan* medical university hospital. Fortunately, two of them regained consciousness, but the status of the other two miners is unknown.

Miners point out that management officials were pushing too hard to meet their goals set during the 150-day battle. They were working on pit prop repair two days before the accident, and the company insisted upon stopping the repair work to resume mining. *Cha Youngjin* (40s) criticized the management. "The party secretary (at the mine) and the manager both were eager to meet the goal of the 150-day battle and forced us to work for 12 hours a day. Our original work schedule is eight hours a day, and it is extremely hard to work for 12 hours. They didn't care about our lives. They just pushed us to meet the production goal at 100 percent every day," he said.

The safety bureau of the mine fired the primary party secretary, the manager, and the chief of engineers, holding them responsible for the accident and demoted them to work as coal miners for one year without a salary. The police officer in charge of the collapsed tunnel was sentenced to six years of re-education for the failure of the labor safety rules.

## [Editorial]

### **Surplus Rice Stock Should be Sent to Save Lives!**

There is a country where surplus rice is a concern. By the end of this year the rice stock inventory in South Korea will surpass over one million tons. Since the maintenance cost of storing 100 thousand tons of rice is about 30 billion won per year, the amount of tax money spent on storing one million tons of rice is about 300 billion won. The government has announced that it will purchase 100 thousand tons as a remedy for this problem. Also, there are talks regarding developing dried bread made of rice, rice instant noodle, rice bread, rice wine and rice pasta to encourage the consumption of rice. This is the current situation in South Korea as of August 2009.

A household where people eat three meals per day is considered a well-to-do home. We are talking neither about eating rice nor about eating corn

meal. We are talking about "grass porridge" although we're not sure if we can call it porridge because grass is diluted to the maximum in order to increase the quantity. People can't even afford to eat this grass porridge to fill their stomachs. That is the reality of rural areas in North Korea.

The major media channels in South Korea cite suspension of food aid to North Korea as the reason for surplus rice. Every year since year 2000 about 400,000-500,000 tons of rice was sent to North Korea, but it ceased last year. So, that is the reason for surplus rice. Some say that the level of rice inventory can drop 200,000 tons if North Korean food aid is resumed. As such, those who are in favor of resuming North Korean food aid just for the purpose of adjusting the rice supply are gaining support. Some of the farmers' organizations claim that the fallen rice price is causing a disaster for them and insist that, "Food aid to North Korea should be put into a law," in order to ease the rice surplus problem.

In South Korea, people are worried about a disaster caused by too much rice, whereas in North Korea people are concerned about a disaster caused by lack of rice. Since South Korea has to consume the surplus rice one way or another, there is no reason why they should not resume the food aid to North Korea. The budget earmarked for North Korean food aid in 2008 was 197 billion to 400 million won. Although not a single coin was actually spent from that allocation, wouldn't it be better to spend 200 billion won for North Korean food aid than spend 300 billion won for maintaining the inventory of rice? Wouldn't it be wise if we resolve the rice surplus problem and provide relief to the farmers while at the same time save fellow Koreans in North Korea from starvation? It is hard to understand why the government is hesitant about resuming food aid to North Korea when doing so is clearly humanitarian as well as rational. Perhaps their sentiment is such that they would rather throw away the food instead of giving it away as aid to spite the North Korean government. However, we must not forget the fact that the starving children and the elderly are alienated people who are not cared for by the North Korean government.

The Minister of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries said on August 13th in an interview that, "Solving the surplus rice problem by providing food aid to North Korea is not the fundamental solution." It is questionable that the tariff policy being discussed within a related government agency is the fundamental solution. However, it is deplorable that "people" are invisible in the government official's view of the problem. We hope that government officials with executive power recognize the desperate people in life threatening situations separate from politics or ideology.

What would those starving North Korean people think if they hear that they are making dried bread and instant noodles with rice in South Korea because of an unmanageable surplus of rice? What a dreadful and shameful thing it is. What is more important than saving lives? How does it differ from dumping the rice into the sea because of a surplus? Why look for a complicated solution when there is a simple one? Let's send the surplus rice to North Korea. That is the humane and rational thing to do. That is the way to prevent the rice price from falling as well as offering a stable solution to resolve the current tension between South and North Korea. 🌸



**Good Friends: Center for Peace, Human Rights and Refugees**



## Please become a good friend of the Good Friends

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

Good Friends provides relief works for international refugees to become all lives' friends, 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 aid for them.
- 3) assessing human rights violations occurring in North Korea, informing international communities, and requesting that the North Korean government act to improve 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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#### Good Friends USA

(DC) 734 15th Street N.W. Suite # 500B, Washington, DC 20005

(MD) 4605 Powder Mill Rd., Beltsville, MD 20705

Phone: 202-824-0788(DC); 301-455-9196(Cell)

FAX: 301-937-0748

E-mail: [goodfriends\\_usa@yahoo.com](mailto:goodfriends_usa@yahoo.com)

<http://www.goodfriendsusa.blogspot.com>

#### Good Friends Korea

E-mail: [intnetwork@jungto.org](mailto:intnetwork@jungto.org)

Tel: 82-2-587-8996; Fax: 82-2-587-8998

<http://www.goodfriends.or.kr>

