



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.]

[Hot Topics]

Note: Hot topics of No. 312 were published as a separate issue.

[Food]

Food Rations not Given to Absentee Workers Taken by Other Workers
In *Geumya* County, Food Bought by Selling Material to be Used for Bridge
Construction

[Economy]

Public Food Distribution System used to Cover Food Shipping Costs
Grain collected after Farmers Labor Organizations Ideology Training
National Q&A Contest for the Farmer-Labor Organizations Officials Held
Nampo City, Emphasis on the Transportation of Rice

[Politics]

Heoryung, All-out Effort on Cracking Down of Drug Trafficking and Border Crossing
North *Hamgyong* Province Youth Special Labor Brigade, Little Accomplishment
during 150-Day Battle

[Society]

Youth Union, "Hair Style In Our Own Way"
Movie Artists Given New Clothes for All Seasons

Poor Business causes People Selling Phones in *Kangsu* County
Electric Meter that costs 70,000 NKW in Pyongyang Costs 170,000 NKW in Wonsan

[Women/Children/Education]

Hamheung Suri DongRyuk University collects Money from Students to purchase Computers

[Accidents]

Female Middle School Student's Leg Amputated due to Accident After She Attends a Call Out in place of Her Parents

[Food]

Food Rations not Given to Absentee Workers Taken by Other Workers

The food rations for the first half of October was distributed in corn to the factories and state enterprises, including railroads in North *Hamgyong* Province. Railroad-related industry received food starting on the 13th, while regular factories and enterprises began receiving food on the 16th. Factories brought moisture measuring devices and demanded that they be given more since the weight of the moisture should be deducted from the overall weight of the food. But the farmers, arguing against their demands, are saying that this year's harvest was poor. Attendance sheets were checked for daily absences and food was deducted for the days absent without excuses. This led to food being left over for each factory and enterprise. At an enterprise with around 200 workers, 1,500kg of corn was left over after distribution. In many cases, the workers use this food as they please. However, in the official ledger, they record the food as being spent to purchase work-related material.

In Geumya County, Food Bought by Selling Material to be Used for Bridge Construction

In Geumya County, South Hamgyong Province, the military began the construction of the Geumya Bridge by using its own resources. They are providing one meal per day to the laborers because they did not collect enough food. They usually provide noodles, with only radish flavored by salt and soy sauce as a side dish. Although noodle is not fulfilling, the laborers have no choice but to eat what they can. Some workers are stealing cement and other construction material to sell to buy food. The managers yell and warn the laborers morning and night, to no avail. Thefts are continuing. Some laborers who are in worse shape than others often don't show up. It has become the job of head manager and cell secretaries to round up laborers by going from house to house. One worker said that, "Although our military try to plan and carry out its challenging goal of constructing this bridge using its own resources; it's a tough job as long as the food situation isn't solved."

[Economy]

Public Food Distribution System used to Cover Food Shipping Costs

Although prices fell in the grain market, offices of the Grain Administration Departments in the South and North *Hwanghae* Provinces and the South and North *Pyongan* Provinces have been unable to resume normal business. Each offices of the Grain Administration Department receive food from nearby farms, and it is up to the individual farms to transport the food to the offices. However, because of the lack of vehicles in the farms, the farms use cargo vehicles from factories and enterprises. Moreover, the factories and enterprises are deducting fuel costs from the laborers' rations. As a result, the laborers are not receiving their full rations.

Grain collected after Farmers Labor Organizations Ideology Training

On October 8, the Central Committee of the Farmers Labor Organization conducted ideology training with the agricultural workers to promote their active participation in the fall harvesting efforts. The main message was to encourage patriotism and to promote grain donations after a successful fall harvesting. In the North *Pyongan* Province, after a corn harvesting, the farm workers received 70 to 100 kg of corn. However, since October 1, they began collecting grain in the name of patriotism. The management officials of the *Woonha* collective farms in *Woonjun* County received a compliment for collecting 30 to 50 kg of grain before the instructions were given to collect grain in the name of patriotism.

National Q&A Contest for the Farmer-Labor Organizations Officials Held

On October 27, National Questions and Answer contest was held for the farmer-labor organization officials in *Pyongsung* City in the South *Pyongan* Province. About 1,200 officials, selected from every farm in the nation, took part in the contest. From June to October, the selected officials devoted their time to learning the politics, ideology and agricultural policies under the direction of the propaganda department officials. Many farm workers complained that work forces were unnecessarily reduced during the busy fall harvesting due to the Question and Answer contest.

***Nampo* City, Emphasis on the Transportation of Rice**

On October 1, the City Party Committee of *Nampo* City, *South Pyongan* Province, instructed the Ri Party Secretary and the chairmen of farms "to harvest rice without losing any grain." Because this year's rice crop production is not good, the Committee told the workers at the Propaganda and Agitation Department and the Committee to go out to farms in order to assure farmers that the farmers are the people who are in charge of the livelihood of the country. The Committee also instructed the workers to conduct a lecture to prevent rice-theft.

According to the Fall Harvest Report submitted to the *Nampo* City Party on October 7, the number of farmers who participated in the fall harvest at the Cooperative Farms in *Shinryung-ri* in *Woudo* County, *Ryoungnam-ri*, the *Doji-ri* port area, and *Shinheung-ri* was very low. At each farm, novice workers brought farmers who did not come to work to their farms. As a way to solve the lack of workers at each farm, the Committee decided to send

middle school students to the farms that needed workers for the fall harvest for 15 days. Another problem is that proper transportation for rice-sheaves is not in place. In order to prevent rice theft, rice-sheaves should be brought into the threshing floor as soon as possible. However, many tractors have been out of order and purchasing tractor fuel is difficult as well. Although farmers want to use working bulls (i.e., bulls raised to carry things and plow the field), many of the bulls have died because they were fed cornstalks in order to save the food for them during the spring lean season. However, after the long discussion between the Committee and the Farming Management Commission, it has been decided to utilize all working bulls to transport rice sheaves for factories, enterprises, the City People's Assembly and the Departments of the Farming Management Commission.

[Politics]

Heoryung, All-out Effort on Cracking Down of Drug Trafficking and Border Crossing

On November 5, *Hoeryung* City in North *Hamgyong* Province held a community meeting of *Osan Dong* Residents. The purpose is to reinforce mass political propaganda as increasing number of defection cases in which the whole family fleeing the country during the second half of the year. On the 7th, they arrested 35 'ice' (amphetamine) dealers and sent 27 of those who were dealing over 100g to the police station. The Security Headquarter arrested a nurse who possessed a fountain pen video camera at the checkpoint. Through this incident, the Providence Security Department arrested a primary party secretary and a doctor at *Yusun* Labor District People's Hospital, and 60 residents implicated in the case. City and County Organization Propaganda and Instigation Department issued orders to "Get rid of resident's fantasy about foreign countries, and engage a battle to locate 100% of those who cross the river to China or trade with China using a cellular phone."

North *Hamgyong* Province Youth Special Labor Brigade, Little Accomplishment during 150-Day Battle

North *Hamgyong* Province Youth Special Labor Brigade received an evaluation of little accomplishment during 150-day battle. North *Hamgyong* Province Youth Special Labor Brigade worked at several major construction sites such as *Bakdu* Mountain Military First Youth Power Plant (백두산선군청년발전소) in *Ryanggang* Province, *Ryeosung* River Power Plant, and *Mirubul* Watercourse Construction. The biggest reason for such poor evaluation is because of a large number of escapees. For example, the Youth Union from *Chungam* District in *Chungjin* City, North *Hamgyong* Province ran away about 15 days after the mobilization because of hard labor at the *Bakdu* Mountain Military First Youth Power Plant. From this incident, the Youth Union officials were criticized and punished by the construction site commander at the *Bakdu* Mountain Military First Youth Power Plant. On a daily basis the youth members mobilized to the worksite are asking each agency and enterprise for replacement laborers or better food ration. North *Hamgyong* Province Youth Union ordered all cities and counties to prepare uniform, shoes, gloves, toiletries and other supplies to send to the *Bakdu* Mountain Military First Youth Power Plant.

[Society]

Youth Union, “Hair Style In Our Own Way”

November 11, 2009, Central Youth Union Committee ordered, “We need to criticize those who models after foreign styles instead of our own.” Accordingly, Youth Union officials were mobilized to crack down on young people’s hair style. They announced at the Informant Lecture, “at the end of September, our Beloved Leader was on his way to a site visit and expressed a concern when he sighted the hair style of a sales clerk at the *Junseung* store by saying, what is wrong with her hairstyle?; That is not our native hairstyle.” and added, “Is she really our own Korean woman? Why is she giving up our own traditional beauty and chose to model bad foreign habits of the capitalist? He immediately ordered that women should not wear skirt length above their knee, tight pants, flared pants or anything that shows the contour.” They also identified the traditional market seller’s name, age, and position and proclaimed, “Young people need to dress and do their hair in our traditional style.” Currently, Youth Union officials in *Pyongyang* and other cities and counties throughout the nation are taking the initiatives and cracking down on hairstyle of students and young women. Women are prohibited to have color dyed hair, twisted up hair style, short hair cuts, and loosened long hair style. Long hair has to be braided. Men are prohibited from having hair length that is perpendicular to ear, regent hair style that are long in the front and short in the back or regent hair style with short front and short back. They are also prohibiting any dress with writings on it.

Movie Artists Given New Clothes for All Seasons

The Central Party recently gave a special privilege to the movie artists and reporters to buy new clothes at especially low prices. One official said, “One female reporter said, in a meeting where the General attended, that she was ashamed to be wearing poorer clothing than those she was covering. Once when the General was attending a dinner party, one actor was sweating profusely. He asked why and told him to take his suit off if he was so hot, but he wouldn’t. So the General found out the reason. The actor wouldn’t take his suit off because, underneath, he was wearing a short-sleeved dress shirt over his long-sleeved underwear. So the General gave a gift of new clothing covering all four seasons – including underwear, shirts, fabrics for skirts and suits, etc.” Because of the special dispensation by the Party, the artists and reporters were able to buy 1,800 Euro worth of clothing for only 20,000 NKW.

Poor Business causes People Selling Phones in *Kangsuh* County

In *Kangsuh* County in the South *Pyongan* Province, increasing number of wealthy merchants is selling their phones due to poor businesses. When businesses were doing well, these merchants purchased phones at great expenses, yet because of the poor forecast for businesses last year and this year, they are selling their phones. Before the currency revaluation, these merchants purchased the phone for 30,000 won, the phone line for 300,000 won, the phone number for 500,000 won for a total of 830,000 won. However, they are selling them for 600,000 won. The post office in *Kangsuh* County purchased four phones for the county people to use. However, because there is insufficient electricity, at

times generators are required to power the phones, which make the phone rates extremely expensive.

Electric Meter that costs 70,000 NKW in Pyongyang Costs 170,000 NKW in Wonsan

Before the currency reform, the basic cost to install an electric meter was 170,000 NKW. The application cost was 140,000 won with 40,000 won for the cost of electric wires. At one time, the locals complained why it cost 170,000 won here when it was only 70,000 won in *Pyongyang* for the same installation: "Is the electric company making a profit by buying the meter at 70,000 won and selling it to us at 170,000 won?" The locals believe that the electric utility company is making money off them. Park Chul-ryong complained, "Only the rich and powerful get to have electricity while those who are poor don't?" Members of the city Party, police, People's Committee, and others with social status can get electricity without needing electric meters. Those who weren't officials but could afford the 170,000 NKW installation fee received electricity. Ultimately, it was only the poor who had to go without electricity. Park said, "Laborers without money or status work hard all day and come back home only to eat from the light of candles or lanterns."

[Women/Children/Education]

***Hamheung Suri DongRyuk* University collects Money from Students to purchase Computers**

Hamheung Suri DonRyuk University in the Southern *Hamgyong* Province collected 10,000 won from each of the students in order to purchase computers for the university. On September 19, the university collected about 6,100,000 won from 630 students. However, because the collected money was not enough, they decided to collect again in November. The average allowance for students attending the university is around 90,000 to 100,000 won. During the last four years, many students were expelled because their families were unable to support them due to financial difficulties. On average, 40 to 50 students are expelled from the university for this reason.

[Accidents]

Female Middle School Student's Leg Amputated due to Accident After She Attends a Call Out in place of Her Parents

On October 16, in *Hoeryung* City in the North *Hamgyong* Province, a log crushed the leg of a 16 year old girl at a construction site. The girl was attending a labor mobilization at the factory in place of her parents. Because of the severe injury to her leg, she was informed that her leg needed to be amputated. The girl's parents begged the hospital to find another way, but the hospital replied that there was no other way. It is not uncommon to see other young students or the elderly who come to a labor call at the factories in place of their family members. Anyone who misses a labor call pays a penalty of 2,000 won and other workers are forced to stay late to finish the work of the missing person. Therefore, for families whose mothers must go to the market to make a living, they send either the grandmother or the daughter to the call out. A day after the girls' accident, one special labor brigade member fell from a construction site while carrying timber up to the second

floor. He fell because of momentary dizziness. Although he was immediately transported to the hospital, the doctors claimed he did not have a chance because of the severe injury to his head. His fellow workers were distressed because the accident occurred due to his poor nutrition at home and strenuous labor at the construction site. ✨



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' 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.

Currently, Good Friends is making efforts to improve humanitarian and human rights situation of North Korean people and to inform this situation to the international community by:

- 1) Collecting information on food shortages, public health conditions, education, the basic necessities situations and inform humanitarian organizations so that they can support North Korean people effectively.
- 2) Reporting the current human rights situation in North Korea where rights duly protected by law are being violated; assessing incidents of human rights violations in the process of arrest, punishment, and imprisonment and informing international communities; and requesting that the North Korean Government act to improve human rights.
- 3) Investigating the current situations of North Korean refugees in China, and providing protections and aid for them and their children in particular.

For these purposes, Good Friends USA publishes the weekly newsletter North Korea Today (English edition) to inform the international public.

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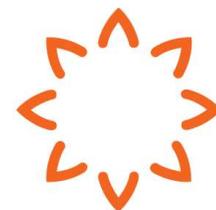
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