

TROUBLE AGAIN IN THE DPRK'S CHUNGJIN MARKET

Police recently clashed with women who had worked as traders in the market in North Korea's Chungjin, in North Hamyong Province, who were demanding that crackdowns in the market be less severe until city officials are able to supply food rations. This report was released on September 9 by 'Good Friends', a human rights group in South Korea focusing on aid for the North.

According to the report, on August 24, patrolmen carried out a drastic crackdown in the market, leading women claiming that they need to continue working there to occupy one area. Ultimately, fighting broke out between the two groups.

Women upset with the implementation of rules restricting market trading by women under the age of 50 also led an organized protest in the Chungjin Market last March, demanding that they be allowed to continue working.

According to local residents, this time, the families of the women who had traded in the markets were strongly resisting, causing authorities to become concerned. This has led Chungjin city authorities, after reporting the incident to local party authorities at an emergency session, to pass down an order to local police and market managers to "not crack down too hard until after the September rations are distributed."