

DPRK CRACKS DOWN ON INFORMATION LEAKS, TARGETS BIG SPENDERS

It appears that North Korean authorities have recently been focusing on those living above their means in its investigation to put a stop to leaking information to foreigners in areas near the North Korean border.

An insider living in a border city in North Hamkyung Province reported, “A Central Party group [tasked with censoring] anti-socialism has been carrying out inspections since last April in order to stem information leaks...among those people who travel back and forth to China in order to visit family, as well as defectors, some have been in contact with South Korean and American intelligence bureaus, and have received operating funds. An order has come down to search everywhere for people who are selling North Korea’s state information abroad.”

This investigation indicates that North Korean authorities believe residents of border areas are receiving financial aid from defectors settled in South Korea or other outside organizations and are passing information on North Korean domestic affairs. It has come to be known that in November 2006, North Korean authorities held a lecture specifically for border guards. The topic was “Selling information is Selling the Nation.”

The insider stated, “In this investigation, every household is being visited, and then the investigation is focusing on those living above their means or who possess expensive household items. Led by the party head of each neighborhood association, each family is being visited, with everything from job position and monthly salary to the standard of living in the home

being taken into account.”

In order to avoid being caught by the investigators, frightened residents are shifting appliances and other household goods from home to home. “It has been said that it is so serious, even investigators (regular police, security force officers, protection officers) are hiding things such as electric rice cookers, gas ranges, and color televisions.”