

**2009 WHITE PAPER ON
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN
NORTH KOREA**

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NKDB-2009 White Paper

2009 White Paper
on
Religious Freedom in North Korea

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Database Center For North Korean Human Right
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On the Publication of the "2009 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea"

The North Korean Human Rights Archives (NKHRA) of the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB) has published the "2009 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea" following a similar one for 2008. The "2009 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea" is a report on the human rights situation in North Korea based on the results of a survey of 2,047 North Korean defectors who have arrived in South Korea since 2007, as well as on analysis of 6,965 cases of human rights abuses in the North as of December 2008 (compared with 4,142 cases in 2007) and on information about 5,272 North Koreans involved in human rights abuses in the same year (compared with 3,131 in 2007). The details of these cases of human rights abuses in the North and information about concerned North Koreans are in the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database."

Some 345, or 5.0 percent, of all human rights violations were related to religious persecution in 2008, up from 138 cases, or 3.3 percent, in 2007. Some 252, or 4.8 percent, of concerned North Koreans were involved in such persecution that year, compared with 177, or 5.7 percent, in 2007.

No progress was made in the promotion of religious freedom in North Korea since the previous year. Religious oppression is ongoing with no signs of any improvement. There is a clearly increasing trend of cases of religious persecution. Despite this there has been virtually no outside intervention in North Korea's continuing denial of the freedom of religion nor its religious persecution nor outside support for victims.

Whilst religious persecution is not new in the North but since

2000, there has been a slight change in the religious topography there. The number of unofficial, behind-the-scenes and clandestine religious activities has increased little by little despite the North's anti-religious policies. Religious materials such as the Bible have continued to be imported. However the cases of religious persecution have also increased in number. Under these circumstances all religious people in South Korea and foreign countries, who want to do missionary work or engage in proselytizing in Korea, should urgently pay attention and give support to the North Korean people.

For the second year running, the "White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea" has been published in 2009 with the help of the Committee for the Reconciliation of the Korean People chaired by Most Rev. Lucas KIM Woon-hoe under the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea. I am grateful to the commission. I am also grateful to Lim Soon-hee, a research fellow at the NKHRA for her dedication to analyzing statistical data and putting together the tables for the white paper.

I hope that the publication of the "2009 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea" will contribute to promoting the freedom of religion in North Korea, and that religious people, both at home and abroad, will take an interest in and continue to support us so that the White Paper can be published every year. Last but not least, I want to express my thanks to North Korean defectors once again for their courage and cooperation in testifying for this White Paper.

February 2009

Yeo-sang Yoon

Director of the North Korean Human Rights Archives

On the Publication of the "2008 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea"

The North Korean Human Rights Archives of the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights has published the "2008 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea." The lack of religious freedom and the level of religious persecution in North Korea have been considered dire for some time but no objective and systematic data gathering and analysis have been made until now.

Whilst there is considerable empathy for the repression of religion in the North and many are very keen to carry out missionary work there, religious persons in South Korea have failed to focus on a continuous monitoring of the absence of religious freedoms and the persecution in the North and gathering objective data about them. Before we can take a serious interest in the religious situation and properly prepare for the proselytizing of the North it is vital to gather and analyze objective data on the status of religion there. It is only with such data that we can correctly understand the state of religious freedom and develop strategies and methods for missionary work in the North. There has been continuous persecution of religious believers in North Korea since the nation was divided. As a result, a large number of people have died as martyrs and many more have been incarcerated in political prison camps or other detention centers for a long time. Indifference to the victims of such religious persecution is intolerable to religious people.

Under these circumstances, the "White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea" will be published every year with the goal of systematically gathering and analyzing data on the policy toward religion and religious freedom in the North, thereby accumulating basic data on the matter, preventing persecution of religious believers, and developing means of rescue for victims of religious persecution there.

Our special thanks go to Committee for the Reconciliation of the Korean People of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea for its support for our compilation of data for the "2008 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea." We hope that the publication of this white paper will spark a keener interest in and encourage support for the efforts to promote religious freedom in the North and rescue religious persecution victims there. We also hope that South Korean religious people will help us publish this white paper every year.

February 2008

Yeo-sang Yoon

President of the Database Center
for North Korean Human Rights

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I . Outline

1. Purpose and Need for Publication of the White Paper

The "2009 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea" is aimed at systematically gathering and analyzing data on the policy towards and the actual conditions of religious freedom in the North, thereby accumulating basic data on the matter, preventing persecution of religious believers, and developing means of rescue for the victims of religious persecution there. Detailed publication goals follow:

First, the white paper aims to analyze changes in North Korea's religious policy and their causes.

Second, the white paper aims to analyze actual conditions of religions in the North and the current status of its religious exchanges with the outside world.

Third, the white paper aims to investigate and record cases of religious persecution and victims in the North.

Fourth, the white paper aims to provide a sound basis for the development of alternative policies that can prevent religious persecution in the North.

Fifth, the white paper aims to provide starting for the development of alternative policies that can aid and rescue victims of religious persecution in the North.

Sixth, the white paper aims to provide basic materials for the

development of strategies for missionary work and proselytizing of the North.

Seventh, the white paper aims to make relevant data on religious freedom in the North available for international organizations, foreign governments, and domestic and foreign agencies upon request.

The core goals for the publication of this white paper are to investigate actual conditions of religious freedom in North Korea regularly with a view to having a better understanding of the level of religious freedom, damage from religious persecution and types of damage and obtaining information on victims and perpetrators; and to develop means to rescue, and find ways of compensation for, victims based on this.

Currently, objective and detailed information on actual conditions of religious freedom and persecution in the North can be obtained only in a limited way. Nonetheless, the outcome of this research shows that religious persecution is ongoing in North Korea.

There has been a greater opportunity to access and gather information and data on actual conditions of religious freedom in North Korea in the wake of the increase in the number of visitors to the North and inter-Korean religious exchanges, and a series of mass defections. Accordingly, it is deemed timely to publish the white paper annually by systematically gathering and analyzing objective information on the freedom of religion in the North.

The South Korean society is charged with a historical mission to prepare for proselytizing of North Korea. Therefore, it is necessary to build a database on information about the victims of religious persecution there, as well as formulating strategies for proselytizing of the North through intensive and continuous

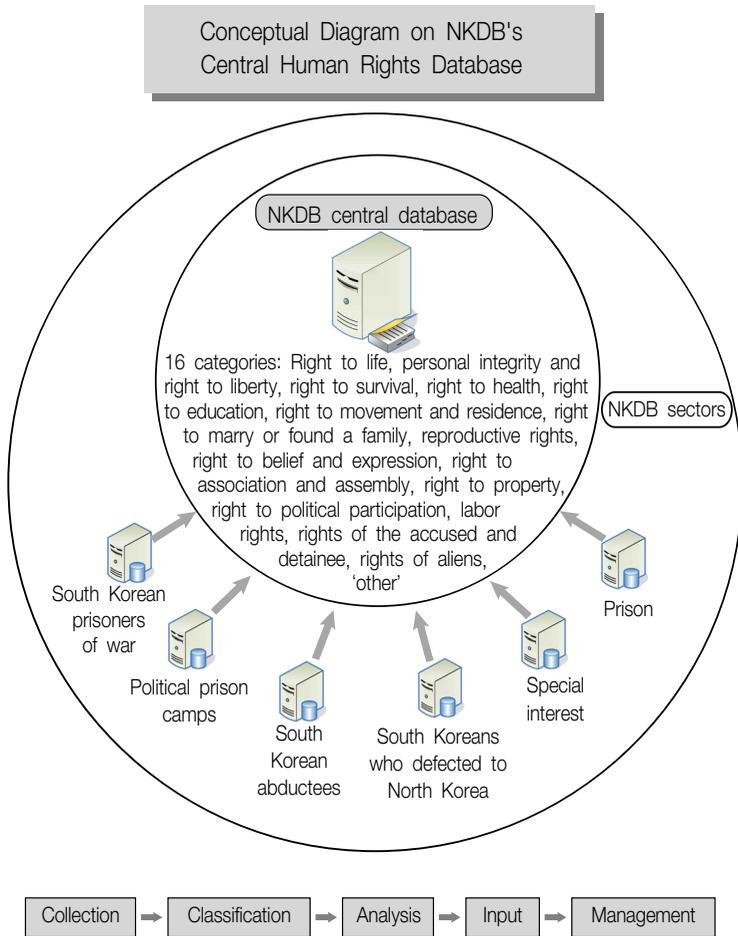
investigation and research about actual conditions of religious freedom and persecution there. Such a "database on victims of North Korea's religious persecution" will be utilized as important basic data for proselytizing of the North in the future and as a means to prevent religious persecution and rescue victims there.

2. Research Methods

There are many constraints on obtaining data and information on actual conditions of religious freedom in North Korea, because it is impossible to carry out an on-the-spot survey there. But since the late 1990s, it has become easier to gather data on the freedom of religion there thanks to an increase in the number of visitors to the North and a series of mass defections.

through interviews with defectors and content analysis of related materials. Such interviews were conducted as part of the NKHRA's efforts to build an "NKDB's central database" and an "NKDB's sector on religious persecution." Interviews were conducted with about 1,000 to 2,000 people annually. Currently, the NKHRA keeps files of interviews with about 5,000 people. But this white paper is based on testimonies by defectors, who have arrived in South Korea since 2007, and interviews with 2,047 defectors, who gave testimony on the freedom of religion in North Korea, as well as on the outcome of analysis of books, personal written records, academic papers, and newspaper articles.

Figure 1. NKHRA's human rights database diagram



The research for this white paper was conducted mainly NKHRA's "NKDB's Central Human Rights Database" keeps files of 6,965 cases and 5,272 people as of December 2008. Currently, the NKDB continues conducting interviews with

defectors to uncover the actual conditions of religion in the North and gathering data on the matter. Based on such data, the NKDB has published the "2009 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea."

3. Research Topics and Content

The main subjects handled in this white paper are North Korea's religious policy, its religious exchanges with the outside, actual conditions of its religious freedom, and people involved in religious persecution there and various methods have been utilized, such as data analysis, content analysis, and intensive interviews, were used concurrently for the research. Major contents of this research report follow:

- (1) Analysis of changes in North Korea's religious policy and religious exchanges
- (2) Evaluation of the actual conditions of religious freedom in the North and level of such freedom
- (3) Acquisition of basic data for building a "database on religious persecution victims in the North"
- (4) Formulation of strategies to prevent religious persecution and rescue its victims in the North

Research for the publication of this white paper is conducted annually, and will continue until the rationale for its publication ceases to exist. Therefore, the outcome of such research will be published in the form of an annual white paper. The number of research targets is expected to increase, depending on how many defectors flee North Korea, how many of them arrive in

South Korea, and how the NKDB is operating. Furthermore, this white paper will be more substantial in the future, with more data on religion in the North likely to grow.

4. Expected Effects and Constraining Factors

Until now, North Korea has been categorized as a country persecuting religious believers at the lowest level of religious freedom, and the number of the victims of religious persecution has been rising. And worse still, currently there is little reason to believe in a drastic improvement in religious freedom in the North anytime soon. Therefore, it is deemed very useful to systematically look into changes in the religious policy and freedom in the North, build a database on religious persecution victims, and work out rescue and prevention strategies for them.

Accordingly, we expect that the publication of this white paper will produce the following effects:

First, the publication of this white paper will contribute to developing a substantive understanding of the North Korean regime's position on religion and changes in it by delving into the regime's religious policy and changes in it.

Second, the publication of this white paper will contribute to predicting what religious policy the regime will take in the future by analyzing causes of changes in its religious policy.

Third, the publication of this white paper will contribute to understanding the significance of religious exchanges with the North by analyzing the current status of the North's religious exchanges with the outside, including South Korea.

Fourth, the publication of this white paper will increase

understanding of religion in the North by providing objective data on the present state of religious practice and actual conditions of religious freedom in the North.

Fifth, the publication of this white paper will conduct a survey of the actual conditions of religious persecution and its victims in the North in an effort to contribute to working out strategies to rescue them and prevent such persecution in the first place.

Sixth, the publication of this white paper will contribute to formulating strategies for missionary work and proselytizing of the North, given general conditions of religion in the North this paper is revealing.

Seventh, the publication of this white paper will stimulate interest at home and abroad in actual conditions of religion in the North, and serve as data for developing a policy to deal with religion in the North and as educational material.

This white paper can be used both as basic data for policy development and education and as fundamental data for formulating strategies for the rescue of religious persecution victims, prevention of such persecution, and missionary work there, as well as function as objective data for analysis of religion in the North.

But this white paper also has some limits and constraints as follows:

The first constraint is limited access to raw data. It is essential to conduct an on-the-spot survey in North Korea to obtain objective and non-biased data on actual conditions of religion there but this would clearly be impossible in North Korea. There also are limits to comprehensive interviews with defectors staying in South Korea and elsewhere, as well as North Korean government officials and residents who might be able to provide

information on religion there. Therefore, under these circumstances, we collected data based on interviews with defectors who have arrived in South Korea. And it is difficult to reveal how underground churches work in the North and how defectors have returned to the North after being proselytized overseas, because we have to protect them and help them to avoid crackdowns by the regime.

The second constraint is reliability of data. There is a constraint on the reliability of collected data due to the impossibility of conducting an on-the-spot survey in the North and limits to comprehensive interviews with North Koreans involved in religious persecution. It is necessary to cross-check direct and indirect testimonies, such as personal written records, given by defectors who have arrived in South Korea or stayed elsewhere. As for now, there is a limit to complete verification of such testimonies. But the reliability of data will increase gradually, because the more witnesses and the more testimonies we have concerning religious freedom in the North, the more chances of cross-checks we will have.

The third constraint is limited data gathering and analysis. South Korean and foreign people's interest in the freedom of religion in the North has increased. But religious circles have given not so sufficient support to, and have not taken as keen an interest in, the continued collection and analysis of data on actual conditions of religion in the North and regular publication of reports. Therefore, there are constraints to data gathering and analysis due to shortage in professional personnel and financial resources. These constraints can be removed if religious persons and governments at home and abroad take an interest in, and give support to, these efforts.

The fourth constraint is limited content and level of data. In most cases, we rely on memories of visitors to North Korea or defectors for information on actual conditions of religious freedom in the North, rather than on primary source documents produced in the North. Accordingly, as seen in the past, some of the data turned out to be trivial or spurious due to the short memory of testifiers and shortage of spoken testimonies.

Despite such constraining factors, this white paper is a serious report on the general status of the freedom of religion in the North, given that it is based on the outcome of a survey of 2,047 defectors, who have arrived in the South recently, and of gathering and analysis of most of the data available on religious freedom in the North.

II . Present Status of Religion in North Korea

1. What Religion Means in North Korea

The North Korean Constitution stipulates that the regime tolerates partial freedom of religion. But in fact, religious freedom is not tolerated in the North. Since it basically considers religion as something to overcome, the North has said it tolerates not a comprehensive freedom, in the usual sense of the term "freedom of religion", but only some aspects of "freedom of faith," as the Constitution stipulates.

As for the "freedom of faith" as stipulated in the Constitution, the regime is supposed to guarantee people's freedom to believe in religion, build facilities for religious rituals, and perform such rituals. But the freedom of religious activities, such as missionary work, religious education, or possession of the Bible or catechism books at places other than worship places, has in fact been prohibited. But even this restricted and nominal freedom cannot be enjoyed by all people, but only when the regime deems it necessary to use it as a policy tool for those among the supporters and participants of the socialist revolution.

Ever since the national liberation, the North has not given the freedom of faith to the opponents of the socialist revolution and religious persons have had to cooperate with the regime in

socialist construction for their freedom of faith. The regime's policy and attitude toward religion have varied from time to time, depending on the influence of external circumstances and the party's needs.

After the nation was liberated, the regime defined religion as the "opiate" and superstition, one of the remnants of the feudal age. Kim Il-sung once said, "Religion is a reactionary and unscientific view of the world. If they believe in religion, people will see their class consciousness paralyzed and they will no longer be motivated to carry out revolution. Thus we can say that religion is just like opium."

But the regime's view of religion changed little by little. Kim Il-sung instructed officials to separate "reactionary people who make ill use of religion" from "progressive religious persons," taking a forward-looking attitude toward exchanges with progressive religious persons.

The North's constitutional provisions on religion also changed according to changes in the regime's position. In 1948, the Constitution stipulated in the chapter of citizens' basic rights and obligations, "Citizens shall have the right to have faith and perform religious rituals." But the Constitution was revised in 1972 to the effect that "citizens shall have the right to have faith and carry out anti-religious propaganda." This revision in fact focused on the right to carry out anti-religious propaganda. But the 1992 constitutional amendment stipulated, "Citizens shall have the right of faith. This right guarantees them chances to build religious facilities or perform religious rituals. Nobody can take advantage of the right to invite foreign forces or disturb state or social order. "Despite a new proviso that allows for religious suppression, the 1992 amendment is regarded as an

improvement because it deleted the provision on "freedom of anti-religious propaganda."

Changes in the North's constitutional provisions on religion are as follows:

Table 1. Changes in provisions on religion in the North Korean Constitution

Year of Enactment or Amendment	Provisions on Religion
DPRK Constitution Sept. 8, 1948	Chapter 2 : Citizens' basic rights and obligations Article 14 : Citizens shall have the right to have faith and perform religious rituals.
DPRK Constitution Dec. 28, 1972	Chapter 2 : Citizens' basic rights and obligations Article 54 : Citizens shall have the right to have faith and carry out anti-religious propaganda.
DPRK Constitution Apr. 9, 1992	Chapter 2 : Citizens' basic rights and obligations Article 68 : Citizens shall have the right of faith. This right guarantees them chances to build religious facilities or perform religious rituals. Nobody can take advantage of the right to invite foreign forces or disturb state or social order.
DPRK Constitution Sept. 5, 1998	Chapter 2 : Citizens' basic rights and obligations Article 68 : Citizens shall have the right of faith. This right guarantees them chances to build religious facilities or perform religious rituals. The right cannot be used to invite foreign forces or disturb state or social order.

The North has used different definitions of religion, with changes occurring in the Constitutional provisions, inter-Korean exchanges being conducted frequently, and the regime's view of religion has changed over time. Such changes were clearly expressed in Modern Korean Language Dictionary published in 1981 and Unabridged Korean Language Dictionary

published in 1992. In 1981, religion was defined as a reactionary view of the world and as the opiate that paralyzed people's revolutionary sentiment. By contrast, in 1992, a relatively value-neutral definition was given to religion. More detailed definitions are in the following table:

Table 2. Changes in lexical definition of "religion" in North Korea

Classification	Definition of "religion"
<p>Modern Korean Language Dictionary (1981)</p>	<p>Religion is a reactionary view of the world or an organization with such a view, stressing that there is a supernatural or superhuman being like God, who rules nature and men, and urging people to blindly believe in and rely on Him, and preaching ideas of dreaming of a so-called happy life in the other world... Historically, it was used as a tool with which the ruling class deceived, suppressed, and exploited people. In modern times, imperialists have used it as an ideological tool to invade backward countries. Religion is the opiate that paralyzes the popular masses' revolutionary sentiment and encourages a principle of nonresistance, urging people to unconditionally submit to exploitation and suppression.v</p>
<p>Unabridged Korean Language Dictionary (1992)</p>	<p>Religion is a view of the world based on an absolute belief in a supernatural or superhuman being that people venerate by reflecting the social man's desires fantastically, or doctrines that preach such a belief. It preaches that people can achieve all their desires and enjoy eternal happiness in the next world only when they believe in, follow and rely on such a holy being as God. There have been many large and small religions, such as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, beginning with primitive types of religion.</p>

Besides changing definitions of religion, variations in interpretation of religious terms well reflect changes in the regime's policy. The regime has refined or taken out hitherto

negative interpretations or concepts of religion. The following table shows details:

Table 3. Changes in lexical definition of "religious terms" in North Korea

Classification	Modern Korean Language Dictionary (1981)	Unabridged Korean Language Dictionary (1992)	Korean Encyclopedia (2000)
Buddhism	It preaches ideas of slavish submission and a principle of nonresistance, reiterating the importance of putting up with all hardships in life to enter the Land of Happiness after death.	It preaches ideas of liberating mankind from distress and doing acts of charity, stressing the need to cultivate yourself morally or religiously to enter the Land of Happiness after death.	It preaches ideas of obtaining deliverance from worldly existence and reaching Nirvana by getting rid of all kinds of obsessions, suppressing your own desires, and cultivating mental discipline, considering that pain is the essence of human life.
Christianity	It preaches ideas of submission to the ruling class, while covering up and justifying inequality and exploitation in the old society, and using an absurd idea of going to Heaven as bait.	Main ideas of the church are equality and love for all people. It preaches ideas of going to Heaven if people follow the teachings of Christ.	Christianity is a religion that preaches ideas of saving mankind through Jesus as Christ, who is called Son of God.
Bible	A book consisting of false and fraudulent doctrines of the religion of Jesus.	A book with religious doctrines mainly in Christianity.	
Church	One of bases that disseminate harmful reactionary ideas to encourage exploitation of people under the guise of religion.	A building built by Christianity to perform various kinds of religious rituals and proselytize people.	A gathering place for religious followers where they perform rituals, such as worship services, baptism, and sacraments.

* Source: Ministry of Unification, "Outline of North Korea," Seoul, Ministry of Unification, 2004, p. 433.

There are several reasons why North Korea has apparently taken such time and effort to think about religion and taken even a somewhat forward-looking attitude toward it.

First, the regime has realized that a claim about the nonexistence of religion in the North could never be a matter of pride, but would only make it a laughingstock or a target of criticism in the international community.

Second, the North may have been motivated to take advantage of religion politically and economically in connection with its exchanges with the South. In fact, it was when full-fledged inter-Korean dialogue began that the North took a forward-looking attitude toward religion. In the wake of a food crisis after the 1990s, religious organizations in the North became more active, with South Korean and foreign religious agencies rushing to give humanitarian aid.

Third, the regime may have concluded that religious activities will no longer pose any threat to its security due to its thoroughgoing policy of suppressing religious activities. Religious activities shrank so significantly that they became nearly negligible, and the ruler has had them under tight control. Under these circumstances, it is difficult for religious followers to emerge as a political challenge group.

2. North Korea's Religious Policy

1) Changes in North Korea's Religious Policy

North Korea has adopted a so-called "parallel policy" toward religion, whereby it takes advantage of religion politically, but in fact suppresses it. The "parallel policy" is a dual policy

through which the regime tries to appear in the international community as if it is tolerating religion and guaranteeing religious freedom, while implementing a policy of suppressing religion internally. It is evident that the regime is only taking advantage of religion politically to seek practical gains, whilst in reality; it is destroying the very basis of religion in the North by getting rid of religious people and banning activities by religious organizations.

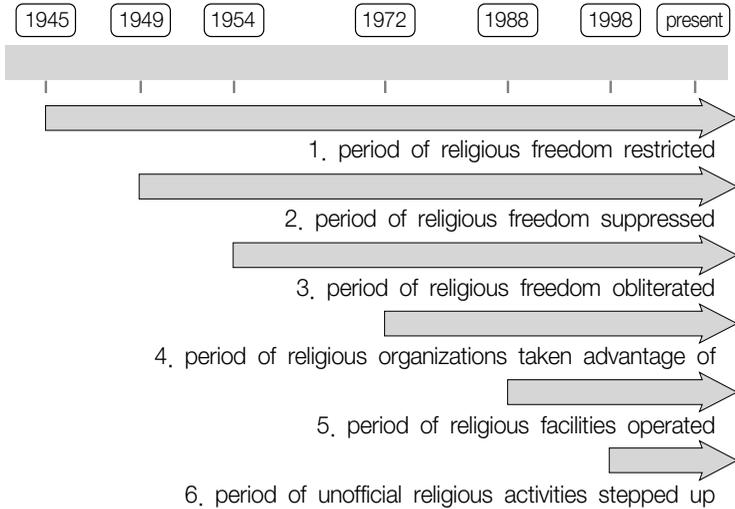
Especially, with the release of the 7.4 South-North Joint Statement and the first South-North Red Cross talks, both in 1972, as momentum, the North expressly stated people's right to have faith and carry out anti-religious propaganda in an effort to appear as if it had guaranteed its people the freedom of religion. But internally, the North continued to implement the policy of suppressing religion.

Notwithstanding the above, some concrete changes have occurred in the regime's religious policy. But it is true that it is still implementing the policy of restricting, suppressing, or even obliterating religious freedom. We are going to take a look at changes in the regime's religious policy by period, paying attention to such a parallel policy toward religion. Details follow in Figure 2:

Since the national liberation, the regime's position on religion seems to have changed, depending on non-religious factors.

Right after the nation was liberated from the Japanese colonial rule in 1945, the regime put restrictions on the freedom of religion to tighten the socialist control. After the DPRK government was established in 1948, the regime suppressed religious freedom by arousing the sense of struggle against anti-revolutionary elements and spreading anti-religious

Figure 2. Changes in North Korea's religious policy



sentiments far and wide to strengthen the socialist revolutionary force. During the period after 1954 in the wake of the ceasefire in the Korean War (1950-1953), religious freedom was eliminated, with religious organizations completely dismantled by the regime's suppression of religion and with collective resistance, let alone religious activities, disappeared. When people were forced to re-register their residence during this period, religious followers were classified as a hostile group of people, and were ceaselessly watched and punished.

In the 1970s, a change began to occur in the North's policy of obliterating religion. With the release of the Joint Statement of the South and the North and the first South-North Red Cross talks, both in 1972, as momentum, the regime publicized as if the freedom of religion were guaranteed in the North, and tried to take advantage of its propaganda as a tool to attain its political goals, including holding the South Korean government

in check and receiving economic assistance from international organizations. The policy reached its climax in 1988, bringing perfunctory and even qualitative changes to various religions. During this period, there also were changes in the constitutional stipulations and conceptual definition of religion.

In 1990, the number of North Korean defectors staying in China increased due to mass defections in the wake of food shortage, bringing about new-phase changes. While staying in China, defectors were naturally exposed to religion and engaged in religious activities as they were helped by religious organizations. However, unofficial religious activities were strengthened in the North as many of them voluntarily returned or were deported to the North.

2) Religious Policy in North Korea by Period

Periods of religious policy in North Korea can be divided and named differently, depending on researchers' personal convictions, values, and views of history. Religious policies North Korea has adopted so far can be divided into six periods: the period of religious freedom restricted; the period of religious freedom suppressed; the period of religious freedom obliterated; the period of religious organizations taken advantage of; the period of religious facilities operated; and the period of unofficial religious activities strengthened.

We are going to outline major events that took place in each period and their effects, and to discuss the North's religious policy in each period in detail. Major events that took place according to changes in the regime's religious policy and their effects are seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Major events concerning North Korea's religious policy by period

Religious Policy by Period	
Major Events	Effects
1. Period of religious freedom restricted (1945-1948)	
Aug. 15, 1945 national liberation Mar. 15, 1946 land reform	* religious activities restricted * religious organizations' property confiscated
2. Period of religious freedom suppressed (1949-1953)	
Sept. 9, 1948 North Korean government established May 7, 1949 monasteries closed June 25, 1950 outbreak of the Korean War	* anti-revolutionary elements removed * Dokwon Monastery closed * a policy of religious repression implemented
3. Period of religious freedom obliterated (1954-1972)	
1958 intensive guidance by the party HQs 1967 residence re-registration	* religious activities banned thru mutual surveillance among people * religious followers classified as a hostile group
4. Period of religious organizations taken advantage of (1972-1987)	
July 4, 1972 South-North Joint Statement 1972 inter-Korean Red Cross talks	* reorganization of religious organizations * constitutional provision on religious freedom
5. Period of religious facilities operated (1988-1997)	
1988 Bongsu Church built 1988 Dept. of Religious Studies founded at Kim Il-sung University Sept. 1988 Jangchung Cathedral built 1992 Chilgol Church built	* The North built religious facilities in a bid to appear as if the freedom of religion were guaranteed. * The North made the most of religion for political purposes.
6. Period of unofficial religious activities stepped up (1998-present)	
1998 mass defections from the North numbers of defectors staying in China increased the latter 1990s inter-Korean religious exchanges increased since 2000 unofficial religious activities increased	* religion propagated secretly in the wake of defectors' voluntary return or deportation to the North * South Korea's unofficial support for religious activities in the wake of increased inter-Korean religious exchanges

(1) Period of religious freedom restricted: 1945-1948

When communists tried to establish a separate government in North Korea with assistance from the Soviet Union after the national liberation from the Japanese colonial rule on Aug. 15, 1945, democratic and nationalist leaders, most of whom were also religious followers, opposed it. Therefore, the communists in the North tried to prevent religious followers from leading a religious life and seeking unity within their religious orders in a bid to tighten control by the socialist regime and break up the democratic and nationalist forces.

But as it was still young and it has not yet cemented its control of society, the regime, instead, adopted a policy of restricting religious activities, believing that it was not opportune yet to start suppression of the religious groups that maintained connections with various walks of life. So in the early stages of its implementation of religious policy, the North initially began by trying to deprive the religious organizations of their economic basis they needed for their religious activities, including missionary work. During the period of "land reform" that began on Mar. 5, 1946, the regime confiscated about 150 million sq.m. of land from religious organizations. When it implemented a policy of "nationalizing major industries" in 1948, the regime confiscated all properties of corporations managed by religious persons or organizations, thereby starting full-fledged suppression of religious persons.

In addition, the regime banned churches, cathedrals, and temples from receiving any donations from followers to cut off their sources of funding. While leaving religious facilities intact, communist party apparatchiks used all kinds of machinations to

disturb religious rituals in such as picking a fight with or blocking followers from going into religious facilities or beating them on streets, causing a disturbance during rituals, or blaming preachers for delivering reactionary sermons.

In late 1946, the regime began taking measures to restrict even indoor gatherings or rituals at churches and cathedrals. It also pressured churches into moving to other places on the pretext that noisy hymns were disturbing neighbors, openly interrupted rituals by sending apparatchiks into the churches, and harassed pastors and priests by branding them with disgraceful labels such as landowning classes. And in case of Buddhism, the regime redefined monks as managers of cultural properties on the pretext of preserving those properties and put restrictions on their religious activities, banning them from being tonsured and receiving donations.

(2) Period where religious freedom was suppressed:
1949-1953

The area north of the 38th Parallel entered a stage of intensifying and developing the people's democratic revolution which was then in full swing, with the DPRK regime established on Sept. 9, 1948 and the Soviet troops finishing their pullout by December the same year. The regime took measures to bear down on malcontents and reactionary forces, who might pose obstacles to it, in advance. In the same vein, the regime focused on consolidating a united front to strengthen socialist revolutionary forces and propagate anti-religious sentiments far and wide, as well as waging a struggle against counter-revolutionary elements.

Before the Korean War broke out, the regime began putting restrictions on religious rituals in 1949 and arresting dissident pastors and believers, while strengthening the control of its rear area in preparation for the war. The regime also began full-blown oppression of religion following its restrictions on religious freedom. When the regime gave orders for massive preliminary arrests to ferret out "insidious elements," anticommunist and antigovernment Christians were reportedly deported to mountainous areas in North Pyongan and Hamgyong provinces. Such measures were taken on the pretext of eliminating hostile elements in advance in a pressing situation ahead of a war. Similar things also happened in South Korea.

St. Benedict's Monastery in Dokwon, South Hamgyong Province, the largest Catholic Church's monastery in North Korea at that time, had harvested grains and vegetables and provided their own food by cultivating its own land. Its monks engaged in active missionary work and had a big impact on the residents living in remote highlands. In addition, it had served as the center for the Catholic Church in the North, maintaining connections with the Catholic Church in the South. For these reasons, the monastery had been considered by the regime a pain in the neck. The then Political Security Department began full-fledged oppression of the monastery after planning to confiscate it.

St. Benedict's Monastery was closed down on May 7, 1949 after the bishop and the abbot were taken into custody by the regime. The regime impounded the monastery and a seminary after it arrested priests of the monastery and evicted all monks from it. After they seized the monastery and the seminary, North Korean officials destroyed all sacred articles and artifacts,

including chalices, at the monastery without leaving any intact. In particular, they broke crucifixes and plaster statues to pieces, and used Bibles as waste paper or burned them. Finally, the monastery was turned into a school.

The Korean War, which broke out in 1950 and is called "Fatherland Liberation War" in North Korea, is the most important political event and it brought changes to the practice of religion in the North, along with the land reform in the 1940s. Until the war, the regime was very harshly suppressing religion as part of focusing on preparations for the war, while establishing a separate government of its own.

Before and after the war, the regime arrested and slaughtered Catholic priests. As a result of the communist terrorism from 1949 to 1954, 19 Catholic priests and monks were killed, 31 died in prison, and 61 went missing after arrest.

By the end of this period, the North Korean regime thoroughly suppressed religion in the North and church organizations vanished.

(3) Period where religious freedom was obliterated:

1954-1972

After the ceasefire, religious organizations were completely dismantled in the wake of relentless religious suppression, leaving no room for self-regulating religious activities or collective resistance. This period, during which religion was dismantled, was divided into two stages.

The first stage occurred between 1958 and 1960, during which an "intensive guidance" was given by the party headquarters. Under the guidance, a collective farm and labor

system was established, bringing all people under tight control and launching a system of mutual surveillance among residents. As a result, religious activities, if any, would be exposed easily.

The second stage occurred between 1967 and 1970, during which "residents were forced to re-register residence." The regime classified all people into 51 classes and gave numbers to religious people. The 51 classes were divided into three groups—core class (core masses), wavering class (basic masses), and hostile class (complex masses). According to this classification, religious persons were given numbers according to their religion, such as 37 for the Protestants, 38 for the Buddhists, and 39 for the Catholics. These people were classified as hostile people and so put under surveillance and punished.

In 1958, the "party headquarters' intensive guidance" led to building a system of mutual surveillance among residents. And in 1967, people re-registered their residence. At least in these two years, religions as faith groups and religious people as their members vanished. As a result, Kim Il-sung attached importance to these two years whenever he stressed the need to build a religion-free nation. After successfully having people re-registered residence, Kim admitted in his meeting with Ryokichi Minobe, then governor of Tokyo, in 1971 that there was no religion in the North.

In the wake of such thorough-going religious oppression, religion completely vanished from the North in the early 1970s. Religious events were not held nor were religious rituals performed by people. Public religious activities were no longer seen.

(4) Period where religious organizations taken advantage of: 1972-1987

In the 1950s-60s, the third phase of its religious policy, the North was able to concentrate on tightening control, shutting the door tight to the outside world. But in the 1970s, it was unavoidable for the regime to open the door ajar, given the inter-Korean relations, transportation of Korean residents in Japan to the North, and the need to maintain international economic relations. In the 1970s when the political situation became unstable in South Korea after the introduction of the Yushin, or the revitalizing reform system, the regime began taking advantage of government-controlled religious organizations in the North as cat's-paws with which it could sling mud at the South Korean political system. In this decade, the North began using religion as a more active tool of propaganda for its "great national united front." In other words, religion began functioning as a tool for the regime to achieve its political goals.

South and North Korean officials met officially, with the first South-North Red Cross talks in 1972 and other inter-Korean talks in the wake of the release of the Joint Statement of the South and the North in the same year as momentum. In this process, there was a keener interest in religion and religious people in the North.

With confidence in the socialist construction, the regime enacted the "DPRK Socialist Constitution" on Dec. 27, 1972, defining the Juche ideology as its official governing ideology. In Article 54 of the Constitution, it declared, "Citizens shall have the right to have faith and carry out anti-religious propaganda."

At the same time, three religious organizations, the "Korean

Christian Union," the "Korean Buddhist Union," and the "Korean Chondoism Central Guidance Committee," emerged. After the inter-Korean talks began in 1972, the North actually reorganized some groups, which had existed only in name, in a bid to appear as if freedom of religion had also existed there. Its reorganization of such religious organizations was aimed not at promoting religious activities, but at establishing a united front with South Korean religious people. Especially, it had a united front strategy to seek solidarity with South Korean Christians engaging in progressive antigovernment struggles.

(5) Period of allowing religious facilities to operate:

1988-1997

To date, the most meaningful and remarkable change in the history of North Korea's religion from 1945 occurred in 1988. All religions grew in size, and the conceptual definitions and the constitutional stipulations concerning religion underwent big changes.

The Protestant Church in North Korea had a historical experience in 1988, when Bongsu Church was built. The church was built with land and an interest-free loan provided by the state and donations by followers. In 1992, Chilgol Church was built with support from the state. These two churches were built not for religious purposes, but for political ones to comply with request by Western countries and out of consideration for visitors. Although they were built out of necessity and to comply with request by the outside, the churches were built with state subsidies. This shows that the regime realized that religion was no exception to the global trend of change, but was most

sensitive to reforms at a time when the entire North Korean society was under outside influence and was being forced to change. The building of these two churches carried great significance because it was the first of its kind since the Korean War, considering that the regime had not even restored buildings of religious organizations, including churches, which were destroyed during the war.

The Department of Religious Studies was founded at Kim Il-sung University in 1988, and courses on Christianity opened at the department the following year. This also was a noteworthy change. The year 1988 was also a historical watershed for the Catholic Church in the North. In 1988, the Korean Catholics' Council in June 1988 was launched as a central organization for Catholics in the North. Right after the council was established, Jangchung Cathedral was completed in Pyongyang in September with a mass was held at the cathedral on Oct. 1 that year. This was the first public Catholic ritual that had ever been performed in North Korea after the war.

An historic event for Buddhism in the North also took place. A celebration was held at Bohyon Temple in Mt. Myohyang on Buddha's Birthday in May 1988. On Jan. 15, 1989 and temples held celebrations of enlightenment nationwide. Especially, since the late 1990s, restoration and repainting have continued at temples in the North with the help of South Korean Buddhists.

In 1989, Chondoism also published a ritual manual, including Chondoist doctrines, a brief history of the church, and the platforms of the Chondoist Chongu Party.

The fact that the conditions for all religions in the North dramatically improved in 1988 was in part connected with the Olympics held in its rival South Korea that year. The North had

tried to regain competitiveness, which it lost to the South in the wake of the latter's hosting of the Olympics, with the approach of the 13th World Festival of Youth and Students providing some momentum. To successfully hold the festival, which was to be held in Pyongyang in June 1989, the regime needed to present a better public face on religion. Such measures were taken to show a united front. But clear changes were occurring in North Korea's religious reality, such as the building of sacred religious facilities and religious rituals being performed in what was a religious wilderness. The dynamic changes in religious reality brought about by central religious organizations under the regime's guidance from 1988 helped religion in the North adapt to socialism. This also paved the way for religion there to emerge as a universal religion.

(6) Period where unofficial religious activities increased:
1998-present

In the 1990s, religion in the North entered a new phase. The number of defectors increased in China as a result of mass defections from North Korea in the wake of food shortage. Defectors lived in China with the help of religious organizations and so they were naturally exposed to religion and engaged in religious activities. Unofficial religious activities increased in the North in the wake of their voluntary return or deportation to the North.

The return to the North of defectors, who had experienced life in foreign countries, including China, it became somewhat possible for South Korean religious organizations to give support to religious activities in the North, which, in turn, made

it possible for unofficial religious activities to increase there. Moreover, an increase in inter-Korean religious exchanges led to a rise in official and unofficial religious activities of North Korean religious people and organizations. Especially, unofficial support to the North by South Korean religious organizations and an increase in private inter-Korean religious exchanges have been bringing important changes to the religious terrain in the North.

The outcome of survey of actual conditions of religion and religious repression in the North shows that since the early 2000s, clandestine religious activities have kept increasing in the North. It is expected that such activities will further increase in the future.

But whilst unofficial religious activities have increased, so the regime has intensified repression on such activities, including voluntary efforts to learn about religion or possession of Bibles. Under these circumstances, conflict between the regime and religious people is expected to continue for a considerable amount of time.

3. Religious Activities in North Korea

1) Present Status of Religion in North Korea

As the North is a closed society, realistically, it is impossible to get a correct understanding of religion there. Most of the data on religion is provided by the regime and estimates made by South Korean religious people who have visited the North. Therefore, it is hard to objectively judge their credibility and accuracy. With such limited sources of data on religion in the

North, it is difficult to accurately ascertain the status of religion there, but we will attempt to analyze actual religious practice and repression in the North by compiling available data and materials we have gathered at home and abroad recently.

It is hard to deny the existence of religion in North Korea but it is currently used by the North as merely a propaganda tool for external consumption, not as a true expression of religious belief.

Currently, the key religious groups are Chondoism, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism, and the Korean Orthodox Church (Russian Orthodox Church). The Korean Council of Religionists, which consists of councils of religions, has existed since 1989. Table 5 shows founding dates, leaders, facilities, and members of each religion in North Korea.

Table 5. Present status of religious organizations in North Korea

Organization	Period	Present Status
Korean Council of Religionists	May 1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was founded as a council of religious organizations. • chairman: Jang Jae-On (Jang Jae-chol)
Korean Buddhist Union	Dec. 1945	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was founded as North Korean Buddhist Union, (inactive: 1965-1971)
	1972	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was renamed Korean Buddhist Union, (Chairman: Pak Tae-ho)
	after the 1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has about 60 temples, about 300 married monks, and about 10,000 followers. • educational institution: Buddhist Academy founded at Junghung Temple in Yanggang Province in 1989, but moved to Kwangbop Temple in Pyongyang in 1991.

Organization	Period	Present Status
Korean Christian Union	Nov. 1946	• It was founded as North Korean Christian Union, (inactive: 1964-1973)
	1974	• It was renamed Korean Christians' Union,
	Feb. 1999	• It was renamed Korean Christian Union, (Chairman: Kang Yong-sop) • two churches (Bongsu Church founded in 1988 and Chilgol Church founded in 1989); about 520 home churches; New and Old Testament Bibles and hymn books published in 1990. • about 30 pastors, about 300 preachers, and about 12,000 followers. • educational institution: Pyongyang Seminary(1972-1995, 2000)
	Nov. 2005	• a third church (Jeil Church) founded in November 2005.
Korean Catholic Council	June 1988	• It was founded as Korean Catholics Council,
	June 1999	• It was renamed Korean Catholic Council. • chairman: Jang Jae-on (Jang Jae-chol) • 1 cathedral (Jangchung Cathedral founded in 1988); about 3,000 followers; no priests or nuns,
Korean Chondoist Church Central Guidance Committee	Feb. 1946	• It was founded as North Korean Chondoist Office(?). (inactive: 1949-1973)
	Feb. 1974	• It was renamed Korean Chondoist Church Central Guidance Committee • chairwoman: Ryu Mi-yong • 52 temples, 250 officials, and about 15,000 followers,
	after the 1990s	• 52 temples, 800 home temples, 250 officials, and 15,000 followers.
Korean Orthodox Church Committee	June 2003	• chairman: Ho Il-jin • Construction began for Russian Orthodox Church's Jongbaek Church.
	Aug. 2006	• Russian Orthodox Church's Jongbaek Church dedicated.

According to the North Korean Central Yearbook published in 1950, it was estimated that there were in North Korea right after the national liberation approximately 2 million religious believers, such as about 1.5 million Chondoists, about 375,000 Buddhists, about 200,000 Protestants, and about 57,000 Catholics. This accounted for 22.2 percent of the entire North Korean population. However, religious people and researchers in South Korea believe the actual number of religious people in the North was much larger than this estimate. It is possible that there are nearly no genuine believers in the North today, because most of them defected to the South in the aftermath of religious repression by the North Korean regime after the national liberation; others were killed or went missing during the Korean War; and some abandoned their religious faith. Since the 1970s, religious organizations have engaged in religious activities under the regime's politically-oriented guidance. Statistics showed that in 2000, about 38,000, or about 0.2 percent, of the population belonged to one or another religion --about 10,000 Buddhists, about 10,000 Protestants, about 15,000 Chondoists, and 3,000 Catholics.

In a feature story in the Aug. 2004 issue, "Fatherland," a monthly published by the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Jochongnyon), publicized the number of followers of each religion in North Korea - about 13,000 Protestants and Chondoists, respectively, about 10,000 Buddhists, and about 3,000 Catholics.

As part of official data on religion published by the regime, a North Korean delegation submitted a second national human rights report to the UN Human Rights Council for review in July 2001. At the time, the delegation said that there were a total of

about 40,000 religious believers in the North --10,000 Protestants, 3,000 Catholics, 10,000 Buddhists, and 15,000 Chondoists. According to the South Korean government's estimate on religion in the North, there are three churches, Bongsu, Chilgol, and Jeil churches; 500 home churches; one cathedral (Jangchung Cathedral); about 60 Buddhist temples; 52 Chondoist temples. There are no Catholic priests, but 300 Protestant pastors, 200 Buddhist monks, and 250 Chondoist leaders officiate at services, the South Korean government also believed.

When these statistics are compared with those released right after the national liberation, everything, such as the number of religious facilities, believers, and priests, has been curtailed remarkably. Table 6 shows a compilation of data released by the North Korean regime, Jochongnyon, South Korea, and foreign organizations.

Table 6. Religions in North Korea (an estimate for 2008)

Religion	Number of Religious Facilities			Number of Believers			Number of Priests			Remarks organization
	national liberation	2001	2008	national liberation	2001	2008	national liberation	2001	2008	
Chondoism	99	52 (800 places of prayer)	52 (801 places of prayer)	1,69 mil.	15,000	15,000	—	250	250	Korean Chondoism Central Guidance Committee
Buddhism	518	60	65	375,000	10,000	10,000	732	200	300	Korean Buddhist Union
Protestantism	2,000	2 (500 home churches)	3 (500 home churches)	200,000	12,000	13,000	908	300 (20 pastors)	300 (30 pastors)	Korean Christian Union
Catholicism	4 dioceses	1 (2 temporary churches)	1 (2 temporary churches; 3 parishes; 500 home churches)	57,000	3,000	3,000	262	0	0	Korean Catholic Council
Russian Orthodox Church	0	0	1	—	—	5	—	—	5	Korean Orthodox Church Committee
Total	2,617 4 dioceses	115	123	2,322,000 (24.3%)	40,000 (0.2%)	41,000 (0.2%)	1,902	750	855	5

It was estimated that as of the end of 2008, there were 123 religious facilities, excluding home churches or places of prayer, 41,000 believers (0.2 percent of the entire population), and 855 priests, and that their numbers were on the increase.

2) Religions in North Korea

We are going to review how each religion has undergone changes in each period. We will look into the size of religious facilities, present status of religious organizations, and numbers of believers, with focus on Chondoism, Buddhism, Protestantism, and Catholicism.

(1) Chondoism

A. Activities

Around the time of national liberation, Chondoism had the largest number of believers among all religions in North Korea. At the time, it had about 1.69 million followers, accounting for 70 percent of all Chondoists across the entire Korean Peninsula. It was not only numerically large, but also exerted a strong influence through nationalist and religious activities, including organizing the Chondoist Chongu Party during the Japanese colonial rule and carrying out a new cultural, anti-Japanese movement.

In the North, Chondoism viewed relatively positively, compared with other religions, because it was nationalist and realistic, received farmers' support, and actively participated in socialist construction and the united front.

The Chondoist Chongu Party is the only religiously-oriented political party in the North and maintains connections with the

Korean Chondoism Central Guidance Committee. But in fact, whilst they are formally two different bodies these two organizations work as if they were one.

Table 7. Activities by Chondoists by period

Period	Events
1945	"North Korean Chondoist Chongu Party" founded
1946	"Korean Chondoism Central Committee" founded
1986-2007	Since 1986, the "Korean Chondoism Central Guidance Committee" has observed the founding day of Chondoism.
1994	It performed rituals for the national founder Dangun, engaging in proper religious activities.
2001	Joint Korean events were held, with a visit to the North by Kim Chul, the head of the South Korean Chondoism Central Headquarters, as momentum.

B. Number of facilities and leaders

Currently, there are 52 temples in Pyongyang and provincial regions and 801 places of prayer across North Korea. But Chondoists are said to use ordinary homes, such as apartments, as places of prayer. Ordinary followers perform services at "rooms for propagation of the faith" in groups of tens or twenties on Sundays. During services, elderly senior members called "dojeong" or "gyojeong" officiate at the services.

About 250 Chondoist priests are reportedly working in the North and they are officiating at all the rituals.

C. Number of followers

In a feature story in the Aug. 2004 issue of "Fatherland," the

monthly published by Jochongnyon, reported that there were about 13,000 Chondoists in the North. But the data submitted by the regime to the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2001 said that there were 15,000 Chondoist followers in the North.

D. Educational institutions

North Korea submitted a second regular report to the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2000. According to the report, the Korean Chondoist Central Guidance Committee is operating a Chondoist middle school. In 1989, the North opened the Department of Religious Studies under the supervision of the history faculty at Kim Il-sung University. The department teaches students about doctrines and principles of five major religions, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Chondoism, and Islam.

(2) Buddhism

A. Activities

The Buddhist temples in the North have lost their original meaning and functions, acting only as cultural properties and resting places for people according to Kim Il-sung's teachings. Similar treatment is given to other items of Buddhist heritage. In the North, Buddhists engage in activities only under the Korean Buddhist Union, which exists as a peripheral organization of the party. Nothing was known about Buddhist believers' religious behavior.

In 2000, Buddhism in the North was more active than other religions. The North has tried to renovate temples. It began the restoration of 27 buildings at Yongtong Temple in Kaesong in

November 1999. In December 2002, it repainted a total of 59 temples in various regions. The frequency of Kim Jong-il's visits to temples has increased every year, including a visit to Yangchon Temple in Kowon, South Hamgyong Province in June 2002. Especially, after the restoration of Yongtong Temple in 2007, many South Korean tourists visited it and joint Korean events were held often. But since the inter-Korean relations became tense in 2008, package tours to the temple have been made or religious events have become infrequent.

Table 8. Activities by Buddhists by period

Period	Events
Dec. 1945	The General Union of the North Korean Buddhists (GUNKB) was founded.
1946	After land reform, Buddhists lost their economic base and began decline.
1972	The GUNKB was renamed the Korean Buddhist Union (KBU). No remarkable activities were made until it was launched officially.
1976	The KBU became a member of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace. Afterwards, it engaged in activities as befits a peripheral agency of the party, including focusing on blaming South Korea at international conferences.
1986	The KBU became a member of the World Fellowship of Buddhists.
May 1988	An event was held to celebrate Buddha's Birthday at Bohyon Temple in Mt. Myohyang, the first of its kind in the North in about 40 years. Since then, the North has held three major Buddhist celebrations on Feb. 15, April 8 (Buddha's Birthday), and Dec. 8 all by lunar calendar every year. But the regime has used most of the time denouncing the South and urging struggle for unification.
Oct. 1991	High-level Inter-Korean Buddhist talks and a joint prayer service were held in Los Angeles.

Period	Events
Nov. 2004	Restoration of Yongtong Temple in Kaesong was completed and a dedication ceremony for a main building at Singye Temple at Mt. Kumgang was held.
Oct. 31, 2005	A dedication ceremony for Yongtong Temple was held. A seminar on the Cheontae Order was held.
Sept. 2006	The Central Laymen's Association of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism in South Korea and the National Laymen's Association of the KBU held a joint prayer service at Mt. Kumgang, the second of its kind since 2005.
Nov. 2006	A dedication ceremony for 11 major buildings at Singye Temple was held
2007	Package tours by South Koreans to Yongtong Temple began. A dedication ceremony for Singye Temple was held.
2008	Temples in the North were under restoration or being repainted.

B. Number of facilities and leaders

With no other Buddhist sects or orders, except for Jogye Order, existing there, the Korean Buddhist Union is controlling nationwide followers.

It is said that there are three temples in Pyongyang and 65 in provincial regions, and about 300 monks. The monks consist of "daeseonsa," "seonsa," "daedeok," and "jungdeok" in a hierarchical order. All monks are said to be married.

C. Number of followers

In the Aug. 2004 issue of "Fatherland," the monthly of Jochongnyon, reported that there were currently about 10,000 Buddhist followers across the North. The number was also confirmed by the regime in a report it submitted to the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2001.

D. Educational institutions

"Buddhist Academy," a Buddhist monk training institution established on Kim Il-sung's orders in 1989, is located at Kwangbop Temple. In 1989, the North opened the Department of Religious Studies under the supervision of the history faculty at Kim Il-sung University. The department teaches students about doctrines and principles of five major religions, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Chondoism, and Islam.

(3) Protestantism

A. Activities

After its government was established, North Korea tried to make the most of Christians politically, whilst at the same time suppressing them. As a result, the Korean Christian Union was founded in 1946. In 1972, Pyongyang Seminary was set up to train Christian leaders, but its operation was suspended in 1995. But with the assistance from the South Korean Christian circles in 2000, the seminary was reopened in September the same year and resumed education by teaching 13 students as a start to train future pastors who would work at Christian organizations. In March 2003, four graduates of Kim Il-sung University studied at Moscow Theological Seminary under the sponsorship of the Korean Christian Union. Since the founding of Jeil Church in Pyongyang in 2005, joint Korean events have been held more often.

Table 9. Activities by Protestants by period

Period	Events
Nov. 1946	The Korean Christians Union was founded as the headquarters of Protestantism in North Korea based on the North Korean Christians Union established the same year.
1972	Pyongyang Seminary opened. Its operation was suspended in 1995, but it reopened in 2000 with assistance from the Korean Methodist Church's western chapter in South Korea.
Feb. 4, 1974	Christians in the North began politically-oriented activities in the name of the "Korean Christian Union Central Committee" (chairman: Kang Yang-uk).
Aug. 2, 1974	The North Korean Christians Union applied for membership at the World Council of Churches (WCC). The WCC put off a decision on its application on condition that it would review the application after looking into the North Korean organization's activities.
1988	Bongsu Church was founded in Pyongyang.
1989	Chilgol Church was founded in Pyongyang.
Jan. 1991	The Korean Christians Union was renamed Korean Christian Union. Following Kim Song-ryul, Rev. Kang Yong-sop has worked as its chairman since 1989.
2001	South Korea began supporting the operation of Pyongyang Seminary.
May 2004	A joint Korean prayer service was held at Mt. Kumgang.
Sept. 2005	Reconstruction of Bongsu Church was underway.
Nov. 2005	Jeil Church was founded in Pyongyang.
Nov. 29, 2006	A joint worship service was held at Bongsu Church with attendance of 91 South Korean Christian leaders to concurrently hold a ceremony of putting up the ridge beam for the church.
2007	Preparations were made to open Pyongyang University of Science and Technology.
2008	Massive joint Korean prayer services were held: a dedication worship service for Bongsu Church held with attendance of 157 people; and 99 attended a prayer service for peaceful unification.

B. Number of facilities and leaders

There are three authorized churches in North Korea, all in Pyongyang. They are Bongsu Church established in 1988, Chilgol Church established in 1989, and Jeil Church founded in 2005. There is speculation that there are about 500 home churches in the North, but it is hard to confirm the allegation.

Korean Christian Union Chairman Kang Yong-sop attended the 7th inter-Korean Christians' conference on the peaceful unification of the fatherland and proselytizing in Fukuoka, Japan on Dec. 12-15, 2000. At the conference, he reported that there were 30 pastors, 300 staffers, and 12,343 Protestants in the North. According to him, there were about 500 home churches across the North, and Pyongyang Seminary, a three-year educational institution for pastors, had produced a total of seven classes of graduates from 1972 to 1992 but its operations were suspended. It reopened in September 2000, and 13 students were able to continue studies at the school for five years under full scholarship.

C. Number of followers

In a second national human rights report it submitted to the UN Human Rights Council for review in 2001, the regime said there were about 12,000 Protestants. And the Aug. 2004 issue of "Fatherland," the monthly of Jochongnyon, stated that there were about 13,000 Protestants across the North. However, a compilation of domestic and foreign data shows that there are about 15,000 Protestants in the North. But it is hard to estimate what is the exact number of regular attendants at North Korea's authorized churches and home churches.

In an annual report in 2009 on governments' suppression of

Christians released by Open Doors, an international missionary group, on Feb. 3, 2009, North Korea topped the list of 50 countries in the world that oppress Christians.

In an interview with Radio Free Asia, Al Jensen, the director of public relations for Open Doors, said that currently there are reportedly at least 200,000 underground Christians in the North, but that the actual number nearly doubles the estimate. It is rumoured that about one-quarter of the underground Christians are detained at political prison camps, he added.

D. Educational institutions

As Christian educational institutions in the North, there is Pyongyang Seminary and a program of Christian studies at the Department of Religious Studies of Kim Il-sung University. The seminary trains future pastors, while the university's Religious Studies Department trains future officials who will take charge of religious policies. Currently, Christian organizations give refresher courses to 30 pastors and about 300 officials.

(4) Catholicism

A. Activities

Around the time of national liberation, there were four Catholic dioceses, three bishops, 90 priests, and about 57,000 Catholics. After the national liberation, the regime's policy against Catholicism was particularly hostile, compared with a similar policy against other religions.

The regime made the most of Buddhism and Protestantism as political tools by making government-patronized organizations and cajoling their believers. But it did nothing like that to the

Catholic Church. From the beginning, the regime did not make any attempt to win it over because the number of Catholics was much smaller than that of other religions and Catholics had strong anticommunist sentiments. Moreover, the communist regime found that the church was not so easy to handle, due to the organized structure of the Catholic Church under the supervision of the Vatican and the presence of quite a few foreign priests.

Table 10. Activities by Catholics by period

Period	Events
June 30, 1988	The Korean Catholics Council was founded
Sept. 1988	Jangchung Cathedral was built.
Oct. 1, 1989	Bishop John Ik Chang, as a representative of the Vatican, officiated a mass at the cathedral, the first of its kind in the North since the church was closed.
Oct. 1991	The Korean Catholics Council published religious books, including prayer books, such as "An Introduction to Catholicism," "First Step of Religious Life," and "Catholic Prayer Book."
Jan. 1999	The Korean Catholics Council was renamed Korean Catholic Council.
1999-2007	The Korean Catholic Council received supplies from dioceses, the Committee for the Reconciliation of the Korean People of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Catholic Priests' Association for Justice, and the International Caritas in South Korea.
Mar. 2003	A delegation of the Korean Catholic Council visited Myeongdong Cathedral in Seoul. South Korean religious leaders and 105 North Korean religious people held a national congress to commemorate the March 1 Independence Movement.
Nov. 2007	The Korean Catholic Council and the National Reconciliation Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of South Korea discussed ways for South Korea to give help to the Catholic Church in the North.
2008	A mass was held at Jangchung Cathedral, with attendance of 96 people.

The Catholic Church in the North gradually disintegrated after it lost its economic base in the wake of the communist regime's land reform and nationalization of industries. But only after the Korean Catholic Council was founded in 1988 did it come back to life and resumed its activities.

On the surface, the North is stressing Catholicism's innate characteristics and functions. But in reality, the Catholic Church in the North also functions as the regime's propaganda tool as do other religions. Under these circumstances, the Catholic Church in the North is seeking to establish connections with the Vatican, not because of its innate connection to the Papacy, but because of the regime's politically-charged ulterior motives.

B. Number of facilities and leaders

The Korean Catholic Council led by Samuel Jang Jae-on, concurrently chairman of the North Korean Red Cross Society, is guiding North Korean Catholics' religious activities. In an interview with the Minjok Tongshin, an online media agency in the U.S., in July 2005, Kim Yong-il, chairman of the Jangchung Cathedral management committee, said, "There are a total of three parish associations in Pyongyang, and on the east and west coasts. And there also are about 500 places of prayer under the parish associations."

Members of the National Reconciliation Committee of the Korean Catholic Bishops' Conference visited North Korea in November 2007, where they met with senior members of the Korean Catholic Union Central Committee.

In the meeting, one of the North Korean officials reportedly said, "There are Jangchung Cathedral in Pyongyang and about 500 home churches in provincial regions. There aren't enough

Catholic believers for us to build more cathedrals. Moreover, it's all the more difficult to build new cathedrals, because most of them live here and there. Therefore, they lead a religious life at home churches in groups of threes or fours or more. But most of them are old. It isn't easy to bring young people into the fold. Most of the Catholics here had parents who believed in Catholicism in the past. But it isn't easy to trace their roots, either."

With no priest available, it is impossible to celebrate a mass or the Eucharist at Jangchung Cathedral. But a mass is held only when priests from the outside, including South Korea, visit North Korea. But priests have been ordered by the archbishop of the Archdiocese of Seoul, who is concurrently archbishop of the Archdiocese of Pyongyang, not to celebrate a mass at Jangchung Cathedral. The Vatican has also not recognized it as an official Roman Catholic church. Currently, there are no priests, monks or nuns in the North.

C. Number of followers

The Aug. 2004 issue of "Fatherland," the monthly of Jochongnyon, reported that there were currently about 3,000 Catholics across the North. This figure is identical with the number that a North Korean official told members of the National Reconciliation Committee of the Korean Catholic Bishops' Conference visited North Korea in November 2007.

D. Educational institutions

Nothing is known about any educational institution for Catholic priests in the North. In 1989, the North opened the Department of Religious Studies under the supervision of the

history faculty at Kim Il-sung University. The department teaches students about doctrines and principles of five major religions, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Chondoism, and Islam.

(5) Russian Orthodox Church

A. Activities

The Russian Orthodox Church has recently attracted the regime's attention. During a visit to Russia's Far East region in August 2002, Kim Jong-il visited a Russian Orthodox church, where he discussed with Russian officials ways to build such a church in the North. As a result, the Korean Orthodox Church Committee, a Russian Orthodox Church organization, was launched on Sept. 25, 2002. A Russian Orthodox Church priest visited Pyongyang, where he celebrated a Christmas mass in January 2003. Construction of Jongbaek Church, a Russian Orthodox church, began in Pyongyang in June the same year and was complete in August 2006. The church is located in Jongbaek-dong in Rakrang District of Pyongyang. With a 350 sq.m. floor area, it can accommodate 500 churchgoers.

B. Number of facilities and leaders

After Jongbaek Church was dedicated, four North Korean students entered Moscow Theological Seminary, an educational institution for Russian Orthodox Church priests, and graduated in May 2005. Two of them reportedly arrived in Vladivostok in December the same year to practice celebrating a mass for three months. Currently, there are five staffers working at the Korean Orthodox Church Committee. But it is unknown whether

the North Korean students, who studied in Moscow, are officially celebrating a mass at Jongbaek Church.

C. Number of followers

No details have been known about the number of Russian Orthodox Church believers in the North. But a recent report says that there are currently five such believers there.

D. Educational institutions

Nothing is known about any educational facilities for the Russian Orthodox Church.

(6) Shamanism

Shamanism was widely practiced in North Korea before the nation was liberated from the Japanese colonial rule. But after the establishment of the communist regime, the North launched a rigorous crackdown on shamanistic rituals, calling them unscientific superstitious practices. As a result, shamanistic elements, such as shamans, fortunetellers, and shamanistic shrines, vanished.

The regime says that shamanistic practices were eradicated in the North after the national liberation. But despite the vigorous crackdown by the regime, shamanistic practices have become very common in recent days in the North.

Recently, superstitious practices, including a cult of carrying talismans, fortunetelling, and face or palm reading, are widely practiced there. Furthermore, such practices have spread even to young people. To counter this situation, the regime is trying hard to prevent the further spread of such practices.

It was in the latter 1990s that such shamanistic practices became popular among North Korean people. According to testimony by them, whilst only a few numbers of houses of fortunetellers and shamans existed in the latter 1990s, now they do business even in downtown Pyongyang. It is no longer a secret that many senior government officials or party members clandestinely invite shamans to their homes to perform an exorcism. Such practices are still rampant, although shamanistic practices, which are considered unsocialistic, are obviously illegal and both shamans and their patrons are subject to severe punishment if found out.

According to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) 2005 Annual Report, shamanism and fortunetelling are very widely practiced in the North, but no substantial crackdown is carried out, because even the officials in the government, the army, and the State Security Agency, who are supposed to crack down on such practices, are seeking advice from shamans or fortunetellers. Their fees are very high. Normally, customers pay rice, domestic animals, or cash. But in some cases, customers pay the equivalent of their monthly salary.

Because of this, the regime has attempted to launch a massive crackdown on shamans and fortunetellers by organizing Antisocialist Activities Inspection Unit in major cities. But it seems unlikely that the regime will easily achieve its goal because shamanistic practices are now deeply rooted in society and residents adroitly avoid crackdown. Shamanism and fortunetelling are rampant despite the regime's massive crackdown and severe punishment against perpetrators. This proves North Korean people feel the pinch in their lives and feel very insecure due to serious economic difficulties since the 1990s.

4. Religious Exchanges with Outside World

1) Inter-Korean Religious Exchanges by Period

(1) 1945-1960s

As time went by after the nation was divided in 1945, religious organizations in the North and the South gradually became estranged from each other. In the late 1940s, their contact was completely cut.

(2) 1970s

Due to the release of the Joint Statement of the South and the North and the first South-North Red Cross talks, both in 1972, a mood of detente was created between the two Koreas. During this period, religious organizations, such as Buddhist, Protestant, and Chondoist unions, resumed activities. The regime took an interest in religion and the political situation in South Korea, stressing a united front with South Korean religious people. As a result, the first thing that the North Korean religious organizations did after they resumed activities between 1973 and 1974 was the release of a statement on the political situation in the South. Denouncing the political situation in the South, they expressed support to the democratization movement by South Korean religious organizations and their members. They also began issuing a flurry of statements urging the South Korean religious organizations and people to carry out an independent campaign for unification by achieving a "grand unity of the socialist forces in the North and patriotic democratic forces in the South."

After the early 1970s, North Korean religious organizations began efforts to establish relations with international religious organizations. The Korean Christians Union attempted to contact the World Council of Churches, whose headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1974. In addition, officials of North Korean organizations attended international conferences hosted by the Christian Peace Conference, the Asian Christian Peace Conference, and the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace.

Such activities were due not to the regime's pure religious motives, but rather to their politically-charged goal of making the most of religion.

(3) 1980s

The 1980s was a notable period in the history of religion in North Korea. It during this period that Protestant organizations carried out most remarkable activities there. At the time, inter-Korean religious talks had begun, with a focus on Christians. Protestant and Catholic churches were built in the North for the first time after the Korean War. In the latter 1980s, Christians in the North gained political status and influence through exchanges with international and South Korean religious organizations.

After the mid-1980s, there was a sharp increase in the number of foreign religious people visiting the North. Likewise, an increasing number of North Korean religious people visited foreign religious organizations or attended religious conferences. Officials of the Korean Christian Union attended a general congress of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1987, a conference of the World Council of Churches' Central Committee in 1989, and a general congress of the WCC in 1991.

(4) 1990s

There were more exchanges between South and North Korean religious organizations in the 1990s than in the 80s. Among the reasons for more religious exchanges between the South and the North was South Korea's enactment of "law on inter-Korean exchange and cooperation" on Aug. 1, 1990, which legally guarantees inter-Korean exchanges, and the severe natural disasters that took place in the North in years after 1994. In the wake of damage from a hail storm in 1994 and severe flood in July and September 1995, the North Korean government received economic assistance from the international community.

In the 1990s when the North suffered economic difficulties, South Korean religious circles carried out humanitarian campaigns to help it, including sending rice in 1990 and medicine in 1991. In 1995, South Korean religious circles more actively supported North Korea under the influence of the international society's assistance for North Korean people as part of an independent civic movement.

In the 1990s, inter-Korean religious exchanges, which had focused on Protestantism, Catholicism, and Buddhism, spread to Chondoism, Won-Buddhism, and the Unification Church.

(5) After the 2000s

A. Inter-Korean religious exchanges

Inter-Korean religious exchanges have continued and consistently center on Protestant, Catholic, Buddhism, and national religious organizations based on South Korean religious peoples' interest in proselytizing of North Korean people and on their humanitarian motivation to help the North. Especially since

Table 11. Cooperation projects in the religious sector since 2000

Year	South Korean Organization	Project	Remarks
2003	Church Evangelism General Assembly in Korea	construction of an education center of the Korean Christian Union and Pyongyang Seminary	completed
	The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism	repainting of temples in the North and other events	completed
2004	The Cheontae Order of Korean Buddhism	restoration of Yongtong Temple in Kaesong	completed
2005	The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea	construction of Jeil Church in Pyongyang	completed
	The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism	restoration of Singye Temple in Mt. Kumgang	completed (Oct. 2007)
	The Northeast Asian Council of the Korean Nation	installation of refrigeration facilities for Bongsu Bread Factory	completed
	The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea	support and supply of materials for Bibles and hymn books	completed
	The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea	support for construction of Woesong Apple Orchard	completed
	The Korean Methodist Church's western chapter	support for the operation of Pyongyang Seminary	in progress
	Good News Mission	reconstruction of Bongsu Church and its mission education center	completed
2006	The Catholic Archdiocese of Seoul	support for the construction of a Sunday school at Jangchung Cathedral	-
2007	The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism	restoration of Singye Temple	completed
	The Cheontae Order of Korean Buddhism	pilgrimage tours to Yongtong Temple	completed
	Yoido Full Gospel Church	a plan for the construction of Rev. David Yonggi Cho Heart Hospital in Pyongyang	-
2008	Protestant circles	massive joint Korean prayer services were held, including a worship service for the dedication of Bongsu Church (attendance of 157 people) and a prayer service for peaceful unification (attendance of 99); and humanitarian aid continued	
	Buddhist circles	restoration of temples and humanitarian aid continued	-
	Catholic circles	a mass was held at Jangchung Cathedral (attendance of 96); and humanitarian aid continued	

* Sources: Ministry of Unification data submitted to the National Assembly in 2007 and the ministry's 2008 white paper on unification

the early 2000s, South Koreans have concentrated on substantial religious exchange and cooperation with the North, instead of humanitarian support they gave in the past. Accordingly, the two Koreas have pushed jointly for, and succeeded in, restoration of religious facilities in the North, in addition to simple exchanges between them. But after the inauguration of the Lee Myung-bak administration in 2008, the inter-Korean relations have become tense and inter-Korean religious exchanges have been affected to an extent.

Table 11 shows a list of cooperation projects that have been implemented between South and North Korean religious organizations until 2008 since 2000.

Recently, North Korea has been active in exchanges with South Korea through religious organizations. On Mar. 1, 2003, 105 North Korean religious people visited Seoul and held a "national congress to commemorate the March 1 Independence Movement" jointly with their South Korean counterparts.

Construction of Pyongyang University of Science and Technology, the first university to be established in collaboration among South and North Korean, and overseas Christians, began in Sungli-dong, Rakrang District, Seoul in June 2002, and was to open in 2008. Its opening is very significant for the North's opening up of education, as it is the first of its kind since the regime's establishment. Its construction is also a great achievement in inter-Korean religious exchanges.

The South Korean Buddhist circles are supporting the North in restoring temples, which carries dual significance in realizing active inter-Korean religious exchanges, and carrying out joint Korean excavation and restoration of cultural sites there. In addition, despite the tense inter-Korean relations, South Korean

religious circles as a whole have achieved certain success in their support for the North's medical and health programs, and welfare for babies and infants.

The South Korean Catholic Church has maintained religious ties with Jangchung Cathedral, while continuing to support projects for the North by various dioceses and Committee for the Reconciliation of the Korean People of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea. In 2008, 96 people attended a mass at Jangchung Cathedral.

B. Inter-Korean exchanges of religious people

Since the "basic guideline on inter-Korean exchange and cooperation" came into force on June 12, 1989, a total of 7,950 South Korean religious people had visited the North on 352 occasions as of the end of November 2007. The frequency of visits to the North by South Korean Protestants is significantly more than that by Catholics, Buddhists, or Won Buddhists. A total of 4,899 South and North Korean religious persons exchanged visits in 2007, up 45 percent from 3,376 in 2006. Despite a slight year-on-year drop in numbers, 597 South Korean religious persons visited the North on 54 occasions in 2008.

As well as visits to the North to restore the Buddhist temples in 2008, large numbers of South Koreans also attended massive joint prayer services held there, including 157 people who attended a dedication ceremony at Bongsu Church in Pyongyang; 99 who attended a prayer service for peaceful unification; and 96 who attended a mass at Jangchung Cathedral.

Generally speaking, the frequency of South Korean religious peoples' visits to the North has been on the rise. But such visits

have been suspended and resumed alternately, depending on the political situation in the South and the North. The number of visits to South Korea by North Korean religious people has been negligible compared to those by South Koreans to the North.

Inter-Korean religious exchanges have been made directly between the two sides. Such exchanges have been further encouraged by visits to the North by Korean religious people residing overseas, because South and North Korean religious people have arranged many of these visits.

2) Religious Exchanges between International Religious Organizations and North Korea

The regime has allowed religious organizations to maintain religious exchanges with international organizations. It conducted lively exchanges with religious organizations in Europe and the U.S. after the 1990s. In 1995, the North invited American missionary organizations to Pyongyang as part of its efforts to improve ties with the U.S. A delegation led by Rev. Kang Yong-sop, chairman of the Korean Christian Union Central Committee, had a busy schedule in the U.S. for a month. In addition, members of the Korean Christian Union attended a general congress of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1987, a conference of the WCC Central Committee in 1989, and the WCC's general congress in 1991.

But the North Korean religious organizations are focused on winning aid from foreign religious organizations or international agencies, and not trying to guarantee and support the freedom of religion. The regime seems to be making the most of religion

as a kind of tool to "earn dollars," a tool to improve ties with the Western countries and receive more humanitarian aid from them. As it became difficult to tighten control due to severe food shortage after Kim Il-sung's death, the regime has tried to keep balance among various religions through contacts with a variety of religious denominations, while continuing to suppress religious activities internally.

III. Present Status of Religious Freedom in North Korea

1. Level of Religious Freedom in North Korea

1) Outline

We have conducted a structured survey of North Korean defectors, who have arrived in South Korea after 2007, to measure the recent level of the freedom of religion in North Korea. The survey was conducted among a total of 2,047 defectors, 755 who arrived in 2007 and 1,292 who arrived in 2008, at the time of their respective arrivals.

This survey was conducted as part of the NKDB's research on victims of human rights abuses in North Korea. Its outcome is recorded in the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database" kept by the NKHRA.

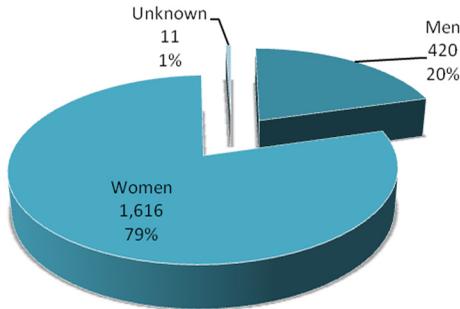
The following is the demographic background of the interviewees, who participated in the measurement of the level of the freedom of religion in the North for the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database": First of all, all of the interviewees are defectors who arrived in South Korea in 2007 or 2008. We targeted defectors, who arrived only after 2007, as we needed latest information on North Korea to find out actual conditions of religious freedom in the North.

The gender distribution of the interviewees was 20.5 percent

of men and 78.9 percent of women, which reflects the total gender composition of all defectors who arrived in the South after 2007. But the ratio of female defectors, who arrived very recently, has gradually increased to 80 percent.

Table 12. Interviewees by gender

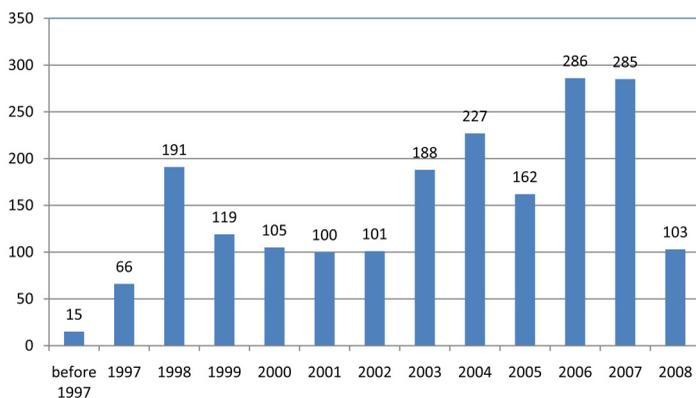
Gender	Number	Ratio (%)
Men	420	20,5
Women	1,616	78,9
Unknown	11	0,5
Total	2,047	100,0



Asked when they fled the North, 19.3 percent of the interviewees said they left the North between 1997, when mass defections occurred, and 1999; 0.8 percent said they left the North before 1997; but the majority, or 79.9 percent, said they left the North after 2000. The yearly ratios of defectors fleeing the North are found to be almost identical with the ratios of defectors arriving in the South in 2007 alone. This outcome shows that most of the defectors, who arrived in the South

Table 13. Interviewees by year of defection

Year	Number	Ratio (%)
before 1997	15	0,8
1997	66	3,4
1998	191	9,8
1999	119	6,1
2000	105	5,4
2001	100	5,1
2002	101	5,2
2003	188	9,7
2004	227	11,7
2005	162	8,3
2006	286	14,7
2007	285	14,6
2008	103	5,3
Total	2,047 (99 omitted from the questionnaire report)	100,0



recently, had stayed in China for an extended period of time, and that a mere 5.3 percent of them fled the North in 2008 and arrived in the South the same year. To sum up, it seems clear that the number of North Koreans fleeing the North has become stabilized recently.

Especially, two specific years, 2006 and 2007, saw the percentages of North Koreans fleeing the North soar highest to 14.7 percent and 14.6 percent, respectively. Remarkably, the ratio of North Koreans fleeing the North after 2004 stood at 54.6 percent of the total. This proves that the outcome of our survey reflects the latest situation in North Korea.

In terms of regions where they had lived before they escaped from the North, most, or 72.1 percent, of the defectors surveyed are found to come from North Hamgyong Province. If those from South Hamgyong are included, those from both Hamgyong provinces account for the absolute majority of defectors at 81.4 percent. When it comes to other regions, except for 7.6 percent from Yanggang Province, the average ratio of defectors from other provinces is less than 3 percent. The ratios of those from Hamgyong provinces were still high in 2007 and 2008. 2007's ratio stood at 84.2 percent, showing a 2.8 percent difference from the 2008's.

This distribution ratio is probably identical with that of defectors who arrived in the South recently. This may reflect a bias in survey sampling. With more than 80 percent of defectors coming from Hamgyong provinces, it is possible that the information on actual conditions of the freedom of religion in the North mostly reflects events or experiences that took place only in these two provinces. Nonetheless, we can say that the outcome of our survey comprehensively represents the whole

of North Korea, given that the North maintains a unitary control system and there is nearly no difference in people's lives between regions, except in Pyongyang.

Table 14. Interviewees by region of residence in North Korea

Province/City	Number	Ratio (%)
Kangwon Province	32	1,6
Kaesong	3	0,2
Nampo	2	0,1
Rason	3	0,2
Yanggang Province	150	7,6
Chagang Province	16	0,8
South Pyongan Province	56	2,8
North Pyongan Province	44	2,2
Pyongyang	29	1,5
South Hamgyong Province	184	9,3
North Hamgyong Province	1,427	72,1
South Hwanghae Province	18	0,9
North Hwanghae Province	16	0,8
Total	2,047 (67 omitted from the questionnaire report)	100,0

By age, young people in their 20s through 40s made up the majority of defectors. Those in their 30s accounted for 41.8 percent of all defectors, followed by those in their 20s (29.2 percent) and those in their 40s (23.1 percent). In particular, those in their 20s and 30s accounted for 71.0 percent, reflecting the latest distribution of defectors by age groups. The age

distribution of all defectors showed no notable difference from that of those surveyed in 2007 alone. But the ratio of those in their 20s and 30s was down from 75.1 percent year-on-year.

Table 15. Interviewees by age

Age Group	Number	Ratio (%)
10 and younger	1	0,1
teens	12	0,6
20s	567	29,2
30s	812	41,8
40s	448	23,1
50s	81	4,2
60 and older	20	1,0
Total	2,047 (106 omitted from the questionnaire report)	100,0

2) Present Status

(1) Freedom of Religious Activities

Whether the freedom of religious activities is really guaranteed in North Korea is the most important question regarding the freedom of religion there. North Korean laws include stipulations on religious freedom, but there is no objective information showing that religious activities are carried out freely in the North. Asked if religious activities can be carried out freely there, 99.7 percent of all 1,762 respondents said negatively.

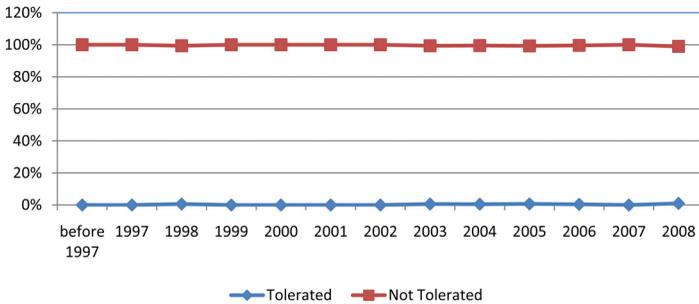
This shows that it is nearly impossible to carry out ordinary

religious activities there, although very limited clandestine religious activities are done and perfunctory religious activities are performed at North Korean religious facilities for special purposes. It is worthwhile to note that defectors, who fled the North before 1997, and those, who had escaped from 1997 until 2008, gave nearly identical answers. This also proves that the North has never tolerated religious activities.

Table 16. Whether religious activities were tolerated

Year of Defection	Tolerated (%)	Not Tolerated (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	0 (0.0)	13 (100.0)	13 (100.0)
1997	0 (0.0)	60 (100.0)	60 (100.0)
1998	1 (0.6)	180 (99.4)	181 (100.0)
1999	0 (0.0)	112 (100.0)	112 (100.0)
2000	0 (0.0)	93 (100.0)	93 (100.0)
2001	0 (0.0)	86 (100.0)	86 (100.0)
2002	0 (0.0)	89 (100.0)	89 (100.0)
2003	1 (0.6)	164 (99.4)	165 (100.0)
2004	1 (0.5)	216 (99.5)	217 (100.0)
2005	1 (0.7)	146 (99.3)	147 (100.0)
2006	1 (0.4)	249 (99.6)	250 (100.0)
2007	0 (0.0)	253 (100.0)	253 (100.0)
2008	1 (1.0)	95 (99.0)	96 (100.0)
Total	6 (0.3)	1,756 (99.7)	1,762 (100.0)

Figure 3. Can religious activities carried out freely?



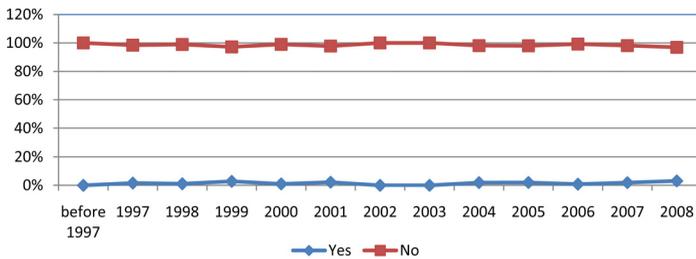
The regime says it is operating religious facilities, such as Protestant and Catholic churches, in Pyongyang, and that there are authorized home churches in provincial regions. To verify this, we asked the defectors if there really are such legal home churches in provincial regions.

Asked if there are legal home churches recognized by the regime in provincial regions outside Pyongyang, 98.6 percent of respondents said negatively, compared to a mere 1.4 percent who said positively. All of the 26 respondents, who said there are legal home churches recognized by the regime, turned out to have fled the North after 1997. This shows that in some cases, the regime has recognized home churches where people can carry out religious activities, albeit in a limited manner, in provincial regions outside Pyongyang. Nonetheless, the respondents answered only based on their guess that such home churches might exist. Virtually none of them had either seen such home churches with their own eyes or participated in religious activities at such places. Therefore, more intensive research is needed to verify existence of legal home churches.

Table 17. Authorized home churches in provincial regions

Year of Defection	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	0 (0,0)	12 (100,0)	12 (100,0)
1997	1 (1,6)	60 (98,4)	61 (100,0)
1998	2 (1,1)	182 (98,9)	184 (100,0)
1999	3 (2,8)	106 (97,2)	109 (100,0)
2000	1 (1,0)	96 (99,0)	97 (100,0)
2001	2 (2,2)	89 (97,8)	91 (100,0)
2002	0 (0,0)	96 (100,0)	96 (100,0)
2003	0 (0,0)	171 (100,0)	171 (100,0)
2004	4 (1,9)	209 (98,1)	213 (100,0)
2005	3 (2,0)	150 (98,0)	153 (100,0)
2006	2 (0,8)	260 (99,2)	262 (100,0)
2007	5 (1,9)	258 (98,1)	263 (100,0)
2008	3 (3,1)	94 (96,9)	97 (100,0)
Total	26 (1,4)	1,783 (98,6)	1,809 (100,0)

Figure 4. Are there authorized home churches?



(2) Participation in Religious Activities

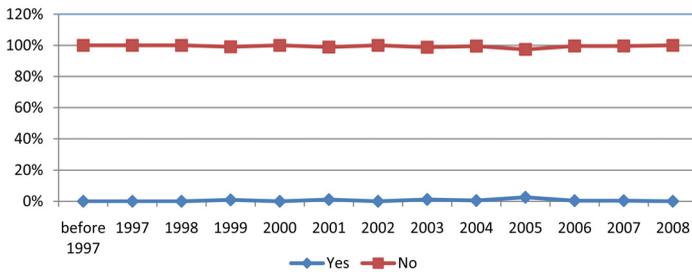
Only 11 respondents, or a mere 0.6 percent, answered in the positive when they were asked if they had been allowed to visit religious facilities, Protestant or Catholic churches, or temples in the North. It is not easy for ordinary North Koreans to visit religious facilities legally in the North unless it is an official event. But some of those who escaped after 1999 said they had visited such places, which shows that ordinary people are allowed to visit religious facilities, albeit in a decidedly limited manner. Nonetheless, only very few had ever visited such places to engage in religious activities. It turns out that it is almost impossible for ordinary people to visit such facilities for religious purposes. The outcome of the 2007 survey shows that only nine defectors, who arrived in the South after 2003, had visited such places. According to the 2008 survey, two more defectors, who escaped in 1999 and 2001, said they had visited such facilities.

Table 18. Visits to religious facilities

Year of Defection	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	0 (0,0)	13 (100,0)	13 (100,0)
1997	0 (0,0)	62 (100,0)	62 (100,0)
1998	0 (0,0)	185 (100,0)	185 (100,0)
1999	1 (0,9)	114 (99,1)	115 (100,0)
2000	0 (0,0)	98 (100,0)	98 (100,0)
2001	1 (1,1)	93 (98,9)	94 (100,0)
2002	0 (0,0)	98 (100,0)	98 (100,0)
2003	2 (1,2)	169 (98,8)	171 (100,0)

Year of Defection	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
2004	1 (0,5)	218 (99,5)	219 (100,0)
2005	4 (2,6)	151 (97,4)	155 (100,0)
2006	1 (0,4)	265 (99,6)	266 (100,0)
2007	1 (0,4)	263 (99,6)	264 (100,0)
2008	0 (0,0)	97 (100,0)	97 (100,0)
Total	11 (0,6)	1,826 (99,4)	1,837 (100,0)

Figure 5. Have you ever visited Protestant or Catholic churches, or temples legally?

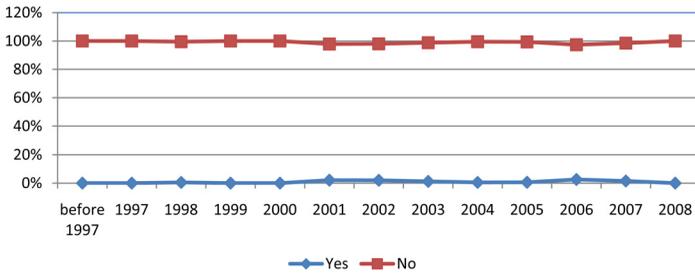


It is well-known that it is impossible to engage in free and open religious activities in North Korea. But it seems that since 2000, clandestine religious activities have been performed there on a limited scale. According to the survey, 20, or 1.1 percent, of respondents said they had participated secretly in religious activities. Since 2000, it seems clandestine religious activities appear to have been done in limited circumstances in the North given that 19 of them had escaped after 2001. Moreover, it is worthwhile to note that after 2006, the percentage of those who had witnessed clandestine religious activities in the North increased.

Table 19. Participation in clandestine religious activities

Year of Defection	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	0 (0,0)	13 (100,0)	13 (100,0)
1997	0 (0,0)	63 (100,0)	63 (100,0)
1998	1 (0,5)	186 (99,5)	187 (100,0)
1999	0 (0,0)	114 (100,0)	114 (100,0)
2000	0 (0,0)	98 (100,0)	98 (100,0)
2001	2 (2,1)	92 (97,9)	94 (100,0)
2002	2 (2,0)	31 (98,0)	33 (100,0)
2003	2 (1,2)	170 (98,8)	172 (100,0)
2004	1 (0,5)	218 (99,5)	219 (100,0)
2005	1 (0,6)	154 (99,4)	155 (100,0)
2006	7 (2,6)	260 (97,4)	267 (100,0)
2007	4 (1,5)	261 (98,5)	265 (100,0)
2008	0 (0,0)	97 (100,0)	97 (100,0)
Total	20 (1,1)	1,822 (98,9)	1,842 (100,0)

Figure 6. Have you ever participated in clandestine religious activities?



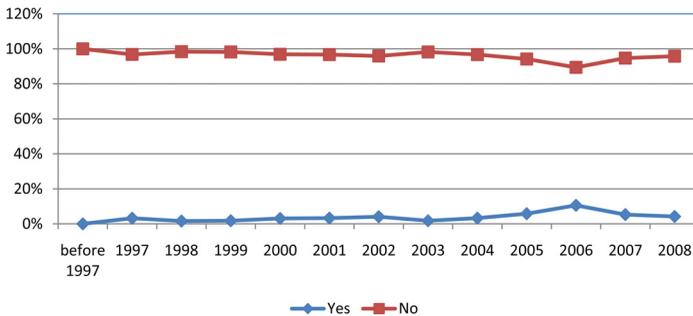
In an effort to look into actual conditions of religious activities performed in the North, we asked defectors whether they had ever witnessed other people engage in clandestine religious activities, even if they had not participated in such

activities themselves and 4.5 percent of respondents said yes, which is a relatively high percentage compared to 1.1 percent who had participated directly in religious activities themselves.

Table 20. Witnessing of clandestine religious activities

Year of Defection	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	0 (0,0)	13 (100,0)	13 (100,0)
1997	2 (3,2)	61 (96,8)	63 (100,0)
1998	3 (1,6)	182 (98,4)	185 (100,0)
1999	2 (1,8)	110 (98,2)	112 (100,0)
2000	3 (3,1)	95 (96,9)	98 (100,0)
2001	3 (3,3)	89 (96,7)	92 (100,0)
2002	4 (4,1)	93 (95,9)	97 (100,0)
2003	3 (1,8)	168 (98,2)	171 (100,0)
2004	7 (3,3)	207 (96,7)	214 (100,0)
2005	9 (5,8)	145 (94,2)	154 (100,0)
2006	28 (10,6)	236 (89,4)	264 (100,0)
2007	14 (5,3)	250 (94,7)	264 (100,0)
2008	4 (4,2)	91 (95,8)	95 (100,0)
Total	82 (4,5)	1,740 (95,5)	1,822 (100,0)

Figure 7. Have you ever witnessed anyone engage in clandestine religious activities?



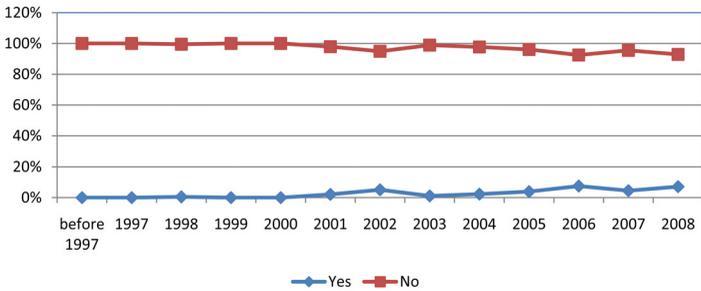
This shows that there are people of faith in the North who engage in religious activities individually or in groups.

In the survey, 60, or 3.2 percent, of respondents said they had seen the Bible when they lived in the North. Only one of them fled the North before 2001, standing in sharp contrast to the other witnesses who left the North after the year. Very few North Koreans had ever seen the Bible in the North before 2000, but since then a growing number of them have seen it due to increased imports of the Bible.

Table 21. Exposure to the Bible

Year of Defection	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	0 (0.0)	13 (100.0)	13 (100.0)
1997	0 (0.0)	63 (100.0)	63 (100.0)
1998	1 (0.5)	187 (99.5)	188 (100.0)
1999	0 (0.0)	115 (100.0)	115 (100.0)
2000	0 (0.0)	99 (100.0)	99 (100.0)
2001	2 (2.1)	92 (97.9)	94 (100.0)
2002	5 (5.1)	93 (94.9)	98 (100.0)
2003	2 (1.1)	174 (98.9)	176 (100.0)
2004	5 (2.3)	213 (97.7)	218 (100.0)
2005	6 (3.9)	149 (96.1)	155 (100.0)
2006	20 (7.5)	248 (92.5)	268 (100.0)
2007	12 (4.5)	253 (95.5)	265 (100.0)
2008	7 (7.1)	91 (92.9)	98 (100.0)
Total	60 (3.2)	1,790 (96.8)	1,850 (100.0)

Figure 8. Have you ever seen the Bible?



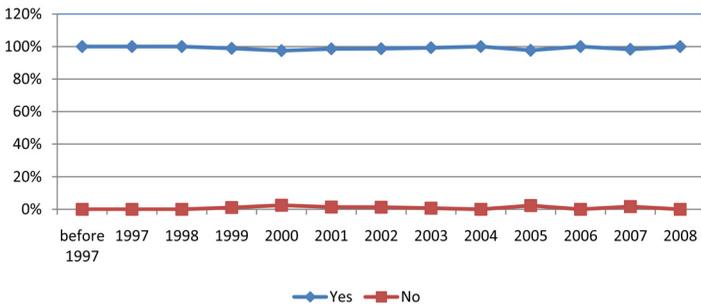
(3) Intensity of Punishment

In North Korea, everyone is subject to severe punishment when they are arrested for their involvement in religious activities. Only a mere 0.9 percent, of respondents said nobody would be punished even if they engage in religious activities. This shows that North Koreans understand that they would be punished for carrying out religious rites. There is no significant difference in the percentages of respondents who escaped in different years. This suggests that although clandestine religious activities have increased in the North, the regime is still ready to punish those involved and people still fear the possibility of punishment. Especially, even in the 2007 survey, 99.1 percent of respondents said North Koreans would be punished in that regard, proving that nothing has changed there.

Table 22. Punishment for participation in religious activities

Year of Defection	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	10 (100,0)	0 (0,0)	10 (100,0)
1997	47 (100,0)	0 (0,0)	47 (100,0)
1998	142 (100,0)	0 (0,0)	142 (100,0)
1999	90 (98,9)	1 (1,1)	91 (100,0)
2000	77 (97,5)	2 (2,5)	79 (100,0)
2001	68 (98,6)	1 (1,4)	69 (100,0)
2002	77 (98,7)	1 (1,3)	78 (100,0)
2003	142 (99,3)	1 (0,7)	143 (100,0)
2004	182 (100,0)	0 (0,0)	182 (100,0)
2005	126 (97,7)	3 (2,3)	129 (100,0)
2006	231 (100,0)	0 (0,0)	231 (100,0)
2007	233 (98,3)	4 (1,7)	237 (100,0)
2008	80 (100,0)	0 (0,0)	80 (100,0)
Total	1,505 (99,1)	13 (0,9)	1,518 (100,0)

Figure 9. Will those involved in religious activities punished?



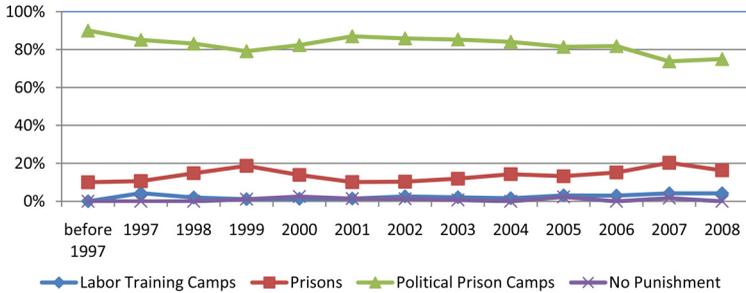
According to the outcome of an intensive survey on the level of punishment against those involved in religious activities, only 2.9 percent of those arrested are sent to labor training camps.

By contrast, 14.9 percent are sent to prisons and an astonishing 81.4 percent to political prison camps, the harshest level of punishment in North Korean society. This testifies how severely the regime punishes those involved in religious activities. The percentage of respondents, who escaped after 2001, who answered "detention at the political prison camps" has gradually fallen. But it is hard to consider this a reflection of any policy change in the North. We think it important to conduct more intensive research and analysis on this. There is no big discrepancy between this and the 2007 survey. In most cases, those arrested for involvement in religious activities in the North are invariably detained at political prison camps.

Table 23. Level of punishment for participation in religious activities

Year of Defection	Labor Training Camps (%)	Prisons (%)	Political Prison Camps (%)	No Punishment (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	0 (0.0)	1 (10.0)	9 (90.0)	0 (0.0)	10 (100.0)
1997	2 (4.3)	5 (10.6)	40 (85.1)	0 (0.0)	47 (100.0)
1998	3 (2.0)	21 (14.8)	118 (83.1)	0 (0.0)	142 (100.0)
1999	1 (1.1)	17 (18.7)	72 (79.1)	1 (1.1)	91 (100.0)
2000	1 (1.3)	11 (13.9)	65 (82.3)	2 (2.5)	79 (100.0)
2001	1 (1.4)	7 (10.1)	60 (87.0)	1 (1.4)	69 (100.0)
2002	2 (2.6)	8 (10.3)	67 (85.9)	1 (1.3)	78 (100.0)
2003	3 (2.1)	17 (11.9)	122 (85.3)	1 (0.7)	143 (100.0)
2004	3 (1.6)	26 (14.3)	153 (84.1)	0 (0.0)	182 (100.0)
2005	4 (3.1)	17 (13.2)	105 (81.4)	3 (2.3)	129 (100.0)
2006	7 (3.0)	35 (15.2)	189 (81.8)	0 (0.0)	231 (100.0)
2007	10 (4.2)	48 (20.3)	175 (73.8)	4 (1.7)	237 (100.0)
2008	7 (4.2)	13 (16.3)	60 (75.0)	0 (0.0)	80 (100.0)
Total	44 (2.9)	226 (14.9)	1,235 (81.4)	13 (0.9)	1,518 (100.0)

Figure 10. What kind of punishment is meted out to those involved in religious activities?



(4) Ratios of Religions

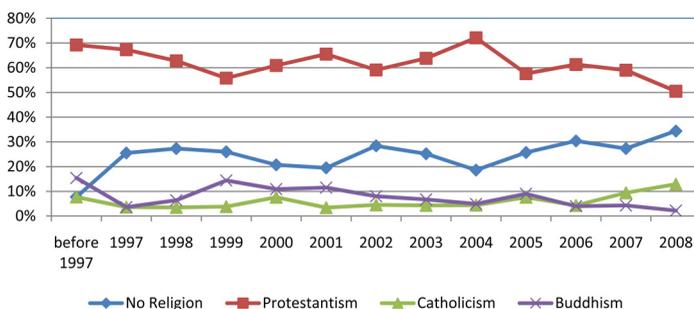
The majority, or 50.5 percent, of defectors who had arrived in South Korea before the end of 2008, are Protestants, followed by 12.9 percent of Catholics and 2.2 percent of Buddhists. Meanwhile, 34.4 percent said they have no religion. Whilst the ratio of Protestants is the highest, that of Catholics has increased since 2000. Compared with the 2007 survey, the ratios of Catholics and those who have no religion were up, but those of Protestants and Buddhists were down.

The outcome of the 2007 survey showed 64.9 percent of Protestants, followed by 23.0 percent of those with no religion, 7.3 percent of Buddhists, and 4.8 percent of Catholics. But in the 2008 survey, the rankings of Buddhists and Catholics were changed.

Table 24. What religion do defectors have?

Year of Defection	No Religion (%)	Protestantism (%)	Catholicism (%)	Buddhism (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	1 (7.7)	9 (69.2)	1 (7.7)	2 (15.4)	13 (100.0)
1997	14 (25.5)	37 (67.3)	2 (3.6)	2 (3.6)	55 (100.0)
1998	47 (27.3)	108 (62.8)	6 (3.5)	11 (6.4)	172 (100.0)
1999	27 (26.0)	58 (55.8)	4 (3.8)	15 (14.4)	104 (100.0)
2000	19 (20.7)	56 (60.9)	7 (7.6)	10 (10.9)	92 (100.0)
2001	17 (19.5)	57 (65.5)	3 (3.4)	10 (11.5)	87 (100.0)
2002	25 (28.4)	52 (59.1)	4 (4.5)	7 (8.0)	88 (100.0)
2003	41 (25.2)	104 (63.8)	7 (4.3)	11 (6.7)	163 (100.0)
2004	38 (18.6)	147 (72.1)	9 (4.4)	10 (4.9)	204 (100.0)
2005	37 (25.7)	83 (57.6)	11 (7.6)	13 (9.0)	144 (100.0)
2006	77 (30.4)	155 (61.3)	11 (4.3)	10 (4.0)	253 (100.0)
2007	70 (27.3)	151 (59.0)	24 (9.4)	11 (4.3)	256 (100.0)
2008	32 (34.4)	47 (50.5)	12 (12.9)	2 (2.2)	93 (100.0)
Total	445 (25.8)	1,064 (61.7)	101 (5.9)	114 (6.6)	1,724 (100.0)

Figure 11. What is your religious inheritance?



Asked when they began engaging in religious activities, those

who currently are religious gave different answers: 14 (1.1 percent) began leading a religious life in North Korea; 558 (45.1 percent) in China; 417 (40.2 percent) at Daesung Gongsa; and 133 (10.8 percent) at Hanawon. In the 2007 survey, the figures were 1.9 percent for North Korea, 51.4 percent for China, 39.0 percent for Daesung Gongsa, and 7.7 percent for Hanawon. But in the 2008 survey, the ratio in China fell, but that at Hanawon rose.

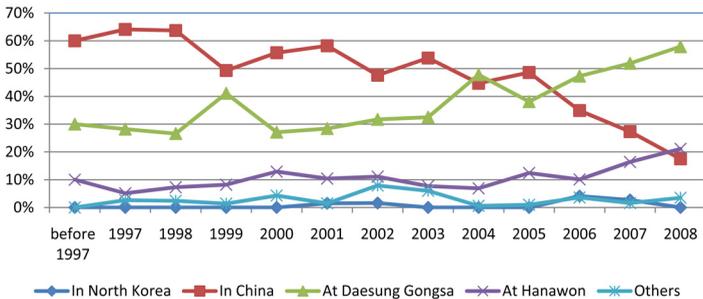
The survey shows that there is little difference between the percentage of those who began their religious life before they arrived in South Korea (46.2 percent) and those who learned how to lead a religious life after they arrived in the South (51.0 percent). This reflects a result of the overseas missionary work for defectors.

Generally speaking, the longer they stayed overseas before arriving in the South, the more likely defectors began their religious life in China and elsewhere. By contrast, the more recently they fled the North, the more likely they began engaging in religious activities at Daesung Gongsa or Hanawon. While staying for about a month at Daesung Gongsa for the defector screening process, 40.2 percent of defectors began their religious life. This shows how important religious activities at Daesung Gongsa are. Especially, the more recently they escaped from the North, the greater meaning religious activities at this facility have for defectors.

Table 25. Where did defectors begin religious life?

Year of Defection	In North Korea (%)	In China (%)	At Daesung Gongsa (%)	At Hanawon (%)	Others (%)	Total (%)
before 1997	0 (0,0)	6 (60,0)	3 (30,0)	1 (10,0)	0 (0,0)	10 (100,0)
1997	0 (0,0)	25 (64,1)	11 (28,2)	2 (5,1)	1 (2,6)	39 (100,0)
1998	0 (0,0)	79 (63,7)	33 (26,6)	9 (7,3)	3 (2,4)	124 (100,0)
1999	0 (0,0)	36 (49,3)	30 (41,1)	6 (8,2)	1 (1,4)	73 (100,0)
2000	0 (0,0)	39 (55,7)	19 (27,1)	9 (12,9)	3 (4,3)	70 (100,0)
2001	1 (1,5)	39 (58,2)	19 (28,4)	7 (10,4)	1 (1,5)	67 (100,0)
2002	1 (1,6)	30 (47,6)	20 (31,7)	7 (11,1)	5 (7,9)	63 (100,0)
2003	0 (0,0)	63 (53,8)	38 (32,5)	9 (7,7)	7 (6,0)	117 (100,0)
2004	0 (0,0)	71 (44,7)	76 (47,8)	11 (6,9)	1 (0,6)	159 (100,0)
2005	0 (0,0)	51 (48,6)	40 (38,1)	13 (12,4)	1 (1,0)	105 (100,0)
2006	7 (4,1)	59 (34,9)	80 (47,3)	17 (10,1)	6 (3,6)	169 (100,0)
2007	5 (2,7)	50 (27,3)	95 (51,9)	30 (16,4)	3 (1,6)	183 (100,0)
2008	0 (0,0)	10 (17,5)	33 (57,9)	12 (21,1)	2 (3,5)	57 (100,0)
Total	14 (1,1)	558 (45,1)	497 (40,2)	133 (10,8)	34 (2,8)	1,236 (100,0)

Figure 12. Where did you begin religious life?



2. Religious Persecution in North Korea

1) Research

(1) Research and Analysis Methods

We relied on the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database" stored at the North Korean Human Rights Archives (NKHRA) of the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB) for the basic information to analyze the present status of religious persecution in the North. Since 2003, the NKHRA has kept a comprehensive database on cases of human rights abuses in the North based on a systematic collection of records and data on such cases and intensive interviews with information providers. The NKHRA has built such a database after analysis of the records and data according to an analytical method it developed on its own. As a result, the NKHRA has kept and managed "NKDB Central Human Rights Database" it developed with its own efforts.

The "NKDB Central Human Rights Database" consists of 16 categories on rights, such as right to life, personal integrity and right to liberty, right to survival, right to health, right to education, right to movement and residence, right to marry or start a family, reproductive rights, right to belief and expression, right to assembly and association, right to property, right to political participation, labor rights, rights of the accused and detainee, and rights of aliens; 84 sub-categories on types of human rights abuses; 101 sections; and 198 items on tools and methods.

Religious persecution comes under a subcategory of the

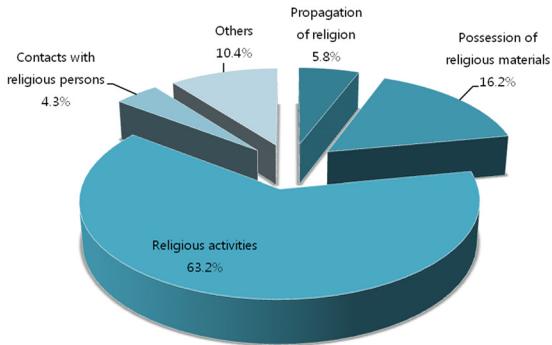
category of "right to belief and expression" in the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database." The subcategory is then divided into five sections -- propagation of religion, possession of religious materials, religious activities, and contacts with religious person, and others. The analysis of religious persecution in the North was conducted based on this data.

(2) Basic Information on Religious Persecution in North Korea

The "NKDB Central Human Rights Database" keeps files on a total of 6,965 cases of human rights violations in the North as of December 2008 (compared with 4,142 cases in 2007) and 5,272 North Koreans involved in human rights abuses in the same year (compared with 3,131 in 2007). Of the human rights violations, 345, or 5.0 percent, of all cases were related to religious persecution, compared with 138 cases, or 3.3 percent, in 2007. Some 252, or 4.8 percent, of all such North Koreans were involved in such persecution, compared with 177, or 5.7 percent, in 2007. The following files show basic information about the present status of religious persecution in North Korea:

① Cases of religious persecution

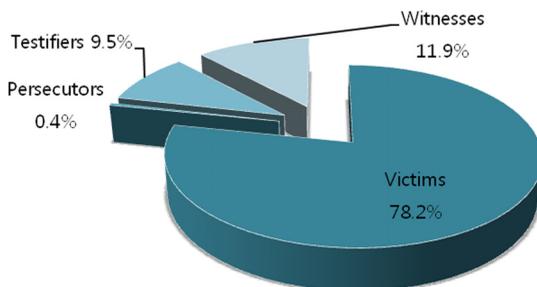
Section	Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
No. of People	20	56	218	15	36	345
Ratio (%)	5,8	16,2	63,2	4,3	10,4	100,0



As of December 2008, 345 cases of religious persecution in the North were entered into the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database." According to the file, persecution of people involved in religious activities topped the list at 63.2 percent, followed by possession of religious materials (16.2 percent), propagation of religion (5.8 percent), and contacts with religious persons (4.3 percent). The majority of people were persecuted for their involvement in religious activities in the North, including saying prayers, singing hymns, or attending worship. They were followed by those who possessed religious materials, such as Bibles and crucifixes, and those who contacted missionaries or Christians in third countries such as China, or religious persons in the North.

② People involved

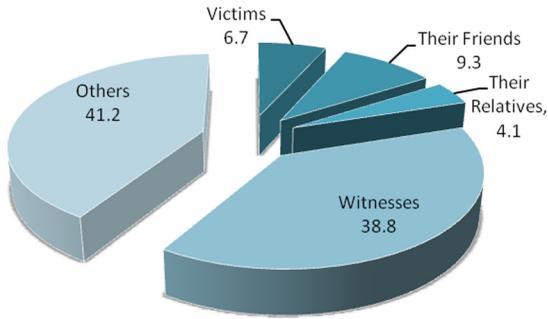
Type	Victims	Perpetrator	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
No. of People	197	1	24	30	252
Ratio (%)	78,2	0,4	9,5	11,9	100,0



A total of 252 North Koreans were involved in religious persecution. Victims accounted for the largest portion at 78.2 percent, followed by witnesses (11.9 percent), testifiers (9.5 percent), and only one perpetrator (0.4 percent). As it happened, the ratio of victims was very high, given that surveys focused on them and it is, in most such cases, difficult to identify perpetrators.

③ Information provider

Type	Victims	Colleague of the victim	Relative of the victim	Witnesses	Others	Total
No. of People	23	32	14	134	142	345
Ratio (%)	6,7	9,3	4,1	38,8	41,2	100,0

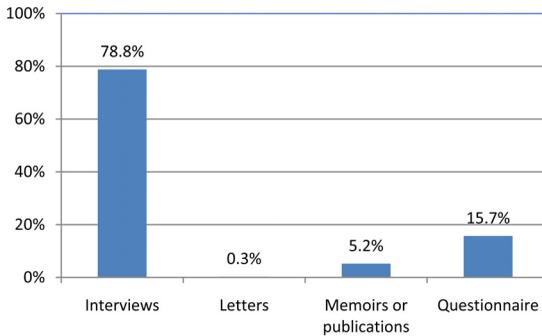


The proportion of witnesses, who gave information on religious persecution cases in the North to the NKHRA, was high, with that of victims, their friends, or their relatives remaining low. This shows that a high percentage of victims and their relatives were sent to political prison camps or prisons, given that the regime metes out harsh punishment to those involved in religious activities.

④ Sources of information

Sources	Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
Interviews	15	50	179	12	16	272
	5.5%	18.4%	65.8%	4.4%	5.9%	100.0%
	75.0%	89.3%	82.1%	80.0%	44.4%	78.8%
Letters	0	0	0	1	0	1
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	0.3%
Memoirs or publications	2	0	16	0	0	18
	11.1%	0.0%	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	10.0%	0.0%	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%

Sources	Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
Questionnaire	3	6	23	2	20	54
	5,6%	11,1%	42,6%	3,7%	37,0%	100,0%
	15,0%	10,7%	10,6%	13,3%	55,6%	15,7%
Total	20	56	218	15	36	345
	5,8%	16,2%	63,2%	4,3%	10,4%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



Some 78.8 percent information on religious persecution in the North was obtained through face-to-face interviews with defectors, with 15.7 percent coming from their answers in questionnaire. The amount of information gathered from their letters, or memoirs or publications were very low at 0.3 percent and 5.2 percent, respectively, because the process of analyzing written data, including defectors' publications, and entering them into the database was done far more slowly than that of face-to-face interviews.

⑤ Types of information

Types	Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
Directly observed	10	34	144	6	32	226
	4.4%	15.0%	63.7%	2.7%	14.2%	100.0%
	50.0%	60.7%	66.1%	40.0%	88.9%	65.5%
Directly experienced	2	2	15	1	3	23
	8.7%	8.7%	65.2%	4.3%	13.0%	100.0%
	10.0%	3.6%	6.9%	6.7%	8.3%	6.7%
Second-hand report	8	20	59	8	1	96
	8.3%	20.8%	61.5%	8.3%	1.0%	100.0%
	40.0%	35.7%	27.1%	53.3%	2.8%	27.8%
Total	20	56	218	15	36	345
	5.8%	16.2%	63.2%	4.3%	10.4%	100.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

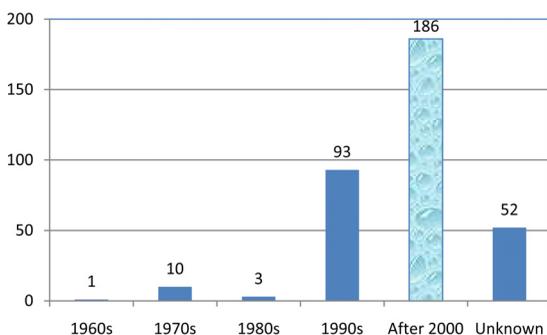
As of December 2008, 345 cases of religious persecution in the North were entered into the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database." Among them, cases revealed by those who witnessed or experienced themselves, stood at 72.2 percent in 2008 (compared with 58.7 percent in 2007), while the number of cases disclosed through hearsay was 27.8 percent (41.3 percent in 2007). This shows the percentage of those who witnessed or experienced religious persecution personally was relatively high, demonstrating a certain level of credibility for the data. In case of religious activities and possession of religious materials, the number of interviewees who witnessed the event turned out to be highest, followed by that of hearsay and experience. This was also true of other sections.

2) Information on Religious Persecution Cases in North Korea

(1) Cases of Religious Persecution

① Number of cases by period

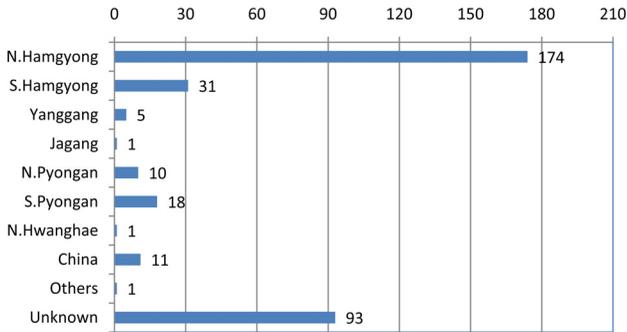
Period		Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
1960s	No. of people	0	0	1	0	0	1
	% in period	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,3%
1970s	No. of people	0	4	6	0	0	10
	% in period	0,0%	40,0%	60,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	7,1%	2,8%	0,0%	0,0%	2,9%
1980s	No. of people	0	0	0	3	0	3
	% in period	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	20,0%	0,0%	0,9%
1990s	No. of people	6	12	65	1	9	93
	% in period	6,5%	12,9%	69,9%	1,1%	9,7%	100,0%
	% in category	30,0%	21,4%	29,8%	6,7%	25,0%	27,0%
After 2000	No. of people	13	34	107	7	25	186
	% in period	7,0%	18,3%	57,5%	3,8%	13,4%	100,0%
	% in category	65,0%	60,7%	49,1%	46,7%	69,4%	53,9%
Unknown	No. of people	1	6	39	4	2	52
	% in period	1,9%	11,5%	75,0%	7,7%	3,8%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	10,7%	17,9%	26,7%	5,6%	15,1%
Total	No. of people	20	56	218	15	36	345
	% in period	5,8%	16,2%	63,2%	4,3%	10,4%	100,0%
	% in category	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



Most of the incidents of religious persecution took place in the North after the 1990s, with 27.0 percent occurring in the 1990s and 53.9 percent after 2000. A mere 11, or 3.2 percent, were reported before the 1970s. With this statistic on hand, we can estimate that the number of such cases rose after the 1990s, as mass defections occurred in the wake of a food crisis and economic difficulties and religion was introduced to North Koreans through defectors. At the same time, it seems that many North Koreans were influenced by religion as a result of increased inter-Korean religious exchanges amid an increase in overall exchanges and of more visits to the North by foreigners during this period. Most cases of religious persecution that took place before the 1990s in the North were recorded in the old data. But as it relied on analysis of testimonies by defectors who have arrived recently and who are mostly in their 20s and 30s, this report does not seem to reflect persecution cases that occurred before the 1980s as much as it could.

② Number of cases by region

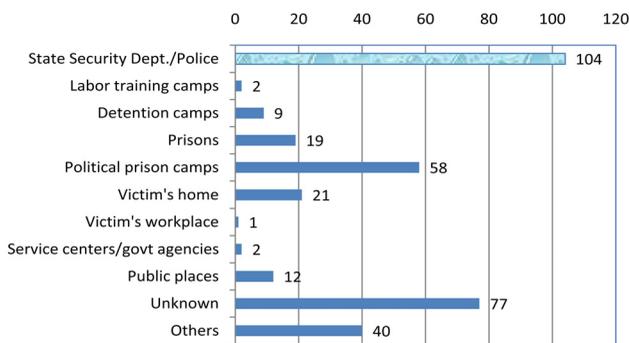
Region		Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
N,Hamgyong	No. of people	10	29	117	5	13	174
	% in region	5,7%	16,7%	67,2%	2,9%	7,5%	100,0%
	% in category	50,0%	51,8%	53,7%	33,3%	36,1%	50,4%
S,Hamgyong	No. of people	2	1	22	1	5	31
	% in region	6,5%	3,2%	71,0%	3,2%	16,1%	100,0%
	% in category	10,0%	1,8%	10,1%	6,7%	13,9%	9,0%
Yanggang	No. of people	0	1	4	0	0	5
	% in region	0,0%	20,0%	80,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	1,8%	1,8%	0,0%	0,0%	1,4%
Chagang	No. of people	0	0	0	1	0	1
	% in region	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	6,7%	0,0%	0,3%
N,Pyongan	No. of people	1	1	6	0	2	10
	% in region	10,0%	10,0%	60,0%	0,0%	20,0%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	1,8%	2,8%	0,0%	5,6%	2,9%
S,Pyongan	No. of people	0	1	15	2	0	18
	% in region	0,0%	5,6%	83,3%	11,1%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	1,8%	6,9%	13,3%	0,0%	5,2%
N,Hwanghae	No. of people	0	0	1	0	0	1
	% in region	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,3%
China	No. of people	0	2	9	0	0	11
	% in region	0,0%	18,2%	81,8%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	3,6%	4,1%	0,0%	0,0%	3,2%
Others	No. of people	0	1	0	0	0	1
	% in region	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	1,8%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,3%
Unknown	No. of people	7	20	44	6	16	93
	% in region	7,5%	21,5%	47,3%	6,5%	17,2%	100,0%
	% in category	35,0%	35,7%	20,2%	40,0%	44,4%	27,0%
Total	No. of people	20	56	218	15	36	345
	% in region	5,8%	16,2%	63,2%	4,3%	10,4%	100,0%
	% in category	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



Most cases of religious persecution occurred in Hamgyong provinces, accounting for 59.4 percent of all cases, followed by Pyongan provinces (8.1 percent) and Yanggang Province (1.4 percent). This shows most religious persecution cases take place in areas that border China and, therefore, in which exchanges with the outside occur often. In other words, these regions are likely to see religion introduced more often than elsewhere due to regular and active exchanges with China and the occurrence of mass defections. But given that more than 70 percent of the defectors who have arrived in the South recently came from Hamgyong provinces, we also guess that the outcome of the survey was affected by the large proportion of defectors from specific regions. Accordingly, we think it is vital to conduct a more in-depth survey and study to find out more accurately in which specific regions in the North religious persecution occurs intensively.

③ Number of cases by place

Place		Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
State Security Agency/Police	No. of people	9	15	66	4	10	104
	% in place	8,7%	14,4%	63,5%	3,8%	9,6%	100,0%
	% in category	45,0%	26,8%	30,3%	26,7%	27,8%	30,1%
Labor training camps	No. of people	0	0	2	0	0	2
	% in place	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,6%
Police holding camps	No. of people	0	0	7	0	2	9
	% in place	0,0%	0,0%	77,8%	0,0%	22,2%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	3,2%	0,0%	5,6%	2,6%
Prisons	No. of people	0	5	11	2	1	19
	% in place	0,0%	26,3%	57,9%	10,5%	5,3%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	8,9%	5,0%	13,3%	2,8%	5,5%
Political prison camps	No. of people	4	12	32	5	5	58
	% in place	6,9%	20,7%	55,2%	8,6%	8,6%	100,0%
	% in category	20,0%	21,4%	14,7%	33,3%	13,9%	16,8%
Victim's home	No. of people	1	6	10	1	3	21
	% in place	4,8%	28,6%	47,6%	4,8%	14,3%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	10,7%	4,6%	6,7%	8,3%	6,1%
Victim's workplace	No. of people	0	1	0	0	0	1
	% in place	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	1,8%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,3%
Service centers/govt agencies	No. of people	0	0	2	0	0	2
	% in place	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,6%
Public places	No. of people	2	5	5	0	0	12
	% in place	16,7%	41,7%	41,7%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	10,0%	8,9%	2,3%	0,0%	0,0%	3,5%
Unknown	No. of people	3	7	54	2	11	77
	% in place	3,9%	9,1%	70,1%	2,6%	14,3%	100,0%
	% in category	15,0%	12,5%	24,8%	13,3%	30,6%	22,3%
Others	No. of people	1	5	29	1	4	40
	% in place	2,5%	12,5%	72,5%	2,5%	10,0%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	8,9%	13,3%	6,7%	11,1%	11,6%
Total	No. of people	20	56	218	15	36	345
	% in place	5,8%	16,2%	63,2%	4,3%	10,4%	100,0%
	% in category	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



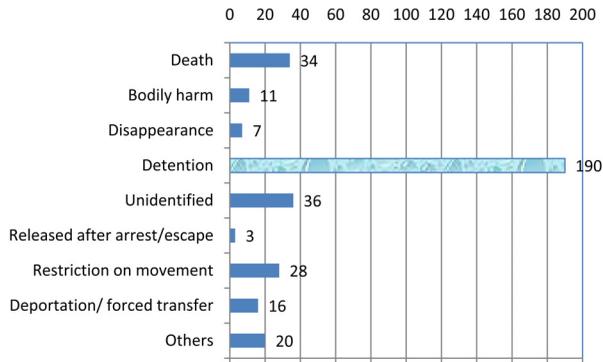
Incidents of religious persecution occurred at a variety of places. But a survey on where such persecution actually occurs has its limits. It is hard to pinpoint specific places where persecution occurs. Considering that an entire process falls under the category of religious persecution -- from the moment people are arrested for propagation of religion, possession of religious materials, participation in religious activities, or contacts with religious people to the moment an investigation is carried out and punishment is meted out. Therefore, for this survey, we decided to regard any place, no matter where information providers witnessed or experienced relevant cases or where they witnessed other people languish under religious persecution, as the place where religious persecution occurred.

As a result, the State Security Agency and police topped the list at 30.1 percent, followed by political prison camps (16.8 percent), the victim's home (6.1 percent), prisons (5.5 percent), public places (3.5 percent), Police holding camps (2.6 percent), labor training camps (0.6 percent), and the victim's workplace

(0.3 percent). This clearly shows that investigation agencies or detention centers, where people involved in religious cases are investigated or detained by the regime, turned out to be major centers of persecution. With 65.5 percent of reported cases, most of the occurrences of religious persecution in the North were witnessed at investigation or detention facilities.

④ Initial consequences

Initial consequences		Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
Dead	No. of people	4	7	18	1	4	34
	% in situation	11,8%	20,6%	52,9%	2,9%	11,8%	100,0%
	% in category	20,0%	12,5%	8,3%	6,7%	11,1%	9,9%
Injured	No. of people	1	1	9	0	0	11
	% in situation	9,1%	9,1%	81,8%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	1,8%	4,1%	0,0%	0,0%	3,2%
Disappeared	No. of people	1	0	5	1	0	7
	% in situation	14,3%	0,0%	71,4%	14,3%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	0,0%	2,3%	6,7%	0,0%	20,0%
Detained	No. of people	10	29	127	9	15	190
	% in situation	5,3%	15,3%	66,8%	4,7%	7,9%	100,0%
	% in category	50,0%	51,8%	58,3%	60,0%	41,7%	55,1%
Unidentified	No. of people	1	2	16	1	16	36
	% in situation	2,8%	5,6%	44,4%	2,8%	44,4%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	3,6%	7,3%	6,7%	44,4%	10,4%
Released after arrest/escape	No. of people	0	0	2	1	0	3
	% in situation	0,0%	0,0%	66,7%	33,3%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,9%	6,7%	0,0%	0,9%
Restricted movement	No. of people	1	9	16	2	0	28
	% in situation	3,6%	32,1%	57,1%	7,1%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	16,1%	7,3%	13,3%	0,0%	8,1%
Deportation/ Forcible repatriation	No. of people	1	4	10	0	1	16
	% in situation	6,3%	25,0%	62,5%	0,0%	6,3%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	7,1%	4,6%	0,0%	2,8%	4,6%
Others	No. of people	1	4	15	0	0	20
	% in situation	5,0%	20,0%	75,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	7,1%	6,9%	0,0%	0,0%	5,8%
Total	No. of people	20	56	218	15	36	345
	% in situation	5,8%	16,2%	63,2%	4,3%	10,4%	100,0%
	% in category	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

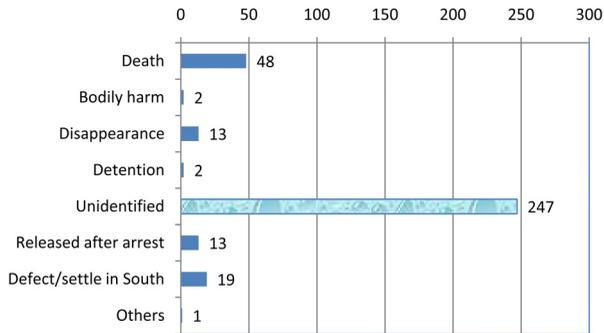


In terms of initial punishment against those involved in religious activities or initial consequences of their persecution as seen by witnesses, 55.1 percent were detained, followed by 9.9 percent who died, 8.1 percent who saw their movement restricted, 4.6 percent who were deported or forcibly sent back to the North, 3.2 percent who sustained bodily harm, and 2.0 percent who disappeared.

Those arrested for their involvement in religious activities faced a very harsh punishment or serious consequences, including detention, death, disappearance, restriction on movement, or deportation. Nonetheless, such punishment or consequences only reflect the situation which witnesses or testifiers saw with their own eyes. So the actual punishment or consequences could have been much harsher.

⑤ Final consequences

Final consequences		Propagation of religion	Possession of religious materials	Religious activities	Contacts with religious persons	Others	Total
Dead	No. of people	3	11	29	5	0	48
	% in situation	6,3%	22,9%	60,4%	10,4%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	15,0%	19,6%	13,3%	33,3%	0,0%	13,9%
Injured	No. of people	0	0	0	2	0	2
	% in situation	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	13,3%	0,0%	0,6%
Disappeared	No. of people	0	0	13	0	0	13
	% in situation	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	6,0%	0,0%	0,0%	3,8%
Detained	No. of people	0	0	2	0	0	2
	% in situation	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,6%
Unidentified	No. of people	16	43	146	8	34	247
	% in situation	6,5%	17,4%	59,1%	3,2%	13,8%	100,0%
	% in category	80,0%	76,8%	67,0%	53,3%	94,4%	71,6%
Released after arrest	No. of people	0	1	12	0	0	13
	% in situation	0,0%	7,7%	92,3%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	1,8%	5,5%	0,0%	0,0%	3,8%
Defect/settle in another area	No. of people	1	1	15	0	2	19
	% in situation	5,3%	5,3%	78,9%	0,0%	10,5%	100,0%
	% in category	5,0%	1,8%	6,9%	0,0%	5,6%	5,5%
Others	No. of people	0	0	1	0	0	1
	% in situation	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	% in category	0,0%	0,0%	0,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,3%
Total	No. of people	20	56	218	15	36	345
	% in situation	5,8%	16,2%	63,2%	4,3%	10,4%	100,0%
	% in category	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



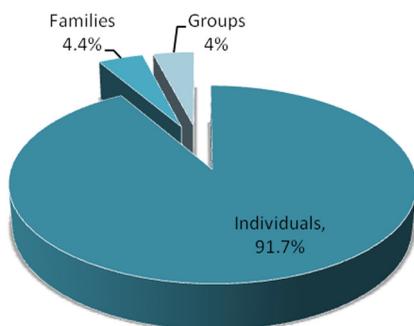
In terms of the end result of the religious persecution, it was impossible to find out what had ultimately happened to most or 71.6 percent of cases. This figure was followed by 13.9 percent in which victims died. This shows that the regime persecutes those involved in religious activities so secretly and harshly so that it is hard to find out what has ultimately happened to them. About 9.9 percent died during the initial process of religious persecution, but the percentage rose to 13.9 percent during investigation.

3) Information on North Koreans Involved in Religious Persecution

(1) All people involved

① Type of victim report: Individuals, Families and Groups

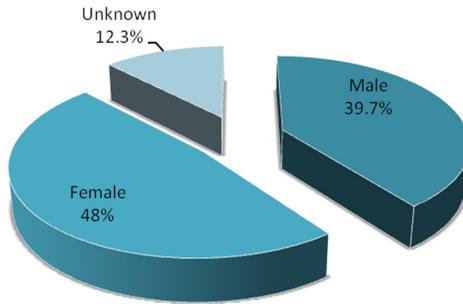
Unit	Individuals	Families	Groups	Total
No. of people	231	11	10	252
Percentage (%)	91.7	4.4	4.0	100.0



According to the outcome of analysis of the, "NKDB Central Human Rights Database" analyzed a total of 252 individuals, families, and groups who experienced religious persecution in North Korea. Some 91.7 percent of them involved individuals, while families and groups accounted for 4.4 percent and 4.0 percent, respectively. We only classified people as individuals if they were obviously individual persons, and made a distinction between families and groups if families and groups were persecuted as such. The survey shows religious persecution not only against individuals, but also against families and groups collectively, although their relative numbers were not so high.

② By gender

Gender	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
No. of people	100	121	31	252
Percentage (%)	39,7	48,0	12,3	100,0



By gender, more women (48.0 percent) than men (39.7 percent) were involved in religious persecution. Of the 100 men, 43.3 percent were witnesses, followed by 41.6 percent of victims, and 16.7 percent of testifiers. This shows the ratio of men as victims was average and their percentage as testifiers was considerably low. By contrast, 79.2 percent of 121 women were testifiers, followed by 53.3 percent of witnesses and 43.7

Gender	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Male	82	1	4	13	100
	82,0%	1,0%	4,0%	13,0%	100,0%
	41,6%	100,0%	16,7%	43,3%	39,7%
Female	86	0	19	16	121
	71,1%	0,0%	15,7%	13,2%	100,0%
	43,7%	0,0%	79,2%	53,3%	48,0%
Unknown	29	0	1	1	31
	93,5%	0,0%	3,2%	3,2%	100,0%
	14,7%	0,0%	4,2%	3,3%	12,3%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

percent of victims, showing a remarkably higher percentage of testifiers than victims. There was nearly no difference between gender ratios of victims of religious persecution, but the table showed a wide gap between those of testifiers, reflecting that women accounted for almost 80 percent of defectors who have arrived in South Korea recently.

③ By age

Age	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Teens	2	0	0	0	2
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	1,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,8%
20s	31	0	6	7	44
	70,5%	0,0%	13,6%	15,9%	100,0%
	15,7%	0,0%	25,0%	23,3%	17,5%
30s	31	0	7	9	47
	66,0%	0,0%	14,9%	19,1%	100,0%
	15,7%	0,0%	29,2%	30,0%	18,7%
40s	19	0	3	9	31
	61,3%	0,0%	9,7%	29,0%	100,0%
	9,6%	0,0%	12,5%	30,0%	12,3%
50s	8	0	1	1	10
	80,0%	0,0%	10,0%	10,0%	100,0%
	4,1%	0,0%	4,2%	3,3%	4,0%
60s	7	0	2	2	11
	63,6%	0,0%	18,2%	18,2%	100,0%
	3,6%	0,0%	8,3%	6,7%	4,4%
70s	1	0	0	0	1
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	0,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,4%

Age	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Over 70	2	0	0	0	2
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	1,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,8%
Unknown	96	1	5	2	104
	92,3%	1,0%	4,8%	1,9%	100,0%
	48,7%	100,0%	20,8%	6,7%	41,3%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

By age, those involved in religious persecution in their 30s topped the list at 18.7 percent, followed by those in their 20s (17.5 percent), those in their 40s (12.3 percent), those in their 60s (4.45 percent), those in their 50s (4.0 percent), teens and those aged 70 and over (0.8 percent each), and those In reply to: their 70s (0,4 percent). According to the survey, those involved in religious persecution were concentrated in those aged in their 20s through 40s who were involved in more activities outside the home. This phenomenon is also true of victims, testifiers, and witnesses.

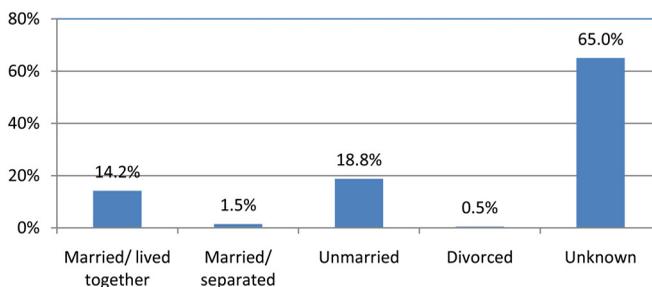
④ By marital status

a. Marital status when persecution occurred

Marital status when persecution occurred	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Married/ lived together	28	0	5	7	40
	70,0%	0,0%	12,5%	17,5%	100,0%
	14,2%	0,0%	20,8%	23,3%	15,9%

Marital status when persecution occurred	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Married/ separated	3	0	0	0	3
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	1,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,2%
Unmarried	37	0	4	10	51
	72,5%	0,0%	7,8%	19,6%	100,0%
	18,8%	0,0%	16,7%	33,3%	20,2%
Divorced	1	0	0	0	1
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	0,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,4%
Unknown	128	1	15	13	157
	81,5%	0,6%	9,6%	8,3%	100,0%
	65,0%	100,0%	62,5%	43,3%	62,3%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Victims' marital status when persecution occurred



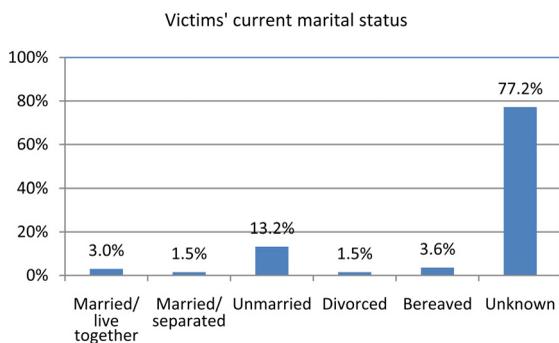
According to the survey, the marital status of those involved in religious persecution when such persecution occurred, unmarried people topped the list at 20.2 percent, except for "unknown" (62.3 percent). They were followed by those who were married and lived together with their spouses (15.9 percent), those who were married but separated (1.2 percent), and those who were divorced (0.4 percent). But by the analysis of their marital status after arrival in South Korea, unmarried people topped the list at 15.1 percent, followed by those who were bereaved (4.4 percent), those who were married and lived together with their spouses (4.4 percent), those who were married but separated (3.2 percent), and those who were divorced (2.0 percent). "Unknown" still accounted for an overwhelming 71.0 percent.

Given the difference in marital status between the time of persecution and the time of survey, it seems that religious persecution played a role in disintegrating the family and breaking up marriages. Notably, the percentage of those who were married and lived together with their spouses dropped significantly from 15.9 percent to 4.4 percent. The ratio of those who were married but separated rose from 1.2 percent to 3.2 percent, and that of those who were bereaved grew to 4.4 percent from 0.

b. Current marital status

Current marital status	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Married/ live together	6	0	2	3	11
	54,5%	0,0%	18,2%	27,3%	100,0%
	3,0%	0,0%	8,3%	10,0%	4,4%

Current marital status	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Married/ separated	3	0	3	2	8
	37,5%	0,0%	37,5%	25,0%	100,0%
	1,5%	0,0%	12,5%	6,7%	3,2%
Unmarried	26	0	4	8	38
	68,4%	0,0%	10,5%	21,1%	100,0%
	13,2%	0,0%	16,7%	26,7%	15,1%
Divorced	3	0	1	1	5
	60,0%	0,0%	20,0%	20,0%	100,0%
	1,5%	0,0%	4,2%	3,3%	2,0%
Bereaved	7	0	4	0	11
	63,6%	0,0%	36,4%	0,0%	100,0%
	3,6%	0,0%	16,7%	0,0%	4,4%
Unknown	152	1	10	16	179
	84,9%	0,6%	5,6%	8,9%	100,0%
	77,2%	100,0%	41,7%	53,3%	71,0%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



⑤ By educational background

Educational background	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Elementary school	1	0	0	1	2
	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	0.8%
Senior middle school	33	0	14	15	62
	53.2%	0.0%	22.6%	24.2%	100.0%
	16.8%	0.0%	58.3%	50.0%	24.6%
College	5	0	1	6	12
	41.7%	0.0%	8.3%	50.0%	100.0%
	2.5%	0.0%	4.2%	20.0%	4.8%
Graduate school or higher educational background	3	0	1	3	7
	42.9%	0.0%	14.3%	42.9%	100.0%
	1.5%	0.0%	4.2%	10.0%	2.8%
Unknown	155	1	8	5	169
	91.7%	0.6%	4.7%	3.0%	100.0%
	78.7%	100.0%	33.3%	16.7%	67.1%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78.2%	0.4%	9.5%	11.9%	100.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Most of those involved in religious persecution were graduates of senior middle schools or had a higher educational background. A mere 0.8 percent had a people's school, or elementary school, background. By contrast, 24.6 percent had a senior middle school background, followed by 4.8 percent who had a college background and 2.8 percent who had a graduate school or higher educational background. The educational background of 67.1 percent was unknown.

Generally speaking, this statistic shows no significant difference from a similar statistic on the educational background of defectors who have already settled in South Korea. But the ratio of "unknown" is relatively high in this table, because it is hard to check the educational background of many people who are still living in North Korea.

⑥ By original nationality / place of birth / country of residence / place of residence

a-1. Original nationality

Original Nationality	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
North Korean	193	1	24	29	247
	78,1%	0,4%	9,7%	11,7%	100,0%
	98,0%	100,0%	100,0%	96,7%	98,0%
Unknown	4	0	0	1	5
	80,0%	0,0%	0,0%	20,0%	100,0%
	2,0%	0,0%	0,0%	3,3%	2,0%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

The original nationality of all but five, whose original nationality was unknown, was North Korean. But except for those whose places of birth were unknown, one of them was born in Japan and two in China. Despite their countries of birth, one of them is presumed to be a North Korean national under affiliation with Jochongnyon and the other two Korean-Chinese with North Korean nationality.

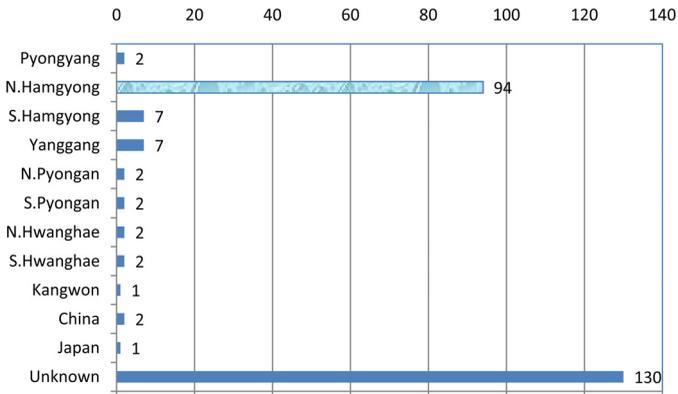
a-2. Countries of birth

Country of birth	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
North Korea	148	0	2	20	188
	78.7%	0.0%	10.6%	10.6%	100.0%
	75.1%	0.0%	83.3%	66.7%	74.6%
Japan	1	0	0	0	1
	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
China	0	0	1	1	2
	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	3.3%	0.8%
Unknown	48	1	3	9	61
	78.7%	1.6%	4.9%	14.8%	100.0%
	24.4%	100.0%	12.5%	30.0%	24.2%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78.2%	0.4%	9.5%	11.9%	100.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

a-3. Cities or provinces of birth

Place of birth	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Pyongyang	2	0	0	0	2
	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
N,Hamgyong	78	0	8	8	94
	83.0%	0.0%	8.5%	8.5%	100.0%
	39.6%	0.0%	33.3%	26.7%	37.3%
S,Hamgyong	5	0	1	1	7
	71.4%	0.0%	14.3%	14.3%	100.0%
	2.5%	0.0%	4.2%	3.3%	2.8%

Place of birth	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Yanggang	6	0	0	1	7
	85.7%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	100.0%
	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	2.8%
N,Pyongan	1	0	1	0	2
	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	0.5%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.8%
S,Pyongan	2	0	0	0	2
	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
N,Hwanghae	1	0	1	0	2
	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	0.5%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.8%
S,Hwanghae	1	0	0	1	2
	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	0.8%
Kangwon	0	0	1	0	1
	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.4%
China	0	0	1	1	2
	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	3.3%	0.8%
Japan	1	0	0	0	1
	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Unknown	100	1	11	18	130
	76.9%	0.8%	8.5%	13.8%	100.0%
	50.8%	100.0%	45.8%	60.0%	51.6%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78.2%	0.4%	9.5%	11.9%	100.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



The vast majority of those involved in religious persecution were born in North Hamgyong Province. With the exception of "unknown," North Hamgyong Province topped the list at 37.3 percent in this regard. North Hamgyong was followed by South Hamgyong and Yanggang (both 2.8 percent); Pyongyang, North and South Pyongan provinces, North and South Hwanghae provinces, and China (0.8 percent each); and Kangwon and Japan (0.4 percent each). Despite the high ratio of those born in North Hamgyong Province, there was no prominent ratio bias phenomenon found in places of birth or in each category of those involved. Although it was a small number, two victims were from Pyongyang.

b-1. Countries of residence when persecution occurred

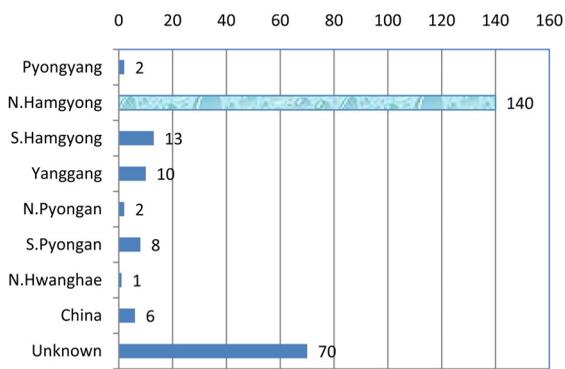
Except for six who lived in China, all those involved in religious persecution lived in North Korea. According to the survey, five victims and one testifier testified about cases of religious persecution committed by North Korea which they experienced when they lived in China.

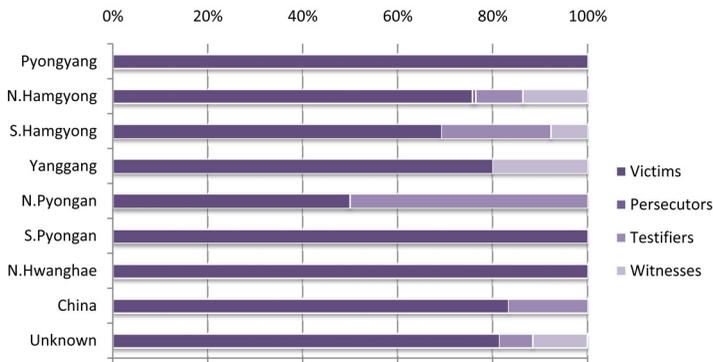
Country of residence	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
North Korea	158	1	22	23	204
	77.5%	0.5%	10.8%	11.3%	100.0%
	80.2%	100.0%	91.7%	76.7%	81.0%
China	5	0	1	0	6
	83.3%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	100.0%
	2.5%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	2.4%
Unknown	34	0	1	7	42
	81.0%	0.0%	2.4%	16.7%	100.0%
	17.3%	0.0%	4.2%	23.3%	16.7%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78.2%	0.4%	9.5%	11.9%	100.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

b-2. Places of residence when religious persecution occurred

Place of residence	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Pyongyang	2	0	0	0	2
	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
N,Hamgyong	106	1	14	19	140
	75.7%	0.7%	10.0%	13.6%	100.0%
	53.8%	100.0%	58.3%	63.3%	55.6%
S,Hamgyong	9	0	3	1	13
	69.2%	0.0%	23.1%	7.7%	100.0%
	4.6%	0.0%	12.5%	3.3%	5.2%
Yanggang	8	0	0	2	10
	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	4.0%

Place of residence	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
N,Pyongan	1	0	1	0	2
	50,0%	0,0%	50,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	0,5%	0,0%	4,2%	0,0%	0,8%
S,Pyongan	8	0	0	0	8
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	4,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	3,2%
N,Hwanghae	1	0	0	0	1
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	0,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,4%
China	5	0	1	0	6
	83,3%	0,0%	16,7%	0,0%	100,0%
	2,5%	0,0%	4,2%	0,0%	2,4%
Unknown	57	0	5	8	70
	81,4%	0,0%	7,1%	11,4%	100,0%
	28,9%	0,0%	20,8%	26,7%	27,8%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%





There is no notable difference between the figures for place of birth and those for place of residence when religious persecution occurred. But the proportion of those who lived in North Hamgyong Province when persecution occurred turned out to be overwhelmingly high at 55.6 percent. This seems to reflect the high proportion of North Koreans arriving in South Korea recently whose place of last residence in North Korea was North Hamgyong Province.

c-1. Countries of current residence

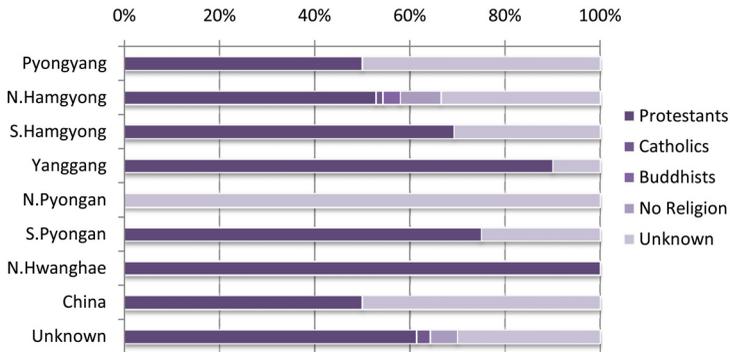
Country of current residence	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
North Korea	2	0	0	0	2
	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
South Korea	49	0	8	9	66
	74.2%	0.0%	12.1%	13.6%	100.0%
	24.9%	0.0%	33.3%	30.0%	26.2%
Unknown	146	1	16	21	184
	79.3%	0.5%	8.7%	11.4%	100.0%
	74.1%	100.0%	66.7%	70.0%	73.0%

Country of current residence	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

In the category of countries of current residence, "unknown" accounts for a huge 73.0 percent, followed by 26.2 percent who live in South Korea and 0.8 percent who live in North Korea. The low rate of those who live in North Korea is due in large part to the difficulty in verifying whether those involved actually live there or not.

⑦ By type of religion

Religion	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Protestantism	123	0	12	11	146
	84,2%	0,0%	8,2%	7,5%	100,0%
	62,4%	0,0%	50,0%	36,7%	57,9%
Catholicism	4	0	0	0	4
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	2,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,6%
Buddhism	3	0	1	1	5
	60,0%	0,0%	20,0%	20,0%	100,0%
	1,5%	0,0%	4,2%	3,3%	2,0%
No religion	10	0	2	4	16
	62,5%	0,0%	12,5%	25,0%	100,0%
	5,1%	0,0%	8,3%	13,3%	6,3%
Unknown	57	1	9	14	81
	70,4%	1,2%	11,1%	17,3%	100,0%
	28,9%	100,0%	37,5%	46,7%	32,1%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



As for the religious distribution of those involved in religious persecution in North Korea, the proportion of Protestants (57.9 percent) is very high, even higher than the 32.1 percent of the "unknown." Protestants were followed by Buddhists (2.0 percent) and Catholics (1.6 percent), with "no religion" at 6.3 percent. Most of those with no religion were found to be testers or witnesses, rather than victims. This shows that most of the victims of religious persecution in the North were Protestants.

⑧ Distribution of religion by region

Place of residence	Protestants	Catholics	Buddhists	No Religion	Unknown	Total
Pyongyang	1	0	0	0	1	2
	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.8%
N.Hamgyong	74	2	5	12	47	140
	52.9%	1.4%	3.6%	8.6%	33.6%	100.0%
	50.7%	50.0%	100.0%	75.0%	58.0%	55.6%

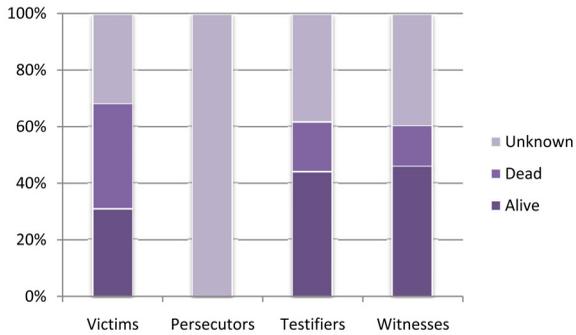
Place of residence	Protestants	Catholics	Buddhists	No Religion	Unknown	Total
S,Hamgyong	9	0	0	0	4	13
	69,2%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	30,8%	100,0%
	6,2%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	4,9%	5,2%
Yanggang	9	0	0	0	1	10
	90,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	10,0%	100,0%
	6,2%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,2%	4,0%
N,Pyongan	0	0	0	0	2	2
	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	100,0%
	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,5%	0,8%
S,Pyongan	6	0	0	0	2	8
	75,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	25,0%	100,0%
	4,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,5%	3,2%
N,Hwanghae	1	0	0	0	0	1
	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	0,7%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,4%
China	3	0	0	0	3	6
	50,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	50,0%	100,0%
	2,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	3,7%	2,4%
Unknown	43	2	0	4	21	70
	61,4%	2,9%	0,0%	5,7%	30,0%	100,0%
	29,5%	50,0%	0,0%	25,0%	25,9%	27,8%
Total	146	4	5	16	81	252
	57,9%	1,6%	2,0%	6,3%	32,1%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

There seems to be no significant difference between the distribution of religion and that of people by place of residence. The distribution of people by region remains the same -- 55.6 percent from North Hamgyong, 5.2 percent from South Hamgyong, 4.0 percent from Yanggang, and 3.2 percent from

South Pyongan. And there was no prominent ratio bias phenomenon found in terms of the distribution of religion by region.

⑨ Whether they are still alive or not

Alive or dead	Victims	Perpetrators	Testifiers	Witnesses	Total
Alive	77	0	11	14	102
	75,5%	0,0%	10,8%	13,7%	100,0%
	39,1%	0,0%	45,8%	46,7%	40,5%
Dead	21	0	1	1	23
	91,3%	0,0%	4,3%	4,3%	100,0%
	10,7%	0,0%	4,2%	3,3%	9,1%
Unknown	99	1	12	15	127
	78,0%	0,8%	9,4%	11,8%	100,0%
	50,3%	100,0%	50,0%	50,0%	50,4%
Total	197	1	24	30	252
	78,2%	0,4%	9,5%	11,9%	100,0%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



40.5 percent of those involved in religious persecution in the North were found to be still alive, followed by 9.1 percent who were dead and 50.4 percent who were not identified. In terms of victims, 39.1 percent were still alive, 10.7 percent dead, and 50.3 percent unidentified, showing a relatively higher death rate and a low survival rate.

(2) Victims

① By type of victim report: Individuals, Families and Groups

Unit	Individuals	Families	Groups	Total
No.	176	11	10	197
Percentage (%)	89.3	5.6	5.1	100.0

The survey of victims of religious persecution was based on classifying them into individuals, families, and groups. The individuals category accounts for 89.3 percent of cases, with families and groups the remaining negligible percentage. This shows that the majority of the victims of persecution were individuals, despite some cases occurring to families or groups. This strongly suggests that religious activities in North Korea are carried out by individuals in a very limited way, rather than among families or groups.

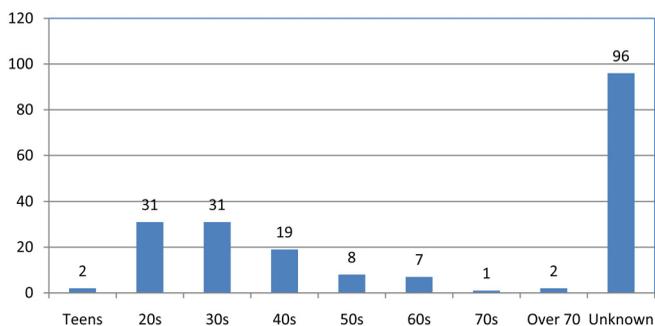
② By gender

Gender	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
No. of people	82	86	29	197
Percentage (%)	41.6	43.7	14.7	100.0

There was no big difference between male (41.6 percent) and female (43.7 percent) among all 197 victims of religious persecution. The gender of most of the members of families and groups was "unknown."

③ By age

Age	Teens	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	Over 70	Unknown	Total
No. of people	2	31	31	19	8	7	1	2	96	197
Percentage (%)	1.0	15.7	15.7	9.6	4.1	3.6	0.5	1.0	48.7	100.0

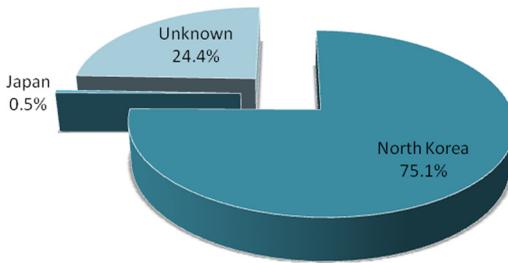


There is nearly no difference between the distribution of victims by age and that of all people. Those in their 20s and 30s made up the largest portion at 15.7 percent each, and those in their 40s accounted for 9.6 percent. This indicates young victims accounted for the majority of cases. The percentage of teenagers (1.0 percent) and those aged 50 and older (9.2 percent) was low.

④ By victims' place of birth

a-1. By country of birth

Country of birth	North Korea	Japan	Unknown	Total
No. of people	148	1	48	197
Percentage (%)	75.1	0.5	24.4	100.0



There is no big difference between the distribution of victims by country of birth and that of all people. Apart from one who was born in Japan, all were either born in North Korea or their origin was "unknown." Some 39.6 percent of victims were born in North Hamgyong Province, followed by 3.0 percent in Yanggang Province, 2.5 percent in South Hamgyong and 1.0 percent who

were born in Pyongyang and South Pyongan each. Those who were born in other regions accounted for less than 1.0 percent each.

a-2. By region of birth

Region of birth	Pyongyang	N.Hamgyong	S.Hamgyong	Yanggang	N.Pyongan	S.Pyongan	N.Hwanghae	S.Hwanghae	Japan	Unknown	Total
No. of people	2	78	5	6	1	2	1	1	1	100	197
Percentage (%)	1.0	39.6	2.5	3.0	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	50.8	100.0

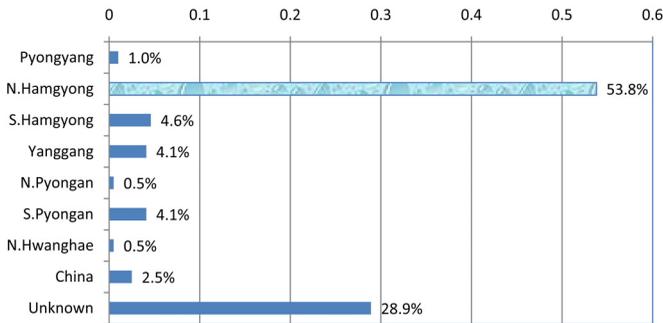
⑤ By victims' places of residence

a-1. By country of residence

Country of residence	North Korea	China	Unknown	Total
No. of people	158	5	34	197
Percentage (%)	80,2	2,5	17,3	100,0

a-2. By region of residence

Region of residence	Pyongyang	N.Hamgyong	S.Hamgyong	Yanggang	N.Pyongan	S.Pyongan	N.Hwanghae	China	Unknown	Total
No. of people	2	106	9	8	1	8	1	5	57	197
Percentage (%)	1,0	53,8	4,6	4,1	0,5	4,1	0,5	2,5	28,9	100,0



a-3. By place of current residence

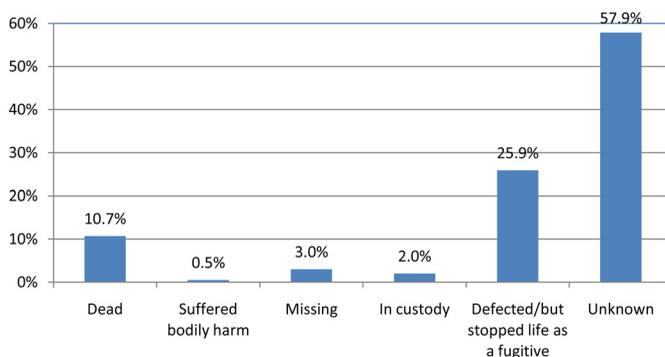
Place of current residence	North Korea	South Korea	Unknown	Total
No. of people	2	49	146	197
Percentage (%)	1,0	24,9	74,1	100,0

When religious persecution occurred with the exception of five who were living in China, all were living in North Korea. The

majority, or 53.8 percent, lived in North Hamgyong Province, followed by 4.6 percent in South Hamgyong, and 4.1 percent in Yanggang and South Pyongan, respectively. There was a wide gap between the percentage of people who were born in North Hamgyong (39.6 percent) and that of those who lived there (53.8 percent). This was apparently due to the fact that a relatively high percentage of residents in this specific province had been relocated forcibly from Pyongyang and other regions. Except two who live in the North, 49 live in South Korea. But the proportion of "unknown" is very high at 74.1 percent (146), which reflects the uncertainty about whether they are still alive or where they currently live.

⑥ By status of the victim

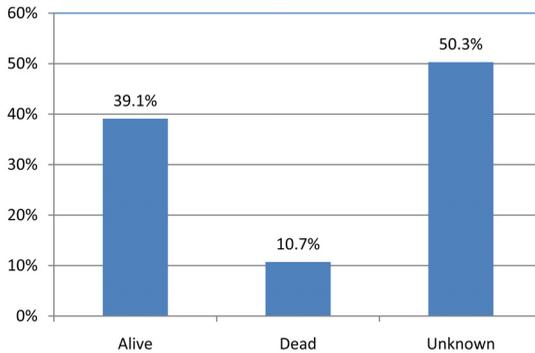
Status	Dead	Suffered bodily harm	Missing	In custody	Defected, but stopped life as a fugitive	Unknown	Total
No. of people	21	1	6	4	51	114	197
Percentage (%)	10.7	0.5	3.0	2.0	25.9	57.9	100.0



The proportion of "unknown" is the highest at 57.9 percent, followed by 10.7 percent for "dead," 3.0 percent for "missing," 2.0 percent for "in custody," and 0.5 percent for "suffered bodily harm."

⑦ By whether they are living, deceased, or of unknown status

Alive or dead	Alive	Dead	Unknown	Total
No. of people	77	21	99	197
Percentage (%)	39.1	10.7	50.3	100.0



In the category "alive or dead," the ratio of "unknown" is the highest at 50.3 percent, followed by 39.1 percent for "alive" and 10.7 percent for "dead." The death rate when the religious persecution occurred was found to be identical with the current death rate of victims.

(3) Testifiers

① By type of victim report: Individuals, Families and Groups

Unit	Individuals	Total
No. of people	24	24
Percentage (%)	100,0	100,0

All testifiers were individuals, because the survey of them was carried out on an individual basis.

② By gender

Gender	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
No. of people	4	19	1	24
Percentage (%)	16,7	79,2	4,2	100,0

There was no remarkable difference between the gender ratio of testifiers and that of all respondents. In the category of "testifiers," female (79.2 percent) overwhelmed male (16.7 percent), apparently because more female defectors were willing to testify than their male counterparts.

③ By age

Age	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	Unknown	Total
No. of people	6	7	3	1	2	5	24
Percentage (%)	25,0	29,2	12,5	4,2	8,3	20,8	100,0

There was no big difference between the age ratio of testifiers and that of all respondents. In this category, those in

their 30s topped the list at 29.2 percent, followed by those in their 20s (25.0 percent) and those in their 40s (12.5 percent). The fact that there was no big difference between the age ratio of testifiers and that of all respondents indicates that religious persecution could happen to anyone in North Korea, not necessarily to those of a certain age group.

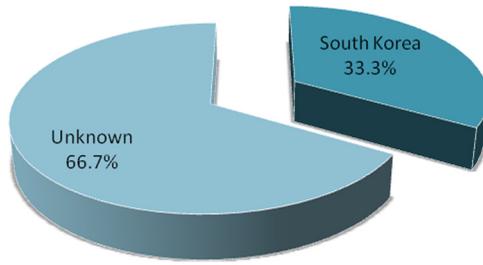
④ By region of residence

Region of residence	N.Hamgyong	S.Hamgyong	N. Pyongan	China	Unknown	Total
No. of people	14	3	1	1	5	24
Percentage (%)	58,3	12,5	4,2	4,2	20,8	100,0

Most, or 58.3 percent, of testifiers of religious persecution cases lived in North Hamgyong Province, followed by 12.5 percent in South Hamgyong, and 4.2 percent in North Pyongan and China, respectively, showing a high ratio bias for Hamgyong provinces. Although this table reflects ratios by region of residence, we can guess that many cases of religious persecution actually occur mainly in these two provinces.

⑤ By place of current residence

Place of current residence	South Korea	Unknown	Total
No. of people	8	16	24
Percentage (%)	33,3	66,7	100,0



(4) Witnesses

① By type of victim report: Individuals, Families and Groups

Unit	Individuals	Total
No. of people	30	30
Percentage (%)	100,0	100,0

All witnesses were individuals, because the survey of them was carried out on an individual basis. The survey of testifiers and witnesses was conducted on an individual basis in contrast to that of victims and perpetrators, whose survey sessions were held either on an individual or group basis.

② By gender

Gender	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
No. of people	13	16	1	30
Percentage (%)	43,3	53,3	3,3	100,0

More women (53.3 percent) than men (43.3 percent) witnessed cases of religious persecution. The ratio of men in this category is relatively high given the gender ratio of all interviewees.

③ By age

Age	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	Unknown	Total
No. of people	7	9	9	1	2	2	30
Percentage (%)	23,3	30,0	30,0	3,3	6,7	6,7	100,0

Those in their 30s and 40s accounted for 30.0 percent each, with those in their 20s making up 23.3 percent. Accordingly, the ratio of those in their 20s through 40s stood at a dominant 83.3 percent.

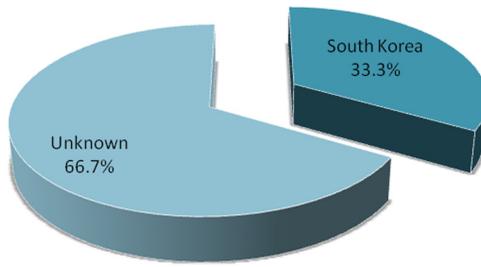
④ By region of residence

Region of residence	N. Hamgyong	S. Hamgyong	Yanggang	Unknown	Total
No. of people	19	1	2	8	30
Percentage (%)	63,3	3,3	6,7	26,7	100,0

Except for three who lived in South Hamgyong Province and Yanggang where religious persecution cases occurred, 63.3 percent of the witnesses lived in North Hamgyong. The high ratio of respondents who lived in North Hamgyong suggests that many such cases actually took place in this specific province.

⑤ By place of current residence

Place of current residence	South Korea	Unknown	Total
No. of people	10	20	30
Percentage (%)	33,3	66,7	100,0



All identified witnesses were found to be living in South Korea at the time of the interview.

4) Analysis of Religious Persecution Cases in North Korea

Cases of North Korea's religious persecution have been made known to the outside world through South Korean and foreign news media, the U.S. State Department's "Annual International Religious Freedom Report," the NKDB's "White Paper on North Korean Human Rights " and "White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea," and publications released by South Korean and foreign NGOs on human rights in the North and by researchers. The following are typical instances of religious persecution in North Korea as revealed by domestic and foreign reports on human rights in the North and by the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database."

In its annual report on the state of religious freedom around the world published on Sept. 19, 2008, the U.S. State Department designated eight countries -- North Korea, China, Iran, Myanmar, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Uzbekistan -- as "countries of particular concern" (CPC). North Korea had been re-designated by the U.S. government as a "CPC" for the eighth consecutive year since 2001.

"Refugees and defectors continued to allege that they witnessed the arrests and execution of members of underground Christian churches by the regime" said the "2008 Report on International Religious Freedom" released by the U.S. State Department. "The [North Korean] Constitution provides for 'freedom of religious belief;' in practice however the [North Korean] government severely restricted religious activity, except that which was supervised tightly by officially recognized groups linked to the [North Korean] government. Genuine religious freedom does not exist."

The report went on to say, "There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom by the [North Korean] government during the period [July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009] covered by this report, and government policy continued to interfere with the individual's ability to choose and to manifest his or her religious beliefs."

"An estimated 150,000 to 200,000 persons were believed to be held in political prison camps in remote areas, some for religious reasons. Prison conditions were harsh, and refugees and defectors who had been in prison stated that prisoners held on the basis of their religious beliefs were generally treated worse than other inmates," the annual report added.

Open Doors, an international missionary group, released an annual report on the state of oppression of Christians around the world on Feb. 3, 2009 under the title "World Watch List 2009." The report chose North Korea as the worst country for severely persecuting Christians in 2008 -- for the seventh straight year. It said that under the regime, Christians suffer endless persecution. It especially added that the number of Christians arrested in the North increased in 2008 year-by-year.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom

(USCIRF), an independent agency, released a report on April 15, 2008 under the title "A Prison without Bars," quoting defectors' testimonies on the North Korean regime's serious infringement on the freedom of religion or belief. Stressing that North Korea is the worst oppressor of religious freedom in the world, the report said that among those deported from China, defectors who are found to have been connected with religious organizations are subject to harsher penalties than others. The report added that the regime opened fake places of prayer to detect Protestants' activities, and gave security officials training in Christian customs and traditions to infiltrate into churches and religious groups.

Also introduced in the "White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea" published by the Korea Institute for National Unification (KINU) are quite a few cases of the regime's crackdown on those involved in religious activities. Especially, the white paper provides details of penalties levied on defectors deported from China for their involvement in religious activities and in underground churches.

"Around October 2000, Ri Bok-sun, a friend of the testifier's, was found by the regional State Security Agency in Musan-gun to have attended a church in Lujiaxiang, Helong, Jilin Province when she stayed in China. She had since been detained at the office for six months."

"A defector testified that he had once discovered an underground church in 1996 after following a believer for three years."

"According to a former State Security agent defector, a

so-called " Hwanghae province case, a massive crackdown on an underground church, unprecedented in scale, took place in early 1990s. In Anak-gun, South Hwanghae Province, 86 underground church members were arrested by State Security agents, some of whom were executed and the others of whom were taken into custody at political prison camps."

There is no freedom to carry out religious activities in North Korea. Under these circumstances, such activities are carried out in secret and Christians take part in them at the risk to their life. Such cases have been verified by a significant number of testimonies given by witnesses who saw other people to be punishment or executed for their involvement in such activities. Based on the surveys in 2007 and 2008, the NKDB found out that North Koreans were punished on charges of engaging in religious activities or possessing religious materials. The following are a few of such cases kept in the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database."

"Between 1998 and 2000, a man and his wife held a Christian meeting with three or four neighbors in a county of North Hamgyong Province. All of them were arrested by the chief of the county State Security Agency. After their arrest only one returned alive, and it is unknown whether the rest are dead or alive."

"According to testimony by a defector, a person was arrested in China in 2002. During interrogation at the Onsong-gun regional State Security Agency, he was tortured severely for having believed in Christianity in China and for having given his daughter an education about Christianity."

"While living in a county in North Hamgyong Province, a defector believed in Christianity. A neighbor informed the authorities about it. In 1997, a security official came to his home to arrest him. During seven months of investigation, agents questioned him about how he came to believe in Christianity, whom he had met, and what missions he had received from them.

At the time, his mother gave agents a bribe equivalent to that year's harvest. Finally he was sentenced to 15 years in prison, because one of his in-laws was a security official."

"In October 2005, an old woman from a county in North Hamgyong Province smuggled a Bible into the North from China. She was caught holding a worship service at her home with her family and detained at a prison camp. She died of a disease at the camp."

"In 2001, a woman was taken into custody at a political prison camp for having talked with her neighbors, who had been to China, about religion. One of the neighbors was a government spy. She was forced to divorce her husband, and was detained at a political prison camp and died there."

"In 2002, North Korea sent agents to churches in China to arrest devout Christians based on information that defectors were attending churches in China. At such a church, a defector and her son led a devout Christian life. Because it was difficult to arrest them inside the church, agents reportedly called them out into another place, put them into a burlap sack, and took them to the North.

The agents investigated them after putting them into a State Security Agency's detention cell, where only Christians were detained. But nobody knew what happened to them

afterwards. At the time, prison guards tossed food to inmates, saying, 'God, take all these bastards to Heaven' in sarcastic imitation of what Christians said in prayers."

"In 1998, I, then a teenager, sought food by traveling to and from China. I lived there with the help of a Korean-Chinese church. At a deacon's request, I attempted to smuggle Bibles into the North. I was arrested, but was released because I was underage at the time of the investigation. But North Koreans, who attempted to receive the Bibles, were taken into custody at political prison camps. Nothing is known about them even now."

"In 2002, the mother of a friend of mine in North Hamgyong Province came to believe in Christianity while buying and selling goods across the North Korean-Chinese border. Her son often used to cross the river. One day, he happened to meet a Korean-Chinese, an acquaintance of his mother's, in China. The Korean-Chinese asked him to deliver a Bible to his mother and he came back with it. His mother secretly read the Bible in North Korea.

Security agents were raiding homes in the neighborhood one day to ferret out mobile phone carriers by monitoring radio waves. He happened to carry a mobile phone himself and security agents raided his home. In that process, the Bible was discovered. His mother and even his father were arrested and taken into custody at Susong Camp No. 22. He was told in 2005 that both his parents had died at the camp. He, however, was not told how they had died, nor did he find their bodies."

"In 2005, I heard a man in the next-door cell singing a hymn while I was in detention at a county security office after being deported to the North. The man sang the hymn when a security

agent told him to sing it, saying he recognized his Christian belief. But he disappeared that very night. At the time, rumors circulated that he was executed in secret."

"In 2003, I watched three men being taken to a place of public execution in a county of North Hamgyong Province. Among them was a man with whom I had studied the Bible together in China. He was gagged with rags before his execution. When told to say what he wanted to say before dying, he said, 'O Lord, forgive these miserable people.' And he was shot dead."

"Based on a tip-off, around January 2005, agents from the Central Antisocialist Activities Inspection Unit raided my home in a county of North Hamgyong Province. As a result of their search, they found a Bible. I was taken into custody to a political prison camp alongside my wife and daughter. My son, who was staying in China, entered the North without any knowledge about his family's detention. He too was later taken to the camp."

"In 2003, I was deported to the North and was in custody at a county labor training camp in North Hamgyong Province. I saw a woman in her 30s, who was in the same cell with me, called out of the cell by a security agent. The security agent tied her hands behind her back. She fainted, crying, 'God, please help me.' As I had not been in the camp very long, I had no idea what was happening. Other inmates later told me she had been taken to a political prison camp because she believed in Christianity."

"In 2003, a testifier was deported from China and was interrogated by a security official for seven days. He sat with

his body crouched and prayed secretly in his cell. Upon hearing the testifier praying, an inmate said he had attended a church in a third country. He asked the testifier to teach him how to say the last part of the prayer that he had forgotten. And they prayed together. Then another inmate, who was asleep nearby, reported it to a security official.

As a result, those two, who said a prayer together, were investigated. During two days of investigation, they were tortured severely and pressured to confess that they had attended churches, but the two stuck it out to the end. As they denied the allegation despite severe torture, the security official had them face the other inmates in the same cell. As the other inmates defended the two saying they had said no such prayer, only the snitch looked stupid in the end."

"In 2000, I was in custody at a regional State Security Agency detention cell. A so-called 'Xian incident' occurred. It was a well-known incident in which 60 defectors were caught studying Christianity in Xian, China. Five leaders were executed publicly in a city of North Hamgyong Province as a public warning."

"Around 2001-2002, a younger brother of a woman, who lived in a city of North Hamgyong Province, returned from China. He brought a Bible to his sister's home. His sister tore it to pieces, regarding religion as a dangerous opiate. Her brother, however, took the pieces from her, promising to burn them himself. But he hid them in every corner of the house. One day, she found some pieces and asked her brother if he would continue to believe in Christianity. Without saying a word, he said a prayer. Later, he was taken into custody by security agents and died."

"A man was punished by a regional State Security Agency in early June 2002 for having crossed the river. There were seven boys aged 13 and 14, with the oldest being 17 years old. They had been taken by their parents to China when young. They were apparently raised by a Chinese Christian church later. It's not clear how they had been caught. Even at the State Security Agency's detention cell, they prayed before having meals and going to sleep. The 17-year-old boy followed the others, while studying the look on guards' faces at the same time. But the other boys seemed to keep doing what they had been doing out of habit. The seven boys were put into the same cell, branded as political prisoners.

They stayed at the detention cell for 15 days and were taken on a covered truck as political prisoners somewhere else around July 10. Soldiers, who arrived with the truck, said they came there to take political prisoners. Cell guards remained silent when they heard it. Nobody knew where they would go. They only knew that they were being taken somewhere as political prisoners."

"Clandestine lectures are given to party members in North Korea. I heard at a clandestine lecture in autumn 1998 that there was a Christian organization in Hwanghae province which had expanded its network across the country. By the way, the Christian organization held a district leaders' conference in a city. So the State Security Agency infiltrated a woman in her early 30s into the group. She, a graduate of Kim Il-sung University, managed to win trust and behaved well inside the church. She finally became a member of the church's inner circle. Then the church's regional leaders held a conference in a city of South Hamgyong Province. She naturally attended the conference, which she reported to the State Security Agency. As a result, all people in the conference and others were

arrested.

This fact was known later at a clandestine lecture of the party. It took place the same year. All arrested were treated as political prisoners by the State Security Agency. The only place they're destined to go is a political prison camp, where all inmates are killed. Some may be shot dead before they arrive at the camp. Just as China thoroughly gets rid of drugs, North Korea thoroughly gets rid of religion, regarding it as the opiate."

"I knew a man named Kim. Kim had an elder brother. They were once released from a political prison camp. Kim was born in 1962. The brothers Kim believed in Christianity. How did I know? Once I went to his home to attend his father's memorial service. I found no food prepared for a memorial ceremony. Then I asked him why there was no food. He said in reply, 'It was my father's last wish.' I knew later that they believed in Christianity. They were sent to a prison in 2001 for believing in Christianity and released in 2004. When they were released, security agents asked them if they still believed in God. They said no. But both died around 2005."

"A 40-something woman, who lived in a city of North Pyongan Province, was caught keeping a Bible in her home. She was taken out of her home. An army officer arrived to live there. The woman was publicly shot to death at a threshing floor of a farm. I was told by superiors to go and see the public execution. I was curious why she was to be shot. Somebody told me she had kept a Bible at her home. Guards tied her head, her chest, and her legs to a post, and shot her dead. It happened in September 2005."

IV. Conclusion and Suggestions

1. Conclusion

Before the nation was divided in 1945, people engaged vigorously in various religious activities in the northern part of Korea as well. But since its establishment in 1948, the North Korean regime has been consistently oppressed religion. Especially after the idolization of Kim Il-sung and consolidation of his leadership, religious people and their families were branded as counter-revolutionary elements and faced harsh oppression and pain. Kim Il-sung's view of religion is well-expressed in the following statement:

"We can't bring religious persons into a communist society. That's why we punished all deacons and higher members of Protestant and Catholic churches after trial, and put all other wicked religious persons on trial. And we let other ordinary religious persons continue to work if they mended their ways or put them into camps if they didn't... that's why we arrested and punished all of them in 1958. So we came to understand that religious persons can only be broken of a bad habit if they are killed..."

Religious persons and their descendants faced severe oppression in the North, regarded as targets to be eliminated. They had to continue suffering from discrimination in education

and employment. But religion has not been completely rooted out in the North, given that cases of religious persecution continue to take place, although in small numbers, even after the 1950s and after the number of small-scale underground groups and individual religious activities exposed since the 1990s. Most testimonies regarding religious activities in the North were about mutual suspicion, fear of oppression, and punishment and execution.

Recently, the North Korean regime has tightened its watch on the refugees and defectors who are deported from China because of the fear that they have been exposed to religion. The North has maintained a firm policy to respond strongly to the import of religion into its society, regarding it as a threat to the regime.

If defectors are sent back to the North from China, the regime focuses on their confession of information about whether they had become Christians or contacted South Korean Christians. If they are found to have done either of such things, defectors are kept in long-term isolation or at political prison camps. This testifies to the fact that the regime still considers religion a major threat to itself.

Since the 1970s, the North has made the most of religion, considering it an important tool of politics and propaganda. After it established national religious organizations, it stepped up exchange activities with the international community, including South Korea. Until the early 1990s, North Korean religious organizations had carried out activities chiefly as part of the regime's unification strategy. But then in the mid-1990s, in consideration of its economic difficulties, the North concentrated on giving such organizations a new role as

channels for religious dialogue and acceptance of outside aid, South Korean religious organizations' increased aid to the North, and more lively inter-Korean religious exchanges took place. Therefore, inter-Korean religious exchanges can be dramatically improved if South Korea's aid to the North is used as a catalyst.

But after the inauguration of the Lee Myung-bak administration in 2008, inter-Korean relations became tense. As a result, inter-Korean religious exchanges were affected. Despite suspension of a considerable portion of government-level aid from Seoul, exchanges between religious organizations have continued to some extent.

In spite of its religious organizations' external activities, North Korea's level of religious freedom is regarded as the worst. The North is tightening control on religion, seeing its spread as a threat to the regime, and has not alleviated punishment against those involved in religious activities. Nonetheless, there is a sign of small change in the religious terrain in the North. It seems that North Korean residents now have a higher possibility of being exposed to religion and that related clandestine religious activities are carried out, albeit in a limited manner. But people have to risk their lives if they want to participate in such activities.

Although it is operating religious organizations and facilities, the North is the world's worst oppressor of ordinary people's religious activities. Files on hundreds of religious persecution cases in the North are entered in the "NKDB Central Human Rights Database" of the North Korean Human Rights Archives at the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights every year. The most common cases are deaths, disappearances, and forced

relocations. It turns out that most of the victims of religious persecution are taken into custody at political prison camps or prisons.

It seems that religious freedom in the North is a remote possibility, unless remedies and means of prevention are found. What seems necessary is to focus on finding realistic solutions.

2. Suggestions

The "2008 White Paper on Religious Freedom in North Korea" was compiled based on analysis of objective data on the present status of religious freedom and cases of religious persecution in the North. But due to the opaqueness and limited accessibility of North Korean society, information about religious freedom and persecution there can be collected in a very circumscribed manner. Therefore, this report has some limitations due to the relatively small dataset and lack of substantial information. We have to be especially cautious using testimonies of defectors living in South Korea as a main source of analytical data, since the inspection is not conducted on-site.

Notably, as seen in the survey of defectors experiences and perceptions, they represent a group of most reformed and open-minded people of the North. Accordingly, the outcome of this survey reflects views of people who had relatively high-level information about the outside world and who had a high chance of being exposed to religion, which is not the general phenomenon across North Korea. In addition, no one can overlook the fact that the survey results reflect characteristics of one specific region, that of the Hamgyong

provinces, given that 70 to 80 percent of defectors surveyed came from one of these two provinces.

Limitations notwithstanding, this data is adequate to provide a general status report on religious freedom in North Korea. It is based on a survey of religious freedom in the North among a total of 2,047 defectors - 755 who arrived in South Korea in 2007 and 1,292 who arrived in 2008; and "NKDB Central Human Rights Database" files about 345 cases (5.0 percent) and 252 people involved in religious persecution (4.8 percent) out of 6,965 human rights violation cases and 5,272 people involved in such violations.

Based on these survey results, we are going to make some suggestions to give relief to victims of and to prevent religious freedom violations and religious persecution in North Korea.

① Permanently monitor the state of religious freedom and persecution

Someone should play a role in establishing a system to permanently monitor the state of religious freedom and persecution in the North; conducting a systematic survey of religious freedom violations and keeping files on them; and supplying relevant information at home and abroad. Currently, such a role is played by the North Korean Human Rights Archives at the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (www.nkdb.org), a non-religious, apolitical independent group.

② Develop remedies and prevention means for victims of religious persecution

It is necessary to develop remedies and prevention strategies for victims of religious persecution in the North to ensure that

the North will enhance and guarantee religious freedom. To this end, the government needs to develop policies for the freedom of religion in the North, and the private sector needs to develop pan-religious and inter-religious measures. To develop such remedies and means for prevention, it is necessary for both the government and the private sector to actively consider launching a joint research institute.

③ Consider linking religious exchanges with, and religious circles' support for, North Korea to the expansion of religious freedom there

Though in a limited way, South Korean and international religious organizations continue to provide humanitarian aid to the North. Their aid is expected to increase in the future. Accordingly, religious organizations should make sure that they can contribute to promoting religious freedom in the North by indirectly urging and asking North Korea to expand religious freedom when they give aid to religious and ordinary organizations in the North.

④ Increase official and unofficial religious contacts with North Korean residents

It is necessary to step up religious support for North Korean residents. When giving such support, it is necessary to give official and unofficial support simultaneously. Therefore, South Korean religious organizations need to expand contacts with their North Korean counterparts by holding religious dialogue and giving humanitarian aid synchronously.

⑤ Launch a pan-religious coalition to realize the expansion of religious freedom in North Korea

The freedom of religion in the North cannot be a goal of any single religion, nor should it be a target of confrontation or competition between religions. All religious circles must form a coalition and manage it jointly to achieve expansion of religious freedom in the North.

⑥ Step up international solidarity to promote religious freedom and rescue victims of religious persecution in North Korea

To promote religious freedom in the North and rescue victims of religious persecution there, it is necessary to seek cooperation and solidarity with international organizations and the international community, including international NGOs. Therefore, it is necessary to step up rescue operations for victims of religious persecution in the North by promoting solidarity among international religious organizations and human rights groups.

⑦ Train professional experts on the religious situation in North Korea

It is necessary to train professional experts to promote religious freedom and rescue victims of religious persecution in the North. Currently, religious education centers are training personnel for evangelical missions in North Korea. But we are in need of professional experts, who are equipped with experience and comprehensive knowledge about North Korea's religious policy, society and culture, to promote religious freedom, and rescue victims of religious persecution, and

prevent such persecution in the North.

⑧ Step up religious operations in regions such as China, where many North Koreans visit or stay. It has been found that most of the North Koreans who engage in clandestine religious activities, as well as defectors who have arrived in South Korea, were exposed to religion for the first time in China and began religious activities there. It is therefore necessary to step up support for religious activities in regions such as China, where many North Koreans visit or stay.

⑨ Increase support for the religious activities of those who have experience living in North Korea

One of the important resources for the expansion of religious freedom in the North is those who have arrived in South Korea after having experience living in the North. These people, including defectors, have a fuller understanding of what living in the North means. They also include South Korean prisoners of war; abduction victims; and South Korean workers at Mt. Kumgang resort, at the joint Korean Kaesong Industrial Complex, and at the KEDO light-water reactor construction site. They have a high-level understanding of life in North Korea, as they stayed in the North for an extended period of time. Given that they have a high-level understanding of life and religion in both Koreas, it will be advantageous to the promotion of religious freedom in the North by realizing them and their resource of knowledge. It is therefore necessary to step up religious support for such people.

⑩ Develop long-term and step-by-step missionary strategies for North Korea

Most religious South Koreans want to do evangelical proselytizing missions in North Korea. If we take an impulsive and emotional approach to this matter without developing long-term and systematic evangelical strategies the results could be negative. It is, therefore, necessary to develop strategies on a step-by-step basis, taking all methods and strategies into consideration -- missionary methods and strategies that could be used in North Korea immediately; strategies to be used only in China; and strategies to be used only in Southeast Asian nations.

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