

JULY 22, 2021



# North Korea's Long-term Prison-Labor Facility *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8, Sŭngho-ri (승호리) - Update

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THE COMMITTEE FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA  
북한인권위원회



## NORTH KOREA'S LONG-TERM PRISON-LABOR FACILITY (KYO-HWA-SO) AT SŬNGHO-RI



### Location:

Sŭngho-guyŏk, P'yŏngyang-si<sup>1</sup>

### CenterPoint Coordinates:

**Prisons No. 2 and No. 3 at  
Pokchŏng-ni**

39.001769° N, 126.057921° E

**Kŏndal-gol 1 Facility**

39.036105° N 126.093164° E

**Kŏndal-gol 2 Facility**

39.036317° N 126.092953° E

### Date of Report:

July 22, 2021

### Date of Imagery:

DigitalGlobe: November 10, 2020

Orbital Imaging Corporation: Sep-  
tember 14, 2004

### Size of Detention Facilities

**Pokchŏng-ni (excluding  
the village):**

43,848 square meters

(52,440 square yards)

220 meters by 260 meters

(240 yards by 284 yards)

**Kŏndal-gol 1:**

6,500 square meters (7,775

square yards)

118 meters by 52 meters (387

yards by 170 yards)

**Kŏndal-gol 2:**

7,500 square meters (9,000

square yards)

72 meters by 105 meters (240

yards by 284 yards)

### Background

The report of the United Nations  
Commission of Inquiry on human

rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (UN COI) determined that "crimes against humanity have been committed in North Korea, pursuant to policies established at the highest level of the State." Many of these crimes against humanity take place against persons detained in political and other prison camps—persons whom the Commission determined are among the "primary targets of a systematic and widespread attack" by the North Korean regime—including murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, forced abortions and other sexual violence, persecution on political grounds, and the enforced disappearance of persons. The Kim regime considers prisoners in political and other prison camps to "pose a threat to the political system and leadership" of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).<sup>2</sup>

Based on research conducted by the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), the following trends have defined the human rights situation in North Korea under Kim Jong-un's control:

1. An intensive crackdown on attempts to escape from North Korea.
2. A restructuring of the prison camp system, with some facilities closer to the border with China being shut down, while inland facilities have been expanded, and construction of internal high-security compounds within the prisons.
3. The sustained, if not increased, economic importance of the political prison camps.
4. The disproportionate repression of women by North Korean officials; women have assumed primary responsibility for the survival of their families and thus

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represent the majority of those arrested for perceived wrongdoing at the “jang-madang” markets, or for “illegally” crossing the border.

5. An aggressive purge of senior officials, aimed to consolidate the leader's grip on power.
6. An increased restriction on information flow.
7. Targeting of North Korean escapees.
8. Increased focus on eliminating “reactionary thoughts.”

### Human Rights

According to the UN COI, “The unspeakable atrocities that are being committed against inmates of the

*kwan-li-so* political prison camps resemble the horrors of camps that totalitarian States established during the twentieth century.”<sup>3</sup>

Former UN COI Chair, Justice Michael Kirby, stated this regarding re-education through labor camps (*kyo-hwa-so*):

*Although these labor camps might be described as “ordinary prisons”, there is nothing “ordinary” in the treatment of those incarcerated there. Differences in the treatment of prisoners and political detainees are often merely “matters of degree, not principle. Policies that combine forced labour with deliberate starva-*

*tion, inadequate medical care and poor hygiene conditions cause the death of thousands of inmates annually.”<sup>4</sup>*

HRNK interviewed a former prisoner (hereinafter “i39”) in the Pokchŏng-ni facility of *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8, Sŭngho-ri (승호리) for this report, finding evidence of crimes against humanity.

### Extermination and Starvation

The former prisoner described death in detention due to malnutrition, including that of a woman who had been forcibly repatriated from China. i39 said that although the North Korean government is supposed to provide at least 200

grams of food per day to the prisoners, they only provided prisoners with 100 grams of food. In addition, the rice porridge the prisoners received was regularly contaminated with mouse droppings.

i39 said that around three people died every day in the women's section during i39's three years of imprisonment. The former prisoner reported that deceased prisoners were taken to Prison No. 2's crematory. i39 recalled, “like origami, they try to make corpses fit by breaking the bones.” The bodies were taken once a month to the crematory and black smoke was visible from the crematory's chimney.

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Although sometimes prisoners were allowed to have visitors (up to once a month), families of deceased prisoners were not notified. In one case, i39 said that a family visited only to realize that their child (age unknown) had died four months earlier.

### **Torture**

i39 also recalled torture methods used as punishment inside the prison. The former prisoner stated that parts of the prison floor were so hot that it was impossible to walk on. i39 reported this was due to the fact that the facility

was near a coal mine and went on to state, "One day, the export unit (*ban*) failed to reach its quota, which was to connect 12,000 doll eyelashes per day for export to China. We had to kneel down on the hot part of the floor. This would cause skin to burn within five minutes." i39 reported that five to six people died from the heat during her imprisonment.

### **Enslavement and Forced Labor**

Finally, prisoners were made to work under long and difficult conditions without enough food. In the export unit (*ban*), prisoners

were forced to affix eyelashes on dolls from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily. Prisoners in other units were forced to conduct difficult manual labor in the fields, nearby cement factory, and in the limestone and coal mines.

### **Analysis**

#### **Executive Summary**

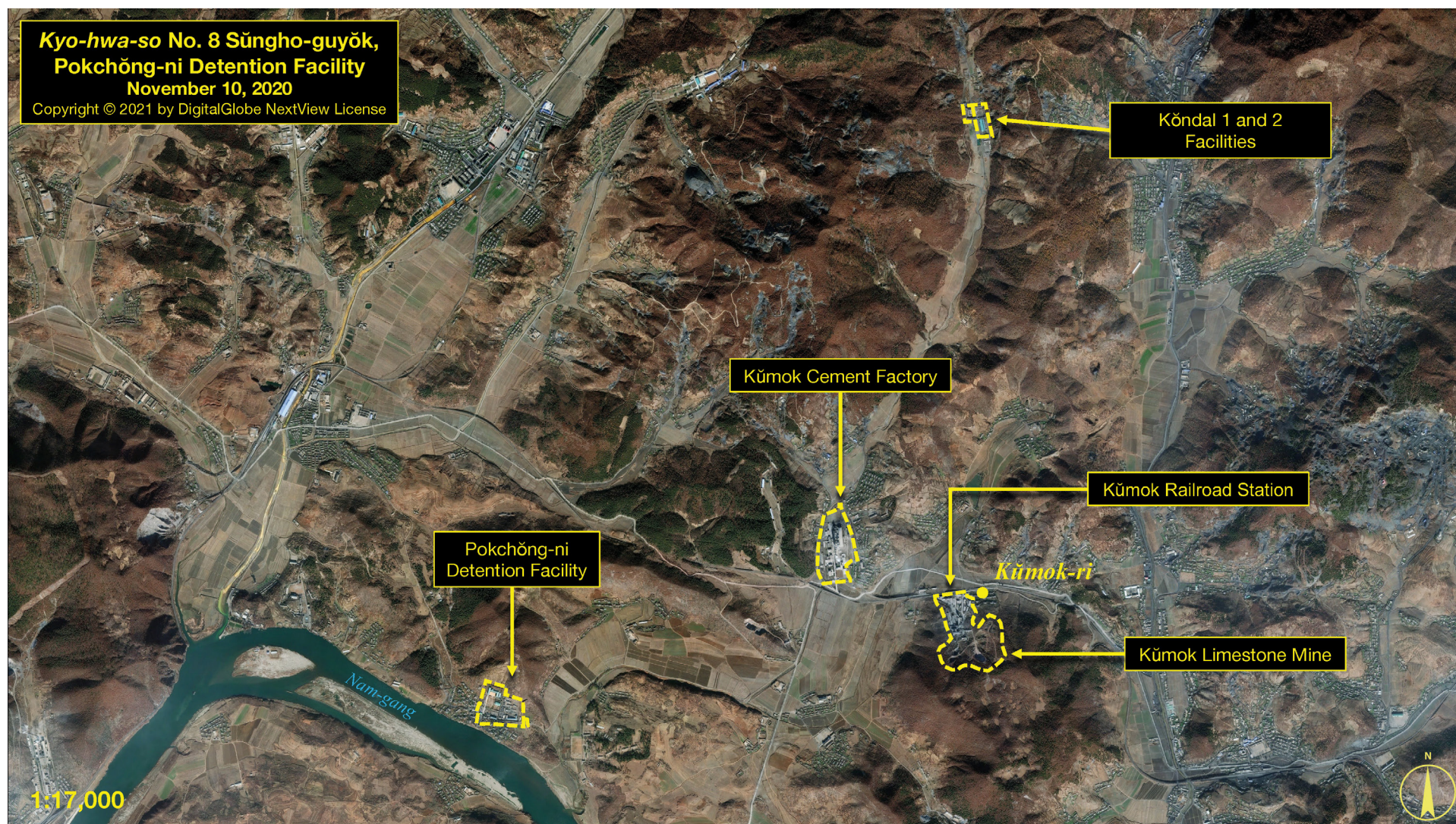
This report is part of a comprehensive long-term project undertaken by HRNK to use satellite imagery and former prisoner interviews to shed light on human suffering in North Korea by monitoring activ-

ity at prison facilities throughout the nation.<sup>5</sup>

This study repositions and expands upon our report from May 29, 2019 covering the detention facility at Pokchŏng-ni (북청리, 39.001730 126.055616), adds information about two recently identified detention facilities—Köndal 1 (곤달골 1, 39.036105 126.093164) and Köndal 2 (곤달골 2, 39.036317 126.092953), places all of these within Sŭngŭho-guyŏk (승호구역, Sŭngŭho District, 39.033333, 126.000000), and as most probably subcomponents of *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8, Sŭngŭho-ri (승호리).<sup>6</sup>



Figure 1



Overview of the Pokchŏng-ni detention facility and surrounding areas, November 10, 2020.



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A model of the Pokchŏng-ni facility by Nathan Hunt is available at [<https://www.hrnk.org/camp/HRNKMMainMapFrontend.html>].

As noted in our earlier report, former prisoner testimonies, open-source reports, and media sources describe several detention activities in the general area as the Pokchŏng-ni facility and identify them all with some variation of the Sŭngho-ri designation, indicating their likely association with each other and their location within the Sŭngho District. For example:

In 1994, Amnesty International reported that the South Korean Government stated that some of its citizens who had been kidnapped by North Korea were being held at a political prison facility in the Sŭngho-ri area. At that time, it was reported that a total of 600 detainees were being held here.<sup>7</sup>

The Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB) lists a Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so*, which it identifies as "*Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8," where approximately

2,000 prisoners mine coal on the border of Hwanghae-bukto (North Hwanghae Province).<sup>8</sup>

In another report, NKDB identifies a No. 26 political prison as being closed during January 1991 in the Hwach'ŏn-ni and the Sŭngho-ri areas of P'yŏngyang-si. It reportedly held a "small scale" number of prisoners.<sup>9</sup>

A later NKDB report states that *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8, located in the Sŭngho-ri area, held over 2,000 prisoners who worked in a nearby coal mine.<sup>10</sup>

The Korea Institute for National Unification (KINU) locates "*Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8, Sŭngho-ri" within Hwanghae-bukto on the border of P'yŏngyang-si.<sup>11</sup>

These reports, unfortunately, were fragmentary and lacked specific location and organizational information. Interviews with former prisoners at the Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 conducted by HRNK during September 2020 and April 2019, combined with satellite im-

agery and other sources, provide new information that permits a more detailed, albeit still incomplete, understanding of the organization and activities carried out at this camp to be presented.<sup>12</sup> HRNK will continue to update this report as additional information becomes available.

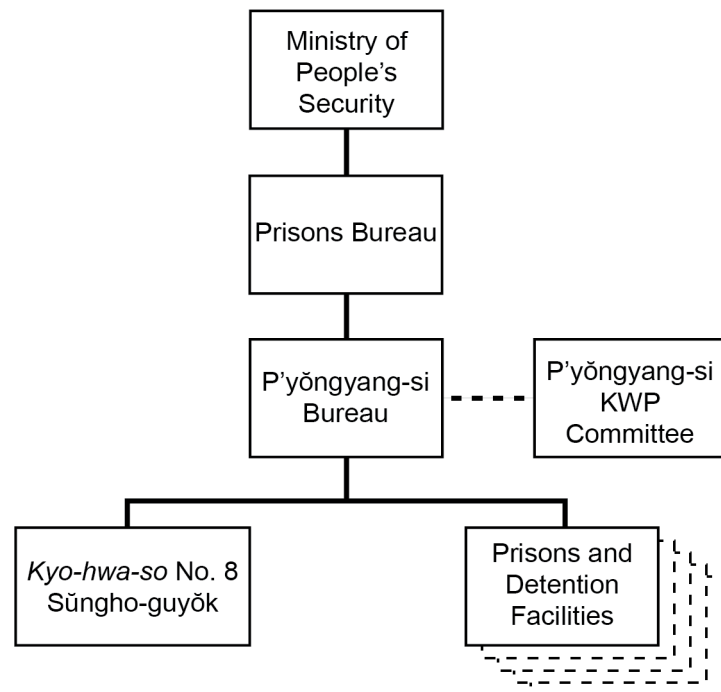
As with the analytical caution presented in previous HRNK reports, it is important to reiterate that North Korean officials, especially those within the Korean People's Army and the internal security organizations, clearly understand the importance of implementing camouflage, concealment, and deception (CCD) procedures to mask their operations and intentions.<sup>13</sup> It would not be unreasonable to assume that they have done so with the Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8.

### Location and Subordination

The Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 is located within Sŭngho-guyŏk, P'yŏngyang-si—approximately 25 kilometers east of the capital city

of P'yŏngyang and consists of a small number of dispersed detention facilities. This *kyo-hwa-so* is reported to be subordinate to the Prisons Bureau (also called the Correctional Education Bureau or the Correctional Bureau) of the Ministry of People's Security (MPS, *In-min Bo-an-bu*).<sup>14</sup> Specifically, it would be under the control of the ministry's P'yŏngyang-si Bureau. As of January 2021, Ri Yong-gil (리영길) is reported to be the new Minister of the MPS (MSS) and is sanctioned by the European Union.<sup>15</sup> General Choi Bu-il (최부일) is the former Minister of the MPS (MSS) and is sanctioned by the United States.<sup>16</sup> The MPS itself directly reports to the State Affairs Commission chaired by Kim Jong-un.

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*Ministry of People's Security, Prisons Bureau, P'yŏngyang-si (Simplified)*

### Development and Organization

The precise date of establishment of the Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 is unknown. However, it or a parent organization appears to have been in operation as early as the late-1980s as indicated by an Amnesty International report that "lists 49 political prisoners held in 1990 in Sungho."<sup>17</sup>

Available satellite imagery indicates that what has subsequently been identified as the Pokchŏng-ni detention facility in Sŭngho-guyŏk was established prior to September 14, 2004. At that time, it occupied an irregular shaped area that measured approximately 220 meters by 227 meters (240 yards by 248 yards), encompassed approximately 32,500 square meters (38,870 square yards), and contained approximately 30 structures of various sizes from large administration, barracks, and prisoner housing buildings to small

sheds.<sup>18</sup>

For this update report, a broader search of Sŭngho-guyŏk was undertaken to identify additional subcomponents of *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8. While this search yielded several potential locations, the characteristics of only two appear to be prison facilities. These two facilities are located five kilometers northeast of the Pokchŏng-ni detention facility and north of the village of Kŏndal-gol (곤달골). HRNK has provisionally identified these two facilities as Kŏndal-gol 1 and Kŏndal-gol 2 to facilitate readability.

Satellite imagery indicates that the Kŏndal-gol 1 facility was established sometime prior to September 2004. At that time, it consisted of a roughly rectangular compound encompassing approximately 6,500 square meters (7,775 square yards) and was surrounded by a high security wall with two guard towers on the northeast and



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southwest corners and a single entrance. Inside the facility were eight structures of different sizes—six of which were interconnected.

Köndal-gol 2 was built 31 meters northwest of Köndal-gol 1 during 2007–2008. At that time, it was a small rectangular facility encompassing approximately 3,000 square meters (3,600 square yards) that was surrounded by a high security wall with two guard towers on the northwest and southwest corners and a single entrance. Internally, the facility consisted of a single 'G'-shaped building.

HRNK anticipates that we will be able to further refine the date of establishment for all these facilities, fill in gaps in their organization, development, and operational history in future updates when additional satellite imagery from the 1980s and 1990s is declassified and correlated with future interviews with former prisoners.

### **Organization**

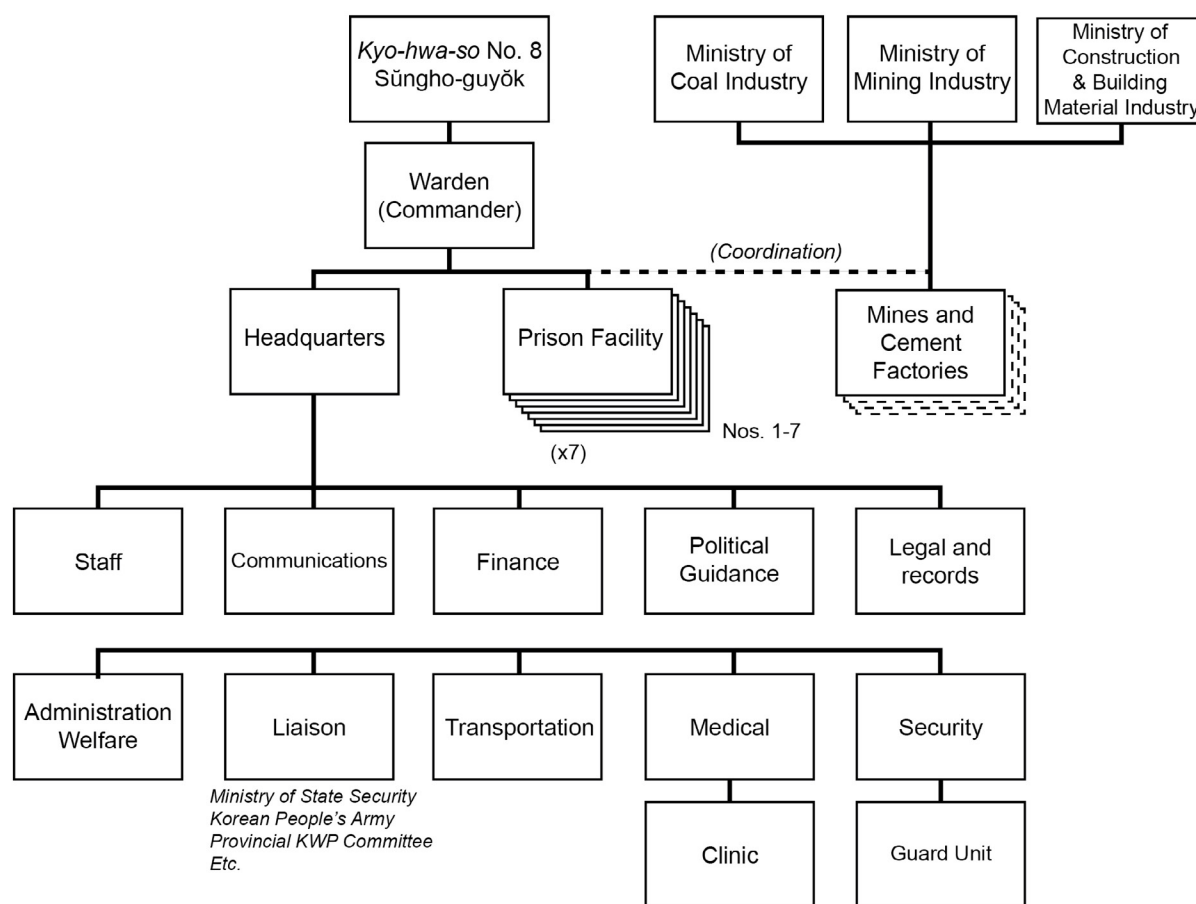
Former prisoner testimony, limited publicly available information, and known North Korean organizational patterns indicate that during the early 2000s *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 was organized into

a headquarters with seven detention facilities dispersed within Sŭngho-guyöŋ.<sup>19</sup> These facilities were identified by a former prisoner as "Prison No. 1 through No. 7."<sup>20</sup>

Although the organization of the *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 headquarters itself is unknown, it is likely to be along a somewhat standard pattern seen elsewhere consisting of: a headquarters staff, communication section, finance section, political guidance section, legal and records section, administration and welfare section, liaison section (Ministry of State Security, Korean People's Army, Sŭngho-guyöŋ and P'yöngyang-si

Korea Workers' Party Committees, Ministry of Coal Industry, Ministry of Mining Industry, Ministry of Construction & Building Material Industry), transportation section, safety/medical section, and a security section (a guard unit). Depending upon their size, the seven individually numbered prisons likely follow a similar yet more rudimentary pattern.

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*Kyo-hwa-so No. 8, Sŭngho-ri (Provisional)*

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While the precise locations of the *kyo-hwa-so* headquarters and Prisons Nos. 1 and 4-7 are unknown, a former prisoner has identified Prisons Nos. 2 and 3 as being within the Pokchŏng-ni facility. It is likely that the Kŏndal-gol 1 and Kŏndal-gol 2 facilities are among the remaining numbered prisons.

### Imagery Analysis<sup>21</sup>

In addition to the 20 high-resolution pan-sharpened multispectral and pan-chromatic satellite images analyzed for the original Pokchŏng-ni report, HRNK analyzed five new images of the facility and its immediate environs to determine if it was still operational and, if so, if there have been any significant developments.<sup>22</sup> This analysis focused upon the following physical features:

- » Entrance/checkpoints, guard positions, and security perimeters (internal and external)
- » Internal arrangement
- » Housing and agricultural support facilities and activity
- » Miscellaneous activity

### *Pokchŏng-ni Detention Facility or Kŭmok (금옥) Kyo-hwa-so*

A former prisoner from the early 2000s states that the Pokchŏng-ni detention facility was organized around Prisons No. 2 and No. 3.<sup>23</sup> As a whole, this facility was sometimes known by prisoners as the Kŭmok (금옥) *Kyo-hwa-so*.<sup>24</sup> This designation is taken from the village of Kŭmok-ri (금옥리, 39.008073 126.094156) and its railroad station, Kŭmok-yŏk (금옥역, 39.008333, 126.091944), 3 kilometers northeast of the

camp—the apparent transit point for prisoners arriving at or departing from the facility.<sup>25</sup> A former prisoner provides the following information concerning the organization and responsibilities of Prisons No. 2 and No. 3.<sup>26</sup>

**Prison No. 2:** Prison No. 2 was an all-male prison that reportedly held more than 1,000 prisoners during the early 2000s (potentially until 2006). The prisoners here would often be sent to work at the “Kŭmok Cement Factory” (39.010793, 126.083326) and the “Kŭmok Limestone Mine” (39.010122 126.085780) approximately 2.5 and 3 kilometers northeast of the prison, respectively. During winter months, these same male prisoners would occasionally be sent to the “Hwach’ŏn Coal Mine” approximately 3.3 kilometers north of the prison

to scavenge coal to be used for heating.<sup>27</sup> The former prisoner also states that there was a crematory within Prison No. 2 in which “bodies are burned once a month and black smoke is visible from its chimney.”<sup>28</sup> The specific site for the crematory was unknown and, as noted in our [previous report](#), sometime between June 2010 and January 2013, the Pokchŏng-ni detention facility was completely remodeled and expanded. Thus, the task of identifying the crematory became more challenging with the resolution of available satellite imagery. There is a reasonable probability that with the [2011–2013 restructuring of the Pokchŏng-ni facility](#), Prison No. 2 was moved to the newly constructed central prison compound.



Figure 2



Overview of the Pokchŏng-ni detention facility, November 10, 2020.



Figure 3



The Kŭmok Cement Factory, November 10, 2020.



Figure 4



The Kŭmok Limestone Mine, November 10, 2020.



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**Prison No. 3:** Prison No. 3 was an all-female prison located within what HRNK had previously identified as the administration and barracks building. It now appears that in addition to administration offices and barracks, the building contained the prison cells and workshops for the female prisoners. When exactly Prison No. 3 was established is unclear. However, [our previous report](#) identifies the building being present in 2004. The former prisoner believes it was previously an all-male prison that was converted into a female prison sometime around 2006. During the early 2000s, Prison No. 3 reportedly held between 500 and 550 prisoners confined to

eight cells with 55-70 individuals in each cell. At that time, the prisoners were formed into five *ban* (workgroups):<sup>29</sup>

- » *Ban 1:* Engaged in agricultural work in the fields and orchards immediately around the facility.
- » *Ban 2:* Same as above.
- » *Ban 3:* Same as above.
- » *Ban 4:* Primarily assigned to manufacture eyelashes for dolls to be exported to China. No Chinese persons, however, were ever observed by the former prisoner at the facility. Prisoners had to take a test to be accepted into this unit. The women in this

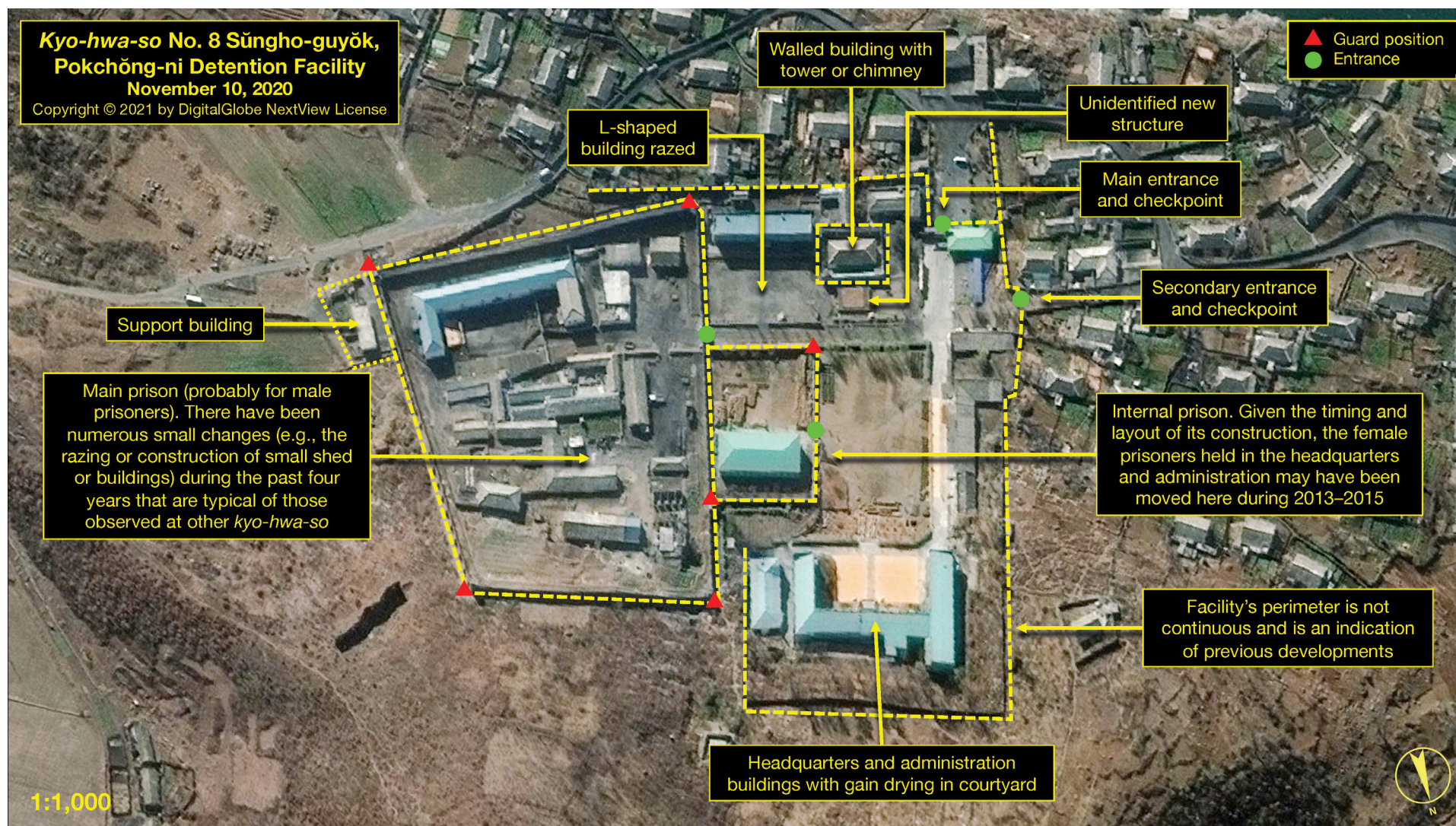
*ban* worked from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily while sitting at workbenches. Due to the absence of electricity, the prisoners reportedly wore a headband with a light to perform their work in the dark.

- » *Ban 5:* Engaged in agricultural work in the fields and orchards immediately around the facility.

Satellite imagery indicates that since 2017, the Pokchŏng-ni detention facility has undergone only minor changes, such as the razing of one building and construction of a small structure in the support area; the razing and construction of several small buildings or sheds

within the No. 2 Prison area; etc. These changes were, however, relatively minor, and typical of those observed at other *kyo-hwa-so* throughout the nation.

Figure 5



Close-up view of the Pokchŏng-ni detention facility, November 10, 2020.

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### *Köndal-gol 1 and Köndal-gol 2 Facilities*

As noted above, the Köndal-gol 1 detention facility was present prior to satellite imagery acquired during September 2004. At that time, it consisted of a roughly rectangular facility encompass-

ing approximately 6,500 square meters (7,775 square yards) that was surrounded by a high security wall with two guard towers on the northeast and southwest corners with a single entrance. Inside the facility were eight structures of different sizes—six of which were interconnected.

Located immediately south of the facility was a small compound, although its relation to the detention facility is unknown.

Köndal-gol 1 remained relatively unchanged until early 2015 when major reconstruction began. By early 2019, the project was complet-

ed, with previous buildings being razed and replaced by two large buildings and one small building.



Figure 6



Although not a high-resolution image, this view of the Kŏndal-gol 1 facility shows that it was present in some form as early as September 14, 2004.



Figure 7



Close-up view of the Kŏndal-gol 1 and 2 detention facilities, November 10, 2020.

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Available satellite imagery indicates that the Kōndal-gol 2 detention facility was built sometime during 2007–2011. It is a small rectangular facility immediately northwest of Kōndal-gol 1 that, at the time of its construction, encompassed approximately 3,000 square meters (3,600 square yards) and was surrounded by a high security wall with two guard towers on the northwest and southwest corners with a single entrance. Internally, the facility consisted of a single 'G'-shaped building. The facility remained essentially unchanged until sometime between June and August 2020, when additional security walls were constructed extending east connecting it to Kōndal-gol 1. While the original security walls, guard towers and entrance remain, a new entrance was also added to the new south

wall. As of November 2020, the total area encompassed by the facility had increased to approximately 7,500 square meters (9,000 square yards).

The fact that Kōndal-gol 2 was built adjacent to Kōndal-gol 1 strongly suggests an organizational relationship between the two and that they are components of the Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8—likely two separate prisons. These relationships are further reinforced by the fact that the new walls under construction during 2020 connect the two facilities. Both facilities are within 350 meters of six small coal-mining operations and there is a well-used trail leading directly from Kōndal-gol 2 to the mine immediately to the northwest. Both are strong indications that any prisoners held here are being

used for mining operations. HRNK anticipates that it will be able to identify the specific prisons within the Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 that are contained at these two facilities in future interviews with former prisoners.

### Assessment

Analysis of high-resolution satellite imagery of the Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8's known detention facilities and their environs collected between 2017 and 2020 indicates that:

#### *Pokchōng-ni Facility*

- » The Pokchōng-ni facility is an operational prison facility that, by DPRK standards, is mature and well maintained.
- » The facility has undergone minor infrastructure changes

since 2017. These changes are typical of what has been observed at other *kyo-hwa-so* throughout the DPRK.

- » Perimeter walls and gates remain well maintained and in good repair.
- » Guard positions are well positioned to provide overlapping fields-of-view of the prison and are well maintained and in good repair.
- » Administrative, barracks, housing, support buildings, and grounds are generally well maintained and in good repair.
- » The grounds and buildings of the prisoner housing and work areas appear to be moderately well maintained and in a moderate state of repair.



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### *Köndal-gol 1 and Köndal-gol 2 Facilities*

- » The Köndal-gol 1 and Köndal-gol 2 facilities are operational prison facilities that appear to be well-maintained.
- » The facilities have undergone significant infrastructure changes since 2015, including the addition of new perimeter walls that appear to be designed to physically connect the two compounds and may indicate an increase in prisoner population.
- » All guard positions are well positioned to provide overlapping fields-of-view of the prison. The positions at Köndal-gol 1 appear more distinct and potentially in a better state of repair than those at Köndal-gol 2.

It is presently not possible to arrive at an accurate estimate of the prisoner population at Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 or its subordinate Prisons Nos. 2 and 3 within the Pokchöng-ni facility or at the Köndal-gol 1 and Köndal-gol 2 facilities. A former prisoner estimated that during the early 2000s, the Pokchöng-ni facility detained approximately 1,500-1,600 prisoners (approximately 550 female and 1,000 male prisoners). This estimate is well within the capacity of the physical structures observed present at that time. The subsequent reorganization and expansion of the facility during 2010–2015 suggest that an even larger prisoner population may now be detained. No information is available concerning the prisoner population at Köndal-gol 1 or Köndal-gol 2.

### Recommendations

Continued background investigation and ongoing monitoring of the Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 is recommended to identify all of its subordinate facilities, to provide a more detailed accounting of their previous operations, and to develop an objective baseline understanding of their continuing activities, maintain an evidentiary catalog of physical changes at the facility, update its status, develop evidence of prisoner population size, and assist with the identification of human rights abuses.

The United Nations and any international organizations or civil society organizations operating near Sŭngho-ri *Kyo-hwa-so* No. 8 should consider the vulnerability of prisoners inside this facility and incorporate a Human Rights up Front approach when delivering

humanitarian aid to North Koreans in need.<sup>30</sup> Prisoners inside this facility should be treated as one of the most vulnerable populations.

HRNK calls on North Korea to abide by the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Female Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules).

HRNK requests that North Korea “[g]rant immediate, free and unimpeded access to international humanitarian organizations to provide assistance to the most vulnerable groups, including prisoners” as per Ireland’s May 2019 Universal Periodic Review recommendation, which North Korea supported.<sup>31</sup>



## Gazetteer

Location	Latitude (N)	Longitude (E)
Chigyŏng (지경)	39.001944	126.061389
Hwach'ŏn-ni (화천리)	39.016944	126.044167
Köndal-gol 1 (곤달골 1) Facility	39.036105	126.093164
Köndal-gol 2 (곤달골 2) Facility	39.036317	126.092953
Köndal-gol (곤달골)	39.023611	126.093056
Kŭmok-ri (금옥리)	39.008073	126.094156
Kŭmok-yŏk (금옥역)	39.008333	126.091944
Pokchŏng-ni (복청리)	39.001730	126.055616
Pokchŏng-ni (복청리) Prisons No. 2 and 3	39.001732	126.057974
Sŭngho-guyŏk (승호구역)	39.033333	126.000000
Sŭngho-ri (승호리)	38.994444	125.976389

## Note

HRNK would like to extend a special note of thanks to Allen Anderson for his gracious support of HRNK's efforts to document North Korea's prison system and the tragic conditions present within that system. HRNK would like to thank Nathan Hunt for his model of the Pokchŏng-ni facility. HRNK would also like to express sincere gratitude to the following individuals for their assistance with this report: Ronald Bohmuller, Bobby Holt, Huiwon Yun, Hangyun Kim, Sua Lee, and Junmin Cha.

## Endnotes

- 1 Throughout this report the location names and spelling are those used by the U.S. National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.
- 2 UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Commission of Inquiry on human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, A/HRC/25/63, para. 77, February 7, 2014, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/CoIDPRK/Pages/CommissionInquiryonHRinDPRK.aspx>, [http://hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/A\\_HRC\\_25\\_63.pdf](http://hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/A_HRC_25_63.pdf) (hereafter "A/HRC/25/63").
- 3 A/HRC/25/63, para. 60.
- 4 David Hawk with Amanda Mortwedt Oh, *The Parallel Gulag: North Korea's "An-jeon-bu" Prison Camps*, (Washington, D.C.: Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), 2017), Foreword by Michael Kirby, [https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Hawk\\_The\\_Parallel\\_Gulag\\_Web.pdf](https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Hawk_The_Parallel_Gulag_Web.pdf).
- 5 Previous reports in the project can be found at <https://www.hrnk.org/publications/hrnk-publications.php>.
- 6 The use of the name Pokchŏng-ni to identify this detention facility was provisionally chosen by HRNK as it is the accepted name of the area in which the facility is located. The village of Chigyŏng may also have been used as it is nearby and may have been used by other sources to designate the same facility.
- 7 "Political Prisoners' Camp in Sungho-ri Unmasked in Addition to 12 Concentration Camps," *Vantage Point*, August 1994, pp. 12-15; and *North Korea, New Information About Political Prisoners*, (New York: Amnesty International), June 1994, pp. 4-5 and 8-9.
- 8 NKDB, *Current Situation of Detention Facilities in North Korea Focused on Kyo-hwa-so*, [in Korean] (Seoul: The Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB), 2016), pp. 40-41.
- 9 During the 1950s there were numerous reports of prisoner-of-war camps including a "Prisoner of War Camp No. 8," in the Sŭngho-ri area. The presence of a "Camp No. 26" is sometimes referred to in documents dating to the 1950s, 1990s, and in more contemporary documents discussing the human rights situation prior to the 2000s. It is unclear what, if any, relationship these references have to today's Sŭngho-ri Kyo-hwa-so No. 8. For example: UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Detailed Findings of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, A/HRC/25/CRP.1, 7 February 2014, [https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/A\\_HRC\\_25\\_CRP\\_1\\_ENG%20LONG.pdf](https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/A_HRC_25_CRP_1_ENG%20LONG.pdf); NKDB, *Political Prison Camps in North Korea Today*, (Seoul: The Database Center for North Korean Human Rights, 2011), pp. 63-64; "Political Prisoners' Camp in Sungho-ri Unmasked in Addition to 12 Concentration Camps," *Vantage Point*, August 1994, pp. 12-15; and *North Korea, New Information About Political Prisoners*, (New York: Amnesty International), June 1994, pp. 4-5 and 8-9; Central Intelligence Agency. Prisoner of War Camp No. 8, North Korea, July 11, 1953, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80-00810A001600880001-7.pdf>; Central Intelligence Agency. Prisoner-of-War Camps, North Korea, May 23, 1952, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP82-00457R012000400004-4.pdf>; and Central Intelligence Agency. United Nations Prisoner of War Camps in North Korea, November 10, 1951, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP82-00457R009200140004-5.pdf>.
- 10 NKDB, *Current Situation of Detention Facilities in North Korea Focused on Kyo-hwa-so*, [in Korean] (Seoul: The Database Center for North Korean Human Rights, 2016), pp. 40-41.
- 11 Han Dong-ho, Do Kyoung-ok, Lee Wootai, and Rim Je Joon, *Prison Camps in North Korea*, (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification (KINU), 2016), pp. 16-17.
- 12 Author interview data; *Interview of former Kyo-hwa-so No. 8 Prisoner i39 by HRNK*, Seoul, April 25, 2019 and September 14, 2020 (hereafter "Interview i39").
- 13 Joseph S. Bermudez, Jr., Greg Scarlatou, Amanda Mortwedt Oh, & Rosa Park. *North Korea's Chŭngsan No. 11 Detention Facility*, (Washington, D.C.: HRNK), December 21, 2020, [https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Chungsan%20No\\_%2011%20Detention%20Facility%20Web.pdf](https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Chungsan%20No_%2011%20Detention%20Facility%20Web.pdf); Joseph S. Bermudez, Jr., Greg Scarlatou, Amanda Mortwedt Oh, & Rosa Park. *North Korea's Long-term Prison-Labor Facility Kyo-hwa-so No. 12, Jŏngŏ-ri - Update 3*, (Washington, D.C.: HRNK), September 30, 2020, [https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/KHS12\\_FINALFINAL.pdf](https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/KHS12_FINALFINAL.pdf); and Joseph S. Bermudez, Jr., Greg Scarlatou, Amanda Mortwedt Oh, & Rosa Park. *North Korea's Long-term Prison-Labor Facility Kyo-hwa-so No. 1, Kaech'ŏn*, (Washington, D.C.: HRNK), March 25, 2020, [https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Bermudez\\_Kaechon\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Bermudez_Kaechon_FINAL.pdf).
- 14 The full title in Korean is 조선민주주의인민공화국 인민보안부. According to several reports, during early 2020, North Korea changed the name of the Ministry of People's Security back to its older name of the Ministry of Social Security (사회안전성 / *Sa-hoe An-jeon-sung*). This, however, remains to be confirmed. Jeongmin Kim, "North Korea likely renames Ministry of People's Security," *NK News*, June 3, 2020, <https://www.nknews.org/2020/06/north-korea-likely-renames-ministry-of-peoples-security/?t=1591178315505>.
- 15 Official Journal of the European Union Legislation, L 99 I, Volume 64, March 22, 2021, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2021:099I:FULL&from=EN>, pp. 9 and 33-34.
- 16 Also known as Choe Pu Il or Ch'oe Pu-il. U.S. Department of the Treasury, "North Korea Administrative Designations Updates," May 13, 2020, <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20200513>.
- 17 *North Korea, New Information About Political Prisoners*, (New York: Amnesty International), June 1994, pp. 4-5 and 8-9.

- 18 Joseph S. Bermudez, Greg Scarlatou, Amanda Mortwedt Oh, & Rosa Park, *North Korea's Long-term Re-education through Labor Camp (Kyo-hwa-so) at Pokchŏng-ni*, (Washington, D.C., HRNK), May 29, 2019, p. 4, [https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Bermudez\\_Pokchongni\\_FINALFINAL\\_Web.pdf](https://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Bermudez_Pokchongni_FINALFINAL_Web.pdf).
- 19 *Interview i39*.
- 20 *Interview i39*.
- 21 The following sources were used throughout this section: Database Center for North Korean Human Rights, "Political Prison Camps in North Korea Today." <http://nkd.org/2012/main.php>; Hawk, David. *The Hidden Gulag: Second Edition*. (Washington, D.C.: Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, 2012), pp. 3, 63, 79 and 223, available at [http://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/HRNK\\_HiddenGulag2\\_Web\\_5-18.pdf](http://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/HRNK_HiddenGulag2_Web_5-18.pdf); Hawk, David. *The Hidden Gulag: Third Edition*. (Washington, D.C.: Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, 2013), pp. 22 and 25, available at [http://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/NKHiddenGulag\\_DavidHawk\(2\).pdf](http://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/NKHiddenGulag_DavidHawk(2).pdf); Hawk, David. *The Hidden Gulag: Fourth Edition*. (Washington, D.C.: Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, 2015), pg. 8, available at [http://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Hawk\\_HiddenGulag4\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/Hawk_HiddenGulag4_FINAL.pdf); Kim, Soo-am, Kook-shin Kim, Soon-hee Lim, Hyun-joon Chon, Kyu-chang Lee, and Jung-hyun Cho. *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea, 2003-2013*. Seoul, Korea: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2003-2013. [http://www.kinu.or.kr/eng/pub/pub\\_04\\_01.jsp](http://www.kinu.or.kr/eng/pub/pub_04_01.jsp); KINU *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea 2014*, (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, July 2014), pp. 180-81, 189, 194 and 624, (hereafter: *KINU2014*) available at: [www.kinu.or.kr/eng/pub/](http://www.kinu.or.kr/eng/pub/); KINU *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea 2015*, (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, September 2015), pp. 115-116, 122, 126 and 517, (hereafter: *KINU2015*) available at: [www.kinu.or.kr/eng/pub/](http://www.kinu.or.kr/eng/pub/); and *Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, A/HRC/25/CRP.1* (New York: UN Human Rights Council, 7 February 2014), pp. 222-224 and 263, available at [http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoIDPRK/Report/A.HRC.25.CRP.1\\_ENG.doc](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoIDPRK/Report/A.HRC.25.CRP.1_ENG.doc).
- 22 The term "high resolution" in this report refers to satellite images with a ground sample distance (GSD) of less than 1.2 meters. The GSD is the distance between pixel centers when measured on the ground.
- 23 *Interview i39*.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 This is simply a collection of 19 housing buildings adjacent to a sand/limestone quarry identified as the "Kumok (Geumok) Limestone Mine" (39.010122 126.085780).
- 26 *Interview i39*.
- 27 This is more correctly a series of surface and horizontal shaft mines that extend up two small valleys between the villages of Chin-gol and Utho-kol.
- 28 Author interview data, *Interview i39*.
- 29 A former prisoner reports that there was also a "newcomers *ban*," in which new female prisoners were initially placed prior to being permanently assigned a *ban*. It is unclear whether this was one of the existing numbered *bans* or an *ad hoc* unit. Detainees in this *ban* performed manual labor in the fields and brought "coal back to the *kyo-hwa-so*, 50kg of weight." *Interview i39*.
- 30 "Rights Up Front," May 2014, <http://www.un.org/sg/rightsupfront/doc/RuFAP-summary-General-Assembly.htm>; see also Roberta Cohen, "Must UN Agencies Also Fail in North Korea?," *38 North*, April 21, 2015, [https://www.38north.org/2015/04/rcohen042115/#\\_ftn2](https://www.38north.org/2015/04/rcohen042115/#_ftn2).
- 31 Recommendation 126.58. *List of all recommendations made to Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its responses*, Session 33 - May 2019, [https://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/korea\\_dpr/session\\_33\\_-\\_may\\_2019/2rps\\_dprk.pdf](https://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/korea_dpr/session_33_-_may_2019/2rps_dprk.pdf).



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THE COMMITTEE FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA  
북한인권위원회

HRNK is the leading U.S.-based bipartisan, non-governmental organization in the field of North Korean human rights research and advocacy, tasked to focus international attention on human rights abuses in that country. It is HRNK's mission to persistently remind policy makers, opinion leaders, and the general public in the free world and beyond that more than 20 million North Koreans need our attention.

Since its establishment in 2001, HRNK has played an important intellectual leadership role on North Korean human rights issues by publishing 50 major reports (available at <http://hrnk.org/publications/hrnk-publications.php>). HRNK became the first organization to propose that the human rights situation in North Korea be addressed by the UN Security Council. HRNK was directly, actively, and effectively involved in all stages of the process supporting the work of the UN Commission of Inquiry. In the past five years, HRNK has been invited numerous times to provide expert testimony before the U.S. Congress. In April 2018, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) granted HRNK UN consultative status.

For media inquiries, please contact Executive Director Greg Scarlatoiu at +1 202.499.7973 or by e-mail at [executive.director@hrnk.org](mailto:executive.director@hrnk.org).

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