

“South Korean Electricity” Crossing the DMZ

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APRIL 20, 2004 21:14 by Seung-Ryun Kim (srkim@donga.com)

For the first time, South Korea will supply electricity to North Korea across the DMZ. On April 20, Korea Land Corporation and Hyundai Asan decided to supply electricity directly to South Korean firms undergoing construction in the Kaesung Industrial Complex through Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO). KEPCO will set up telegraph poles to Kaesung and supply energy to about 10 factories. They will settle in the initial section (10,000 pyong) of the Kaesung Industrial Complex, which opens in the second half of this year.

An official from the Ministry of Unification said, "When the need for electricity increases after the industrial complex is completed and more factories are built, we will construct a substation in the Kaesung area and supply power by linking it with a South Korean substation and transmission tower."

"Since the South Korean central station has a complete control over the matter, the electricity supply will be intercepted if North Korea attempts to steal energy," he explained.

The North Korean government has asked South Korea to supply power by building a power plant in the Kaesung area. However, the South Korean government showed disapproval because electricity is a "strategic resource."

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