Beat: Arts

N. Korea says it has `world`s most advantageous human rights system`

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USPA News - Rebutting international criticism of its human rights situation, North Korea released its own assessment on Saturday, calling itself "the world`s most advantageous human rights system" and claiming that all its citizens have access to free education, free medical care and free housing. The report, written by North Korea`s Association for Human Rights Studies, is a direct response to a damning United Nations (UN) assessment earlier this year, which said the gravity, scale and nature of human rights violations in North Korea do "not have any parallel in the contemporary world."

In Saturday`s 53,000-word rebuttal, the reclusive state said its citizens lead happy lives as all of them enjoy genuine freedom and rights. It claimed that defectors who have provided testimonies about North Korea`s human rights situation were being paid and had committed "indelible crimes" at home before fleeing the country. "The Korean people enjoy a worthwhile and happy life without any social and political uncertainty, and beautiful traits of helping each other and sharing joys and sorrows under the slogan of `one for all and all for one` are witnessed in various social life," the report said. "The Korean people are convinced that their state and social system based on the Juche idea are the most superior and popular one as it guarantees them genuine freedom and rights and place absolute trust in it." The report details that all of its citizens are supplied with food "at a price next to nothing," have access to free and compulsory education, free medical care, and free housing, among other perks such as freedom of expression and freedom of the press, even though all media is controlled by the government. "The socialist system of the DPRK is the land of bliss for the people," the report adds, referring to North Korea by its official name, the Democratic People`s Republic of Korea. The report is in stark contrast with this year`s UN assessment, which documented wide-ranging and ongoing crimes against humanity in North Korea, including extermination, murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, forced abortions and other sexual violence, persecution on political, religious, racial and gender grounds, the forcible transfer of populations, the enforced disappearance of persons and prolonged starvation. "There is an almost complete denial of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as well as of the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, information and association," the UN report said, adding that propaganda is used by state-controlled media to manufacture absolute obedience to Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un and to incite nationalistic hatred towards other countries. North Korea, however, said it hoped its report would help "clearly understand how false and unrealistic" the accusations are. "Whoever echoes what was uttered by the riff-raffs even after reading the report released by the Association must be imbeciles lacking the ability to judge the reality," the government said. It is not the first time that North Korea has responded to accusations about its human rights situation, which is widely accepted to be one of the worst in the world. Responding to annual U.S. State Department reports, North Korea released its own assessment of the human rights situation in the United States earlier this year, calling the United States "a living hell."

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