

Overview of DPRK Social Media Activities July-August

In July and August 2010, Uriminjokkkiri, an official North Korean website allegedly operated by the United Front Department of the Workers Party of Korea, opened up accounts and began rehosting existing official North Korean propaganda material on three popular international online social media outlets: YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. Despite the ROK Government's blockage of South Koreans' access to North Korea's YouTube channel and Twitter page, the North continued to channel its messages and even made its first online interaction with a South Korean follower on Twitter. Facebook took down North Korea's Facebook page on 23 August, after only a few days of operation, for violating terms of use.

All content posted to North Korea's *YouTube*, *Twitter*, and *Facebook* pages were in Korean without any English subtitles. Most of the postings were previously released propaganda material taken from DPRK official media outlets, such as Pyongyang television, KCNA, *Rodong Sinmun*, and *Uriminjokkkiri* (UMK).



Screen shot of the Uriminjokkkiri website's main page provides links to its YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook accounts, and a link to free proxy router programs for those who cannot access these sites in the top right corner (OSC provides pink box highlight)

YouTube was the first international networking site where North Korea began posting propaganda material in July.

- UMK set up its own *YouTube* channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/uriminzokkiri>) on 14 July. Its initial postings between 14 July and 11 August were mostly UMK-produced video statements disparaging South Korea and its government, and claiming that the DPRK was not responsible for the sinking of the ROK naval vessel Ch'o'nan [Cheonan].
- Between 12 and 25 August, however, the overarching theme of the postings shifted to introducing North Korea's culture, landmarks, social system, and economy. Most of these clips were taken directly from Pyongyang television.

This OSC product is based exclusively on the content and behavior of selected media and has not been coordinated with other US Government components.

- As of 31 August, the ROK Government has blocked South Koreans' access to the UMK *YouTube* channel's profile page. However, South Koreans can still access its video clips by searching on the *YouTube* main page.

Despite the ROK Government's blockage of South Koreans' access to North Korean propaganda material, North Korea continued to transmit its messages on *Twitter*, and even began interacting with a South Korean "follower."

- UMK opened its *Twitter* account (<http://twitter.com/uriminzok>) on 12 August.
- Most of UMK "tweets" were titles and links to existing official DPRK media reports from KCNA, *Rodong Sinmun*, and UMK. The news reports describe Kim Jong Il [Kim Cho'ng-il]'s activities and various domestic and international events. The majority of articles denounce the United States, Japan or South Korea. The UMK *Twitter* page also hosted some links to video clips on its *YouTube* channel, and a few cartoons taken from the UMK website satirizing South Korea's political situation.
- The only unique messages were two announcements: a self-introductory "tweet" on 12 August stating that "This is the UMK website's *Twitter* account"; and another "tweet" on 23 August announcing the opening of a UMK *Facebook* account.
- On 19 August, the ROK Government blocked access to the UMK *Twitter* site. However, South Koreans were still able to read *Twitter* messages via smartphones.
- On 28 August, UMK conducted its first interaction with a South Korean follower on *Twitter* by replying to the follower's question about the DPRK's *YouTube* channel.

Content Posted on DPRK *YouTube* and *Twitter* Accounts 12-25 August

YouTube	
Cultural Programs	75
Music Videos	43
Introduction of DPRK	32
Domestic Economic Propaganda	22
Anti-ROK Propaganda Programs	9
News Reports	2

Twitter	
News Reports	69
Articles	67
Official DPRK Statements	18
Video Clips on <i>YouTube</i>	13
Political Cartoons	4
Announcements	2

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North Korea's foray into another popular social networking site, *Facebook*, was short-lived.

- The UMK *Facebook* page (<http://www.facebook.com/uriminzokkiri>) first appeared about 19 August, under the user name "Uriminjok." After amassing 50 "friends," the page was removed by the *Facebook* operator on 21 August for violating terms of use.
- About 22 August, the UMK *Facebook* page resurfaced with the same user name, "Uriminjok," but a different address (<http://www.facebook.com/uriminzok>). After growing from 50 to almost 400 friends in one day, this account was also shut down on 23 August.
- Prior to being deleted on 23 August, the UMK *Facebook* page was observed with approximately 100 postings, which included video clips linked to the UMK *YouTube* channel, photos showing DPRK landmarks and people, and transcripts of official North Korean Government statements. As of 31 August, this account has not been observed to resurface.

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