



Recently deported Gangjeong peace maker, Emily Wang held a Gangjeong solidarity event in Taiwan.

NEW “PILGRIM HOUSE” OPENS IN GANGJEONG

By Dong-Seok

We cannot let the Gangjeong community be destroyed through this naval base construction. For this reason a new place to establish a foundation of Peace and Life in this struggle against the base has opened. This place is called “Pilgrim House”.

Pilgrim House is a place which anyone can visit and have a break. We hope visitors feel at home. At least one room will always be made available for international visitors as Gangjeong needs much international solidarity.

Jeju Life and Peace Forum: May 28-30
As a form of protest to the upcoming annual government run, “Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity”, a conference with no real interest in actual peace, groups actually interested in peace will hold an alternative “Jeju Life and Peace Forum” from May 28 to May 30.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- 1. Make a donation to support our international outreach and public education efforts. Visit savejejunow.org to donate. Alternatively, join Gangjeong Friends to give regular support to activists.
2. Write letters to Gangjeong’s prisoners of conscience (See page 3). Address letters to: Jeju Prison, 161 Ora-2dong, Jeju-si, Jeju-do, Korea
3. Stay updated on the resistance by joining the “No Naval Base on Jeju!” and “Save Jeju” Facebook pages.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
http://www.savejejunow.org (English / Mandarin / Japanese)
http://www.facebook.com/SaveJeju (English / Korean)
http://www.facebook.com/groups/nonavalbase (English)
http://twitter.com/SaveJejuNow (English)
http://cafe.daum.net/peacekj (Korean / English / Mandarin / Japanese)

For Gangjeong related videos, visit savejejunow.org or check these Youtube sites:
1234y2100 / Shalomsea / Sungbong2012 / ShealEum / Regis Tremblay

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The Ongoing Struggle for Conscientious Objection in Korea

By D.S.

May 15th is International Conscientious Objector’s Day. This is a commemorative day for people who choose to deny war and military service. It has been held since 2003. In Seoul there was an event to mark this day, with a film showing. Then there was a bicycle parade called “Roll the Pedal of Peace” from Gangnam Station to the Ministry of National Defense, passing by Samsung C&T on the way.

Reasons for defying military service can range from being against war to wanting to resist government power. Many people also say they are willing to contribute to “national defense” if they can do it nonviolently or non-militarily and insist on alternative social service peace work.

According to the Korean Military Service Law, “The person who has received a notice of active duty enlistment, but does not join the army within three days without justifiable reason, shall be punished by imprisonment of less than three years.” But personal beliefs, religious beliefs, and political beliefs are not covered under “justifiable reason” and will be met with sentences of 1 year and 6 months imprisonment.

There should be more options to contribute to “national defense” than just being forced to be a soldier, breaking personal peace beliefs. Actually the ROK Ministry of Defense announced in 2007 that they would make a plan for alternative service, but after former President Lee Myeong-Bak took office, they scrapped the plans, claiming it was “not the right time”. Conscientious objection will also most likely not be accepted during Current President Park Guen-Hye’s regime as she has already shown her dislike for it.

PLEASE HELP GANGJEONG FRIENDS
GANGJEONG FRIENDS IS A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HELP SUPPORT THE ONGOING WORK OF PEACE ACTIVISTS IN GANGJEONG VILLAGE
ACTIVISTS CONTINUE TO SPEND EVERY WAKING HOUR IN PEACEFUL OPPOSITION TO THE NAVAL BASE THAT MAY CONSUME THE ENTIRE VILLAGE IF NOT STOPPED. MOST HAVE BEEN GIVEN STEEP FINES BY THE COURT FOR THEIR EFFORTS. WE NEED YOUR HELP. PLEASE JOIN US. YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL HELP US KEEP JEJU THE PEACE ISLAND.
HOW TO DONATE:
1. VISIT HTTP://CAFE.DAUM.NET/GANGJEONG79S/P0K7/1
2. FILL OUT THE FORM AND EMAIL IT TO GANGJEONG79S@DAUM.NET AND GANGJEONGINTL@GMAIL.COM

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY
Monthly news on the struggle against Jeju Naval Base
Published by Gangjeong Village in Jeju, South Korea



CRACKDOWN REMINDS OF GWANGJU

Gangjeong on May 10, 2013 will be remembered in history for the government’s murderous crackdown on the people’s sit-in tents. At the moment when controversially elected president Park Geun-Hye returned back from her US tour, to deepen the ROK-US alliance and begin regular joint ROK-US-JAPAN navy drills in Korean waters to the east and south of Jeju.

The sit-in tents were located on Gangjeong property near the Gangjeong stream and were used to monitor the navy’s illegal environmental destruction, which is constantly and thoroughly neglected by the government. Despite the fact that prior to the crackdown, Seogwipo City Hall told the villagers that

they would not mobilize police forces, around 800 police officers including many from Busan in addition to more than a hundred “public workers” were used to suppress the nonviolent struggle. The severe crackdown resulted in unjust arrests including village Mayor Kang Dong-Kyun and severe and minor injuries to activists and villagers.

When the police and public workers attacked, Mayor Kang Dong-Kyun & anti-base chairman Go Gwon-Il, along with one villager and one activist, chained their necks to the sit-in tent, the chained necks symbolizing the marginalization of Gangjeong by dominating powers. Village native Ms. Kim Mi-Lyang, was knocked over a ledge by police

and fell nearly 6 meters, sustaining a serious 15 cm cut across her midsection and has been hospitalized since. Villager Kim Jong-Hwan, who was arrested after chaining his neck, passed out during interrogation from the stress of the incident.

Meanwhile, the media and even police, spread lies and deceptions about the event, claiming that the Mayor tried to hang himself (He was attacked carelessly by police while chained around his neck!) and claimed that the injured Kim Mi-Lyang is an activist and not a native villager. Most terribly, the police lied about Mi-Lyang’s accident, claiming she fell accidentally by herself, until video evidence was found showing the

real events.

Because of their embarrassing and violent actions, and after the presentation of clear video evidence, the Jeju Police Office made an apology to the Gangjeong village representatives. However, those truly responsible, such as the Island governor, the Seogwipo city government, or the Chief of the Seogwipo Police did not apologize or investigate. On May 24, the ROK police chief expressed a vague “sorry feeling” but did not apologize.

May is famous in Korea for the May 18th Gwangju democratic movement in 1980, also called 5.18. 33 years later, Gangjeong is another Gwangju.

Catholics Resist Increased Repression

By Oh Du-Hee, Peace Nomad

The Ministry of Land, Transportation and Maritime Affairs, the Ministry of National Defense and the Jeju self-governing province finally signed a Joint use agreement for the Jeju Naval Base on 14th of March. The Korean Navy has taken this chance to speed up the construction ahead of the typhoon/rainy season. So they once again increased the oppression on the peace activists and also are doing construction (destruction) 24 hours a day. Then on the 25th of April, A new police chief was assigned to Seogwipo and 830 police officers were dispatched to Gangjeong including 500 police from the mainland. Police removed the barricades which was installed by peace activists to disturb the construction vehicles.

Police even began to further disturb the daily 11 a.m. Catholic Life and Peace Mass. The Catholic Life and Peace mass begun on Gureombi Rock in 2010 for the recovery of the village community and for the Peace of Jeju Island, the Peace Island Until September of 2011, when the Navy sealed off the entrance to Gureombi Rock. The Catholics consider this as a symbol of Golgotha and so, denied entry to Gureombi, we’ve held the daily mass at the construction site gate since then.

The police have now begun to disturb the Mass to rush the construction, pushing the construction trucks through even in the middle of the Mass. The Catholic complained and asked that the trucks to stop, insisting on their right to freedom of religious expression. However, the police continued to mock the catholics and the villagers, violently moving the priests during Mass. In response, the Catholics set up an altar at the gate of the construction site in protest.

The villagers and peace activists have been encouraged and given strength through the struggle of the Catholics and the police have started to slow down a bit after strong criticism of religious oppression. The government cannot stamp out our prayer or our wish for peace no matter how bad the police oppression gets.



Image: Gangjeong Village Story
Father Woo performs mass saying, “Police, if you move this altar, the 1 billion Catholics of the world will see!”

WAR DRILLS IN JEJU’S WATER

On May 15, a joint ROK-US-JAPAN naval war drill was held in the international waters between Jeju and Kyushu Islands. Though it was publicly stated that it was for humanitarian purposes, it is suspected that it is a part of training for the US missile defence system, as Aegis Destroyers were among the war vessels used in the drill.

The war drill began with the mobilization of the US nuclear aircraft carrier Nimitz arriving in Busan on May 10. A group of 26 students were arrested on May 11 during a protest blocking the road as two buses with the Nimitz crew attempted to pass. 25 were released on May 13.



NIS Sued for Defamation of Naval Base Opponents

On March 18, Korean media outlet Hankyoreh revealed that Won Se-Hoon, Chief of the ROK National Intelligence Service (NIS) interfered in the presidential election by “ordering his employees to interfere directly in national politics.” Part of his orders included instructing employees to leave comments on on-line sites defaming opponents of the Jeju naval base project.

Severl groups, including the office of Jang Hana (National Assembly Woman, Democratic United Party (DUP), the Democratic Lawyers’ Association (Min-byun), and People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), filed a defamation lawsuit against Won Se-Hoon on March 21.

Save Our Seas Completes Ocean Training in Indonesia

By Kim Dong Won

Six people from SOS (Save Our Seas) who are now working in Gangjeong and 1 peacemaker working in Aceh, Indonesia, have just safely finished 4 weeks of ocean training in Sulawesi, Indonesia. It was the first international ocean training since SOS formed. It was very intensive, sailing around 700 km on a native Indonesian handmade wooden catamaran sail boat. We had to relay and trust on the blowing of the wind, the compass in our hands, water bottles for drinking, and our friends next to us.

It took a total of 10 days to test and repair the boat before and after sailing, and 16 days of sailing to reach our destination. We passed through 7 small islands and 6 seaside towns. As we travelled away from the Sulawesi mainland, the water and scenery became cleaner and more beautiful, and the local people on tiny islands, became more friendly and innocent. There were several moments of fear and danger though, with even our mast breaking in half at near the end of our journey.

Why did SOS decide to leave for training even though Gangjeong’s huge 24 hour-a-day struggle is still on going? We needed fresh and abundant experiences to deepen our hearts, in order to more deeply love and respect and protect the peace of the ocean. As the Jeju naval base is built, tension between the US and China will increase just as territorial disputes between China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan are getting worse.

Dr. Song Kang-Ho who participated in and coordinated this training told us, “The paths of the sea seem different from the roads of land. The sea can’t be owned by anyone. Unlike land it is for everyone. But unfortunately there are some people and nations who forget this and try to own the ocean. Trying to own the ocean leads to many sea creatures getting hurt and many people having their homes taken from them. So we need to make the path of peace on the ocean, which belongs to everyone. In the future we should be able to make peace with boats of peace sailing freely in the vast ocean, not warships.”

SOS who are now in Gangjeong, Jeju, dream of setting boats of peace afloat in the vast waters of the Asia Pacific and the China Sea to build peace in North-East Asia. We are dreaming of peace sailing to decry war in places where there are territorial disputes or conflicts. We should not lose the peace which the ocean embraces.



Image: Moctppuri Park

The navy & construction companies destroying the worthless caisson damaged during last year’s typhoons, poisoning the local sea life and irrevocably damaging the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve



Image: Ramsey L.

Chairwoman Jeong with Noam Chomsky following a Gangjeong event and panel in Boston.

Talking about her visit to Maine, where huge Aegis Destroyers are built and Hawaii where the environment is contaminated by the military bases, she said she realized that the base being built in Jeju was clearly a US base.

She expressed thanks to all of the event organizers and international activists who support Gangjeong despite the South Korean government’s unjust oppression of them, including numerous deportations.



Image: Save Our Seas (SOS)

The SOS catamaran sail boat in the middle of the ocean.

VILLAGE CHAIRWOMAN RETURNS FROM U.S. SPEAKING TOUR

Jeong Young-Hee, a Gangjeong farmer and Chairwoman of Women Villagers’ Committee to Stop the Naval Base, was invited on a speaking tour of United States recently and traveled all across the U.S. to Hawaii, Maine, Boston, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles from April 23 to May 12.

After her return she also has had two chances to share about her trip with the people of the village as well as with a group of college students. She said that she could feel Gureombi Rock guiding her wherever she went.

TRIAL UPDATES

On April 29, The Gangjeong Village Association, on trial for supposedly violating the “Law on Donations”, has filed for a review of the law itself in the Constitutional Court, claiming that the law is a violation of the Constitution. On April 30, the court declared “guilty” nine villagers and activists who protested the navy’s violence against Dr. Song Kang-Ho and others on a barge on June 20, 2011. The nine were charged with “Obstruction of Business”. They were sentenced to four or six months imprisonment with a suspended sentence and two years’ probation.

On May 7, the Jeju court sentenced Fr. Lee Young-Chan on the charges of “Obstruction of Business” and “Obstruction of General Traffic”. He was given 10 months imprisonment with a suspended sentence and two years’ probation. Fr. Lee was arrested on October 26, 2012 and imprisoned for two months for his protest, before being released on bail. On May 9, Paco Booyah, an international peace worker living in Gangjeong stood court on an appeal of his original case by the prosecutor. On February 8, he was sentenced to a 700,000 won (around \$700 USD) fine but with a suspended sentence. On May 10, six peace activists who covered their bodies in red paint and held an anti-Samsung “Bleeding Gureombi” protest in front of the Samsung C&T building in Seoul on March 26, 2012 started their trial at the Seoul Central District Court. The prosecutor accused them of “Obstruction of Business”, “Property Damage”, “Trespassing”, and “Violation of the Law on Rallies and Protests”. Samsung C&T claims that it should recieve around 20 million won (around \$20,000 USD) in damages from the protest. If the court decides that that they are guilty, then a civil suit by Samsung may also follow for damage compensation.

Finally, in good news, on May 8, the National Human Rights Commission of Korea acknowledged that the February 2012 arrest of the members of Shinzzakkot band, composed of three Gangjeong peace activists, was illegal. Band member Jo Yak Gol applied an appeal to the commission last September

“Gangjeong’s Daughter”, Mi-Lyang, Badly Hurt by Police

Here, there is a native-born woman of Gangjeong whom president Park Geun-Hye should face. Has been fighting for over 6 years for the protection of her hometown and for the water of Jeju to not become a war playground for the U.S. Military.

On May 10, during the repressive crackdown of state power on the people’s sit-in tents, as she sat innocently doing nothing, she was bumped by careless police over a ledge falling nearly 6 meters. During the fall she suffered a large 15 cm gash torn across her stomach and an injured finger. She was rushed to the hospital and had emergency surgery were she is still recovering. Fortunately the wound was 1 cm short of cutting her internal organs.

At first the police claimed that she was walking and fell over on her own. But then a video was found showing clearly that the police had knocked her over the side. So the police stopped lying but still no public apology was given. Even the mayor of Seogwipo refused to come and meet with Mi-Lyang or the villagers until shamed into it by the finding of the clear video. He didn’t make a public statement but did come to visit her in the hospital.

There Mi-Lyang said to him, “How can people from the same hometown repress each other?! How can you bear the realization of this US Base? I will resist this repression of state power. Let all the arrested be free for the sake of my sacrifice.”



Reflections on Entry Denial and Deportation

By Emily Wang (Wang Yu-Hsuan)

On April 24th, after a short overseas trip, I returned back to Korea, excited to go back to my second hometown, Gangjeong. But then a ridiculous but not really surprising thing happened to me. It was Entry Denial. I am the 21st person who has gotten this treatment from the Korean government in relation to the Jeju naval base issue, demonstrating once again that justice and peace are very inconvenient in Korea right now.



Image: Gangjeong Village Story

Emily at Netgiliso in Gangjeong

Looking at my case, I’ve never been arrested or received any investigations from the Korean police. I’ve never been on trial. I didn’t often tell people my real name and in the beginning not even my nickname. But now I’m rejected to enter the ROK because I’m on the “Black List”.

For giving me this special label, I want to say thank you. With the support of many friends, I decided to walk back with dignity, not carried by the police, a situation which happens almost everyday in Gangjeong. I feel the price of this dignity clearly. It’s a present. Dear ROK, you gave me a big present to continue the vision of Inter-island peace solidarity, outside of Gangjeong.

Forcing someone to leave cannot erase that one witnessing eye or one listening ear but will only bring more eyes and ears to the suffering of Gangjeong. I truly and deeply feel sad to leave, but I am saying thank you.

Emily lived in Gangjeong for almost two years where she was an active member of the struggle, a member of SOS, The Frontiers, The Gangjeong Ineternational Team and an emerging artist who held her first public exhibition in Gangjeong. She is well loved by many villagers and activists.

PRISONER UPDATES

Apart from Prof. Yang Yoon-Mo (57) and Mr. Kim Young-Jae (41), two more peace activists were imprisoned in the last month. On April 28, a bright Sunday, Mr. Lee Jong-Hwa was arrested around 11:30 am while sitting in front of the gate of naval base project building complex. He is one of the activists who used to do “Baek Bac” or 100 bows in front of the gate every morning at 7 a.m.

On May 7, Park Suk-Jin who was released on bail on December 12, 2012 after 98 days in prison was re-imprisoned for violating the conditions of his bail, one of which was that he is not allowed to stay in Gangjeong for more than three days without court permission. He had been in Gangjeong for five days when he was arrested. His bail was cancelled and he was directly arrested by the court and re-imprisoned. The reason he was in prison was that he along with four others, occupied a tall caisson making dock in Hwasoon Port on the opening day of the WCC (World Conservation Congress) on Sept. 6, 2012.

Finally, Mr. Kim Jong-II, co-representative of the Seoul branch of the SPARK (Solidarity for Peace And Reunification of Korea) was imprisoned on May 15 and released on May 23 after 9 days’ prison labor. He was arrested by the Jeju Prosecutor’s Office and moved to Jeju Prison on May 15. He was first arrested on Dec. 27, 2010, along with 33 other villagers and activists, while holding a press conference opposing the navy’s opening ceremony of the naval base project building complex. He was fined 450,000 won (Around \$450 USD) for “violating the Law on Rallies and Protests”.

He appealed but finally the Supreme Court rejected his appeal. Mr. Kim Jong-II refused to pay the fines and instead chose prison labor (1 day in prison pays for 50,000 won or around \$50 USD). He says that he has refused to pay the fines as an act of civil disobedience against unjust judicial oppression on the struggle against the Jeju naval base project.

GANGJEONG PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Please write letters of support to

Since Feb. 1
No. 301
Mr. Yang Yoon-Mo

Since April 12
No. 435
Mr. Kim Young-Jae

Since April 28
No. 125
Mr. Lee Jong-Hwa

Since May 7
No. 199
Mr. Park Suk-Jin

Jeju Prison, 161, Ora-2 dong, Jeju-si, Jeju-do, Korea

Deported French Activist Shares about Gangjeong at SOAS, University of London

By Andren; UK activist and Gangjeong supporter

In March, Benjamin Monnet (Benj) a French national who lived in Gangjeong for ten months, was invited to talk at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) University of London. It was one year since Benj was violently and illegally deported from South Korea following a non-violent attempt to defend Gureombi Rock from detonation. British peace activist and Nobel Peace Prize nominee Angie Zelter was also arrested at the same time and eventually subjected to a deportation order.

The event was attended by students from the UK, South Korea, Japan, Norway, Germany, Italy and Tahiti. Benj said he hoped to ‘generate some inspiration’, and did exactly that with a delivery that was at once calm, good humoured and passionate. He showed a film of the navy’s ramming of Save Our Seas team kayaks, in which he narrowly missed being killed. He described the events leading up to the deportation, the brutal nature of that experience - from the deceit of Korean immigration officials to arriving in Paris, having to beg for money to get home from the airport. But Benj was careful to make the focus of his talk the struggle of Gangjeong villagers, not himself.

The audience included supporters of the struggle, some who knew very little about it and at least one in favour of the naval base. A lively discussion developed about North Korea, but Benj made it clear that the naval base is about China, saying that the US would have the equivalent in kilo wattage of 12,000 Hiroshima bombs on Jeju Island. He answered a pro-base Korean student who said the issue is national self defence: ‘If I point a gun at your head, is that self defence? Is this how you should treat your neighbour?’

The deportation of this non-violent defender of peace was one of the countless human rights abuses enacted by Lee Myoung Bak’s corrupt government. The injustices have continued under Park Geun Hye’s regime with the indefensible and inhumane deportation of Emily Wang (Wang Yu-Hsuan) in April and recent political imprisonments. So, should we then despair? The last word goes to Benj:

‘Of course we can stop this naval base! We are human beings - where there is a will there is a way. But we need your help’.