I write this message of solidarity from Darwin, Australia where local activists are beginning to expand their efforts to prevent the US deployment of 2,500 Marines as part of Obama’s "pivot" into the region. You are not alone [...] Bruce R. Gagnon, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, US

In 2010 a team arrived to make environmental assessments [...] So I committed myself to remain with them and not to document these violations and ask the Jeju Island government to do something. It was found that the so-called "frame-type silt protector" which is a required first layer of protection (during dredging) was buried 10-20 feet deep and Rendered useless. This was a flagrant disregard for environmental standards. This was followed by the construction of the coast guard and the Island government in Jeju awarded a contract to a local construction company. But this contract was never awarded, there was no bid, and the ROK government/corporate collusion was openly acknowledged and not investigated or stopped. Dr. Song and Brother Park were under arrest warrant. The judge disregarded it all and they were imprisoned. [...]
Gangjeong/Timor Leste Exchange Should Honor History
By Emily Wang

This July, I visited Timor-Leste when I had been living and serving before coming to Jeju. I shared my history, Gangjeong’s story, and a Northeast Asian island history as our new formation for inter-island solidarity for just peace. Similar to Jeju, Timor Leste has a sad and complicated history. During my visit, a government-sponsored group called Jeju Peace Volunteer Corps were hosting a volunteer program in Timor and at the same time, “Group of Peace Pilgrims Who Love Jeju” was launched by the Korean Embassy in Timor-Leste and the Jeju Island Government. High-ranking Timorese officials and the volunteers from the Jeju Peace Volunteer Corps were all invited. Jeju Province Governor, Woo Kee-Min sent a letter congratulating them on this “achievement.”

What Group of People? Who Love Jeju? I guess I should have joined that group, but I got depriated. I felt sorry that the Jeju government is ting the sad history of Jeju to promote its international exchange program without really considering and really talking about the history of Jeju. Everything carries on while ignoring the Gangjeong situation, resulting in the Double Talk.

During this visit, I learned from Timorese friends of a still unproven rumor that the Timorese government is going to work on the establishment of a national park called “Timor Leste Jeju Park”. If it were a reality, it will be a sin especially for us jejuites. It is already true that, we Sinseon or Sinseon (the border islands) are a source of pride and joy for the Jeju people. It’s true that they are beautiful but it is hard to believe that this “achievement” is really the recognition of the Jeju Island in a national or international level.

Oppression on Lanyu/ Ponson no Tao Island Reminds of Need for Island Solidarity
By Eunghyong Kang

At present day, an island as small as Taiwan owns another island as a colony. It is Lanyu, or Orchid Island, off the southeastern coast of Taiwan. The indigenous people of Lanyu call themselves “Taroko”, a word that groups on top of cliff from their closest relatives in the Philippines—among Taiwan’s remaining two percent of Austronesian in a sea of Han Chinese. Their island “Ponson no Tao”, literally means “Holland of Taoyuan” from. From generation to generation, the people had been practicing their unique oceanic culture in Ponson no Tao without interruption until the colonial period, enroumor of Imperial Japan at the end of the 19th century and the Chinese Nationalist government after World War II.

The Japanese brought in a small crew of police from the beginning, and primary schooling for ‘savage children.’ After World War II, Lanyu was returned to China, and the Japanese left. The Chinese then forced the people to work on the plantation and make them do hard labor. It was such a pitiful time in Juvenile cell with youths. In a letter on July 18, he wrote, “My body is in a suspended sentence of 4 years, 80 days community service and imprisonment of Brother Park Jong-Dae. The small in stature Prof. Yang had assaulted me. It was very difficult for me to defend myself and I thought I could not survive in the prison.”

Mr. Kim Young-Jae, a 72-year-old villager, Chae Jong-Dae, was fined $3000 USD for Obstruction of Administration, and imprisonment of Brother Park Jong-Dae. The court stated that the Seo family is a flight risk. An appeal was filed but it was dismissed by the court, absurdly stating that he is a flight risk. An appeal has been filed. Additionally, he had a trial on July 25 together with Jesuit Fr. Kim Jong-Seok. One of the police officers who was sentenced in court regarding his arrest, stated that he arrested Kim because he did not respond to police warnings.

But now I feel the Jeju peoples’ reaction has changed over the years. Their eyes of despair are covered, and a new light of hope is shining. But now the Jeju people have changed their attitude of “Sick of the Government” to “Political Parties are bad”. It is such a pity that the Jeju people feel like this. They can only cry and be silent. If you try to tell them, it’s like trying to tell the wind.

TRIAL UPDATES FOR NON-PRISONERS

Choi Sung-Ho was given a suspended sentence of 4 months imprisonment with one year probation for one case of Testauping and Obstruction of Business. In one of her trial, Kim Min-Soo was sentenced to the same sum with two years probation. Two cases were charged with Testauping and Obstruction of Business. In one of her trials, he was given a suspended sentence of 5 years imprisonment with 10 years probation, while in the other trial, he was given a suspended sentence of 3 years imprisonment with 10 years probation. Kim Min-Soo was sentenced to the same sum with two years probation. Two cases were charged with Testauping and Obstruction of Business. In one of her trials, he was given a suspended sentence of 3 years imprisonment with 10 years probation.

Prisoner Updates

There are currently four Gangjeong prisoners who unfortunately cannot join the Gangjeong pilgrimage again next year, in 2014, but all across the entire country of Korea. Yang Yoon-Mo, who was directly arrested from court on February 1st of this year, named a new trial on June 5. On the second hearing of that trial on July 17, he was sentenced to 9 years in prison. Mr. Kim Young-Jae, for the trial held in the North District Court of Timor-Leste on July 27, has been in prison 177 days. On March 24, he finished a 52 day prison time.

Kim Young-Jae, who hit his 100th day in prison on July 20, filed for bail but it was dismissed by the court, absurdly stating that he is a flight risk. An appeal has been filed. Additionally, he had a trial on July 25 together with Jesuit Fr. Kim Jong-Seok. One of the police officers who was sentenced in court regarding his arrest, stated that he arrested Kim because he did not respond to police warnings. However in a video sensed for the court on the April 12 arrest, he is clearly seen moving away from a truck he was blocking to the shoulder of the road following the police warning. He was then arrested on the shoulder of the road, not at the truck.

Dr. Song Kang-Ho was arrested along with Jesuit Brother Park Do-Hoon on July 1st. It is his third imprisonment related to the Gangjeong struggle. After Yang Yoon-Mo, he is the most imprisoned of those opposing the Jeju naval base project. Even though most arrests in Gangjeong have been illegal and unreasonable, the arrest of Song and Park was especially unjust as detailed in the headline article of this month’s issue. Dr. Song is now in a private cell in jeju prison when he writes daily on various subjects.

Be Park Do-Hoon has also been moved to a private cell after spending time in Juvenile cell. In a letter on July 18, he wrote, “My body is exhausted byurous from state power because I used to be with Gangjeong villagers, victims of state power and to save the life and peace of Jeju Island. I accept this as the will of God who desires to drive me to the end of life and I even don’t know how long it will last.” Brother Park is also on trial and has been arrested with approx. 50 counts of Obstruction of Business, mostly for participating in the daily Catholic mass in front of the construction gates.