

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

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Monthly news on the struggle against
the Jeju Naval base project

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Soft Corals Dying in UNESCO Sea

By Lee Bora

Office of Jang Hana, National Assemblywoman
Images : Kim Jin-Su, taken in 2012 and 2014

Jang Hana, National Assemblywoman for the Democratic Party of Korea, the Gangjeong Village Association, National Network of Korean Civil Society for Opposing to the Naval Base in Jeju Island, and other supporters have been conducting an independent environmental impact assessment on the soft coral communities of Gangjeong. As a part of this, the “International Symposium on the Conservation of Soft Corals in Asia Pacific” was held. The programs included workshops for monitoring soft coral around the construction site of the Jeju Naval Base project, techniques for analysis and preservation, and underwater research. The focus for practical experiences was inside the naval base site and at nearby Seogeon Island and the Gangjeong Lighthouse.

The programs of the symposium mainly aimed to

scientifically identify the impact of artificial structures, particularly the naval base project in the case of Jeju, on coral communities. Many coral researchers from Micronesia, Hawaii, Okinawa, and Korea participated in the symposium and research. Especially, the symposium was able to briefly conduct research inside the base site with governmental permission for the first time.

The research repeatedly revealed the impact of the construction: the soft coral cover rate has dropped and the tidal current is also weakened. One researcher even commented that the sea near the breakwater had become like a lake. Additionally, investigations revealed that the Ministry of Defense's chosen location for measuring suspended sediment (only once a year!) was not suitable as it is a local strongly influenced by tidal currents. The

locations are far out from the base site in the ocean and therefore illogical points to collect data on sediment build-up pollution. Thus it was proposed that the west side of the West Breakwater, and east side of the East Breakwater, where suspended sediment settlement is ongoing and expected to be chosen as new measurement points. Additionally, the warning system for suspended sediment needs to be re-examined.

As a follow-up to this new research, Ms. Jang Hana will seek answers as to the real condition of the environmental pollution and propose corrections to the Ministry of Environment during this year's annual parliamentary administrative inspections.

Future prospects for Jeju after the June Provincial Elections

By Hong Ki-Ryong

Jeju Peace & Human Rights Center

In my opinion, there were no candidates who represented our voice in the June 4th governor's election. It was an important election, however, and not having any candidates who fully represented our stance allowed for a failure to bring attention to the naval base issue.

For a number of years, Jeju has pursued strategies leaning towards development and competitive attraction of foreign capital, framed as the goal of building Jeju Free International City. Such pursuits have already led to the destruction of the clean environments in the mid-mountain areas of the island including the precious Gotjawal forest, and Chinese speculative capital now seems to be replacing the traditional values of Jeju.

The government's disagreeable enforcement of the construction of the Jeju naval base abandoned not only the vision of the peace island but also the

ocean as an absolute conservation area and the life of the islanders.

Essentially, true Jeju values are disappearing in the face of profit, and the island is changing as it fills with competition and greed. The voice of the islanders longing for peace echoes in the empty air, ignored by the arrogance of the governor, and grassroots democracy is in crisis. The fears of residents may be realized in a future Jeju subordinated by capital and the cause or site of conflict in Northeast Asia. This is indeed a crucial moment in which the election occurred.

However, the June 4th election was won by Won Hee-Ryong from the conservative ruling party. The values, philosophy and policies of Jeju were not discussed. Instead it was confirmed that the desire for a new generation of politicians was desired among Jeju residents regardless of political interest, and thus the young Won Hee-Ryong was

voted for regardless of party.

There are two concerning aspects in the statements from the transition team of Governor Won. First is the use of the term “collaborative governance”. I doubt its sincerity and believe that he is eager for ambition and power behind the mask of these words. Second, he approaches the naval base issue from the perspective of compensation rather than the peace of Northeast Asia. As a result he treats the issue merely as a matter of small conflict between the villagers and the government, not as a discourse on the future of Jeju. It's very likely that the Jeju government will persist in trying to push the naval base issue to the periphery, thus making our struggle even more difficult.

Such a situation asks us to plan thoroughly for long term expansion of the movement and solidarity to realize our vision for the peaceful future of Jeju.

Sydney Unlikely Example of Military/Civil Cooperation

Excerpted from a longer article by Julie Marlow
Australian Anti-Bases Campaign

Won Hee-Ryong, Jeju's new Governor, has stated that Sydney Harbour is an example of a port comfortably combining civilian and military uses. This is highly debatable, particularly on past and present environmental evidence.

The new Governor also has suggested that the big cruise lines enjoy an accommodating relationship with Sydney Harbour's naval base. This is simply wrong. The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) has made clear that guaranteed access to its terminals by cruise ships is incompatible with the 'primacy' of naval operations.

Sydney Harbour has been a naval base since 1788, when Britain's Royal Navy first arrived and hoisted the British flag. The harbour's colonial history is tragic, with its Indigenous people largely displaced within a few generations, many murdered or dead of introduced diseases.

A more recent disaster—Sydney Harbour's dioxin contamination—also has a strong military component.

Australian-produced Agent Orange, manufactured by Union Carbide at a site on the western reaches of the harbour, was sold to the US and Australian armed forces for chemical warfare during the Vietnam–America War. Carcinogenic and teratogenic dioxins, originating from the Union Carbide site, now extensively contaminate the harbour's marine life and sediment, and will continue to do so for decades. Since 2006, commercial fishing in the harbour has been banned and recreational fishers are warned not to eat fish caught in its western waters, and to strictly limit what they eat of their catches in other areas.

Sydney Harbour's sad history belies the claim made by Won Hee-ryong. So does the nature of Australia's current military build-up. Most of the build-up is in the north of the country and along the west coast, following recommendations of the government's 2012 Force Posture Review, developed in sympathy with the USA's Global Force Posture Review. Nonetheless, Sydney and the east coast are not being spared. Naval activities in the

harbour are increasing and these activities are resource-greedy and polluting. It is hard to see how such activities can easily dovetail with civilian uses of the port.



Image : Shining Lake

Ori from World Without War facilitates a session during the recent nonviolent direct action training in Gangjeong.

Presents from the Remembrance of War

By Shining Lake



Image : Cho Sung-Bong

Shining Lake facilitates the Peace Talk with Ms. Jeong and Mr. Lee during the peace concert.

On June 27th, the Gangjeong Peace School hosted a peace concert to mark the 64th anniversary of the Korean War. For more than half a century, the South Korean people have been educated to believe that North Korea attacked the South very suddenly one calm Sunday morning, and that we could not have survived without the US army's intervention. But we were not taught what caused Korea to be divided into two Koreas and how the aftermath of war have effected society in destructive and violent ways. In this context, Gangjeong Peace School hoped to share different perspectives on the Korean War by telling the unspoken stories.

Two guest speakers were invited to talk during the concert. The first was Ms. Jeong Seon-Nyo, who currently lives in Gangjeong as the head of the Catholic Mission, a farmer, and participant in the daily mass and morning 100 bows. Her parents were victims of the Jeju April 3rd Massacre. The second was Mr. Lee Haeng-Woo, a Quaker and peace activist. Mr. Lee has been engaged in various activities related to peace and democracy for the Korean peninsula throughout his 80-year lifetime.

During her sharing, Ms. Jeong said, "What the war brought us was poverty and shame. But if I had known the causes for the poverty we experienced, I would not have felt quite as shameful. Education is a problem. Schools don't teach truthfully about Korea's modern history. The ceasefire that was expected to last 3 months has continued on for 64 years, and still the two Koreas haven't come to a peace treaty. This is such a tragedy for the Korean people. If we try to make small efforts towards reunification, we might develop a stronger desire for a unified Korea. I do my best with all my strength when I do the 100 bows in the morning, dreaming of all the creatures running and playing on Gureombi Rock."

During his sharing, Mr. Lee said, "Do you now why the US hasn't been supportive of South Korea to sign a peace treaty thus far? It's because they don't want to leave. They want to maintain control of our country for their hegemony. Although many of us are not aware of it, Korea is still at war. We live in a dangerous place where war could break out anytime. A present we can receive from the memory of the war is to learn that war must never happen anywhere."

Nonviolent Direct Action Workshop in Gangjeong

By Lina Koleilat

Dorothy Thompson said, "Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict -- alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence."

On the first week of June 2014, a group of Gangjeong activists participated in a Non-Violent Direct Action peace workshop organized by World Without War's amazing Ori and Yeo-Ok. According to Martin Luther King Jr., "Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored."

The workshop started with an analysis of the anti-apartheid non-

violent movement in South Africa and developed across two full days of brain-storming, debate, discussion, activities and role play. Throughout the two days we shared and explored different forms of non-violent actions and discussed perceptions and prejudices that are attached to peace activists. We were also able to draw on the diversity of the peace activist community to reflect on stories and strategies of Non-Violent Direct Action.

The workshop was highly interactive, our trainers Ori and Yeo-Ok used several ice breaking techniques along with videos and mediated debates and group discussions. Several workshop contents were inspired by the War Resisters International.

International Solidarity



Image : Park Chul-Soon

On June 14, Gangjeong supporters made a presentation and held an advertising booth during Yuntakutakai, an event held in Tokyo by anti-American/Japanese base activists.

Police Break Promise, Disturb Mass Again

By Jesuit Fr. Kim Sung-Hwan

On June 16, 2014, the naval base office gate was closed and the newer gate near the road to the Samgeori was expanded into larger double gate. Following this, the police began to guide the construction vehicles, including cement trucks and other heavy-duty trucks to this extended gate. On that day, I began leading the daily mass as usual. Whenever the trucks passed by the mass tent, not only could other not hear my voice, but even I could not hear my own voice as I read from the missal. The mass was once again, despite repeated police promises, totally obstructed.

Even after the Mass, the Rosary Prayer, the Human Chain, and the Gangjeong dances were finished, I remained seated in protest in front of the gate, to express to the police a protest at the violation of their promise to not obstruct the mass. The police encircled me and

forcefully moved me at first, but soon began a warning announcement that I would be arrested. Despite this, I planned to sit there continuous in protest. However, I soon got a call from Fr. Mun who was in the mainland, asking me to move, and I accepted his suggestion.

That day was Monday, which means that there are two masses, at 11 am and 4 pm. 10 priests from The Catholic Priests Association for Justice came to Gangjeong to join the afternoon mass. At the end of the 4 pm mass, the priests continued to sit in protest, just as I had in the morning. But this time the police didn't threaten to arrest them like they had me. This is the usual two-face of the police. Act strongly towards the weak, but weakly towards the strong. This made me sad. But I was also comforted by the solidarity of my fellow priests. That day I felt the power of solidarity deeply in my body.



Image : Gangjeong Village Story

Fr. Kim Sung-Hwan is confronted by police as he sits in protest in front of the newly expanded construction gate. His sign reads, "Guarantee the Mass Time" calling on Police to keep their promise to not obstruct or disturb the daily mass.



Images : Park Suk-Jin & Cho Sung-Bong

(L) Quaker peace activist Oh Chul-Geun was released from prison on June 24 after 30 days. (R) Park Seung-Ho and Lee Jong-Hwa entered prison voluntarily together on July 3 in refusal of fines.

Excessive Construction Noise a Constant Problem

By Lee Min-Joong
Gangjeong Activist

The constant construction noise coming from the naval base site at night has been a fast growing concern among villagers and activists in Gangjeong. Especially households in the area of near the Peace Center have suffered from insomnia from the loud noise. Considering that most of the buildings in the village are only one or two stories, the sound of demolition and ongoing ground vibrations are hard to escape. Additionally, the geographical characteristics of the village, water in front, mountain behind, creates a kind of surround sound system, where noise generated near the coast echoes through the village.

I live near the Peace Center and also suffer from this noise. When I looked up the relevant laws regarding noise, basic environmental law, noise and vibration management law and housing act, I discovered that Gangjeong belongs to the following categories: Green Urban Area, Conservation Farming Area, and Exclusive Residential Area. Based on these categories, the Regulation Criteria of Noise and Vibration in Living Areas allows for noise below 80dB during the day and 70dB in night. From 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. is must be below 60dB.

Some residents, including myself have been calling the Department of Environment in Seogwipo City to file complaints. Legally, the civil officers are supposed to process complaints by either visiting the site in person for measurement or through notifying the construction companies. This should be followed up by checking with the original complainant to see if the complaint has been resolved. However, our reports are not usually processed at all. Only a few times, when there were too many phone calls to ignore, did an actual inspection take place. Most of the time nothing happened.

The last time I measured the noise levels, it was at the Gangjeong Port around 11 p.m. about two weeks ago. Failing to fall asleep due to loud noise and vibration I took a walk there to measure the noise. I measured 100 dB, the noise equivalent of a passing train. When I called the city that night, they suggested that I directly call the construction companies. When I contacted the companies they refused to help, and said the city was responsible for complaints! Despite this cycle of inaction, activists in Gangjeong continue to file complaints, as well as archive noise measurements for future legal action.

Trial Updates

On June 12, Rev. Lee Jung-Hoon, labor union worker Kim Sung-Hoon, and peacekeepers, Kim Seri and Lim Ho-Young, were given lower court sentences of two years imprisonment, suspended with three years probation (Rev. Lee and Worker Kim), 6 months imprisonment suspended with 2 years probation (Kim Seri), and 18 months imprisonment suspended with 2 years probation (Lim). All four were also placed in "supervised protection" for the duration of their probations. The charges were Trespassing for all four and Violence except for Kim. On June 20, 2011, when the four observed plain clothes naval officers recording a protest of villagers and activists in a building near the protest site, they ran into the building along with many others to confront them. However the navy only pressed charges against the four. In court, the four claimed that the navy's behavior was in clear violation of laws on military inspection on civilians and denied doing any violence. However the court sided with the navy who claimed that they were only recording the sea. In fact, on that day the navy violently attacked protesters on a barge in the sea, which was the trigger for the other's (including the four) protest on land.

On June 23, the Supreme Court dismiss the appeals of Rev. Oh Se-Yeol, Rev. Ku Kyo-Hyung, and peacekeeper, Park Jong-Hoon. The higher court decision of 10 months imprisonment suspended with 2 years probation (Park), and 4 months imprisonment suspended with one year probation (the reverends) were maintained. Park had been charged with Obstruction of a Construction Vehicle by crawling underneath a truck on April 9, 2012, and the two reverends were charged with Obstruction of Justice on the same day. The lower court had declared the reverends not guilty saying that "the police did not carry out their legal requirements and did not read the Miranda Rights before arresting the two." This ruling was overturned on appeal by the prosecution.

On June 26, the Supreme Court also dismissed the appeals of 13 people including eight villagers, including former Mayor Kang Dong-Kyun, Co-Vice Mayor Go Gwon-II, Jung Kyung-Bo, and Kim Young-Sam, and 5 peace keepers including Dr. Song Kang-Ho and Kim Min-Sou. The case involved three different cases from 2011: The May 30 incident, when the navy measured the land of Moetppuri next to Gureombi without informing villagers; the June 20 incident when the navy violently assaulted Dr. Song Kang-Ho and former Mayor Kang Dong-Kyun, and many people entered the base site in protest; and the November 8th peaceful silent protest by three peace activists at the UN-ROK Government Peace and Disarmament Conference, and were arrested for refusing to leave. 19 of those on trial were charged in the lower court with Obstruction of Business, Refusal to Leave, and Violation of the Public Waters Act. The higher court dismissed their appeals and 13 of accused filed appeals to the Supreme Court. The final judgements stand as follows: Six months imprisonment suspended with one year probation for Go Gwon-II and Dr. Song Kang-Ho, 7 million won fine for former Mayor Kang Dong-Kyun, 4 million won fines for Kim Min-Sou, Jung Kyung-Bo, Kim Young-Sam, and Dir. Cho Sung-Bong, and 700,000 to 2 million won fines for the rest.

Gangjeong Prisoners

No.

251

Mr. Park Seung-Ho
Since July 3, 2014

No.

319

Mr. Lee Jong-Hwa
Since July 3, 2014

Please write to Jeju Prison, 161,
Ora-2 dong, Jeju-si, Jeju-do, Korea



Image : Gangjeong Village Story

In June, artist Lee Nan-Young came to Gangjeong to paint the Gangjeong Village bus. The bus, which was an old and dirty yellow color, has now been reborn with a mural of Gureombi and the sea.

Violent Crackdown in Miryang

By Joyakgol

"The world was full of violence" is a passage from the Book of Genesis. In a return to the military dictatorship era, the government is oppressing people who love their homes, justice, and peace. On June 11, four sit-in camps set up by elderly Miryang residents to block transmission tower construction was torn down by a massive police mobilization.

Most of the villagers of Miryang have spent their whole lives farming their fields in the countryside. Then suddenly, they were told that ultra-high voltage pylons were going to be constructed in their villages. It turned out that nearby nuclear power plants needed 765kV transmission towers built through the rural areas of Miryang to send electricity to the big cities. The lives of residents became miserable and the community become torn by hate and division because the government and KEPCO told lies and made false excuses to the elderly people rather than having honest discussions with them. For the past 10 years, the once-peaceful Miryang communities have been torn apart.

The Miryang villagers appealed to the public, saying that the problem must be solved peacefully through dialogue. The people wanted to have an honest dialogue with the government before it sent thousands of police troops. With disdain and contempt, the government ignored their cries for help, and went ahead with the administrative crackdown order. Miryang residents are no doubt Korean citizens. Their health and wealth must undeniably be protected by the government. But in carrying out this order, not even one resident was carefully protected. The police forces were not public servants. They acted like violent gangsters hired by private companies. The police shamelessly revealed their true nature, private guards of capitalist companies.

To make matters worse, Catholic nuns fell victim to the indiscriminate police brutality. Veils were forcefully removed. The veil represents holiness and cleanliness for the sisters. It is a common sense that one should not touch the veil of a nun. However, the police disregarded etiquette and violated human rights. Some nuns had their wrists broken, and were even sexually harassed.

The government must apologize for the despicable acts committed by the police. And the national police commissioner and high-ranking police chiefs in the chain of command must immediately be discharged. I don't want to see any more Gangjeong-like state violence repeated in other places. We've had it. Gangjeong is enough!

How You Can Help

1. Write a letter to Pope Francis asking him to visit Jeju.
2. Write letters to Gangjeong's prisoners of conscience.
3. Stay updated by joining our Facebook groups and following us on twitter.
4. Organize a solidarity event (concert, movie screening, protest, etc...) then share about it on social media.
5. Visit Gangjeong!
6. For other ways to help and more visit us on the web.

For More Information

<http://www.SaveJejuNow.org>
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/NoNavalBase>
<http://www.facebook.com/SaveJeju>
<http://www.pope2jeju.org>
<http://www.twitter.com/SaveJejuNow>

For Gangjeong related videos, visit savejejunow.org or check these Vimeo/YouTube users :

Vimeo : cho sung bong / DH Song / Regis Tremblay
 Youtube : Gang-Jeong Il-Gi / Shalomsea / 1234yz100 / Sungbong2012

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The 12th Remembrance of the Two Girls

By Park Seok-Boon
 Solidarity For Peace And
 Reunification of Korea,
 Busan Regional Branch

June 13 is remembered as the day that two 15 year old girls, Misun and Hyo-Soon, were run over and killed by a US armored vehicle while on the way to a friend's birthday party. The two murderous US Soldiers returned back to the United States after being declared "not-guilty". Since that time, crimes by the US military forces stationed in Korea (USFK) have continued, but the rate of failed indictment for USFK crimes has more than doubled in the last 5 years. (2009-2013, 72.9%) under conservative right wing ROK governments, as compared to a rate of 30.1% in 2008. The existence of the USFK is a source of tension and confrontation in Northeast Asia, with their ongoing war exercises and compulsion towards arms purchases such as missile defense systems. The only way for them to contribute to the peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula is to create a peace treaty and then leave Korea.

In Memory of the Battle of Okinawa

By Emily Wang

We, the people who fight against the naval base construction in Gangjeong Village, Jeju Island, South Korea, stand together with the Okinawan people on June 23rd, to memorialize, reflect on, and feel the pain and shame together, that we, humans, have allowed ourselves to walk in the way of war preparation and dehumanize each other through war.

We don't want these kind of tragedies to be repeated. However, we recognize that the atmosphere in East Asia is now very similar to that of before WW2. Under the U.S. Asian Pivot strategy, our island, Jeju, is also being further militarized, and thus the value of the Island of World Peace, gained through the pain of the 4.3 Massacre, has been destroyed by nationalism, U.S. militarism, and the long tradition of marginalization of border islands. Your island, Okinawa, not to mention your long struggle against U.S. bases, is now facing a new tide of militarization even by the Japan Self-Defense Force, revealing that the painful lessons supposed to have been learned by WW2 and the Battle of Okinawa have also been diluted by the same nationalism, U.S. militarism, and the long tradition of marginalization of border islands.

We recognize your effort to stand against war on this memorable day of June 23rd, just has here in Jeju we don't want our historical lessons to be twisted. If we, Jeju islanders, choose the way of development with military bases, feeling the importance of "national security", we may be alarmed to learn that we are already on the same path that led to the experiences of the Battle of Okinawa.

Some argue that the Jeju Naval Base will not be a U.S. base, but we are aware that U.S. militarism sneakily plays upon the nationalism that we could not yet overcome as it spurs on many island disputes in our region. Under both U.S. militarism and our own nationalism, our islands, Jeju and Okinawa, are overwhelmed by both the U.S. and our central governments. We are alarmed that this could lead to another experience of the Battle of Okinawa. We appreciate your continuous effort to remember the memory of war every June 23rd. The wind of peace is today blowing toward our village, and we wish to let this wind of peace blow across all corners of our island.

Bases are bases. There is no difference between your base and our base because there's no difference between your peace and our peace. The peaceful lives which we want to sustain on our island are the same as yours. That's why we are in solidarity with your peace action, and we also want to actively invite you to come to our beautiful Gangjeong village to build not only solidarity, but also an action plan for peace in our region.

