

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

September 2016

Monthly news on the struggle against the Jeju Naval base project

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The Inspiring 3rd Gangjeong Peace Conference

Article by Bokhee

Images by Oum Mun-hee

From Sept. 2 to 4, the 3rd Gangjeong Peace Conference was held under the title of ‘Going Together toward Life and Peace.’ It had three themes of ‘the Church and Non-violent Peace,’ ‘Building a Life Peace Village,’ and ‘Asian Peace Education Workshop.’ Domestic and international peace activists, including peace activists from Gangjeong and other Asian regions such as Okinawa, Japan, Philippines and Thailand shared and discussed peace activities and built solidarity with one another. The direct action daily practiced in Gangjeong deeply inspired the peace educators, especially those from overseas. Dr. Chris Rice joined the conference as a keynote speaker and greatly moved the audience. He shared what he had learned about peace and

spirituality at different phases in his life. He confessed feeling of bitterness and hatred, but stated that “peace is never bigger than the person nearest to you who is most difficult to love.” Commenting on the divisions in Northeast Asia, he said “In a world of ‘us’ and ‘them,’ peace seeks to give us a New We.” In the Church and Non-violent Peace small group, the discussion was on the practical role of church in peacemaking, how to provide deep reflective programs for individual believers, and the importance for church members to ask themselves without fear about their participation in the reality of militarism. In the Building a Life Peace Village small group, everybody agreed with the claim that, based on the villagers’ spirit in the 10 year struggle, the focal point for building a life peace village

is to respect people’s pride and right of autonomy. Gangjeong is currently in the crossroads to choose between the development value brought by the base construction and the values of peace and humanity. The Asian Peace Education Workshop small group focused on anti-war and anti-militarism peace education and strengthening the solidarity between Gangjeong and other peace education groups in Asia. They discussed how peace education can respond when militarism penetrates into everyday life through the media, etc. (Editor: *The Gangjeong peace conference first started in 2014, mainly organized by the Jesuits and the Jeju Catholic Diocese. It has been held annually and has grown in scope. The article was reviewed by Ms. Oh Doo-hee, Ddalgi and Curry.*)

The wrongful arrest of Mayor Cho Kyung-chul

On April 28, the Navy undertook a security drill in which soldiers directed guns all around to threaten residents in the center of the village near the elementary school. When villagers, including the village mayor Cho Kyung-chul, a strawberry farmer, observed such action, they protested such a threat. Instead of working to prevent the recurrence of such behavior, the navy informed the police of the protest of Cho and the others. As Cho and others refused to be investigated for such wrongful accusations, the police arrested Cho in his strawberry farm on Sept. 5. He did not communicate with the police inquiry while his hands were handcuffed and the inquiry room door was closed, which was unusual. After his release from the police custody room where he was held and fasted in protest for two days, he publicly appealed to his fellow Korean citizens.

In his statement Cho stated that the navy base project has broken the Gangjeong village community in pieces. He said that the navy is now leading the destruction of the village community even after the base completion. He also stated that he had ‘not heard any example of soldiers directing guns toward people in the civilians’ area, except for the April 3rd incident or Gwangju under the martial law. Was the navy regarding the Gangjeong village as under martial law when they did not seek any prior understanding on the drill from the villagers and rather accused the people for their protest?’

Cho also reminded the public in his statement of the secret NIS-led meeting in 2009 which discussed total judicial oppression on the anti-base villagers. He appealed to Koreans for their solidarity, stating that the whole of Korea is suffering because of what is happening in Gangjeong, as well as the tragic Sewol ferry tragedy and the continuous movement of the anti-THAAD struggle.



Image by a Peace Conference participant/ During the human chain on Sept. 2, the opening day of the Gangjeong Peace Conference, a truck full of explosives drove out from the navy base. Everyone could witness first hand the dangers posed by the military base and practice expressing their nonviolent opposition.

Peace Educators' Solidarity

Reflections from international participants at the Asia Peace Education Workshop during the Gangjeong Peace Conference.

Jasmin Nario-Galace, Center for Peace Education-Miriam College & Pax Christi-Pilipinas:

I cheered at every presentation, noting distinct approaches to peace advocacy. For instance, World Without War's strategy of wearing bomb-like costumes and riding the train to raise awareness on the nuclear weapons issue was so innovative for me. I am thinking of doing the same!

The trips to the naval base, forming the human chain, and doing symbolic activities by the rocks were all very meaningful to me. I actively worked to oust the US Bases in the Philippines; hence, the activities we did by the naval base brought back a lot of memories. We succeeded in getting those bases out -partly with the help of Mother Nature but largely with the work of anti-bases advocates. I hold on to the hope that with our persistence and collaborative work, time will come that people will see the light that war bases do not provide genuine security.

Fareeda Panjor, Center for Conflict studies and Cultural Diversity, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani, Thailand:

There were many peace educators who educate people how to win peace without war and militarism, as we learned from many cases such as Mindanao, Aceh, and the Deep South of Thailand. These countries have different experiences from Gangjeong village but peace education is still needed to educate people to stop killing and build sustainable peace.

The two art performances and the protest songs and dances gave us a sense of belonging. People's tears let us feel and unite with their tragic past. I think these arts experiences stop us from thinking too fast, but help with the reflecting process to move forward.

Jeju naval base for the US aircraft carrier?

By Joyakgol

The United States is going to dispatch a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to South Korea for a joint naval exercise in mid-October in the wake of North Korea's latest nuclear test. The USS Ronald Reagan will sail to South Korea's Yellow and Jeju seas. Many other warships will accompany the flagship to the drills. Once again, the Korean waters will be filled with warmongering weapons. Furthermore, right-wing conservatives, bigots, and basket of deplorables (they are everywhere) openly demand that a unit of the US nuclear aircraft carrier striker group with nuclear submarines should be stationed at Jeju naval base which will serve as not just a one-time military power demonstration, but as a strong sign of US military's serious warning against North Korea. It's a shame, but it is the reality that if the U.S. wants to use a military installation in South Korea, it can. So, Jeju naval base can convert into a home port for the US navy fleet, if necessary. Recently, the U.S. is deploying B-1B and B-2 strategic nuclear bombers to the Korean peninsula. It is also reported in the media that Seoul plans pre-emptive attack on Kim Jong-un, the North's supreme leader if Pyongyang makes moves towards nuclear launch. Park Geun-hye is really serious about this so-called 'decapitation operations.' She ordered to the Ministry of Defense to create a new special unit for that. It only gives the north side an excuse for another nuclear test. What can people do to stop that increasing military buildup? One thing for sure is that we will not allow the US warships to come to Jeju base.



Image by Park Inchun/ When a typhoon was approaching between Sept. 16 to 19, military ships in the Jeju navy base port all escaped from the port because the port is never safe from typhoon. The location of the base was totally wrong from the beginning still the navy enforced the base construction here anyway!

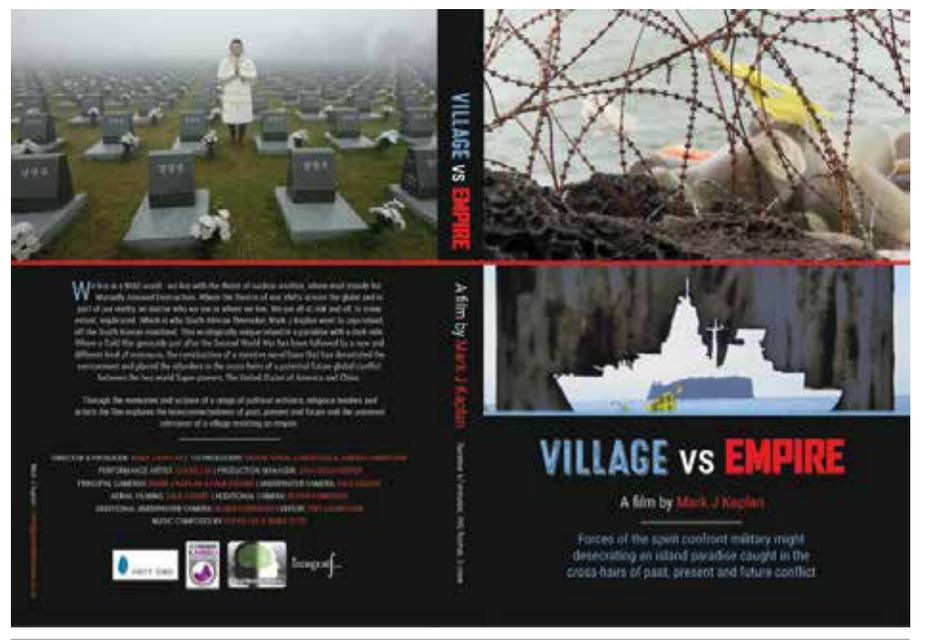


Image by Mark Kaplan/ Director Mark Kaplan's movie, 'Village vs Empire' is to be released soon in English. Mark Kaplan from the South African Republic has visited Gangjeong for filming in 2014 and 2015.

International Tribunal of Eviction

By Emily Wang

Last July, Gangjeong Anti-Naval Base Committee sent members to participate in the 2016 East Asia Tribunal of Eviction held in Taiwan, the first regional tribunal session of the International Tribunal on Eviction (ITE). And the 5th ITE session is planned to be held under the People's social Forum in Resistance to Habitat III alternative to the Conference of the United Nations Habitat III at the same city and dates (Quito, Ecuador, October 17 to 20, 2016).

While the cases submitted to ITE are struggling for their living dignity, the presence of the alternative forum and the 5th ITE in Quito itself is a global struggle resisting to the UN Habitat III which failed to address the issues of forced eviction worldwide.

Our case: Jeju's militarization is one of the 7 cases selected out of 87 submitted cases to be presented in 5th ITE in Quito. Gangjeong village is sending representatives to give testimony in the ITE.

Through this tribunal, we will shout out for justice across borders to sue those responsible for Jeju's militarization including President of ROK, Chief of ROK Naval Operations, Jeju Governors, Jeju Provincial Council, Jeju District Court, Supreme Court, Police Agency...

The Tribunal will issue formal recommendations to the United Nations and the Governments gathered at UN Habitat III, and to responsible actors for the evictions. Besides the ITE, diverse program will be held in the alternative forum including showing a new Gangjeong documentary "The Memory of the 25th Hour" (made by Grace Kim).

International Solidarity



Image by Oum Mun-hee/ Peace Education Workshop participants at the closing ceremony of the Gangjeong Peace Conference

THAAD and Jeju naval base

The Park Geun-hye administration has maintained the position that the THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area defense) to be deployed in Seongju is nothing to do with the US-led MD (Missile Defense) system. However it is clearly a part of the US-led global MD to the China and Russia's serious concerns. Let's look at 'C2BMC (Command, Control, Battle Management, and Communications),' which is applicable to the brain of global MD network. If C2BMC could be compared to brain, satellite and radar could be the 'eye,' while ballistic missile being the 'fist.'

The C2BMC is a key facility which integrates and operates sensors such as a satellite and a radar with ballistic missiles such as THAAD, Standard Missile

3(SM-3), and Ground-Based interceptor (GBI). They are deployed in space and in various places on earth. The United States is currently deploying such systems in the main domestic and overseas US command headquarters such as in the Strategic Command. Therefore if THAAD is deployed in Seongju, the battery would function as 'the front line scout,' of the global MD system. For example, if a ballistic missile is launched towards a Japan-stationing US base or US aircraft carrier, the Seongju base would transmit the information on that missile launch to the C2BMC of the Pacific Command which would transmit that to the Japanese self-defense force or US military so that interception of the missile with Aegis

Ballistic Missile Defense (ABMD) or Patriot could be attempted. As South Korean aegis ships are being deployed in the Jeju navy base which would be used as US military port of call, the THAAD in Seongju and Jeju navy base could work closely together. South Korea, United States, and Japan have already concluded the intelligence sharing arrangement in Dec. 2014. The interoperability between the Aegis battle system and THAAD is also being progressed. Further, the C2BMC is equipped with a software to control X-band radar (AN/TPY-2) which would be deployed in Seongju. THAAD is useless for the defense of Korea but it has proved again and again that it is a part of the US led global MD.



Image by Lee Joon-hun, Kyunghyang Shinmun on Sept. 7/ A "postmodern avant-garde live show" in front of the South Korea Ministry of National Defense by a peace activist, Park Sung-soo (Dungree) with 5000 pieces of 10 won coins to protest against the navy's wrongful reimbursement claim \$3.4 million against 116 individuals of villagers/activists and 5 civic groups who have protested against the Jeju navy base project. He himself is one of the 116 individuals.

Gangjeong, the village we should remember

(This is an excerpt of an interview with Mr. Kim Sung-Kyu, a villager and poet, that was made for the East Asia Tribunal of Evictions. Translation by Father Pat.)

› [When] the mainstream media were reporting the news- 'Gangjeong village, the designated site for the Naval Base' I was flabbergasted! I went up on top of the greenhouse and looked over to Gureombi. The prospect of Gureombi disappearing was too painful to contemplate. It was a shocking time, my heart was broken...

› [Now] the Navy says it wants to live in harmony with the villagers. What harmony? It's enforcing its agenda on the village with what amounts to an invasion. How can it be a symbiotic relationship when there is such a huge discrepancy in power? [It] is highly insulting. It's a complete media stunt! After all the repression and state violence and then to turn around and say let's bury the hatchet and live in harmony? No, this is a parasitic relationship where one feeds off and exploits the other! If a relationship is to be mutually beneficial or symbiotic then one must confess one's sin and be truly repentant in order to receive the forgiveness of the people. Then and only then can we talk of a mutually beneficial relationship!

› Some people have issued the call for 'all villagers to put the past behind and to get along together now'. I find myself reacting to the imposition of this word 'now' as if we should pretend nothing ever happened... as if we should gloss over the past.

› One reason I sent my daughter to another school was that I didn't approve of sending my child to a school where pro/anti base divisions are strong. Of course it's not the fault of the children but what I find objectionable is my child having to relate to pro-base parents. In one or two years I believe there will be an influx of children from military families. This was another reason for sending my child to another school outside the village.

› Gangjeong is gone. It is no longer Gangjeong Naval Base but rather Jeju Naval Base. The way Osan Air Force Base is not in fact in Osan but in Seongtan! Daechuri US Base? No, rather Pyongtek US Base! Why is this the case? They want to delete the village from collective memory! We must reveal our story to the world and in this way we keep the memory alive.

Delivery of the claim for reimbursement to the Navy has commenced

By Joan

The legal proceedings for the claim for reimbursement from the Villagers to the Navy has commenced after 6 months. The claim for reimbursement papers are being delivered to each of the 121 defendant's houses, including individual activists and organisations. A court officer even visited a defendant's house at 10pm at night to deliver the papers and when another defendant was suffering with his sick child and couldn't answer the door they simply left the claim for reimbursement papers on the front door. Many villagers are angry about the agent's uncaring and rude attitude. The defense counsel group stated that "villagers may be suffering with this kind of delivery, but basically the delivery of the claim for reimbursement is a matter of legal proceedings." The delivery will take a long time until all defendants get their claim for reimbursement papers served to them because Navy sued such a large number of people. The defense counsel group is currently preparing for a strategy to move the political pressure onto the Pentagon. It has been a great struggle to move a resolution at the National Assembly to 'cancel the claim for reimbursement' process, but at this time half the membership of the National Assembly have signed for the cancellation among the 300. On 19 September 2016, Kim Jong-dae, a member of National assembly visited Gangjeong to have meetings with villagers. He promised to 'be strong against the Navy in the parliamentary audit' and also stated that he 'could stop the claim for reimbursement, if opposition members support him.'

Baek Nam-gi, Presente

By Nanch'o

Baek Nam-gi, a champion of the rights of poor rural farmers, left this world. He died on September 25th, at the age of 69, after a courageous life devoted to the cause of democratization. The memory of his life and untimely death have become widely recognized as an indictment of Park Geun-hye's government and its abuse of power, sparking outrage against the use of water cannons and other forms of excessive state violence in the ruthless suppression of peaceful demonstrations. Baek Nam-gi should still be alive today, but he died after 317 days in a coma, induced by traumatic brain injury after he was mercilessly assaulted by high-velocity streams of water laced with pepper spray. His death is the direct result of a brutal police crackdown of an enormous popular rally on November 14, 2015, when tens of thousands of Korean citizens took to the streets of Seoul to demand greater accountability from their government and to defend the rights of ordinary people to live a decent life. As Baek Nam-gi's name has become synonymous with the renewed struggle for democracy in Korea, may his spirit rest in peace.



Image by Lee Yeon/ The people in Gangjeong set a prayer altar in the Gangjeong Peace Center, remembering Mr. Baek Nam-gi, a farmer who passed away on Sept. 25.

Remembering Gureombi

On September 2nd, we held a small ceremony to commemorate the day in 2011 that Gangjeong people were brutally blocked to enter Gureombi Rock. At the time, the navy was about to destroy the rock as they began the construction by forcefully setting the fence. We, Gangjeong people still have a feeling of loss, sadness, rage and pain from the experiences on that day. Therefore, we got together in front of the main gate of the naval base and recited poems, sang songs and told stories of the day and memories of Gureombi. Remembering collectively is powerful and it gives voices to history so we will continue to hold this ceremony every year as long as we fight against the Jeju Naval Base.

Solidarity with Pyeongtaek: Stop the Air Show!

The Osan US Air Force base in Songtan, Pyeongtaek county located in the mid-west coast of the Korean peninsula is the largest US air force base in the Pacific region. It has headquarters for the US 7th Air Force which is under the US Pacific Air Forces. Air shows were held in Osan since 2000 but have been paused in the last three years for lack of budget. However, the air show resumed again on Sept. 24 and 25, this year. The Pyeongtaek Peace Center which organized protests against the air show says about 26,400 households which is about 15% of the whole population of Pyeongtaek suffer from noise damage due to US air force planes. According to the Peace Center, it was still expected that about 70,000 citizens would come to see the air show. Noise is not the only problem, a spokesman from the Pyeongtaek Peace Center said 'many civilians in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan are being killed because of aerial attacks.' The show must be stopped. In solidarity, peacekeepers in Gangjeong folded lots of paper flowers and mailed it to the activists in Pyeongtaek in support. Activists in Pyeongtaek were joyfully amazed by such warm solidarity!



Image by Pang Eunmi/ During the Chuseok (fall harvest) holidays from Sept. 14 to 18, daily street mass led by Fr. Mun Jeong-Hyeon was continued.

How You Can Help

1. Write a letter to the South Korean government to close the Jeju base project and to the US government to stop the support for it.
2. Write letters to the South Korean government to drop the lawsuit of USD 3 million against the people of Gangjeong.
3. Stay updated by joining our Facebook groups and following us on twitter.
4. Organize a solidarity event (concert, movie screening, protest, etc...)
5. Then share about it on social media.
6. Visit Gangjeong!
7. 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.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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We express our solidarity with the water defenders at Standing Rock, and their nonviolent struggle to protect their lands and rivers from the Dakota Access pipeline.

**No more killings in Syria.
Peace for Syria.**

CHOKEHOLD ON RUSSIA AND CHINA
Why is the U.S. provoking global war?

KEEP SPACE FOR PEACE WEEK • OCTOBER 1-8



The U.S. & NATO are increasing their military encirclement of Russia and China. After the fall of the former Soviet Union the U.S. promised not to expand NATO toward Russia. That promise has been repeatedly violated by the west.

Today U.S. 'missile defense' systems (MD), key elements in Pentagon first-strike attack planning, are being deployed on the ground and at sea around Russia and China. Nuclear disarmament negotiations have ground to a halt due to these U.S. MD deployments.

Help us stop this new dangerous Cold War from igniting into a deadly hot war. Join us by holding local events during space week. Demand true peace and conversion of the military industrial complex to help deal with the coming reality of climate change.

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Sept, 2016 issue marks the 5th year of publication on the Gangjeong Village Story!
Thanks for friendship and solidarity!



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