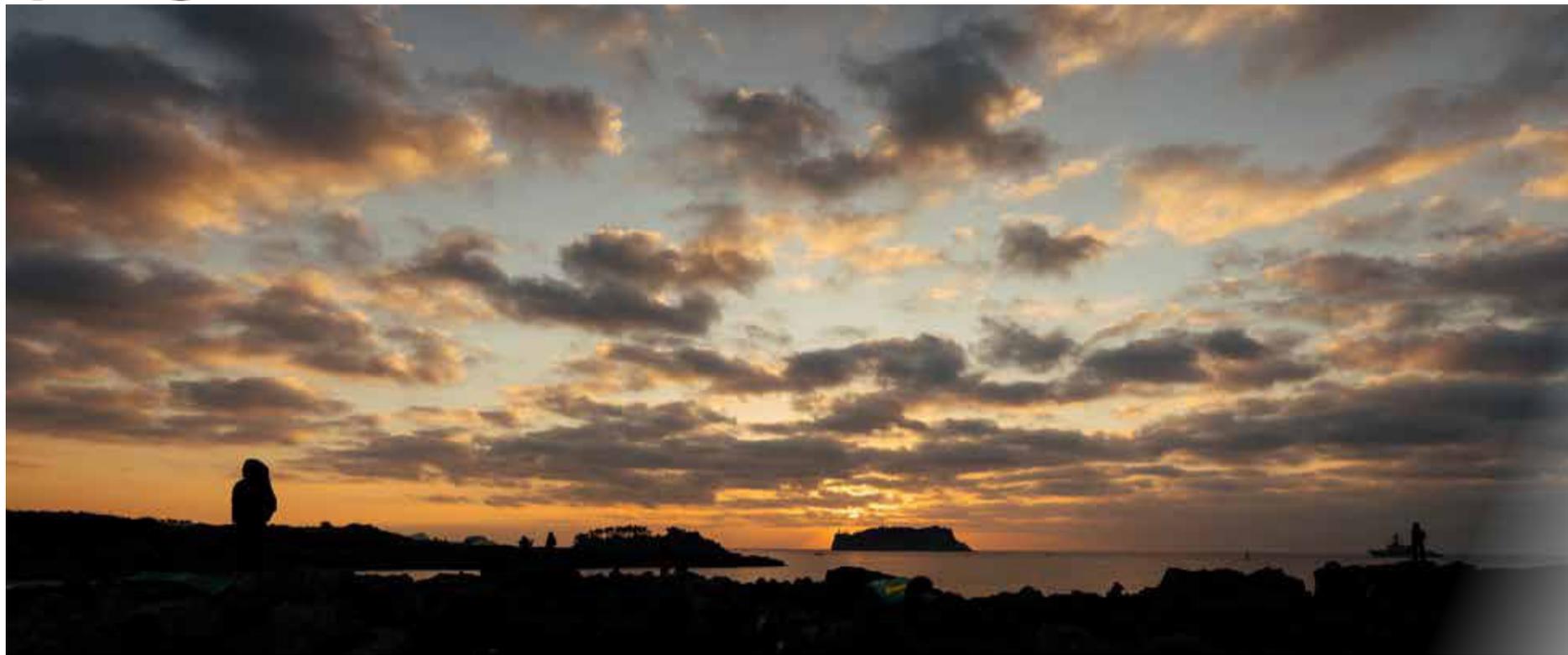


GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

January
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Monthly news on the struggle against
the Jeju Naval base project

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South Korea



No Samsung! the No.1 power of South Korea

Image by Song Dong-hyo

Article by Moon Sang-bean, co-representative,
Korean Federation for Environmental Movement of Jeju

Through the Park Geunhye-Choi Soonsil gate, it was proven again that the No. 1 power of South Korea is Samsung corporation. On January 19, the court dismissed an arrest warrant for Mr. Lee Jae-yong, vice president of Samsung Electronics who hopes to succeed the Samsung management rights and who was responsible for a merger that caused huge damage to the national pension. Here in the Republic of Korea (South Korea), the Samsung vice-President is not imprisoned despite the facts that 79 workers died of leukemia as a result of industrial disease in the Samsung Semiconductor LCD factory, and that Lee has given bribes to President Park by embezzling huge amounts of company money, and that he contributed to tremendous loss of the citizens' retirement savings. Samsung's power is shown again in the navy's filing a 3 million USD indemnity lawsuit against 116 individuals

and 5 groups including Gangjeong villagers who oppose the base. In the beginning it was Samsung who originally demanded 30 million USD as damage compensation from the Navy. Last year, it turned out through the National Assembly investigation on government affairs and media reports that the navy did not go through a (publicly open) lawsuit but a (closed) arbitration by the Korean Commerce Arbitration Board for the procedure of computation on the amount of damages with Samsung because the navy wanted to hide the fact that it and Samsung had responded together against the opposition to the base construction, actively cooperating with each other. In this situation when the Court's decision on the Constitutional matter of the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye is expected to be made in early March, it is very likely that an early Presidential election would be in May. The Presidential candidates

of opposition/progressive parties should promise citizens without fail through election pledges that they would clearly disclose the suspicion of corruption between Samsung and the navy that occurred during the construction process of the Jeju navy base in Gangjeong village. It is Samsung who openly joins as a collaborator in Chinese development projects, which threaten the mid-mountain and underwater environment in Jeju and who is constructing a huge casino resort in the area adjacent to the Halla Mt. National Park. It is Samsung which for corporate profit turns a blind eye, even though the environment is being destroyed and the residents' everyday life and right to happiness is collapsing. The first step to reform reality should start from thorough investigation on Samsung's intervention in monopolization of government affairs.

For a Jeju native to survive

By Kang Won-bo, Executive chairman
of the Seongsan Town Committee
Opposing the 2nd Jeju Airport Project

With 15 million tourists annually in recent years Jeju, UNESCO-acknowledged, Island of Peace, is suffering. With the escalating numbers of migrants, overseas tourists, foreign capital, and encroaching tourism facilities, Jeju suffers from thoughtless development with serious adverse effects, socially and environmentally. Amid this, the central and Jeju Governments are attempting to kick local residents out of the way for the 2nd Jeju airport project under the pretext of increase in aerial demands. Even though they are asserting that the 2nd Jeju airport building is necessary for the happiness of Jeju islanders and the centennial grand plan of Jeju, we, the local natives, are never included in the so called 'happy Jeju islanders' of their talk. Jeju Island is only valuable when the heaven-blessed natural scenery, clean environment, and human environment make harmony all together. It is nothing but folly, like cutting the belly of a goose which produces golden eggs, to accommodate tourists indiscriminately and to stage thoughtless development with no consideration for the environment. Central and island governments decide policies in closed rooms and induce islanders' agreement through manipulation. These behaviors are making the future of Jeju grim. We will fight to the end against the 2nd airport building project which is being enforced roughly with no consideration for the receptivity of local residents and which damages our democracy. Have we ever asked them to develop our lands into a city? Have we ever said that we want the tourism business? Have we ever asked them to give us jobs? We only want to live and work on our farms, happily keeping our livelihoods, as we have lived thus far.



'No THAAD,' letters were projected on the United States embassy building in Seoul, South Korea. The residents in Seongju hit their 200th candle light vigil in opposition to the deployment of THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) on Jan. 28. Photo by Kim Young-Jae.

Joining the dance in Gangjeong

By Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteers (Dia, Emi, Lauren, Simon)

It was cold the day we visited Gangjeong village. The winter wind rushed past our bundled bodies, slapping against the cold concrete wall, falling flat, useless in its journey from the sea to the mountain. Undeclared, it swirled; another gust, whistling quickly, followed behind to repeat. Swirl, whistle, slap. Swirl, whistle, slap. Like a drum, the rhythm beat. The dance that began long before the wall's construction continued.

We traveled to Gangjeong expecting to find stories of despair and failure; instead, we found hope. We found grace. We listened to the songs and stories of the activists and felt the draw of the dance outside the gates of the navy base. The music called and so we danced. Why? Why do you still dance now that the base is built? Why do you still sing now that your stone has been blown to pieces? You dance because without it, you've lost hope. You dance because your voice is part of a larger movement to uphold the voice of the Korean people to the government against the further militarization of Jeju Island. Dancing and singing as one, to songs with meaningful lyrics was extremely powerful and peaceful, simultaneously. Through the dance a camaraderie was created. A camaraderie that carries into the lives of the activists, the village, and the world. This dance is the Gangjeong people's spirit. Like the bitter wind chilling our bones, the dance is within our hearts now. Wherever we go, will not forget but join the dance.

Henoko struggle goes on despite hardships By Dongseok

On Dec. 20, last year, the Supreme Court of Japan dismissed the appeal by Onaga Takeshi, the Okinawa prefecture governor, regarding the lawsuit filed by the Japanese government against him who had revoked his predecessors' grant to the government on the reclamation of coastal area in Henoko for the building of a new US base. And a week later, the Okinawa Defense Bureau (ODB) notified the prefecture that it would resume reclamation construction despite Onaga's demand on consultation before construction resumption and Okinawa people's resistance.

The ODB says it would install soon concrete blocks for silt protectors in the underwater. By this installation, the government intends to give impression of 'the irrecoverable.' In case that the ODB drops blocks in the underwater without replies to the prefecture's inquiries on detailed plan, there are possibilities that it violates the condition attached to the grant given by Nakaima, the ex-Okinawa governor, in 2014, the prefecture sees. If it is considered as the violation of such condition, the prefecture has the right to revoke grant before the end of March followed by Japanese government's re-application. However, the Chief Cabinet Secretary of Japan asserts that reclamation construction can be continued without reapplication.

Despite huge oppression by the central government, the citizens in Okinawa keep going their courageous daily sit-ins in front of U.S. Camp Schwab in Henoko. The citizens are resolute to say, "we will not give up until construction stops. Even though the government is excluding citizens with violent manner, we will protest in non-violent ways." The tyranny of government and military in Okinawa is similar to what happens in Jeju. Even as I write this, three anti-base Okinawa citizens including Yamashiro Hiroji, one of the leaders of struggle, have been detained for more than 100 days. Any human rights oppression on the detained should be immediately stopped and they should be freed, soon.



Free Yamashiro Hiroji and other anti-base citizens in Okinawa. Students of the 18th Gangjeong Peace School made a picket in solidarity with people in Okinawa. Photo by Oum Mun-hee.



On Jan. 19, Students from Incheon visited the village and participated in the daily human chain. The long human chain was made up of students from the 18th Gangjeong Peace School, visitors from Uijeongbu diocese, Seoul, and Gangjeong. The children read warm and encouraging letters for the village. Photo by Pang Eun-mi.

By Kang Hee Ju

Solidarity Trip to Hawaii From Jeju Island

We have fully and thoroughly experienced of Hawaii for a month which is a bit short time though. As we met activists, joined protests and worked on farms, we learned about military bases, native cultures and eco system while watching and feeling. In the whole course of journey, we especially give thanks to two peace activists, Naomi and Soosun. They accompanied us throughout the trip and fully supported us to experience antiwar movements, human rights movements, Hawaiian traditional cultures, organic farming, etc. It motivates us to want to share our experiences with Korean people, especially Gangjeong friends. The US bases in Hawaii has been causing a lot of problems. The nature of Hawaii is enormously beautiful. However, it has been destroyed over time. We believe that Hawaii is not a land of the USA. Hawaii is a land of Hawaii. Before Hawaii was annexed by the USA, Hawaii was an independent kingdom. Hawaii is a strategic point to the USA, yet it is a culturally and historically living Hawaii itself to native Hawaiian and peace activists we met. In history, the USA has destroyed and banned her own languages, cultures, arts, farming and everything. However, Hawaiian never succumbed but has tried to keep their cultures. They never thought that Hawaii belongs to the land of the USA. Therefore, they seek the independence of Hawaii and take actions. We stand with them by shouting "No more base, no more war!". It was such a joyful solidarity action. We stood with them and they also stood with us. We kept shouting 'No Naval Base in Gangjeong'. On the women's march day, we made a banner that says 'Save Our Jeju' with drawing. We realized how powerful standing in solidarity is. Let's keep fighting for the independence and peace of Hawaii!

International Solidarity



Byeopssi School students and Hawaiian peace activists demonstrated outside the Japanese consulate in Hawaii, calling for the closure of military bases in Hawaii, Okinawa, and Jeju. Photo by Byeopssi School

Welcome the judgment of acquittal on reservist objector

On January 10, Cheongju District Court acquitted a defendant objecting to the reserve service. A judgment of acquittal for those who refuse to join the army has already been given twice this year. This is the second time since 2004 that a reservist objector received a not guilty verdict. At least 897 people have refused the reserve forces training since 1968 when the Homeland Reserve Forces were established up until 2010. After 2010, approximately 80 people were punished every year for refusal of reserve army training. The punishment for the reservist objector is obviously a violation of human rights guaranteed by

the Constitution. This issue is often discussed as a matter of choosing either the freedom of conscience or the interest of national security, which arises in a special situation of military confrontation between the two Koreas. Moreover, if we think that the nature of national security is ultimately to guarantee the fundamental rights of the people, Infringing on these rights is a violation of the fundamental purpose of national security. Repeated punishment for the reservist objector is more problematic. Unlike the objector who refuses to join the army, the reservist objector's duty for the training does not disappear and

is re-imposed for 8 years of the reservist period even though he pays penalties for his action. This process is repeated throughout the whole training period and the punishment continues to accumulate in the future. Because of this repetitive punishment, reservist objectors may be required to pay a fine as low as a few million won and as high as ten million won plus extra social service or imprisonment. Everyday life is impossible because objectors have to go through dozens of police investigations and trials for many years. The hope with this acquittal is that the repetitive punishments and serious human rights violations against the objectors will disappear.

Moving to Gangjeong

By Memil

I first learned about Gangjeong when I was living at the Catholic Worker Community near Seattle Washington. Catholic Worker Houses focus on housing for people who are homeless, but also have a deep history in the anti-war movement.

Fr. Bix was the Jesuit priest who started our community in the 1980s. Fr Bix was also the first person who told me about Gangjeong, and in 2014 I traveled with him and 10 other peace activists to visit Gangjeong. Then again I came in 2016 and stayed for the month of March. Now I am here living in Korea and moved to Gangjeong this month.

As a member of The Frontiers I spent several months living in community in Yangpyeong and now I am living in the Gangjeong community. I really believe that living in community with others is the tool we need to make peace in the world, I also believe that in order to do that we need to have cross cultural relationships. As a visitor I had a positive experience meeting the many activists that live here in Gangjeong; learning about their personal story as well as the history of Gangjeong. I am excited to develop these relationships more deeply and become part of this story.



On Jan. 7, a Buddhist monk named Jeong-won Bigu immolated himself in Seoul in protest of President Park Geun-hye and her corrupt collaborators. He passed away two days later which happened to be the 1000th day for the remembrance of the Sewol tragedy. An incense altar for him was set up in the Peace Center of Gangjeong Village. Photo by Gangjeong Village Story.

Trial Updates



▶ On Jan. 16, the Supreme Court confirmed a higher court decision of the eight month imprisonment suspended for one year on Mr. Cho Kyung-chul, Gangjeong village mayor, who was charged of Special Obstruction of Justice. Two years ago on Jan. 31, 2015, the Ministry of National Defense and the navy mobilized 1000 policemen and civilian security service workers, and enforced an executive crackdown on the people's sit-in tent in opposition to the building of military residences in the village. Then around 100 villagers and activists including mayor Cho resisted the crackdown for more than 14 hours. Cho and several others chained their bodies and climbed up the watch tower, which had been built the night before. Cho was eventually charged with playing a leading role in the interruption of the crackdown.

▶ Otherwise, the 1st court made a ruling of a year suspended with two years. However, the higher court commuted it stating that the court acknowledges that he "did not directly exercise material power, that it is difficult to consider his deed as pursuing of private interest, and that there are points to be taken into account in the motives of resistance claimed by the protesters.

Jeju sea, covered with wind farms?

By Joyakgol

Jeju Autonomous Provincial Government has an ambitious plan to transform the island by 2030 into a zero carbon dioxide emission place where renewable energy sources provide all electricity needs. Well, the plan itself is not bad, but the big problem is that government officials are not concerned about this bold transition's possible impact on environment.

Jeju Island is famous for year-round strong winds. So it was considered a perfect location for wind power. As of January 2017, there are 531 wind turbines that generate electricity in South Korea, and Jeju has 123 windmills, accounting for 23%. So far, most of the turbines have been built on land, but people are feeling discomfort from low-frequency noise, even sickness such as anxiety, nausea.

With more people realizing wind turbines can be hazardous to human health, they are moved to the sea where no humans live. Last September, Jeju commenced the first commercial offshore wind power in the west coast of Hankyeong-myeon. And it has plans to build many more in Hanlim, Gujwua, Daejeong and Pyoseon. What does that mean? All the sea around the island will be covered with wind farms.

But how about our rights to enjoy nature without being distracted by artificial buildings? How about marine wildlife that live there? Jeju dolphins used to swim constantly around the island all through the year, but large building projects like Jeju naval base destroyed some of their habitat. Now you can see dolphins only in Daejeong and Gujwua. Do we really want to coexist with other species on the planet? If not, we will perish, too.

Flowers will bloom

By Emily Wang

Having selfness seems to draw boundaries. However, what if we meet the world with selfness not forgetting the colors of myself are connected to the world and facing the fear. Then, I believe, the boundaries would mediate the difference of one another, build relationships and make a bridge to each other's isolation. If you are willing to be such an active boundary, you will need courage to embrace selfness and change. I would like to give a present to someone, which is harmony from this realization.

(Words shared with her paintings at Gangjeong Poetry Night on January 15th)



On Jan. 14, some young people who survived the Sewol ferry tragedy on April 16, 2014, visited Gangjeong. One exposure last year was that the ferry had been overloaded with 400 ton iron bars heading to the Jeju navy base construction site. Fr. Mun Jeong-hyeon was very moved to finally see these young survivors. Photo by Oum Mun-hee.



On the Lunar New Year, after Catholic Mass on the street Gangjeong community members followed the Korean family tradition of bowing to the oldest member, Father Mun, and then bowed to one another, wishing each other blessings for the new year, and headed to Samgeori kitchen for a feast. Photo by Pang Eun-mi



There's a new fence painting of human chain bound to Gureombi through an imaginary door in Meotburi which is the remaining part of Gureombi. The art work was done through the peace community of Gangjeong: two painters (Maldong's mom and Rainbow), Meotburi Park who lives in the tent at Meotburi cutting the long grass to reach the fence, and one volunteer babysitter. Photo by Meotburi Park



January 4 had mild weather, a perfect chance for some new participants to practice kayaking in the Gangjeong port. Causing further environmental pollution in the name of tourism, the "Seogwipo Cruise Terminal" is now under construction at Gangjeong port. Photo by Oum Mun-hee.

How You Can Help

1. Write a letter to the South Korean government to close the Jeju base 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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- 1- Would you prefer to receive an email version (PDF file) of Gangjeong Village Story?
- 2- If you prefer printed copies, how many paper copies would you like us to mail to your organization or house?

Thank you in advance for your responses!

The 18th Gangjeong Peace School

By Curry

The 18th Gangjeong Peace School was held January 18 to 21. Eleven students participated, learning from survivors about the Jeju 4.3 massacre and learning firsthand about the current struggle against the navy base. They participated in the daily 100 bows and human chain and ate meals at Samgeori community kitchen. Ddalgi and Hosu led peace education classes, Curry shared about international peace movements, and Oum Mun-hee shared about the power of documentation. The students shared with one another about their life journeys and shared their understanding of and commitment to making peace through different media at the graduation ceremony. During the tour they visited Netgiliso- the pool where Gangjeong stream begins. The preciousness of nature remained a theme during the peace school. Participants reflected how the names of the places destroyed by the navy base will stay in their memories: Gae-gureombi, Muljil, Soldewat. The story of a grandfather who survived the 4.3 massacre was a particularly moving experience. Kim Jeong-min lived in a village high on Halla Mountain until he was 9 years old, but he fled the massacre, hiding with different people and witnessing death all around him until he arrived in Gangjeong. Annyeong shared how it pains her heart to think of the 'ancestral rites that not even the crows can remember.' This is a term used to express how so many people died that no one can remember them with the proper rituals on the day of their death. Meong-meong thought of her cousin who is 9 and how she can't imagine going through something like that at that age. In a video made for the last night, Borum-Dal shared how he won't forget the dancing, "Isn't that what beauty is, what peace is?" Minsun shared, "I got encouraged by Gangjeong's continued struggle and continued survival."



Peace School students, facilitators, and guests enjoyed a fun evening of sharing, art, song and dance on the last night of the Peace School program. Photo by Lee Sang-sun.

