

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

Monthly news on the struggle against
the Jeju Naval base project

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Withdrawal of Navy Lawsuit, Start of New Year

By Gangjeong Village Story
Image : Oum Mun-hee

It was March 2016 when the now-ousted Park Geun-hye government filed an indemnity lawsuit against 116 individuals and 5 civic groups, demanding around 3 million USD from those involved in the anti-navy base movement. People resisted this unjust lawsuit and called for it to be dropped. On Dec. 12, 2017, the new Moon Jae-in government announced its will to drop the lawsuit, and 3 days later it was confirmed by the court.

Otherwise, on Dec. 22, Gangjeong Village held an election. The biannual vote was joined by 556 villagers this year and Mr. Kang Hee-bong, an advocate of business development, became the new mayor, earning 300 votes. Go Gwon-il, ex-vice

village mayor and an active leader in the anti-navy base campaign, lost to Kang. Three days before the vote, he had a traffic accident when a navy captain driving in a hurry happened to hit Go's bicycle in the night. Go was greatly injured and hospitalized, delivering his mayor-candidacy speech by video from the hospital. After the base opening in 2016, more and more villagers have been inclined to adjust to 'reality' while they don't want base expansion.

Kang Dong-kyun, ex-mayor of Gangjeong village, said in an interview: "No matter who becomes mayor in the future, the justice of our 10 year anti-base activities should be inherited. Even though the naval base was built, we should remember it started on the

wrong basis." He also said, "We have been greatly empowered by solidarity. The power of solidarity is the strongest. I hope people know we have not given up our efforts to save the village."

The first day of 2018 started with the life and peace 100 bows at Metburi, located on the east tip of the village. Tens of people prayed for peace in the village and the world. On January 14, the Presidential House announced that it would start a truth investigation in relation to the past governments' evil practices. The case of Gangjeong was chosen as one of the five cases to be investigated. The village had filed its case last October. The navy lawsuit was not the only thing that must be resolved. The anti-naval base struggle continues.

Rejecting Militarism on the 80th Anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre

By Curry



Image : Song Dong-hyo

At the fourth annual memorial for the Nanjing Massacre at Aldreu Airfield, people from around Jeju gathered to mourn the victims of the 1937 massacre, vowing to remember this tragic history and work together so that the past is not repeated. With no navy base and no second airport (air force base) we must make Jeju a real peace island.

80 years ago, Japanese fighter planes bombed the city of Nanjing in preparation for their invasion on 13 Dec. 1937, in which an estimated 300,000 (mostly Chinese civilians) were killed. The planes used Aldreu Airfield in Jeju, which was built by the forced labor of over 70,000 local people. Remembering the victims of massacre, rape, murder and looting by the Japanese in Nanjing, 50 people gathered on the 13th at Aldreu Airfield and declared that Jeju must not be used to cause such suffering again. The memorial was hosted by the People Making Jeju to be a Demilitarized Peace Island and Inter-Island Solidarity for Peace of the Sea. The program included song, music, poetry, dance, and speeches from the Daejeong Women Farmer's Association, the Anti-Jeju Second Airport Committee and the Gangjeong Anti-Navy Base Committee, and the reading of a statement. "Now, 80 years later, US warships and nuclear submarines are frequenting the navy base in Gangjeong. The problem has arisen of air force plans to use the Jeju second airport... So that there will be no more Nanjing Massacres, we remember that bloody history and how Jeju was mobilized in that day. Jeju must become a demilitarized peace island for the peace of East Asia and the whole world. We must preserve our right to live peacefully." A message from Okinawa-Korea People's Solidarity remarked on the ongoing militarization of the Ryukyu Archipelago and how the military threats of the Abe and Trump governments resemble Japan's pre-war aggressions in Asia. "Attempts to erase the truths of history must not be tolerated. For the peace of East Asia we must remember the massacre victims and the war crimes of imperialism. With one heart, let us hold hands across the sea and work to build peace."

St. Francis Peace Center Visit

By Martha Hennessy

While attending the first Catholic Institute of Northeast Asia peace conference held at the National Reconciliation Center in Paju, my love of Korea grew deeper. This conference, hosted by Bishop Kim Hee-joong seeks to bring peace to the Korean peninsula through the theme of forgiveness and atonement. Seventy years of partition, occupation, and militarization is enough. We visited Panmunjon Peace Village where dialogue occurs between the North and South. The recent reconnection of the hotline is so encouraging. A vision of healing and unity will prevail to end the old cold war model with its degenerate state, undemocratic economy, and abuse of the environment.

I returned to beloved Jeju to visit friends and fellow

peacemakers, now into a decade of resistance against the naval base built and operating there. A US nuclear submarine entered in November, leaving behind its waste. The long-term struggle mounted in Gangjeong Village was born of the Japanese occupation, the April 3rd 1948 massacre under US military oversight, and the Korean War of 1950-53. The current traumatization of the people and destruction of the land is a continuum of this history. I know that love, truth, and justice remains, and will flourish on Jeju again, because today, resistance and education continue to be pursued with persistence through a beautiful, strong, hopeful group of people still saying Mass by the roadside and protesting at the gate. Their presence there is a thorn in the side of the lion.

Image : Sung-hee Choi

Martha Hennessy, granddaughter of Dorothy Day, visited Gangjeong Dec. 3-8, to join protests against the US-Korea joint air drill known as "Vigilant Ace." She also shared about her and her grandmother's experience working for peace.



Naval Blockade & Nuclear Posture Review

The inter-Korean high-level meeting and joint press release on Jan. 9 regarding cooperation during the Pyeongchang Olympics and the winter Paralympics helped to gradually dissolve a long frozen inter-Korean relationship. However, the U.S. Trump government insists on de-nuclearization of North Korea as a precondition for talks. Further, despite the agreement to delay ROK-US military exercises during the Olympics and Paralympics, the U.S. is strengthening its military pressure against North Korea by mobilizing 'strategic military assets' around the Korean peninsula.

On Jan. 15-16, the U.S. gathered 16 countries involved in the 1950-1953 Korean War (belonging to the so-called UN Command) and Japan to Vancouver, Canada, to talk about ways to pressure North Korea such as a naval blockade. The United States was already drawing Japanese self-defense force into that naval blockade against North

Korea since December. Such a naval blockade could bring military clashes and is like pouring cold water on the new mood of inter-Korean dialogue.

Additionally, according to the recently public draft of the Trump government's Nuclear Posture Review, the Trump government wants to develop 'low yield nuclear weapons,' which would heighten the threat of nuclear war in the Korean peninsula and North East Asia.

If the U.S. wishes to truly pursue 'non-nuclearization of Korean peninsula', it should stop military pressure against North Korea and amend this draft of the Nuclear Posture Review. In order to bring about North Korea's halt of nuclear and missile tests, ROK-US war exercises, the key hostile policy against North Korea, should stop and unconditioned talks between North Korea and the United States should be held. (Reference: SPARK)

Nuchi Du Takara (All Life is a Treasure)

By Miles Megaciph, Veterans for Peace Delegation to Okinawa, Dec. 2017

Its a simple matter of human rights over humiliation hence the Daily demonstrations and colorful cloth placements
The power and peace represented through the perseverance
In the push back against the rampant militarization
From the northern training area down past camp Hansen
For all the noise and harassment and Ospreys crashing
The illegal land grabs an American embarrassment
And the 12-year-old raped in 9-5 with no answer

Yeah I was stationed at camp Schwab in '95 and
I remember our presence impeded a normal life
I mean on the island marines relax by f***ing wilding
when drinking and fighting was our way of socializing
So now I work towards vocalizing the way I feel properly
Now that I am no longer government property
I hope and pray it's not impolite of me to say this
I'm truly sorry for my service...
it meant your freedom waited

Nuchi du takara Nuchi du takara All Life is a treasure All life is precious
Nuchi du takara Nuchi du takara Shut the bases down forever

Over 20 years ago, I was stationed at Camp Schwab as a US Marine, so the opportunity to go back as a civilian and redeem myself was more than a little appealing. While I was stationed there, back in 1995, a young 12-year-old girl was raped by two Marines from my very own base and one sailor from another base. The worst part is that these three rapists were not tried in Okinawan court and essentially went free. While I was stationed there we destroyed a lot of property and injured numerous people, [but] never once was I or any of my fellow trouble makers held accountable...[On this trip] I [was] arrested and held for a day for obstructing traffic after I threw myself under a truck [and] I also cried my heart out at the memorial of a young woman who was brutally raped by a former Marine only a few years ago. [When] I jumped under the truck, I was asked by an officer..., "what are you doing?" and I told him while trying to wrap my legs around the axel, "I am protecting the Dugong, I am protecting the Coral Reef." (excerpted from Facebook)

"Sirens normalize the potential for war."

On Jan. 13, the State of Hawaii sent a false alert of a ballistic missile attack to its citizens. Ann Wright, a retired U.S. Colonel and now peace activist, has launched a petition to 'Stop Hawaii's Monthly Nuclear Attack Warning and Cell Phone Alerts,' which states, "The State of Hawaii is war mongering and scaring its citizens with its monthly nuclear attack warning siren which began in December 2017...The sirens heighten the anxiety and stress of impending conflict and devastation, make citizens afraid and in their fear, accept whatever the government feeds them on how great threats to our nation are. We know that successive administrations have lied our country into wars -from Vietnam to Iraq. We do not agree for the need for war with North Korea and refuse to accept the attempted US intimidation of North Korea which could lead to war. The sirens normalize the potential for war."

International Solidarity



Image : Sung-hee Choi

On Jan. 6, Gangjeong peacekeepers held pickets in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle, calling particularly for the release of Ahed Tamimi, whose detention highlights the injustice of the Israeli system and whose 17th birthday on January 31 is also the day her trial begins.

JUPITER and a Secret Bio-Chem Lab

In 2015, the news that living anthrax bacterium was taken to Osan US Air Force base, Pyeongtaek, brought a shock to Korea society.

It was revealed that the US Department of Defense (DoD) has been conducting a dangerous bio/chem test for years under a program called JUPITER (Joint USFK Portal and Integrated Threat Recognition). Further, it has been sending that dangerous material for test use to about 80 US bases around the world.

In November 2016, the US DoD installed a lab

for the JUPITER project at the US base on Pier 8 of Busan port, in the main land of Korea, despite citizens' strong opposition to it.

Now it turns out that the US DoD is also aiming to install the same lab secretly by March 2018 in the US Camp Humphreys, Pyeongtaek.

According to the evaluation sheet for the 2018 fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2017 to Sept. 30, 2018) of the Chemical/ Biological Defense (ACD&P) program, published by the US Defense department, a two year

budget is planned to install the Jupiter system on pier 8 of Busan and at Camp Humphreys. Around 9.54 billion Korean won was designated for the 2018 fiscal year.

The JUPITER program violates the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (Reference: Pyeongtaek Peace Center and Voice of the People).

Round 3 of Jeju 2nd Airport Contention

By aRiverDrop



Images : National Network to Stop the Jeju Second Airport & Song Dong-hyo

The Seongsan struggle against the plans for a second Jeju airport (and air force base) spread from Jeju to Seoul. At Gwanghwamun in Seoul (top) they dramatized the threat to Jeju's environment and cultural heritage. Back in Jeju on January 1, they posed for photos at the Seongsan Sunrise Peak volcanic cone.

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MLIT) and the Anti-Jeju 2nd Airport Seongsan Committee (referred to as Committee) tried but failed to find common ground due to different perspectives. Development vs. conservation, general practice vs. transparency, efficiency vs. procedural democracy, etc.

In the first round, the unilateral site selection by the Park Geun-hye administration ignored the local residents from the beginning. Governor Won Hee-ryong's Jeju government had forgotten its Special Self-Governing status and acted as mouthpiece of MLIT, asking local residents to sacrifice themselves for the good of the majority. It was like hitting people who were not even informed about the match itself! Residents of the candidate sites should have been informed, but transparency and procedural democracy were missing in the name of "land speculation prevention measures."

In the second round, Seongsan people seemed disintegrated, but Kim Kyung-bae's 42 day hunger strike attracted attention in and out of Jeju. Kim kept saying "My hometown is the home of life and life itself. No matter the national policies, there must be a good reason to take homes from people." The pressure of public opinion began to rise, and the Committee finally got to meet with MLIT officials twice in Jeju, but failed to reach an agreement. The Committee moved their protest to Seoul and the two sides had two meetings there, but their distrust deepened.

The third round has begun. The Committee returned to Jeju and held a press conference. Committee chairman Kang Won-bo said, "The MLIT said it would accept a preliminary feasibility reexamination, but it is only formal, both the results and the follow-up measures will be decided by them... a one-sided re-examination. The second airport is not a problem only for Seongsan-eup residents. Everyone in Jeju Island can become a victim."

Meanwhile a voluntary citizen group called 'Let's do whatever' started this new year with a performance on January 1, and a national network against the second Jeju airport is being formed.

Let's Pull Out THAAD and Plant Peace!

By Kim Young-jae, peace activist in Soseong-ri

2017, the year when THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) was deployed, was a year of turbulence for people in Soseong-ri. In March, hundreds of policemen were mobilized in a village of merely 100 residents. Since then, tension as if walking on thin ice was formed every day. And small and big clashes are constantly happening so far.

On April 26-27, most equipment such as THAAD radar and two launchers were moved in for the first time. And from Sept. 6 to 7, the remaining equipment such as four launchers were additionally deployed.

During that illegal, betraying, and sneaky THAAD deployment process, hundreds of citizens including residents of Soseong-ri, nearby villages and the nearby cities Seongju and Gimcheon, gathered to stop the deployment of THAAD which damages peace. They resisted all night long.

However, the violent suppression of nearly 100,000 policemen was overwhelming, and people felt helpless to watch THAAD equipment being moved into the base area, passing by the village.

Especially the struggle to stop additional deployment was heartbreaking. 500 people facing enormous violence by the riot police resisted to the end for 18 hours. Many people who joined that struggle could realize one another's strong will to save peace. People found it was a very rare and adamant struggle. A historic fight.

In the New Year, too, people are continuing the struggle for the withdrawal of THAAD. Starting even before day break, people carry out daily peace activities such as monitoring and stopping the access of THAAD-related vehicles and personnel including the US army.

The residents and peace keepers of Soseong-ri, Gimcheon, and Seongju regard the anti-THAAD struggle as a historic calling to save peace. They resolve to fight until the day when THAAD is finally pulled out!

Every morning, people shout, "Let's pull out THAAD this year!" "Let's plant peace this year" "Let's pull out THAAD and plant peace!"

Trial Updates



▶ On Dec. 15, 2017, the Supreme Court made a decision of not-guilty for Rev. Paik Chang-wook, a former representative of the Daegu regional office of the Solidarity for Peace And Reunification of Korea (SPARK). The charges against him under the National Security law were sympathetic action to benefit the enemy and possession of articles benefiting the enemy (aka North Korea). All nine members of SPARK who were charged under the National Security Law were confirmed as not guilty. The ex-government of Lee Myung-bak conducted raids of SPARK's offices and some staff members' houses on February 8, 2012. It is considered an act of oppression on the Jeju anti-navy base movement as SPARK was one of the leading groups in the struggle. SPARK welcomed the court decision, saying the court naturally acknowledged the legality and justice of SPARK activities which include opposition to ROK-US war exercises; appeals for the conclusion of a Korea Peace Agreement, withdrawal of the USFK from Korea, dissolution of ROK-US alliance, and halting of the ROK-US-Japan trilateral military alliance.

▶ On January 11, 2018, the Jeju local court sentenced Mang-gi, Gangjeong peace activist, with a 500,000 KRW fine for his anti-base protests during Feb.- March, 2016. He has been charged with interruption of road traffic, non-compliance with orders to leave, and insult. The judge said that he made the court decision, acknowledging all the charges but keeping in mind how Gangjeong village has been in conflict due to the Jeju navy base.

“Night & Day” Recital

By Curry

Guests filled the Peace Center for the eleventh Gangjeong song and poetry recital event in the evening of Dec. 17. Some performers were familiar, like Joyakgol and Sun Kyung. Min Kyung performed an emotive goodbye to the Peace Center, which we may not be able to use much longer. An elementary-aged boy shared a poem and played piano. Jane shared her diary entries from Dec. 17 of each previous year of the Gangjeong peace struggle, and she and Hosu performed “For the Women of Gaza” by Emma Ringquist of the 2016 Women’s Boat to Gaza.

Peace School Updates

By Curry



Image : Sunghee Choi

Gangjeong Peace School participants joined the daily human chain even in a snow storm.

During winter vacation, Gangjeong is full of groups coming to learn about the struggle against the navy base, the April 3rd (4.3) massacre, and the militarization of Jeju. Some groups are hosted by the Gangjeong 4.3 Peace Learning Tour group, others by Gangjeong Peace School. The Citizens’ Peace University (a network of peace ed. organizations) came to Gangjeong Dec. 15-19, with sessions on restorative justice and Jeju mythology.

From January 13-16, the 19th Gangjeong Peace School was held during what seemed the coldest week of the winter. Participants did 100 bows and human chain dances in the snow, toured Gangjeong, ate in Samgeori kitchen, and had experiential peace education workshops with Ddalggi. After watching ‘The Ghosts of Jeju’, several participants shared about how their own families experienced 4.3 and similar incidents where Korean civilians were killed in the name of anti-communism. At Alddreu Airfield, Myeolchi explained about how local people were forced to build the Japanese airbase, about how people with suspected sympathy for communism were rounded up, killed, and buried in mass graves at Seot-al Oreum, and about the struggle to prevent the airfield from being re-opened in the late 1980s. Mang-gi, Hyeyoung and Curry shared about why we do 100 bows, human chain, tabling to share information about Gangjeong, sea-coral monitoring, and inter island solidarity peace camps. For the graduation ceremony, participants prepared essays, songs, and poems expressing what they learned and what peace means to them.

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 use of it.
2. Stay updated by joining our Facebook groups and following us on twitter.
3. Organize a solidarity event (concert, movie screening, protest, etc...) then share about it on social media.
4. Visit Gangjeong!
5. 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 :

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

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More on *The Memory of the 25th Hour*

By Grace Kim

The Memory of the 25th Hour (2016, 78 min.), a documentary film on the Gangjeong struggle directed by Sungeun Kim, was recently screened around Korea: Seoul Independent Film Festival (Nov. 14), Busan Docu-shipda (Nov. 28), Incheon Human Rights Film Festival (Dec. 2), and Gongryong Community Center in Chungjoo (Dec. 11). According to Kim, "The film recounts the day in Gangjeong village when the massive crackdown was operated on the protestors of the anti-naval base movement at the new military housing construction site in 2015. Exploring the possibility of filmmaking as a means of active memory, this film follows the life of activism after its visible phases."



Image : Hosu

Seventeen high-school students from the alternative Ewoo School visited Gangjeong on Dec. 27-30, joining actively in the human chain, learning about Jeju and Gangjeong, and documenting what learned through photography, drawing, poetry, film, and painting a mural.

Conference on U.S. Foreign Military Bases in Baltimore

"We all agree that U.S. foreign military bases are the principal instruments of imperial global domination and environmental damage through wars of aggression and occupation, and that the closure of U.S. foreign military bases is one of the first necessary steps toward a just, peaceful and sustainable world' (From the Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases' Unity Statement). A Conference on U.S. Foreign Military Bases was held in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, January 12-14, 2018. For more, go to noforeignbases.org



Image : Pang Eun-mi

Morning mass in Gangjeong on Christmas Day. The street mass in opposition to war and war bases, led by Fr. Mun Jeong-hyeon, is held daily at 11am, Monday to Saturday, across from the Jeju navy base.

