

# GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

JANUARY  
2014

Monthly news on the struggle against  
the Jeju Naval base project

Published by Gangjeong Village in Jeju,  
South Korea



## New Village Mayor Puts Conflict Resolution as Top Agenda

By Cho Kyung-Chul,  
newly elected Gangjeong  
Village Mayor  
Image : Song Dong-Hyo

On December 30th, 2013, Cho Kyung-Chul, who was vice mayor under previous Mayor Kang, was elected as the new mayor of Gangjeong. Gangjeong Anti-Base Committee Chairman Go Gwon-II and Choi Yong-Boem, were elected as vice mayors. They will run the Village Association for 2 years from 2014. All members of the new association are strong proponents for peace on Jeju Island, so the Gangjeong Village Association will continue on as they have done for 7 years under Mayor Kang.

I live in Gangjeong so I fight against the naval base. I couldn't ignore the injustices happening before my eyes and it led me to be involved in this struggle. From now on, the new council members and I will do our best to face the situation of our village... If the Jeju government wants to do something for us, I would like to tell them to give us

what we want. They are stealing the land, the sea and the home of the villagers...

The top of my agenda during my term will be to moderate conflict among the villagers. In my opinion, the people whom we first need to reconcile with are not those who secretly made the decision to host the naval base, causing anger among the villagers, but rather those who were tricked and pushed into supporting the base. I hope to restore our relationships with them and live our daily lives like before. It's possible because we have lived in the same community throughout this long history of oppression. I will try to talk with them and unite their minds in order to live together.

If the government admits their fault for the undemocratic way in which it pushed ahead the naval base construction project, and makes efforts to do something for the villagers, then we would be willing to talk with

them. I doubt that we can even try to have a talk with the navy. The former naval leader in charge of the construction project set a bad precedent. He stated publicly that the navy would not force the sale of land in the building site if the villagers didn't agree. Then a few years later he became Naval Chief of Staff and forced the compulsory sale of land near Gureombi. In any country, the army should be a group which works with loyalty to the people. But the ROK Navy seems like a group lacking in common sense, which even tries to cheat their own people. I will try to take the right path for the villagers and our friends who love peace during my 2 year term. May Gangjeong Village have good fortune in 2014!



Image : Gangjeong Village Story

On January 27, on the 9th anniversary of the declaration of Jeju as the Peace Island, Participants gathered for the 4th meeting of the movement to demilitarize Jeju Island

## Let's write letters to Pope Francis

By Jo yak gol  
(aka dopehead zo)

I was having a conversation with Jesuit priest Kim Jeong-Uk when the idea of inviting Pope Francis to Gangjeong occurred to me. I asked Father Kim how, and he told me that writing letters could be a good way to do it. But instead of just me writing a letter once a week by myself, how about if the whole world wrote peace letters to the Pope so that his Holiness can visit the life and peace village on his trip to South Korea?

According to the Catholics here in Jeju, it's almost certain that Pope Francis will come to Korea this August. The details and itinerary are not decided yet, but we believe that the Vatican will decide the schedule soon. So it is very important for us to write and send letters to Pope Francis now, to invite him to Jeju during his visit.

We should let him know about Gangjeong's 8 years peace movement against the naval base for nuclear warships and convince him to visit the suffering village on the Island of World Peace.

Many of us think that if Pope Francis comes to Jeju, then it will become another watershed moment in our peaceful struggle. Everyday, we picture the scene where the head of the Catholic church holds the Eucharist at the daily Life-Peace Mass in front of the construction site. Tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of people would gather together, and as Jeju Bishop Peter Kang U-il Once said, the peace of the world will begin from this tiny village and flow to the rest of the world.

So please, take a pen and write your

sincere heart out on a piece of paper. Then send it to the Apostolic Palace of the Vatican City. It's easy and anyone can do it for the peace of Gangjeong. Although we encourage hand written letters, for those that want to do it online, we have created a website: [www.pope2jeju.org](http://www.pope2jeju.org), where you can type your message and send to the Vatican with the click of a button.

This campaign has only begun a week or so ago, but we have already heard that people from around the world are now writing letters for Gangjeong. Please ask your friends to join this nonviolent peaceful protest to get Pope Francis to read our letters so we can meet him in Gangjeong this summer!

# Update on Henoko: Okinawa's Fight against US Base Construction Continues

By Excerpted from an article by Hideki Yoshikawa, Citizens' Network for Biodiversity in Okinawa, Save the Dugong Campaign Center

As 2013 ended and 2014 has begun, Okinawa witnessed two critical developments, and they are re-shaping the course of Okinawa's fight against the construction of a US military airbase in Henoko and Oura Bay, Nago in northern Okinawa Island.

On December 27, 2013, under pressure from the Japanese government, Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima gave permission for land reclamation in Henoko and Oura Bay. While a complete turnaround from his previous position, the governor's granting of permission now enables the Japanese government to move on to the phase of actual construction. Meanwhile, on January 19, in Nago city, Mayor Susume Inamine, who has been staunchly opposing the base construction, soundly defeated his Tokyo-backed, pro-construction opponent in the mayoral election.

In this situation, the government appears

determined to proceed with the construction plan, dismissing the result of Nago election, even hinting at lawsuit and the use of police force. Many of us in Okinawa however are gearing up and taking actions.

The Okinawa prefectural assembly has adopted a resolution, calling for the governor's resignation. Local citizens have filed lawsuits against the governor for violating the land reclamation law in granting the permit. Environmental groups are collaborating to challenge the governor's decision on scientific grounds. And, many are preparing for sit-ins and rallies. It remains to be seen how this issue of the base construction will unfold in the end. However, with drilling surveys for reclamation scheduled to start in March, it appears certain that Henoko and Oura Bay will become a site of confrontation again. International attention is needed.



Image : Gangjeong Village Story

Winter is tangerine harvest season in Jeju, so Gangjeong's villagers are busy harvesting their famous Hallabong tangerines.

## Peace Activists Honor Dr. King By Nuclear Weapons Action

Excerpted from a longer article by Leonard Eiger



Image : Ground Zero

People Gathering in Honor of MLK and in Solidarity with Gangjeong at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor in Washington, USA

On January 18, 2014 activists from a Puget Sound-based nuclear abolition group engaged in a nonviolent direct action at the US Navy's West Coast nuclear submarine and nuclear weapons base.

Members of Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action held a peaceful vigil and nonviolent direct action at the main gate to Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor in Silverdale, Washington. They protested the U.S. government's continued deployment of the Trident nuclear weapons system, and increasing military presence in Asia due to its Asia-Pacific Pivot. Its continued reliance on nuclear weapons as an instrument of foreign policy by force projection is in contravention of both U.S. and international laws. The Trident submarine base at Bangor, just 20 miles from Seattle, contains the largest concentration of operational nuclear weapons in the US arsenal.

On Saturday afternoon the group maintained a peaceful vigil on the roadside outside the base entrance. Two participants entered the roadway, symbolically closing the base, and were removed by Washington State Patrol officers. Cited for traffic violations

– "Pedestrian on Roadway Illegally" – were Gilberto Perez, Bainbridge Island, WA and Michael Siptroth, Belfair, WA. Perez, a Buddhist monk who has visited Jeju Island in South Korea, held a banner (in Korean) calling for "No Naval Base on Jeju." Another participant, Tom Krebsbach, Brier, WA walked onto the base in an attempt to deliver a message, in the form of a poem, to the base commander. Naval security authorities arrested Krebsbach, and took him to a base facility for processing. He along with MacKnight Johnson, who entered the roadway carrying a sign reading, "Abolish Nuclear Weapons." were both cited.

The day planned in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. began in the morning at Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action where participants screened "The Ghosts of Jeju," a shocking documentary about the people of Jeju Island who are resisting the military advance on their island today, just as their parents and relatives did in 1947.

## India's Odisha State People's No POSCO Struggle

By Nah Hyun-Phil, Korean House for International Solidarity

In 2005, POSCO, South Korea's biggest steel company, and the Odisha State Government of India agreed on an enormous \$10 billion USD integrated steelworks plant project and its associated infrastructure. This project comes at the sacrifice of 22,000 local residents who will be forced to migrate due to the project.

For the past 8 years, the local residents have been fighting against this, claiming that POSCO and the state government had not gone through proper negotiations with the residents in advance. Since 2007, due to the conflict which has arisen around this project, violence has resulted in the deaths of four villagers and hundreds of injuries. Since 2011, the local residents have blockaded the entry into their village to keep out the government authorities who want to expropriate their land to hand it over to POSCO. The residents there are not able to get access to medical service, let alone other aspects of normal life, since they cannot leave their village for fear of arrest.

In addition to various Korean activists groups' solidarity with them, international society, including the UN has considered this matter as an example case of human rights infringement by multinational corporations' mega development projects, and are working on various measures regarding the situation.

However, the Korean government and POSCO continue trample on their voices as they enforce the construction, which has led the residents to express great fury at POSCO and the governments of India and South Korea, holding protests and burning an effigy of ROK President Park Geun-Hye upon her recent visit to India. This construction/destruction must be stopped immediately.

**Ed. POSCO is also a major company involved in the similarly forced Jeju Naval Base project**

## International Solidarity



Image : Renie L.

Upon Obama's visit to Hawaii, Gangjeong solidarity protestors demonstrated outside the Korean Consulate.

# Gangjeong-Related Entry Ban Lifted!

Emily Wang, who was denied entry to Korea and repatriated to Taiwan in April of 2013, following a short training abroad, has been able to come back to Korea, last December 30, 2013! She lived in Gangjeong since the summer of 2011 and joined the Save our Seas ocean protest team, and eventually became the 23rd international activist to be banned entry to Korea, related to Gangjeong. Upon hearing of her re-entry, it was assumed that something has changed in the regard to the entry denial blacklist. It was later confirmed through official sources that the entire blacklist has been cleared and the entry ban on all internationals who were denied entry in relation to Gangjeong has been lifted.

According to the Ministry of Justice, on May 29th, 2012, 37 persons were placed on prohibition entry according to the Immigration Control Act, Article 11, paragraph 1, subparagraph 3, which states that the Minister of Justice may prohibit entry to, "A person about

whom there are considerable grounds for concern that the person may commit acts detrimental to the national interest or the public safety of the Republic of Korea". Later following a policy change related to human rights violations, the ban was lifted on all 37 persons on May 22, 2013 as per Article 14 of the Immigration Control Act. According to the Ministry of Justice, the policy change followed an outpouring of civil complaints regarding the banning of entry to internationals and various related human rights violations controversies.

Although the prohibited 37 persons are now free to enter Korea once again, sadly, French activist Benjamin Monnet, who was violently deported following his arrest in 2012 and later found guilty in a Korean court even though he couldn't attend his own trial, is still banned entry to Korea for at least 5 years from his date of deportation.



Image : Dunguree

Gangjeong Filmmaker Dunguree holds a sign in front of the Gunsan Police station declaring himself a wanted criminal for refusal to pay a 50,000 KRW (about \$50 USD) fine related to Gangjeong activities. He was arrested shortly after and released that evening as one day in prison equals 50,000 KRW.

## Jeju Governor displeased by Human Rights Act

On Dec. 31, 2013, Jeju Governor Woo Keun-Min called for a reconsideration of the recent Jeju Human Rights Act passed by the Island Council on Dec. 13, 2013. The Jeju Human Rights Act includes regulations and practical systematic measures towards assisting Islanders victimized by state power such as the central or local government, such as the people of Gangjeong.

The Gangjeong Human Rights Committee criticized the Island governor's demand, saying that it shows his duplicitousness to oppose the installation of a practical system to advance the human rights of the Island people while also asking for "special amnesty" for the victims in Gangjeong. The committee stated that if Governor Woo has is truly concerned with the support of the Gangjeong residents' human rights, he should revoke his request. If not, it will be clear that his appeal for "special amnesty" is merely a political gesture to get more votes in coming local election.



Images : Gangjeong Village Story

January saw the release of two of Gangjeong's peace prisoners, Jesuit Brother Park Do-Hyun and Peacekeeper Kim Eun-Hye.

## Letter to Yang Yoon-Mo

By Kim Minsou

Yang Yoon-Mo. In my memory, I see you wandering naked, like a little child, on Gureombi rock. I remember you acting so young, when on your own, you claimed a permanent residence at "Joong-Duk Temple" there on Gureombi. You said you'd fight there as a pseudo-Buddhist monk. Every morning, you drank a glass of rice wine, before soaking your haggard body in the water of "Yeo" [a temporary pond formed at low tide] and drying yourself on the "Neo-Reok-Bah-Wi" [broad and flat rock], found across Gureombi. I remember your beaming smile, as you were preparing a feast with some small squid you had just caught.

In my memory, you always argued with your best friend, Jong-hwan, on every subject, but over a glass of rice wine you would bond as if nothing had happened. When you fought with Samsung employees though, you were just like a gangster.

Underneath a crane, you shouted, "Kill me! Kill Gureombi! Kill Gangjeong!" After your 70-day hunger strike in prison your worn-out body cried out once more, "No naval base on Jeju!"

Yang Yoon-Mo. The immature, shabby and stubborn old man. My father, teacher, and friend. I miss you so much. The sweet potatoes you brought for us to bake together are still sitting in that corner, untouched and moldy, covered with old spider webs.

I want to hear your silly laughter once again. I cannot wait to see your child-like smile with a glass of rice wine in your hand.

## Gangjeong Prisoners

No.

301

Mr. Yang Yoon-Mo  
Since Feb. 1, 2013

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

## Trial Updates

- ▶ On Jan. 6, the Supreme Court affirmed the higher court decision on Catholic Br. Park Do-Hyun, who received eight months' imprisonment suspended with two years probation and a 50,000 KRW (Approx. \$50 USD) fine for obstruction of business and trespass in January of 2012. Related to the case from July 1, 2013 when he was arrested along with Dr. Song Kang-Ho on the sea, he was released on Jan. 14 after the full six month prison term possible for a person still on trial. His trial on that case continues.
- ▶ On Jan. 9, Ms. Kim Eun-Hye who was directly imprisoned from the court last October 8, was released with a higher court decision of eight month imprisonment suspended with two years probation. Her lawyer claimed that Kim has never committed violence to a police officer and that even accepting the supposition that she had, there is no appropriate cause and result relationship between the supposed events and the 12-week medical diagnosis of at the police woman she is accused of hitting. However, as without the original ruling, the higher court's unfair decision was based on a "possibility of violence", despite the absence of actual evidence.
- ▶ On the same day, villager Mr. Kim Jong-Hwan was given a sentence of 18 months' imprisonment suspended with three years' probation and supervised protection for Special Obstruction of Justice, Injury, and Obstruction of Business). A peacekeeper, Park Suk-Jin, who was imprisoned on the opening day of the WCC Environmental Congress in 2012, had his appeal dismissed by the appeals' court. The original court ruling was one year imprisonment suspended with three years' probation. The appeals of nine villagers and peace keepers including Kim Seri, Park Yune-Ae, Lim Ho-Young, and Kim Kab-Deuk who were charged with trespass for June 2012 were also dismissed. The appeal by a peace keeper, Lee Jong-Hwa was also dismissed (4 million KRW fines, Approx. \$4,000 USD, in first ruling).
- ▶ On Jan. 16, Park Han-Baek, a peace keeper, was given a sentence of 10 months' imprisonment suspended with two years' probation and two years' supervised protection for the charge of Special Obstruction of Justice. The appeals by five including peace keepers, Joan Kim and Rev. Lim Bora were also dismissed, maintaining of the 1st court decisions of 3 million to 5 million KRW fines.
- ▶ On Jan. 17, there was a trial in Seoul of Sr. Soh Stella, the 1st Catholic Nun to stand trial in the 200 years of Catholic history in Korea. Her lawyer, Paik Shin-Ok, stated in relation to the charges aimed at Sr. Soh, "Because the Jeju naval base construction itself is illegal in process and content, the act she did is not obstruction of proper government affairs. Nor was any Injury to police was not intentional, and it was all righteous self-defense over the excessive abuse of state power therefore it is not in violation of the law." Sr. Soh Stella also stated, "I could not but be compelled to be there with the villagers, after I witnessed them being trampled down by state power. The Jeju naval base is a base only for the United States to check China, nothing to do with Korea's interests. It will be an obstacle for Korean's re-unification as well."
- ▶ Finally, on Jan. 23, the appeals of nine people including Dr. Song Kang-Ho and movie director Cho Sung-Bong, who were charged with violation of the Public Waters' Act/Obstruction of Business/Group Property Damage, were also dismissed. The 1st court sentences of 700,000 to 4 million KRW or four months imprisonment suspended with 1 year probation or 1 year imprisonment suspended with two year probation were maintained. As well as 100,000 KRW fines.

# Please join Gangjeong Friends!

By Choi Hye-Young

I am the new secretary of Gangjeong Friends, Choi Hye-Young. Gangjeong Friends is an organization to support Gangjeong village and the activists here. We have around 200 members at the moment. Gangjeong has struggled for 8 years. Gangjeong Friends holds a public awareness campaign every Tuesday from 6-8pm in front of City Hall in Jeju City. We do this to raise money and also remind people of the struggle of Gangjeong. You can join as a regular support member or as an irregular member as well. Regular members raise funds for Gangjeong and even small amounts help us a lot. I have many ideas for how we can work for Gangjeong in 2013. We hope to expand but still be a strong connection between activists and villagers. Please support us and help us grow!

# Yes! Peace will start from right here!

By Choi Hye-Young

We started for the question, "Why don't we teach Peace if Peace is so important?" and it led to Gangjeong Peace School in Gangjeong Village. Gangjeong is the best place to learn about Peace. The Government broke apart the community in the name of "national security" in order to keep the country's "peace". But we struggle against the naval base, for life and peace.

Gangjeong Peace School was held once again, this time from January 20-25, with 11 students. We learned about April 3rd, 1948 Massacre and about the 8 years of Gangjeong's struggle. We toured the village learning from the memories of the villagers. We learned that Peace is not simply the absence of violence, but must be nonviolently built on love and nonviolent struggle takes a long time. Violence looks easy and like it can solve things quickly, but nonviolence requires time to prepare and unite all of our strength together. During peace school we made a great performance about the red-foot crab who used to live on Gureombi Rock. We feel sorry that they lost their homes and are becoming extinct. Everything should be able to go back to where it once was. The way of Peace is to pay attention to these small voices crying out.

We learn mutually, from each other, as we step together towards peace. Anyone who wants to act, dance, sing, swim, and struggle for peace, we invite you!

# 5 Years: Remembering the Yongsan Tragedy

January 20, 2014 marked the 5th year since the Yongsan Tragedy in which five residents of Yongsan were killed by state power during their resistance against a government and corporate development project in their area. The Yongsan struggle, along with the Gangjeong, Milyang, and Ssangyong Motor workers's struggles, has been one of the critical recent struggles exposing the injustices of Korean society and these four struggles have continually held each other in solidarity and support.

# Park Geun-Hye faces harsh reception during visits to Switzerland and India

By Grace

On January 18, 2014, ROK President Park Geun-Hye visited Bern Switzerland for summit talks with Swiss President Didier Burkhalter. On the same day, in front of the Bern Korean Consulate, members of the Swiss Railway Workers' Union gathered to hand a protest letter to Park. The letter strongly expressed that they were against the unacceptable oppression by Korean government on Korean railway workers who were on strike for 21 days last December. In solidarity with the Korean workers, they also advised President Park to comply with democratic procedures regarding the workers' right to strike.

Meanwhile, earlier in January, President Park also received a harsh reception in India. Residents from India's Odisha State, who have been struggling against a government land grab for Korea's steel company POSCO, burnt effigies of Park, along with the Indian Prime Minister and the India Minister of Environment, upon her arrival in New Delhi. During the demonstration they stated that they wanted to inform the president of the damaged caused to their village. However, as the an Indian media outlet rightly claimed, her visit to India was about "sales diplomacy", focusing not only on sealing the POSCO deal but also on the possibility of a new joint nuclear power project.

# Fundraising Event for Artist Koh Gilchun

On December 31st, 2013, during the party to welcome the new year in Gangjeong, a special fundraising event was held for Jeju artist Koh Gilchun, who suffered a cerebral hemorrhage last August, and has been in hospital since then. February 3rd will mark 6th months hospitalization for Koh, who is slowly getting better through rigorous rehabilitation.



Image : Grace

From Jan. 18-19, Gangjeong Activists held a retreat at a nearby Catholic retreat center. Activities included a lecture on the history of resistance to U.S. bases in Asia, talks about future directions of the struggle, food, and games.



Image : Gangjeong Village Story

During January, Gangjeong supporter and musician Jo Yak Gol held a daily protest concert for several hours, every afternoon in front of the construction site gates.

## 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>

### For Gangjeong related videos, visit [savejejunow.org](http://savejejunow.org) or check these Vimeo/YouTube users :

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

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