

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

MARCH
2014

Monthly news on the struggle against
the Jeju Naval base project

Published by Gangjeong Village in Jeju,
South Korea



Image : Hanoul

Gangjeong Marks 2nd Anniversary of Gureombi Blasting and Int'l Womens' Day

An event to mark the 2 year anniversary of the blasting of Gureombi Rock, Professor Yang Yoon-Mo's 400th day of imprisonment, and the 106th International Women's Day was held on March 7. Gangjeong villagers, activists, and visitors participated in a peace march from the village center to Moetbburi Rock, which is directly next to Gureombi Rock and the base construction site.

Exactly 2 years ago, Gangjeong villagers, Jeju Islanders, and people from across Korea and the world came together to resist the blasting of Gureombi and its coastal waters. For thousands of years, Gureombi has been a playground, a garden, and a mother's arms, embracing and embraced by the people of Gangjeong. Thus it was perhaps the most painful and sorrowful moment of this 8 year struggle to experience the partial destruction of Gureombi Rock. Still, though we cannot see Gureombi

anymore, it lives on in our memories.

Like usual, there were many tricks and deceptions committed by the navy in the process of blasting Gureombi. It was also at that time that oppression on the human rights of international activists by the ROK government reached a climax, when Benjamin Monnet was forcibly deported and banned from re-entering Korea. Deep scars from the loss of Gureombi and dear friends have been left in the hearts of the people of Gangjeong.

Prof. Yang, who has been imprisoned for 400 days, was also remembered. He once declared that it was his calling as a critic to discover beauty, protect it, and make it known to the world. Putting his words into practice has cost him his freedom and so we marched to remember him.

Since March 8 is International Women's Day, it

was also celebrated together a day early. Women's Day in Gangjeong is usually a fun celebration of Women with singing and dancing and dressing up. This year, marchers passed out lilies to everyone they met.

Near the end of the march a press conference was held by the Gangjeong Village Association in front of the main gate of the construction site. New mayor Cho Kyung-Chul and Chairwomen of the Women's Anti-Base Committee, Jeong Young-Hee gave speeches.

At the end of the march, there was a final ceremony on Moetbburi Rock. The ceremony included a traditional music performance, the reading of a poem about memories of Gureombi, and a special peace dance, led by a dancing group for the victims of the Jeju 4.3 Massacre. The event closed with each tying a flower to the fence of the construction site with a piece of torn cloth.

Catholic Laity Concerned about Pope Visit Itinerary

By Regina Pyon & Pat
Cunningham

It was announced that Pope Francis will visit South Korea from Aug. 14-18. During his visit, Pope Francis will attend Asian Youth Day, to be held in Daejeon. He will also attend the beatification ceremony for the 124 martyrs who were killed for their beliefs during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Hosting Pope Francis is an honor not only for Korea's 5 million Roman Catholics but for all Korean people. However, some Korean Lay faithful have expressed disappointment that his itinerary does not include a solidarity visit to the poor and most alienated people in Korean society.

In a statement on March 17 by the Catholic Coalition for Justice and Catholic Action for Justice, Peace and Democracy, a nationwide representative lay people's groups, they expressed concern about

use of the pope's visit for the benefit of the governing party to garner political capital, particularly emphasizing that "the visit of Pope Francis should not lead to the results of the presidential election being covered up and ignored in an effort on the government's part to confer legitimacy."

Mr. Kim Geun-Su, lay theologian and co-representative of Catholic Action for Justice, Peace and Democracy suggested that "at least, he should visit one of the places associated with social struggle that have deeply troubled Korean society in recent times namely Gangjeong village, Miryang, and Ssangyong." For the past number of months since the prospect of the Pope's visit to Korea became public, Gangjeong villagers, activists and overseas

supporters have participated in a letter writing campaign inviting Pope Francis to the village of Gangjeong, Jeju, the scene of the building of the naval base. His visit to Gangjeong would indeed be a ringing endorsement of the local church and Bishop Peter Kang U-Il's strong opposition to the construction of the naval base and the consequent destruction of the coastline and its marine ecology.

It is hoped that Pope Francis' visit will indeed be a source of healing for all people who have suffered deeply as a result of state projects enforced against the will of local communities who continue to struggle through non-violent means. Let us hope that Pope Francis' visit will initiate moves towards peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula.



Image : Timothy Hari/Alison Angotti
Regis Tremblay's documentary "The Ghosts of Jeju" won the Exposé Award at the Chicago Peace On Earth Film Festival, which ran from March 6-9, 2014.

The Quest for Harmony Continues

By Benjamin Monnet,
written to mark the 2
year anniversary of his
deportation from Korea

Gureombi rock calling loud while disappearing in massive explosions.

Kayaking to prevent the murder, while warmly encouraged by Gangjeong villagers.

Sitting on a Earth Mother fucking crane surrounded by a legion of submitted governmental peons.

Acknowledging people following our way through the barbed wire breach.

Watching Beom Island at the horizon while sharing with Seri.

Listening the soft wind which brought me here at the offspring of Halla Mountain...

Silent agents with leather gloves and jackets.

Isolated cell room, communication forbidden.

The brutality of rushy transfers in high speed vehicles.

Meditating one afternoon in the dark underground of an international airport.

Airway company stewardess arguing with petulant agents, and refusing to let them throw me in the deportation plane.

Resolved to beg for food and lodge wearing prison clothes on arrival in Paris.

Those are some memories of the last moments spent to keep Jeju island free from the war beast.

As long as Korea is enslaved under division, they might be afraid to allow me to step in this territory, which is under the yoke of USA army.

Anyway, I will always remember how to create a movement of resistance empowering warriors of light.

Our team is still alive, and our spirit is even stronger.

Even though tired, many Gangjeong heavily oppressed villagers are brave and determined.

Through the heart beat of Gangjeong resistance, may you feel free to measure how strong humans are ready to save themselves from evil forces.

Such as this blossoming garden, where seeds were kindly planted and watered, Gangjeong is a source of inspiration for whoever wants to be part of our humane family.

The family where elementary harmony prevails between

minerals, plants, animals and humans.

As the frontline of USA military pivot to Asia-Pacific, Jeju island suffers to prevent an unprecedented World war. Let's keep our light shining even in the darkest of days.



Image : Kang Eun-Joo

Fr. Mun sits in front of the construction site gate on March 11, the 3rd anniversary of the Fukushima disaster with a sign in solidarity with Fukushima and the Milyang anti-nuclear struggle.

Rampant Illegal Destruction Ongoing in the Gangjeong Sea

By Park "Moetbburi" Inchun

Originally I came from a very remote mountain area in Gangwon Province. When I learned about the struggle of Gangjeong, I merely planned to visit and witness it. However, I am still here after 2 years.

Moetbburi is the slightly higher rock area on the eastern edge of the naval base construction site. I have been monitoring there for 13 months. When I first began to live on Moetbburi, several caissons were laid right off the eastern seawall. Inside of the port area, 7 caissons were laid, which were destroyed by the huge Typhoon Bolaven in 2012.

Actually, that's why i started to live on Moetbburi, to monitor and record the navy crushing the broken caissons little by little at night and illegally dumping them into the sea. As time went on, I continued to have a closer look at what's happening in the construction site.

A caisson weighs over 8,900 tons. The lower part of it should be filled with strong and uniform size of stones. But here it is being half-filled with dirt and half-filled with different kinds of stones in random size and weight. Eventually, this will cause these newly built caissons to sink or for it to be partially washed away by waves. This will also cause the caissons to bump and push against one another, damaging each other.

It is clear from the gross variations in width and height of the caissons as well as the fact that they are all submerged at high tide that Samsung and Daelim have not done a proper survey before beginning construction. Building the naval base here has been fraudulent from the beginning. I hope that one day I see the people who forcibly stole this land pay for their actions. For this reason I continue on as a witness here.

International Solidarity



Image : Dopehead Zo

Members of Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space hold banners in support of Gangjeong and urging the Pope to visit Gangjeong during thier annual meeting. The Global Network has been one of Gangjeong's longest and most active international solidarity groups, including holding thier annual meeting in Gangjeong and at the Jeju April 3rd Peace Park in 2012.

Protestants, Buddhists Visit Gangjeong, Restart Service

By Kang Dong-Seok



Image : Yoo In-Sik

Pastor Lim Wang-Sung leads the prayer service in front of the main construction gate.

On March 3rd a Protestant prayer service was held in front of the naval base construction site. The theme of the service was "Pray for the Island of Peace, Jeju, and a world of peace and life without war bases!"

The meeting was hosted by the Protestant Church Committee Against the Jeju Naval Base and led by Pastor Lim Wang-Sung. The service order included an Ash Wednesday ceremony, meditation, a communal prayer, a testimony, scripture reading, and hymn singing.

About 20 people from Gangjeong, Jeju, and the rest of Korea attended the service. Pastor Seo Seong-Hwan of Saranghaneun Church spoke on the theme of "a holy seed" citing Isaiah 6:13, "And though a tenth remain in the land, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled. The holy seed is its stump." He also spoke about why Christians should

continue the struggle against the Jeju naval base project in nonviolent ways through proclaiming the justice, peace, and life of God. He stated that the people of Gangjeong have been pleasing to God and following God's way through their struggle.

It was declared at the service that the regular monthly Protestant prayer service which was discontinued in December of 2012 would resume again in the this season of Lent. They set the date for the last Thursday of each month. Pastor Lim also emphasized that they would try to put more effort again in to bringing Christians to Gangjeong for the peace of Jeju.

11 days later, around 30 graduate students from the Central Monk Buddhist College visited Gangjeong to hear about the struggle from Vice mayor Go Gwon-II. They also joined the Catholic Mass and toured the village and construction area.



Image : Song Dong-Hyo

March 7 was the premiere of "You" in Jeju City, a one woman play written and directed by Gangjeong activist and playwright Pang Eun-Mi. The play is about both Jeju and Gangjeong and the main character is based on Gangjeong villager Kim Mi-Ryang.

Letter to Pope Francis

Excerpted from
a letter to Pope Francis by
Father Bill "Bix" Bichsel, S.J.,
Tacoma Catholic Worker

Dear Pope Francis,

I wish to request your presence on Jeju Island when you visit Korea. Your faithful walk of peace among the poor is deeply needed in the Gangjeong village of Jeju where the villagers have been resisting the construction of a navy base for 7 years. Much of the resistance is being done by Catholic nuns and priests on a daily basis. The Eucharist is celebrated every day on the side of the road opposite one of the construction gates. Bishop Kang of the Jeju Diocese is the inspiration and biggest supporter of the resistance. Three Jesuits have been assigned full time to support the villagers and the resistance. Four Jesuits have been imprisoned for their resistance. Never have I been more proud of the Jesuit Order than in Korea.

A Buddhist monk from my area and I were there from September 24 to October 10. We lived and worked with the Jesuits and villagers. Never have I experienced more deeply a faith community together in resistance with the Eucharist at the center of it. Our resistance

was mostly blocking the gates where the cement and building material trucks would enter. The navy base is being built by the U.S./ROK collaboration with Samsung as contractor. The coral forest outside of the village has been destroyed as well as rock formations sacred to the islanders. The island was designated an international island of Peace in 2003.

This will be one of the largest naval bases in the Pacific and will be capable of being a port for missile defense destroyers, aircraft carriers, and Trident submarines. Vessels will be nuclear weapon equipped. The people experience the navy base as a sign of endless war.

Your visit there could do much to nourish a culture of peace in our world. I found a deep well of spirituality that seems to come from their faithfulness to the resistance. Even though they feel significantly smaller than the gigantic military force, they continue. I do believe it is a spirituality that can begin to turn back militarism in the Pacific.

Trial Updates



On March 20, the imprisoned Prof. Yang Yoon-Mo had another trial. The trial was an appeal by the prosecutors of a sentence of 10 months' imprisonment suspended with two-years' probation given in August of 2013. This is a different trial than the one which has held him in prison for more than 400 days, but which he is expected to be released from at midnight on April 11th. Visited on March 22, Yang looked bright and healthy and talked of a dream of a children's center in the village for young peace making couples who have a chosen a life of exile from normal society and want to contribute to the building of the Gangjeong as the life and peace village.

On March 20 and 21, Sister Soh Stella began a second trial in Seoul in addition to her ongoing one. Her new trial was added to the current one and she will be tried for both together. Meanwhile, Rev. Choi Hun-Kook also began a trial in Seoul where he lives. Lawyer Paik Shin-Ok, the attorney for Sister Soh argued during the trial that the naval base construction project process is not legal and therefore its "business" does not deserve special protection.

Female villager, Kim Mi-Ryang was found guilty of obstruction of business and given a a fine of 6 million KRW (Approx. 6,000 USD). Former mayor Kang Dong-Kyun began a trial for his chained sit-in protest on May 10, 2013 when the Island and City government demolished the villagers' sit-in tents illegally and violently. On March 14, villager Choi Jong-Dae and several peace activists were forced to begin attending "social service education" as per court sentencing.

On March 27, the Jeju court dismissed the prosecutors appeal against islander Jang Sung-Shim who had been charged with obstruction of business and sentenced to six months' imprisonment suspended and two years' probation.

Finally, construction company Woochang, a sub-contractor of Samsung and Daelim has filed a civil lawsuit against five peace keepers and a villager, demanding the six people pay compensation for construction damage totaling around 100 million KRW (approx. 100,000 USD). This is the same company that previously filed a lawsuit against 14 villagers for a total of 289 million 780 thousand KRW (Approx. 289,789 USD). On Nov. 28, 2013, the first court judge ruled that five of 14 should pay the company a total of 26.1 million KRW (approx. 26,000 USD). That case is still pending with the villagers' appeal.



Image : Cine-Dance Project

In March, the Cine-Dance Project visited Jeju and Gangjeong. The project is a traveling dancing project which is being filmed and then released as a film. Many of the participants at each location are generally local and the dances are both coordinated and freestyle. The focus of the project is healing through dancing, especially in places of massacre and violence, like Gwangju and Jeju.

Guesthouse Owner Arrested, Hospitalized

By Bok-Hee

On March 7 at around 9:30 pm, a Gangjeong villager went to the naval base construction gate to complain about the constant noisy construction during the night. The man was the owner of "Pada Wa Seom" Guesthouse which is directly next to the construction site. According to him, he has lost guests continually due to the incredible noise all night long. He has filed civil complaints on numerous occasion to Seogwipo City Hall with no results. In despair, he even recently filed a complaint to the Blue House, the Korean presidential residence.

Finally, fed up and with nowhere to turn, he decided to take direct action. He went to the gate himself and began to block the cement trucks entering and exiting the base. According to witnesses at the scene, despite the dangerous situation, rather than helping, the police merely recorded his actions to collect proof of "Obstruction of Business" and threatened him with arrest. Go Gwon-II, Gangjeong village Vice-Mayor and chairman of the villagers anti-base committee was present and called Seogwipo City Hall and demanded substantial real administrative action be taken about the constant night time construction sounds. However, nothing happened and after three days, a sound measurement person from City Hall arrived only to make a perfunctory noise test. No further action has been taken and nothing as changed.

Unfortunately, the guesthouse owner was arrested that evening. Worse, while under arrest he had a stress-induced stroke and collapsed due to cerebral infarction while in police custody and has been moved to the hospital where he still is. The mental distress of Gangjeong villagers continues unabated and many people are reaching their limits, especially due to the constant hammering and pounding of construction 24 hours-a-day.

**Gangjeong
Prisoners
of
Conscience**

No.

301

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

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

ROK Military Re-organizes with New Defense Plan

On March 6, the ROK Ministry of Defense announced “New Defense Plan (2014-2030)” of which the strategic focus will shift from “suppressing North Korean provocations” to “detering an all-out war.” It will also “prepare for maritime disputes with neighboring nations.” Efforts will also go towards developing the Kill Chain pre-emptive strike system and the Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD) system.

The media have reported that the military plans to re-organize naval task forces by around 2023 with the idea of deployment of three more 7,400-ton Aegis destroyers from 2023 to 2027. Meanwhile, the ROK air force will install a satellite surveillance and control unit and plan to install five multipurpose satellites for survey and reconnaissance of all of North Korea by 2022.

The navy will also form a submarine command post with 3,000 ton class submarines. Meanwhile, next year it is planned to create a new marine brigade for “integrated defense operation” to replace the small sized “Jeju Defense Command” following the completion of the Jeju naval base project.

On March 4th, Jeju Sori reported that residents of Hwasoon, Jeju have been resisting the new Hwasoon Coast Guard Dock project which would dock a 5,000 ton class coast guard vessel. The dock is planned to be completed by October of 2017. It is thought to be an open secret that the navy will likely eventually use the dock as its main base facility in Jeju because the poorly designed base layout of the illegal Gangjeong base will make it difficult for ships to enter and exit.



Images : Lee Woo-Ki/ Cho Sung-Bong

(Top) On March 8, Gangjeong activist couple Emily Wang and Kim Dong-Won got married in Yangpyeong, near Seoul. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Song Kang-Ho and his wife Cho Jung-Rae and the wedding was prepared and run by fellow The Frontiers community members. (Bottom) Then on March 15, they had a feast and party to celebrate in Gangjeong at the village Ceremonial Hall. Emily was denied entry to Korea in April of 2013 after living in Gangjeong since 2011, but was able to return from Taiwan to Korea at the end of 2013.

How You Can Help

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

For More Information

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

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

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

- Created and designed by the Gangjeong International Team, special thanks to Everyday Practice.
- Published by the Gangjeong Village Association, 4417 Gangjeong-dong, the Life and Peace village, Seogwipo-si, Jeju, the Peace Island.
- Special thanks to Gangjeong Friends for financial support.

ROK Gov's Mythical Development Plan

By Go Gwon-Il
 Vice Mayor of Gangjeong
 & Anti-Base Committee
 Chairman



Image : ROK Government/Gangjeong Village Story

An English translation of the ROK government's layout for thier "Regional Development Plan".

As if the land-theft and environmental destruction of Gangjeong for the naval base itself weren't enough, the government has revealed its' so-called regional development plan for Gangjeong in connection with the base, and it is an issue that will blow up soon. On the surface it is suggested as a project to increase the income of local residents through alternative enterprises and agricultural support. But upon closer examination, what the plan entails makes little sense.

First of all, looking at the details for the “Direct Farmhouse Support Project”, the criteria for receiving support is likely too financially burdensome with those that want the support having to pay nearly 50% of the costs. This will probably exclude any low-income farms (the people who actually need support) from being candidates for support.

A more serious problem is that only the costs of the “Cruise Terminal Project” are fully supported by the national government and all the rest of the projects must actually be covered by the local government. Thus if this regional development plan were to really be pushed forward, the debt of the Jeju government will increase by 500 billion KRW (Approx. 500 million USD). According to the plan, the local government's financial burden will be 171 billion KRW (Approx. 171 million USD), but under the “Private Capital Inducement Project” there is a cost in the category “other” of 327 billion 400 million KRW (Approx. 327 million 400 thousand USD). Although this cost is supposed to be covered by private companies, in actuality, such large sums of money will be borrowed and the only place which can guarantee such a large amount of money is the local government, making it highly probable that most of this burden will fall to the local government and rather than revitalization, Jeju will fall into greater debt.

Furthermore, most of the projects are environmentally damaging, industrialized fishing and farming, re-dubbed with fancy names like the “Plant Factory” or the “Farming Complex”. This “Farming Complex” just means a fishery in a building. “Marine Ranching” are just coastal floating fish cages. The “Plant Factory” will focus on the maximization productivity without thought to whether it is creating good food for the future. And most of the projects will further expropriate farmland and other environmentally precious areas. Another plan is to create a 150,000 square meter park near the Gangjeong-mul area. This will swallow vast farmland just for an unneeded park.

Worse, there is a plan to further destroy the landscape of the sea coast with a new wind farm power complex and power plant. This environmentally disastrous green washing project alone will cost 150 billion KRW (Approx. 150 million USD). It will

also bring 200 meter tall wind turbines and be built directly on top of a precious volcanic rock coastal eco-system.

It seems the aim is to turn Gangjeong, a once beautiful, “Excellent Eco-Village” and “Absolute Conservation Area” into an industrialized pile of concrete and branded “tourism”. In the end, regardless of how good an enterprise any of this could be it is worthless, because it is entirely without the input and participation of the local people. Is this really a regional development plan or a forcibly-built, debt-making, military resort?”

