

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

August/September 2018

Monthly news on the struggle against the Jeju Naval Base project

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Image by Pang Eun-mi
Article by Joyakgol

US Nuclear Aircraft Carrier, Japanese Imperial Rising Sun Flag in Jeju naval base??

The International Fleet Review will be held at the Jeju naval base on Oct. 10-14, the navy announced at a press conference. A key admiral thanked residents of Jeju and Gangjeong village for “helping make the fleet review possible.” The navy even went so far as to say that the Navy Chief of Staff’s proposed apology for state violence to Gangjeong villagers during the military event will become a good opportunity to bury the Gangjeong conflict. Is it really? According to the navy’s explanation, this year’s fleet review will be the ‘biggest ever’ with more than 50 warships including 21 foreign vessels, and delegates from 45 countries. Previously, some 40 plus warships participated. The navy also uses the phrase ‘Jeju, where peace starts’ in the official website, which makes the general public think the maritime

parade is a big peaceful event on Jeju. What a scam! The Korean navy confirmed that 4 US navy warships including the nuclear aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan will come to Jeju for the fleet review. Finally, a US aircraft carrier is making its way to Jeju naval base after slowly increasing the visits of US warships, small vessels, destroyers, a nuclear submarine, over the years! This reveals what the true American military interest is in Northeast Asia: to check China’s expansion by sending the nuclear-powered supercarrier, a flagship of the US strike group. Is this giant war machine coming to our region for peace? The controversy over the fleet review continues to grow. The Korean navy admitted that it has no say regarding a Japanese navy ship coming to Jeju displaying the imperialist symbol of the Rising Sun flag because it

has to do with sovereignty. The flag represents Japan’s wartime atrocities, tantamount to the Nazi’s swastika. Many Korean people are angry and urged the Blue House to stop that. 37 petitions were registered so far on the Presidential website with tens of thousands of signatures. This year’s 3rd historical inter-Korean summit was held in Pyongyang and the two leaders read a joint peace declaration, but the phrase that caught my attention was, ‘From Mt. Halla to Mt. Paekdu, let’s make the Korean peninsula a nuclear free zone.’ We don’t want to see nuclear warships or imperial symbols on the island of world peace. Stop the fleet review!

Bringing 100 year conflict to the villagers

Article by Choi Sung-hee

On Sept. 27 at the Anti-Base Villagers’ Association’s press conference to oppose the International Fleet Review in Jeju this October, the voice of Cho Kyung-chul, a former Gangjeong village mayor, trembled in fury against President Moon Jae-in who had interfered in the villagers’ decision on the fleet review. He said that such intervention has brought not 10 but 100 year conflict to the villagers who have suffered enough during the anti-base struggle for last 11 years. Another former mayor, Kang Dong-kyun, told media reporters in a same vein, “the Moon Jae-in government says it would make the Jeju Sea a sea of peace through the international fleet review. How you can make a sea of peace when you bring conflicts and tear apart the locals?” Moon has conditioned the villagers’ agreement on the fleet review for his apology regarding the state enforcement of the Jeju navy base project in Gangjeong. The historic Pyongyang declaration, Sept. 18 to 20, signed by Moon and Kim Jong-un, leader of North Korea reads: ‘cessation of military hostility in regions of confrontation such as the DMZ.’ How will you explain the militarization of Jeju such as the fleet review while the Korean DMZ is to be made into a peace zone? And do you think it is OK that a navigation route possibly for a US nuclear aircraft carrier is being dredged at the risk of killing of soft corals and the UNESCO biosphere reserve?

While a peace era has started in the Korean peninsula, 100 year conflicts may have started in the World Peace Island, Jeju. How is the peace of Northeast Asia possible without the demilitarization of islands there?



On Sept. 26, more than 10 citizens carried out picketing in the Jeju airport. The sign denounces the international fleet review which has brought conflict which is breaking apart the village community. Photo by Choi Sung-hee.

By Jo Ahae

Symposium on the US bases in East Asia

The 11th International Symposium on the settlement of matters of US bases in East Asia hosted by the Base Peace Network opened in the Peace Center, Seoul on Sept. 7. Many peace activists from Korea and Japan shared their field situations and agendas with one another in Seoul. They also talked about the direction of the peace movement in relation to the recent conditions of peace in Korea. Activists from Okinawa, Kanagawa, Yokosuka, Sasebo, Soseong-ri, Pyeongtaek, Gunsan, Yongsan, and Gangjeong presented and shared their situations and tasks. We also had the chance to hear about how the South Korea-North Korea-United States talks progressed so far from Professor Kim Jun-hyung, Handong University. In our joint statement, we expressed our will that nobody should be excluded in the peace we make: "Peace not our own but for all. We will not stop our resistance until your peace becomes the peace for all of us."

By Hideko Otake

Okinawa Carries On Onaga's Legacy

The unexpected death of Governor Onaga challenged the road map that the Abe administration arrogantly planned for the construction of a new U.S. military base in Henoko. Tokyo had announced that full-fledged land reclamation work would begin on August 17th, and the south side of Henoko seawall construction was completed by the end of July. As the date approached in early August, tensions rose among the sit-in protesters at Camp Schwab.

Then Governor Onaga's passing away on August 8th provoked a breakthrough. While he was seriously ill, Onaga held a press conference to announce that he would be starting procedures to retract approval to conduct landfill work, which had been issued by his predecessor. Onaga's courage and pride as an Okinawan touched the people's hearts. At a mass gathering on August 11th, originally planned as a protest rally against the landfill, 70,000 people gathered to mourn him. They vowed to fulfill his last wish to fight against the unjust burden placed by the Japanese government on Okinawa by locating so many U.S. military facilities there. Despite threats by Tokyo, the Okinawa government finally withdrew the permission on August 31. Afraid of offending the voters, the Abe administration decided to stop the construction work in Henoko until after the gubernatorial election on September 30.

All Okinawa, a broad coalition of political parties, labor unions and businesses opposed to relocating the Futenma air station within the prefecture, swept Onaga to power in the 2014 election. They designated Denny Tamaki as Onaga's successor. Born to an Okinawan mother and a U.S. Marine father, Tamaki became the first Amerasian member of the Japanese House of Representatives in 2009. An ex-DJ who can play guitar like Jimi Hendricks, Tamaki has now become a big threat to the LDP and Komeito parties. They try to do their best to stop this new political star who could bring hope to the voters. Go, Denny!

Editor's note: To our delight, Denny Tamaki was elected as the Okinawa governor on Sept. 30!



977 Dae Jo Young, a stealth destroyer and 922 Yulgok Yiwi, an Aegis destroyer returned to Jeju naval base from RIMPAC exercise on Aug 20. A welcome home ceremony was held to cheer the sailors who just came from the world's largest international maritime warfare exercise/ Photo by Park In-cheon

By Emily

Interconnections between Korea and Yemen

While Jeju is heading to further militarization, around 500 Yemeni friends ended up journeying to Jeju due to the war in Yemen. Ironically, few people notice how the Korean arms trade is responsible for the killing in Yemen. In 2009, the Lee Myung-bak administration made a secret military pact promising military support to the UAE, including dispatching in 2011 a 130-strong Special Forces unit, named Ahk, to train local troops in "anti-terrorism" and conduct joint drills, in return for winning a contract for four nuclear reactors. The military relationship with the UAE begins from exporting Barakah power plant, the 1st nuclear power plant to the Arab world, but it doesn't end there. According to the Ministry of National Defense, Korea's arms exports to the UAE were worth 39.3 billion won from 2006 to 2010, and skyrocketed to 1.2 trillion won over the five years. The relationship between the two countries was elevated to a comprehensive strategic partnership this year.

Since 2015 the UAE has participated with the Saudi coalition in the Yemen War. We can actually say Korea is an active player in the war business in the Middle East. Considering the militarization in Jeju and the whole Korea, it is even more disappointing to me that the peace talk between North and South seems more like misusing ethnic emotion than caring about peace. Though overwhelmed by anger at ignored truth, interaction with Yemeni friends keep me healthier. Some Gangjeong peace activists initiated "School of Hope" inviting friends from Jeju and Yemen to co-create a safe and equal space to meet and learn from each other. We also have a "Power of Visitation" program to visit Yemeni's homes and working places and to invite Yemeni friends to visit some Korean groups for face to face sharing, and "A Cup of Tea Together?" where Jeju and Yemeni women (and kids) gather together to share with each other. We do all these things because we are all humans. This is how Korean society can humanize Yemeni friends and it is actually how Korean society can be ready to overcome war.

International Solidarity



By Curry

2018 Asia Peace Education Workshop

The third annual Asia Peace Education Workshop met in the Gangjeong Peace Center Sept. 14-16. The workshop focused on the role of peace education and peace activism to build peace between South and North Korea, to overcome hostility, hate, and militarism, and to build solidarity. This year the Korea-Vietnam Peace Foundation joined the organizing committee and several presentations addressed Korea's role in the Vietnam War and citizen's movements to call for apology. Other presentations addressed Okinawa's historical roles as both victim and offender, Yemeni refugees in Jeju and identity in Korea, how to remember war history, and the current situation of peace education in Korea. Participants also toured Seodal Oreum, Aldreu Airfield and Gangjeong, and wrote a proposal calling for peace educators and activists to cultivate peace sensitivity in order to go beyond political declarations in the inter-Korean peace process, to foster respect for diversity and self-determination that counters the culture of competition and militarism, to encourage gradual change in educational philosophy, and to make spaces in society for citizenship education, including space to debate about threats to peace such as the Fleet Review.



During the Asia Peace Education Workshop, the peace center was full of energy, packed with over 50 people with diverse experience in researching, teaching, raising awareness, organizing and participating in direct actions for peace. Photo by JooWon Kim.

Inter-Island Solidarity for Peace of the Sea Camp & Jeju Grand March for Life and Peace, 2018

By Curry

This year Peace for the Sea Camp was held in Gangjeong from July 25-29, just before the start of the annual Grand March (July 30-Aug. 4), so it was a busy season for us. The connections made through these annual events help us to remember the bigger picture of our common histories and the slow work of education and personal growth that is a necessary part of social change.

The 2018 Inter-Island Solidarity Peace for the Sea Camp's theme was "We are Gureombi," recognizing the importance of the rock which formed Gangjeong's coastline as an important collective symbol and source of resilience. Participants joined from Korea (including Soseong-ri), Japan (including Okinawa and Ishigaki), Taiwan, Hong Kong, Hawaii, the United States, Canada, and Ireland. We learned about Jeju's history of Japanese Imperialism and the 4.3 Uprising and Massacre and about the current struggle against the planned Jeju 2nd Airport in Seongsan. Some participants learned and performed choreographed dances, while others participated in a kayak protest. Participants reported on the recent challenges facing their islands and discussed how to build Inter-Island Solidarity in the future. We made a statement demanding an end to militarism, military exercises, base construction and overdevelopment, recognizing our dependence on nature.

Several members of the Peace for the Sea Camp also joined the Jeju Grand March for Life and Peace. For three days we marched from Gangjeong to Seongsan, then had a three day Peace Camp in Seongsan. Through the camp activities, people enjoyed getting to know more of the other participants and the diverse social issues that they represented. We could also focus on learning about the villages where the government intends to build a second Jeju airport, causing much environmental damage. The march and peace camp culminated in a concert with diverse performances such as interpretive introductions by the international team, drumming by Seongsan women, singing by Soseong-ri grandmothers, dancing by Korean students, and the crowds danced along to the music of professional rock bands.

Sara

I am from Ishigaki Island (part of Okinawa and located in southern Japan). From the end of July to the middle of August, for about 2 weeks, I went to Korea. It was my first time in Korea and the first destination was Jeju. When I arrived in Gangjeong-village, first I felt the view was quite similar to Ishigaki. The style of buildings, the plants... and also we do have similar backgrounds from the war history.

The naval base has already been constructed in Jeju and the same situation is now happening to Ishigaki. The local government is planning to build a missile base in my beautiful hometown. So I thought I could learn something from people who are anti-militarism, like how to reject the military things from islands.

In Gangjeong Village I saw the Samgeori restaurant, peace center, St. Francis Center. I was very impressed that they have so many places to meet each other and talk together. Also 100 bows was new to me. After I finished doing 100 bows, I had the same feeling as when I do Yoga and meditation; I felt very refreshed.

During that 2 weeks, I participated in Peace for the Sea Camp and the Grand March for the full schedule. It was my first time to join these sort of peace activities, even in Okinawa I have never done it before, so this was new for me.

Leo

Peace for the Sea Camp has been held five times on four islands: 2014 in Jeju, 2015 in Okinawa, 2016 in Taiwan, 2017 in Ishigaki and 2018 in Jeju, and I have joined three times. Many people come from different islands, different places, and different cultures, and we try to learn different history, think and act together. We believe that trying to understand difference, to communicate with those who are different, to accept difference, that is the way to have peace in our life.

This year, I came to Jeju Island, Gangjeong village again. There are many old friends still working for peace, and there are also new friends who joined peace camp. We went around the village together, listened to the voices from river, land and sea. Even if the navy base is finished already, it's not the end of peace work. We can see the Vietnam War, Jeju 4.3 Incident, military bases in Okinawa, Jeju and Hawaii, colonialism, WWII sites, Nationalism, Capitalism etc.; they still control people in the world, still destroy the environment and life.

So, even if the situation is very hard, even if the nation-state's power is still strong, even if we're often full of sadness and helplessness, still we don't give up. I saw many people try to make their way to fight for peace : peace camp, peace march, photography, sailing, keep local memories, singing, dancing, concern for refugee issues... So, where is the Peace? I think Peace is just in our daily life, and it's waiting for people to build.

Geon Woong

Last year when I was 14, I came to know about the Gangjeong naval base in Jeju news, so I joined the Jeju Grand March and met Curry, Suki, Uno, and other international members. This year I joined the march alone, but I met the international team and others.

2018 Grand March was interesting because it included the Seongsan camp. We learned that if the second airport is in Seongsan, many oreum (volcanic cones) would be cut, then citizens can't live [so well]. That's why there should not be a second airport.

During the march, many people gave me advice about many problems in the world, so I thought, "When many people try to change the world, we can change!!" I have interest in many problems in the world and I try to help.

We came to my hometown Pyoseon. At that time I felt nervous. My friends don't like the Gangjeong naval base or the 2nd airport, but I thought if they saw me, they'd look at me strange. But a friend from Hawaii told me 'Why are you nervous? I think they're proud of you! You are doing good now! Don't be nervous!' So now I'm not nervous, I am proud of myself! My grandma wanted to see me and the international team, so we went to my grandma's house and took pictures with her. My grandma told me 'I am proud of you!' so I got much confidence.

No more tragedies like Gangjeong naval base should ever happen. To do this, we all need to work together to find peace.

Hye-young Lee

"What are you all doing here?" A middle-aged man nervously shouted at a group of people who were doing a "human chain" in front of the naval base. At that moment, I was doing the peace dance with the participants of the Peace Camp. The conflict did not last long, but I was confused, and nervous. Terra, who was leading the dance, said: "Let's not be shaken by this, let's concentrate." We were able to dance to the end. However, the question the man asked stuck with me. Why I am dancing here in front of the naval base with a group of strangers who I met 3 days ago?

The pain that Gangjeong village has is deeply connected to the pain of other islanders. Opposing the militarization of our islands should not come from a local nationalistic point of view, but the people from around the world must work together.

I found out later the angry man was there to visit his son who was serving at the naval base. After I learned that, I could understand his feeling to an extent. Sometimes, our non-violent act of achieving peace can be understood as offensive to some. To narrow the gap of mis-understanding, we must continue to dance, sing, and carry out our solidarity. The question I had at the camp was, "how I would carry out peace actions in my daily life?" I did not get a clear answer. However, I met friends who will say, "Let's not be shaken by this, let's concentrate."

2018 Jeju Grand March for Life and Peace



(Left) Peace march participants passing through Goh-sung village
Photo by Ha-hyung Kwon

(Right) Gangjeong Choir singing at The Grand March Eve Concert
Photo by Yang Sang



Grand March participants cheering up on the road
Photo by Eom Moon-hee



Team scooters of the Grand March!
Photo by Lee Hyun Joo



A Soseong-ri villager dancing with other March participants during the last night's festivity /Photo by Lee Wooki



Soseong-ri villagers visiting the Grand March Finale and singing for the audience
Photo by Lee Wooki



Grand March participants miming trees during the indoor workshop in Seongsan
Photo by Lee Wooki



International participants making a collective drawing during the indoor workshop in Seongsan
Photo by Lee Wooki

2018 Inter-Island Solidarity for Peace of the Sea



Opening of 2018 Inter-Island Solidarity for Peace of the Sea
Photo by Grace



Team Inter-Island Solidarity for Peace for the Sea holding a "We're Gureombi" banner at the opening of the Jeju Grand March / Photo by Yeolmae

(Below) Camp participants holding white papers to show their solidarity with Seongsan villagers and support for cancelation of the second airport / Photo by Awil



Dongseok, Emily and Joyakgol translating the guided tour of Myeolchi into Japanese, Chinese and English
Photo by Awil



(Above) Japanese participants singing Okinawan protest songs together at the talent show on the last night of the camp / Photo by Awil

(Left) Camp participants at Aldreu Airfield in Daejeong on July 27, Korea's armistice day / Photo by Pua'ena



Camp participants doing the morning one hundred bows at the front gate of Jeju naval base
Photo by Pua'ena



Camp participants presenting their group work during the indoor evening workshop
Photo by Awil

Arms sales and President Moon's Peace through Strength

By Choi Sung-hee

On April 27, the leaders of the two Koreas agreed upon 'non-aggression' and 'disarmament in a phased manner' and on Sept. 19, the two again confirmed the 'cessation of military hostility' in their Pyongyang declaration, adopting an annexed agreement which described more details on arms control. However, President Moon has rather emphasized 'peace through strength,' in his domestic security strategy, discussing the need to respond to 'unspecified and diverse threats' despite progress in the inter-Korean relationship.

Here are some cases which reflect this strategy.

Announced on July 27, Defense Reform 2.0 focused on the expansion of military power.

On August 17th, the media confirmed that the ROK (South Korea) navy was discussing to load US stealth fighter F-35Bs on its landing ship, and even considering to build a huge ship for the safer landing

of F-35Bs. Two days before, President Moon had emphasized a stronger 'ROK-US alliance.'

On August 28, it was reported that the defense budget included the largest increase in 10 years. Part of the budget plan is the so called "three-axis" defense system which involves the ROK-US combined preemptive strike and the Korean Air and Missile Defense system.

On Sept. 9, it was reported that the United States Forces of Korea (USFK) has been deploying Patriot 3 MSE missiles in military bases along the west coast of the Korean peninsula since 2016. Days later, it was also reported that the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, US Department of Defense, approved the sale of six P-8A Poseidon and sixty-four Patriot 3 MSE missiles to South Korea.

On Sept. 14, President Moon talked again about

'peace through strength' in the launching ceremony of South Korea's first 3000 ton submarine which can be equipped with submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM).

In his interview with Fox news on Sept. 25, he said, "Even though [a Korean] peace agreement is made, the matter of USFK is wholly decided by ROK-US alliance."

In April 2017, Vincent Brooks, Commander of USFK, mentioned that the next goal of THAAD deployment in South Korea is to get South Korea buy more US arms such as F-35 and enhanced PAC-3. He said it gives direct 'benefit' to the US economy.

What is this alliance for? You may remember 'Peace through strength' is also a motto of the US aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan which comes to Jeju for the fleet review this October.

By Baek Gayoon, Jeju Dark Tours

Following the shadow of Seodal Oreum

On 17 August 2018 (lunar calendar 7 July), a group of people gathered in front of the fishery warehouse in Hallim at 2 am. 68 years ago on this day, people who had been detained in the Hallim fishery warehouse, Mooreung police station and sweet potato storage in Daejeong were taken to Seodal Oreum and killed under the name of 'preventive detention'. At the exact same time on that day people gathered together in the rain to follow in the footsteps of the victims.

Right after the Korean War broke out in 1950, preventive detention swept across Korea and Jeju was no exception. People who were identified as targets of preventive detention were dragged away by soldiers and killed. Around 374 villagers from Hallim, Hangyeong, Daejeong, and Andeok were identified as targets of preventive detention and among them 150 people were detained in a storage facility in Daejeong and 63 people were detained in Hallim and Mooreung. On 7 July 1950 (lunar calendar), victims were loaded into trucks and they dropped their shoes behind so their families could follow the shoes and find their dead bodies. They were all killed at Seodal Oreum.

We followed the path of the bereaved families 68 years ago, the path where black rubber shoes were left. Once we arrived at Seodal Oreum around 5 am, we had a small ritual to remember those who passed away there. We were able to feel the pain and sorrow of the bereaved families at least a bit.



"Interconnections between Korea and Yemen" (P.2)/ Painting by Emily Wang

By Joyakgol

Seongju is still at war with THAAD missile deployment

Seongju is still at war with THAAD missile deployment, a senior villager of Soseong-ri said holding a chrysanthemum flower in her hand. On TV, South Korean President Moon and North Korean leader Kim were signing a peace treaty to declare there will be no more war on the Korean peninsula, but at the same time in the village, hundreds of people were holding an event to commemorate Jo Youngsam who set himself on fire one year ago to protest the deployment of THAAD. 'Nameless' peace advocate Jo Youngsam sacrificed himself in Seoul on Sep 19, 2017 urging the Moon Jae-in administration to stop THAAD and to engage in peace talks with North Korea. His final words were 'go away THAAD, come peace.'

The one year anniversary commemoration service was joined by Soseong-ri villagers and many citizens who still remember him. Among them was Jo's son. He said "the North-South Korea summit was one of my father's wishes. When I heard the news, I couldn't stop but smiling. Peace should not be achieved by blood. Rather, it should become something natural."

Soseong-ri people have been fighting everyday for two years to stop the US missile system. They chant, 'peace has come, go away THAAD.'



Soseong-ri villagers visited Gangjeong. The women's committee chair said the two villages go through the same experiences so we all stick together. Photo by Joan.

Blue House directly involved with human rights violations

By Grace

Since early this year the Special Committee for the Human Rights Violation Cases Investigation of the Truth launched investigative cases for Ssangyong motors dismissed workers, the Yongsan tragedy and Farmer Baek Nam-gi's death. Their recent reports revealed that not only the police but also the presidential office (Blue House) was evidently involved with the excessive use of violence by the police during the crackdowns on the aforementioned cases during the Lee Myung Bak and Park Geun Hye regimes. What's more shocking is that a lot of conspiracy theories and rumors during those periods turned out to be true, that the Blue House was behind those incidents such as coercing the doctors for the life-prolonging treatment of Baek Nam-gi or making the final decision commanding the police's violent suppression the 77 day lock-in strike of Ssangyong motors in 2009. Civil society is making further investigations to clarify the specific people in charge and concrete background stories, which weren't achieved through the original investigation.

August 2nd concluded the bi-annual Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) war games held in (illegally occupied) Hawai'i and San Diego, USA and their surrounding waters. Military forces from 25 countries including the ROK Navy and Japan MSDF participated in the desecration of sacred 'āina (land) and kai (ocean). Protests against RIMPAC, war, militarism and the ongoing occupation of Hawai'i by the US took place throughout the duration of the war games across Hawai'i, including at the State Capitol, the front gates of Pearl Harbor and Pōhakuloa Training Area (PTA) by Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian people), peace activists and members of Malu 'Āina, Women's Voices Women Speak and Women Cross DMZ.

This past May, Lt. Col Loreto V. Borce ("JR"), who was born in Honolulu, assumed command at Pōhakuloa Training Area and stated that he wants to make PTA transparent to the community. Currently, US Army Garrison-Pōhakuloa is in a comment period for a proposed agreement with Hawaii State historic preservation representatives. This document proposes alternative procedures for military training and support actions, which would circumvent the consultation process which exists to protect historic properties from adverse impacts.

Lastly, in a historically unprecedented move, Hawai'i County Councilmember Jennifer Ruggles has announced that she will refrain from enacting legislation until she has sufficient legal assurance that she is not incurring criminal liability for War Crimes under the Hague and Geneva Conventions by illegally enacting US laws in an occupied state. Ruggles was made aware of this possibility by a memo authored by UN Independent Expert, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Dr. Alfred M. deZayas regarding the lawful political status of Hawai'i. On September 5th, several Hawaiian Kingdom subjects and American citizens testified in support of Councilmember Ruggles during a County Council session and demanded that they cease and desist from further legislation.

USA is coming back to Taiwan

By Will Yang

For a long time, the Korean peninsula was the most possible point of military conflict in East Asia. After peace talks between the two Koreas and the USA, the tension seems to be calming down, but it didn't disappear, it only shifted to the Taiwan strait.

In 2018, significant actions were taken by the US government to strengthen bilateral ties with Taiwan. And China didn't like it very much. Due to no official relation between Taiwan and the USA, government officials couldn't travel freely between the countries. But the "Taiwan travel act" passed in 2018 opens the door for high level officials of both sides to visit each other. Moreover, the "2019 National Defense Authorization Act" (NDAA) strongly recommends the US government improve Taiwan military defense abilities. More arms sales and possible military drills between both countries are included.

What makes China most uncomfortable is that the US government is trying to deploy Marines in the newly relocated AIT (American Institute in Taiwan) which seems to be the US official representative in the country. If it comes to be, it will be the first US military force stationed in Taiwan after 1979.

China always claims Taiwan is its own breakaway province and tries to oppress Taiwan's international space in every way. In this regard, Taiwanese commonly hold a negative point of view towards China's aggression. On the other hand, Taiwanese welcome most of the US government's actions that look to be in favor of Taiwan. However, these actions by the US could also bring war on the island. Between these two hegemon's conflict, Taiwan should find its own way to reach peace.



August 8-21, Northeast Asia Regional Peacebuilding Institute brought together about 70 participants for two weeks of peace-related courses and a field trip around historical sites of Jeju, including Gangjeong Village. Photo by Charlotte White

Northeast Asia Regional Peacebuilding

by Curry

For two weeks each summer since 2011, NARPI brings together students, NGO staff, teachers, professors, religious workers, researchers, etc. to study peace education and related topics in rotating locations around Northeast Asia. The classes are held in English and have topics like Conflict and Peacebuilding Framework, Peacebuilding beyond Nationalism and Militarism, Arts, Media and Peacebuilding and Optimizing Peace Making by Ending Generational Trauma. This year NARPI was held in Jeju. Most participants usually come from Korea, Japan, China, Taiwan, and Mongolia and this year three Yemeni participants joined. One shared his personal journey, and another taught an Arabic class to the other participants. Another evening session introduced the struggle against the Jeju 2nd Airport.

Between the two weeks of courses, NARPI took a field trip to Seodal Oreum, where people deemed potential communist sympathizers were massacred in 1950, Aldreu Airfield, where the Japanese refueled the planes that bombed Nanjing in 1937, and Bukchon where they learned about the massacre there in 1948. On August 15, they joined the 100 bows and human chain, toured Gangjeong, heard the personal side of living in Gangjeong and the anti-base struggle during small group meetings with Gangjeong residents, and joined a performance in the evening. The next day, NARPI learned about the community building in Dongbaek-dongsan (Camelia Hill) where the local people are working together to protect the environment, preserve their history, and build community together.



Go Bomi of the Neo-young Na-yeong (You and I) Theater Troupe acted out a Gangjeong myth about the preciousness of protecting the land in the fruit-packing warehouse on Aug. 15 when NARPI visited Gangjeong. Photo by Lee Jae Young.



Bijarim-ro road was once selected as one of the most scenic roads in the country, but construction is going on to expand the road for faster access to the second Jeju airport projected area. People held gatherings to stop the environmental destruction. Photo by Yang Sang.

Story of Bijarim

By Grace

Located in northeast Jeju Island, Bijarim road is known for its picturesque roadsides which earned national acknowledgement as the most beautiful driving way in Korea in 2002 by the ministry of construction and transportation. In early August this year, Bijarim road became the new victim of the reckless destruction of nature in favor of development, which is taking place all around the island at the lead of the local government. 900 cedar trees planted alongside the road were cut down over just a few nights before the civil society could even react to the situation. What's noteworthy here is that the government's excuse for widening the road from two lanes to four is quite absurd, as their argument refers to traffic jams which are non-existent until now. Civil society strongly suspects that it's in fact the initial phase of the construction of the second airport in Seongsan. In mid-August several local residents voluntarily formed a resistance group against the cutting-down of the trees and have been organizing peaceful protests and cultural events on site as well as pressuring the local government to find an alternative solution other than destroying nature. The construction has been paused for now. However, the issue has already created discord and conflict among the local residents.

Fr. Kim Seong-hwan returned to the village

Fr. Kim Seong-hwan joined the daily street mass and protest to stop the Jeju navy base construction for years until he left for peace studies in Ireland in 2016. After two years' study there, he has recently returned to the village. While working on his dissertation, he carries out again the daily street mass along with Fr. Mun Jeong-hyeon, and joins other activities in the community. We are happy and thankful to have him again!

No Space Force: Keep Space for Peace

"No Space Force." It is the theme of this year's Keep Space for Peace week, Oct. 6 to 13- the International Week of Protest to Stop the Militarization of Space. In June, 'Trump [...] announced plans for a Space Force—a separate branch of the US military.' According to organizers, 'the Los Angeles Times recently reported that aerospace industry pressure and lobbying got Trump to announce the Space Force.' 'The industry has long said that 'Star Wars' would be the largest industrial project in human history.' It is the industry that has been pressuring Congress to cut the so-called 'entitlement programs,' the 'social safety net' for the people. 'The United Nation's Outer Space Treaty declared in 1967 that space must be preserved for all of humanity. The treaty needs updating to include new high-tech space weapons programs.' 'To protect social progress and a sustainable environment on Earth rather than a new arms race in the heavens.' please visit Global Network against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space at space4peace.org



The 'Bapcha' or Solidarity Food Truck came to Jeju for a 4-day peace tour which visited the main gate of the Jeju naval base in Gangjeong village where rice farming originated on the island, as well as Jeju Dolphin Center, Bijarim-ro and an event to remember the sunken Sewol ferry. Bapcha was established in 2014 to provide free and healthy meals to protesters fighting for social change. Photo by Hotpinkdolphins.

"Tamra is Queer"

"Tamra is Queer." It was the theme of the 2nd Jeju Queer festival this year. Tamra is the original name of Jeju. It has been the island of many diasporas like queers, the organizers say. They also say they want to make it an island where all the queers are happy and they don't need to be distinguished as 'queers.' As the recent queer festival in Incheon met hostile interruption by conservative Christians and other citizen groups, it was a huge challenge for the organizers of Jeju to safely finish the rally and march without such interruption. Like last year, they faced a group of conservative Christians who countered the march this time, too. However, the organizers finally succeeded to finish all the events which were joined by 37 groups and 500-700 people despite all the ugly prejudice.



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...)
4. 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.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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