

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

Bimonthly news on the struggle against the Jeju Naval base project
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US Coast Guard in Jeju

By Curry

In January, US Coast Guard cutter Bertholf was deployed to the Western Pacific amid calls in the US military for a response to the expansion and militarization of the Chinese coast guard. On February 22, US Coast Guard Pacific area Commander Linda Fagan visited the Jeju Coast Guard Headquarters and called for the strengthening of mutual maritime security capabilities. In early March, the Bertholf arrived in the East China Sea to monitor for North Korean ship-to-ship transfers that violate UN sanctions. From Mar. 26-28, the US Coast Guard cutter Bertholf visited the Jeju Navy Base with the stated purpose of a joint rescue and anti-narcotics inspection drill with the Korean Coast Guard (Sea Police). However, on the way to Jeju, the Bertholf and a US navy destroyer passed through the Taiwan Strait, in what Chinese media deemed an act of provocation. The militarization and extended reach of the US Coast Guard is a sign of escalating tension with China, and the joint activities may indicate pressure on the Korean sea police (which are not a branch of the military) to become more militarized as well.

The Bertholf's visit coincided with Jeju's memorial period for the April 3 Uprising and Massacre. Starting in 1948 under the control of the US Military Government in Korea, Korean troops and paramilitaries massacred tens of thousands of Jeju civilians, and at the time a US warship was stationed off the coast of Jeju. On land and at sea, Gangjeong activists protested the Bertholf's visit, calling for the US to apologize for the Jeju April 3 Massacre, and for the US Coast Guard to get out of Jeju.



Photos by Pang Eun Mi (above) and Curry (below).



Photos by Lee Ki-Cheol (above) and Choi Hyea-yeong (below).

First Cruise to Gangjeong “Civilian-Military” Port

By Curry

Although the alternative name for the Jeju Navy Base is “Civilian Military Complex Port for Tour Beauty,” there were no civilian passenger ships until now. The Queen Mary II, operated by British-American cruise line Cunard and sailing from Hong Kong by way of Japan, arrived in Gangjeong in the morning on March 2 and stayed until evening. The welcoming party for the ship included Jeju Governor Won Hee-Ryong, the Admiral of Jeju Navy Base, and Gangjeong Mayor Kang Hee-Bong. Though the cruise port was promoted as a source of profit for Gangjeong, the tourists directly boarded tour busses and didn't even visit the new cafe across the street from the cruise terminal. Gangjeong activists stood along the street with picket signs that raised awareness about the environmental destruction caused by the navy base and also distributed leaflets about the history of the Gangjeong struggle. The leaflets asked, “What if it was your hometown?” Many cruise passengers expressed their sympathy with Gangjeong. The experience demonstrated how cruise profits go to big corporations, and not to the local community.

2nd Jeju airport? It is an air force base!

By Choi Sung-hee



On February 25, more than 100 people carried out one hundred bows of prayer for life and peace at the Jeju government hall. It was Oum's 40th day of fast. Photo by Kim Soo-Oh



The view which could disappear with the building of the 2nd Jeju airport (air force base). Photo by Kim Soo-Oh

are being destroyed. A part of Chunmi-cheon stream which provides drinking water for the residents of east Jeju is also threatened by the construction. On March 19th, a woman peace activist Green C and other friends started to live in the forest to monitor the destruction. The previous day, March 18th, was the first day of the remembrance period for the Jeju April 3rd uprising and massacre 71 years ago.



On March 19, Green C put her cedar tree house in the Bijarim-ro to live there at least for a month and monitor the destruction of the forest. Photo by Kim Soo-Oh



On March 23, when the destruction of the forest was resumed, another female activist stopped a chain saw and cried together with her friends. Photo by Song Dong-hyo

Henoko base construction despite referendum

By Curry

On Feb. 24, Okinawa’s prefecture-wide referendum had 52% voter turn out, and 72% opposed the new US base construction at Henoko. Okinawan Governor Tamaki met with Japanese Prime Minister Abe on Mar. 1 to convey the referendum results and call for three-way talks between the US, the Japanese central government, and Okinawa prefecture.

However, construction began on Mar. 4 on a new embankment which extends to the area where the feasibility of construction is highly doubtful because the sea floor is soft ‘like mayonnaise,’ and contains active fault-lines. Last August, Okinawa had revoked the land



Off the coast of Henoko, Oura Bay is an important feeding ground for the endangered dugongs. Only 3 dugongs have been sighted in recent years, but on Mar. 18, a female dugong was found dead by unknown causes in Northwest Okinawa. Time is running out to protect these precious creatures. Photo by Sei Ito (Asahi Shimbun).

reclamation permit, but the central government suspended the revocation. Since the Abe government rejected Okinawa’s calls for dialogue, Okinawa filed a lawsuit against the construction on Mar. 22. About 10,000 citizens joined an “All Okinawa” rally on Mar. 16, and on Mar. 25, around 600 people gathered at Henoko, and 9 boats and 44 canoes protested at sea. They shouted “Okinawans will decide the future of Okinawa!” “Do not build a base on soft seafloor and active faults!”

As Gov. Tamaki declared, “ignoring the popular will as expressed in the referendum and continuing base construction tramples upon democracy and destroys local governance.”

Solidarity visit in Okinawa

By Oh Doo-Hee

On February 8, Okinawa Korea People’s Solidarity hosted a symposium titled, “What happens to the military bases when the Korean War is ended?” Field activists from Pyeongtaek, Gangjeong, Kadena, and Miyako Island shared about their struggles and the prospects for peace in the future. Okinawa peace activists were very interested in the recent North Korea-US dialogues. They think that ending the Korean War is an excellent opportunity to force the closure of US bases in Okinawa and to realize peaceful coexistence in East Asia.

During four days of field visits and meetings, the participants could see that not only the US base at Pyeongtaek, the Jeju Navy Base, and the new base being constructed at Henoko, but also the Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) bases, from Yonaguni at the far end of Okinawa, to Ishigaki, Miyako, and Amami, are all out outposts against China. Joint use of bases and joint military practices are standard in the US-Japanese alliance, just like in Korea. We can analyze that the US intends to make a first barrier against China without spending its own money.

The participants visited the construction site of the Miyako SDF base that will be a headquarters for the bases on neighboring islands. Miyako is near the half-way point between Okinawa main island and Taiwan. But in the middle of this small, beautiful island, barracks for 800 SDF soldiers and a missile launch platform are under construction. Plans are being pushed for a massive ammunition base on the end of the island. At the island’s summit, there is an eavesdropping base with massive cylindrical towers. There are also plans for an air force base. It is awful to think about this little island being filled with high-tech weapons and heavily armed military bases.

Hawaii-Alaska solidarity resists aerospace industry

By Koohan Paik

On Dec. 18, Donald Trump announced the creation of the U.S. Space Command, which provides the aerospace/defense industry with a brand-new, wide-open market. On Jan. 28, the U.S. announced that it had begun production of a new low-yield nuclear weapon that some consider "small enough to use." A few days later, Donald Trump announced that the U.S. would be suspending compliance with the landmark 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, which limits the number of missile launch pads any nation can operate.

All these developments open up markets to build new, profitable private rocket launch pads across the U.S. Alaska Aerospace is proposing to build one such rocket launch pad on Hawaii's Big Island, in Kea'au, just a few miles from many neighborhoods, schools and one of Hawaii's most sacred and beautiful beaches.

A piece of legislation was simultaneously introduced in February to create an Aerospace Development Corporation (ADC) within the Hawaii state government. The ADC would have facilitated the nontransparent transfer of millions of tax-exempt dollars to subsidize a new aerospace defense industry in Hawaii.

Fortunately, Hawaii activists launched a huge letter-writing campaign that killed the bill before it could move forward at the legislature. They connected with communities on Kodiak Island, Alaska, where Alaska Aerospace has operated a rocket launch facility for the past 25 years. The Kodiak Islanders relayed horror stories about how they had been exploited by Alaska Aerospace, which had received millions of tax-exempt dollars through the Alaska ADC every year -- until 2014. That's when a large explosion after a rocket launch scattered debris and toxic chemicals across the coastal landscape. The Governor of Alaska cut off funds, and that's why Alaska Aerospace came to Hawaii.

Thanks to solidarity from Alaska and hundreds of letters to the Hawaii State Legislature, Hawaii killed the bill to create the Aerospace Development Corporation. The plan to build the rocket launch pad itself remains, but Hawaii activists have a strong campaign and chance to win that -- precisely because there is no ADC in place. As the highest levels of power position the world for global war, let us continue building solidarity, as Hawaii and Alaska did, to successfully resist.

ROK military satellite and F35-A fighter jets

The ROK Air Force made a deal in 2014 to purchase 40 F-35A stealth fighter jets from Lockheed Martin, which promised to include a military satellite. The satellite was supposed to be launched in 2018, but was delayed due to costs and is now to be launched in November. It is Korea's first exclusive military-use satellite. The first two of the F35-As arrived in Korea on March 29.

Citizens' campaign for a Jeju Non-nuclear Peace bylaw

By Choi Sung-hee

On March 10, groups such as 'Jeju Green Party', 'Non-nuclear Jeju! Peace Citizens' Gathering' and 'People Making Jeju a Demilitarized Peace Island' held an event titled 'The Beginning of Non-nuclear Jeju' in front of Jeju City Hall in remembrance of the Fukushima tragedy 8 years ago. They declared a citizens' campaign for the establishment of a Jeju Non-nuclear Peace bylaw within this year.

In 2018, the keyword for the Korean peninsula was 'non-nuclear.' However, a US nuclear aircraft carrier came to Jeju navy base during the International Fleet Review in October. It was the 2nd nuclear warship after a US nuclear submarine in November, 2017.

The Non-nuclear Jeju! Peace Citizens' Gathering reminded us that South Korea has the highest density of nuclear plants per area and the 1st, 3rd, 4th, and 7th largest nuclear plants in the world. Emphasizing the importance of process in which local citizens raise and expand issues, the group explained the necessity of a 'citizens' movement' for the enactment of a Jeju Non-nuclear Peace bylaw.

People Making Jeju a Demilitarized Peace Island noted that "there is no peaceful use of nuclear power and the start of nuclear power in the world was historically for military needs such as nuclear submarines." They called for the closure of Jeju navy base which they fear to be a breeding ground for nuclear disaster, especially for the entry of nuclear warships.



About 200 Jeju residents, including many families and children, gathered in front of the Provincial Hall for a special "Choir, Not Airport" performance on March 28. They sang their promises to protect the nature that is threatened by the 2nd airport project in a new song, 'Call Us By Name.' Photo by Kim Soo-Oh

The first for-profit hospital in Jeju is being revoked

By Joyakgol

South Korea's first for-profit hospital, the highly controversial Greenland International Medical Center was approved in Jeju in December 2018. Many feared that allowing a commercial hospital may bring about a substantial change in the Korean public medical system. Every weekend protests and candlelight vigils are organized in Jeju City calling for the resignation of Governor Won who authorized this Chinese corporation to operate in Jeju on condition of treating only foreign patients.

Under the current law, a medical institution must launch medical services within 90 days after obtaining approval. However the hospital did not hire a single doctor. Facing enormous criticism and pressure from citizens, Jeju provincial government began a procedure to cancel the medical business license. The for-profit medical institution applied for approval in 2017 and Jeju government welcomed the foreign capital without giving thorough consideration of the the investment company's capabilities.

Gangjeong still in agony as big money flows in the name of development

By Joyakgol

It has been a well-known secret that the new Gangjeong village mayor is a Jeju naval base supporter. He revealed his true nature when he called for an extraordinary general meeting in late January to make changes to the village's autonomy code. The new code changed the definition of a Gangjeong villager, narrowing it down to exclude anyone who was not born in Gangjeong or who moved to Gangjeong after the controversial military base project was announced in 2007. As a result, several dozens of peace activists who have lived in the village for 5 to 10 years now lost their rights as official residents. What does it mean and why did it happen?

Starting this year, it was widely publicized that the government would give 960 billion won (900 million US dollars) to Gangjeong Village to 'restore the torn community.' Rumors spread around the island that most villagers became rich with the public funding jackpot. And the new village leadership didn't want to share the lottery ticket with the so-called 'newcomers,' 'naysayers' or 'professional demonstrators.' So they gathered and modified the village autonomy code to rid the peace activists of the entitlement.

The public funding for development in Gangjeong was a part of the carrot and stick strategy used by the government. And the biggest chunk of the budget (425 billion won) will be spent for the navy, a shopping outlet for the soldiers, building more military facilities and the cruise terminal. No Gangjeong residents became rich with the enormous budget, but it only deepened their scars.

7 years since Gureombi Rock was blasted

By Jungjoo



March 7 has become a significant day for Gangjeong residents and activists. It is the day we lost our sacred place, playground and garden, Gureombi Rock. To build the Jeju naval base, the navy destroyed it. A lot of citizens and activists were brutally trampled on and even arrested in the course of stopping the construction. Since then, we hold an all day event to remember and honor Gureombi Rock. This year, the number of participants was small but we still had a vibrant and memorable time. We read a statement, had a small concert and even ate lunch at the main gate of the base. Afterwards, we walked to the Gangjeong river, to the nearest spot to Gureombi. While walking, we sowed seeds and drew/wrote short messages on the fence. One action for remembering is our resolution to not forget. It is also proof that we move forward. Therefore, we will not stop this work.

Photo by Curry.



▶ On February 25th, the Jeju local court made a decision on Dr. Song Kang-ho of a year imprisonment suspended with two years probation. He had been indicted for interrupting the Jeju navy base construction three times for 1 hour 40 minutes by entering the construction site by kayak on July 1, 2013. His attorney defended him saying his deed was to monitor the navy's illegal construction, which is a justifiable act. However, the court did not accept it. Still, it made a decision of not-guilty on Song for other charges of interrupting traffic at the entrance of the base construction site and of holding an illegal rally on Dec. 24, 2012, saying there is not enough evidence to prove the charges.

Illegal and unreasonable proposals of cost-sharing for the USFK

By Choi Sung-hee

In February, South Korea and United States reached a deal regarding the 10th Special Measure Agreement which decides South Korea's share of the cost of the United States Forces of Korea (USFK). In March, the agreement was submitted to the South Korean National Assembly who will decide whether to adopt it on April 5th. According to the agreement, the total cost for South Korea to pay for the USFK amounts to 1

trillion 38.9 million KRW (around 0.9 billion USD). It increased as much as 8.2% compared to 2018.

However, according to a poll this January, around 60% of South Koreans oppose the US demand for South Korea to increase cost-sharing for the USFK. There are so many reasons. South Korea is already paying 73% of the cost. For the relocation of USFK Command to Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek, South Korea paid 92% of the expense. Additionally, the accumulated amount of funds left unused by the USFK reached 1 trillion 40.5 billion KRW as of June, 2018. Moreover, South Korea has paid more than 5 trillion won annually for the stationing of USFK through direct and indirect supports beside the cost-sharing.

One of most striking things in the deal is that South Korea would pay for USFK's public utility charges, as well as storage/sanitation/disposal of wastes. Japan is the only other country in the world who pays public utility charges for the stationing of the US military in their own nation. For the shared cost of waste disposal, there is no precedent in the world. More seriously, the support goes not only for the USFK but also for other US forces who come to Korea for joint war exercises or to deploy their strategic assets. South Koreans would pay even for the disposal of waste from US nuclear warships coming to the Jeju navy base. (Resource: SPARK, PSPD)

19 Gangjeong villagers and activists offered pardons without truth-seeking

By Joyakgol

The Moon Jae-in administration granted special pardons to 19 Gangjeong villagers and peace activists in late February to mark the 100th anniversary of the Korean independence movement. The beneficiaries included about 50 demonstrators who participated in various social movements, including protests against the deployment of the US THAAD missile system, Ssangyong Motor Co.'s massive layoff of its workers and so on.

President Moon granted the amnesty to political protesters for 'reconciliation' and 'to restore justice.' The candlelight movement threw two repressive former presidents into jail and established a more progressive government, and it seems that Moon wants to put closure to Gangjeong naval base issue by showing leniency. But it's far from over.

Enforcing the Jeju naval base project, the government arrested 696 people, and among them 611 were indicted. Most of them were convicted, but are they criminals? No way. Kang Dong-kyun, a former mayor who served jail time for leading the non-violent resistance against the militarization plan, vehemently refused to be pardoned. He says he is not accepting the offer because he didn't do anything wrong.

Still active and enthusiastic, Kang asks us whether or not taking actions to defend his beloved hometown was a crime. He argues that if the government truly meant reconciliation, then not just 19 chosen people but all of the convicted should be pardoned. He also demands a truth-seeking investigation into the unlawful crackdowns and unjust state violence. Without it, the stigma on Gangjeong will not be lifted, and the wounds not healed.



Photo by Pang Eunmi.



What would disappear with the building of the 2nd Jeju airport (air force base)? According to bird-lover Kim Ye-won(19), the area nearby the planned airport is a paradise for birds. Some of these birds, like Chinese black-headed gulls, are endangered species. About 10 oreums (parasitic cones) are also threatened to have 40 to 100 meters cut off from the top. Photos by and resource partly from Ha Sang-yoon, Segye Ilbo. March 3, 2019

High-Altitude Area Defense) base in Seongju, Korea, just six days before the NK-US Summit in Hanoi. Such a deed threatens the peace process of Korea. Firstly, there is no legal basis for the deployment of THAAD in Korea. There was no agreement either from the South Korean National Assembly or the residents. It is illegal and must be withdrawn.

Otherwise, according to a March 14 article in Voice of People, it turned out that a 'chemical and biological lab' is being operated this year in Camp Humphreys, Pyeongtaek, the largest overseas US base in the world. The US Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense (JPEO-CBD) has conducted numerous JUPITR (Joint USFK Portal and Integrated Threat Recognition) chemical and biological warfare tests inside US bases in Korea. It turned out that the US Defense Dept.'s 2019 fiscal year budget allocated again for real CBD tests at Camp Humphreys. Another separate budget was also confirmed for a CBD lab that was installed on pier 8, at the Port of Busan.

End of War exercises?

By Choi Sung-hee

Two days after the North Korea-United States Summit meeting in Hanoi, Feb. 27 to 28, the defense authorities of both South Korea and the United States agreed to end two key annual ROK-US joint exercises: Key Resolve and Foal Eagle. However, the former was changed into another exercise named 'Alliance' and its first exercise, '19-1 Alliance' was conducted from March 4 to 12. The Foal Eagle is expected to be continued annually on a smaller scale. In April and May, the South Korean military will carry out its own exercises. All of these violate the NK-US joint statement and NK-SK joint declarations which confirmed the mutual dissolution of hostile relations and mitigation of military tension.

Meanwhile, it turned out that the United States Forces Korea (USFK) submitted plans on the 700,000 m² area inside the THAAD (Terminal



In memory of the 7th year since blasting of Gureombi Rock, an exhibit titled, 'Coral' is being shown in the Gangjeong Peace Center from March 10 to April 7. Exhibit organizer Choi Hyea-yeong reported that the knitting of coral shapes was done by 54 people of various ages and backgrounds. The Gangjeong sea is a magnificent UNESCO-designated soft coral habitat which is being destroyed by the Jeju navy base. Image from the 'Coral' exhibit poster (left). Photo by Choi Hyea-yeong (above).



On February 19, a full-moon celebration was held in Nansan-ri, one of the villages that will be most affected by the Jeju 2nd Airport (Air Force Base) project. Before a festival at the town hall, musicians travelled house to house and residents tied cloths onto a rope to represent their wishes. On March 16, a candlelight vigil against the 2nd Airport was held in Shinsan-ri. Photos by aRiverDrop (above) and Bigarim (below).

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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Gangeong Women on International Women's Day

Women in Gangeong celebrate International Women's Day every March 8th. During the human chain, we shared our stories in relation to the day. A friend expressed her solidarity with a female navy officer who is a lesbian but was raped by her senior male officers. She sued them but is greatly suffering due to the current military criminal law which violates LGBT human rights. Another friend who lately visited Miyako-jima, Okinawa, shared the story of three brave women there who are protesting daily against the Japanese Self-Defense Force command post construction. Curry from the United States also shared the story of a courageous nurse who distributed anti-war leaflets from a plane during the Vietnam War.

