

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

Bimonthly news on the struggle against the Jeju Naval base

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Protesting the government plan to build a light aircraft carrier in front of the Jeju Naval Base, Nov. 11. Photo by Grace.

Light Aircraft Carrier, Jeju Naval Base, US Indo-Pacific Strategy

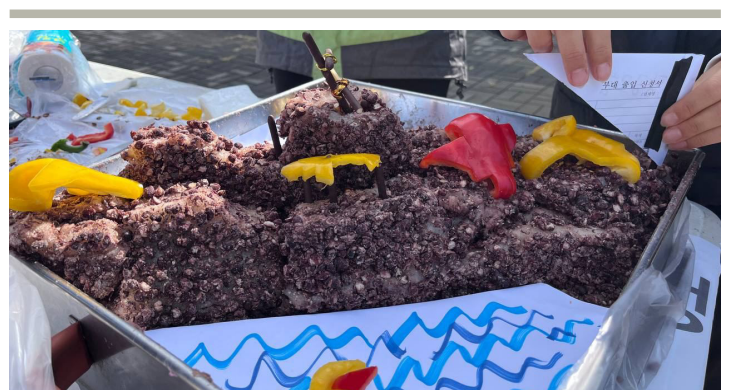
by Choi Sung-hee

This year, the light aircraft carrier (about 30,000t) was the hottest issue in the South Korea National Assembly's review of the fiscal year 2022 budget. The South Korean navy, which aims to be a so-called 'SMART' navy by 2045, compiled a budget of around 7.2 billion won (about 6 million USD) to start the basic design. On Nov. 16, the defense committee of the National Assembly drastically cut that budget leaving only 0.5 billion won for the reason that the necessity of a light aircraft carrier was not verified enough.

However, the Moon Jae-in government and ruling party immediately connected the so-called government-party hotline, reversed the decision of the defense committee, and finally pushed the whole budget of 7.2 billion won through the plenary meeting on Dec. 3, which was almost unprecedented. Civic groups including the Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Navy Base and Gangjeong Peace Network strongly protested against it. Noticeably, the passage of the light aircraft carrier budget happened on the day after the 53rd ROK-US Security Consultative Meeting in Seoul.

Why does the light aircraft carrier matter? According to the South Korea 2022-2026 National Defense mid-term planning report made public by the Ministry of National Defense in early September, the navy plans to create a task force command and air command by 2026. The task force command, composed of 3 task groups will "extend the operation area to the ocean." The light aircraft carrier would be the flagship of the task force command, and could be homeported in the Jeju Naval Base. Not to mention the whole cost for the aircraft carrier and the planes together, which is similar to the Jeju island government's annual budget (around 6 trillion won in 2022), the 10+ F35B fighter jets that would be on the aircraft carrier means it would be designed for preemptive attacks. It violates the UN Charter which proscribes aggressive war.

The South Korean navy's light aircraft carrier is useful for the United States Indo-Pacific strategy rather than the defense of South Korea. South Korea's introduction of light aircraft carriers would fuel the increasing military tensions due to the US-China conflict. The budget for the light aircraft carrier should be used for responding to the climate crisis and for people's welfare. We will continuously demand 'no light aircraft carrier.'



On Nov. 11, Gangjeong activists gathered to protest the navy's plans for a light aircraft carrier. Inspired by Codepink's "Cut the Pentagon" performance, we made an aircraft carrier out of rice cake and carved F35B's out of bell peppers. Our aircraft carrier was much more delicious, healthy, and entertaining than anything that the navy can make. Photo by Grace.

The 2021 Gangjeong Peace Activist March

by Gangjeong Village Story

Recently, a defense budget of around 55 trillion won (around 47 billion USD) for the 2022 fiscal year was passed in the South Korea National Assembly. For the last five years, such war costs rose nearly 37%. It was the biggest military build-up ever, and it occurred under the government formed by the so-called 'candlelight revolution.' The "Peace Island Jeju" has become an Island of deception and militarization. Jeju is where the sea level most rapidly rises in South Korea, the 9th biggest emitter of greenhouse gasses in the world. The Gangjeong peace activists had an urgent awareness that they should work more to stop military build-up, a major cause for the climate crisis, and to abolish the ROK-US alliance, a form of imperialism. On Oct. 7, South Korean peace activists held an anti-base forum during which people could grasp more about the true nature of the rearrangement of US bases in Korea and the establishment of new South Korean bases (such as the Jeju navy base) under the United States 'strategic flexibility' policy since the early 2000s. The forum also helped people to be more aware of the environmental and human rights harms by the bases, as well as the stronger necessity for solidarity among anti-base people. In that context, starting with a press conference on Oct. 22, Gangjeong peace activists made a peace march visiting Gunsan, Chuncheon, Yongsan, Busan, Soseong-ri, and Pyeongtaek. The "Peace is the Way: 2021 Gangjeong peace activist march for peace in Korea and the world" ended with a rally in front of the Jeju navy base opposing the military build-up focused on light aircraft carriers. Throughout the march, Gangjeong peace activists witnessed the problems of other military bases, learned through meetings with peace activists in other regions, and began to think about ways to work together. (see page 3 and 4)



On Oct. 30, the "Peace is the Way: 2021 Gangjeong peace activist march for peace in Korea and the world" visited Yongsan base in Seoul, learning how the land has been polluted and still not returned to Korea as promised.



On Mar. 7, 2020, Dr. Song Kang Ho and Ryu Bok-hee visited the remaining part of Gureombi Rock inside Jeju Navy Base to pray for peace. Ryu was detained only briefly but Song was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment. Finally, after 578 days, he was released early on parole on Oct. 28. Many friends met him at the gates of the Jeju prison and others congratulated him at the Gangjeong human chain and the daily lunch at Halmangmul (Samgeori) community kitchen. Photos by Oh Yeon Jae and Grace.

Gangjeong Peace Activists Learn throughout the March

Thinking of the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty in Gunsan

by Oum Mun-hee

Gunsan in Jeollabuk-do province (the Southwest of the Korean peninsula) had the richest and largest farmland in Korea, being adjacent to two rivers and mud flats. However, the city has now been ruined, handing over its life-giving lands to the military base and industrial facilities. The US 8th Fighter Wing ('Wolf Pack') is stationed at the US Air Base Kunsan. The site for the controversial New Saemangeum Airport project is only 1.3 km from the base. With a later road construction, the airport could be available to the US military. In June 2019, the US military demanded the opening of a way to connect to the planned New Airport. Then, the civilian planes' take-off and landing would be controlled by the US military. Also, the US military can use the new airport anytime according to the SOFA (Status of Forces Agreement). Actually, at the current Gunsan airport, only domestic civilian airlines are possible because of US military opposition. It reminds us of the fact that the Kunsan base is privileged like any other US base in South Korea, thanks to the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty. Based the treaty's article 4, the US has executed its counter-China strategy in Gunsan. The US could freely use various kinds of advanced weapons, chemical and even biological weapons possible for mass destruction, not to mention nuclear weapons.

Environmental pollution of the returned lands in Chuncheon and Yongsan

by Joe

After the US Camp Page in Chuncheon, Gangwon province (the middle of the Korean Peninsula), was relocated to Pyeongtaek, civic groups in Chuncheon took measures to address environmental contamination in the returned lands. The United States military left without taking responsibility for the large amount of contaminated material buried under the ground. A guide from a civic group told us that people could succeed in disclosing pollution-related facts mainly because they collaborated with a government group and had a National Assembly member on their side. I had been accustomed to hold in check and monitor the government in the peace movement, so I felt compelled to think about the possible application of such a strategy in Gangjeong, too.

A big part of the US military base in Yongsan, Seoul, also moved to Pyeongtaek. However, most of the land has not been returned and is maintained as a territory of California. Walking around the wall of the base, we tracked down a trace of contaminated water flowing out from the base. The amount of pollution inside the base has hardly been assessed. First, I was struck by the poisonous smell of the tank where polluted water from the base is collected. Then I was shocked by the fact that the tank was located in the middle of a busy walkway without even a proper sign. During our walk I came to think that militarism is guileful, hiding its true appearance.

Visiting Asia's biggest US Army base in Pyeongtaek

by Asha

For the last step of our march, we visited the village of Daechu-ri, Pyeongtaek, around one hour from Seoul. In 2003, the US and ROK government made plans to expropriate around 942 ha from the villages of Daechu-ri and Dodu-ri, for the relocation of the US 2nd Infantry Division and Yongsan base. The villagers fought for 935 days before their eventual ouster from their hometown. The main US bases in Pyeongtaek are Osan Air Base and Camp Humphreys, along with Alpha magazine and a field training area. With the completion of the relocation project and expansion of the US base, Pyeongtaek will be the assembly area for the core strategic bases of the Pacific Command, not to mention the US military in South Korea. Even though I walked for three hours with my colleagues around Camp Humphreys, we could see only one third of the base. The base is the biggest US army base in Asia. Pyeongtaek Peace Civic Action is a network of around 20 groups which have persistently carried out environmental monitoring around the base. They think it is best to start monitoring the base for pollution even now so that they can recover their robbed land as early as possible. They are also taking action to respond to the damages to people caused by the military bases, such as airplane noise, vibration, environmental pollution (oil-leaks), anthrax tests, drills, unlawful radar installation, and US military crimes.



Several Gangjeong activists had participated in the struggle against the expansion of Camp Humphreys, but for others it was their first time to visit the Pyeongtaek peace movement. Nov. 3 photo at the Daechuri Peace Museum by Grace

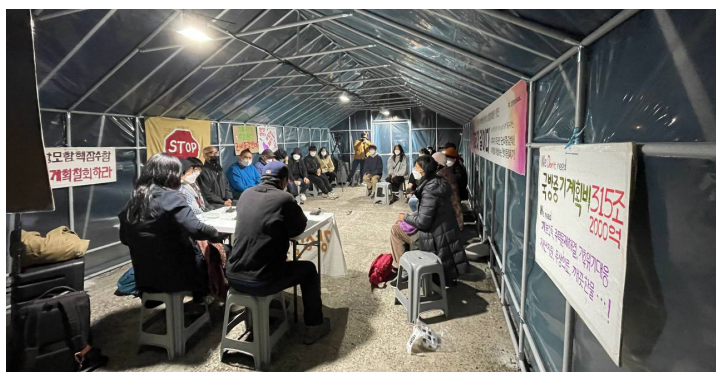
Peace is the Way in Busan and Soseong-ri

by Curry

On Nov. 1-2, I joined the “Peace is the Way” peace march in Busan and Soseong-ri. Upon arrival in Busan, we headed directly to the US military base at Pier 8 and found plainclothes military police waiting (they follow our social media). The base entrance featured English advertisements for a Seamen’s Club, and we could see the large US Naval Ship Watkins docked on the other side of the barbed wire-topped cement fence. Local activists described how they have been opposing the US biological warfare laboratory located at Pier 8 and other problems of militarization in Busan. Both the Busan activists and the police seemed entertained when we danced to the song “Naval Base Trash” in colorful costumes outside the Pier 8 base.

The goal of the JUPITR (Joint United States Forces Korea Portal and Integrated Threat Recognition) project is purportedly to detect biological and chemical threats, but especially since live anthrax was delivered to Korea for the JUPITR program in 2015, citizens have protested the danger, secrecy and lack of accountability of the program. In 2019, the US Defense Department budget allocated funds for live agent testing at Pier 8, so citizens campaigned to get the Busan government to take responsibility, collecting 200,000 signatures calling for a referendum on whether the Pier 8 laboratory should be closed, but the city responded that it had no jurisdiction even though the lab is in the heart of the city. Now citizens are also mobilizing to stop powerful new radar facilities from being built above Busan’s famous Haeundae beach.

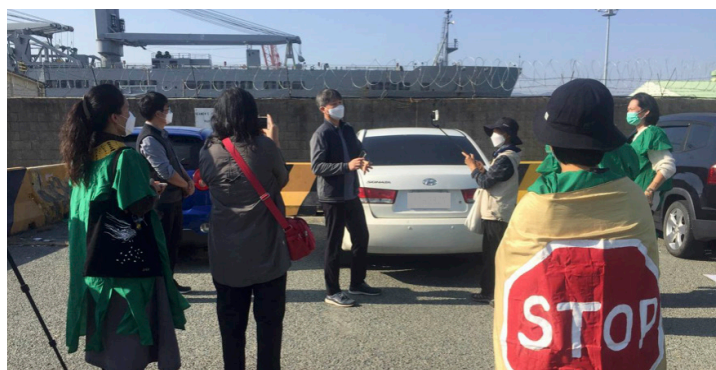
Next we travelled to Soseong-ri, where villagers and their supporters have been blocking construction equipment from entering the US THAAD missile and radar base every Tuesday and Thursday morning since May 14. We joined the bi-weekly interfaith prayer service on the street and danced in our colorful costumes to the song “Bawi Cheoreom (Like a Rock).” Soon, police surrounded the gathering and dragged people off the street to make way for the trucks carrying THAAD base supplies and construction workers. For the Soseong-ri residents and other regular participants, this direct action twice a week leaves little time for farming and family life, but the US keeps pressing Korea to make way for equipment to enter the base every day. The women’s association leader told us that “every day is like hell,” but many people in nearby Seongju city don’t even know of the ongoing struggle. Meanwhile, inside the base US soldiers live in the nice golf course facilities while Korean soldiers make do in the lobby and the shower building. Inside and outside of the base, the strategy has been to divide and conquer. However, on Nov. 2 we held the prayer meeting together on the road for 15 minutes longer than usual, and we hope that our solidarity gave strength to the people of Soseong-ri.



After joining the monthly Paeng Paeng Festival in Haje Village, Gunsan on Oct. 23, peace march participants and Gunsan residents had a discussion time together. Oct. 28 photo by Oh Doo-hee.



The peace march journey was a good opportunity for Gangjeong activists to enjoy quality time together. Photo by Choi Hyea-yeong.



At the US base at Pier 8 in downtown Busan, a local activist described the struggle against the JUPITR biological weapons program. Nov. 1 photo by Ddalgi.



The peace march joined Soseong-ri residents in their twice weekly sit-in protest to block the entrance of new equipment to the THAAD base. Nov. 2 photo by Curry.

Accusing the Navy Chief of Staff on Gangjeong Stream

by Oum Mun-hee

Six Gangjeong peace movement groups including the Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Navy Base and Gangeong Peace Network have recently accused Boo Suk-jong, navy chief of staff (former director of the Jeju navy base construction project), and the former chief of the Environmental Agency for illegal procedures and wrong descriptions in the environmental impact assessment on the Jeju navy base entry road construction which is destroying the Gangjeong stream. Construction of the entry road is currently being enforced, even though an intentional reduction of research scope was found in the EIA. Although the related area is an 'absolute preservation area' which needs the Jeju Provincial Council's agreement and approval for any development activities, the navy base project committee avoided the approval procedure by the Jeju Council by omitting such a fact. It also turned out that the investigation on the birds and other species was carried out hastily and shoddily. The EIA on the Gangjeong navy



Since the navy base entry road construction began two years ago, green houses and residential houses located nearby the construction site have suffered from flooding when it rains. Some green houses' water pipes were broken during the construction. Photo by Oum Mun-hee on Sept. 14, 2021.

base entry road is a false report and the project implementers should rightly take criminal responsibility. Citizens have the right to sue to stop development activities until the project goes through a legal and just EIA.

Navy's illegal occupation of public coastal area

by Gangjeong Village Story



Peace activists held the human chain and other activities at Metburi in protest to the navy's illegal occupation of the public coastal area. Photo by Hati on Nov. 18.

In November, an illegally installed fence around the navy base was discovered at Metburi, a public coastal area between the end of Gangjeong stream and where the base ends. People's access was blocked by a wire fence. A woman called the Seogwipo City Hall which manages the coastal area. The city answered her that they had not gotten any approval for the navy's occupation of the area. It is an absolute preservation area and any installation of facilities should go through the city's process of licensing. By the order of Seogwipo City the navy removed the wire fence. However, there was no follow-up from the navy: no apology, public statement nor promise to prevent a recurrence. On Nov. 22, six peace groups including the Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Navy Base and Gangeong Peace Network filed a report accusing the commander of the Jeju navy base squadron for violating the law on public water areas and Jeju Special Self-Governing Law. Later it was also known that, in addition to the wire fence, the Jeju island government

was constructing a storm water pipeline for the Jeju navy base entry road and the South Korea Defense Installation Agency was carrying out construction for the replacement of a guard facility. Therefore, people also filed an accusation report against the acting island governor and the 7th task group commander of the Jeju navy base, who ordered the construction.

Convolutd Political Process Regarding the Bijarim-ro Road

by Curry

The Jeju Provincial Assembly passed an unnecessary and inflammatory resolution that called for the resumption of Bijarim-ro road expansion on Sept. 7. Citizens held a relay protest outside the Assembly building from Aug. 20 to Sept. 7 and a press conference on Sept. 6. They called on the Assembly to provide rational measures to address the Bijarim-ro road expansion controversy, such as holding expert debate about whether it is necessary. In 2018, a large area of forest was cleared to expand the Bijarim-ro road connecting Jeju City and the proposed 2nd Airport site in Seongsan. Many people were shocked and boldly acted to protect the forest. Construction was halted multiple times as illegalities were revealed and endangered species living in forest were discovered.

Since the construction process is in the hands of the Ministry of Environment and the Jeju governor's office, the Assembly resolution is only symbolic, but it has inflamed conflict and exposed problems in the political process. Notably, it was reported that of the 26 Jeju Assembly representatives who signed the resolution, 23 of them signed without even reading the contents. They signed only as an exchange of favors with the representatives who promoted the resolution. On Oct. 13, the Bijarim-ro solidarity meeting applied to hold a referendum on the Bijarim-ro construction, but the Jeju government blocked the application. The solidarity group sued, but the Jeju courts sided with the Jeju government. In November, the solidarity group appealed to the Central Administrative Appeals Commission.

Ocean Action

by Oh Yeon-jae, a climate activist and graduate of Sungmisan School living in Gangjeong and working part-time with Hotpinkdolphins

Since I moved to Gangjeong this past spring, I have been able to join several actions in the ocean, including kayak protests and soft coral monitoring. Without following the wind and weather, the currents and waves it is impossible to kayak into the Gangjeong sea, but if one paddles hard one can reach the entrance of the base. During the hundred bows and human chain we see the base from the front gates every day, but it felt different to see the base from the other side, where there is no wire fence but just a boundary that cannot be crossed even though it is the same ocean water on both sides. I imagined how it looked before the base was built. I never saw Gureombi Rock, but as I thought about how beautiful it must have been, I pondered how the navy could occupy such a place.

I also joined a kayak protest with Hotpinkdolphins in Daejeong to demand that tourist boats stop operating in the main habitat of the Jeju Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins. Whales sequester carbon and help foster the growth of phytoplankton, which is a very important role in this time of climate crisis. The tour boats just use the dolphins as a means of earning money. Our kayak protest was timed so tour boat passengers would see us and hear what we shouted. I hope that it was an opportunity for them to change their thoughts.

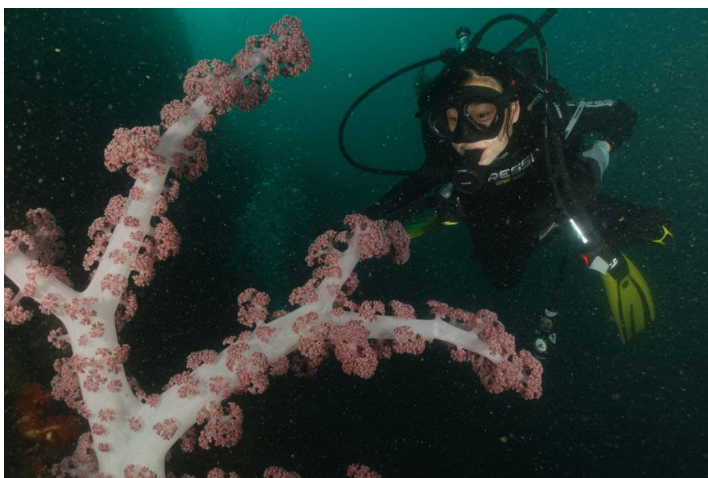
I cannot forget the moment I saw the beautiful colors of the swaying soft coral for the first time; I was surprised to see that such colors existed in nature. Soft coral is a home to many creatures and plays an important role supporting the ocean ecology. Joining the ongoing soft coral research dives twice was not enough to see any changes, but I could reflect how just like Gureombi Rock was blasted and occupied by the naval base, the base has also destroyed the ocean ecology and the soft coral. Through the soft coral research and kayak protests, swimming in the ocean could be more than a hobby but also a way to document the harm caused by the base to the ocean ecology, and a method for protest.



The endangered red-footed crab used to live on Gureombi Rock, but its habitat was destroyed through the violent construction of the navy base. It has nearly disappeared from the Gangjeong coastline, but it features prominently in our memories and in the new map of Gangjeong which St. Francis Peace Center commissioned GreenC and Curry to draw. Photo by Grace.



On Sept. 11, Hotpinkdolphins kayakers placed themselves along the route of the tour boats which have been harassing the Jeju Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins in their primary habitat off the west coast of Jeju. The banner reads, "Stop the boat tours which harass dolphins." Photo by Hotpinkdolphins.



Yeon-jae with a Dendronephthya soft coral during soft coral monitoring in the Gangjeong sea. Photo by Park Seung-hwan.



On Oct. 5, Gangjeong kayakers shouted at the sea entrance of the navy base, "Rise Up Gureombi! Close the Jeju Naval Base!" Photo captured from a video by Oh Yeon-jae.

Update on the struggle against the 2nd airport project

by Choi Sung-hee

►On Nov. 15, the Nationwide Action Opposing the Jeju 2nd Airport and the Jeju People's Assembly Against the 2nd Airport were chosen as the co-recipients of the 'Environment Award' given by the organization Together with the World which established the 'Three Steps One Bow and Body-Fighting Spirit Environment Award.'

►On Nov. 30, the Jeju higher court ruled to impose fines with a year of probation on eight anti-2nd airport activists. The fines given by the 1st court were still maintained; they ranged from 700,000 to 2 million won (around 590 to 1,690 USD). Six activists who climbed up on the portico of the Jeju Government Hall in the dawn of Feb. 7, 2019 were charged with trespassing, while the other two were charged with refusal to disperse on the same day.

►Otherwise, around 42.5 billion won (around 36 million USD) for the fiscal year of 2022 was recently budgeted for the Jeju 2nd airport project in the National Assembly. It has been impossible for the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport to drive the project because the Jeju islanders chose 'no' to the project in the public opinion poll this February and the Ministry of Environment returned the MOLIT's EIA in July. Considering that it is difficult for the MOLIT to establish even a Basic Plan for the airport, 42.5 billion won would be, in fact, of no use. It is a serious waste of people's tax money when the government management is in crisis due to COVID 19.

Shut Down Foreigner Detention Centers

by Emily

In Korea, Foreigner Detention Center is translated as Foreigner "Protection" Center. Somehow for me it's similar to calling sexual slaves comfort women. For whose comfort? For whose protection? My life in Jeju is neighboring with a naval base which is designated as a national security facility, and I was surprised that all foreigners are actually treated in terms of national security, so when someone's visa is expired here, they have to go to a Foreigner "Protection" Center which is also a national security facility, just like a military base. Under the framework of national security, instead of human security, the existence of humans can be expired and illegal. After participating in a series of refugee status application trials in Seoul, I came to know the existence of Foreigner "Protection" Centers where innocent humans have been jailed for years without getting any attention from society. More and more, I can see how war happens domestically, structurally, and invisibly in our society.

Without creating a society of equality, we can never stop war because discrimination always allows us to justify our actions that harm someone simply for being different in some way. To shut down military bases in the world, at the same time, we are also going to shut down the Foreigner Detention Centers. Our existence, our dignity can not be expired. We are going to realize international solidarity in our society. When we jail someone we are jailing ourselves. It is time to stop dividing and imprisoning people in these jails which we call 'nations.'

For those reasons (and more which I could not mention yet), at least once a month, a festival/parade is being held to shut down Foreigner Detention Centers.

Calls to Enact the Anti-Discrimination Law

by Choi Hyea-yeong

On Oct. 12, two people started to walk from Busan to the National Assembly. Ever since 2007, the National Assembly has postponed discussion regarding the enactment of an anti-discrimination law, calling it 'an issue of timing' and saying that 'a social consensus is needed,' although this year 100,000 people signed a petition in favor of enactment. People have worked together across the country to call for the anti-discrimination law to be enacted within this year, and people in Gangjeong, Jeju, took turns singing the song "What is Peace?" for a video that was contributed to the "Equality Relay Race Online Sit-in" (you can see it here: <https://fb.watch/9U0YI7n5Nb/>).

Also, the Bisugi Culture Space hosted a full-fledged series of queer movie screenings in Gangjeong. "Weekends," "Good Mother," "Some Queer Bo-Ki," and "Trust Fall" were screened outside at the fruit packing warehouse and people joined from around Jeju. And on Nov. 10, when Mi-ryu and Jong-geol finally reached the National Assembly after walking from Busan, members of Gangjeong Friends and the Jeju Anti-discrimination Law Enactment Solidarity Team joined the people's march in Seoul. However, on Nov. 10 the National Assembly extended the deadline for deliberations regarding the petition until 2023. The call for an Anti-discrimination Law is an issue of fundamental human rights; it is a call for survival. That's because the National Assembly cannot postpone people's lives until later. People in Jeju are joining together so that the Anti-discrimination Law can be enacted as soon as possible.



On Nov. 7, the Association for the Memorial of Martyr Yang Yong-chan awarded the Jeju Love Yang Yong-chan award to the Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Navy Base. "We give you this since you made a landmark for peace and ecology with your devoted activities to save your hometown and sea for the last 15 years," the text of the plaque reads. Yang, 25 years old at the time, self-immolated on Nov. 7, 1991 as an act of resistance opposing the Jeju development special law. Photo provided by Pang Eun-mi.

The Stop ADEX 2021 Joint-Action

The Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition 2021 (hereafter, Seoul ADEX 2021) was held from Oct. 19 to 23. However, the true nature of exhibition is a 'death market' where weapons for killing are traded. According to the SIPRI report of "Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2020," "arms exports by South Korea were 210% higher in 2016–20 than in 2011–15." South Korea, the 9th largest national exporter of arms, marked the most rapid increment in arms exports among the top 20 arms export nations. For the last five years, South Korea exported the most arms especially to Asia and Oceania. Arms exports to those regions occupied 55% of the total. The arms made or exported by South Korea are being used in many places of conflict such as Yemen. In West Papua, they have been used to violently suppress protesting citizens (Source: Stop ADEX 2021 Joint-Action formed by five civic groups in Seoul.)



Photo by Stop ADEX Joint-Action.

The New Space Era of South Korea with Rockets

by Choi Sung-hee

On Oct. 21, the Nuri, called 'South Korea's first homemade rocket,' was launched. It was also South Korea's first rocket to launch low-altitude 'application' satellites. The media said that even though the Nuri did not make a complete success, it speeded up South Korea's entrance into the new space era. However, the launch is not irrelevant to South Korea's drive for military power in space based on civilian-government-military cooperation. South Korea's space ambitions have been spurred as the United States completely lifted missile restrictions on South Korea this May. U.S. Space Operations Command vice commander, Space Force Maj. Gen. DeAnna Burt joined the Seoul International Aerospace Symposium, held in connection with the Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition 2021 (hereafter Seoul ADEX 2021), and emphasized the cooperation between the ROK-US and expected continuous cooperation on the development of the Nuri and South Korea's military satellites. She later visited the ROK Air Force Operations Command at Osan Air Base and discussed the "importance of opportunities that can propel the ROK's space development." At the 53rd ROK-US Security Consultative Meeting in early December, the two sides "pledged to explore measures to strengthen space capabilities as an alliance through the Space Cooperation Working Group and the associated ROK-U.S. space policy joint study."

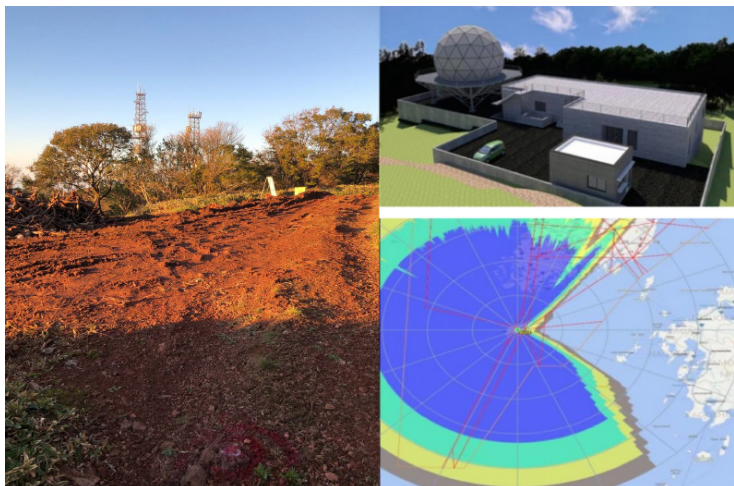


A photo by Pang Eun-mi, Oct. 19, 2021.

The South Korean military's move toward space is visibly increasing. A navy officer has said that the navy has much concern with the operation of the sea-based satellite interception system. On Nov. 3, the first meeting on defense space power was held by top Korean military officers. Otherwise, the Jeju Island Government is planing its first civilian rocket launch within December. Former Jeju governor Won Hee-Ryong made an agreement for cooperation on civilian space development study/education with the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology in July. He said, "Closest to the equator in South Korea, Jeju is the best place for the possible scope angle to launch projectiles to space," and "I have made efforts to make Jeju an advanced base for the space industry." Not only in Korea, "a gold rush into space is now underway. There are tens of thousands of mini-satellites expected to be launched in coming years, mostly for 5G which will have military applications for greater surveillance and targeting. We can expect growing deterioration of the Earth's ozone layer due to toxic rocket exhaust." See Keep Space for Peace Week 2021, space4peace.org.

Jeju Southern Airway Radar

In mid-October, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport started construction of the Jeju Southern Airway Radar facility project at the 1100 meter point on the west side of Mt. Halla. However, it is an oreum (parasitic cone) and absolute preservation area, so establishment of such a wireless signal facility is not permissible by Jeju regulations. Thanks to citizens' protests, the construction was soon halted and the MOLIT said it would reconsider the area. People found that the area is immediately next to the Jeju navy base communication towers and radar. Image by the MOLIT.



Opposition to AUKUS

by Curry

The Australia/United Kingdom/United States trilateral security partnership (AUKUS) announced on Sept. 15 exacerbates military tensions in the Indo-Pacific region, undermines the Australian democratic process, and encourages nuclear proliferation. The secretive pact was made without public review and commits Australia to acquire nuclear powered submarines and other high-tech weaponry and to further integrate its military and military-industrial complex with those of the US and the UK. In conjunction with the agreement, Australia cancelled its contract for conventional submarines from a French company, which triggered a diplomatic spat between France and the AUKUS nations. As part of the new nuclear-powered submarine deal, Australia would become the first country without nuclear weapons to receive highly enriched weapons-grade uranium and associated technologies from the US, which had previously refused to assist other allies such as Canada, India and South Korea in developing nuclear-powered submarines due to concerns for nuclear proliferation. AUKUS represents a dangerous precedent that could undermine the power of the International Atomic Energy Agency to monitor the movement of weapons grade nuclear fuel. The deal would also commit Australia to spend more precious resources on militarization rather than on healthcare and the environment, and it would further cement Australia into the Cold War mentality that pressures nations into increasingly exclusive relations with either the US or China. On Oct. 8, the International Peace Bureau held a webinar on “International Peace Movements’ Perspectives on the AUKUS Military Pact” to analyze the social and ecological impacts of AUKUS and “to build a coalition... with trade unions and local peace movements to inform civil society and social movements on these issues.” (You can find the webinar on the IPB Youtube channel). The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network created a petition calling on the Australian government to “withdraw from AUKUS, stop the development of nuclear submarines and end integration into the U.S. military.” AUKUS has an 18-month review process before it is finalized, so this is a key time to oppose the dangerous plan. You can sign at <https://www.change.org/p/the-australian-government-no-nuclear-submarines-end-u-s-dominance-healthcare-not-warfare>.

Rocket Lab: Privatized Militarization of Space in New Zealand

by Curry

“Unfortunately our outer space legislation has so many gaps and grey areas foreign military powers are literally launching rockets through it,” remarked Teanau Tuiono, Security and Intelligence spokesperson for the Aotearoa New Zealand Green Party at a protest on June 21. Longtime activist Pauline Tangiora also joined the protest. She originally supported Rocket Lab when the founder and CEO Peter Beck promised a minimal environmental impact and many benefits to the people of her Mahia peninsula community. Rocket Lab’s long history of military contracts was largely hidden until journalist Ollie Neas published evidence in 2018 that Rocket Lab was launching US military payloads. As far back as 2012, it supplied rocket fuel to the US Defense Advanced Research Agency and a heat-protective material for use on Patriot missiles to Lockheed Martin, a key investor in Rocket Lab. The company is now headquartered in the US and has a new launch facility in Virginia. Its top two customers are the US military and NASA.

Although New Zealand is a member of the Five Eyes intelligence network, it also has been a nuclear-free zone since 1987. Maire Leadbeater of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament said that Rocket Lab is “effectively a base, a US base... it has no accountability to us.” She highlighted the Mar. 23, 2021 launch of “Gunsmoke-J,” a satellite which provides direct targeting support to combat operations of the US Army’s Space and Missile Defence Command and likely violates New Zealand’s Nuclear Free Zone Disarmament and Arms Control Act. Since March, Rocket Lab has launched a satellite for the US Space Force in July and two satellites for US military contractor BlackSky which “enable rapid distribution of highly responsive insights to warfighters” in October. In September, Rocket Lab was awarded a major US Space Force contract. According to Rocket Lab, “The agreement signifies Rocket Lab’s commitment to becoming a launch provider for the National Security Space Launch programme, which launches the United States’ most critical missions.” A bill introduced by Teanau Tuiono would ‘prohibit the launching of military hardware into space from Aotearoa New Zealand’ but until such legislation is passed, it is up to the Minister of Economic Development to stop a launch if it is deemed to be against the national interest. So far he has not vetoed anything.

Resisting Militarization

by Curry

St. Francis Peace Center Foundation hosted an English-language online course titled “Resisting Militarization From East Asia to South Asia and the Pacific” from Oct. 15/16 to Dec. 3/4. In April-May, a similar online course delved deeply into the histories of resistance against militarization in Jeju Island and the Northeast Asia region. Building on this experience of informative presentations, rich discussions, and strengthened solidarity networks, we decided to continue the program. This time, speakers shared about resistance to militarization in Guam, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, India, New Zealand and Australia. 19 participants with diverse backgrounds and ages joined in small group discussions and full group Q&A times, sharing encouragement to one another and building solidarity across oceans and borders. Five of the speakers gave permission to share their presentations publicly, and you can find them on the “St. Francis Peace Center Foundation” Youtube channel.

US Militarization of Guam and the Marianas

by Curry

On Oct. 1/2, as part of their #ChinaIsNotOurEnemy series, Codepink hosted a webinar titled “US Militarization of Guam and the Marianas: Lived Impacts of the US War on China.” Speakers from Guåhan (Guam) and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) shared about the history and current escalation of militarization on their home islands. Dr. Kenneth Gofigan Kuper described why Guam has been called the “Tip of the Spear” of the US military, as a strategic but disposable location which has been made perpetually vulnerable and thus dependent on the US military. Dr. Theresa (Isa) Arriola described how the Mariana Islands have been segmented, and the CNMI has a separate political status from Guam. Like Guam, the CNMI has been made dependent on the US military, particularly for recovery from two super-typhoons. It is ironic since the US military is one of the main culprits behind climate change, which has caused stronger and more frequent typhoons. The military also uses scientific research and environmental preservation projects to hide the massive destruction which it causes simultaneously. Artist and activist Monaeka “Naek” Flores told about the recent expansion of military bases and threats posed by the military in Guåhan, especially during the COVID pandemic. Historic village and burial sites, rare herbs, endangered species, and essential sources of drinking water have been destroyed, but groups like Prutehi Litekyan have been standing in opposition. Finally, writer and lawyer Julian Aguon shared how he has helped various organizations to file numerous lawsuits with little success. However, he encouraged the participants that we need to rekindle our imaginations, think critically about language, and tell good stories about what is happening in Guam and other places, stories that pay attention to what is usually excluded from conversations. The webinar itself was a good opportunity for activists in the Marianas to connect with other peace movements and vice versa. The video recording is available at <https://youtu.be/k-GyqOlFeHc>

Updates from Henoko and Miyako

by Nakamura Mizuki

Okinawa Governor Denny Tamaki announced on Nov. 25 that he decided to disapprove the Japanese government’s application for design changes for its plan to build the new U.S. military base in Henoko. The application was filed in Apr. 2020 to address the soft seafloor found at the planned landfill site in Oura Bay. On the next day, more than 100 residents took part in a rally in Naha City to support the governor’s decision and reaffirm their protest against the base construction in Henoko. A similar rally was also held in Tokyo on the same day. The Japanese government is expected to take measures against the governor’s denial of its application, which could lead to another legal battle. The national government continues to transplant coral from the planned landfill site despite the Okinawa prefectural government’s withdrawal of its conditional permission for transplanting. The prefectural government withdrew its permission after they found that the construction had not complied with its condition that the transplanting must avoid high water temperature and typhoon periods.

On Nov. 14, the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force transported surface-to-air and surface-to-ship missiles to its Bora Training Area on Miyako Island, Okinawa. A Maritime SDF transport ship docked at Hirara Port that morning and unloaded 15 large trucks, which then delivered containers filled with munitions to the training area. Residents protested against the delivery at the port and in front of the training area and were forcibly removed by the prefectural police. On Nov. 21, representatives of a residents’ group against the SDF deployment to Miyako Island held a press conference in front of GSDF Camp Miyakojima and released a statement in protest against the expansion of the SDF’s base capabilities and training on the island. The GSDF deployed surface-to-air and surface-to-ship missile units to Camp Miyakojima in Mar. 2020. In March this year, two ammunition depots were built in the Bora Training Area. (Reference: Okinawa Times)

The War Drum-beating 53rd ROK-US SCM

by Choi Sung-hee

On Dec. 2, the ROK Minister of National Defense Suh Wook and U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III made public the joint communique of the 53rd South Korea-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting in Seoul. According to the joint communique, the US Secretary reiterated “the firm U.S. commitment to providing extended deterrence to the ROK utilizing the full range of U.S. defense capabilities, including nuclear, conventional, and missile defense capabilities,” and “both leaders committed to strengthening the Alliance’s deterrence posture by leveraging all available Alliance capabilities, including cyber and space capabilities.” The Minister and the Secretary “approved new Strategic Planning Guidance (SPG) to guide Alliance planning efforts—which reflects changes to the strategic environment.” The joint communique is full of infringements on South Korea’s sovereignty and threats to the peace of the region and the world. The Moon Jae-in government, above all, abandoned its right to operational control. Noticeably, “the importance of the Taiwan Strait” was mentioned “as reflected in the May 2021 Joint Statement between President Biden and President Moon.” However, the USFK’s intervention in the China-Taiwan conflict violates even the ROK-US mutual defense treaty. Further, South Korea’s intervention in that conflict would violate South Korea’s own constitution and the UN Charter which proscribe aggressive wars. The United States intention is clear: while raising the level of military coercion to a climax against North Korea, it draws South Korea into the US-China military confrontation, aiming for a dangerous ROK-US-Japan military alliance. For the people, it is very clear: the SCM which “has played a pivotal role in the continued development of the ROK-US Alliance” should be abolished; and the imperialistic US-ROK alliance should be dismantled!

Today is Thursday

by Deulso

This summer, I performed a series of protest interventions in front of the Jeju Naval Base entitled “Today is Thursday.” These performances started with a recording of the sit-in protest on Sept. 2, the anniversary of the expulsion of protestors from Gureombi. While we were sitting in the plaza, sewing, talking, reading and thinking about the memory of that day, I realized we were keeping alive a memory that many of us did not have directly but one that had been passed on to us through the community in Gangjeong. I thought about our responsibility to pass that memory along to others, and to add the new memory of this Sept. 2. And so, in addition to the photographs and videos of the day, I made an audio recording. This recording captured the sound of the creaking gate and the rumbling truck, but also murmurs of a community resisting.

On Sept. 3, I returned to the gate and played the recording while reading a poem called “Today is Thursday / 오늘은 목요일.” The poem was addressed to the base, explaining that the spirit of Sept. 2, 2011 was going to continue through Sept. 2, 2021 and beyond. I returned to read the poem and play the sound again, on Sept. 4. Thursday was now Friday was now Saturday, too. Then I started moving the performances, drawing lines across the base; first on the Haeoreum Noeul-gil Path on the southern breakwater, shouting the poem over the blustery tide-winds. Then in the west, in the park near the replica Jusangjeolli rock formation fountain. Then in the east, on the rocks at the open mouth of the Gangjeong River.

When I had finished, I took the recordings of all the performances, all these September 2nds, and layered them into one cacophonous track. I returned to the base to play the sound, but this time I read a different poem, called “Line, Gather, Rock-in-the-Way.” This poem was not addressed to the gate but to Gangjeong Village, expressing my deep gratitude for everything they taught me about the power of daily resistance and a culture of peace. I turned my back on the base and read that poem to my friends.

More than once, I was corrected by the security guard, as if I was confused or slightly mad. “What are you talking about? Today is Friday,” he said, or “Today is not September 2nd, it is September 9th.” Maybe so. But not only. 오늘은 목요일. 오늘은 9월 2일. (Today is Thursday. Today is Sept. 2).



You can see Deulso's performances of “Today is Thursday” and “Line, Gather, Rock-in-the-Way” on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qb8D5oEaANs> and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSqlo_cMtLM



On Sept. 2, the anniversary of Gureombi Rock being closed off for base construction, activists hung ribbons with peace messages to Gureombi all over the entrance of the Jeju Naval Base. Photo by Deulso.



During heightened coronavirus restrictions, the daily 7 AM 100 Bows for Life and Peace were temporarily paused, but on Sept. 18, people from around Korea joined the Gangjeong 100 Bows over Zoom.



During heightened coronavirus restrictions in August and September, the daily 12 noon Gangjeong human chain was temporarily paused, so we took turns doing daily picketing on the main road near the entrance to the Jeju Naval Base. Photos by Curry and Choi Sung-hee.

Marking the 10th year of the Gangjeong Village Story

The Gangjeong Village Story hit its 10th year as of this October. The first Gangjeong Village Story was published in 2011 amid the forceful building of the base construction fence around Gureombi Rock, as well as arrests and imprisonment of seven villagers and activists. The GVS was published every month until 2017. It was published every two or three months since then and only online from 2019. It would not have been possible without financial support by the Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Navy Base and Gangjeong Friends. We also thank many internationals who showed constant concern and support to the GVS.

Presente! Lee Haeng-woo

Lee Haeng Woo, a Quaker and the President Emeritus of the National Association of Korean Americans (NAKA) passed away on Oct. 16. Born in Korea on Jan. 3, 1931, he moved to the United States with his family in 1968. While making a living as a system analyst in the banks until 2003, he devoted himself to working for the peaceful unification of Korea for more than four decades. He was also a strong supporter of the Gangjeong peace movement, bringing internationals to Gangjeong. He was the recipient of the Hankyoreh Unification Culture Award in 2011. His funeral was a closed family ceremony, following his testimony.



The documentary film made by Grace (Sungeun Kim), *Map without Island*, premiered on Oct. 10 at Busan International Film Festival. The film deals with the story of Yasmin, a Yemeni asylum seeker who arrived in Jeju in 2018, and her film letter being delivered to other islanders who participate in various social and environmental movements on the island. Many friends came to Busan to celebrate the first screening. Photo by Hahyung Gwon.



On August 7, friends prepared gifts of appreciation for Chef Kim Jong-hwan recognising his 13 years of cooking meals at Halmangmul (later also called Samgeori) community kitchen. Over the years, these meals have been the heart of the Gangjeong peace community. Photo by Choi Hyea-young

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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The Korea Peace Appeal Campaign to End the Korean War has collected over 111,000 signatures so far, but it aims to collect 100 million signatures. You can sign and get involved at endthekoreanwar.org.

