

GANGJEONG VILLAGE

STORY

News on the struggle against
the Jeju Naval Base

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On Aug. 26, 2023 Jeju Grand March for Life and Peace participants gathered for a photo as they started the fourth and final day of the march. Photo by jum.jombbae

Remembering the 6,000th day of the Gangjeong Struggle

by e-sang

Celebrating Oct. 20, 2023, the 6,000th day of Gangjeong struggle, Gangjeong Peace Network and the Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Navy Base held a rally at Jeju City Hall on Oct. 23. "6,000 days of struggle against the naval base in Gangjeong Village, blood, sweat, and tears – let's end the war," participants of the rally stated. "Through the past 6,000 days of struggle, we have experienced a journey of peace created by diverse and intersecting movements of peace, justice, and life, not just a dichotomous approach of winning and losing. We learned that part of the Gangjeong struggle has been to learn a lifestyle and attitude of responsibility, choosing on our own what kind of life to live, and acting despite the limitation that we can exist only as a part of an enormous social structure. In addition, as we have experienced solidarity with countless people, we could feel that individuals, society, the country, nature, and the earth are connected. The sense for and traces of peace engraved on each person who participated in this struggle contribute to create Gangjeong's present day and enable us to continue our struggle in connection with various sites. [...] We will continue our daily peaceful actions of resistance and solidarity, to stop the militarization of Jeju Island, and to stop the unnecessary and unfair wars around the world. We will block the planned Jeju 2nd Airport, which would effectively serve as a military airport. We will continue to criticize the use of Korean weapons in Israel's recent resumption of the war on Gaza, and to oppose the Korean government's active participation in the war. We will continue our journey of peace toward a world where there is no military and no war, a world where everyone is equal, without giving up hope in the progress of history."



A performance portrayed memories of Gureombi Rock to celebrate the 6000th day of the Gangjeong struggle. Photo by Curry

Jeju Grand March for Life and Peace

by Ddalgi

After pausing during the COVID pandemic for three years, the Jeju Grand March for Life and Peace resumed last Aug. 23 and was held for four days. With the slogan, "Again, Let's Go, Peace!" participants from Jeju, across Korea, and around the world called out to close the Jeju Naval Base, to stop the Jeju 2nd Airport, for Pres. Yoon Seok-yeol to resign, and to oppose the release of nuclear-contaminated water from Fukushima. A total of about 700 people joined the march which departed from Gangjeong Village, passed through Seongsan (the proposed site of the 2nd airport), and continued to Jeju City. People could feel the importance of talking about peace in Jeju amid the coming and going of US and foreign warships at Jeju Naval Base, wars continuing around the world, and military tensions being triggered between Taiwan and China. It was a chance to affirm that the majority opinion is against the plans for the Jeju 2nd airport. Consensus was formed to confront the degradation of social rights under the Yoon Seok-yeol administration. Particularly, people spoke out together against Japan's release of nuclear-contaminated water from Fukushima. The end of August was comparatively cooler than previous marches in early August, but the schedule had to be adjusted due to sudden heavy rains. Feeling the uncertainty about the climate with their whole bodies, the participants were conscious of the climate crisis as they walked. This year, students from Jeju alternative schools brought passion to the march, and participants from Okinawa, the US and Mexico brought diversity. It had been a long time with no march, but many people from across the nation and around the world contributed to preserve the enthusiasm to protect life and peace in Jeju. The event ended with wishes by participants to continue the march again next year. I am looking forward to affirming our connectedness and building solidarity at the next Grand March for Life and Peace.

by Sanho

I had seen videos that showed the Grand March, with beautiful scenes of many people in yellow t-shirts marching together and calling for peace in Jeju. I knew that the march hadn't happened for a long time due to COVID, but I was excited that it would happen again this year. On August 23, many people gathered at the entrance of the Jeju Naval Base despite heavy rain. Everyone wore pink t-shirts with the words, "Peace is the Way," and as we walked, we danced and sang. I hoped that our message of peace would reach the hearts of distant people. Our shoes got wet, but we just looked at each other and laughed. When we stopped for a break, the rain stopped and I could lie on the grass and dry my wet socks in the warm sunshine. This was peace, for me: to laugh with friends in the cool rain, to sing and dance as we walked, to lie down and rest. To cut down forests to build an airport, to kill corals by filling the ocean with cement for a navy base, these are not the way of peace. The way that we marched, this was a way of peace.

by Sabina Castro

I am from Mexico, where social movements and indigenous communities have taught us much about other possible worlds. Participating in the Jeju Grand March was a very beautiful experience. I had the opportunity to meet other people who taught me a lot about the dignified rage and the joyful rebellion that prevails in the unsubmissive land of Jeju. Our Zapatista brothers and sisters always remind us that our struggle is in defense of life. Undoubtedly, the people of Jeju continue to put life at the center. The struggle against the new airport and the naval base are proof of this. Despite language barriers, chatting with people, sharing food, exchanging smiles, shouting peace slogans and carrying banners with important messages during the walk filled my heart with hope. At the march I reaffirmed that resistance is also a celebration, even though at times we experience sorrow and mourning as well. Dance, art and music are part of our struggle, and to resist is at the same time to create something new. Despite being so far away from my home, I felt sheltered by the collective energy of a tumult that dreams and organizes to change the world.



On the third day, march participants spot dolphins swimming around the northeast side of Jeju. Photo by jum.jombbae



Sanho (left) gazes defiantly at the dark skies, while retired Bishop Peter Kang (right) smiles towards the camera. Photo by jum.jombbae



Jeju Youth Climate Action prepared umbrellas that read, "We don't want to eat nuclear-contaminated water from Fukushima!" Photo by Allen Majors



During a short rest from marching, Sabina answers questions for a video interview. Photo by jum.jombbae



March participants shout together in front of Jeju City Hall, where the Grand March concludes with a rally including speeches and several musical performances. Photo by Gureombiya Saranghae



Alternative school students dance to the Grand March theme song as marchers prepare to leave the Catholic church where they ate lunch. Photo by jum.jombbae

Peace for the Sea International Camp in Miyako Island

by Curry

From Nov. 10 to 13, Peace for the Sea International Camp was held on Miyako Island, southwest of Okinawa main island. Until COVID, Peace for the Sea Camps were held annually from 2014 to 2019 in rotating locations in Jeju, Okinawa, and Taiwan, and each year the camp has been organized by local hosts. After a three year break, several participants from past years reunited in the name of inter-island solidarity in Miyako Island. Many new participants joined as well, with a total of 50 participants from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, mainland China and Hawaii.

Organizers Kamoshita Yuichi and Aihara Sarasa recruited a team of volunteers and local hosts, and the camp was held at a youth center. Participants joined lectures and discussions and took field trips to historical sites and sites of protest against the several Japanese Self Defense Force bases which have recently been expanding.

Local residents welcomed the peace camp members and shared about their experiences, confronting the noise pollution, radiation, threats to underground water resources, and the threat that these bases will bring war again to Miyako Island. In the Second World War, 30,000 troops were stationed in Miyako, the island was blockaded and bombed, and many civilians died from disease and starvation. Now, residents fear that their island will be targeted if war breaks out in Taiwan.

The peace camp offered many opportunities for participants to share about the issues that they face and the movements for peace that they are a part of. For the first time at Peace for the Sea Camp, participants shared their experience with social movements in mainland China. As diverse participants shared their unique struggles, we could sense the power of meeting in person to share information and encourage one another.

by Omi Yoshida

The first person I saw coming off the plane in Miyako-jima was Bandi. My face lit up! Memories from visiting Gangjeong Village in 2017 for the Grand March came back. Curry was surprised to see me. Brother Song gave a warm welcome. And I began to meet a new generation of peace activists.

As we drove from the airport to the dorms that would be our home for 4 days, the aquamarine color of the ocean stood out, as well as the flora that is kin to the plants and trees we have in Hawai'i. Kamoshita-san and Sarasa-san are such great organizers and hosts. That was felt from the beginning.

We continued to gather every few hours to share food and conversation around what was happening in our home communities related to military forces. I really appreciated the time to just focus on friendship and mutual understanding of what each of us are experiencing, especially from the host community of Miyako-jima.

Our goals are the same. To live in peace – to grow healthy food, take care of the earth, our traditions and each other. It strengthens my commitment to do the same in Hawai'i. And I hope the friendships made in Miyako continue to grow.

by Toran

I joined Miyako peace camp with friends from Gangjeong. I had heard that Okinawa was an attractive tourist destination that felt like a 'harmonious' combination of the US and Japan. However, when I visited Henoko, on Okinawa's main island, and Miyako Island I saw the bases and joined protests in solidarity. I realized that there was not 'harmony' but 'oppression' and 'violence.' The Okinawan people's peaceful lives were destroyed by many bases built on small islands for the sake of making Okinawa into a US war base. This sight reminded me of Jeju and Gangjeong. Militarism is a menace wherever it is found. Militarism tramples the weak and steals their lives. This sight was sad, but at the same time I was deeply inspired by the peace activists who joined peace camp from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Hawaii and Korea. Militarism destroys community and breaks the universal camaraderie of humanity, but I could see that as the weak call out for peace, they make a strong wave of solidarity. As each island seems to be distant, but all are connected by the sea, so at peace camp we were all connected to each other. Thus, I knew clearly that we have to make an effort to achieve true 'harmony.' With these thoughts I returned from camp, knowing that Gangjeong is not alone.



Shimizu Hayako shares about the local protest movement against Chiyoda Japanese Self Defense Force Base, which opened in 2019. Photo by Hotpinkdolphins



Korean participants gather around one of the Japanese-Korean interpreters, Okimoto Fukiko, at the site of the Arirang Memorial, which remembers the Korean women who were held as sexual slaves to the Japanese military in Miyako in WWII. Photo by Curry



At the entrance of Chiyoda base, participants from Jeju lead the group in three dances from the Gangjeong peace movement. Photo by Hotpinkdolphins



Local hosts share freshly harvested sugarcane as a desert for peace camp participants. Photo by Curry



Peace for the Sea camp participants gather for a photo before settling into the youth house in Miyako. Photo by Hotpinkdolphins



Bandi is carried by police during the daily protest against the US base expansion at Henoko. Some peace camp participants visited the main island of Okinawa on the way to or from Miyako Island. Photo by Curry

Gong Pyeong Hae

1st Peace Ocean Sailing Project

Jeju - Okinawa - Taiwan

Jun. 1 ~ Sept. 15, 2023

5000 km Sailing Completed

by Song Kang-ho

107 days ago, we left Gangjeong Port on June 1. It rained that day. I vividly remember the people waving.

When we declared Jeju to be a Demilitarized Peace Island on Jan. 27, 2013, I announced my plan to sail for peace. Then, in Sept. 2019, I brought our yacht, Jonah's Whale, from Funabashi, Japan, sailing for 15 days. Finally, 10 years after announcing the journey, 5 crew members, including me, Susan, Shicho, Seungjun, and Joe set sail together.

The voyage conveyed the hope of making our sea surrounded by Korea, China, and Japan, which has been called the East China Sea, into a sea of peace. Thus, we call it 'Gongpyeonghae' (Sea of Peace and Coexistence). This sea where dolphins and fish swim is dying, polluted with styrofoam, plastic and floating dead fish. The beautiful sea, lined with islands of forests and fantastic rocks, is being destroyed by military bases. However, in order to overcome this self-destructive reality, peaceful people who inhabit these islands are struggling to stop military bases and protect the islands' natural peace and beauty. We shared our condolences, encouragement and gratitude. People welcomed us, fed us, hosted us, and showed us around their islands. They got courage from us and pledged to persist until the end to make peace islands.

If we do not hold on to our hope for a peaceful world without war, our voyage is meaningless. We departed because we believe that the Sea of Peace and Coexistence will be realized, a sea where all living beings coexist. It is our right and our duty. We hope that 2nd and 3rd voyages will be joined by others in the future.

(Excerpted from a speech given at the Human Chain on Sept. 15 when the boat arrived in Gangjeong. Korean full text at <https://new.express.adobe.com/webpage/bamBruLCZHoOn>)



Many Gangjeong friends came to the port to welcome the Jonah's Whale on Sept. 15, including some who paddled out in kayaks. Photo by Yang Sang

Reflections After 100 Days at Sea

by Jonathan Seungjoon Lee



The Gongpyeonghae team's GoPro took a photo of Seungjoon and Song sailing. Photo by the Gongpyeonghae team

Greeted by the smell of Halla-san [mountain], winding its way down to our small 30-foot yacht in the ocean, Jonah's Whale finally reached the end of its first journey circling the East Pacific. Embarking from Gangjeong over 100 days before, we crossed the Ryukyu Islands, reaching Taiwan before making our way back home again. Anticipation bubbled up, when I saw our friends waving yellow flags and banners over the pier.

In our circumambulation of the eastern Pacific I realized just how interconnected our islands are. How our struggles in opposition to neo-imperial hegemony and militarism can never be seen as isolated cases. How we become whole as we resist the homogenizing effect of US military culture, finding our voices and identity in union with one another.

Within this solidarity, the winds directed my body and mind towards the question of the loss of indigenous identity within these islands, from Jeju, the Ryukyu Islands, to the indigenous tribes of Taiwan. Conversations with indigenous activists, leaders, and students began to shape my understanding of what the sea of peace and coexistence could mean. I realized then that the loss of such indigenous knowledge is at the heart of the anti-base movement.

The spiritual question of this work resonates with me. The globalizing hegemony functions by flattening all things. It makes all things interchangeable and replaceable. However, at the soul of this work is that which is irreplaceable. I think of the soul that exists within places such as Gureombi rock. Indigenous knowledge recognizes that such a place cannot be bought, sold, or replaced. To live in coexistence means to recognize this essence, whether that be the oceans, the trees, or the rocks.

In order to transmute global military culture we must then place indigenous knowledge at the heart of our work. So now, one week after our arrival, I find myself continuously arriving over and over again- so that I might arrive towards the spiritual core that will overturn this hegemony.

2023 Jeju Womens' Peace Workshop "Empathy and Solidarity"

by Bomal



The 2023 Jeju Women's Peace Workshop participants posed together at the Oct. 14 human chain and shouted, "Women are making peace!" Photo by Song Kang-ho

"During my stay in Korea so far, I've never felt so free, comfortable yet stimulated like I was here," said Rev. Unju Lee, the East Asia Regional Director of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), after sharing an intense two days at a workshop in Gangjeong. She's one of 34 women peace activists who gathered from all over to this small town in Jeju to participate in the 2023 Jeju Women's Peace Workshop from Oct. 13-14. The workshop was organized by Gangjeong Peace Network, Gyeonggi Women's Network, the Women Conscientious Objectors, and Women Making Peace with the help of St. Francis Peace Center. The two-day workshop program started its first day with introductory presentations about the peace movement in five locations: Seongju, Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggi, Gangjeong, and Gunsan, and

small group discussions followed. After eating dinner prepared by peace activists at the center, there was a recreational time to get to know each other and exchange items that each participant introduced with a story. The second day consisted of planning joint agendas and ideas for future cooperation, evaluating the overall program, participating in the daily Gangjeong Hundred Bows for Life and Peace and the Human Chain, and touring the Gangjeong Stream and the village. During the discussion session, concerns were raised about how to find right grounding between recovery of victims and recognition of perpetrators, about awareness of militarism within 'us', about harmonious and continuous connection with community activities, and about research activities after field struggles. Regarding future plans for joint action, the International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament on May 24 was suggested. Participants also agreed to take action online for International Women's Day. The participants shared feedback such as "listening to stories from each region told from the perspective of female activists or female local residents was valuable," and "the overall atmosphere felt like a safe and free environment, and I feel closer to the group after getting to know everyone."



On Oct. 22, a documentary titled 'Love your neighbor as your body' was screened in Gangjeong. The movie portrays people who call for 'love' in the face of ultra-right Protestant forces of hatred against the LGBTQ community. The movie follows LGBTQ allies in eight places around Korea: in Seoul, Daegu, Busan, Gyeongnam, Gwangju, Incheon, Chuncheon, and Jeju. The event was co-organized by the Jeju Women's Association and the Jeju Queer Pride Organizing Meeting.

Photo by the Jeju Women's Association

Demilitarization and non-alignment

by Curry

On Oct. 28-29, the International Strategy Center hosted an international forum titled, "Building Peace." Speakers from around the world warned about the looming threat of not-so-cold war in Northeast Asia and the need for international grassroots solidarity aligned with neither the US nor China. Simone Chun named the US encirclement of China as the greatest threat to peace in the region and proposed the vision of a liberated, independent and unified Korea. Daiwie Fu outlined the statement he prepared with other Taiwanese professors recommending that Taiwan should have an equal distance from the US and the PRC, and suggested a model of 'one China' as a confederation like the EU. Hideki Yoshikawa shared about the peace movement in Okinawa, and Cho Youngmi shared about the Korea Peace Appeal campaign. Hinada Seishi shared about international solidarity in Japan and Choi Sunghee shared about the vision of Jeju as a demilitarized peace island. The second day continued with presentations about the new non-aligned movement around the world and the need to involve civil society in people's diplomacy. All speakers agreed on the need to continue such timely conversations to build further people's solidarity together. Find recordings of the forum in English and Korean at <https://www.youtube.com/@internationalstrategycente7376>

Trilateral alliance launch and UNC revitalization

By Choi Sung-hee

In the statement released following the Camp David Summit on Aug. 18, 2023, the leaders of South Korea, the U.S., and Japan, Yoon, Biden, and Kishida, announced plans for annual summit meetings and regular South Korea-U.S.-Japan drills over the next years. In fact, it was a declaration of alliance among South Korea, the U.S. and Japan. This pledge to trilateral consultation is characterized by imperial aggression, in that it violates Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, which recognizes individual or collective self-defense only in the event of an armed attack, and that it seeks to solidify hegemony over the region and the world.

From Aug. 21, the ROK-US drill called Ulchi Freedom Shield, "the largest joint war exercise in the Pacific," was held for 10 days, and for the first time ever, the U.S. mainland's space force and 10 United Nations Command member countries including Australia, Canada, France, Greece, Italy, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, and the U.K., joined the drill. Among them, five are NATO countries. The UNC is a U.S.-led military organization unrelated to the United Nations, as the General Assembly passed a resolution to dismantle the UNC in 1975. Nevertheless, the U.S. still maintains the U.N. Command in South Korea and seven UNC bases in Japan. As long as the UNC exists, Japan will intervene in the event of a crisis on the Korean Peninsula by providing bases to the U.S. and other UNC force contributors, even though Japan is not a UNC force contributor.

As a result of the ROK-US-Japan defense ministers' meeting held on Nov. 12, 2023, a real-time missile warning information sharing system began operating in the following month. This supports the integration of missile defense (MD) between South Korea, the U.S., and Japan. The 55th annual Korea-US Security Consultative Meeting held on Nov. 13 discussed "maintaining and strengthening the momentum for the development of a global comprehensive strategic alliance" and "implementing extended deterrence." On Nov. 14, the first ROK-UNC defense ministers' meeting was led by the South Korean government. This can be said to be part of the US hegemonic initiative to build a power that overwhelms China in the Indo-Pacific region by involving NATO member states which contribute forces through the UNC to supplement the ROK-US-Japan forces.

The establishment and strengthening of the Korea-U.S.-Japan alliance not only heightens the war crisis on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia, but also threatens the lives and peace of people around the world as it is a tool for the U.S. initiative for global hegemony. Korea's peace movement strongly opposes the launch of the Korea-U.S.-Japan Alliance and the revitalization of the United Nations Command. (Reference from SPARK etc.)



As US soldiers left from the Jeju Naval Base in tour buses on Oct. 5, activists confronted them with picket signs. Protests continued during three visits by US warships at the Jeju Naval Base in fall 2023: the Aegis destroyer USS Ralph Johnson (Oct. 2-6), the Aegis destroyer USS John Finn (Oct. 27-30), and the nuclear submarine USS Santa Fe (Nov. 22-27). Photo by Choi Sung-hee

South Korean Defense Budget Grows

By Choi Sung-hee

In Dec. 2023, the Ministry of National Defense decided to establish a mid-term defense plan for 2024-28 and invest 348.7 trillion won (266 billion USD) over the next five years. The growth rate of military spending will be 7 percent on average over the next five years. The main point of the mid-term defense plan is to create a strategic command, integrating military strategic assets, and to upgrade the 7th Task Force stationed at the Jeju Naval Base into a Mobile Fleet Command, which will implement the capability of a three-axis maritime-based system centered on Aegis ships. Another remarkable thing is that by combining dozens of ultra-small satellites and an expected five reconnaissance satellites, the time lapse between satellite visits over the Korean Peninsula will be drastically shortened to 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, Korea's defense budget for 2024 was finalized at 59.42 trillion won, up 4.2 percent from the previous year. In contrast, the Yoon Suk Yeol government cut 20 percent of the unification-related budget. The government also cut taxes for the rich such as corporate taxes, which is estimated at 60 trillion won.

Why is the Yoon Suk Yeol regime sticking to armaments and defense budget expansion while drastically reducing the desperate people's livelihood and unification budget? At the root of the Yoon Suk Yeol regime lies the distorted security idea of 'peace by force.' The increase in the defense budget is related to the active participation of the Yoon Suk Yeol regime in the U.S. initiative of global hegemony, including the Korea-U.S.-Japan alliance. According to the U.S. assessment agency Global Firepower's report on Jan. 19, 2024, South Korea ranked fifth, rising one notch from last year. On the other hand, North Korea's military strength ranked 36th. (Reference from SPARK etc.)

Arms dealer Hanwha is entering Jeju

By Choi Sung-hee

Following North Korea's launch of a military reconnaissance satellite on Nov. 21, 2023, South Korea launched its first military reconnaissance satellite on Dec. 1 using SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket at Vandenberg Space Force Base. Then, on Dec. 4, a small-sized SAR (Synthetic Aperture Radar) satellite from Hanwha Systems, one of Korea's leading arms corporations, was launched using a solid-propelled projectile and technology developed by the South Korea Agency for Defense Development at the ADD maritime launching station installed only 4km from the south coast of Jeju.

In July 2023, Hanwha Systems and Jeju Island government signed an MOU to foster the space industry in Jeju. The Jeju government fully sponsors Hanwha to build a space center on part of the former Tamna University site, part of the planned 'Hawon Techno campus' development project. The site is a 15-minute drive from the Gangjeong navy base. The Hanwha Space Center will build numerous micro satellites.

Hanwha Systems signed a commercial low orbit satellite-based communication system worth 39.8 billion won (approx. 30 million USD) on Nov. 29 under the auspices of the ROK Agency for Defense Development, which aims to secure a military network by utilizing low-orbit satellites from the civilian sector. Specifically, it aims to "upgrade the tactical network of the Army, Navy, and Air Force into a satellite communication network" and "lay the foundation for a hyper-connected and multi-tier network for the future military." As if reflecting this, the sea launch station came to the Gangjeong navy base on Dec. 18.

The military conflict between the two Koreas intensified due to the militarization of space, and the September 19 inter-Korean military agreement of 2018 was finally incapacitated. It goes without saying that the de facto Korea-U.S.-Japan alliance declaration and NATO expansion for US hegemony are behind this. Following the Korea-U.S. Space Forum on Nov. 6-7, 2023, the 'Korea-U.S. Space Industry Symposium' was held on Nov. 8 "to form a South Korea-U.S. alliance in the space industry." According to a media report, "Space companies have emerged as key players" of the South Korea-U.S. space alliance. In December, South Korea and Japan expanded their cooperation into space, also.

The space industry, which is touted for future job opportunities by the government and Hanwha, gives profits to capital and increases military power, but it deprives people of their right to live, causing environmental destruction and climate catastrophe. Unfortunately, Korean politicians, ruling and opposition parties alike, are bent on expanding the space industry and increasing their military power in space. The Yoon Suk Yeol government drastically cut its science and technology budget for 2024. However, the budget defined Daejeon (R&D), Gyeongnam (Satellite Production Specialization), and Jeonnam (Launch Production Specialization) as triangular clusters in the space industry.



On Dec. 4, 2023, people protest the sea rocket launch of a Hanwha Systems satellite in Jeju. Photo by Hwang Yong-woon.

Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water dumping begins despite resistance

By Choi Sung-hee

On Aug. 24, 2023, the Japanese government began dumping contaminated water from the Tokyo Electric Power Corporation's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, despite opposition from numerous countries and citizens, and even Japanese fishermen. It is speculated that the discharge will last 30 to 100 years. It is an international terrorist act that ignores international law on the obligation to preserve marine ecosystems, and is a criminal act that violates the right to life.

Experts and civil society groups have revealed that the Advanced Liquid Processing System cannot purify contaminated water, and have suggested alternatives such as land storage, including solidification or oil tank construction. Nevertheless, the Japanese government opted for low costs and economic benefits, not life and safety.

The South Korean government has long turned a deaf ear despite the majority of the population opposing the dumping of contaminated water. At the Korea-U.S.-Japan summit on Aug.18, President Yoon Suk-yeol did not even mention the issue of contaminated water, and the issue of health and safety of his people was totally ignored.

In Nov. 2023, three anti-nuclear Jeju activists were each booked on charges of unauthorized attachment of advertisements and got fined 100,000 won with a two-year suspended sentence at a summary trial. They are accused of posting posters with the phrase "Can I really drink nuclear contaminated water from Fukushima, Japan?" and photos of President Yoon Suk-yeol pouring nuclear contaminated water into a cup at 280 bus stops and public facilities in Jeju Island in May. (Reference from the YMCA etc.)



During the hot summer, peace activists in Gangjeong worked on renewing Samgeori restaurant, our protest community kitchen. After the hard labor of replacing things that were broken and a deep cleaning, this beautiful restaurant is ready to welcome anti-war protesters from all over the world! Photo by Kim Jong-hwan.

natural monuments such as camphor trees, psilotales, and elaeocarpus grow naturally.

The construction had been rejected for years due to the legal protection of many cultural properties and natural monuments, but the Ministry of National Defense and the Jeju provincial government reported that the construction work had little impact on Gangjeong Stream. They wrote illegal reports, drastically reducing the scope and methods of environmental impact assessment or stating false facts.

The entire Gangjeong Stream is now surrounded by military facilities, starting with the naval radar facility not far from the upper stream on Halla Mountain, followed by the planned Hanwha Space Center, and then the naval base located at the end of Gangjeong Stream.

Military Road Opens...

By Lee Kwang-hee

On Nov. 15, 2023, the construction of the entrance road to the Gangjeong Civilian Military Complex Port for Beautiful Tourism (hereafter referred to as the naval base access road) was completed, with a total length of 2.52 km. It has brought many controversies and accidents.

The project's implementation design was initially promoted by the Civilian Military Complex Port for Beautiful Tourism construction project board which belongs to the Navy, as part of the civil-military joint use facility construction project in 2015.

The naval base access road crosses the Gangjeong Stream, which is the most important drinking water source in Jeju Island, supplying 50% of drinking water in Seogwipo City. It is a wintering place for numerous birds such as mandarin ducks and kestrels, and an ecological axis river where numerous

Stop the notice of the basic plan on the 2nd airport

By Park Chan-sik, Jeju People's Assembly Against the 2nd Airport

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT) is pushing ahead with the process of notifying the basic plan to legally determine the construction plan for a second Jeju airport. More than 75% of residents agreed in a poll that the construction of the second airport should be decided through a referendum, but Governor Oh Young-hun rejected the idea on the grounds that it was not within the governor's authority and the opinions of the residents could be reflected in the environmental impact assessment (EIA), paving the way for the MOLIT to push ahead with the process. Since the EIA is a process that evaluates the impact on the environment and proposes reduction measures on the premise of project promotion, there is no room for the residents to exercise their right to decide whether to build the second airport. However, the project cannot be carried out unless the governor of Jeju Island, who has consultation authority under the Jeju Special Act, agrees with the environmental impact assessment. Therefore, if the basic plan is announced, inevitably fierce conflict will follow over whether to agree to the environmental impact assessment which will be submitted in about two years. The Jeju People's Assembly Against the 2nd Airport held a signature campaign calling for the notice of the basic plan to be stopped and for a referendum to be held, and they submitted it to the MOLIT. In addition, if the basic plan is announced, they will continue to conduct investigations on major issues in the environmental impact assessment, along with activities to expand opposition to the construction of the second airport. Based on this, if an EIA is submitted, the People's Assembly plans to gather the will of Jeju residents against the second airport and to pressure the Jeju governor and the provincial council with strong actions.



Die-in performance in opposition to new airport projects nationwide in front of the MOLIT building, Sejong City, Korea, on Sept. 7, 2023, the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies. Photo by Bombom.

Finishing Season 1 of the Jeju Climate Peace March

by Oum Mun-hee

The Jeju Climate Peace March concluded its first year-long season of action with a briefing for Jeju residents on Nov. 23. With the slogan, "The world moves as much as we march," Jeju Climate Peace March began in Nov. 2022 in Gangjeong Village at the site where the Gangjeong River is being destroyed. The march continued each month for a year, visiting 10 different sites to listen to the people struggling there and discuss how to solve the problems that Jeju faces at the frontlines of the climate crisis.

At the briefing, three members of the Jeju Climate Peace March planning team, Oum Mun-hee, Choi Sung-hee and Hwang Yong-



On Sept. 23, Jeju Climate Peace March participants posed with their banner, which reads, "The world moves as much as we march." Photo by Cho Sujin

woon, gave presentations on different topics, and another member, sociology researcher Yoon Yeo-il, facilitated the event.

The Jeju Climate Peace March team looked at 'colonialism' as a deep-seated cause of disaster amidst the sights of Jeju, the frontline of the climate crisis, and specifically pointed to the militarization of Jeju, which has quickly become a reality in the form of satellite launchers and satellite centers. They also evaluated the unexpected future that these activities have brought.

The briefing ended with hopes that after the end of the first season of the Jeju Climate Peace March, the climate activism would continue with new topics. They also confirmed that there are several active groups researching Jeju's current climate issues.

Gangjeong Village joins the Gunsan Climate Peace March

by Go Gwon-il, Co-representative, Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Naval Base

The Gunsan Climate Peace March is directly connected to the movement against the Saemangeum New Airport. Saemangeum New Airport is synonymous with the issue of U.S. military base expansion. It is said to be a civilian airport, but it would be a military airport controlled by the U.S. military. Gunsan (located in the southeast of the mainland of Korea) and Gangjeong Village have something in common in that both fight against militarization.

The Korean Peninsula is now on the verge of a serious war as the new Cold War spreads and strengthens. The Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Naval Base has opposed the Jeju Naval Base, declaring that the base would turn Jeju Island into a Northeast Asian powder keg. Gangjeong also knows that the Jeju 2nd Airport construction project planned in the east of Jeju, once realized, would be a turning point in the new Cold War that threatens to turn the whole of Jeju Island into a military base, and that the Saemangeum New Airport construction project would permanently destroy peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Five people from Gangjeong Village, Yoon Sang-hyo, Kim Jong-hwan, Go Gwon-il, Kim Bong-gyu and Lee Kwang-hee, visited Gunsan and joined the march on Oct. 21, 2023. We witnessed Father Mun Jeong-hyeon's hospitality and his sincere passion for peace. I also confirmed with my eyes that the tidal flats were alive in the Saemangeum site, which is equivalent to the size of Seoul.



In a mock trial held at the Jeju Museum of Art on Oct. 21, plants and animals living in the Bijarim-ro forest filed a lawsuit against the Jeju provincial government which has executed road expansion work. The mock trial was planned by artist Lee Yoo-jin and "People Doing All Things to Save the Bijarim-ro" participated in cooperation. Photo by Kim Seon

Bijarim-ro trial update

On Dec. 13, the High Court dismissed the plaintiffs' appeals in the final trial of a lawsuit filed by 10 people against Jeju Island government to invalidate the expansion construction of the Bijarim-ro road. The court judged that the environmental impact assessment for the road was poor, but not enough to cancel the project. The lawsuit was filed on Dec. 3, 2021. The 1st court did not recognize the eligibility of nine plaintiffs while rejecting the other one's claim. In response, the plaintiffs argued, "It is anachronistic that the court does not even give the plaintiffs the opportunity to be tried at a time when the survival of current and future generations is threatened by biodiversity damage and the climate crisis, and that the court considers environmental rights inferior to property rights. It is a dereliction of the judicial power granted by the constitution." In addition, experts testified that the various measures to reduce environmental damage at the Bijarim-ro had no real effect. They also pointed out that Jeju Island failed to properly refute their claims. The Bijarim-ro road project is expanding a 2.9km section to four lanes, and people are concerned that the road is linked to the plans for a second airport.

Standing with Palestine from Jeju

by Park Inhye



Reading of the group statement at Jeju Emergency Action for Peace in Palestine, in front of Jeju City Hall, on Nov. 4, 2023. Photo by Inhye

On Oct. 27, the US Aegis destroyer John Finn arrived in Gangjeong Village at the same time that 2 million forcibly displaced Palestinian refugees who had been trapped in the Gaza Strip for 17 years were indiscriminately bombed and driven to their death due to a complete blockade by Israel that had continued for three weeks. It was right after the United States had vetoed the UN resolution to implement an immediate ceasefire and humanitarian aid in Gaza on the ground that it omitted phrases condemning Hamas and guaranteeing Israel's right to self-defense in the resolution. The government of the Republic of Korea not only cowardly abstained from voting on the resolution, but also opened its largest-ever arms trading exhibition, ADEX, and proudly declared its goal to become the world's fourth-largest arms exporter, rejoicing in the booming business. My stomach turned when I saw the US warship that proudly entered the village, disposed of its dirty waste, and generously filled up with necessary supplies. For the first time since I started joining

the human chain, I could not hold back my anger or help shouting in front of the gate of Jeju Naval Base about the meaning of the right to self-defense. "Is using weapons of mass destruction to kill innocent civilians and helpless children what you call security? The logic of security achieved through armament and force has resulted in making Palestinians the biggest victims. You can never achieve peace with weapons and guns! Stop the war immediately! The Korean government must stop exporting weapons of mass destruction to Israel!"

On Nov. 4 with my friends in Gangjeong, I organized and carried out 'Jeju Emergency Action for Peace in Palestine' in front of Jeju City Hall. I had to do something to not be overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness, depression, and loss, standing against the enormous powers of the world. People who participated in the action shouted out, calling for the end of Israel's 75-year illegal occupation, an immediate ceasefire, a stop to the genocide, and a free Palestine. We gained strength from friends and citizens who joined us that day with anger, sadness, passionate love, solidarity with Palestine, and a heart of resistance that would not give up, standing together until the day of Palestine's liberation.

While preparing for the emergency action, I learned that many people were having difficulty understanding the complex history of the conflict between Palestine and Israel and correctly understanding the situation on the ground due to biased, one-sided media presentations, limited Korean language materials, and complexity of the cultural and historical background.

Thus, a group of precious colleagues created a team called 'At the Edge' and three programs: (1) a lecture on the history of conflict between Palestine and Israel, (2) a screening of a documentary depicting the daily lives of Palestinians, and (3) presentations and discussion with refugee activists about refugees driven to the edge due to the world's conflicts and wars. We found that these meetings helped people whose bodies and souls were near breaking to be firmly held and reminded that warm love and hope exist within us despite a hopeless reality.



Group photo at Jeju Emergency Action for Peace in Palestine, in front of Jeju City Hall, on Nov. 4, 2023. Photo by Dora



The Gaza Monologues have been performed around the world since being created by ASHTAR Theatre in 2010. On Nov. 29, e-sang invited people to gather for a reading of the Korean translation of these collected narratives, which tell the experience of Gazan children during war and siege. Image captured from video by Ddochi



On Sept. 26, 2023, Park Hyun-woo and Ko Chang-geon, Jeju activists in the labor and peasant movements who were arrested for North Korea spy charges in February, were released on bail. Shin Dong-hoon, a Peace Shelter activist in Jeju who was arrested for violation of the national security act was also released on bail on Sept. 21. On Dec. 29, three labor union workers were also released on bail. The trials are ongoing. See the previous Gangjeong Village Story. Photo by Kang Jeong-yeon on Sept. 26.



Peace activists at DX KOREA 2022 held a banner reading, "Defense Industry Profits = Someone's Death." Photo by World Without War

On Nov. 8, 2023, Uijeongbu District Court Goyang Branch acquitted all eight peace activists charged with disrupting the arms fair, DX KOREA 2022. On Sept. 22, 2022, [eight] peace activists climbed on top of armored vehicles, played the violin and the guitar, [and] chanted slogans holding a banner. The court found that the DX KOREA organizers had taken unjustified and excessive measures to accuse the peace activists of their nonviolent actions.

Wars don't just happen; they start from when the weapons are made and traded. South Korea, the [world's] ninth-largest arms exporter, bears a heavy responsibility for conflicts and human rights violations around the world. The real criminals are the arms companies that profit from countless deaths. (Excerpted from full statement at <http://www.withoutwar.org/?p=20948>)

The Beginning of Peace, Nanjing Massacre Memorial

by Nang

"Nanjing and Jeju, joined together by suffering," "Towards Jeju Demilitarized Peace Island," so read the banners hanging at Alddreu Airfield in Daejeong, Jeju. Each year on Dec. 13, a memorial for the Nanjing Massacre is held here. The memorial has been held since 2014, so this was the 10th year. This year the title of the event was "Preservation of Alddreu: From remembering massacre to the beginning of peace," and about 40 people attended. In 1937, the Japanese military carried out a horrific massacre in Nanjing, and Jeju was used as an outpost during the massacre. The memorial was a time to mourn for those who were massacred and a space to pledge to act to prevent Jeju from being used as such a war base again. Both Jeju and Nanjing suffered many deaths through war. Like the banner says, they are "joined together by suffering," and after enduring suffering, we can empathize with each other's pain and stand in solidarity. When we act with remembrance of each other's pain, I believe that we can make peace. At the memorial we heard solidarity messages not only from within Korea, but also from China, Okinawa, and Japan. The situation of East Asia is precarious, like a candle held in the wind. Weapons of war are purchased and bases are built like it's a competition, as if the massacres have been forgotten. It is a time when action for peace is acutely needed. At Alddreu Airfield, we continue our memorial to begin peace through the memory of massacre.



The 10th memorial for the Nanjing Massacre at Alddreu Airfield. Photo by Ddochi



To remember the day that Gureombi Rock was fenced in on Sept. 2, 2011, the Gangjeong Peace Choir held a concert at the entrance to the navy base. Photo by Yang Sang



Saint Francis Peace Center hosted its second annual "Warmth-Sharing Peace Concert" on Sept. 25. Gangjeong Peace Choir joined the stage with Byeopssi School, a children's choir, tenors, a soprano and a Korean-flamenco fusion band. (See www.youtube.com/watch?v=eshncWFBDbA). Captured from video by Song Dong-hyo



On Sept. 28, after cooking and feasting together to celebrate Chuseok at Samgeori Community Kitchen, some stayed for another holiday tradition- the exciting game of Yut. Photo by Curry



On Sept. 16, Gureombi Peace Festival continued despite heavy rain during the human chain and while a market was opened in the Peace Center, but the weather cleared up before Hosu and Yang Sang hosted the evening talent show. Photo by Ddochi

April 3rd still discussed and reflected upon

The solo exhibition "Memories, Showers, Seas" by artist Im Heung-soon at the April 3rd Peace Museum from Sept. 6 to Nov. 12, 2023, was about the life of the late Kim Dong-il, a woman liaison activist during the Jeju April 3rd Uprising. The exhibit was based on clothes and knitted works, which were keepsakes of the deceased. In the "Sea of Words," a program that accompanied the exhibit, five women of diverse generations in Jeju today shared their stories, co-directed by Im and Yoon Yeo-il.

On Nov. 16, there was an online book discussion titled, "Gender, Jeju Women, and the Reconstruction of Post-4.3 Jeju." It featured Dr. Gwon Gwi-sook's recently published English book, *The Island of World Peace-The Jeju Massacre and State Building in South Korea*. Based on questions raised in the book such as 'the process of gender formation in the aftermath of war,' the talk also examined 'how Jeju women's struggle sheds light on the intertwined histories of militarization and gendered violence between Korea and the United States.' The discussion was co-hosted by the Ending the Korean War Teaching Initiative and the Memorial Committee for the Jeju April 3rd Uprising and Massacre. It was sponsored by the Korea Policy Institute and The Center for Racial Justice at UC Santa Cruz.

Jeju artist Koh Gil-chun was invited to a meeting on the Jeju April 3rd Uprising hosted by a Korean Americans' progressive group during his visit to Seattle, US, in fall 2023. He had a solo show at the ArtX Contemporary in Seattle from Oct. 5 to Nov. 25 which was on ecosystems that are destroyed by human selfishness. In the meeting, participants also shared aspirations for the end of war and the realization of peace, as well as demands for an end to the discharge of nuclear-polluted water by Japan.

Peace Voyager

by Tantan

I participated in the second semester of the Peace Voyager program, hosted by the World Peace University Gangjeong Campus as preparation for joining the Gongpyeonghae sailing project. Gongpyeonghae (Sea of Peace and Coexistence) is our name for the East China Sea. I lived and studied at Saebangbat container village in Gangjeong.

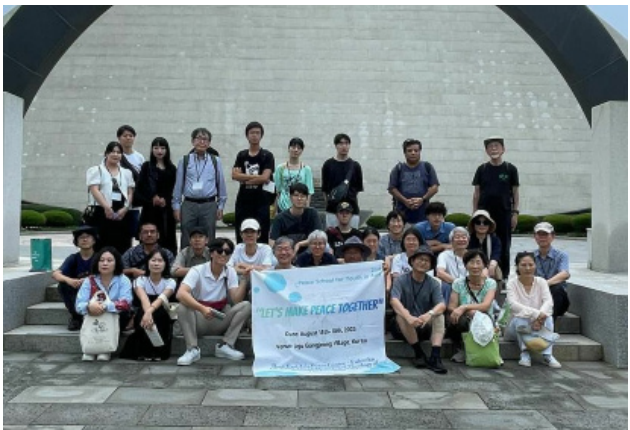
I joined the daily 100 Bows at 7 AM, the Human Chain at 12, and lunch at Samgeori Community Kitchen. Every Monday, I looked through world news stories, and I learned for the first time about what's happening in Azerbaijan and Venezuela. I also realized how many wars are happening around the world and how Korea is involved in them. We had Peace Lectures about the law of the sea, basic income, the war in Ukraine, the UN Command, the war in Palestine, refugees, the Taiwan Strait conflict, and the relation of increased military spending to the climate crisis. I felt that these different lecture topics were all related. During "The Sea and Peace" class, I learned about sailing, practiced steering the sailboat, and learned how to tie and use many knots. I was glad to get to know the language teachers Curry (English), Cony (Chinese) and Hirayama (Japanese) and it was memorable to discuss Gandhi during Peace Studies class. During East Asian History class I learned about Taiwan and the Vietnam War.

I was the only (full-time) student, but other Gangjeong friends joined the classes, which gave me motivation. Through Peace Voyager, I got to stay longer in Gangjeong and in addition to my classes, I could join other events and the daily peace activities. In Sept. 2024, the third semester of Peace Voyager will be held, to be followed by the second sailing project in Mar. 2025. We expect to have Korean class for foreign participants, and I hope that many people will be able to join the second Gongpyeonghae sailing project.

Peace School for Youth in Asia

by Yang Yoon-Seon

Aug. 15-18 was a time full of fiery passion for peace. Fukuoka Peace Center, The Frontiers, Okinawa Ecumenical Peace Center, and Seinan Gakuin University hosted the "2nd Peace School for Youth in Asia" in Gangjeong, and 34 participants joined. The first youth peace school had been held in Aug. 2019 in Okinawa. Dr. Song Kang-Ho gave a lecture, "Jeju-Okinawa-Taiwan: Dreaming of Inter-Island Solidarity for Peace of the Sea" and talked about converting the Jeju Navy Base into a peace university. We joined the human chain and shouted for peace in Korean, English and Japanese. Dr. Uchima Kiyoharu gave a lecture about "Islands Permeated with the Blood of Residents - Beautiful Tourist Sites, Jeju and Okinawa." On the third day we visited the 4.3 Peace Park and Alddreu Airfield. On the last day Prof. Hwang Nam-Deok announced plans for the third Peace School to be held in Taiwan. (excerpted from the original)



Peace School participants at the memorial for the Jeju April 3rd Uprising and Massacre. Photo by Hati



As a fundraiser to pay the rent of Gonggan () Cafe, Gureombi Festival was held at Gonggan () Cafe on the evening of Dec. 30. More and Doto's duo "Moredo-toyoil" were among the performers. Photo by Kim Jong-hwan



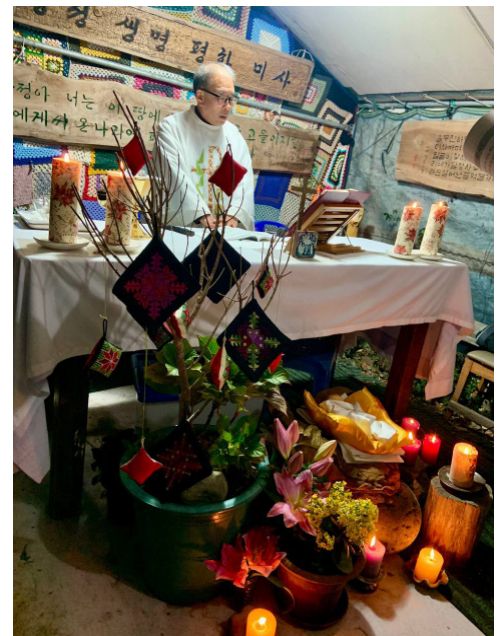
The Korean University Students Progressive Union joined Gangjeong's daily Human Chain on Dec. 28. About 150 people marched with traditional pungmul percussion to the entrance of Jeju Naval Base, shouted for all war exercises to be stopped, and danced together. Photo by Jeong Seon-nyeo



On Dec. 2, activists gathered at Samgeori community kitchen to make kimchi. Photo by Choi Sung-hee



As per tradition, on New Year's Day 2024, the 100 Bows for Life and Peace were held at sunrise at the Metburi coast, where Gangjeong River meets the sea. Photo by Choi Hyea-yeong



Fr. Kim Sung-hwan presided over the Christmas Eve candlelight evening mass at the Gangjeong mass tent on the street across from the old navy base construction entrance. Photo by Pang Eun-mi



On Dec. 9-10, Gangjeong peace activists held their annual meeting at a nearby Catholic retreat center. In the evening, they bonded over fun group games. Photo by Asha

“Presente!”



Yang Jae-hee joins mass at the navy base construction entrance. Photo by Pang Eun-mi



John Pilger holds a "No Naval Base" flag from Gangjeong. Photo from Andrew

Yang Jae-hee, a respected elder who daily joined the Gangjeong street mass and anti-base movement since 2011 passed away on Aug. 8, 2023. He was 87 years old.

John Pilger, an Australian journalist, writer, scholar and documentary filmmaker, who visited Gangjeong in 2015 and made the documentary, 'The Coming War on China' passed away on Dec. 30, 2023. The movie is about the Pacific Islands' suffering due to militarization and their struggles.

Korea Peace Appeal Delivers Signatures

by Curry

More than 207,000 people from over 180 countries around the world signed the Korea Peace Appeal petition to end the Korean War, sending their signatures both online and offline during the three years between the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War to the 70th anniversary of the signing of the armistice. Representatives of the campaign travelled to New York City to deliver the collected signatures to the United Nations Secretary-General and the UN Missions of the two Koreas, the US, and China. They emphasized the gravity of the growing threat of war on the Korean Peninsula under the recent political situation and called for proactive efforts to create an environment for dialogue. They also travelled to Washington D.C., to meet with State Department officials and 6 members of the House of Representatives, emphasizing the importance of changing US policy to facilitate an end to the conflict on the Korean Peninsula. Both in New York and in Washington D.C., the delegation organized peace marches, rallies, and meetings with Korean diaspora organizations. Over the past three years, the Korea Peace Appeal campaign was hampered by the global COVID pandemic and an unfavorable political climate, but it succeeded in strengthening local and global networks of peacemakers around the urgency of ending hostilities and making a formal end to the Korean War. (See more at endthekoreanwar.net.)



On Sept. 30, the "70 years is enough, Korea Peace Rally & March in NYC," organized by the Korea Peace Appeal campaign, gathered in front of the UN Secretariat building. Photo by Korea Peace Appeal Campaign

"The Field, a Space for Connecting Words"

by Curry

On Aug. 12, Media Gongryong hosted a forum in Cheongju City, bringing together activists from Okinawa, Gangjeong, Gunsan and Pyeongtaek to share about the media that they use to share the stories of their peace movements. The title of the forum was "The Field, a Space for Connecting Words." Curry shared a presentation about the role of the Gangjeong Village Story newspaper in the Gangjeong peace movement. Though the number of regular readers is small, this newspaper is an important resource to make records of the Gangjeong struggle available to an English-speaking world audience.

How You Can Join

1. Write a letter to the South Korean government to close the Jeju Naval Base and to the US government to stop the use of it.
2. Stay updated by following our social media
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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Email to subscribe: gjengnews@gmail.com

Peace in Ukraine!

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