GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

Bimonthly news on the struggle against the Jeju Naval base

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Parts of Gureombi Rock (a unique wetland habitat with 1.2 km of contiguous rock) were blasted for two months starting on March 7, 2012. Most of the rock was covered with landfill and cement during the enforcement of the Jeju navy base construction, which was completed in 2016. / Photo taken by Cho Sung-bong, 2011

Asking "What is True Security?" During the COVID-19

By Curry

For those of us involved in the struggle against militarism, the question "what is true security?" comes up regularly as we explain all the problems of military bases and how they don't really make people safer. Every spring the Global Days of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS) challenges people to think about how the money given to the military could be better spent. This year the hashtag #HealthcareNotWarfare couldn't be more timely.

The Korean response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been applauded and emulated around the world. The national healthcare system was prepared, the number of new cases peaked in early March, the curve flattened, and by the end of April the number of current cases shrank to 1,459. Jeju Island only had 13 total cases. However, as in other parts of the world, the pandemic has exacerbated structural and economic inequalities (putting precarious and immigrant workers at risk, making farming unprofitable, increasing domestic violence, xenophobia…).

Arundhati Roy has called the pandemic a 'portal;' it is an opportunity to reevaluate the root causes of our current inequality and vulnerability and to risk proposing radical change. A patriarchal, multinational corporation-centered system that devalues care-giving and agricultural work threatens our basic needs for healthy relationships and healthy food. An extractive system destroys the forests that our climate relies on and the biodiversity which prevents zoonotic disease from jumping from animals to humans. These systemic problems have become more visible, opening the way to pursue alternatives.

For example, in 1982, a SIPRI report formulated the concept of 'common security': "States can no longer seek security at each other's expense; it can be obtained only through cooperative undertakings." In 1994, the UNDP outlined 7 areas of 'human security:' economic, health, food, environmental, personal, community and political security. The idea of a universal basic income has been around since the 1500s but is now gaining traction, and many states are providing income assistance and direct payments to citizens.

The Jeju Navy Base has been used as a US pawn to put pressure on China, increasing military tensions and insecurity in the region. The base destroyed the local coastal ecosystem and the human livelihoods which it supported. The huge budget of the base, the warships, the radar and missile systems represents a theft from the people's needs which could have been met instead. South Korea cut its defense budget by 2% to divert funds to the COVID-19 response, but its military spending had increased 7.5% in 2019 (10th highest in the world). Now is the time to consider how militarized, patriarchal, extractive systems can be replaced with equality, inclusion, cooperation, and environmental protection.

Dr. Song Kang-ho and Ryu Bok-hee entered the Jeju navy base as a non-violent direct action on March 7, 2020, the 8th anniversary of the blasting of Gureombi Rock / Photo by Gangjeong Peace Network

The Imprisonment of Song Kang-ho and the World Peace Island

By Choi Sung-hee

Dr. Song Kang-ho and Ryu Bok-hee were accused by the navy after they entered the Jeju Navy Base on March 7. Song cut a part of the wire fence, and they entered the base and visited a small remaining part of Gureombi Rock there. Song held a banner reading 'Peace Island Without Military Bases,' and Ryu held one that said 'Gureombi, Did You Sleep Well this Spring?' They were called to court and both detained on March 30. Ryu was released, but Song got an arrest warrant. Despite petitions signed by around 7,300 Koreans and internationals, his arrest warrant was maintained by the court on April 3rd. It was his fourth imprisonment. March 7 marked the eighth remembrance year since the blasting of Gureombi Rock for the Jeju navy base construction, and April 3rd was the 72nd remembrance year of the Jeju April 3rd Uprising and Massacre. Shocked by their action, the Ministry of National Defense replaced the chief of naval staff and decided to send marines to the navy base with the role of watching the border.

On January 27, 2005, the Roh Moo-Hyun government designated Jeju as an Island of World Peace, partly for the cause of 'sublimating the tragedy of April 3rd through reconciliation and co-existence.' However, it missed the content of 'demilitarization' which had been discussed as the 1st principle for the Peace Island of Jeju by international politics experts who met in Jeju in 1991. The talks on the World Peace Island were distorted when the US-ROK military alliance was emphasized, and the 'designation' of the World Peace Island was included under the law on the Jeju Free International City, which anticipated that the Peace Island would not be freed from capital and reckless development. Worse, the current Jeju Special Law justifies the Jeju Civilian-Military Complex Port for Beautiful Tourism (another name of Jeju Navy Base) under the section on the designation of the World Peace Island. In 2018, President Moon Jae-in even said that he would make the Jeju Navy Base 'a foothold for peace.'

What should the World Peace Island be? The court decision to maintain the arrest warrant on Song Kang-ho -which happened to be on April 3rd- raises this very question again.

You may write a letter of support to: Song Kang-Ho (Prisoner No. 219) Jeju Post Office PO Box 161, Jeju City, Jeju Peace Island, Korea 63166

Protect Jeju! Citizens' Declaration for a Sustainable Jeju

Over-tourism and over-development are exceeding the environmental capacity and destroying Jeju's nature, which had been renowned for its heaven-blessed beauty. […] The same is true for the deterioration of the environment surrounding our daily life. Around 100,000 tons of trash have piled up, beyond the incineration and landfill capacity. Fetid, putrid water is permeating the ground. Increased car rentals make the traffic congestion resemble that of Seoul, and the highest crime rate in the nation threatens our well-being. Skyrocketing land and housing costs, deepening anxieties of ordinary people, the foundations of the primary sector of the economy are crumbling. […] The current economic difficulties did not result from a 'lack of development' but from 'over-development.' […] The COVID-19 pandemic vividly exposes how an economy reliant on excessive tourism is vulnerable to external factors. Jeju's natural environment and the living environment of the residents are at a critical juncture. This current reality was created by the Jeju Free International City's exclusive promotion of economic development for the last 20 years. […] Thus, determined to protect Jeju from impending environmental crisis and to make a sustainable Jeju, we make the following demands:

1. Stop the unilateral enforcement of the Jeju 2nd Airport project and follow the will of the Jeju citizens.
2. Put a full stop to nonessential tourism/development projects such as the Songaksan New Ocean Town, the Animal Theme Park, Ora Tourism Complex, and the expansion of the Bijarim-ro road.
3. Adopt a tourism tax (funding environmental protection), and convert the tourism policy paradigm from promotion to regulation and from quantity to quality.
4. Reform the system of environmental impact assessments which has furthered over-development and environmental destruction, and immediately implement environmental regulations.
5. Abandon the designation of a "Free International City" which has encouraged large-scale tourism development, especially by foreign capital, and revise the entire Jeju Special Law.

(Excerpted from the statement on April 10th, 2020)

Kings Bay Plowshares Sentencing

The 7 Kings Bay Plowshares activists who entered the Kings Bay nuclear submarine base in Georgia, USA, on April 4, 2018 will be sentenced in federal court on May 28 and 29, possibly by video. More at kingsbayplowshares7.org.

1 Billion Women Rising, Singing and Dancing in Solidarity!

By Gunso

When we visited Hong Kong Social Movement Film Festival last winter, we were introduced to the 1 Billion Rising campaign by a group of printmakers. The campaign entails circulating the fact that one third of women in the world- 1 billion women- are exposed to violence (beaten or raped in their lifetime) and call for a stop to the crimes against women by dancing, singing and creating artworks.

In Gangjeong our first action was translating the lyrics for the Chilean protest song against femicide to Korean and recomposing the lyrics and dance: the first lyrics are about resistance against the violence committed against women; the second lyrics portray the struggles in Jeju and Gangjeong. Our second action was opening a printmaking workshop in collaboration with Ecotopia, a art-activist group whose activities are printmaking, bike-touring and kayaking. On March 8th International Women's day, we planned to march with a huge banner made of 100 prints created through Ecotopia's print workshops all over the country, however, the march was canceled due to the COVID19 pandemic. We now plan to wrap the banner around Peace Island (Gangjeong Peace Center), before it closes its doors this coming May

1 Billion Rising Protest Printmaking workshop with Ecotopia at Gangjeong Peace Island on Feb. 2/ Photo by Gunso

Rise Jeju Women and Jump Everywhere Lyrics

By Bandi, Gunso, Dolgorae, Grace

1.

Patriarchy has said / Since I was born / "Come home early" / "No short skirts" / "Women must be circumspect," "You protect your own body" / This kind of bullshit / We reject it! / illegal spy-cams porns / Circulation, participating and onlooking on social media / Sexual discrimination, violence against sex workers / your version of history / Where ever I go, whatever I wear, that's my choice *4 / The rapist is you *2 It's the cops / It's the prosecutors / Everyone who closes their eyes to this violence is complicit / Who's killing us? / It's you / Everyone who closes their eyes to this violence is complicit, the rapist is you / We will resist!

2.

Women are saying / No second airport / No military bases / They kick out the Jeju citizens / cut tens of oreums (volcanic cones) / block the caves / The airport will be an air force base / Stop the second airport and the navy base / Yerae Resort Complex, Shinhwa World / Songak Mountain, Gotjawal forests, Seonheul Village / Overdevelopment of Jeju / Where ever I live and however I live, that's my choice *4 The criminal is you *2 / Development companies / The Ministry of the Environment / The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport / The Won Hee-ryong provincial government / the cedars of Bijarim-ro, Seongsan villagers' way of life / Leave us alone, leave us alone, leave us alone, the destroyer is you *2 / Development companies / Won Hee-ryong, Everyone who closes their eyes to this violence is complicit / Who's killing us? / It's you / Everyone who closes their eyes to this violence is complicit, the destroyer is you / We will resist!

Music videos for "Rise Jeju Women and Jump Everywhere" filmed at Peace Island and a farming field in Gangjeong village./ Video stills, Videos by Grace
Video links: https://youtu.be/R6BPEnSYMHY and https://youtu.be/mox49BoEohw

Cancel RIMPAC, Protect Hawai'i

by Tina Grandinetti, Laurel Mei-Singh, Kyle Kajihiro

In light of the global pandemic, the people of Hawai'i have joined people across the world by sheltering in place. Because of our position as a tourist destination and military hub, the prospect of disease from abroad poses a particular danger to our communities. March 26 marked the beginning of a 14-day quarantine for travelers, a stop on the disembarkation of cruise ships, and a statewide stay-at-home order.

Despite these measures, the U.S. military plans to hold the largest international maritime exercise in the world in Hawai'i from late June to early August, and more than 26 nations plan to attend. Hosted every two years, the last Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) in 2018 brought 47 surface ships, five submarines, more than 200 aircrafts, and 25,000 military personnel to Hawai'i's lands and waters. Confronting a petition to #CancelRIMPAC signed by thousands, Hawai'i Governor David Ige announced on April 3 that he will request to postpone these war games.

Still, Capt. Jeff Bernard, commander of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam insisted, "RIMPAC is on." Even before COVID-19, community leaders have opposed RIMPAC. The sinking of decommissioned ships releases toxic chemicals just offshore from beaches. Live-fire training has set fires at Pohakuloa at the base of Mauna Kea, a focal point of Hawaiian cosmology and resistance where kia'i (protectors) have contested desecration for decades. Every two years, RIMPAC has destroyed our island resources while naturalizing the imperial violence that underlines these encounters.

Adding insult to injury, the Indo-Pacific Command just submitted a report to Congress calling for $20.1 billion of additional spending over the next five years. Rather than allowing the military industrial complex to capitalize on this crisis, we need to seize this moment to scale back military presence and look to environmentally just alternatives rooted in place-based knowledge that include Indigenous practices of abundance as the basis of well-being, community-based agriculture, social housing, youth arts programs, and more.

Bullets and bombs are useless against viruses. This pandemic reveals that our mutual survival depends on fostering an ethos of solidarity to develop systems that care for all members of our community. Millions of people around the world are changing the way we move through our daily lives so that we may better protect each other. We call upon our lawmakers and the U.S. Pacific Fleet to honor these acts of sacrifice and solidarity by canceling RIMPAC 2020. (excerpted from the April 12, 2020 article in Common Dreams)

UPDATE: On May 1, 29 Korean organizations released a joint statement calling for the cancellation of RIMPAC and of the Korean navy's participation after the US military announced on April 29 that the war exercises would be held Aug. 17-31, with the participation of 25 countries.

Photo by Pang Eunmi

Coronavirus and Carcinogens in Okinawa

By Curry

The first case of COVID-19 in Okinawa was found on February 14. Sit-ins at the Henoko base construction site continued cautiously, but people were concerned that the guards were not wearing masks. The All Okinawa Coalition suspended the sit-in protest from April 15 through May 6. On April 17, one of the construction workers at the Henoko new base was found to have the coronavirus and landfill construction was temporarily halted. The shipping of sand and dirt for the landfill at Awa and Shiokawa piers was stopped on April 20. As of April 29, 145 cases of the novel coronavirus were confirmed in Okinawa, but the US military has prevented Okinawa prefecture from conducting contact tracing for infected US soldiers.

Also, on April 10, a massive spill released carcinogenic PFOA and PFOS fire-fighting foams at the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. 143,000 liters of the foam spread outside the base, flowing into a river and floating in the air. A similar incident releasing a smaller amount of the foam also occurred at Futenma in December, and Okinawa's drinking water already contains high levels of the 'forever chemicals.' The US military's continued use of PFOA and PFOS blatantly ignores safer alternatives which are already used by civilian airlines and around the world. An Okinawan prefectural assembly committee unanimously called for authorities to investigate the leak, clean up the contaminated area, apply domestic laws on US bases, and shut down Futenma airfield.

On a more positive note, FY2019 survey results reported feeding trails of the endangered dugongs in the under-sea grasses of Hateruma and Irabu Islands. However, these islands are far from the dugongs' previously known feeding grounds. (Hateruma is near Ishigaki and Irabu is near Miyako). Then it was reported that in February on days with no construction the sounds of dugongs were recorded at Henoko. (Reference: standwithokinawa.net)

COVID-19 affects budget cut on the Jeju 2nd airport project

By Choi Sung-hee

It is of course, dominantly thanks to people's persistent fight against Jeju 2nd airport (air force base) project. But COVID-19 also justified its budget cut! When the government cut the budgets of existing projects to make the COVID-19 emergency disaster fund, Jeju 2nd airport project was one of those projects! It was categorized as a national policy project having conflict with local residents. The government cut 32 billion KRW out of 35.6 KRW set aside for the 2020 Jeju 2nd airport budget. 32 billion KRW was for the Basic Plan of the project. The National Assembly passed the bill on April 30, which means the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT) can only execute a bare minimum of service works for the Basic Plan unless the government recovers the budget for the project in the latter part of the year. Still, MOLIT plans to make a public announcement on the Basic Plan for the 2nd Jeju airport in the latter part of the year, after its negotiation with the Ministry of Environment on the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) finishes around June.

Otherwise, on April 27th, the Jeju Island Council passed a resolution to extend the term of the Jeju 2nd airport special committee for the settlement of conflict from 6 months to 13 months, which means Jeju Island government's execution of 2nd airport-related budget would be difficult this year.

Meanwhile, the Jeju People's Assembly against the Jeju 2nd Airport conducted its own investigations with local residents in Seongsan and found a total of 135 soomgols (passages through which rain enters Jeju ground water) in the planned area for the 2nd Jeju airport, exposing fraud and omissions in the MOLIT SEA.

Increasing numbers of people involved in the struggle against the 2nd Jeju airport have been on trial. It started with Kim Kyung-bae, a Seongsan resident who has been sentenced to one-year's imprisonment with two years' probation, as well 7 million KRW in fines. The court sentenced Kim Jae-beom to six months' imprisonment suspended with two years' probation on March 20; Kim Chang-joon to one-year's imprisonment suspended with two years' probation; and Hwang Yong Woon to eight months' imprisonment suspended with two years' probation on April 24. Many charges were for special obstruction of business. Many more people are awaiting trial, especially those whose tent sit-in across from the island government hall hit its 500th day as of May 2.

Continued Struggles in the US Colony of Guahan

By Lisa Natividad, I Hagan Famalao'an Guahan

Guahan (Guam) is a US unincorporated territory or colony that is 1/3 occupied by US Department of Defense. Most are familiar with the March 30th letter sent from the USS Theodore Roosevelt captain revealing the alarming number of COVID-19 cases of his crew and the need for about 90% of them to be transferred off the ship and onto the shores of Guahan. The Roosevelt is an aircraft carrier with just under 5,000 crew members. As a community, we were in a state of panic over the request- recognizing the need to keep our community safe! IHFG worked quickly to pen a letter to our Governor asking her to reject their being allowed off the ship and to not allow them off the base. Our position was that the ship should proceed to its homeport of San Diego, where there was much greater capacity for meeting the health care needs of the infected sailors.

In our letter, we also asked that sailors be quarantined ON THE BASE and not in our community. She, however, decided otherwise. As of yesterday, there are 4,234 sailors on our shores. Of this number, 840 sailors have tested positive for COVID-19- with some cases still pending. There has been one death; and 4 are reportedly in the hospital. There are reportedly 26 other US Navy ships with COVID-19 cases on board. And while the number of cases is alarming, what is upsetting is the thousands of sailors quarantined in our civilian hotels for nearly three weeks. These sailors were tested upon departing the ship and tested negative. But what we know is that there is an incubation period of what is guessed to be three weeks and what we've started to see this week is these sailors, quarantined in our hotels are beginning to test positive. According Admiral Mulnoni, 2.5% of sailors have tested positive while in quarantine. If we do the math based on the total cases, this accounts for about 210 sailors. And our greatest fear is the spread that these individuals will pass the virus onto our community members who work in the hotels and who provide services to the visitor industry.

Most of the nearly 1,000 COVID-19 cases on the base are being housed in a building located off the base in the south of the island. And it goes without saying that what we are most fearful of is the spread of virus into our community that has a fragile, dilapitated, and fragmented health care system reflective of a US colony. This on an island of under 170,000 people and 156 COVID-19 cases. So rather than the US DOD providing any kind of aid for our community- we are- yet again- as historically has always been the case- need to sacrifice ourselves for the needs of the US military. And this is all amidst the typical COVID-19 challenges of unemployment, little access to competent health care, social distancing, etc. Lastly, the vulnerability of the USDOD as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak on naval ships has resulted in the US increasing its military posture on our island. It is for this reason that we must resist US militarism and work tirelessly for peace!

Daejeong Wins Two Struggles

By Choi Sung-hee

On April 28, The Environment and City standing committee of the Jeju Island Council 'disagreed' with the environmental impact assessment on the New Ocean Town development project proposed to be built at Songak Mt., Daejeong-eup, in the southwest of Jeju. It was the 1st time that Jeju Island Council stopped a problematic development project in 18 years. It was a great accomplishment for the people who have fought against the project for years.

The New Ocean Town project, financed by Chinese capital, is a 'large scale tourism development project of two hotels with 461 rooms, as well as camping sites and commercial facilities on 191,950m^2 of Songak Mt.' People have been concerned that the project would "damage the view of Songak Mt., an absolute preservation area, privatize the view, damage nearby oreums (parasitic volcanic cones), and damage historic military remains from the Imperial Japanese occupation period, such as fortified caves and old Alddreu air field." People have demanded that the area of Songak Mt. be listed as a cultural asset and designated as 'world mixed natural and cultural heritage.'

Otherwise, on April 28, the Agriculture, Seafood, and Livestock Economy standing committee overwhelmingly passed a bill to designate the Daejeong maritime wind power development project zone. However, the bill was rejected in the Island Council main meeting the next day, which was very unusual. A local Island council member strongly claimed in the meeting that the passage of the bill would bring about a conflict with residents like the Gangjeong navy base struggle. When people who had struggled for years heard that the bill was rejected, they shouted and danced in joy in front of the Island Council where they held rallies and picketing for nearly 10 days. Maritime environment protection group Hotpinkdolphins emphasized that Daejeong Sea is a main habitat for the Jeju indo-pacific bottlenose dolphins, saying that saving dolphins and marine lives helps to delay the extinction of human beings. They also quoted Jeju Green Party to point out that Jeju's electric power reserve rate was in excess of as much as 28.8% and 66.6% respectively in summer and winter.

On April 27, people had a press conference at Songak Mt. in opposition to the New Ocean Town development project there / Photo by Oum Mun-hee

Breaking Censorship on Art

In the beginning of this year, a group called Gureombi Wandering Theater Troupe ('troupe' hereafter) proposed a meeting with a person who works under the 'World Heritage Centre' dept. of Jeju Island Government to have a performance at the Honinji (meaning 'pond of marriage') located in Onpyng-ri village, Seongsan-eup, Seogwipo City. Honinji is one site bearing the myth of Jeju's creation and would be affected by the Jeju 2nd airport project. However, the official told the troupe that 'permission for performance is not possible if the group's performance has any minimum content related to Jeju navy base or the 2nd airport.' The troupe strongly protested and finally got a letter expressing the 'sorriness' of the department in March. Otherwise, a group called Cultural Democracy Action Solidarity made a statement in support of the troupe, reminding us that a key reason that former conservative governments made blacklists of artists years ago was for those artists' work on the issue of the 'Gangjeong (Jeju) navy base.' Otherwise, last October, Seogwipo City Hall blocked one artist's works just because it related to the April 3rd Uprising and Massacre 72 years ago. Recalling such various censorships of art in Jeju, the troupe demanded that the island government respect people's efforts to widen imagination for peace and make active steps to guarantee diversity of society.

General Election Amid COVID-19

There was a general election on April 15th. The nationwide average voting rate was the highest in 28 years of General elections: 66.2%. The ruling Democratic Party swept 180 seats among 300 seats of National Assembly. And in Jeju, all three seats for the National Assembly are occupied again by the Democratic Party, as they have been for 20 years. How can we stop the neo-liberal policies of both the biggest ruling and opposition parties in Jeju? It will be a big task for small but progressive parties in Jeju!

Urgent: A Special Investigation Team Right Under the President!

On April 16, 2014, the Sewol ferry sunk on its way from Incheon to Jeju. Including many high school students, 304 people lost their lives. The Park Geun-hye government then was hiding something. It did not make any efforts to rescue the passengers but further interrupted citizens' voluntary efforts to save them. The government crime lit the fire of the people's Candle Revolution. However, even though a new government was set up, radical truth investigation has been neglected for unknown reasons. The only public servant to be punished was a coast guard sergeant who was imprisoned for three years. Now, less than 10 months of the statute of limitations remains to punish those in charge! A Jeju citizen group called 'Gieokgongan re:born' which focuses on the truth investigation and punishment of those responsible for the tragedy had a press conference with survivors and their supporters. They demanded "total reinvestigation of the tragedy through installation of a special investigation team right under the President within the remaining statute of limitations; truth examination and punishment of the responsible; and measures to support the mental recovery of bereaved family members, survivors and their family members, with understanding of their suffering." Around 400 tons of iron bars destined for the Jeju navy base construction were overloaded in the Sewol ferry. However, that alone does not explain the whole truth of the tragedy.

Trump pressures increase of cost-sharing for the USFK

Due to COVID-19, economic recession is anticipated in South Korea like all over the world. Irregular workers, millions of recipients of welfare programs, and small business owners & tradespeople are all being pushed into a crisis of unemployment and bankruptcy. Yet, United States President Trump is forcefully insisting on an increase of South Korea's defense-cost sharing for the United States Forces of Korea (USFK) of five to six times more than last year, which will be around 6 trillion KRW. To pressure the South Korean government, on April 1, the Trump administration also dared to force an unpaid leave of absence on about 4,000 Korean workers (about half of USFK's Korean workers).

Otherwise, a 2nd US-made Global Hawk advanced spy drone was introduced in South Korea on April 19th. And an ROK-US air exercise was conducted from April 20 to 24. The drill was an alternative of Vigilant Ace, an invasive drill for preemptive attack on North Korea.

A Blind Spot for COVID-19: USFK, Pyeongtaek

Camp Humphreys (US Army) in Pyeongtaek, about one-hour southward from Seoul by car, is the world's biggest overseas US base where the Eighth United States Army Command, United States Forces of Korea (USFK) Command and UN Command are all located. On April 5, Pyeongtaek City received a report that 72 US soldiers tested positive for COVID-19 in the sample test commissioned by the USFK. However, USFK never made any explanation on the source of infection, except for saying that those 72 were not US military stationed in South Korea. On April 7, starting from a wine bar where USFK soldiers are the main customers, the numbers of COVID-19 cases increased to 17 people. Citizens and activists in Pyeongtaek compared Camp Humphreys to a blind spot and demanded USFK to make their COVID-19 related information open to the public for the safety of all. The USFK has been non-cooperative to share it, saying it is for protection of personal information.

Each year on the Friday before Easter, Catholic activists host a Stations of the Cross walking procession to important sites in Gangjeong, remembering key moments of the struggle against the navy base. At the entrance of the base, Pang Eunmi read a poem "Rise Up Gureombi" by poet Kim Kyung-hoon. Photo by a participant.

The "What is Peace?" exhibit (Apr. 8 to June 30 at "Peace Wind Inn" in Gunsan) includes this piece by Dan Jones, an English human rights activist and artist. Originally painted on the wall in a house in Daechuri, Peace Wind activist Oh Doo Hee found it before the house was destroyed (for the expansion of US Camp Humphreys), cut the wallpaper from the wall in pieces, and preserved it for ten years until now. Photo by peacewind.

Art and Citizen Activism in the Bijarim-ro

Despite finding many endangered species in the Bijarim-ro forest, Jeju Island government plans to resume construction in May. They plan to expand the road through the forest. It would be connected to the Jeju 2nd airport project in Seongsan, eastern Jeju. Artists inspire fellow citizens to save the forest and ecology system, especially in the era of COVID-19.

Commemorating Earth Day, the citizens' project "Let's go to plant trees" took place between April 25th and May 5th at the Bijarim-ro.. Artist Koh Gilchun made more than 100 frottages of cut trees and is presenting a piece to each of 100 citizens who planted trees there / Photo by Jang Young-sik

Artists from around Korea made several outdoor sculptures including giant nests using cut trees at the Bijarim-ro from March 8th to 15th. They encouraged citizens' participation in making the art pieces, and the results will be most enjoyed by children / Photo by Kim Dong-Kwang

One Meets the Kingdom of God on the Street

Fr. Mun Jeong-hyeon recently published a booklet titled, "One Meets the Kingdom of God on the Street." It is a collection of his sermons at the street mass in Gangjeong during two of his nine years here. On April 12, people gathered for the 14th Gangjeong recital event and congratulated Fr. Mun with readings, reflections on the book and related songs. On one page, Fr. Mun wrote, "A heart which gives all, that is the life on the street. Without such life, there will be neither history nor learning. A theory is what was set up based on the site of life."

A group photo exhibition titled 'Lost Last Jeju' is being held in 20 bookstores in 7 cities across Korea from March 15 to May 30. The subjects are: Gangjeong, Bijarim-ro, Seongsan, and Jeju mid-mountain villages / Photo by Yang You-Jeong

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 Gangjeong Campus of World Peace University opened!

The Gangjeong Campus of World Peace University which "starts with a handful of people studying together" but envisions "the day when youths from all over the world come to Gangjeong to dream, sing, and dance world peace" opened on March 23 amid much joy and celebration. The Gangjeong campus plan is to convert the Jeju navy base into a World Peace University and to make Jeju a Demilitarized Peace Island. Song Kang-ho and his group, 'The Frontiers' have worked to build peace in the places of armed conflict around the world for the last 20 years.