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Window into Overseas Koreans



Special Article - 80th anniversary of Korean independence

Special Feature - President Lee Jae Myung attends South Korea-U.S. and South Korea-Japan summits,
and meeting with overseas compatriots

Overseas Korean of the Month - Independence activist Lee Ui-gyeong, author of 'The Yalu River Flows'



Liberation Day celebration ceremony commemorating 80th anniversary of Korean independence



재외동포청
Overseas Koreans Agency

Realistic conditions for sustaining Korean language education

The World Association of Korean Language Educators is a professional community formed by professors and teachers who teach Korean overseas. We go beyond language education to spread Korean culture worldwide and organize various forums, training programs and academic exchanges so that the next generation can preserve their cultural roots.

Recently, the spread of the Korean Wave has heightened global interest in the Korean language. However, the patterns vary by region. In developed countries like the United States, while there is significant positive sentiment toward the Korean language, enrollment in university Korean language majors has plateaued. Conversely, in Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe, demand for Korean language learning has surged significantly due to the practical motivation of potential employment with Korean companies. This demonstrates that the prospects for Korean language education are ultimately tied to learners' career paths.

I have been teaching Korean at a university during the week and at a Hangeul school on weekends. These two educational settings differ in nature. The Hangeul school focuses on teaching history, culture and identity alongside the language to second- and third-generation Korean descendants. In contrast, the university centers on teaching Korean as a foreign language. Credits and achievement levels are important, and systematic, practical teaching methods are applied. Learners are initially drawn by K-pop or dramas but gradually expand their studies to encompass understanding of Korean society, economy and culture. These two educational tracks, while distinct, are complementary and share the common goal of broadening the foundation for Korean language and culture.

However, career prospects for Korean language majors remain a significant challenge. In North America, even with a Korean major, related job opportunities are limited, leading many students to choose other paths. Conversely, in emerging economies, opportunities for employment with Korean companies or within Korea itself are relatively abundant, translating into tangible outcomes for Korean language education. For Korean language education to remain vibrant, governments and businesses must actively create job and internship opportunities where Korean language majors can utilize their expertise. This will strengthen motivation for learning Korean and sustain the passion within educational settings.

Another point I wish to emphasize is institutional cooperation. While organizations like the National Institute of International



Shim Yong-hyu,
president of the World Association of
Korean Language Educators (Former
president of the National Association of
Korean Schools (NAKS) USA)

Education, Sejong Academies and the Overseas Koreans Agency each play important roles, they do not fully reflect the unique nature of teaching Korean as a regular curriculum in university settings. This is because training programs remain focused primarily on elementary and secondary school teachers, and Sejong Academies are limited to non-regular courses. Strengthening support for the academic forums and field experience sharing that our association organizes would be essential to ensure both the professionalism and sustainability of Korean language education.

Every time I see young people who grew up in Hangeul schools blossoming into leaders within American society, I truly feel how identity education can transform the future of both individuals and communities. At the same time, it is always disheartening to see students who majored in Korean at university struggling to find their career paths. Korean language education transcends mere language instruction. It holds the power to preserve roots and identity while simultaneously serving as a practical task directly linked to the future. When national-level support and on-the-ground efforts interlock, Korean language education will become an even more enduring and powerful current.

As president of the International Association of Korean Language Education, I will continue to dedicate my utmost efforts to enabling educators to share experiences, exchange effective teaching methods and develop sustainable Korean language education models tailored to local educational environments. This is because Korean language education transcends mere language learning and is a precious journey of sharing the identity of the Korean people and the values of Korean culture with the world. 장



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This magazine can also be viewed at <http://webzine.korean.net>

President Lee Jae Myung's commemorative address

Keywords were peace and future

Light was word most frequently used in 5,500-character message; followed by independence, peace, democracy

Foreign policy message also emphasizes dialogue and cooperation; approximately 25 rounds of applause during 25-minute speech

The core keywords running through President Lee Jae Myung's 80th Liberation Day commemorative address were light and peace.

He emphasized that his administration came to power after overcoming martial law and civil disorder while simultaneously focusing on sending a future-oriented message to the international community.

Lee appeared at the commemorative ceremony held at the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts on the morning of Aug. 15 wearing a dark suit and a tie featuring intersecting blue, red and white stripes. This tie design, symbolizing unity, was the same one he wore on special occasions, including his inauguration briefing on June 4. First lady Kim Hea Kyung, who attended with him, wore a white "hanbok."

Lee's speech, lasting approximately 25 minutes, was about 5,500 characters long. Excluding general terms like citizens, government and nation, the word light appeared 19 times in this speech.

In his congratulatory address, the president emphasized, "The light of independence which our ancestors reclaimed, the light of democracy that our people achieved, will serve as a guiding light illuminating our future path."

Following this, the most frequent terms were independence (14 times), peace (12 times), democracy (11 times), future (11 times) and sovereignty (seven times). He highlighted the people's achievements using terms like democratization, democratic nation, democratization movement and democratic republic. In messages directed at external parties like North Korea and Japan, he emphasized cooperation and dialogue, focusing on peace rather than conflict.

The terms freedom and unification, prominent in the previous administration's commemorative addresses, saw a significant decrease in frequency, each appearing only twice. Furthermore, the terms North and northern side were used instead of North Korea. Applause erupted from the audience approximately 25 times during Lee's speech, including when he emphasized the need for proper




President Lee Jae Myung delivers a commemorative address at the 80th Liberation Day celebration held at the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts in Seoul on Aug. 15.

respect for independence activists.

Meanwhile, candidate Ahn Cheol-soo, who is running for the People Power Party leadership, stood up during President Lee's speech and held up a protest placard reading "Oppose pardoning Cho Kuk and Yoon Mi-hyang" in protest.

This year's celebration ceremony was held under the theme "The light we found together illuminates the Republic of Korea." Eighty Taegeukgi flags were displayed on the podium, and 80 descendants of independence activists ascended the stage, adding to the symbolic significance of the 80th anniversary.

Actor Jo Jin-woong, who participated in the repatriation process of General Hong Beom-do's remains, recited the "Oath to the National Flag." Later in the event, scenes from the film "Assassination," which depicts the independence movement and features actors, including Jo Jin-woong and Jeon Ji-hyun, were shown on a large screen.

President Lee personally awarded commendations to five descendants of independence activists, including Kim Jong-min, a descendant of the late Lee Eun-sook, who dedicated herself to restoring national sovereignty in regions like North Jeolla Province. Including them, 311 independence activists received government commendations. 

President Lee Jae Myung delivers special Liberation Day message to overseas and Japanese-resident Koreans

‘Proud of overseas Koreans, will support talent development’
‘Will never forget the patriotism of Koreans in Japan’

President Lee Jae Myung delivered a special message to overseas compatriots on Aug. 15, the 80th anniversary of Korean Independence Day.

“Today, the overseas compatriot community has also achieved remarkable development, demonstrating the resilience of our people in various fields, such as the economy, society, academia, arts and sports. I am truly proud,” he said.

“The government will meticulously ensure these brilliant achievements continue into the next generation. We will support the next generation of compatriots so they can grow as talented individuals while preserving their pride and identity as Koreans.”

Lee emphasized, “If we pool the great capabilities of our overseas compatriots worldwide and our citizens, we can build a nation that grows and develops vigorously once again.

“Wherever you may be, I am always grateful to our compatriots who live with pride in the Republic of Korea and a sense of representing our homeland,” he said. “I will do my utmost to build a Korea that is always a source of pride and a nation you can trust and rely on.”

Lee delivered a special separate message to Korean residents in Japan, stating, “The Republic of Korea will never forget the history of our compatriots in Japan, who always demonstrated shining patriotism even amid blood, sweat and tears.

“It was the dedication of our compatriots in Japan that helped us eighty years ago to reclaim the stolen light of our country,” Lee said. “Despite enduring unspeakable suffering in harsh labor sites and horrific devastation in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they always extended a helping hand to their homeland.”

He expressed gratitude, saying, “Thanks to the sacrifices and



President Lee Jae Myung delivers a commemorative address at the 80th Liberation Day celebration held at the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts in Seoul on Aug. 15.

dedication of our compatriots in Japan, the Republic of Korea has achieved remarkable accomplishments over the past 80 years.

“Their support continued through many critical moments, including the IMF foreign exchange crisis,” he said. “The sacrifices of young compatriots in Japan were also significant during the homeland’s journey toward democratization.”

He particularly emphasized that “Among the 173 Korean diplomatic missions worldwide, the nine missions established solely through donations from local compatriots stand as a testament to the dedication of Korean residents in Japan.” 장

‘Long Live the Republic of Korea’ echoes through Washington, D.C., the heart of U.S.

First-ever commemorative event held at San Francisco City Hall; over 1,000 attendees

A commemorative ceremony marking the 80th anniversary of Korea’s liberation was held Aug. 15 at the Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center in Virginia, U.S., attended by approximately 600 compatriots and prominent figures from mainstream American society.

The event was jointly hosted by the Korean Associations of Virginia and Maryland and the Korean American Federation of Washington, D.C., with support from the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, the Overseas Koreans Agency, the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the U.S., the Washington Council of the Peaceful Unification Advisory Council and the Washington Chapter of the Heritage of Korean Independence.

The ceremony opened with a piano and violin duet, songs by the youth choir K-Harmony and a Nanta performance by the Di Dim Sae Korean Traditional Arts Institute.

“We pay tribute to the patriotic martyrs and independence activists who sacrificed for our nation’s independence,” Kim Deok-man, president of the Virginia Korean Association, said in his welcoming remarks. “We hope to further strengthen the blood-sealed friendship between Korea and the United States.”

Following this, Cho Ki-joong, consul general at the Korean Embassy in the U.S., read President Lee Jae Myung’s congratulatory address.

“Eighty years ago, we regained our light through countless sacrifices and dedication,” the president said. “Let us inherit the spirit of freedom and sovereignty and advance toward a Republic of Korea that leads the world.”

U.S. Sen. Mark Warner, Virginia House Rep. Irene Shin and Fairfax School Board member Moon Il-ryong also delivered congratulatory addresses, reflecting on the significance of liberation.

The event lobby featured a photo exhibition on the independence movement. The stage was adorned with a large Taegeukgi (South Korean flag) and the Stars and Stripes (U.S. flag), along with the phrase “80th Anniversary of Liberation: Brilliant Footsteps, New Path,” adding to the emotional atmosphere. The celebratory performance by the JUB Korean Culture and Arts Institute and Lee Cheong-young’s “Long Live Korean Independence” performance brought tears to the audience’s eyes. When the choir, dressed in



A ceremony commemorating the 80th anniversary of Liberation Day is being held at the Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center in Virginia, U.S., on Aug. 15.

“hanbok,” sang the Liberation Day song, many people joined in singing along.

At the event’s conclusion, three cheers of “Long live Korean independence!” led by Kim In-cheol, president of the Korean Veterans Association of the Eastern United States, resounded. Attendees then shared commemorative rice cakes and left messages on a panel, including “Long live the Republic of Korea” and “Long live the Korean community in Washington.”

San Francisco also hosted its first-ever grand Liberation Day commemoration at its City Hall. Organized to reflect on the historical significance of liberation and celebrate the Korea-U.S. friendship, the event drew over 1,000 attendees, including local community leaders, Koreans and citizens, making it a meaningful occasion.

“We prepared this event to showcase the standing of the Northern California Korean community on the 80th anniversary of liberation,” said Kim Han-il, president of the Korean Association of the San Francisco Bay Area. “I hope Koreans of the first generation, along with the second and third generations, feel a sense of pride.”

Meanwhile, the 80th Liberation Day commemorative football tournament, hosted by the Virginia Korean Association (President Kim Deok-man) and organized by the Washington Korean Soccer Association (President Park Hee-chun), was successfully held Aug. 10.

This tournament was arranged to commemorate the 80th anniversary of liberation, allowing the Korean community to reflect on its historical significance and foster camaraderie. 🇺🇸🇰🇷

‘Henequen of 120 years ago’ Liberation Day cheers of joy and sorrow echo across Mexico

89-year-old second-generation Korean descendant leads ‘Manse’ chant dressed in ‘hanbok’;
‘precious time to reflect on our roots’

A ceremony commemorating the 80th anniversary of Liberation Day was held at the Palacio Real banquet hall in Merida, the central city of Yucatan State in eastern Mexico, on Aug. 10.

Attended by about 100 descendants of Koreans, spanning from the second to fifth generations, the event proceeded with a salute to the national flag, an overview of Korea’s independence history, congratulatory addresses by the Yucatan governor and mayor of Merida, and remarks by Consul General Lee Sang-hee of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Mexico.

During the subsequent performances of “samulnori” percussion and fan dance, 12-year-old Lia, a fifth-generation descendant dressed in “hanbok,” captivated the audience with her performance to Korean rhythms, eliciting beaming smiles from the gathered families. Her father, who proudly regarded his daughter, had the Korean name Lia tattooed on his left arm.

The highlight of the event was the brief-yet-powerful Mexican-style three cheers. Maria Amparo Kim Yam (89), a second-generation Korean descendant born in Mexico in 1936, raised her drink and led the chant with clear pronunciation, shouting, “Manse!” three times. The rest of the attendees immediately repeated her cry like an echo.

“I was born and raised here, gave birth to eight children, and those children in turn gave birth to 28 children,” Kim said. “Though circumstances prevented me from ever visiting Korea, I know well that something Korean resides within me.”

Kim Yam’s father, Miguel Kim Son, was one of 1,311 people who boarded the British merchant ship Ilford at Jemulpo Port in Incheon 120 years ago, in 1905.

Amid the chaotic social atmosphere and days of poverty, our ancestors at the time viewed Mexico as a land of opportunity. They boldly boarded ships, their hopes pinned on newspaper recruitment ads that later proved to be nothing but “sugar-



Key attendees, including Jeong Gab-hwan, standing representative of the Latin America Branch of the Center for Historical Truth and Justice (4th from R), and Lee Sang-hee, consul general of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Mexico (C), pose for a commemorative photo at the 80th Liberation Day celebration held in Merida, Yucatan State, Mexico, on Aug. 10. On the far right is Juan Duran, president of the Yucatan Korean Descendants Association.

coated lies.”

However, various records and oral accounts reveal that the henequen plantations in Yucatan where they were placed were almost akin to a “living hell.” Henequen, a type of cactus with sharp leaves, was the material for ship ropes, which were in high demand at the time.

The first generation of Korean immigrants to Mexico, who were not even paid properly, are referred to as the “eniken” (henequen). The term eniken is used as if it were a word representing the tear-soaked daily lives of Koreans at that time.

Even through their hardships, the first generation of Korean immigrants in Mexico established the Sungmu School to train independence fighters and sent funds back to their homeland for the independence movement. Miguel Kim Son, the father of Kim Yam, sent part of his living expenses to Korea.

Dolores Garcia (64), director of the Korean Immigration Museum and a third-generation Korean immigrant, said: “I feel this year is more special than any other. It’s a precious time to reflect on our roots together with many descendants of Koreans.” 🇰🇷

President Lee Jae Myung consoles compatriots affected by atomic bombing on 80th anniversary

‘We will steadfastly uphold value of peace to prevent horrors of war from repeating’



President Lee Jae Myung (5th from L) and first lady Kim Hea Kyung (6th from L) observe a moment of silence for patriotic martyrs and national heroes at the 80th Liberation Day celebration held at Seoul's Sejong Center for the Performing Arts on Aug. 15.

President Lee Jae Myung expressed his condolences on Aug. 5, as part of the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Japan, stating, “I offer my deepest condolences and sympathy to our fellow citizens who suffered the atomic bombings and their bereaved families, who endured the double and triple torments of history’s turbulent waves in a foreign land, not even in their own homeland.”

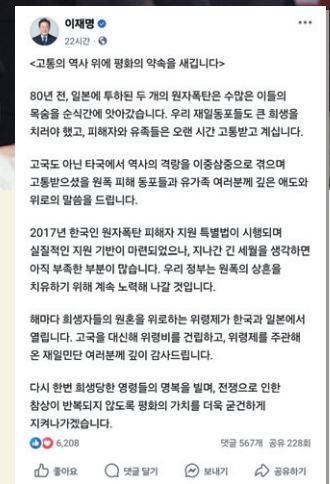
On the eve of the Hiroshima bombing anniversary, Lee offered this consolation in a Facebook post titled “Carving a promise of peace upon a history of suffering.”

“Eighty years ago, the two atomic bombs that were dropped on Japan instantly took countless lives,” Lee said. “Our compatriots in Japan also suffered great sacrifice, and the victims and their bereaved families have endured pain for a long time.”

‘We will continue our efforts to heal the scars of the atomic bomb’

“While the Special Act on Support for Korean Atomic Bomb

President Lee Jae Myung's Facebook post



Victims took effect in 2017, establishing a practical support framework, considering the long years that have passed, there are still many areas that fall short,” Lee said. “The government will continue its efforts to heal the scars of the atomic bomb.

“Memorial services to console the spirits of the victims are held annually in both Korea and Japan. I express my deep gratitude to the members of the Korean Residents Union in Japan who have erected memorial monuments and presided over these services on behalf of their homeland,” he said.

“We will steadfastly uphold the value of peace to ensure the horrors of war are never repeated.” 장

Memorial service for victims held before Statue of Peace on 80th anniversary of atomic bombing of Japan

Memorial service for Korean victims also held in Hapcheon, ‘Korea’s Hiroshima’;
‘remembering the painful history’

A memorial event was held for the Korean victims of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, on Aug. 6 to mark the 80th anniversary.

The Hiroshima Atomic Bombing 80th Anniversary Korean Victims Memorial Service Preparatory Committee (preparatory committee) held a memorial service for the Korean victims near the Statue of Peace in Jongno-gu, Seoul, that morning. The memorial service was held in conjunction with the weekly Wednesday protests organized by the Justice and Remembrance Alliance.

On Aug. 6, 1945, nearing the end of World War II, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan, and three days later, on Aug. 9, dropped another on Nagasaki.

Han Chung-mok, co-chair of the preparatory committee, took the podium and stated: “300,000 civilians were sacrificed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, at least 70,000 of whom were Koreans. The government must step forward and commemorate the 70,000 victims of the atomic bombings,” demanding the Lee Jae Myung administration launch an investigation into the truth and provide compensation for the victims.

Participants chanted slogans, such as, “The atomic bombings are anti-humanity war crimes. We demand the truth about the Hiroshima bombing be revealed and the victims’ honor restored.”

Meanwhile, a memorial service was solemnly held in Hapcheon County, South Gyeongsang Province, also known as “Korea’s Hiroshima,” to honor the spirits of Koreans who perished in the atomic bombings and to reflect on this painful history.

South Gyeongsang Province held the 80th Anniversary Memorial Service for Korean Atomic Bomb Victims at the Memorial Hall of the Hapcheon Atomic Bomb Victims Welfare Center on Aug. 6. The memorial service proceeded in the following order: the unveiling ceremony for the commemorative monument, the memorial rite, eulogies, an award ceremony for a commemorative poem and the laying of flowers.

Approximately 400 attendees, including Jeong Tong-ryong, director of Public Health Policy at the Ministry of Health and Welfare; Kim Young-sun, director of the Welfare and Women’s Affairs Bureau of South Gyeongsang Province; Kim Yun-cheol, county mayor of Hapcheon; Jang Jin-young, a South Gyeongsang




Participants observe a moment of silence for the victims at the Hiroshima Atomic Bombing 80th Anniversary Korean Victims Memorial Action rally held near the former Japanese Embassy in Jongno-gu, Seoul, on Aug. 6.

Province council member; Venerable Monk Jin Gyeong (director of social affairs, Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism); Park Jong-sul, secretary general of the Korean Red Cross; atomic bomb victims and bereaved family members, paid tribute to the spirits of the victims.

“We will remember this painful history together and dedicate our continued attention and efforts to ensure these noble sacrifices were not in vain,” Gov. Park Wan-soo of South Gyeongsang Province stated in a video tribute.

South Gyeongsang Province has been providing living assistance allowances to first-generation atomic bomb victims since last year. The province plans to explore various support measures to improve the quality of life for victims and their bereaved families, including medical expense reductions for second- and third-generation atomic bomb victims.

On Aug. 6 and 9, 1945, atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. Approximately 70 percent of the Korean atomic bomb victims at that time are known to have been from Hapcheon, leading Hapcheon to be called Korea’s Hiroshima. Currently, about 200 victims reside in Hapcheon, and the memorial hall where this commemoration ceremony was held enshrines the memorial tablets of 1,167 victims. 

President Lee Jae Myung's national appointment ceremony; 'I will move forward, placing all my trust in the citizens'

Appointment certificates presented by citizen representatives at Gwanghwamun Square 72 days after inauguration; 'It is an immense honor and a great responsibility'
'A nation where the people are in charge, a Republic of Korea where everyone is happy; I will place the people at the center of state affairs'

"As a faithful servant of the sovereign people of the Republic of Korea, I will trust only the people and stride forward toward a nation where the people are in charge and all are happy," President Lee Jae Myung said on Aug. 15.

Lee made these remarks in a "Letter to the People" read aloud at the national appointment ceremony held that evening at Gwanghwamun Square in Seoul on Liberation Day.

"Receiving the letter of appointment, which embodies the earnest wishes of the people, fills me with boundless honor and an immense sense of responsibility," he said.

The National Appointment Ceremony, held 72 days after Lee took office on June 4, served as a substitute for the inauguration ceremony that was omitted due to the government launching immediately after the early presidential election.

The event proceeded in a format where representatives of the people directly presented Lee with the appointment certificate, in accordance with the value of "people's sovereignty."

"Thanks to you who sacrificed your lives to defend the nation, and you who built modernization with your sweat, the Republic of Korea exists as the world's 10th-largest economic power," Lee said. "Whenever national crises have struck, it was because you were there, holding the brightest torch to dispel the darkness, that the democracy forged through blood could breathe again."

Business leaders, including Lee Jae-yong, and ruling party figures, including former President Moon Jae-in, attended en masse

"As our great 80-year modern history proves, the source of



Eighty citizen representatives take the stage at the 21st presidential inauguration ceremony held at Gwanghwamun Square in Seoul on Aug. 15.



President Lee Jae Myung and first lady Kim Hea Kyung express their gratitude after receiving the “Certificate of Light” from 80 citizen representatives at the 21st Presidential Citizen Appointment Ceremony titled “80 Years of Liberation: Building the Future with People’s Sovereignty” held at Gwanghwamun Square on Sejong-daero in Seoul on Aug. 15.

Korea’s national power has always been its people,” Lee continued. “The ‘People’s Sovereignty Government’ will always place the people -- the source of national strength -- at the core of its philosophy and vision for governing.”

Referring to residents of border regions and bereaved families of tragedies, he said, “I will devote all my strength to ensuring our nation blossoms into a peaceful and safe country.” Mentioning the sweat and efforts of cultural figures and aspiring young athletes, he declared, “I will give wings to those dreams.”

He further promised, “We will provide solid support so that entrepreneurs can grow freely and compete confidently on the global stage, and so that scientists and engineers can focus solely on innovation.

“The adversity before us now is unprecedentedly severe, but it is not an insurmountable obstacle,” Lee said. “Let us overcome this crisis with united strength and pass on to our descendants an even more glorious homeland, shining brighter than ever.”

He concluded his speech by stating, “I am infinitely proud to be appointed president of the Republic of Korea, a nation rebuilt by the great Korean people. I am determined to return this pride to the people in the form of joy and happiness.”

‘The strength of the Republic of Korea has always been its people’

On this day, Lee appeared at the event wearing a white tie with blue stripes, while first lady Kim Hea Kyung wore a white two-piece suit.

Presidential spokesperson Kang Yu-jeong explained that the white tie symbolized embracing everything like a blank sheet of paper and signified a fresh start.

The president and first lady stepped out of their vehicle and

walked toward the event venue, waving to citizens holding up their phones to take pictures or clapping their hands in greeting. From the audience, chants of “Lee Jae Myung” could be heard.

Lee then shook hands with former President Moon Jae-in and his wife, and the late former President Roh Moo-hyun’s widow, Kwon Yang-sook, as well as dignitaries that include former National Assembly Speakers Chung Sye-kyun and Moon Hee-sang, former Prime Minister Han Myeong-sook and former Democratic Party leader Lee Hae-chan.

Emphasizing peace, safety, dreams, innovation

He also greeted Democratic Party lawmakers, including Rep. Jung Chung-rae, National Assembly Speaker Woo Won-shik, Chief Justice Cho Hee-dae, Constitutional Court Chief Justice Kim Sang-hwan and National Election Commission Chairman Noh Tae-ak, among other heads of constitutional bodies.

Samsung Electronics Chairman Lee Jae-yong, Hyundai Motor Group Executive Chair Euisun Chung, LG Group Chairman Koo Kwang-mo, Lotte Group Chairman Shin Dong-bin and Shinsegae Group Chairman Chung Yong-jin also visited Gwanghwamun Square to observe the inauguration ceremony.

Notable figures from the cultural and sports sectors were also present, including Bang Si-hyuk, chairman of HYBE; Park Hang-seo, former coach of the Vietnam national football team; and volleyball player Kim Yeon-koung.

However, former presidents Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye, along with families of opposition party former presidents, politicians and local government leaders affiliated with the People Power Party, all declined to attend, citing health reasons or expressing protest against President Lee’s Liberation Day pardons. [\[창\]](#)

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재미 동포 간담회



2025. 8. 24. (일), 워싱턴 D.C.



President Lee Jae Myung speaks at a dinner meeting with Korean American compatriots at a hotel in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 24.

President Lee Jae Myung

At meeting with overseas Koreans in U.S., President Lee urges, ‘Let us together forge a new history of the ROK-U.S. alliance’

At ROK-U.S. summit, Lee requests, ‘Please meet Kim Jong-un’; Trump responds, ‘I want to meet him within this year’

President Lee Jae Myung met with Korean Americans on Aug. 24, one day before his summit with U.S. President Donald Trump, urging them to contribute to the development of bilateral relations. He stated, “I believe you will join us on this journey to create a new history for the ROK-U.S. alliance.”

Lee made these remarks during a dinner meeting with Korean Americans held at a hotel in Washington, D.C., that afternoon, marking his first official schedule in the U.S. First lady Kim Hea

Kyung also attended, dressed in “hanbok.”

“KPop Demon Hunters, featuring K-pop themes, is sweeping various records and capturing the hearts of young people globally,” Lee said. “‘Gimbap’ and ‘ramen,’ familiar to us, are no longer just Korean foods. We are witnessing a new chapter in our alliance that enriches both nations.

“I am embarking on this important journey to open a new path for the 72-year-old ROK-U.S. alliance by pooling our strength amid all

President Lee Jae Myung (L) and U.S. President Donald Trump smile together during their summit meeting at the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 25.



these changes. We will jointly explore ways to develop the ROK-U.S. alliance by responding together to the rapid changes in the international order.

"To ensure the brilliant efforts of our compatriot community are not in vain, we will listen to diverse voices and further expand necessary support. We will also devote our efforts to resolving longstanding issues, such as dual citizenship and the lowering of the age requirement for it," Lee said. "We will also establish well-functioning voting locations, equipment and systems to ensure citizens can fully exercise their sovereign rights and fulfill their responsibilities and roles without hindrance."

The dinner was also attended by Sen. Andy Kim, the first Korean American elected to the U.S. Senate.

In a toast, Kim welcomed Lee to the U.S., stating, "Korea has a positive future," and proposed a toast, "To the relationship between Korea and the United States."

Meanwhile, the possibility of dialogue between North Korea and the United States was the main focus of the first summit meeting between President Lee and U.S. President Donald Trump in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 25.

Lee requested that Trump meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, and Trump expressed his desire to meet this year if possible.

"Among world leaders, it is unprecedented for someone like President Trump to show such interest in global peace issues and actually achieve tangible results," Lee said in his opening remarks. "His role as a peacemaker truly stands out. Please bring peace to the Korean Peninsula, the only remaining divided nation in the world, if possible. Please meet with Kim Jong-un."

President Lee: 'Trump is only person who can resolve North Korea issue'

"It is not easy to significantly improve inter-Korean relations with just my involvement," Lee said. "In reality, the only person who can

actually resolve this issue is President Trump. If the president acts as a peacemaker, I will diligently support him as a 'pacemaker.'"

Trump responded: "I think that (meeting with Chairman Kim) is a very good thing. We will pursue it."

"Chairman Kim and I had a good relationship (in the past)," he said. "I called Chairman Kim 'Rocket Man' (at that time), and I hope we can talk again. If we are both ready to talk, I think there will be an opportunity for that."

Trump recalled holding two summits with Kim during his first term, emphasizing, "I know him better than anyone except his sister."

When asked by reporters whether he would meet Kim this year or next, he responded: "I meet with many people. So it's hard to say, but I would like to meet him this year."

The two leaders also agreed to strengthen economic cooperation, focusing on the shipbuilding industry.

"It seems America is becoming great again," Lee remarked. "A renaissance is taking place not only in shipbuilding but also in manufacturing, and I hope the Republic of Korea can be part of that process."

"I hope we can expand the ROK-U.S. alliance beyond the military sphere to encompass economic and scientific-technological fields, developing it into a future-oriented alliance."

"We will have a lot to discuss regarding shipyards and shipbuilding," Trump said. "Since the U.S. shipbuilding industry currently has a lot of closures, we will need to purchase from Korea."

"I hope that through cooperation with Korea, ships will be built again in the United States. I hope we will have the opportunity to revive the U.S. shipbuilding industry in cooperation with Korea." 🇺🇸

President Lee Jae Myung: 'We will not forget our compatriots in Japan and will repay their support'

'South Korea-Japan relations back on track after return of democratic Republic of Korea' South Korea and Japan issue first joint statement in 17 years; Ishiba refers to inheritance of 'Kim Dae-jung-Obuchi Declaration'



President Lee Jae Myung speaks at a luncheon meeting with Korean residents in Japan held at a hotel in Tokyo on Aug. 23.

President Lee Jae Myung met with Korean residents in Japan on Aug. 23 as his first scheduled activity during his visit to Japan, promising support and stating, "The government will not forget your patriotism; we will remember it well and repay it."

Lee made these remarks during a luncheon meeting with Korean residents in Japan held at a downtown hotel after arriving in Tokyo that day, saying, "At every turning point in the history of the Republic of Korea, marked by repeated pain and struggle, there was the dedication and sacrifice of our compatriots." Approximately 200 Korean residents in Japan attended the meeting, including Kim Yi-jung, chair of the Central Headquarters of the Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan).

"The YMCA auditorium, where the February 8 Independence Declaration was announced, and Hibiya Park, where the independence movement erupted, are both nearby to this place,"

he said. "It feels deeply moving that the traces of our compatriots' intense lives are so vividly embedded throughout the heart of Tokyo."

He particularly emphasized, "From the pain of colonial rule to the pain of division, the homeland's split into two opposing halves must have intensified the sorrow of life in a foreign land. Yet you always remained steadfast supporters and pillars of strength for your motherland.

"There is also a shameful and painful history we must confront," he said. "During the great journey toward democratization, a very large number of Korean Japanese compatriots suffered unjustly as victims of fabricated espionage cases."

He then bowed his head, saying, "As president of the Republic of Korea, I offer my sincere condolences to the victims of state violence and their families, and I formally apologize once again.



President Lee Jae Myung (2nd from L) toasts with attendees of a luncheon meeting with Korean residents in Japan, including Kim Yi-jung (L), chair of the Central Headquarters of the Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan), at a hotel in Tokyo on Aug. 23.

"I will never forget the horrific history that unfolded 100 years ago along the Arakawa River, nor the souls scattered across Japan who still cannot return to their homeland," Lee said. "I will do my utmost to build a worthy nation, where anti-human rights state violence never occurs again, and build a prosperous nation that safeguards the daily lives of its people."

The "history that unfolded along the Arakawa River" mentioned by Lee appears to refer to the Kanto Massacre.

"Beyond the twists and turns of many years, Korea-Japan relations are moving forward anew toward a new future," he said. "We will listen closely to the compatriot community and spare no effort in expanding necessary support so that your brilliant achievements may continue into the next generation."

While in Japan, Lee and Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba held a summit meeting Aug. 23, jointly emphasizing the importance of Korea-Japan cooperation. The two leaders shared the recognition that the international situation is rapidly changing across economic and security domains, including the restructuring of the U.S.-led trade order and the growing North Korea-Russia alliance. They agreed to jointly respond through a virtuous cycle where the development of Korea-Japan relations drives trilateral cooperation among Korea, the U.S. and Japan.

"The international order is in flux," Lee said in his opening remarks at the expanded summit meeting. "Now more than ever, South Korea and Japan, which share similar positions on values, order, systems and ideology, must strengthen their cooperative relationship. This is a time when we truly have much to gain through cooperation. Dialogue and cooperation will take place between Prime Minister Ishiba and myself, as well as between officials of both countries."

Ishiba responded warmly to Lee's choice of Japan as his first bilateral diplomatic visit since taking office, stating: "I am deeply reassured. The development of stable Korea-Japan relations benefits not only both countries but the entire region."

Following the talks, the two leaders adopted a joint press statement outlining specific directions for cooperation across various fields. This marks the first time in 17 years that the South Korean and Japanese leaders have produced a joint document summarizing the results of their summit. The two leaders also appeared together before live cameras to deliver a joint press statement introducing the outcomes of their talks.

"We reaffirmed our firm commitment to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the establishment of lasting peace, and agreed to continue cooperation between our two countries on North Korea policy," the two leaders stated about security cooperation, which drew particular attention. "We emphasized the importance of a peaceful resolution to the North Korean nuclear and missile issues through dialogue and diplomacy."

Additionally, they stated: "We confirmed the need to continue cooperating with the international community to ensure the faithful implementation of UN Security Council sanctions resolutions against North Korea, based on trilateral coordination among South Korea, the U.S. and Japan in response to the North Korean nuclear threat. We also agreed on the necessity to jointly address the deepening military cooperation between Russia and North Korea."

In the economic sphere, they agreed to expand cooperation in future industries, such as hydrogen and artificial intelligence (AI).

"We shared the need to jointly address common challenges both nations face, including low birth rates and aging populations, population concentration in the capital region, agriculture and disaster safety," Lee said. "We decided to launch an interagency consultative body to jointly seek solutions."

The two leaders agreed to cooperate for the successful hosting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Gyeongju this October and the Japan-Korea-China summit, currently chaired by Japan. 🇯🇵



President Lee Jae Myung (L) holds a joint press conference with Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba at the prime minister's official residence in Tokyo on Aug. 23.

Independence activist Lee Ui-gyeong, author of 'The Yalu River Flows'

Participated in League Against Imperialism and Colonial Oppression and Korean Youth Diplomatic Corps; after exile, pursued independence activities in Europe
Attended 1927 Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, declaring Korea's resolve for independence to international community



August's Overseas Korean of the Month: Patriot Lee Ui-gyeong

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Sang-duk) has selected literary figure and independence activist Lee Ui-gyeong (1899-1950, pen name Lee Mireuk) as the Overseas Korean of the Month for August 2025. Lee promoted Korea's independence and disseminated Korean culture in Europe.

Born in Haeju, Hwanghae Province, in 1899, Lee Ui-gyeong participated in the March 1 Independence Movement of 1919 while attending Kyung Sung Medical College (now Seoul National University College of Medicine). He spearheaded efforts to build public support for independence by serving as editor-in-chief of the

Korea Youth Diplomatic Corps and publishing and distributing promotional materials, such as the Diplomatic Bulletin and the Warning Statement to Remember the National Humiliation.

Path to independence beginning with March 1 Independence Movement

When his activities were discovered by the Japanese authorities, he fled to Shanghai to escape persecution and took on the task of training nurses at the Korean Red Cross, which was established by the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea to carry out relief missions.

While in Shanghai, his interactions with the family of independence activist Ahn Jung-geun further strengthened his national consciousness. In 1920, he traveled to Germany via France with Ahn Jung-geun's cousin, Ahn Bong-geun, to continue the independence movement in Europe.

When the League Against Imperialism and Colonial Oppression convened in Brussels, Belgium, in 1927, he was studying zoology and philosophy at the University of Munich, and he participated by forming a delegation with Lee Gyeok-ro and Hwang Woo-il, who were studying in Berlin, and Kim Beop-rin in France.

Anti-Japanese imperialism struggle reaches Europe

The delegates drafted a resolution titled "The Korean Question," translating it into German, French, English and other languages to inform the international community about their homeland's plight and their resolve for independence.

After earning his doctorate in zoology from the University of Munich in Germany in 1928, Lee found it difficult to utilize his expertise. He decided to change the course of his life, adopting the pen name Lee Mireuk and embarking on literary pursuits.

In particular, his 1946 German-language novel "The Yalu River Flows," written in autobiographical form and covering his childhood, participation in the March 1 Independence Movement, and exile, dealt with the purity of the human spirit and familial love preserved even in the face of dehumanizing circumstances. It resonated



The German first edition of "The Yalu River Flows" (1946) (Provided by the Lee Mireuk Memorial Foundation)

deeply, offering solace and hope to Germans grappling with post-war loss.

Transformation into literary figure Lee Mireuk

A German magazine selected the novel as the "Best German language book of the year," and it was later included in German textbooks, widely read by Germans, and spread the life of our people and the sentiments of Korea among locals.

This literary work also greatly contributed to building mutual trust between Korea and Germany. According to a 2009 memoir about the German loan program by Dr. Baek Young-hoon, who served as interpreter during former President Park Chung-hee's 1964 visit to West Germany, it is said that the German government's decision to provide Korea with a 150 million-deutsche mark (approximately \$30 million) loan without conditions was influenced by the trust and empathy Germans developed toward Korea through Lee's works.

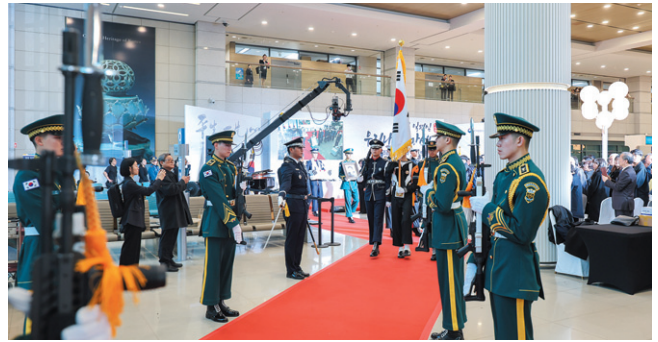
Final path as educator

From 1948 onward, he walked the path of an educator, teaching Korean Studies and Eastern Philosophy at the Department of Oriental Studies at his alma mater, the University of Munich. He passed away in March 1950 due to stomach cancer.

Germans remembered him as a true humanist and a "fully realized human being." His student Wolfgang Leander Bauer, who was so captivated by the professor's character that he switched his major from medicine to Oriental studies and later became a professor at Munich University's Department of Oriental Studies, expressed his respect, calling Lee, "A man and writer who proved the most noble values of life by setting himself as an example."

In recognition of his contributions, the Korean government posthumously awarded him the Presidential Commendation in 1963 and the Order of Merit for National Foundation, Medal of Patriotism in 1990. In November 2024, his remains, previously interred in Grafelfing, Germany, were repatriated to Korea and laid to rest at the National Cemetery in Daejeon.

"Patriot Lee Ui-gyeong carried the cry of the March 1



The repatriation ceremony for the remains of independence activist Lee Ui-gyeong is held at Incheon International Airport Terminal 1 on Nov. 16, 2024. After a memorial service at his grave in Germany the previous day, his remains returned to his homeland after 105 years. (Provided by the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs)



A memorial service for the repatriation of the remains of independence activist Lee Ui-gyeong is held at the funeral hall within the Grafelfing Cemetery in Germany on Nov. 14, 2024, ahead of the repatriation. (Provided by the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs)

Independence Movement all the way to Europe and, through literature, made the world aware of the greatness of our homeland and people," Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Sang-duk said. "To honor Lee's noble spirit of independence on this year's August 15 Liberation Day, marking the 80th anniversary of Korean independence, we have selected him as the Overseas Korean of the Month for August."

The OKA identifies compatriots who have contributed to the development of the Republic of Korea or enhanced the status of Koreans in their countries of residence, selecting and announcing them as the Overseas Korean of the Month each month.

The previous honorees are Kim Pyeong-jin (1926-2007), former president of the Jeju Development Association in Japan, for March; Hong Myeong-gi (1934-2021), former chairman of the M&L Hong Foundation, for April; Im Cheon-taek (1903-1985), independence activist, for May; Park Byeong-heon (1928-2011), former head of the Korean Residents Union in Japan, for June; and Park No-hak, former president of the Return of Detained Sakhalin Koreans Association, for July. 장

Park Min-seo, overseas Koreans supporter for OKA

'A precious journey reaffirming my sense of mission as a little diplomat and affirming my identity'

"Being an overseas Koreans supporter isn't just about external activities; it's a precious experience that affirmed my identity -- that even while living abroad, I can remain deeply connected to Korea."

Park Min-seo, who has lived abroad for over 15 years and has been leading efforts to promote Korea's history and culture, said her activities as an overseas Koreans supporter renewed her sense of mission as a "little diplomat."

Park is a young activist who has consistently produced content on themes resonating with both Koreans at home and abroad since her school days. These include Dokdo and the comfort women issue, promoting traditional Korean culture, the 1988 Seoul Olympics, introducing the Korean community in Dubai, preparing for overseas employment, the overseas Korean system and the Korean Emigration History Museum.

She moved to the United Arab Emirates with her parents during elementary school and spent her teenage years in the Middle East.

During high school, while wanting to promote Korea, she formed a club called Kloud with friends to teach Korean and personally planned events for Dokdo Day.

In her college days, she co-founded and operated the online web magazine Wisdom Agora for overseas youths. This platform, primarily run by university students from international schools, serves as a space for overseas youth to share their own writings and experiences.

"We ran a program connecting Korean university students and overseas youth as mentors and mentees to share experiences," she said, noting that these diverse experiences helped establish her identity as an overseas Korean.

"Interacting with friends of various nationalities made me keenly aware of the importance of networks. While seeking opportunities to connect with similar overseas youth, I discovered supporter activities at various organizations and have been consistently involved in such support work ever since."

She said she will never forget winning the Gold Award from the Anti-Japanese Imperialism Video History Foundation for her video "Later is too late," which addressed the comfort women issue.

"I added English narration and subtitles to spread awareness of the Japanese military comfort women issue worldwide," she said. "The fact that my voice reached someone was the greatest achievement."

In her role as a supporter, she emphasized a production approach



Park Min-seo, who acts as an overseas Koreans supporter for the OKA

blending "information plus storytelling." Rather than merely explaining systems, she created richer content by weaving in her own firsthand experiences.

"Like obtaining an apostille, I turned initially unfamiliar and complex processes into videos based on actual experiences, hoping they might serve as a small guide for others facing similar situations."

Among her many pieces, the one she found most rewarding was a video about visiting the Korean Emigration History Museum. "It went beyond a simple introduction and weaved in my personal experience. When someone who watched it said, 'I definitely want to visit with my students,' I felt a great sense of fulfillment."

Currently enrolled in the Erasmus Mundus master's program, she plans to continue producing content related to overseas Koreans during her working holiday and study abroad period. She expressed her aspiration to pursue a doctoral program and continue research contributing to educational technology and international education development. 🇰🇷

Kang Hansol, overseas Koreans supporter for OKA

‘I want to be bridge connecting compatriots and citizens through Instagram cartoons’

“I always thought that someday I too might live as an overseas Korean. That’s why the policies and activities of the Overseas Koreans Agency felt to me not just like a system but like a story connected to my own life.”

Webtoon artist Kang Hansol (31) was recently appointed as a Dongpo You supporter for the Overseas Koreans Agency. Though she resides in Korea, she lives between Korea and China with her Chinese husband. She applied for this role driven by the tangible sense that she herself could soon experience the life of an overseas Korean. To her, the OKA represented not a “system detached from me” but “policies connected to my future self.”

Kang’s reason for deciding to apply was clear.

“I personally experienced the role of bridging Korea and overseas communities, and I wanted to share that value with more people,” she said. “I especially believed my experience creating Instagram comics would help convey the OKA’s policies in an accessible and warm way.”

Indeed, she has been delivering social messages through Instagram (@zhulaoshi_wife) using the format of “Instagram cartoons.” Her approach of telling stories through short text and cute illustrations resonated effortlessly with younger generations. Responses like “This is my first time learning about the OKA” and “Explaining policies this simply makes them so much easier to understand” poured in. Overseas residents and international couples also expressed empathy, saying, “This feels like a story about me.”

Her greatest strength, she asserts, is storytelling.

“My unique approach isn’t just text or card news; it’s using characters and situational dramas to break down policies and systems in an accessible way,” she explained.

In particular, she strives to authentically weave her own life experiences into the content to enhance its sincerity. This goes beyond merely communicating the OKA’s policies; it creates a point of empathy -- a story where “my life and your life intersect.”




The launch ceremony for Dongpo You, the first cohort of supporters for the Overseas Koreans Agency, is held at the Overseas Koreans Welcome Center on May 21. Kang Hansol is third from the right.

“When creating content, I always consider three things: friendly language, visual appeal and real-life relevance. I simplify technical terms as much as possible and connect them to points people can tangibly relate to in their daily lives. When the Instagram comic characters engage in dialogue like a sketch, it feels much more natural and easy to understand.”

Among the content Kang has produced so far, the piece she feels most attached to is the OKA SNS Introduction Instatoon.

“It was a piece that introduced what the OKA is and what it can do in a friendly way. Thanks to the round, cute art style, information that could easily seem stiff became accessible. It’s content that reminds me of my original intentions, so I feel especially attached to it.”

Kang has worked in the cultural production industry for six years, gaining experience in large-corporation campaigns, public institution promotions and influencer marketing. Through this process, she developed a keen sense of how to plan messages and what formats deliver them most effectively.

She expressed her aspiration to “warmly convey the activities and policies of the Overseas Koreans Agency through Instagram comics so that many people can relate. I want to be a bridge connecting compatriots and citizens.” 

First visit to homeland after ‘KPop Demon Hunters’ release ‘Deeply grateful for huge love; we must have confidence in Korean culture’

President Lee Jae Myung meets director Kang: ‘We will build a proud cultural powerhouse’



Director Maggie Kang of the film “KPop Demon Hunters”

“Netflix and (Sony Pictures Animation) gave us their full support from the very beginning. They seemed to understand how appealing Korean culture and Korean content are to so many people.”

Director Maggie Kang, who created the Netflix animated film “KPop Demon Hunters,” said, “I believe we must have confidence in our culture and in the Korean perspective.”

At a press conference held at CGV Yongsan I’Park Mall in Seoul on Aug. 22, Kang said, “I’ve loved Seo Taiji and Boys and H.O.T. since way back, and I was also greatly influenced by director Bong Joon-ho. In particular, the film ‘The Host’ holds a lot of meaning for me.”

Regarding a sequel to “KPop Demon Hunters,” she hinted that while “there’s no official word yet,” she has many ideas she’d like to incorporate into a follow-up.

“I would like to showcase more of Korea’s diverse music styles,” she said. “Trot is all the rage these days, so I’d like to feature those kinds of songs, and I’d also like to show some heavy metal.”

‘Influenced by Seo Taiji, H.O.T. and Bong Joon-ho’

The secret behind “KPop Demon Hunters” global popularity lies in its universally relatable story. Kang explained, “Doesn’t everyone want to be loved, crave stability and seek recognition? These are points everyone can relate to.”

Relating to this, Kang referenced a review left by a 6-year-old child at a screening of “KPop Demon Hunters.”

“The child said they could precisely understand the fear felt by Rumi (a member of the girl group Huntrix in the film) because they had once feared how their friends would see them,” Kang said. “The core theme this work aims to address is ‘shame.’”

Rumi is also a character that partially reflects Kang herself. She said, “To be honest, I wanted to see a woman ‘like me.’”

“It seemed like many animations tried to draw female characters so they wouldn’t be ugly, too funny or foolish. In my work, I wanted to see a woman who eats food strangely and makes funny faces.”

Rumi shares the name of Kang’s daughter. She also shared how her daughter personally



A scene from the Netflix animated film “KPop Demon Hunters” (Provided by Netflix)



President Lee Jae Myung appears on the Arirang International Broadcasting program "K-Pop: The Next Chapter," which aired as a prerecorded broadcast on Aug. 20. President Lee met with Maggie Kang (L), director of the Netflix animation "KPop Demon Hunters," to discuss the future of the K-pop industry. (Provided by the Office of the President)

voiced young Rumi in the film.

"Seeing her perform without fear -- singing and acting in front of unfamiliar adults -- made me so proud of my daughter," the director said. "She told me, 'If I do well, Mom's movie will be even better.'"

'I want to include trot music in the sequel too'

Though it was a labor of love that took seven years from production start to release, she says that she did not expect such a massive success. Kang said, with tears in her eyes, "I never imagined it would receive this much love, and I truly want to express my gratitude."

She recalled that "Golden," an iconic original soundtrack (OST) song, was the most challenging one to work on among the film's tracks.

"It was a representative song embodying the protagonist Rumi's hopes and aspirations, making it a crucially important piece in the film," Kang said. "We went through seven to eight versions before finding the final one. When I heard the final version, I felt, 'Ah, this is it,' and tears came to my eyes."

Maggie Kang is a Korean Canadian director who was born in Seoul and moved to Toronto, Canada, with her family at age 5. She worked as a story artist at DreamWorks, Blue Sky, Warner Bros. and Illumination, and "KPop Demon Hunters" is her first feature film as director.

Released last June, the film became the highest-grossing Netflix original animation of all time, while its original soundtrack (OST) "Golden" claimed the top spot on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 main singles chart. Billboard announced in its chart preview article on

Aug. 25 (local time) that "Golden" climbed one spot from the previous week, securing its second week at No. 1.

President Lee Jae Myung: 'Emergence of this great work is miracle'

On Aug. 20, President Lee Jae Myung said, "The opportunity to truly showcase the power of Korean culture is now fully under way."

Appearing on Arirang International Broadcasting's program "K-Pop: The Next Chapter" that day, Lee responded to the host's question, "How far has South Korea come as a cultural powerhouse?" by remarking, "We've just entered the beginning."

During the broadcast, the president discussed strategies for fostering a cultural powerhouse with figures like Kang and her film "KPop Demon Hunters."

"I agree with the criticism that while South Korea's cultural industry appears dazzling on the surface, it may be hollow inside with rotting roots. The government will build strong roots, starting now," Lee said.

"We will lay a solid foundation to make it a core industry," Lee continued. "We aim to build a proud cultural powerhouse. For a great tree to grow, the grassland must be well-cultivated. Support and nurturing for the pure arts are also necessary. That is the government's role, not the market's."

Lee further assessed, "Opportunities in the cultural and artistic fields should be created equitably so anyone can challenge themselves, but they were largely neglected. It's truly remarkable and almost miraculous that such great works and artists have emerged." 🇰🇷

First Korean American woman on U.S. coin; disability rights activist Stacey Park Milbern

Made significant contributions to expanding policies and laws
'A fierce and compassionate activist'



Stacey Park Milbern is pictured on the left, while on the right is the Stacey Park Milbern commemorative 25-cent coin, which the United States Mint will begin distributing Aug. 11.

A 25-cent coin (quarter) featuring a Korean American female disability rights activist will enter circulation in the United States on Aug. 11. The person being honored is Stacey Park Milbern (1987-2020). This marks the first time a Korean American figure has appeared on U.S. currency.


According to the U.S. Mint on Aug. 10, the coin commemorating Milbern's life and legacy was minted through the American Women Quarters Program. The U.S. Treasury Department and others have been running a campaign since 2022 through this year that features 20 women on the reverse side of quarters, honoring women who contributed to the development of American society in various fields, such as suffrage, civil rights, abolition of slavery, science and the arts. Milbern became the 19th person to be honored through this program.

As a person with a disability, Milbern was a human rights activist who laid the groundwork for the disability rights movement. She was born in Seoul as the eldest of three siblings to a U.S. serviceman father (Joel Milbern) stationed in Korea and a Korean mother (Jean Milbern). She later moved to the United States and grew up in North Carolina. Some Korean American media outlets in the U.S. report her Korean name as Park Ji-hye.

She suffered from muscular dystrophy, a congenital degenerative muscle disease. Milbern began disability rights activism while interacting with other disabled individuals in her community and, by age 16, was already making a name for herself serving on several disability-related committees in North Carolina. At age 20 in 2007, she played a decisive role in the enactment and passage of North Carolina state legislation designating October as Disability History and Awareness Month and mandating the teaching of disability history in all schools.

After graduating from college, she moved in 2011 to the California Bay Area, a historic hub of the disability rights movement. There, she founded the Disability Justice Culture Club, giving concrete form to the Disability Justice movement, whose concepts she had developed alongside fellow activists during her teenage years. Through this movement, Milbern sought to advance the rights and interests of marginalized groups within the disability community, including people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals and the homeless.

In 2014, Milbern was appointed to the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities under former President Barack Obama's administration, where she served as a policy adviser. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, she organized a team to distribute masks, medicines and hygiene supplies to people with disabilities, low-income individuals and the homeless. Despite undergoing treatment for kidney cancer, she remained passionately active until her death on May 19, 2020, due to surgical complications. It was the day of her 33rd birthday.

The Mint stated: "Milbern was a leader, visionary, and problem-solver. She was a fierce yet compassionate advocate for justice for people with disabilities, shining with youth, purpose, and dedication." 



Second-generation Korean Argentinian filmmaker wins Locarno International Film Festival's Best Emerging Director Award

Director Cecilia Kang's debut feature film, 'The Eldest Son,' tells story of immigrant family



Cecilia Kang, a second-generation Korean Argentinian director

Argentinean media outlet Pagina 12 reported on Aug. 16 that Cecilia Kang, a second-generation Korean Argentinian director, won the Best Emerging Director Award at the 78th Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland for her debut feature film, "Hijo Mayor" (The Eldest Son).

Director Kang received the Best Emerging Director Award in the Directors of the Present competition section, which features the first and second films by emerging directors.

Born in 1985 in Buenos Aires, Kang studied at Argentina's National School of Experimental Film and Video Production (ENERC).

She debuted in 2015, when her short film "Videojuegos" (Videogames) was nominated in the Generation section at the Berlin Film Festival. She also gained recognition in Korea for her documentary film "The Ship That Left From Me," which addresses the issue of Japanese military comfort women.

"The Eldest Son" is director Kang's first feature film, based on the story of her own family, who immigrated to Argentina.

According to Pagina 12, Kang explained, "The Eldest Son' begins from memory, or rather, from the place from which we choose to remember. It is the romantic trace of a man who chose a path different from expectations and a work that shows how that path became the inescapable beginning of his new life."

She explained that it differs from the film "Minari," which is also about immigrants, in that it views her father's experience as the eldest son migrating to Argentina through the eyes of his teenage daughter.

In a written interview with Yonhap News four years ago, Kang expressed her desire to live as a storyteller, saying, "I want to tell stories that move people, make them ask questions and see the world in unexpected ways," rather than setting grand goals as a filmmaker. 🌐



First History and Culture Camp for overseas Korean youth residing in Korea is held

25 youth from Russia, China, Vietnam and CIS countries experience their homeland while reflecting on the meaning of Korean liberation from Aug. 13 to 16

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Sang-duk) held its first History and Culture Camp for overseas Korean youth residing in Korea from Aug. 13 to 16.

Reflecting on the significance of the 80th anniversary of Korean independence, this camp was attended by 25 participants, including middle and high school students and university student mentors who were born and raised in Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), China and Vietnam, and are currently residing in Korea.

The camp was designed to help youth who arrived in Korea later in life to foster pride through experiencing their homeland's history and culture, build networks through interactions with peers of similar age and support their settlement in Korea.

Participants began their schedule Aug. 13 by visiting the OKA in



Participants take part in the History and Culture Camp for overseas compatriot youths residing in Korea.

Yeonsu-gu, Incheon, and attended the opening ceremony held at the Overseas Koreans Welcome Center, located in the same building.

“As we mark the 80th anniversary of Korean independence, this will be a time to reflect on the noble sacrifices made by overseas Korean independence activists for the freedom and peace of future generations,” Lee Ki-sung, director of the

Overseas Koreans Policy Department at the OKA, said at the opening ceremony. “I hope you will support one another and nurture your dreams in your homeland through meeting friends and colleagues who have also experienced immigration later in life.”

Following the opening ceremony, participants moved to the Korean Immigration History Museum in Incheon to learn about the immigration history of our overseas compatriots.

OKA holds training tour to strengthen Hangeul schools

300 teachers, students and parents participate at Silicon Valley, New Vision, and Dasom Schools in U.S.

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Sang-duk) held the Weekend Hangeul School capacity building training tour in California from Aug. 14 to 16 to foster the next generation of Korean Americans.

The training was conducted in collaboration with Dasom Korean School (Principal Choi Mi-young) in Sunnyvale, California, the visiting Silicon Valley Korean School in Cupertino and New Vision Korean School in Milpitas. Approximately 300 participants attended, including over 150 principals and teachers, 70 students and 80 parents. This was the second such event following the Atlanta training session last April.

Under the theme “Korean Language and Identity Education in the AI Digital Age,” the training introduced the latest teaching methods aligned with the digital environment, along with know-how for school and classroom management.

Moon Young-sook, the chair of the Choi Jae-hyung Memorial Foundation, who attended as a special guest lecturer, delivered a



Participants take part in the Weekend Hangeul School capacity building training tour.

session titled “80th anniversary of Korean independence: the diaspora who made Korea shine” to parents at New Vision Korean School.

Kim Cha-myeong, a teacher at Gwangmyeongseo Elementary School, and Kang Yong-cheol, a teacher at Kyunghee Girls' Middle School, conveyed the necessity of identity education and effective methods for teaching the Korean language and culture during a special lecture for parents at the Silicon Valley Korean School.

‘Seeking startups to expand into Seattle area’; recruitment via Hansangnet until Aug. 29

Supporting the selection and expansion of AI, big data, environmental startups

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Sang-duk) is recruiting companies for its Startup Overseas Expansion Support Program through Hansangnet (www.hansang.net) until Aug. 29. This program leverages the overseas Korean business network to support outstanding startups in their global expansions.

The Startup Overseas Expansion Support Program selects outstanding startups in the recently spotlighted AI/big data and environment sectors, providing them mentoring and facilitating their participation in an investment attraction event held in Seattle.

The Seattle investment attraction event will be hosted by the OKA in November. Overseas Korean investors, entrepreneurs, IT professionals and local investors are expected to attend. The event will feature various programs, including ▲ Startup company presentations (IR), ▲ One-on-one business meetings between startups and investors, ▲ Networking events and ▲ Visits to global



The 2025 SME Export Consultation Meeting is held at the Lotte Hotel in Busan on June 10, hosted by the Overseas Koreans Agency.

corporate headquarters.

Seattle is home to the headquarters of global companies like Microsoft and Amazon, and is gaining attention as a region offering abundant opportunities for collaboration with venture capital (VC) firms and accelerators.

Registration as overseas Koreans now possible without basic certificate

OKA announces revised bill that Commissioner Lee says, ‘provides user-centered consular services’

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Sang-duk) announced that overseas Koreans residing or staying abroad no longer need to submit their basic certificates in person when applying for overseas Korean registration or changing registered information.

The OKA promulgated the “partial amendment to the enforcement decree and enforcement rules of the Overseas Korean Registration Act,” which simplifies the documents required from applicants for overseas Korean registration-related services. The Overseas Korean Registration Act was enacted to register overseas Koreans residing or staying abroad, thereby identifying their status and supporting their safe stay and activities.

Under this law, Korean nationals intending to reside or stay abroad for more than 90 days must register with the diplomatic mission overseeing that region. They must also file a “change



OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk delivers a congratulatory address at the commemorative event for the launch of the pilot service of the Overseas Koreans Certification Center held at the Diplomatic Town in Seocho-gu, Seoul, on Nov. 28, 2024.

report” if their registered details change or a “relocation report” if their address or place of residence changes. Previously, applicants faced the inconvenience of having to obtain and submit a basic certificate for these reports in person.

This amendment enhances the convenience for applicants by allowing the person responsible at the registration office to directly verify basic certificates for applicants for overseas citizen registration or those filing change/relocation reports, subject to their consent, eliminating the

need to separately obtain and present such certificates.

“This amendment will improve the efficiency of processing overseas citizen registration-related tasks,” Commissioner Lee said. “We will continue striving to provide user-centered consular services.”



Aug. 11: Social contribution activities with Koreans of Central Asian descent and Chinese compatriots residing in Korea
12: Promulgation of Revised Enforcement Decree and Enforcement Rules of the Overseas Koreans Registration Act
13~16: History and Culture Camp for young overseas compatriots residing in Korea
14~16: Capacity building tour training for weekend Hangeul schools in California, U.S.
29: Policy dialogue on support for settlement of overseas compatriots in Korea
29: Completion ceremony for Overseas Koreans Youth Vocational Training

OKA Announcements

Overseas Koreans and foreign nationals of Korean descent can also apply for consumption coupons

For National Health Insurance subscribers residing in Korea, second round of payments to be distributed
Sept. 22 ~ Oct. 31

Government distribution of Livelihood Recovery Consumption Coupons will extend to overseas Koreans and foreign nationals of Korean descent residing in Korea. The payment reference date is June 18, and applications will be accepted online and offline until Sept. 12.

Eligible recipients include overseas Koreans or foreign nationals of Korean descent residing in Korea on the payment reference date, who are National Health Insurance subscribers, dependents or medical aid recipients.

Overseas citizens may apply if they are listed in the resident registration system and have health insurance eligibility. Foreign nationals of Korean descent may apply if they hold permanent residency (F-5) and have health insurance eligibility, or even without permanent residency if they are listed on a resident registration form that includes a Korean national and are eligible for health insurance or medical aid. However, those who do not meet these eligibility requirements are excluded from receiving the payment.

The consumption coupons will be distributed in two phases: Phase 1 (July 21 to Sept. 12) and Phase 2 (Sept. 22 to Oct. 31). During the first phase, individuals can receive between 150,000 won and 450,000 won per person. The second phase will provide an additional 100,000 won per person to 90 percent of the entire population, following an income screening process.

Applications can be submitted online via the card issuer's



A poster providing information on the Livelihood Recovery Consumption Coupon

website, app, call center or automated response system (ARS), or offline through affiliated bank branches or the resident center (administrative welfare center) in the applicant's registered address jurisdiction.

Online applications are possible even if the applicant is outside Korea during the application period. However, if the applicant was abroad on the payment reference date, they must return to Korea by Sept. 12 and file an appeal at their local resident center. Eligibility for payment will be determined after verification procedures, including a review of immigration records.

Coupons can only be used in the area corresponding to the applicant's registered address. If the address is in a special city or metropolitan city, the coupon can be used throughout that city. If the address is in a provincial area, the coupon can be used within the corresponding city or county. The usage period is until Nov. 30. Unused portions will automatically expire after this date.

The government emphasized that applications are only possible through designated online and offline channels, as false information stating, "Applications are possible through overseas diplomatic missions," is circulating online.

Inquiries regarding the Livelihood Recovery Consumption Coupons can be made through the dedicated call center (1670-2525) or the National Call Center (110). The dedicated call center operates weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., while the National Call Center is available 24 hours a day, all year round.



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