

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. 