



Window into Overseas Koreans



Special Article - OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol visits U.S., Australia, New Zealand
Policy in Focus - OKA promotes overseas textbooks on Korea's development
Spotlight Interview - 'This is the first year of the control tower for the establishment and implementation of overseas Korean policies,' says OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol



The 3.1 Movement and the Red Cross Spirit



Kim Cheol-soo,
president of the Korean Red Cross

Independence activist Lee Kwan-yong (1891-1933). As the first Korean to earn a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Zurich, Switzerland, he was an overseas Korean who was active in the independence movement from 1916 until he earned his doctorate in 1923.

As vice chairman of the Provisional Government's Paris Committee, he helped Kim Kyu-sik attend the Paris Reinforcement Conference in 1919, and on March 8, 1920, as head of the European branch of the Korean Red Cross, he sent a letter to the secretary general of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, Switzerland.

The letter included a protest that the Japanese had ruthlessly repressed Koreans during the March 1 Movement and that the Japanese Red Cross had done nothing to help Koreans despite receiving large donations from Korean donors, as well as a copy of an English-language photo book published by the Korean Red Cross titled the "Korean Independence Movement," which featured images from the March 1 Movement.

He argued that the Provisional Government had organized the Korean Red Cross and should be recognized. He believed that if the Korean Red Cross was recognized by the international community, the Provisional Government of Korea would also be recognized as a country.

According to the principle of "unity," one of the basic principles of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), there is one Red Cross organization in each country that has signed The Geneva Conventions. With this in mind, Emperor Gojong signed The Geneva Conventions in 1903 and established the Korean Red Cross in 1905 with Edict No. 47 as part of his diplomatic efforts to protect the country.

However, in 1909, the International Committee of the Red Cross refused to recognize the Korean Red Cross because the Japanese Red Cross had absorbed the Korean Red Cross, which was established by the Korean Empire, and the Provisional Government was not recognized internationally.

Nevertheless, the Korean Red Cross laid the foundation of the Republic of Korea by spreading the desire to be a sovereign nation to the world during the Korean Empire and the Korean Provisional Government.

Based on these efforts, the Korean Red Cross, which was reorganized under the Korean Red Cross Organization Act in 1949 after liberation from Japanese occupation, has grown beyond its history of providing relief to displaced people during the Korean War, when it received aid from 35 other Red Cross organizations, including the United States and Sweden, and is now able to help in humanitarian crises around the world, including Ukraine and Turkey.

It is said that a people who forget their history have no future. As I look at Lee Kwan-yong's letter on display at the Korean Provisional Government Memorial in Seodaemun Ward, Seoul, I am reminded of the efforts of those who shouted "Manse for Korea's independence" around 100 years ago, not only on the Korean Peninsula but also in China, the United States, Mexico, Cuba and around the world. [\[3\]](#)





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Publisher: Lee Key-cheol
Publishing Company: Overseas Koreans Agency
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YouTube: @OKAKOREA
Designed and edited by: Overseas Koreans Agency **Production:** Yonhap News Agency

The Overseas Koreans Agency is an external agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that conducts various policies and projects to support the rights and interests of the overseas Koreans around the world and their integration into mainstream society in their countries of residence.

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



OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol visits U.S., Australia, New Zealand

Visits Korean communities to establish ‘communication centers’ and hear grievances

Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Key-cheol visited the United States, Australia and New Zealand from February to March to communicate with overseas Koreans and understand their daily lives.

Lee first visited Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles from Feb. 26-29. In Chicago and San Francisco, Lee paid tribute to the Korean War memorials in the U.S., and held meetings with compatriots and Korean educators, including Korean language school teachers, to explain major Korean policies and hear suggestions. In LA, he toured civilian sites and spoke to Korean American businessmen to listen to their concerns.

Lee focused on communicating with the local Korean community. In Koreatown in LA, he met with Korean businesspeople to learn about their daily lives and discuss ways for Korean small businesses to expand overseas. They also discussed ways to successfully organize the World Korean Business Congress, which will be held in North Jeolla Province this year.

Recommendations for compatriot societies, fostering the next generation and expanding allowance of multiple nationalities

Korean American businesspeople recommended creating a map of Koreatowns, holding a biennial Korean American Business Congress, expanding opportunities for the next generation of Korean American businesspeople to participate in the Congress, supporting young Korean talent to enter the U.S. and building an economic platform among Korean American businesspeople.

At the meeting, Lee introduced the “Foreign Textbooks on Korea’s Political and Economic Development” project, which is being promoted by the OKA to improve the status of the Korean community and strengthen the Korean identity. The compatriots in attendance expressed their willingness to participate.

“Cultivating the identity of the next generation is an essential task of the Korean National Committee,” Lee told the Korean school teachers, “so please actively participate in the textbook project and come up with a good plan.” The teachers suggested utilizing the network of Korean American Education Councils in each state and analyzing existing textbooks.

At the meeting, compatriots recommended simplifying the acquisition of multiple citizenships and lowering the age of acquisition; supporting underprivileged compatriots, such as Korean adoptees abroad; and disclosing

the support of compatriot organizations.

Lee said that concrete results will be achieved through close consultation between ministries, and that he will actively promote policies to remove thorns from under the fingernails of compatriots and policies to comfort compatriots by collecting opinions from the field. He also encouraged active overseas participation in the 22nd National Assembly election so that compatriots can exercise their precious rights.

Explaining Basic Plan for Overseas Koreans in Sydney and Auckland

Lee visited Sydney, Australia, and Auckland, New Zealand, from March 12-15 to hear the opinions of the local overseas Korean community.

On the first day of the trip, in Sydney, which has the largest overseas Korean community in Oceania at 84,000 people, he discussed major issues with stakeholders in the Korean association. He then invited more than 100 local compatriots to the Korean Community Center for a dinner and meeting to introduce the main policies of the Overseas Korean Basic Plan and Roadmap and listen to their concerns.

This was the first time the meeting was held in the Australian Capital Territory since the establishment of the OKA in June last year, and it was an opportunity to hear about the issues and concerns of the Korean community in Australia, as many overseas Koreans from Sydney and other regions attended the meeting.

The next day, he held a meeting with officials from the Australian Korean Language School Council to explain the OKA's policy for the next generation of Koreans, including its support for Korean language schools, and to discuss how to teach Korean political and economic developments in Korean language schools, which are not only for Korean language education but also for Korean identity education.

On the last day of the program, the 14th, the delegation traveled to New Zealand, home to 31,000 overseas Koreans in the Oceania region, where they hosted a dinner and meeting with more than 50 Koreans at the Auckland Korean Community Center. The delegation also met with Melissa Lee (minister of multicultural affairs and six-term member of parliament), a prominent local politician, to discuss the Korea-New Zealand friendship and ways to develop the Korean community in New Zealand.

Korea holds meeting to comfort Padok workers dispatched to Germany

On Feb. 23, Lee visited the Padok Workers' Memorial in Yangjae-dong, Seocho Ward, Seoul, to hear about the plight of workers who were sent to Germany as miners and nurses. In an ongoing effort to smooth out relations and communicate with alienated compatriots, this is the second time Lee has visited the memorial, following his visit to Hambak Village in Incheon on Jan. 30, where Koryo compatriots live.

The commissioner first viewed the historical exhibits at the memorial, including photos and memorabilia of Padok workers. He then held a meeting with the Padok workers to ask about their well-being and listen to their stories. Kim Choon-dong, president of the Korean Federation of Padok Miners, Nurses and Care Assistants, and more than 40 Padok workers attended the event.



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Participants complained about the difficulties caused by poor living conditions and called for practical help from the government, such as expanding medical benefits through the amendment of the Act on Support and Commemorative Projects for Padok Miners, Nurses and Nursing Assistants, and supporting the return of Padok workers who cannot afford to return home. They also called for various commemorative projects to ensure that Padok workers' dedication to the country is long remembered. [▶](#)

- 1 Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Key-cheol (front row, 10th from L) poses for a photo after a meeting with compatriots from the Midwest in Chicago on Feb. 26.
- 2 Lee greets Korean businesspeople during a meeting in Los Angeles on Feb. 28.
- 3 Lee (front row, 5th from L) takes a group photo with officials from the Australian Korean Language School Council in Sydney on March 13.
- 4 Lee listens to the grievances of a Padok miner at the Padok Workers' Memorial Hall in Seocho Ward, Seoul, on Feb. 23.

OKA promotes overseas textbooks on Korea's development

Announces 'Major Work Plan for 2024': 'strengthening support for Hangeul schools' and 'focusing on shared growth'

To strengthen overseas Koreans' sense of identity, the Overseas Koreans Agency will work with Korean communities in each country to include Korean political and economic developments in textbooks in the countries where they live. The agency will also increase the budget for 1,462 Hangeul schools, which educate overseas Koreans on the Korean language, history and culture, by a significant amount compared with last year.

OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol announced the "2024 Major Work Plan" on March 7 in a briefing room at the Seoul government complex. Since its launch in June last year, the agency has listened to the vivid voices of overseas Koreans in person at 13 meetings with the president, held more than 200 meetings at home and abroad in local communities, and listened to the opinions of domestic and foreign experts, to establish a basic plan for overseas Korean policies to be implemented over the next five years.

The OKA has proposed the following basic directions for overseas Korean policy: ▲ Focusing on projects with a large ripple effect that fundamentally benefit the Korean community, rather than one-time events; ▲ Establishing policies centered on people's livelihoods and their localities, such as supporting small and medium-sized enterprises to expand overseas and creating jobs for youth; and ▲ Contributing to the

realization of a nation that's part of the global backbone by pursuing shared growth with the 7 million overseas Koreans.

Prioritizing the cultivation of overseas Korean identity and improving their status in their countries of residence

The OKA places a high priority on strengthening the Korean identity in light of the fact that the mainstay of the overseas Korean community has shifted from the first generation of immigrants to the second and third generations and is becoming more assimilated. In the next generation, the number of overseas Koreans of mixed race and multiple identities will increase. Therefore, the agency plans to educate overseas Koreans about Korea's political and economic development and the correct view of history and nationhood so that the next generation of Koreans will have a Korean identity.

The agency will develop relevant educational content and visit 15 major countries to hold regional, sectoral and generational meetings. It will provide education on Korea's development through invitational training sessions taking place in Korea, and in cooperation with the private organization cyber diplomatic mission VANK, it will produce videos on Korea's development and distribute them through social networking services. In particular, the OKA will work with the Korean diaspora, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Korean civil organizations to promote Korea's development through various media, including an inclusion in textbooks in countries where overseas Koreans live.

"This project will not only foster overseas Koreans' identity and pride as Koreans and improve their status in their countries of residence but also synergize with the continued spread of the Korean Wave," Lee said. "It will also contribute to the export of domestic small and medium-sized enterprises with



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weak brand power and bring about a ‘five birds with one stone’ effect, contributing to the common prosperity of humankind.”

The OKA will allocate 17.7 billion won (US\$13.2 million), up from 14.1 billion won last year, to operate Hangeul schools, a 25.7 percent increase from last year, to boost teacher morale and improve the educational and operating environment. The budget to enhance teacher competency will be 2.7 billion won, up 44.6 percent from last year’s 1.9 billion won. The budget will be used to improve the operation of Study Korean, an online education platform, strengthen formal education by expanding tuition support for low-income children and expand Korean language education at Korean Cultural Centers abroad.

Awareness campaign to protect and support overseas Koreans to benefit national status

The agency will consider amending the Basic Law on Overseas Koreans to support overseas Koreans in emergency situations and consider enacting a special law to support returning overseas Koreans in special circumstances. In September and October of last year, President Yoon Suk Yeol was the first president to invite previously marginalized compatriots, such as atomic bomb victims and Padok workers, to their home country to honor them and make them feel at home.

Reflecting the government’s commitment, the government will also prepare a yearly action plan for the specific implementation of the recently finalized “First Basic Plan for Overseas Koreans Policy” (2024-2028), a comprehensive mid- to long-term government plan.

As the “Special Law on Support for Sakhalin Compatriots” was passed by the National Assembly at the end of last year, the government will actively support overseas Koreans by establishing a support system for Sakhalin compatriots living in Korea. To commemorate the 160th anniversary of the Koryo people’s migration, we are also organizing programs to invite Koreans from Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region to visit their home countries, as well as visiting children of vulnerable multicultural families in Southeast Asia.

The agency will also promote the inclusion of the concept of overseas Koreans and the background of overseas Korean migration in school


textbooks. It is also planning to organize a public awareness campaign for elementary, middle, high school and university students on “seeking understanding of overseas Koreans.”

One-Stop Citizens’ Service for Overseas Koreans

The OKA will organize meetings with overseas Koreans on occasions such as the president’s overseas tours to address their concerns. In addition to inviting and supporting overseas Koreans in various fields, the agency will utilize online platforms, such as Korean Net, to create a permanent communication system.

The World Korean Business Convention (WKBC), which received high praise for its first overseas event last year, will be internalized to support domestic SMEs to expand overseas and serve as a global business hub for win-win cooperation with overseas Korean companies.

To reduce the burden on overseas Koreans when using the “Overseas Koreans 365 Civil Service Call Center,” data calls and chat consultations will be added to reduce international call charges. The government will also introduce a mobile overseas Korean identity card that overseas Koreans can use to access online e-government services and verify their identity at government offices and banks, and establish an overseas Korean authentication system that allows them to receive private e-signature certificates through Kakao and Naver even if they do not have a mobile phone in Korea.

“The OKA will be an organization that communicates with overseas Koreans in a humble, people-oriented manner, removing thorns from under their fingernails and providing practical help,” Lee said. “Above all, we will play the role of a protective barrier and spokesperson to protect and support our proud 7 million overseas Koreans and bring about win-win development with our home country.” 

1 A Korean language class is held at a Hangeul school in the Cuban capital of Havana on Feb. 17. Both teachers and students are Cuban locals.

2 Next-generation Koreans from 20 countries attending the 2023 World Korean Congress pose for a group photo after a meeting with Bang Ki-seon (C), chief of the National Security Council, at the Prime Minister’s Office in Samcheong-dong, Jongno Ward, Seoul, on Nov. 29, 2023.

3 OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol announces the “Major Work Plan for 2024” at the briefing room of the government complex in Seoul on Feb. 7.

‘This is the first year of the control tower for the establishment and implementation of overseas Korean policies,’ says OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol

Five-year basic plan finalized; ‘Focus on fostering next generation’s identity and supporting compatriots’



“2024 will be the year when the Overseas Koreans Agency will show itself as a control tower for establishing overseas Korean policies and implementing projects.”

In a press interview on March 18, OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol expressed his confidence, saying that the basic plan for the government’s overseas Korean policy for the next five years, from this year to 2028, has just been finalized.

The OKA had previously explained the vision, policy goals and tasks contained in the basic plan at a joint briefing with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on March 7. Civilian committee members who attended a review of the plan held prior to the briefing said, “With the establishment of the OKA, the plan is broader and better

organized than ever before.”

Lee emphasized that after finalizing the basic plan, which lays the foundation for mid- to long-term overseas Korean policies, “We are now able to carry out fundamental and far-reaching projects for overseas Koreans in earnest. We will promote policies that are people-centered and locally oriented, and focus on projects that help domestic small and mid-sized enterprises expand overseas and create jobs for young people.”

He added, “The OKA will play its role as a protective barrier for overseas Koreans around the world and a spokesperson for the overseas Korean community that provides practical help.”

The following is a one-on-one interview with Commissioner Lee.

What are the five policy goals outlined in the Basic Plan?

The first is to establish a strengthened overseas Korean policy system. We want to build a foundation for a consistent and sustainable overseas Korean policy that is centered on the needs of policy users. We will overhaul and internalize laws and guidelines related to overseas Koreans, and activate pan-government policy consultations and collections of opinions from the Korean compatriot community. We plan to enhance policy effectiveness in this way.

Strengthening the identity of the next generation of overseas Koreans was emphasized.

This is also the second policy goal of the compatriot policy. To this end, we will strengthen overseas Korean education. The operating budget for Korean language schools has been increased from 14 billion won last year to 17.7 billion won this year. The plan is to boost teachers’ morale and strengthen their teaching capabilities. By 2028, the government plans to increase the operating budget for Hangeul schools to 19 billion won to strengthen their functions.

The plan also embarks on the journey to foster identity and help compatriots integrate into the mainstream society of their host countries by sharing information about Korea’s development.

This is a key program of the OKA. It works with the Korean community, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and civil organizations in Korea to communicate Korea’s political and economic developments in various media, including textbooks in overseas Koreans’ countries of residence. We will help the next

generation of Koreans become rooted in the mainstream society of their countries of residence by creating an environment where they know their home country correctly and where being Korean can be a competitive advantage.

The program to protect and support compatriots has been strengthened.

This is the third goal of the policy. In order to fulfill the policy task of protecting and supporting overseas Koreans in line with national dignity, the government will warmly embrace compatriots who have been marginalized, such as Sakhalin compatriots, Koryo compatriots, atomic bomb victims and compatriots from multicultural families, and further strengthen support and protection for compatriots in crisis situations. Policies to support compatriots living in Korea will also be promoted. We will strengthen guidance and explanations on the immigration and residence systems, and work with local governments to help compatriots settle in Korea.

Since taking office, you have emphasized building a global Korean network and dramatically improving the civil complaints service.

That's right. We will build a global network to earn support for our policies from the governments of major countries where many compatriots reside. In particular, we will further internalize the World Korean Business Congress to strengthen support for domestic SMEs to expand overseas. We will also improve civil services to make life easier for Korean compatriots. In particular, we will establish an overseas Korean authentication center so that overseas Koreans can conveniently use domestic digital services without a Korean mobile phone. We are cooperating with the Ministry of Science and ICT and other related ministries, and will pilot a certificate issuance service for overseas Koreans in the second half of the year.

Through these projects and others, we will ultimately contribute to the realization of a nation that's part of the global backbone. This is the final goal set out in the Basic Plan for Overseas Koreans. We will also establish an overseas Korean advisory group to promote two-way cooperation in major policy formulation processes and actively support the public diplomacy activities of Korean compatriot organizations.


What are you determined to do to achieve your policy goals?

Since taking office, I have visited diaspora communities in Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Australia and New Zealand, and held meetings to understand the current situations of people's lives and inform them of the government's policies. I try to communicate with

overseas Koreans in a low-key manner and focus on removing the thorns under their fingernails and providing practical help. Above all, I felt that I should take care of people's lives by performing locally oriented work.

At the meeting, the overseas Koreans showed great interest in our project to inform them about Korea's political and economic development. Korea is the only country among the 80 countries that gained independence after World War II that has achieved EU-level democracy and economic growth at the same time. We want to include this fact in foreign textbooks. This is a project that can contribute to the fulfillment of the two core goals of the OKA, which are to foster the identity of the next generation of Koreans and to help them enter mainstream society.

What would you like to say to the overseas Korean community?

The OKA will strive to become an organization that takes care of you so that you can feel, "My country is by my side." We will also strive to become an organization that instills a sense of identity and pride in the next generation of Koreans, as well as become a global business hub. We look forward to your continued interest and cooperation in our priority programs, including our work to promote Korea's development story. 

- 1 OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol explains the direction of the agency's policy pursuits at a joint briefing on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the OKA's major policy initiatives for 2024 held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jongno Ward, Seoul, on March 7.
- 2 Lee delivers opening remarks at the opening ceremony of the 2023 Korean Language School Teacher Invitation Training held at The K Hotel Seoul in Seocho Ward, Seoul, on Jan. 8.
- 3 Lee visits a Korean supermarket in Eastwood in Sydney, Australia, on March 13 to listen to current issues faced by the Korean community.
- 4 Lee speaks about the development of Korea being included in Dutch textbooks at a press conference at the OKA grand conference room in Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, on Sept. 13, 2023.



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Documentary about history of Korean immigration to U.S., ‘Words of Wisdom from the Rainbow State,’ made into educational content

Supported by the Academy of Korean Studies and distributed to public schools and Korean language schools in the Americas

“Words of wisdom from the Rainbow State,” a documentary film introducing the history of Korean immigration in the Americas, and “Songs of Love from Hawaii,” a musical short film, will be produced as educational content and distributed to public schools in the Americas and Korean language schools around the world. Now Production Films (CEO Lee Jin-young), which produced the two documentary films, recently announced on March 6 that it has been selected for the 2024 Korea Immersion Educational Content Development and Activity Support Project hosted by the Academy of Korean Studies.

As a result, Now Production Films will develop a customized website and e-book to be used as classroom materials in North American K-12 public schools and Korean language schools around the world. The website and e-books will include edited versions of the movie for classroom use, as well as discussion topics and quizzes. A “Words of Wisdom from the Rainbow State” template will also be created to help students record their own family stories.


The website and e-book will be available in Korean and English and will be released in the first half of next year. The educational content will be produced by Daniel Suehisa, a teacher at Kai Elementary School in Hawaii; Choi Tae-seong, a history expert and author of Korean history textbooks; Lee Jin-young, director of the Institute of International Relations at Inha University; and Diana Kim, professor of Asian Studies at Georgetown University in the United States.

“We are excited to share more of our proud immigration history with students around the world in a more interesting way,” said Lee, the director of the documentary. “We will do our best to create educational content to contribute to the globalization of K-content.”

Now Production Films will use this opportunity to continue collecting and documenting the history of immigration to create a legacy for future generations.

Meanwhile, the musical short film “Songs of Love from Hawaii,” which tells the story of 120 years of Korean immigration to the Americas, was produced by world-class musicians, including violist Richard Yong-jae O’Neill and violinists Lee Ki-jang and Chee-yun.

The film premiered at the 43rd Hawaii International Film Festival last October. The film will be released in the U.S. in May and Korea in June, and will also be broadcast on PBS Hawaii.

For more information about the movie, please visit Now Production Films at www.theRainbowWords.com. 



1 Promotional posters for the documentary film “Words of Wisdom from the Rainbow State” and the music short film “Songs of Love from Hawaii” produced by Now Production Films

2 A screening of “Songs of Love from Hawaii” takes place at the Incheon Museum of Art’s special exhibition room on Dec. 15, 2022.

Documentary film to shed light on Japanese citizens who fought discrimination against Koreans in Japan

Director Park Young-i's film 'sheds light on Independence Movement and history of discrimination against Korean schools' to be released in October


A documentary will highlight the activities of Japanese people who stood together against discrimination against Korean immigrants in Japan. Titled "Shout Out and Gather," the movie is being produced by the Citizens' Organization to Protect Our Schools and Children and is set for release in October, the organization said recently.

The director is Park Young-i, a third-generation Korean Japanese who won the Documentary Award at the Dallas Asian Film Festival for "Sky Blue Symphony," a film about a Korean school in Japan.

"Shout Out and Gather" tells the story of Japanese people who have supported the Korean Independence Movement, participated in the Hanshin education incident, fought against the closure of Minjok schools in 1948 and worked to uncover the truth about the massacre of Koreans during the Great Kanto Earthquake.

The film also introduces the activities of local people who support Korean schools and call for an end to discrimination because they believe that Japanese society should not take away the culture and language of Korean Japanese. The film also introduces the solidarity of various civil society organizations in Korea, the United States and Europe that supported Korean Japanese and their schools.

"Through the untold stories of those who have been helping Koreans in Japan since the Japanese occupation and protecting the Korean schools, we will be able to show that we should aim for coexistence, even if it is difficult and hard," a member of the group said.

The organization is raising part of the money for the movie through crowdfunding. Those who wish to contribute can do so at www.socialfunch.org/sorione or forms.gle/cWi29dhe55jXELHB6. 



1 A promotional poster for the documentary film "Shout Out and Gather"

2 Director Park Young-i, a third-generation Korean Japanese

GLOBAL KOREAN



MBK Chairman Kim Byeong-ju takes on role of chairman of board of directors at Haverford College, U.S. First Korean American to serve in such a role at American college

Kim Byeong-ju (60), chairman of MBK Partners, a large Korean private equity fund, was appointed as the next chairman of the board of directors of Haverford College, his alma mater. The college announced on March 6 that Chairman Kim was appointed as the successor to Charles G. Beaver, the current chairman of the board of directors, and that he will take office on July 1.

Haverford College, founded in 1833, is a private university focusing on liberal arts, including humanities, social studies, basic science and engineering, located in Pennsylvania. It is considered part of the “Little Ivy League,” along with Amherst College, Williams College, Swarthmore College and Wesleyan University.

Although there are cases where Korean Americans have served as board members at American universities, Kim is the first to be appointed as chairman of the board of directors of a prestigious university. The Haverford College Board of Directors is an organization that manages the core regulations of university operations, including governance, research areas and financial resource management, and is comprised of 30 directors, including the chairman of the board and the university president. Kim served as a board member of Haverford College from 2005 to 2017.

Kim, who is also the chairman of the MBK Scholarship Foundation, also serves as a board member of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Carnegie Hall, the New York Public Library and Harvard Business School.

Catherine Kim, second-generation Korean American, appointed VP of NBC News Supervises news production for NBC newsrooms across U.S.

At NBC, the largest broadcaster in the United States, a Korean woman has taken charge of the operations of newsrooms as the first Korean American in one of the highest positions in American journalism.

According to The Korea Times, Catherine Kim, a second-generation Korean American, was recently promoted to executive vice president of the NBC News Department.

Executive Vice President Kim will oversee news production across all platforms of the NBC newsroom. She also directs investigative and in-depth reporting through collaborations with CNBC, Telemundo, which is owned by NBCUniversal, and local media outlets.

A Minnesota native who majored in journalism at New York University, she worked at CBS as a producer for “60 Minutes,” “Sunday Morning” and “Evening News” from



1995 to 2006 and worked as a news editor for two years, starting in 2009. She also worked as a senior producer at CNN.

After joining NBC in 2011, she worked as a senior producer for “Rock Center with Brian Williams,” senior producer for “Dateline: On Assignment,” senior producer for “NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt,” digital chief editor for NBC News and NBC News & MSNBC digital. After serving as global chief news officer, she has served as the senior vice president of NBC’s news department since January of last year.

‘First Korean permanent resident’ Jeong Ho-hyeon, head of Korean language school in Cuba

‘With new diplomatic ties between South Korea and Cuba, exchanges will increase and things will get busier’

Jeong Ho-hyeon (51), principal of the Cuban Korean Language School in Havana, said she did not have time to put down her cellphone on Feb. 14, when the announcement of the establishment of diplomatic relations between South Korea and Cuba was made. She reported to the media, “On social media where I was talking about various things with local Cuban students attending a Korean language school, heart emoticons were flying around. There were also reactions like ‘I want to cry because I can’t believe it,’ and some students were almost fainting.”

The principal was the first of roughly 30 Koreans living in Cuba to receive permanent residency. Jeong, who studied broadcast planning and documentary film production, visited Cuba in 2005 while producing a program for Korean descendants of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and fell in love with the country. In 2007, she married a local man and moved to Korea for a while before returning to Cuba. Their story was covered in her autobiographical documentary film “Cuban Lovers” (2010).

For this reason, Koreans in Cuba call her Director Jeong. Additionally, when couples on their honeymoons and Korean tourists traveled to Cuba, she also served as a reliable guide for those who wanted to explore the local area.

Jeong also successfully completed everything from marriage registration to birth registration in Cuba during the “unofficial diplomatic relations” period. “There was no precedent for anything related to administration, and I could not ask anyone about anything,” she recalled. “Since Korea and Cuba did not have diplomatic relations, there was nothing that could be done directly (between the countries).”

She is currently focusing on the operation of the Korean language school, which was established with the help of the Overseas Koreans Foundation (currently the Overseas Koreans Agency) in 2022 and is working to foster Cuban Korean language experts.

“After the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, there will be more work to do, and I will be busier, but I am in a great mood,” she said with a smile. “More than anything, students’ hopes that academic and language exchanges will continue are very high, so we must do our best to live up to them.” 🇰🇷



New President of National Koryo People's Association Jung Young-soon plans to 'expand network of interaction'

3rd-generation Sakhalin compatriot, 'I will serve community regardless of background'

"We want to create a platform for the 120,000 or so Koryo people living in South Korea to share their experiences and knowledge when facing various difficult social, legal and other issues, and expand it into a nationwide network of interaction."

"We will develop programs to integrate and support Koryo compatriots in each region," said Jung Young-soon, 52, a visiting professor of Russian at Incheon National University's Northeast Asia Institute of International Trade, in a recent media interview.

She was elected president of the National Koryo People's Association at a general meeting at Hanyang University's Erica Campus in Ansan, Gyeonggi Province, on Feb. 25 and will work to improve the rights and interests of Koryo people for the next two years.

In a congratulatory letter to President Jung, Lee Key-cheol, the commissioner of the Overseas Koreans Agency, said, "Despite difficulties, Koryo people have grown into exemplary members of their countries of residence, contributed to the development of relations between their countries of residence and their home countries, and maintained their Korean identity.

"This year marks the 160th anniversary of the migration of Koreans to the Far East, and I will continue to act as a bridge between Koryo diaspora and their home countries."

Jung said: "We will actively cooperate with the government and NGOs to jointly address issues and problems related to the rights of the Koryo people, especially since this year marks the 160th anniversary of the settlement of the Korean people in the Far East, we will strive to raise awareness about the Koryo people.

"In South Korea, there is a distinction between Koryo people and Sakhalin compatriots, but we try to look at them as the same community regardless of background," she said. "We are trying to convince others that we should all work together to write a new page of history."

Jung's views are echoed by the likes of the Northeast Asia Peace Federation (Dongpyeong), an organization that supports compatriots in Northeast Asia. In announcing plans to commemorate the 160th anniversary of the Koryo people's migration this year, civil society organizations, such as Dongpyeong, have used the term "Koryo/Korean migration" to broaden the scope of the existing term "Koryo migration" to include Sakhalin and Chinese compatriots.



Jung Young-soon, new president of the National Koryo People's Association

A third-generation Sakhalin compatriot, Jung was born in Irkutsk, Russia. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in Korean and English from the Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk State Normal University and her doctorate in linguistics from Moscow State University.

After working as a Korean professor at Moscow State University, Jung married and settled in South Korea in 2008. She has worked as a Russian professor at Kyungpook National University and the National Police University, and founded the Russian College Busan, an alternative school centered on the Russian curriculum, which she now runs.

She became a South Korean citizen in August 2020. 

Sakhalin Korean descendant illustrator Jung Marina, 'I want to bring happiness to someone'

30 Korean artists participated in 'Ee-eeungmiseum The Place Art Fair'

Jung Marina, 41, a Sakhalin Korean descendant who works as a fashion designer and illustrator, has been showcasing her spring-appropriate works at a monthlong exhibition in a "hanok" since Feb. 27.

Jung was invited to participate in the "Ee-eeungmiseum The Place Art Fair," which opened March 31 at Ee-eum The Place near Bukchon Hanok Village in Jongno Ward, Seoul. The exhibition features 30 artists, including Jung and actress and painter Yoon Song-ah. The exhibition held a VIP preview event on Feb. 21 for five days.

Ee-eum The Place is a private gallery in a remodeled urban hanok built in 1908. Originally a mix of traditional hanok and Japanese architecture, the building was transformed into a traditional hanok in 2008.

"I participated in this art fair because it is the first art fair in Korea to be held in a hanok, and I thought it held a special meaning," Jung told the press. "Living in the West, I have always been fascinated by the culture and life of the East, especially the space of a hanok."

She describes herself as someone who is often caught between East and West, analog and digital, reality and imaginary, glamorous and mundane, and traditional and modern. She likes to explore opposites and discover new worlds and ideas within them.

Jung exhibited three of her past digital prints, "Among The Flowers," "Broken Flower Alive" and "Mara Wonders 01," which were made using the digital printing method.

"I thought a painting with flowers would be appropriate since it's the beginning of spring," Jung said. "I wanted to convey happiness to someone, just as having a flower pot with beautiful flowers in a room makes me feel happy and cheerful."

In particular, "Mara Wonders 01" is part of her Mara series, and the fictional character she created in the painting, "Mara," means "eternally beautiful" in Greek.



Artist Jung Marina, a third-generation Sakhalin Korean, poses for a photo in front of her work.

"We live our lives surrounded by beauty every day, even if we don't realize it," Jung said. "The work contains the message of creating a world where the heart resonates with beauty and actions are in line with beautiful thoughts."

She also submitted a media piece to the NFT (Non-Fungible Token) Korea Festival 2024, which took place March 22-23 at S-Factory in Seongdong Ward, Seoul. This year, the event focused on the world-renowned Spanish architect Antoni Gaudi.

Born in the city of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, Jung is a third-generation Korean, whose grandfather endured forced labor in Sakhalin during the Japanese occupation, and holds Russian citizenship. She began designing as a child in Russia, where she attended art school, but after graduating from a Korean university with a degree in fashion, she has been working primarily in Korea. 🇰🇷

Korea-Cuba diplomatic relations established 103 years after first Korean immigration to Cuba

Only a monument stands in El Bolo, Matanzas, an early Korean village that inherited Korean culture

Drive about 100 kilometers east of Havana, the capital of Cuba, and you'll reach the town of El Bolo in the province of Matanzas. In the middle of the two-hour journey through scenic coastal roads is the Bridge of Bacunayagua, the highest bridge in the country (103.5 meters). It's not a boring road, even for first-timers.

On Feb. 16, a taxi driver, a native Cuban with great knowledge of the surrounding area, picked up our correspondent near his destination and paused for a moment.

"Are we sure this is the way to go?" he asked, backing up briefly onto a side road we had just passed, then turning onto a dirt road. After passing a few wooden houses with "For Sale" signs, we arrived at a prominent structure, surrounded by an iron barrier. It was the Matanzas Korean Immigration Monument, erected in 2005.

With a red roof resembling Korean-style tiles and a blue circular center supported by elongated white supports, it was built with the help of the Korean United Presbyterian Church of Seattle, USA.

"I've been living here, in El Bolo, since 1977," said Marta, a village resident who keeps the keys to the monument at the request of

Korean descendants. "The village used to be in a region with an established Korean community."

El Bolo, a center for raising money for independence movement during Japanese occupation

El Bolo was founded in 1921 as a settlement for most of Cuba's first Korean immigrants. Some immigrants who went to work on Mexican henequen plantations in 1905 came to Matanzas a decade later through the Manati Port and settled in the town of El Bolo. Here, the immigrants continued to perform hard labor, such as harvesting henequen, but they also built a Korean school to teach the history and language of their homeland and established a Korean association to keep the traditional culture alive. Matanzas, where El Bolo is located, was also an important center for raising funds for the independence movement from this faraway foreign land of Cuba during the Japanese occupation.

During the Japanese occupation, Koreans in Cuba, led by Dr. Lim Cheon-taek (1903-1985, recipient of the National Defense Medal of



- 1 A view of the village of El Bolo in Matanzas province, Cuba, on Feb. 16
- 2 A monument to Korean immigration to Matanzas stands in the town of El Bolo.
- 3 Marta Lim (85), daughter of independence activist Lim Cheon-taek, examines a marker stone at the Matanzas Korean Immigration Monument in the town of El Bolo.
- 4 Marta speaks to the correspondent in front of the Matanzas Korean Immigration Monument.



Korea in 1997), collected donations for the Liberation Army and sent them to their home country, which was described in the “Baekbeom Diary” as “In Cuba, Lim Cheon-taek and others sponsored the provisional government.”

However, in El Bolo, which we sought out 103 years after the first Korean immigrants put down roots in commemoration of the recent diplomatic relations established between Korea and Cuba, there was no trace of the old days.

Lim Cheon-taek’s daughter, Marta Lim (Lim Eun-hee, 85), accompanied us on the visit, and she recalled with regret that “There was a well there, but it’s gone now,” “There was no house here, but there is now” and “There used to be a wooden house where the brick house is now.”

Moon Yoon-mi, a Korean consular attache in Cuba who travels back and forth between Havana and El Bolo often to visit the site, also lamented, saying, “They used to put a large bench under a big tree in the middle of the village, where they played ‘yutnori’ and the elderly engaged in friendly conversation. Now, the place has turned into the yard of a local residence.”

Daughter of independence activist says, ‘I hope to preserve historic sites through diplomatic ties’

The situation was similar at the site of the former Matanzas


Regional Center of the Korean Association (1943-1951), close to downtown Matanzas. It was also the home of Dr. Lim Cheon-taek, but the wooden house was torn down and a cement building was built. Today, a cafe is located on the first floor.

“I heard that my house used to be inhabited by a Korean,” said Violeta Rosario (94), a resident I met while exploring El Bolo, who gladly invited me inside.

Passing through the rusted, squeaky iron bars, past a small vegetable garden and through a wooden door, I was greeted by high ceilings and spacious rooms.

“It’s very spacious inside,” Rosario explained. “But there were other families there, so we didn’t stay long enough to explore every nook and cranny. However, both the interior and exterior of the house were largely intact, with no signs of remodeling.”

Although the house may not have any value as a historic site, given the history of El Bolo, it could be purchased and utilized.

“It has long been my wish that contact between Korean descendants and the Korean people would be easier and faster,” Marta said, emphasizing that she hopes the exchange will lead to a breakthrough in the preservation of Korean settlements and local independence movement sites. 

By Lee Jae-rim,
Yonhap News Agency correspondent in Mexico City

New York State Legislature establishes 'Yu Gwan-sun Day' to commemorate March 1 Movement

Proposed by Rep. Ron Kim of Korean descent; 'Let's remember spirit of resistance'

The New York State Legislature adopted a resolution to establish March 1 as "Yu Gwan-sun Day" to mark the 105th anniversary of Independence Movement Day this year. According to the local Korean community, the New York State Assembly passed this resolution on Feb. 27, proposed by New York State Assemblyman Ron Kim (45, Korean name Tae-seok Kim), who is of Korean descent. New York State Reps. Grace Lee and Edward Brownstein also participated in the resolution.

In 2019, the year of the 100th anniversary of Independence Movement Day, the New York State Legislature designated March 1 as March 1 Independence Movement Day at the New York state level. This time, March 1 was designated specifically as "Yu Gwan-sun Day" to commemorate the spirit of resistance of martyr Yu Gwan-sun.



American compatriots and New York state legislators commemorate the establishment of "Yoo Gwan-sun Day."

"March 1 of this year marks the 105th anniversary of the March 1st Independence Movement, which protested against colonial rule throughout the country in accordance with the Declaration of Independence of Korea," the resolution said. "Martyr Yu Gwan-sun, who created the opportunity for the March 1st Movement to expand beyond the Korean Peninsula and into the world, was a human rights activist and a national symbol. Martyr Yu Gwan-sun is a historical figure who fought for independence and self-determination. Her sacrifice and dedication are worthy of praise."

Kim Min-seon, director of the Korean American Immigration History Museum, said: "The moment Yu Gwan-sun Day was established, a standing ovation erupted from the New York State Legislature. I was thrilled that our history could be treated with such respect."

'History of Korean Ocean Fisheries in Atlantic,' written by Koreans in Las Palmas, Spain, published

The fisheries contributed to US\$2 billion foreign capital earning project and private diplomacy in West Africa in 1970s

The "History of Korean Ocean Fisheries in the Atlantic," compiled by Koreans living in Las Palmas, Spain, which was the outpost of Korea's Atlantic open sea fisheries, was recently published. The book, published by the Las Palmas Korean Fishery History Compilation Committee, consists of two parts, one titled "History of Ocean Fisheries" and the other "Looking Back on Our Shortcomings in the Past."

According to the book, the history of Korean fishing in the Atlantic began in 1966, when the Ganghwa 601, a fishing vessel belonging to the Korea Fisheries Development Corp., made her first port call in Las Palmas. In the late 1970s, the number of Korean open sea fishing boats in Las Palmas reached about 250, and the foreign capital earned up to that time amounted to US\$2 billion. At that time, there were about 10,000 people working in the fishing industry, including fishermen, with about 4,000 Koreans living in Las Palmas.

When the United Nations Law of the Sea took effect in the 1980s and the Western Sahara waters, a major fishing ground for open sea fishing,



The front cover of "History of Korean Ocean Fisheries in the Atlantic"

shrank due to the establishment of a 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone, Koreans continued their legacy by pioneering new fishing grounds in West Africa, such as Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone.

The book also introduces the pioneering history of Korea's ocean fishing industry, its rise and fall and the history of local Koreans, focusing on Las Palmas for 58 years. The compilation committee included former ocean fishing boat captains, representatives of ocean fishing companies, Korean community presidents and expatriates.

"The open sea fishing industry centered on Las Palmas was a major contributor to the establishment and development of diplomatic relations between the Korean government and coastal countries in Africa at the time," Yoon Myeong-gil, president of the Korea Ocean Industry Association, said in his congratulatory address at the beginning of the book. "The foreign capital earned through open sea fishing laid a cornerstone for Korea's industrial development."

160th anniversary of migration of Koryo-saram; promoting commemorative projects in Incheon, Ansan, Yeonhaeju

Inauguration ceremony for promotion committee held at National Assembly to announce full-fledged activities

To commemorate the 160th anniversary of the migration of Koryo-saram this year, promotional projects are being launched under the cooperation of civil society organizations, the National Assembly and local governments. The Northeast Asia Peace Solidarity (NAPS, Chairman Kim Hyeon-dong), a supporting organization for compatriots in Northeast Asia, held an inauguration ceremony for the “Promotion Committee for the 160th Anniversary of Koryo-saram/Korean Migration Project” at the National Assembly Hall in Yeongdeungpo Ward, Seoul, on the morning of Feb. 22.

“2024 marks the 160th anniversary of the settlement of 13 Korean families in the village of Jisinheo in Russia’s Maritime Province, or Yeonhaeju,” an NAPS official said. “Focusing on Yeonhaeju, which is the starting point of the history of the global Korean diaspora, and areas with a high concentration of Koreans in Korea, the project will build a platform for celebration.” The slogan of this year’s project is “Eurasian peace cooperation through global Korean network and culture.”



A poster for the “Koryo-saram/Korean Immigration 160th Anniversary Commemorative Project Promotional Committee Inauguration Ceremony”

The promotion committee will organize by region and collaborate with Ansan city, Gyeonggi Province, and Incheon metropolitan city by November of this year to hold a domestic tour performance by Uzbekistan’s Koryo dance troupe, a photo exhibition on Gen. Hong Beom-do, a forum marking the 160th anniversary of the migration of Koryo-saram and a policy debate for Northeast Asian compatriots. In addition, in the Maritime Province, there will be a touring performance by the Arirang song and dance troupe, a joint creation and exhibition by Korean artists, a 160th anniversary ceremony, a commemorative performance by Korean musicians, a music festival inviting the Vladivostok Orchestra, performances by Korean, Chinese, Japanese and Russian art troupes, and a Eurasian youth dance competition.

The promotional committee was co-chaired by Rep. Lee Myung-soo of the People Power Party, Rep. Kim Gyeong-hyup of the Democratic Party of Korea and Lim Chae-wan, director of the Overseas Koreans Research Institute.

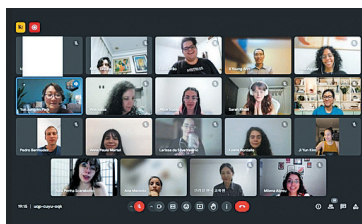
Training course for local Korean language instructors begins in Brazil

‘Trying to meet rapidly increasing demand for Korean language education’

The second training course for Korean language instructors has begun in Brazil. The Korean Education Center in São Paulo held an opening ceremony for the second edition of the Korean language teacher training program with the University of São Paulo, aimed at training local Korean language instructors optimized for Brazil, on March 4.

The Korean language teacher training course officially produced the first class of 16 graduates in November 2023, and two of them were appointed as instructors at the training center and are conducting Korean language classes directly managed by the training center and at local elementary, middle and high schools. Other graduates are also working as instructors throughout Brazil, meeting the rapidly increasing demand for Korean language education.

According to the Korean Educational Institute, 14 students participated in the second training course and were selected from all over Brazil based



The opening ceremony of the “2024 Brazilian Korean Teacher Training Course” (Image provided by the Korean Education Center in São Paulo)

on their Korean language skills. Trainees study various topics related to the Korean language and teaching methods for a total of 180 hours over a period of nine months, from March to November, and students who complete the program are awarded an official certificate from the institute and the University of São Paulo.

“I am very happy to be running the second Korean language teacher training course this year, following last year, and I hope to produce excellent Korean language instructors optimized for Brazil

through the excellent faculty and curriculum of the University of São Paulo,” said Shin Il-ju, director of the Institute of Education.

Meanwhile, the Institute of Education said it is preparing to introduce a Korean language teacher training curriculum into university undergraduate courses through continuous consultation with the University of São Paulo to establish a systematic local teacher training system that meets the rapidly increasing demand for Korean language education.

Daeheung Temple in Haenam, Jeonnam

Patriotic sanctuary surrounded by Gugokpalbong Duryun Mountain

“Eighty years ago you were me, and eighty years later, I am you” (八十年前渠是我 八十年後我是渠).

This is a poem written by Seosan Daesa (1520-1604), a representative figure who saved the country alongside Gen. Yi Sun-sin during the Imjin War in the middle of the Joseon Dynasty, written by him on the back of his funeral portrait just before attaining enlightenment at Myohyang Mountain in Pyongan Province.

The poem expresses that his true heart is the same 80 years later as it was 80 years ago. It symbolizes that he always had a patriotic spirit of loving his people and protecting his country.

Daeheung Temple, where Seosan Daesa’s garments and alms bowl are kept

At the outbreak of the Imjin War, Seosan Daesa led more than 5,000 men to fight on the front lines, achieving great victories, including the recapturing of Pyongyang and Hanyang from the Japanese. At the end of the war, Seosan Daesa passed on his government post that had been passed down by his ancestors to his disciple and entered Myohyang Mountain in Pyongan Province to pray for the peace of the nation until he passed away.

He made a will that his garments and alms bowl, namely his robes and dish, be kept in Daeheung Temple in Haenam, South Jeolla Province. In his will, he referred to Daeheung Temple as “the place where the three calamities, including war, will not enter” and “the land that will not be damaged for 10,000 years.”

In Buddhism, a monk’s robes symbolize the teachings, or lineage, that a master passes on to his students. Seosan Daesa’s relics, including a golden robe, jade shoes, cutlery and prayer beads given to him by his ancestors, were moved, and hundreds of his disciples also migrated, making Daeheung Temple a patriotic sanctuary that continues Seosan Daesa’s religious teachings. Seosan Daesa’s garments are now on display at the Seongbo Museum in Daheung Temple.

Jeongjo, who wanted to cleanse the country of the humiliation of the Imjin War and Byeongjahoran, and make it stronger, publicized Seosan Daesa’s integrity and hoped that future generations would emulate it. In 1798, he ordered the construction of a shrine in memory of Seosan Daesa in the precincts of Daeheung Temple, and donated a votive tablet personally penned by him. The votive tablet portraits of Seosan, Samyeong and Cheoyeong hanging in Pyochung Temple are in Jeongjo’s handwriting. A Confucian-style incense ceremony in honor of Seosan Daesa is held every spring and fall at Pyochung Temple.

In 2018, when UNESCO inscribed Daeheung Temple as a World Heritage Site, alongside Yangsan Tongdo Temple, Yeongju Buseok Temple, Andong Bongjeong Temple, Boeun Beopju Temple, Gongju Magok Temple and Suncheon Sunam Temple, the organization noted Daeheung Temple’s rites carried out for Seosan Daesa, and praised the culture of coexistence between Buddhism and Confucianism.



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- 1 Ilju Gate at the entrance to Daeheung Temple
- 2 Seosan Daesa (C), Samyeong Daesa (R) and Cheoyeong Daesa’s “jinyeong” (portraits) are on display at Pyochung Temple within Daeheung Temple.
- 3 The recently completed great patriotic sanctuary in Daeheung Temple
- 4 The patriotic sanctuary Daeheung Temple embraced by Gugokpalbong (nine valleys, eight peaks) Duryun in Haenam, South Jeolla Province. Behind the temple, you can see the peak of Duryun in the shape of a reclining Buddha.



Why did Seosan Daesa choose Daeheung Temple to carry on his legacy? As a young man traveling around the country, he visited Duryun Mountain and Daeheung Temple, and it is said that he emphasized to his disciples that Haenam was a good place to live because of its fertile soil and abundant products, and that it was far from Hanyang and would not be swept up in the political maelstrom.

Set against the backdrop of Duryun, which has nine valleys and eight peaks, there are many theories as to when Daeheung Temple was founded. However, Daeheung Temple goes by the record that Ado Hwasang founded the temple in the fifth year of King Jinheung of Silla (544). In the late Joseon Dynasty, Daeheung Temple produced 13 high abbots and 13 great instructors.

A great patriotic sanctuary is being built in Daeheung Temple to continue the legacy of Seosan Daesa. After more than seven years of construction, the building was recently finished. It will take another three years to decorate the interior. The great patriotic sanctuary, which will be the largest wooden Buddhist building in Korea, will have an altar to honor all those who died during the Imjin War, the Japanese occupation, the Korean War and the democratization movement, including soldiers and independence activists, and martyrs, but also police, firefighters and others who sacrificed their lives for the country.

Duryun faces Mount Halla

When you enter the grounds of Daeheung Temple, the first thing that immediately catches your eye is the gentle ridge of Duryun's peaks that surrounds the temple. I've never seen a similar mountain or ridge anywhere else.

Daeheung Temple is nestled in the middle of a basin created by Duryun. From the air, the eight peaks create a microcosm of the

parched heaven and earth of Paekdu Mountain. If Duryun is a lotus flower, then Daeheung Temple is the stamen.

Duryun Peak (630 meters), Garyeon Peak (703 meters), Noseung Peak (685 meters), Gogye Peak (638 meters), Hyangro Peak (469 meters), Pyeongmang Peak (379 meters), Yeonhwa Peak (613 meters) and Dosol Peak (672 meters) surround Daeheung Temple in a circle.

As I stood on Noseung Peak, I could see the Mount Halla volcano rising above the clouds in the distance to the south. Park Chung-bae, former director of the Seongbo Museum at Daeheung Temple, who guided us, said he had climbed Duryun more than 10 times, but this was his first time to see Mount Halla.

The mountains of Mount Wolchul to the north, Mount Cheongan to the east and the sea in front of Jindo, Wando, Gangjin and Mokpo spread out in a dazzling blue color. Looking up from the courtyard of Daeheung Temple, Duryun Peak, Garyeon Peak and Noseung Peak resemble a reclining Buddha.

Duryun is a gentle earthen mountain, but when I actually climbed it, I found the rocky sections to be as difficult to climb as Mount Bukhan's Euisang routes or Mount Seorak's Gongryong trail. Fortunately, wooden stairs were installed so it wasn't dangerous, and there was a steady stream of hikers even on a weekday.

At the site of Manilam, which is where Daeheung Temple was first built, a five-story stone pagoda, believed to have been built in the mid-Goryeo Dynasty, stands haphazardly, waiting to be preserved. Not far from the site is a zelkova tree estimated to be 1,200 to 1,500 years old. Called the "millennium tree," it has an exquisite shape, balanced from side to side. It suddenly occurred to me that its balance might be the reason it has survived for more than 1,000 years. 🌳

Encouraging Korean Vietnamese children to experience their home country

Invited 20 children as official Korean culture experience group; ‘actively promoting next-generation identity development project’

The Overseas Koreans Agency invited a Korean culture experience group consisting of children from the Korean-Vietnamese Family Association in Hanoi, Vietnam, to Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, and held a meeting to encourage them.

The Korean-Vietnamese Family Association, in which over 4,000 families in Vietnam are involved, is a Korean Vietnamese multicultural family gathering that carries out a project for second-generation children to visit Korea, a project to invite parents of multicultural families to their homes in cooperation with domestic local governments, and the operation of Hana Kindergarten. The experience group, which visited Korea on Feb. 20, experienced Korean culture in Seoul and other provinces for four days, and also had time to meet second-generation Korean Vietnamese children who had entered Korea.

“It is very important for the next generation of overseas Koreans



OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol (C, front row) takes a group photo after providing encouragement to a Korean culture experience group, consisting of multicultural children from the Korea-Vietnam Family Association, at the Overseas Koreans Agency office in Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, on Feb. 21.

and their second- and third-generation children to have a connection with their home country,” OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol said. “To foster their identity, the OKA provides training in their home countries, support for Korean language schools and overseas Korean language schooling for college students. We are carrying out projects, such as compatriot scholarship programs.

“Everyone here and all the children of Korean multicultural families around the world

are the direct targets of policies and projects for overseas Koreans. We hope you will pay attention to the efforts of the OKA and actively participate in various projects.”

Lee asked the participants to experience various aspects of Korean culture to establish their identities. He also took a group photo and presented them with souvenirs.

Helping overseas Koreans affected by disasters, wars, riots

Establishment of ‘Guidelines on Support for Overseas Koreans in Peril’

Our compatriots who suffered damage from disasters, wars and riots abroad can now receive help from the Korean government. The Overseas Koreans Agency recently established the “Guidelines on Support for Overseas Koreans in Peril,” which stipulate detailed procedures for providing daily necessities to Koreans in critical situations.

According to the guidelines, overseas Korean organizations in countries where a crisis has occurred can request support from the OKA for daily necessities, relief supplies and medicine necessary to overcome the damage.

The OKA, which was launched in June 2023, has been seeking ways to provide practical help to Koreans who have suffered



OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol (R) and Shin Hee-young, president of the Korean Red Cross, pose for a photo after signing a memorandum of understanding at the “Business Agreement Ceremony on Humanitarian Support for Overseas Koreans” at the Korean Red Cross in Jung Ward, Seoul, on July 27, 2023.

damage but have not received appropriate relief as part of the “Overseas Koreans Embracing Policy,” according to the road map for implementing the overseas Korean policy. Last year, the government allocated a budget to support daily necessities needed for emergency relief, and a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Korean Red Cross to provide prompt support.

“This is the first time we have established a system that can provide prompt help to

compatriots in critical situations,” OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol said. “We will continue to serve as a protective barrier for overseas compatriots by carefully taking care of and warmly embracing our compatriots who are marginalized and suffering.”

Overseas compatriots can access governmental services without Korean mobile phones

As early as the second half of this year, Korean citizens residing abroad will be able to use government digital services even without Korean mobile phones. On the morning of March 11, the Overseas Koreans Agency, the Ministry of Science and ICT, the Korea Communications Commission and the Digital Platform Government Committee signed a memorandum of understanding to “enhance the accessibility and convenience of domestic digital services for citizens residing abroad” at the Seoul government complex in Jongno Ward, Seoul.

Since the public i-PIN, which allows identity verification through account login without using a resident registration number, was abolished in 2013 due to security reasons, citizens living overseas without a Korean mobile phone have experienced many inconveniences in virtual identity verification.

There have been various demands from the Korean community to resolve this inconvenience, and after opening in June last year, the OKA saw it as a major project to realize a digital platform government and established a “non-face-to-face identity verification system for overseas Koreans.”



Officials from the Overseas Koreans Agency, the Ministry of Science and ICT, the Korea Communications Commission and the Digital Platform Government Committee signed a business agreement in the conference room on the 19th floor of the Seoul government complex in Jongno Ward, Seoul, on March 11 to “enhance the accessibility and convenience of domestic digital services for citizens living abroad.”

With this agreement, involved organizations will develop a non-face-to-face identification system and build infrastructure for overseas Koreans. We plan to launch a non-face-to-face identity verification pilot service in the second half of the year, and when it begins in earnest, approximately 2.4 million Koreans living abroad with resident registration numbers will receive the service. The OKA will be responsible for establishing identity verification policies and establishing and operating a non-face-to-face system.

The OKA decided to form a working-level consultative body composed of officials from related organizations and make efforts to improve the non-face-to-face identification system and expand the target and scope of the provision of services.

Overseas Koreans Agency's Book Recommendations



'The Clothes Peg that Went to the Dentist'

Korean American poet Han Hye-young / Children's publishing house Sangsang-ah

Poet Han Hye-young (71), who is celebrating the 35th anniversary of her debut this year, has recently published a collection of 60 poems she has been writing over the years, titled “The Clothes Peg that Went to the Dentist.” The anthology was produced with the support of the National Sporting Promotion Fund as part of the 2023 Small and Medium-sized Publishing Company Publication Content Creation Support Project of the Korea Publishing and Culture Industry Promotion Agency.

“The old clothes pegs / have unhealthy teeth like an old lion / when they're hunting their prey // they should hold on / tight! / like a young lion / but if the laundry struggles even a little they let go,” an excerpt from the poem “The Clothes Peg that Went to the Dentist” reads.

This tableau contrasts the characteristics of old and new clothes pegs, evoking the image of laundry and clothes pegs on a clothesline. Clothes pegs are a familiar, everyday subject that children and adults can read and talk about together.



“Just because children are reading it, it shouldn't be a poem that takes nature as easy material and just uses beautiful words,” the poet said. “I try to write poems that are easy for children to read; poems that have well-drawn images and messages.”

The poet, who hails from Seosan, South Chungcheong Province, debuted her work in the spring issue of the magazine Children's Literature Research in 1989. She has been writing both poetry and nursery rhymes since her poems were selected for the 1994 Contemporary Poetics and the 1996 JoongAng New Writer's Award.

She has published 21 books, including four poetry collections, including “The Laundromat that Bridges the Pacific Ocean” and “The Snake-Catching Woman,” four children's poetry collections, one sijo collection, one full-length novel and 11 full-length children's books. She has been awarded the Chugang Overseas Literature Award for Newcomers (1997), the Americas Literature Award (2006), the Dongju Overseas Writer Award (2020) and the Overseas Pul-ggot Poet Award (2021).





Cuba's top art university launches Korean language courses

Korean language courses have been launched at a university in Cuba, which recently became the 193rd country to establish diplomatic ties with South Korea. According to the Korean Cultural Center and Hangeul School in Cuba, a Korean language course has been piloted since March at ISA (Instituto Superior de Arte), an art university in Cuba. ISA, located in the capital Havana, is a four-year university (five years for some departments) and the best educational institution in Cuba with strengths in the arts, including music, visual arts and theater. Currently, language courses at this institution encompass Spanish, English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Japanese. Considering the high demand for Korean language education in Cuba, ISA has been preparing courses with Cuban Korean language schools since January. The opening of this course received even greater attention as the two countries suddenly decided to establish diplomatic relations on Feb. 14, while related administrative procedures were already underway. Previously, in 2012, a Korean language course was opened at the University of Havana, a public institution located in the country's capital, but the course was closed in 2018, due to various factors inside the country.

Incheon spurs construction of Overseas Koreans Welcome Center

Incheon is speeding up the construction of the Overseas Koreans Welcome Center, a comprehensive service support organization for overseas Koreans, with the aim of opening in June. The center will provide customized services related to education, medical care, tourism and investment to the 7 million overseas Koreans around the world and help them settle down in Korea. Incheon has set a goal of opening the center on June 5, the first anniversary of the opening of the Overseas Koreans Agency under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and has allocated a budget of 1.8 billion won (US\$1.34 million). Construction has been underway since January. The center will be built with an area of 1,000 m² on the 30th floor of Songdo Booyoung Tower in Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, where the OKA is located. Its facilities will include a conference room, meeting room, consultation booth, shared office and exhibition space. In parallel, Incheon plans to build a website to gather various information needed by overseas Koreans and strengthen cooperative networks between compatriots.



Koreans in Chile donate money for recovery from forest fire that killed 132 people

Koreans living in Chile donated 50 million won (US\$37,250) to the Valparaiso region, which suffered heavy damage from recent forest fires. According to the Korean Embassy in Chile, the Korean Association of Chile and religious groups, such as the Protestant community, donated hard-earned 40 million pesos to the city of Quilpué on Feb. 24, requesting that it be used to support forest fire victims. Chilean Ambassador Kim Hak-jae and Nam Do-woo, the president of the Korean Association of Chile, met with Quilpué Mayor Valeria Melipillán to offer words of comfort to the forest fire victims and their families, and expressed that the sentiment is shared between the Korean government and the local Korean community. Previously, Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs promised to provide humanitarian aid worth \$500,000 to Chile. Korean companies operating in the region, such as Samsung and LG, are also participating in damage recovery efforts by donating various items. In Chile, a forest fire broke out in the Valparaiso region in early February, killing 132 people and burning down 15,000 houses. The Chilean government announced that it was the worst disaster since the 2010 earthquake, when approximately 500 people were killed.



Korea's economic growth potential lives in spirit of March 1

South Korea's national competitiveness ranked sixth in the world again this year. This is a remarkable achievement made in just 70 years after the ruins of the Korean War. Korea was deprived of all supplies from the Japanese colonial era, and only five years had passed since the liberation in 1945, when the Korean War broke out and burned down the country. Countless Koreans lost their lives in war and ideological confrontations. Until the 1970s, Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world.

What was the driving force behind making Korea what it is today? This year marks the 105th anniversary of March 1 Independence Movement Day. I believe our power originates from the spirit of this day. In 1919, our ancestors rose up from a poor colony that was deprived of their country by Japan and expressed their will for independence to the world. They then organized the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea in Shanghai, China, and for 26 years, they defended the provisional government by overcoming many crises. Patriotic compatriots provided funds for independence by cutting sugarcane in Hawaii and henequen in Mexico, which were covered with thorns.

Since liberation, the Korean people created everything from scratch with their hard work, enthusiasm for education and positive thinking that they should tighten their belts. The determination to not have their children suffer like they did and the responsibility to protect one's family and country have given birth to present-day Korea.

The people have been happy for everyone's well-being, even at the reduction of their individual share. Concessions, sacrifices and considerateness have given birth to warm families who have built strong bonds with neighbors. However, there are more than a few things we lost in the process. We quenched our material needs, but the spiritual hunger is growing worse day by day.

The future of the country is bright only when its young people are healthy. Just over 100 years ago, Yoo Gwan-soon and other protagonists of the March 1 Independence Movement were all young students. Young people in our history, including the protagonists of the April 19 Revolution who rose up for justice and the Gwangju Student Movement, were the cornerstones of erecting the country in the right manner.

The independence activists who protected Korea put the country



Moon Young-sook,
chairman of the
Independence Activist Choi
Jae-hyung Memorial Society

before themselves. Ahn Jung-geun and Lee Bong-chang sacrificed their lives for their country at the respective ages of 31 and 24. They were even younger when they began to worry about their country and hone their spirits. The students who were drafted by the Imperial Japanese Army and ventured out onto the battlefield in China to join the Korean Liberation Army were also young men.

"A nation that forgets its history has no future," Shin Chae-ho said.

I believe that if our young people think about and honor the patriotic spirit and sacrifice of the great independence activists who protected our country, we


will surely be able to overcome our current mental hunger.

I first learned about the works of Choi Jae-hyung, an independence activist, while traveling in Russia in 2012. When I came back from the trip, I made a commitment to let the youth, who will be responsible for the future of the country, know the person named Choi Jae-hyung. Two years later, in 2014, I published a book titled "Independence Activist Choi Jae-hyung."

Choi lived a legendary life. He moved to Russia in 1869 at the age of 9, crossing the Tumen River. He was still hungry until he could harvest from the fields. Choi ran away from home at 11, met a Russian captain and spent six years traveling the world on the captain's mercantile ship.

After returning to Vladivostok at the age of 18, Choi was on a path to prosperity for both his countrymen and his compatriots. Having started his military supply business with skills he learned while traveling the world, he became successful to the extent that he was called the Carnegie of the East due to his fluent Russian and business skills.

With the money he earned, Choi established 32 schools in Korean villages and promoted education. Choi then participated in the Russo-Japanese War and went over to Japan and stayed there for six months, where he learned about Japan's ultimate ambition. He then started the campaign for independence and spent all his fortune for Korea.

I want our young people to know the life of Choi Jae-hyung, who is called Russia's Choi Pechka. I am sure that knowing the brilliant lives of independence activists who devoted themselves to the big cause in China, Manchuria and Russia will change their outlook on life. 

* The contributor's claims or opinions may differ from the position of the Overseas Koreans Agency.

Guidelines on Overseas Voting

1 Verify Identity (Present Form of ID)

Overseas voters must present an original copy of a relevant document designated by overseas poll station managers for verification of nationality

Where and when to vote

- **Place** : Diplomatic missions (Other locations designated by the overseas voting commission if diplomatic missions are unavailable) & additional poll stations.
- **Period** : Between March 27th (Wed) and April 1th (Mon) as decided by the overseas voting commission.
- **Hours** : From 8am to 5pm everyday during the voting period.
 * Information on the venue and voting period for each overseas voting commission will be uploaded to the websites of the NEC (ok.nec.go.kr), MOFA (mofa.go.kr), OKA(oka.go.kr) and diplomatic missions by March 21th.



2 Receive Ballot Paper & Return Envelope

How to vote

1. Visit overseas polling station and present ID for voter identification. Once verified, confirm the receipt of the ballot papers and then collect the ballot papers and a return envelope.
 * Overseas absentees registered as residents in Korea: Ballot papers for both elections for constituency and proportional representation members of the National Assembly.
 * Overseas absentees registered as residents abroad & overseas voters: Ballot paper for proportional representation member election.
2. Inside a poll booth, select one candidate (or one political party for elections for proportional representation members), mark the relevant column on the ballot paper, insert the ballot inside the return envelope, and seal the envelope prior to leaving.
 * A marking device is prepared inside the polling booth.
 * Name should not be written on the envelope.
3. Place the return envelope in the ballot box before leaving the polling station.



3 Mark the ballot, Place Inside the Envelope and Seal



What to take to the polling station

1. A photo ID issued by Korean government or a public agency such as a passport, resident registration card, civil service ID card, driver's license or an ID card (e.g. alien registration card) bearing the photo, name, and birthday of the voter for identification issued by the government of the country of residence.
2. Overseas voters, however, must also carry an original copy of a document for verifying nationality as notified by the overseas polling station manager.
 * In case the aforementioned document has a photo, then there is no need for a separate ID card.



4 Place in the Ballot Box

What makes your ballot invalid

- Using ballot papers or return envelopes not provided by the overseas polling stations.
- Return envelopes with marked ballot papers placed in the ballot box and sent to Korea without completely sealed.
- Ballot papers without any marking.
- Ballot papers with a marking placed in between two columns or with markings on two or more columns.
- Ballot papers with a marking that is not clearly placed in a column.
- Ballot papers marked with letters or symbols other than the official  mark.
- Ballot papers containing other scribbles besides the  mark.
- Ballot papers marked using anything other than the official NEC marking device.



'Information on Political Parties & Candidates' and 'Campaign pledges of political parties and candidates' for the 22nd National Assembly elections will be posted on the NEC website (www.nec.go.kr) once candidate registration is completed.

OKA Commissioner's Activities

- March 7: Attended press briefing on major OKA activities for 2024
- March 8: Attended the final presentation by hired researchers on inclusion of overseas Korean-related content in the domestic curriculum
- March 11: Held a meeting with compatriots in the Oceania region
- March 20: Attended a meeting of ministers on national affairs chaired by the prime minister



750만 재외동포와 대한민국이 하나로 통하는 첫 번째 온라인 세상 코리아넷

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