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Window into Overseas Koreans



Special Article - Address by President Yoon Suk Yeol on Korea's 78th Liberation Day
Special Feature - OKA hires 62 new employees; organization to begin full operations in Sept.
Newsworthy Topic - Independence activist Choi Jae-hyung buried with wife in homeland, 103 years after his death



Greetings on the relaunch of Window into Overseas Koreans

Greetings to the 7.5 million overseas Koreans. I am Lee Key-cheol, the first director general of the Overseas Koreans Agency.

With the opening of the Overseas Koreans Agency (OKA) on June 5, the Window into Overseas Koreans is also returning with a new look. It is with great excitement that I am able to greet overseas Koreans through this webzine, which specializes in overseas Korean news. We would like to sincerely apologize to all overseas Koreans for the six-month gap in publication following the dissolution of the Overseas Koreans Foundation.

With the OKA being upgraded from the Overseas Koreans Foundation under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to a central administrative agency, we will strive to pack the Window Into Overseas Koreans webzine full of information and hot topics. In particular, we will introduce more stories on the local lives of overseas Koreans, promptly communicate new policies and information related to overseas Koreans, and actively cover the events of overseas Korean organizations to provide a good communication platform between the overseas Korean community and the home country, as well as between different overseas Korean communities. In addition, the OKA promises to play the following roles to repay the support of overseas Koreans over the years.

First, we will enable the next generation of overseas Koreans to maintain their Korean identities and connect with their homeland. Since its opening, the OKA has organized two youth homecoming programs and two university student homecoming programs, giving 1,800 young Koreans the opportunity to visit Korea and experience Korea firsthand. Next year, we plan to increase the number of youths and university students to 3,000 and invite 25 new interns to participate in the Overseas Korean Youth Internship Program. In addition, the OKA will continue to advance Korean language education and promote pride in the motherland as a top priority.

Second, the OKA will be a platform for mutual development between Korea and overseas Koreans. In October, in honor of the 17th Korean Day, the 2023 World Congress of Korean Associations Presidents will be held to build a stronger network between Koreans working all over the world. The World Korean Business Convention, gathering Korean entrepreneurs from all over the world, is set to be held. In particular, this year's World Korean Business Convention will take place overseas for the first time in its 20 years of existence, with



Lee Key-cheol,
Commissioner of OKA


more foreign companies participating and demonstrating the rising status of overseas Korean entrepreneurs in the global community. The OKA will continue to strive to strengthen Korea's position in the international community and open doors for overseas Koreans to enter the mainstream societies of their countries of residence.

Finally, the organization has a mission to help our compatriots wherever they are in the world. We want to take special and attentive care of the victims of Hiroshima, the Koryo-saram and people from Sakhalin, the miners and nurses dispatched to

Germany ("padok"), compatriots of multicultural families and international adoptions, and all those who have experienced marginalization. As part of this, we plan to invite 500 overseas Koreans to their home country this year and next year to touch their hearts and offer comfort for the pain they have experienced abroad.

The world is facing a "compounding crisis" right now. Korea is also facing challenges, such as supply chain insecurity, fears of a prolonged economic recession, and a declining birthrate and aging society. Under these circumstances, the 7.5 million overseas Koreans around the world are no longer the recipients of one-sided benefits from their homeland but rather valuable engines and assets who can lead the country's development. The OKA recognizes our compatriots' value and will strive to be a strong pillar of support so that overseas Koreans can feel, "My country is standing by me," rather than feeling distant from Korea. As the first Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner I will create an OKA that is open and communicative, an OKA that removes the thorns under your fingernails and provides practical help, and an OKA that instills a sense of identity and pride in the next generation of overseas Koreans.

There is a saying that even though you have precious beads, they must be threaded to become a treasure. The 7.5 million overseas Koreans who have established themselves in various parts of the world are sparkling beads, and now we have the thread and needle to thread them together. We hope you will follow along with us as we thread our first bead, however clumsy it may be. We will continue to provide you with the latest news about the OKA through the Window Into Overseas Koreans.

Thank you very much, 

Lee Key-cheol, Commissioner of OKA



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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 7.5 million 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>

Address by President Yoon Suk Yeol on Korea's 78th Liberation Day



President Yoon Suk Yeol gives a congratulatory speech at the 78th Liberation Day celebration ceremony at the main auditorium of Ewha Womans University in Seodaemun Ward in Seoul on Aug. 15.

My fellow Koreans, 7.5 million compatriots living abroad,

Today we mark the 78th Liberation Day. I pay tribute to our fallen forebears and patriots who sacrificed and dedicated themselves to our independence. I also wish to express my deep gratitude to their families. Our independence movement was to build a nation that is free and democratic; a nation where the people are its rightful owners, and a nation where freedom, human rights and the rule of law reign supreme. It was not to just reclaim our sovereignty or to return to a monarchy. It was never an attempt to establish a communist totalitarian state where freedom and human rights are ignored. Thus, from the perspective of the whole of humankind, our independence movement was universal and just.

Even after regaining sovereignty, our independence movement carried on. We fought to defend our nation's freedom against communist aggression. We achieved economic development, industrialization and democratization. The movement still continues to this day. Inheriting the spirit of our independence movement, we now envision a global pivotal state that fulfills its roles and responsibilities in the international community for the freedom, peace and prosperity of global citizens. We must properly remember those who gave their all to defend the freedoms of our people, to bring independence to our country and to uphold universal values. Remembering and honoring them in the right way is vital and essential for our national identity and continuity.

My fellow Koreans,

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Agreement and the ROK-U.S. alliance. Alongside the United Nations forces, we fought the communist invasion in defense of our freedom. After the war, we accomplished industrialization. The world calls Korea's amazing success the "Miracle on the Han River." The wise decisions of our leaders to build a liberal democracy, as well as to forge the ROK-U.S. alliance, and the hard work of our people have enabled the Republic of Korea to achieve phenomenal growth and prosperity that have astounded the world.

By contrast, North Korea has stuck to its totalitarian and repressive rule over the same 70 years. It remained unable to escape from its horrendous poverty and deprivation. The stark differences between the Republic of Korea, which opted for and pursued freedom and democracy, and North Korea, which chose communist totalitarianism, could not be any clearer. Nonetheless, still rampant are anti-state forces that blindly follow communist totalitarianism, distort public opinion and disrupt society through manipulative propaganda. In a divided nation, the confrontation between liberal democracy and communist totalitarianism is a reality. And the activities of those anti-state groups are likely to persist.

As totalitarian forces disrupt and attack our societies, they take full advantage of the legal rights enshrined in free societies. That is the way they survive. The forces of communist totalitarianism have always disguised themselves as democracy activists, human rights advocates or progressive activists while engaging in despicable and unethical tactics and false propaganda. We must never succumb to the forces of communist totalitarianism. We must not be deceived by those who follow and serve them. At this critical juncture, having faith is of utmost importance. We must stand united in the spirit of solidarity, with an enduring conviction that freedom and democracy will always prevail.

Since I took office, my administration has vigorously sought cooperation on security and cutting-edge technology with countries that share the universal values of freedom, human rights and the rule of law. The ROK-U.S. alliance, forged from universal values, is an alliance of peace and prosperity. Korea and Japan are now partners who share universal values and pursue common interests. As partners that cooperate on security and the economy, Korea and Japan will be able to jointly contribute to peace and prosperity across the globe while collaborating and exchanging in a future-oriented manner.

Notably, the significance of the ROK-U.S.-Japan trilateral security cooperation is increasingly growing on the Korean Peninsula and in the region. In order to fundamentally block North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, the Republic of Korea, the United States, and Japan must closely cooperate on reconnaissance assets and share North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile data in real time. The seven rear bases provided to the United Nations Command (UNC)

by the government of Japan serve as the greatest deterrent that keeps the North from invading the South. A renewed North Korean invasion will trigger an automatic and immediate intervention and retaliation by the UNC, and the UNC-rear in Japan is sufficiently equipped with necessary land, sea and air capabilities. The UNC is a great example of international solidarity that has played a key role in firmly safeguarding the Republic of Korea's freedom "under one flag."

The ROK-U.S.-Japan summit to be held at Camp David in three days will set a new milestone in trilateral cooperation, contributing to peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and in the Indo-Pacific region. The security of the Korean Peninsula and the Indo-Pacific region is deeply linked to the security of the Atlantic and Europe. Accordingly, strengthening cooperation with NATO is also of great importance. Because the Republic of Korea's security is very much aligned with the security of the Indo-Pacific region, the Atlantic, Europe and the world.

The Republic of Korea should conduct responsible and contributive diplomacy in all regions around the world. It is not only a way to contribute to freedom, peace and prosperity globally but also to foster Korea's own freedom, peace and prosperity. The government putting its resources and efforts into Official Development Assistance (ODA) and international development projects, and assisting Ukraine for its freedom and peace is ultimately promoting Korea's freedom, peace and prosperity. While steadfastly implementing the "audacious initiative" to build peace by overwhelming force, the government will also work together with the international community to make the North Korean regime stop advancing its nuclear and missile programs and embark on a path to dialogue and cooperation, which will lead to better livelihoods of its people.

My fellow Koreans,

Since my inauguration, the government has been working tirelessly to protect freedom and democracy and to set right the toppled free market economy even amid internal and external challenges, as well as the difficulties stemming from the global polycrisis. A robust ROK-U.S. alliance, and working together in solidarity with countries who share universal values, are foundational for Korea's economic development and prosperity, since our economy is highly dependent on international trade. Cooperation in life-and-death matters results in deeper economic partnerships and closer cooperation on cutting-edge science and technology where people's livelihoods are at stake.

The government has been doing all it can to increase exports, invite more foreign investments and expand cooperation on state-of-the-art science and technology through active sales diplomacy undergirded by strong global security partnerships. We have built a solid foundation for a market economy centered on businesses and the private sector; we worked at normalizing the real estate market;

and -- for the sake of our future generations -- we tackled unconstrained, reckless fiscal spending and established policies for fiscal soundness. The government adopted the consideration and assistance for the socially disadvantaged and the vulnerable as key social policies, boldly shifting the focus of its fiscal spending from politically motivated handouts to the welfare of the underprivileged. In order to achieve sustainable economic growth and create decent jobs, the principles of a market economy must function properly and a fair and just compensation system must be put in place. To establish fairness and the rule of law, we must stamp out illegal activities by special-interest cartels.

In particular, we must root out the construction industry cartel that endangers the safety of the people through shoddy construction practices. "Killer" regulations that impede investment will be swiftly removed, and scientific and technological innovation will be pursued by reforming our R&D funding system to ensure that the most promising areas receive a greater share of state funding. Human resources are the key to competitiveness in science and technology. After all, it is all about cultivating talented individuals. The government will boldly invest in cutting-edge science and technology, the engines of future growth. Higher education will be innovated to promote multidisciplinary collaboration in order to nurture talented individuals well suited for convergence. Moreover, we will normalize our schools and make sure that teachers' authority is respected in classrooms, which will in turn effectively guarantee students' rights. We need discipline in our classrooms. Let the authority of our educators be respected. And discipline will follow.

Fellow Koreans,

Even in the darkest times, when few of us believed in the possibility of reclaiming our sovereignty within our lifetime, we dreamed of building a free and democratic nation where the people are its rightful owners. The journey of the Republic of Korea that began as a quest for freedom has brought us not only freedom but also peace and prosperity. We should now embrace our historic mandate: contributing with responsibility to the freedom, peace and prosperity of citizens around the world. To fulfill this calling, the journey we embarked on long ago in search of freedom must continue. We are no longer alone in our journey. Our friends and partners from all around the world stand with us and support us.

Fellow Koreans,

As a Korean citizen, I am proud of all of you. I am proud of us. Because we -- as Koreans -- came all the way together. Because both in times of hardship and glory, we pushed forward together in search of freedom.

Thank you. 🇰🇷

President **Yoon Suk Yeol**
Aug. 15, 2023

OKA hires 62 new employees; organization to begin full operations in Sept.

Competitive recruitment of experienced employees, including former public servants, private sector employees and OKF employees



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' affiliated organization the Overseas Koreans Agency (OKA, Director Lee Ki-chul), which was launched in June, has selected 62 new employees through a competitive recruitment process. On Aug. 10, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the 62 finalists of the competitive recruitment process, including five in Grade Four, 15 in Grade Five, 13 in Grade Six, 25 in Grade Seven and two in Grade Eight, as well as one archivist and one librarian.

The finalists were comprised of 22 national and local government employees (35.4 percent), 20 private sector employees (32.3 percent) and 20 applicants from the former Overseas Koreans Foundation (32.3 percent), which was abolished with the establishment of the OKA. Of the former OKF employees, 57, who had been with the organization for more than three years, were eligible to apply, with 50 actual applicants, of whom 20 were successful. Those who did not make the transition to the civil service will have their employment transferred to the Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center, an organization under the OKA. The Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center will be responsible for carrying out projects consigned by the OKA, including invitations for overseas Koreans, training, education, culture and public relations projects, and will also be responsible for supporting overseas Koreans from countries that are sensitive to ethnic minority issues.

“The issue of the employment succession was also an issue in the National Assembly, so when we wrote the Basic Act on Overseas Koreans, the ruling and opposition parties agreed to ensure that employment succession is guaranteed by law,” a foreign ministry official told reporters, referring to the basis for the agency’s establishment. As for the gender of the successful applicants, 33 women accounted for 53.2 percent and 29 men accounted for 46.8 percent.

On May 9, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued an announcement to select 64 people for 40 positions in the OKA and conducted document screening and interview processes for three months. There were no suitable candidates for two initially created positions for Grade Four officials in the Human Rights for the Next Generation Division and for Grade Five positions in the American and European Diaspora Division, so in the end, 62 final candidates were selected. The total capacity of the Overseas Korean Affairs Office is 151, and it is currently staffed by about 60 people transferred from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government ministries.

“We will finalize the final appointments of the successful candidates by early September after completing necessary procedures, such as background checks,” a Ministry of Foreign Affairs official said. “We hope that the new Overseas Koreans Agency will be stable and continue to play a role in promoting the rights and interests of the 7.5 million overseas Koreans and maintaining and strengthening their identities as Koreans.”

OKA opens for business at Incheon’s Booyoung Songdo Tower in June

The Overseas Koreans Agency held its inauguration ceremony at the Booyoung Songdo Tower in Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, on June 5, with President Yoon Suk Yeol in attendance.

“The Overseas Koreans Agency is a dedicated organization for overseas Koreans that matches Korea’s elevated status and national dignity,” Yoon said. “It will play a role in not only protecting and supporting overseas Koreans but will also become a link that encourages exchanges and cooperation between overseas Koreans and their home country.

“Compatriots who have settled abroad, you are a valuable offshore network of Koreans reaching out to the world,” Yoon said. “If the network of 7.5 million Koreans is closely connected to each other and shares necessary information and experiences, the overseas Koreans and Korea will grow and develop together. The Overseas Koreans Agency will keep a closer eye on our

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compatriots abroad.

“We will specially care for those who have arduously maintained their Korean identities abroad, including Koreans in Japan, Koreans in Central Asia and Sakhalin, and the miners and nurses dispatched to Germany (“padok”) who became the cornerstone of Korea’s economic modernization, to ensure they are not left behind,” he continued. “We will also actively embrace those who have fallen through the cracks due to the lack of a dedicated organization, such as those from multicultural families, those who have been adopted overseas and those who are now residents in Korea.”

Commenting on the establishment of the Overseas Koreans Agency in Incheon, he said, “Incheon is the root of overseas Koreans, where immigrant ships bound for Hawaii departed 120 years ago. Incheon will become a more vibrant international city by hosting the Overseas Koreans Service.” Yoon presented a letter of appointment to Lee Key-cheol, the first director general of the Overseas Koreans Agency, as well as a plaque.

Park Jin, the minister of foreign affairs, gave a progress report at the inauguration ceremony.

“The headquarters of the Overseas Koreans Agency is located in Incheon for its convenience, accessibility and consistency with the administrative organization for balanced regional development,” he said. “For efficiency, the Overseas Korean Service Support Center is located in Gwanghwamun in Seoul. We will strengthen compatriot policies that take into account the special policy needs of each region and sector. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarters and overseas diplomatic missions will also be actively supporting these activities.”

The event was attended by Kim Ki-hyun, chairman of the People Power Party; Kim Tae-ho, chairman of the National Assembly Foreign Affairs and Unification Committee; and Incheon Mayor Yoo Jung-bok, as well as more than 100 compatriots from Korea and overseas. In addition, more than 600 overseas Koreans from around the world, including Korean community chapters in each country, attended the event virtually.

Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center to be located at Kookmin Diplomatic Center in Seoul

The Overseas Koreans Agency has also established the Overseas Korean Cooperation Center as an affiliated organization and appointed Kim Young-geun (67), president of the World Korean Network, as its first director. The



center, located at the Kookmin Diplomatic Center in Seocho-dong, Seocho Ward, Seoul, has partially taken over the work of the Overseas Korean Foundation, which was dissolved on June 1. The center is entrusted by the OKA to carry out invitation, training, education, culture and promotion projects for compatriots, as well as research and exhibition projects on the history of overseas Korean migration. [\[창\]](#)

1 Foreign Affairs Minister Park Jin delivers a progress report at the inauguration ceremony of the Overseas Koreans Agency at the Booyoung Songdo Tower in Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, on June 5.

2 President Yoon Suk Yeol presents a plaque to Lee Key-cheol, head of the OKA, at the inauguration ceremony.

3 A view of Booyoung Songdo Tower in Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, which houses the headquarters of the OKA

4 Kim Young-geun, the first director of the Overseas Korean Cooperation Center under the OKA



1

Independence activist Choi Jae-hyung buried with wife in homeland, 103 years after his death

Choi's remains not found but soil brought back from site where he is believed to have died; wife's remains repatriated

The souls of Choi Jae-hyung (1860-1920), who was called the godfather of the independence movement in Siberia, and his wife, Elena Petrovna Choi (1880-1952), were reunited in Choi's homeland 103 years after his death. On Aug. 14, one day before the 78th anniversary of Liberation Day, the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs held a joint burial ceremony for Mr. Choi and his wife at Gravesite No. 108 of Seoul National Cemetery under the slogan "Reunion After 100 years, Korea, the Homeland of My Dreams." The soil of Ussuriysk, Russia, which is presumed to be the site of Mr. Choi's death, and the remains of Mrs. Choi, who had been buried in a cemetery in Kyrgyzstan for over 70 years, were finally buried together in a national cemetery of their home country.

"Our liberation and building a proud nation are all thanks to people like Mr. and Mrs. Choi who devoted their lives to the independence movement and supported the activists," Patriots and Veterans Affairs Minister Park Min-shik said in his memorial address.

Mr. Choi, who immigrated to the Maritime Province of Siberia with his parents at the age of 9, grew up to be a self-made businessman and used his wealth to assist the independence of his country and for thousands of his compatriots who had emigrated to Siberia. After the Russo-Japanese War, he organized the Dong-ui-hoe, an overseas anti-Japanese occupation organization, and served as its president to form a volunteer army and support the independence movement of national hero An Jung-geun. Moreover, he acquired and relaunched the Daedong Gongbo, a local Korean newspaper, to publish articles that promoted patriotism and was elected as the treasurer-general of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea.

He was revered as a great benefactor of Siberia for his acts. However, immediately after being captured by the Japanese military, who caused the April massacre in Siberia in 1920, Mr. Choi was murdered, and his remains have not been recovered to this day.

His wife, Mrs. Choi, married Mr. Choi in 1897 and gave birth to eight children. She is also known to have taken care of independent activist An Jung-geun's family after his death. After her husband's death, Mrs. Choi led a difficult life with her children. She died in 1952 and was buried in the Bishkek Cemetery in Kyrgyzstan.

Joint burial ceremony at Seoul National Cemetery; Mr. Choi's temporary tomb was destroyed due to 'fake bereaved family' incident and then restored

Choi Jae-hyung's tomb was originally built at Gravesite No. 108 of Seoul National Cemetery in 1970, but it was destroyed in the "fake bereaved family incident" and had remained an empty lot until now. The government posthumously awarded the National Foundation Medal to Mr. Choi in 1962, and a temporary tomb was erected at Seoul National Cemetery in 1970 at the request of a person who claimed to be his descendant.

However, after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and Russia in 1990, Choi's actual bereaved family visited Korea, which revealed that the person who had previously claimed to be a descendant was in fact a fraud trying to receive the national pension for bereaved families. After this incident, Mr. Choi's temporary grave in Seoul National Cemetery was destroyed sometime between 2006 and 2009, but the bereaved family was not notified of the news.

The bereaved family hoped to restore the tomb, but since Mr. Choi's remains could not be found after he was killed by the Japanese army in April 1920, the tomb could not be restored in accordance with the National Cemetery Act, which stipulates the burial of remains or bodies.

Following the family's request, the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs pushed for a revision of the National Cemetery Act to allow the joint burial of memorial tablets of patriotic martyrs and the remains of their spouses, which became effective in July. The joint burial ceremony was attended by Mr. Choi's bereaved family members, Minister Park, Liberation Association Chairman Lee Jong-chan, and Choi Jae-hyung Memorial Association Chairman Moon Young-sook.

For the ceremony, the Korean Consulate General in Vladivostok, Russia, sent 3 kilograms of soil collected from Ussuriysk, the presumed site of Mr. Choi's death, to Korea on the Eastern Dream car ferry, which left for Gangwon Province on Aug. 12. A Russian employee from the Consulate General boarded the ship carrying a box containing the soil wrapped in a golden cloth with a Korean flag attached and delivered it to the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs after arriving at Donghae Port on the afternoon of Aug. 13.

Monument to be established at Kyrgyzstan cemetery from which Mrs. Choi's remains were recovered

The soil from Russia was collected from the hill behind the Choi Jae-hyung

Memorial Hall (formerly Gov. Choi Jae-hyung's home) in Ussuriysk on July 25 at the request of the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs. Afterward, the Consulate General managed to send the soil to Korea after going through somewhat complicated procedures.

"It breaks my heart that I cannot deliver Mr. Choi's remains to his home country, but I feel fortunate at least that I can honor his soul by transferring the soil collected from his old house," Korean Consul General Ha Byeong-gyu said.

Deputy Consul General Koh Moon-hee said: "Although the amount is not much, we believe that without the soil from Ussuriysk, the purpose of restoring Mr. Choi's tomb could fade. The process of carrying out the soil transfer was somewhat rushed, but with the help of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which sympathized with our government's purpose, we were able to shorten the certificate issuance period."

Meanwhile, the remains of Elena Petrovna Choi were returned to Korea by air on Aug. 7. After her remains were recovered, a monument was erected on her behalf at the original burial site in Kyrgyzstan. The active participation of the private sector, including the Choi Jae-hyung Memorial Foundation's public fundraising campaign and support from LG U+, was of great help in delivering Mrs. Choi's remains to Korea. [\[참\]](#)

- 1 Korean soldiers pay tribute to Choi Jae-hyung, the godfather of the independence movement in Siberia, and his wife, Elena Petrovna Choi, at Seoul National Cemetery in Dongjak Ward in Seoul on Aug. 14.
- 2 Pavel Choi, the grandson of Choi Jae-hyung, burns incense at the joint burial ceremony of Choi and his wife, Elena Petrovna Choi, at Seoul National Cemetery in Dongjak Ward in Seoul.
- 3 Patriots and Veterans Affairs Minister Park Min-shik and Pavel Choi pay their respects in silence after offering flowers at the joint burial ceremony.
- 4 Pavel Choi sprinkles soil on the grave at the joint burial ceremony.



2



3



4

Memorial service held for Korean victims of atomic bombing in Hiroshima

Lee Key-cheol, Commissioner of OKA, visits shrine; ‘May they rest in peace’



President Yoon Suk Yeol (2nd from L) and his wife, Kim Keon Hee, visit Japan as observers of the Group of 7 summit on May 21, alongside Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (3rd from L) and his wife, Yuko Kishida. Wreaths were laid at the memorial stone for Korean atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

A memorial service is held Aug. 5 in front of the memorial monument in the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, Japan, to provide solace to the souls of Koreans who died in the atomic bombing of 1945.

A local memorial service was held Aug. 5 to commemorate the Koreans who died in the atomic bombing by the United States on Hiroshima, western Honshu, Japan, at the end of World War II. According to Japan's Kyodo News, the service was held in the morning in front of the Memorial Monument to Korean Victims of the Atomic Bombing in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, with about 200 people in attendance.

“We express our deepest condolences to our compatriots who were sacrificed,” said Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Key-cheol. “Please leave behind your resentment and hatred and rest in peace,” he added, bowing toward the memorial. The OKA was launched under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on June 5.

Previously, President Yoon Suk Yeol visited Hiroshima in May to attend the Group of 7 summit and paid his respects at the memorial

monument with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. It was the first time that the leaders of Korea and Japan jointly visited the monument. Kwon Jun-oh, son of an atomic bomb victim and chairman of the Korean Special Committee for Victims of the Atomic Bombing, said: “I am so glad to see President Yoon and Director Lee visiting the memorial to the point of tears. I hope these visits will continue in the future.”

A list of 2,810 Korean deaths, including eight victims who died from radiation exposure over the past year, was dedicated to the memorial monument. When the atomic bomb exploded on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, it was reported that approximately 50,000 Koreans were affected. The Korean Atomic Bomb Victims Association estimated the number of Korean deaths due to the Hiroshima atomic bombing at 30,000, while the memorial monument recorded it at 20,000. 🇰🇷

Pro-Korea U.S. congressmen celebrate 70th anniversary of armistice 'Start of inseparable Korea-U.S. relations'

Four congressmen, including those of Korean descent, and Korean American organization give speech to veterans at Nat'l Assembly

Pro-Korea members of the U.S. Congress and Korean American voter groups commemorated the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice on July 27 and expressed gratitude to veterans who helped establish strong Korea-U.S. relations. Four Korean members of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Korean American Grassroots Conference (KAGC), the Council of Korean Americans (CKA) and the Korea Economic Institute of America (KEI) jointly held the "Korean War Veterans and Armistice Day Commemoration Reception" at the U.S. House of Representatives' Rayburn House Office Building.

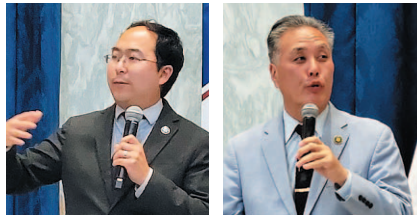
Reps. Andy Kim (Democrat, New Jersey) and Young Kim (Republican, California), who are of Korean descent, attended the event to remember the sacrifices of veterans and the pain of war and reflect on the importance of peace on the Korean Peninsula.

"Americans went to Korea to fight for their own future, the future of our parents and grandparents, and an inseparable relationship was formed at that moment between the two nations," Rep. Andy Kim said. "It is truly amazing to see how our partnership has grown over the past 70 years. It's a great story."

He expressed his determination to continue working to develop Korea-U.S. relations, saying, "We must not only remember at this moment what happened 70 years ago but also think about how far we've come since then and what will happen in another 70 years."

Rep. Young Kim said that although the Korean Peninsula seems to have been at peace for the past 70 years, the threat from North Korea is escalating.

"We must remain on close alert and be more aware of the atrocities taking place north of the Demilitarized Zone in contrast to the peace and freedom that South Korea enjoys," she said. "I'm very proud to serve as a Korean American member of the U.S. Congress. I will continue to fight for freedom and democracy and be grateful that we live in America today to enjoy the freedom we have."



Rep. Andy Kim (Democrat, L) and Rep. Mark Takano (Democrat, R) of the U.S. House of Representatives speak at the Korean War Veterans and Armistice Day Commemoration Reception at the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington, D.C., on July 27.

'(Between North and South Korea), it's clear who made right choice 70 years ago': Korean ambassador

Reps. Mark Takano (Democrat, California) and Josh Gottheimer (Democrat, New Jersey), whose constituencies include many Korean voters, also attended the event to emphasize the importance of Korea-U.S. relations.


"Today, we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice and

the beginning of the ROK-U.S. relationship based on the common values of democracy, freedom and human rights," Takano said. "As we celebrate the ROK-U.S. relationship, we honor our soldiers who contributed to opening a new chapter in the relationship between the two countries."

Takano proposed a bill that would allow Koreans who participated in the Vietnam War as Korean soldiers and later became U.S. citizens to receive the same veterans and medical benefits as U.S. soldiers. This bill passed the House of Representatives in May and is currently pending approval by the Senate.

Also attending the reception were the grandson and granddaughter of former ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command Cdr. Robert W. Sennewald, a Korean War veteran, and veteran soldier James Norman Diggs. Korean Ambassador to the U.S. Cho Hyun-dong delivered the Apostle of Peace Medal to them.

"Seventy years ago, the Korean Peninsula stood at a crossroads, and the decisions made at that time marked our fate," Cho said. "North Korea chose communism and authoritarianism, but South Korea took a different path and embraced freedom and democracy. Now, 70 years later, it is clear who made the right choice."

At the event, a children's choir from a Korean school in New Jersey, who also performed at the White House during the Korea-U.S. summit in April, performed "Arirang." Exactly at 7:27 p.m., the attendees each lit an electric candle to commemorate the Armistice Agreement made on July 27, 1953, and prayed for peace on the Korean Peninsula. 

GLOBAL KOREAN



Prosecutor of Korean heritage appointed assistant attorney general for security at U.S. Justice Dept.

Choi Eun-young, head of cryptocurrency enforcement division, moves to counterterrorism and cyberthreats division

Choi Eun-young, a South Korean prosecutor who led investigations into cryptocurrency crimes in North Korea, China and other countries while working at the U.S. Department of Justice, has been named the deputy assistant attorney general for the National Security Division (NSD), which oversees the Justice Department's counterterrorism functions. According to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and other sources on July 26, Choi, director of the National Cryptocurrency Enforcement Task Force (NCET), recently moved to the NSD under the DOJ.

In a post on her LinkedIn account, Choi announced that she had taken on the role of deputy assistant attorney general of the NSD and was serving as the acting deputy assistant attorney general while the official appointment process is underway.

Established in 2006, the National Security Division consolidates national security-related functions within the DOJ, including information policy, counterterrorism, counterintelligence and export control, and is led by Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen. With cyberthreats, such as technology theft, infrastructure hacking and online information warfare by China, North Korea and other adversaries, on the rise, the DOJ established a new National Security Cyber Section under the National Security Division in June to combat international hacking crimes.

In February last year, the Ministry of Justice established the NCET to investigate crimes involving cryptocurrencies and other digital assets and appointed Choi as its first director. In January, the NCET worked with French authorities to seize the Hong Kong-based cryptocurrency exchange Bitzlato, which was being used to transfer money for illegal transactions online, including drugs.

After graduating from Harvard University and Harvard Law School, Prosecutor Choi served as an assistant attorney for the Southern District of New York, where she gained experience in cryptocurrency investigations.

Director Cecilia Kang, second-generation Korean Argentine, makes documentary on comfort women

'A Boat Departed From Me Taking Me Away' will be released later this year; 'a conversation between women of history and women today'

Argentine director Cecilia Kang, 38, a second-generation Korean Argentine, is making a feature-length documentary about the comfort women who were abused by the Japanese military during the Japanese occupation of Korea. The documentary, titled "A Boat Departed From Me Taking Me Away," is currently in post-production after finishing shooting.

"Although not confirmed yet, I hope to be able to screen it at a film festival later this year or in early 2024," Kang said in an email interview with the press on Aug. 16.

The documentary is structured as a conversation between a Japanese comfort



woman during the Japanese occupation and a woman today. The film follows Melanie, a Korean Argentine, who takes on the role of reading the testimonies of former comfort women on camera, and the film explores the changing emotions, interests and lives of these women.

“As a daughter born to Korean immigrants in Argentina, I started the film with the question, ‘How can I tell the story of the comfort women?’” Kang said. “After listening to the testimonies of the grandmothers of the comfort women, I thought myself deplorable, for how could I not know about the comfort women until now?”

In the documentary, the troubles and struggles of the comfort women, who were not only used as sex slaves by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II but are still ignored to this day, are clearly revealed through the conversation with Melanie.

The documentary is being produced with the support of the National Film and Video Commission, the Buenos Aires Film Commission, the Association of Koreans in Argentina and the Federation of Korean Commerce in Argentina.

Kang made her debut in 2015 with the short film “Videojuegos” (Video Games), which was nominated in the Berlinale Generation category of the Berlin film festival. She followed up with her first feature documentary, “Mi ultimo fracaso” (My Last Failure), which explores the lives of female Korean immigrants in Argentina and the themes of coexistence and contradictions between the two cultures.

Korean American tenor Park Jong-hyun to perform at Metropolitan Opera in New York Selected for Lindemann Young Artist Development Program; performed in ‘The Magic Flute’

Korean American tenor Park Jong-hyun, 30, is headed to one of the world’s top opera stages. According to the website of the Metropolitan Opera (the Met), an opera troupe in New York and the Korea JoongAng Daily, Park has been selected as a member of the Met’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program (LYADP).

Following this selection, he will perform the roles of the First Guard in “The Magic Flute” and Tybalt in “Romeo and Juliet” in the 2023-2024 season. The Met is the largest classical music organization in the United States, and its opera house, which stages 240 opera performances annually, is one of the world’s greatest stages. Since 1980, it has been running the LYADP to discover and nurture young artists in the field of opera. Park will join a cohort of singers who have appeared on the Met’s stage, including Hong Hye-kyung, Sumi Jo, Shin Young-ok, Kathleen Kim, Park Hye-sang and Kim Woo-kyung.

After graduating from Seoul National University’s College of Music and studying at Yale University, he was recently awarded second prize for the New England region at the Met Laffont Competition, as well as winning awards at the Premier Opera Foundation International Vocal Competition, Daegu International Vocal Competition, Nanpa National Music Competition and the Korea Vocal Competition. Recently, he played the role of Fenton in Opera San Jose’s “Falstaff” and the role of Tamino in the Merola Opera Program’s “The Magic Flute.” During his time as a member of the Opera Department at Yale University, he performed with the Yale Philharmonic Orchestra and at the Yale Opera Gala. 🇺🇸



Jang Woo-sang, founder and first president of World Federation of Overseas Korean Traders Associations, passes away

‘Elder’ of overseas Korean entrepreneur organizations

It was belatedly communicated that Jang Woo-sang, the first president of the 42-year-old World Federation of Overseas Korean Traders Associations (World OKTA), passed away in early August. He was 97 years old. In accordance with the deceased's wishes, the bereaved held a quiet family funeral on Aug. 16 and informed the World-OKTA secretariat of the news of his passing two days later.

Jang founded the World Overseas Korean Traders Federation, the predecessor of World-OKTA, in 1981 and served as its president for two years. He played an “elder” role in World-OKTA's growth to become the largest overseas Korean business community organization, with more than 7,600 members and 143 chapters in 68 countries. Jang, who immigrated to the United States in 1970 and started a trading company, also was the president of the Korean-American Traders Association. In 1980, Jang, along with members of the association, decided to establish a global network of Korean traders. The following year, he founded the World Federation of Overseas Korean Traders Association, centered around 101 Korean traders from 16 countries who participated in the Seoul Trade Fair, an export consultation meeting.

In the early years, the association operated out of its members' pockets without government subsidies, but in 1994, with its official registration as a corporation of the Ministry of Commerce and Energy (now the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy), its financial situation improved and the organization began to take shape. Jang, who imported and sold Korean textiles and steel to the U.S., stepped down from the management role at the age of 65, but he showed his unwavering love for World-OKTA and gave insightful advice to successive presidents.

He also showed his unwavering love for the organization by participating online in the opening ceremony of the 22nd World Delegate Congress and Export Consultation in May 2021. [\[?\]](#)



Jang Woo-sang, the first chairman of World-OKTA, gives a press interview on Oct. 14, 2012, while traveling from Los Angeles to Gyeongju, North Gyeongsang Province, to participate in the 17th World Korean Entrepreneurs Congress. “We need to educate the next generation of Koreans so that they can become the owners of World-OKTA,” he said in the interview.

Brian Jeon becomes youngest-ever senior vice president of Korean American Association of Greater New York

21-year-old, who led first overseas Hanbok Day, is youngest VP since association's founding in 1960

The president of a Korean American youth organization that established Hanbok Day for the first time outside of South Korea has been appointed senior vice president of the Korean American Association of Greater New York. According to the association on July 24, Brian Jeon (21) has made it to the recently confirmed final list of senior vice presidents. The New York-based association represents 500,000 Korean American residents in three northeastern states, including New Jersey and Connecticut.

Since the association's launch in 1960, this is the first time that such a young person has taken the position. Jeon, a second-generation immigrant, has led the Asian American Youth Council (AAYC), a Korean youth organization. The AAYC is an organization that was formed in 2017 as a communal response to a teacher's racist actions against Korean students at a high school in New Jersey. Since then, the AAYC has carried out various activities, including campaigns, with the objective of increasing the political power of Asians, including Koreans, in the United States.

Specifically, the AAYC played a leading role in the U.S. East Coast city of Tenafly declaring the first overseas Hanbok Day in 2020. In 2021, the AAYC persuaded the state of New Jersey to introduce Hanbok Day, becoming the first among the 50 states to do so. Additionally, last year, the AAYC persuaded the governor of New Jersey to enact a law mandating history education about Asian Americans in the standard public school curriculum. Recognized for these activities, the AAYC received the Youth of the Year Award from Sen. Bob Menendez in May this year.

Senior VP Jeon plans to establish Hanbok Day in New York City in the near future and push for legislation mandating history education about Asian Americans.

"I am still young and have many shortcomings, which makes



Brian Jeon (21), the youngest person in history to serve as the senior vice president of the Korean American Association of Greater New York

the weight of serving as a senior vice president fall heavy on my shoulders," he said. "I will act as a bridge to strengthen communication between generations in the Korean American community, as well as promote projects, including Hanbok Day." 📺

‘Old friend’ Indonesia celebrates 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Korea

Exchanges began over 600 years ago; also site of anti-Japanese independence movement

According to The Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty, on Aug. 11, in the sixth year of King Taejong’s reign (1406), an envoy named Jin Eon-sang appeared in a ship on the sea off Gunsan, North Jeolla Province. He was on his way to Joseon carrying rare birds, such as peacocks, ostriches and parrots, as well as gifts, such as agarwood and pepper. However, along the way, he was attacked by Japanese pirates, and his belongings were stolen. Members of the envoy fleet were either captured or killed, and only 40 survivors made it to shore. Hearing their story, King Taejong bestowed clothes and other valuable items upon Jin Eon-sang.

The country of Jowa in this story refers to the country of Java, which is present-day Indonesia. Even now, the trip between Jakarta, Indonesia’s capital, and Incheon International Airport takes seven hours by plane, but the two countries were already engaging in exchanges more than 600 years ago.

Indonesia was also the site of our independence movement during the Japanese colonial period. Lee Eok-gwan, who arrived in Indonesia as a member of the Japanese military, formed the Goryeo Independence Youth Group with his Korean colleagues on Dec. 29, 1944, and worked as a Japanese soldier during the day and fought for Korea’s independence at night. However, in January 1945, three of the youth group members received an order to transfer to Singapore and ended up refusing to do so by rising up and killing 12 Japanese soldiers and civilian employees. Due to this incident, the

group was revealed, and the members had to receive news of Korea’s liberation in prison.

Furthermore, since Korea became the Republic of Korea, Indonesia has been a land of opportunities for Korean companies seeking to expand into overseas markets. In February 1968, the Korea Development Company (KODECO) entered Kalimantan, Indonesia, with an overseas investment permit worth \$3 million to develop forest resources. This was both Korea’s first overseas investment and the first foreign-invested company approved by Indonesia. In 1979, when Korea’s crude oil reserves were depleted due to the second oil crisis, KODECO imported Indonesian crude oil into Korea, giving the country room to breathe.

Past Indonesian presidents also had deep ties with North and South Korea

Local Cia-Cia tribe uses Hangeul as their writing system

North Korea also had strong relationships with past Indonesian presidents. Sukarno, Indonesia’s first president, was closer to North Korean President Kim Il-sung than to South Korea during his time. In 1965, during his official visit to Indonesia with his son and successor Kim Jong-il, Kim Il-sung showed interest in an orchid in a botanical garden, and Sukarno named it the “Kim Il-sung flower” and gifted it to him. This flower, bred by an Indonesian botanist, even carries Kim’s name in its botanical name: *Dendrobium Kimilsungia*.



- 1 Indonesian fans take photos with their smartphones at actor Ong Seong-wu’s fan signing event in Jakarta on Dec. 3, 2022.
- 2 President Yoon Suk Yeol shakes hands with Indonesian President Joko Widodo at the Grand Prince Hotel in Hiroshima on May 21, 2023, before the Group of 7 summit. 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and Indonesia.
- 3 Elementary school students from Buton Island, Indonesia, who are learning the local Cia-Cia language using Hangeul textbooks, send greetings to Korea on Oct. 8, 2021, one day before the 575th anniversary of Hangeul’s creation. The transcription of Cia-Cia in Hangeul is considered the first example of the export of the Korean alphabet.
- 4 The guide to historical sites of the Korean independence movement in Indonesia is featured in this photo. The guide was produced and distributed in Korean and Indonesian last August by professor Seo Kyoung-duk of Sungshin Women’s University.



Sukarno's daughter, Megawati, who became sworn siblings with Kim Jong-il, later became president and served as a diplomatic bridge between the two Koreas, traveling between Pyongyang and Seoul in 2002.

Former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who was the first elected president, married into the family of ex-Ambassador Woboni, the first Indonesian ambassador to South Korea. Woboni was his father-in-law. Yudhoyono often visited South Korea to meet his current wife at the time to foster their relationship.

The close ties between Korea and Indonesia can be found in other places as well. Cia-Cia, a local tribe in Indonesia, adopted Hangeul as their system of writing. The head coach of the Indonesian national soccer team is now Korean (Shin Tae-yong). Indonesia also provided support during Korea's diesel exhaust fluid crisis in 1979.

August marked the 50th anniversary of Korea's diplomatic relations with Indonesia, with whom we celebrate a long-standing relationship. Many say that Indonesia, whose GDP continues to grow at approximately 5 percent every year based on its abundant resources, labor force and domestic market, is a key economic partner that can replace China. Just as Korea's economy has grown along with the rapid expansion of China's gigantic consumer market, we hope to see Indonesia play a similar role.

In fact, major conglomerates, such as Hyundai Motors, SK, LG, Lotte and POSCO, are making large investments in Indonesia as their core production base. Indonesia is also actively cooperating with Korea, saying that they must follow Korea's example to avoid falling into the "middle-income trap."

Many Indonesians enjoy K-pop, K-dramas and Korean food and say that they love Korea. Now seems to be the right time for the two countries to join forces as they are in need of each other. The long-standing friendship makes us hopeful that the two countries will rise

to greater heights together.

Professor Seo Kyoung-duk launches campaign to promote historical sites of Korean independence movement in Indonesia

In an effort to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relationship between Korea and Indonesia, professor Seo Kyoung-duk of Sungshin Women's University launched an online and offline campaign to promote historical sites of the Korean independence movement in Indonesia, sponsored by KB Kookmin Bank. On Aug. 14, one day before Korea's Liberation Day, Seo announced the publication of 10,000 copies of the guidebook and released a video introducing the historical sites.

The guidebook, produced in both the Korean and Indonesian languages, introduces the founding site and base of the Goryeo Independence Youth Group, an anti-Japanese independence movement group in Indonesia, and the site of Min Yeong-hak's martyrdom in Ambarawa, Indonesia.

The printed guidebook can be found at the Korean Embassy in Jakarta, the Korean Association, King Sejong Institute, the Korean Language Department at Gadjah Mada University, Sasan Java Cultural Center and KB Bukopin Bank. The introductory video was produced in Korean (<https://youtu.be/VDAXpJjpyEE>) and Indonesian (https://youtu.be/baKP_CxJju8).

"In celebration of Liberation Day, we wanted to promote the historical sites of the Korean independence movement in Southeast Asia widely at home and abroad," said Seo, who also participated in the filming in Indonesia. "We're sharing the video through various SNS channels, including YouTube and Instagram, and through major overseas Korean and international student communities around the globe." 📺

Park Ui-rae, Yonhap News Agency's Jakarta correspondent

Koryo Ilbo's 100th anniversary commemorative sign unveiled in Kazakhstan

Commemorative text in three languages: Korean, Kazakh, Russian

A commemorative signboard has been erected at the former office building of the Koryo Ilbo, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. The building housed the newspaper for 24 years after it was forcibly relocated to Central Asia. On Aug. 24, the newspaper revealed it held a ceremony to unveil the commemorative signboard in front of its former office building at 62 Nazarbayeva in Kyzylorda, Kazakhstan.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by Konstantin Kim, editor-in-chief of the Koryo Ilbo, Deputy Gov. Nurumbet Saktaganov, head of the Kyzylorda Korean People's Association Elena Kim and senior citizen Yuri Kim. The commemorative signboard is a black marble slab measuring 80 centimeters by 50 centimeters and reads in Korean, Kazakh and



A commemorative sign is displayed at the former headquarters of the Koryo Ilbo in celebration of its 100th anniversary.

Russian, "This building housed the Lenin Kichi newspaper, which was the successor of the Vanguard newspaper and the predecessor of the Koryo Ilbo."

Founded in 1923 in Vladivostok to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the March 1 Movement, the Koryo Ilbo was relocated to Kyzylorda, Kazakhstan, in 1937 with the forced relocation of the Koryo-saram, and was relaunched under the name Lenin Kichi. It moved to Almaty in 1978 and has been published under its current title

since 1991.

As the "oldest Korean-language newspaper outside the Korean Peninsula," the Koryo Ilbo is published in three languages -- Korean, Kazakh and Russian -- in the form of a 16-page weekly newspaper.

Mindan launches KJ App, an integrated exchange network for Koreans in Japan

Developed in Korean and Japanese and also available for Japanese users

The Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan) launched the KJ App (Korea Japan App), a communication application, in August to build an integrated exchange network, uniting Koreans in Japan and Mindan. Developed in both Korean and Japanese, the app is available not only to Koreans in Japan but also to the Japanese.

It provides informative announcements from the Mindan headquarters and its chapters, emergency contacts and relief requests in the event of disasters, such as earthquakes and typhoons, and information on children's education, recruitment and job searches. The app also features legal consultations linked to Mindan's Life Counseling Center and various social and event functions. Users can download the app to their PC or phone and use it immediately once they verify their identity.

"It is an integrated community app that unites various members of the Korean diaspora, including longstanding settlers who have lived in Japan since the Japanese occupation, new settlers who have come to Japan since the 1980s, naturalized citizens who have acquired Japanese citizenship and Japanese who are interested in Korea," said a Mindan official, adding, "It will serve as a place for exchanges and harmony in the Korean-Japanese community."



An announcement of the launch of the KJ App, an integrated network for Koreans in Japan

São Paulo photo exhibition traces 60 years of Korean immigration to Brazil

More than 940 photos on display, including of first 103 immigrants arriving at Port of Santos

The Korean Association of Brazil has held a photo exhibition to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Korean immigration to Brazil this year, featuring the history from the early days to the present. The photo exhibition was held from early August to Aug. 30 at the São Paulo City Historical Archives.

The Korean community in Brazil began 60 years ago when an agricultural migrant group first set foot in Brazil and has grown to more than 50,000 people. Initially centered on agriculture, the Korean community has spread to various fields, including commerce and manufacturing, and Bom Retiro in São Paulo's commercial center has been designated as the Koreatown.



A poster for the Korean Association of Brazil's photo exhibition in São Paulo, commemorating the 60th anniversary of Korean immigration to the South American country

The exhibition showed the image of the first 103 immigrants arriving and disembarking at the Port of Santos in Brazil on Feb. 12, 1963, alongside local media articles highlighting the event. In addition, around 940 photos of Koreans participating in various fields, such as agriculture, commerce, education, culture and sports, were displayed.

“The exhibition aims to publicize the status of Koreans in Brazil as dignified members of the country and to introduce history to future generations to help them establish their identities,” said Kwon Myung-ho, president of the Korean Association of Brazil.

Korean Association of Mexico donates to Korean Immigration History Museum, first Korean-owned building in Mexico

10 million won delivered; Merida, where museum is located, was first settlement of henequen immigrants

A donation has been made to the Korean Immigration History Museum in Mérida, Yucatán, which chronicles the migration of Koreans to Mexico that began 118 years ago. On Aug. 12, the Korean Association of Mexico donated 140,000 pesos (US\$8,098) to the Korean Immigration History Museum in Mérida, Yucatán, to help the museum renovate and modernize the building.

The Korean Immigration History Museum, located at 397A Calle 65, Centro, Mérida, is a symbolic site that traces the 118-year history of Korean immigration in Yucatán, which began in May 1905, when 1,033 first-generation Koreans arrived and became known as “aenikkaeng” (a type of henequen or agave).

The current building of the Korean Immigration History Museum was once used as the gathering hall of the Merida Regional Chapter



Members of the Korean Association of Mexico pose for a photo after presenting a donation of 140,000 pesos to the Korean American Museum in Mérida, Yucatán, on Aug. 12.

of the Korean Association, founded in 1909, and was the first property to be owned by a first-generation Korean when it was bought in 1934. It was also used as a fundraising center for the Korean independence movement during the Japanese occupation.

The donation ceremony was attended by Korean Ambassador to Mexico Huh Tae-wan, Korean Immigration History Museum Director Dolores Garcia, Korean Descendants in Yucatan President Juan Duran Gong and Korean Descendants in Mexico City President Marta Kim Leon.

“The museum is an important place that conveys the stories and contributions of Korean ancestral immigrants and the values of diversity and coexistence, and I hope it conveys the heart of the Koreans who hold this museum dear,” said Jang Won, president of the Korean Association of Mexico.

Suncheon Seonam Temple and Jogye Mountain Seonam Temple, known as ‘temple of flowers’; Jogye Mountain, famous for holding spirit of Buddhism

Seonam Temple, located at the eastern foot of Jogye Mountain in Suncheon, South Jeolla Province, is one of South Korea’s most iconic temples. It is an ancient site of contemplation at the center of Buddhism that is thought to have either been founded in 529 by the Goguryeo monk Ado Hwasang and originally known as Haecheon Temple on Go-Cheongnyang Mountain or in 875 by the Silla monk Doseonguksa and named Seonam Temple. It is the principal temple for the Taego sect, the second largest of the Korean Buddhist sects after Jogye.

Seonam Temple, along with Gongju Magok Temple, Boeun Beopju Temple, Yangsan Tongdo Temple and Yeongju Buseok Temple, was awarded UNESCO World Heritage Site status in 2018 as one of Korea’s mountain monasteries. Anyone interested in Korean culture should see this temple with their own eyes to fully appreciate its value and significance. Even non-Buddhists in Korea visit this temple year-round. The world’s leading travel guide, Michelin, has awarded Seonam Temple and its footbridge, Seungseon Bridge, three stars each, the highest possible rating for a destination.

‘The Floral Temple’

Far from the grandeur and hustle and bustle of larger temples, there are many things that attract travelers to Seonam Temple. One of the things that sets this place apart from other temples is its flowers. Starting with the “maehwa” flowers that defy the snow and frost, camellias, cherry blossoms, mountain laurel, forsythia, rhododendrons, plum blossoms, azaleas and other spring flowers bloom along these walls. Even the purple alder, yellow dandelions and other small wildflowers sprouting in every corner of the yard add to the joy. The temple, located on the southern coast, boasts a greater variety and abundance of flowers than other temples and even some gardens, earning it the nickname “The Floral Temple.”

Behind Wontong Hall and next to the wall of Gwahwang Hall are maehwa trees that are 350 to 650 years old. These old trees, known



as Seonamae, are designated as natural monuments. The colorful blossoms on the branches, which have become blackened with age, are awe-inspiring. Here, you can see white, red and green plums. Next to the 400-year-old rock pine, a willow with drooping branches catches the eye.

In front of Cheomseonggak, a cedar tree blooms with yellow flowers. Some visitors were surprised to see such flowers for the first time. This year, perhaps owing to the warm temperatures, these spring flowers bloomed all at once, giving us a veritable feast of flowers. In summer and autumn, hydrangeas, pomegranate blossoms, pear trees, resurrection lilies, spider lilies and chrysanthemums continue the banquet. Along with the flowers, there are many ponds that add to the atmosphere of Seonam Temple. The neat ponds and earthy stone walls make the temple feel comforting, like a home away from home.

The famous Seungseon Bridge, which has become a symbol of Seonam Temple, is located on the path from the entrance to Samindang. The distance from the parking lot to Iljumun is just over 1 km. As you exit your car and make your way up the valley, you become slowly immersed in the Buddhist world. The sounds of the

water, the wind and the birds will prepare you to listen to Buddhist teachings.

The valley is crossed by a rainbow-shaped stone footbridge named the Seungseon Bridge. By crossing this bridge, people who visit the mountain temple are said to be cleansed of suffering and shame and enter the celestial world. The bridge was built in 1707 (33rd year of King Sukjong). Gangseonru, which means “the tower from which the gods descend,” is built on the road above Seungseon Bridge.

Jogyesan, center of Buddhism and life


Jogye Mountain (884 meters above sea level) is a famous mountain that houses the headquarters of the two largest sects of Korean Buddhism: Jogye and Taego. Songgwang Temple on the western side of the mountain is one of the Jogye sect’s chongnim, while Seonam Temple on the eastern side is the only chongnim of the Taego sect. A chongnim refers to a temple that has a seonwon, a space for meditation practice; a kangwon, a scripture school; and a yulwon, a school specializing in precepts. Jogye Mountain is one of the few mountains where both sects of Buddhism house one of their chongnim. This is a testament to its exceptional location.

Jogye Mountain is an earthen mountain with a graceful shape. The water flows plentifully, its sounds fill the valley, and the forests are dense. From Janggung Peak, the frosty earth shines brightly in the sun. Without the new green leaves, the water-drenched silver branches of the trees glitter. On the road connecting Seonam Temple and Janggung Peak, there is a pass called Big Gulmokjae and Small Gulmokjae. Gulmokjae is derived from the Korean word “golmak,” which means a path in the trunk of a tree that blocks a valley. The ridge connecting the two passes is densely forested with Korean oaks and rhododendrons.

‘Korea’s Camino de Santiago’: thousand-year Buddhist path

There is a 6-kilometer forest path connecting Seonam Temple and Songgwang Temple. Called the “Thousand Year Buddha’s Heart Path,” it runs east to west across Jogye Mountain. From Seonam Temple, the phytocide-scented path crosses the valley, passing through cypress forests and the Big Gulmokjae pass. The path rises steeply near the pass and then descends sharply.

On the other side of the valley, one’s breath is taken away once more. The road stretches upwards, as if touching the sky, with no end in sight. On this path, which starts and ends with Buddhism, climbing up and down the slopes and wrestling with oneself, one becomes a pilgrim in search of life’s truth. This path, which connects the two Buddhist temples that have led people to enlightenment, is known as “Korea’s Camino de Santiago.”

Two barley rice restaurants that can be found on the path are a great comfort for hikers and pilgrims alike. One might even come to Jogye Mountain just for this barley rice. As you sit on a bench in the spacious courtyard, looking up at the sky with grains of barley swirling in your mouth, peace will find you. 



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- 1 Iljumun at the entrance to Seonam Temple in Suncheon
- 2 Willow trees in full bloom flank a 400-year-old pine tree at Seonam Temple.
- 3 The Seungseon Bridge and Gangseonru at Seonam Temple
- 4 A stone marker for Janggung Peak on Jogye Mountain

1,200 overseas Koreans invited to 'identity cultivation' training program

The Overseas Koreans Agency held the 2023 Overseas Korean Friends Homecoming Teens Camp to foster the Korean identity of the next generation of overseas Koreans around the world. Under the theme of "Hello" (Safe & Peace), more than 1,200 overseas Korean youths participated in the program in Seoul, Cheonan, Andong, Jeju, Siheung, Gunsan, Mokpo and Pohang, among other cities, with Phase 1 taking place from July 10-16, followed by Phase 2 from Aug. 7-13.

The program was organized to provide overseas Korean youths with the opportunity to experience the society, culture and history of their home country in order to cultivate a sense of their roots and foster mutual bonds through exchanges between domestic and overseas youths.

Starting with an opening ceremony at the Cheonan Independence Hall, the participants took part in a week of activities, including watching Andong Hahoetal and K-pop performances, visiting traditional markets and exploring historical sites, such as Hwaseong in Suwon, Gyeongbok Palace and the Hanok Village in the heart of



Participants of the 2023 Overseas Korean Friends Homecoming Teens Camp pose for a group photo at the opening ceremony at Cheonan Independence Hall on Aug. 7.

Seoul. Participants took part in homestays for the length of the camp, providing them opportunities to interact with Korean youths and understand their home country. The participants of the second training program also traveled to Cheonan, Siheung, Daejeon, Daegu and Mokpo to explore culture and experience history, including a tour of the Independence Hall, to enhance their bonds as Korean people.

OKA and Korean Red Cross provide emergency relief for Koreans abroad

The Overseas Koreans Agency has teamed up with the Korean Red Cross to provide emergency relief and support to overseas Koreans in the event of a disaster abroad. On July 27, the two organizations signed the "Business Agreement on Humanitarian Support for Overseas Koreans" at the Seoul office of the Korean Red Cross in Jung Ward, Seoul.

Until now, overseas Koreans with local citizenship have been in a legal and financial blind spot when it comes to emergency relief and support in the event of disasters abroad, but this agreement will provide them with practical and prompt support.

"By collaborating with the Korean Red Cross, which has international and domestic humanitarian support capabilities, we will be able to properly care for overseas Koreans who have not been able to receive adequate relief in disaster situations," said Lee Key-cheol, director of the Overseas Koreans Agency.

"The Overseas Koreans Agency will take the lead in protecting and supporting overseas Koreans to match Korea's national dignity and status," he added.



Korean Red Cross President Shin Hee-young (L) and Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Key-cheol pose for a photo after signing the "Business Agreement on Humanitarian Support for Overseas Koreans" at the Korean Red Cross in Jung Ward, Seoul, on July 27.

The two organizations will further expand programs for Sakhalin Koreans, such as support for their permanent return and resettlement, medical examinations, cultural tours and temporary visits to their home countries, and visits back to Sakhalin for returning compatriots. They will also work together to support Koreans in Japan who were affected by the atomic bombs.

Overseas Korean Cooperation Center holds intensive Korean language camp for next generation of Koreans in Japan

The Overseas Korean Cooperation Center (Director Kim Young-geun), under the Overseas Koreans Agency, held the “2023 Intensive Korean Language Camp for the Next Generation” for young Koreans in Japan who lack access to Korean language education. The camp invited 70 students between the fourth and sixth grades from elementary schools in Japan to learn about the Korean language and Korea in their home country and establish their identities by interacting with their peers.

Hosted by the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, from Aug. 6 to 15, the participants attended Korean language classes by level, visited elementary schools, toured Seoul and socialized through group projects. Previously, they participated in preliminary training programs in Tokyo and Osaka in July organized by the Kanto and Kansai Regional Council of Korean Language Schools in Japan.

“We hope that the next generation of Koreans in Japan will feel



Youths attend the Intensive Korean Language Camp for the Next Generation of Koreans in Japan, hosted by the Overseas Korean Cooperation Center.

more familiar with their homeland through the camp and enhance their pride as Koreans,” said Director Kim Young-geun, adding, “We will continue to work with the Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan) to make improved efforts on Korean language education.”

Overseas Koreans Foundation's Book Recommendations



'Nuclear Family'

by Joseph Han - Translated by Park Ji-Seon / Wisdom House

The author's novel “Nuclear Family” is a diasporic work connected to the likes of the film “Minari,” the novel “Pachinko” and the memoir “Crying in H Mart.” Jacob's family makes and sells Korean food in Hawaii. The shop is called Cho's Deli. It is named after the surname of Jacob's dad, Cho Jung-yeob. They serve main dishes made of meat and rice, bean sprouts, Korean omelettes and “japchae,” which none of the customers can ever pronounce,” all in one bowl. Their dream is to open franchises all over Hawaii and purchase a beautiful house. However, that dream is jeopardized when Jacob goes to South Korea to teach English to South Korean children, and the news spreads that he attempted to cross the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and defect to North Korea.

Han is a second-generation immigrant, born in South Korea and raised in Hawaii. His first book, “Nuclear Family,” is getting attention overseas, where it was short-listed for the PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Novel last year and was named Time magazine's 2022 Book of the Year. The 32-year-old author was named one of the U.S. National



Book Foundation's “5 Most Promising Writers Under 35.”

As with other diasporic works, the confusion of identity experienced by immigrants, especially second-generation immigrants, surrounds the novel. The unease and pain that Jacob feels for seemingly no reason when he arrives in Korea, and the cycle of smoking cannabis, bingeing and bulimia that his sister Grace is trapped in are metaphors for their confusion and pain, with their two names, Yakob and Jacob, and Eun-ye and Grace, caught between being Korean and American.

“Nuclear Family” does not end there. The book tells not only the story of a Korean American family living in Hawaii but also the story of a family that was shattered when the 38th parallel was drawn and the country was divided into the North and the South.

The novel explores the question of why Jacob did the “foolish” thing of defecting to North Korea, and in revealing that it was due to the presence of the spirit of Baek Tae-woo, the tragic history of Korea is also revealed. A native of North Korea, he left his wife and children to come to South Korea, where he later settled with a new family and gave birth to Jacob's mother but ended up alone and became a spirit. As a spirit, he tries to cross the wall separating North and South Korea but finds the wall to be impenetrable, so when he meets his grandson Jacob by chance in South Korea, he enters his body and attempts to cross into North Korea.





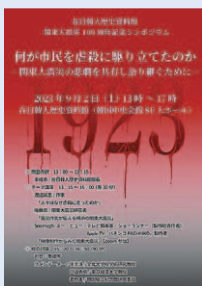
Mindan holds Summer Vacation School Camp for elementary students Mindan, or the Korean Residents Union in Japan, held the two-night, three-day Summer Vacation School Camp to foster the identities and strengthen the bonds of Korean elementary school students living in Japan at the Union's Central Hall in Tokyo from Aug. 21 to 23. During the camp, students made friends with their peers through various social programs and participated in the intensive learning of subjects, including Japanese and English, and various cultural experiences. Sponsored by the Overseas Koreans Agency, the camp was led by university students who are also members of the Mindan student council.

KOSAA holds 24th Teachers' Conference in Buena Park, California Korean School Association of America (KOSAA, Chairman Baek Ki-hwan) held the 24th Korean Language Teachers' Conference at the Buena Park Double Tree Hotel in California on Aug. 12. More than 300 people, including teachers at Hangeul schools in the western United States and California, participated in the conference held under the main theme of "K-culture and Korean language" and the subtheme of "The present and future of the Korean language in preparation for becoming the world's 7th official language." The conference, organized to provide more advanced education to Hangeul school students, was a symposium on teacher education and a seminar on history and culture for next-generation leadership.



'The Sound of the Wind,' a play about song by Korean Japanese about longing for home, performed in Busan Dal-O-Reum, a Korean Japanese theater company based in Osaka, Japan, performed the play "The Sound of the Wind" at the Culture and Arts Center in Buk Ward, Busan, from Aug. 25 to 27. The play is based on a novel by Korean Japanese writer Kim Chang-saeng that depicts the story of twin sisters, Seol-a and Dong-i, who cross the Korean Strait to avoid the 4.3 Jeju uprising and settle in Japan. The play also shows the main characters in Ikuno, the Korea Town in Osaka, overcoming discrimination and living proudly as Koreans in Japan. The performance was co-organized by the civic group Bom in alliance with the Joseon School, the theater company Haepung and the performance agency Ariari Fireworks.

Gwangju Koryoin Village reenacts Bongo-dong Battle to celebrate Liberation Day The Gwangju Koryoin Village staged a street parade reenacting the Battle of Bongo-dong to celebrate the 78th National Liberation Day on Aug. 15. About 500 people, including residents of the village, Honam University's Humanities City Support Project Group and citizens of Gwangju, participated in the parade, which was organized as a public event. Participants, who held Korean flag-patterned umbrellas in one hand and water guns in the other, shouted, "Long live the Republic of Korea," recreating the Battle of Bongo-dong led by Gen. Hong Beom-do as a summer festival. Participants continued their march down the streets of Koryoin Village and gathered at Hong Beom-do Park to watch a play titled "Battle of Bongodong, the Final Step to Liberation of Korea" by the Koryoin Village theater company.



Symposium held in Tokyo to communicate truth about Great Kanto Earthquake and massacre of Koreans The History Museum of Japanese-Koreans (Director Lee Seong-si), a subsidiary institution of the Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan), held a symposium on Sept. 2 to reexamine the massacre of Koreans in Japan in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great Kanto Earthquake. The event took place in the conference room on the eighth floor of the Union's Central Hall in Tokyo. Regarding the Great Kanto Earthquake in September 1923, the Tongnip Sinmun, a Korean newspaper at the time, reported that 6,661 Koreans were slaughtered. The symposium, which was held under the theme "What made citizens murderers," was organized to inform the public and spread the historical truth.

We introduce events of compatriot organizations, such as Korean associations and Korean language schools. Please share your news via this email: okaspokesperson@korea.kr

Online platform to foster overseas Korean identities and connections



The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Key-cheol) is running the “Overseas Korean University Students Training in the Motherland” program using an online platform. The program aims to provide overseas Koreans with the opportunity to receive identity-building education in their native language and culture without geographical or time constraints.

The online training program consists of eight compulsory courses, including “Education on Understanding Overseas Koreans,” “Understanding Peace on the Korean Peninsula,” “Public Diplomacy to Build the Future Together” and “Our Great Heritage: Hangul,” as well as five optional courses, including “The Story of Hanok through Similar but Different Regional Cultures in Korea,” “Meet the Korean Traditional Music Pansori” and “Korean History Education.” A

certificate of completion is also issued upon finishing the required courses.

The training program started in May and will run until October, with each participant receiving online training for one month. Participants can apply for the program directly through the online platform or receive help using the contact information below.

* **Online platform URL:** <https://okfyouthcamp.com>
(Interested domestic university students can also apply)

* **Inquiries:** Tel: +82-51-714-3119
(Overseas Korean University Students’ Home Country Online Training Operation Office)
Email: okfyouthcamp@vncom.kr

OKA Commissioner’s Activities

- Aug. 5: Attended the Korean Atomic Bomb Victims Memorial Day Ceremony at Hiroshima Peace Park in Japan
- Aug. 8: Participated in a meeting with the heads of Korean American Associations in New York City
- Aug. 11: Attended the reception for the 22nd anniversary of the unveiling of the statue of Dosan Ahn Chang-ho in Los Angeles
- Aug. 12: Congratulatory remarks and keynote lecture at the opening ceremony of the Korean School Association of the Americas (KOSAA) conference
- Sept. 12: Virtually attended the 2023 World Korean Associations Presidents Conference’s 1st Steering Committee meeting



Our hope for new Overseas Koreans Agency



Lee Jin-young,
director of Inha Center for International Studies at Inha
University
(Civilian member of the Overseas Koreans Policy Committee
and former president of Association for the Studies of Koreans
Abroad)

I offer my sincere congratulations on the launch of the new Overseas Koreans Agency. I look forward to and support the successful execution of policies for overseas Koreans by Director Lee Key-cheol and his staff.

Establishment of OKA will fundamentally change policies for overseas Koreans

President Yoon Suk Yeol said in a commemorative speech at the launching ceremony of the OKA on June 5, "I am thrilled to announce the launch of the OKA here in Incheon, where the history of overseas Koreans began." He emphasized, "In the future, the OKA will not only protect and support overseas Koreans but will also serve as a link to promote exchanges and cooperation between them and their home country. We will also actively embrace the next generation of compatriots, Koreans in Japan, Koryo-saram and Koreans in Sakhalin, nurses and miners who were dispatched to Germany, compatriots from multicultural families, compatriots adopted abroad and overseas Koreans staying in Korea who were in a policy blind spot due to the absence of a dedicated organization."

Lee Key-cheol, the first Commissioner of the agency, also declared that the OKA will play three roles in the future. First, it will serve as a stepping stone for synergistic growth between Korea and overseas Koreans; second, it will revitalize and expand Korean language education and various exchange programs that foster the Korean identity of the next generation; and third, it will take care of Koreans living in underprivileged areas.

The establishment of the OKA is a major event that will lead to fundamental changes in Korea's policies for overseas Koreans. The request by the 7.5 million overseas Koreans for a dedicated organization, which had been ongoing for the past 30 years, was answered by the launch of the OKA in June and the enactment of the Framework Act on Overseas Koreans on May 9. The Framework

Act and the establishment of a basic plan for overseas Koreans based thereon are expected to bring significant changes in the implementation system and structure of overseas Korean policies that have been in progress for the past several decades. We hope that the OKA will transform itself in line with this huge change and serve as a compass that gives the direction for synergistic growth between overseas Koreans and their home country.

Structure for communication and promotion must quickly be established between OKA and overseas Koreans and within agency

I believe that the agency should first and foremost establish institutional infrastructure and secure communication and publicity structures based on regulations, such as the Framework Act on Overseas Koreans. The OKA, which is in charge of the overall policy for overseas Koreans, as well as its affiliated Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center and Overseas Koreans Service Support, oversees affairs related to establishing and implementing policies for overseas Koreans, supporting overseas Koreans and organizations, and carrying out overseas Korean support service policies. The goal should be to establish the center's role and internal communication system, and simultaneously establish an external communication system to properly promote the OKA to overseas Koreans.

The Overseas Koreans Service Support Center is an organization that provides quick, one-stop processing of civil appeals from overseas Koreans. It handles a variety of tasks among consular services, including digital processing, various civil appeals, immigration, health insurance and pensions. From an administrative perspective, the establishment of a one-stop service system will play a large role in communication between overseas Koreans and the OKA, especially since this has been a point of contention that overseas Koreans have continuously raised at the World Korean Associations Presidents Conference and other events.

In addition, it is necessary to establish the role of the Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center and a communication system with overseas Koreans. This is because the center was established to efficiently and systematically support policies to foster overseas Koreans' identities as Koreans and strengthen ties with Korea. It should also form a close internal communication channel between the OKA and its affiliated organizations, and approach overseas Koreans directly through external promotions of the new agency.

Establishment of policies and projects for overseas Koreans based on accurate demand surveys

In addition to the establishment of the OKA, the most



groundbreaking change was the enactment of the Framework Act on Overseas Koreans. Previously, policies for overseas Koreans did not have a consistent system due to the lack of a basic law or basic plan, and it was difficult to establish a mid- to long-term vision. Now, it has been stipulated that the head of the OKA must establish and implement a basic plan on policies for overseas Koreans every five years, in consultation with the head of the relevant central administrative agency. With the establishment of the OKA, great progress has been made in the institutional aspect. In addition to the basic plan, other systems, such as annual leave, could be created and evaluated, making the establishment of a systematic policy, execution and feedback possible. Along with the establishment of institutional infrastructure, we hope the OKA plays a role that reflects changes in the circumstances of overseas Koreans.

Establishment of policies for each country where Koreans reside in response to changes in global environment

Global conflicts between countries where large numbers of overseas Koreans live are currently increasing. The conflict between the West and Russia is escalating amid the global conflict between the United States and China and the continuation of the war in Ukraine. The need to strengthen public diplomacy among overseas Koreans in the United States, the largest population of Koreans abroad, is increasing accordingly. In addition, there are concerns that the scope of the overseas Korean policy toward the Korean Chinese population will be reduced due to the aggressive diplomacy of China, where the second-largest overseas Korean population resides. The diplomatic relationship with Japan, where the third-largest overseas Korean population resides, is closely tied to changes in the situation of Koreans living in Japan, so there is an increasing need to reestablish neighborly and benevolent relations. Countries where Koryo-saram live, who are the fourth-largest overseas Korean community, are greatly affected by the wars in Russia and Ukraine, diminishing their presence, which calls for relevant countermeasures. In other words, conflict and confrontations between countries where more than 90 percent of overseas Koreans reside require the establishment of policies for overseas Koreans overlaid on wise foreign policies in general.

Revitalizing public diplomacy among overseas Koreans

As the history of immigration continues, more and more following generations of overseas Koreans are entering the mainstream of their local communities, and they are expressing their pride as Koreans in various ways. In the U.S., not only were five Koreans elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, but the number of Koreans advancing to high-level positions in the White House, prosecutor's offices, courts, police and state governments is increasing. Even outside the U.S., the number of Koreans entering the public sector and other fields that influence public perceptions of Koreans is increasing. As the next generation of overseas Koreans enter mainstream society, there is an increasing need to deepen the

relationship between the Korean government and overseas Koreans in various areas, such as public diplomacy, as well as bilateral diplomatic relations with the countries in which Koreans reside, and there is a strong need to promote this by including it in the policies for overseas Koreans. In other words, the need to revitalize public diplomacy among overseas Koreans has increased.

Major countries around the world are already expanding "diaspora public diplomacy" using their overseas populations. Israel, China, India, France, Italy, Greece, Armenia, Turkey and the Philippines are paying attention to the dynamism of their compatriots living abroad and viewing them as important assets for their countries' development. They are thus encouraging cooperation between the home country and overseas compatriots through public diplomacy policies and projects. These are policies that utilize the overseas population as assets for public diplomacy by promoting investment, human contributions and improvements to the country's brand overseas. Korea should also utilize its 7.5 million overseas Koreans to find various ways to promote joint development between overseas Koreans and their home country.

Perception of overseas Koreans returning to Korea should be improved, along with relevant policies

In this respect, there is a need to improve our perception of overseas Koreans who have moved back to Korea. As is well known, the number of returning Koreans from China and Koryo-saram from Central Asia, as well as overseas Koreans and foreign nationals from the U.S., Canada, Australia and European countries, is increasing, currently reaching 1 million. This means that about 13 percent of the 7.5 million overseas Koreans are actually living in Korea rather than abroad.

Currently, new policy issues, such as pensions and health insurance for these people, are emerging, and demand for support is increasing. Korea is gradually moving away from a homogenous society toward a diverse, multicultural one. Considering this, a change in perspective toward overseas Koreans residing in Korea is crucial. Throughout South Korea's transformation into a multicultural society, it is necessary to view them as leading figures in enhancing Korea's diversity and social dynamism. In addition, there should be consideration on a policy level to ensure that the next generation of overseas Koreans residing in Korea can be introduced as special talents, not just foreigners.

The establishment of the OKA is a fruitful result of the continued aspirations of the overseas Korean communities over the past 30 years, and there are high expectations to be met. As Lee Key-cheol, director of the OKA, said, the "thread and needle that can tie the beads of overseas Koreans together" have now been prepared. The understanding and cooperation of the 7.5 million overseas Koreans are desperately needed to take the first step. This process is in itself a form of communication and cooperation between the home country and overseas Koreans, as well as a step toward mutual growth. 

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