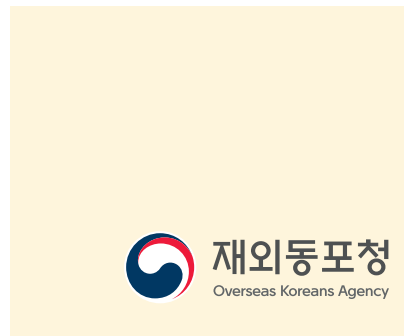
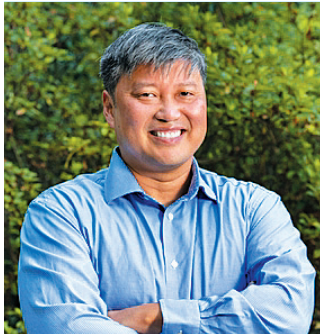




Window into Overseas Koreans



- Special Article - Overseas Koreans Agency ushers in era of 100 billion-won budget
OKA continues to support compatriots in new year
- Special Feature - Sakhalin compatriots now able to return to Korea permanently with all their children
Adopted compatriots in their homeland: 'I will constantly ask who I am'
- Newsworthy Topic - First mayor of Korean descent elected in Georgia, U.S.
First Korean American police chief in NYPD's 178-year history



New Year's address by Lee Key-cheol, head of Overseas Koreans Agency



Lee Key-cheol,
commissioner of the OKA

Dear overseas Koreans!

The new year of 2024, the year of the Blue Dragon, has arrived.

I sincerely hope that this will be a year in which all your dreams and hopes come true.

Last year, the world escaped the pain of COVID-19, but it is still unstable, with the international economy stagnating due to the wars between Ukraine and Russia and the war in Israel.

However, our people have overcome numerous difficulties by helping each other and uniting in times of crisis.

Based on our unique characteristics, we hope to hear better news from Korea and overseas Koreans in the new year.

On June 5 last year, President Yoon Suk Yeol established the Overseas Koreans Agency as part of his election platform, which was a long-standing wish of overseas Koreans.

As our compatriots have longed for, the OKA will strengthen protection and support for overseas Koreans in line with the status of Korea.

In particular, we will actively work to foster the identity of our compatriots and promote exchanges and cooperation with our home country.

We will also faithfully strive to fulfill our role as a strong defender and advocate for the overseas Korean community.

We are also deeply grateful for the loving support you have given to the Overseas Koreans Foundation over the past 26 years.

In 2023, meaningful events were held after the launch of the OKA.

There were visits to their home country by overseas Korean victims of the atomic bomb and workers dispatched to Germany. A "Dialogue with the Government" event was held at the World Korean Presidents' Conference.

In addition, for the first time in history, the World Korean Business Convention was held overseas (Orange County, California, U.S.) and achieved the greatest results in history, including 3.8 times the number of participating companies, 4.6 times the number of consultations and 1.6 times the amount of consultations compared with the previous year.

We will do our best to prepare for all events in order to maintain the good momentum this year.

In the future, all employees of the OKA, including me, will continue to listen more closely to the voices of overseas Koreans.

We also promise to become an institution with low barriers and an institution that removes thorns from under your fingernails.

We ask for your continued support and cooperation from Korea and the OKA throughout 2024.

We join our hands in praying that your homes and workplaces will be full of health and happiness.

Thank you. 🙏





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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 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>

Overseas Koreans Agency ushers in era of 100 billion-won budget

Promoting identity, building global Korean network, etc.



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The government's budget for overseas Koreans has exceeded 100 billion won (US\$74,833,496) for the first time ever. The Ministry of Overseas Korean Affairs announced that its 2024 budget, which passed the National Assembly's plenary session late last year, is 106.7 billion won. This is an increase of 57.8 percent (39.1 billion won) compared with the 2023 budget of 67.6 billion won for the agency's predecessor, the Overseas Koreans Foundation, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Office of Overseas Korean Consular Affairs and Planning.

Looking at it by item, the budget for fostering the next generation of Koreans, including identity cultivation, has increased. Support for the operation of Hangeul schools and teacher training jumped 28 percent from 16 billion won to 20.4 billion won. The budget for the next generation's motherland training invitation program was also increased from 5.9 billion won to 7.7 billion won, and the number of invitees was expanded from 2,300 to 3,000.

Major programs to build a global Korean network between the diaspora and the motherland have also increased. The budget for the World Korean Business Convention (WKBC) and the World Korean Association Presidents' Conference was increased from 2.5 billion won to 2.7 billion won. A new internship program for overseas Korean youth was also established.

A total of 800 million won was newly allocated for the project to support overseas Koreans who have been relatively

marginalized, such as atomic bomb victims in Japan, workers dispatched to Germany and Koryo people. A project to support vulnerable overseas Koreans during crises or accidents caused by war, terrorism or disasters was also designated as a new project.

In addition, the budget for building an overseas Korean certification center and operating an overseas Korean service center was newly established, and the budget for operating the consular information system and building an apostille platform was significantly expanded.

New program to help overseas Koreans stay and resettle in their home country

One of the most notable changes made as a result of the demographic cliff is the establishment of a new program to help overseas Koreans stay and settle in their home country. Previously, the Overseas Koreans Foundation's program was limited to overseas Koreans, but the OKA has also included support for compatriots living in Korea.

The OKA has decided to focus on internalization to improve the performance of the former Overseas Koreans Foundation's existing programs. By efficiently executing its budget, the OKA will fulfill its role as a strong fence to protect and support overseas Koreans around the world and as a spokesperson for the overseas Korean community to provide practical help.

"Despite the difficult national financial conditions, the increased budget reflects the wishes of overseas Koreans around the world and the bipartisan support of the National Assembly," OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol said. "In particular, the budget reflects various projects to comprehensively and systematically promote overseas Korean policies as a pan-governmental control tower."



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1 OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol (R) receives a plaque from President Yoon Suk Yeol at the inauguration ceremony of the Overseas Koreans Agency at Buryong Songdo Tower in Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, on June 5, 2023.

2 Participants pose for a group photo during the opening ceremony of the World Korean Future Generation Congress 2023, hosted by the OKA, at the Grand Hyatt Seoul in Yongsan Ward, Seoul, on Nov. 28, 2023.

OKA continues to support compatriots in new year

Leading support for Sakhalin, Koryo-saram, adoption, crisis victim compatriots

The Overseas Koreans Agency is continuing its various policies to take care of overseas Koreans around the world, who are the backbone of the global economy, in the new year of 2024.

First, a new budget of 40 million won (US\$29,909) has been allocated to provide humanitarian assistance to compatriots who were unable to receive adequate relief when they were affected by disasters overseas. In July of last year, the OKA signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Korean Red Cross to provide quick assistance to compatriots affected by crises.

We have paved the way for practical help for overseas Koreans suffering from intractable blood tumors. Starting this year, we will be working with the Korea Marrow Donor Program (Chairman Shin Hee-young) to support stem cell transplants. The idea is to help overseas Koreans with blood tumors connect with Korean donors by promoting the project so that they don't suffer from not being able to find stem cells that match them due to racial mismatches. To this end, the OKA signed an MOU with the Korea Marrow Donor Program on Dec. 19 last year.

A partial amendment to the Special Law on Support for Sakhalin Compatriots was passed by the National Assembly at the end of last year, expanding the eligibility for the permanent return to Sakhalin from one immediate family member to include offspring. The amendments will take effect six months after the date of promulgation, meaning the OKA will start the permanent return and resettlement support program in 2025 with an expanded scope of accompanying family members.

Commissioner Lee Key-cheol: 'We will continue to serve as protective fence for marginalized compatriots'

Following last year's project to invite Korean compatriots affected by the atomic bomb as the first project of "Embracing Our Compatriots," this year we will continue to promote projects to embrace and comfort compatriots who are in special situations or have been marginalized throughout history. To commemorate the 160th anniversary of the Koryo-saram migration this year, we will revisit the history of the Koryo-saram's migration and organize various events to strengthen the bonds between Koryo-saram in Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States and their motherland. We will also provide opportunities for Koreans from



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multicultural families in Southeast Asia to experience Korean history and culture to help them develop their identity.

We will also continue to promote the International Korean Adoptee Associations Gathering, which was held last year, in order to invite adopted Koreans with weak ties to their motherland to Korea to strengthen connections and promote mutual development.

"We will provide practical help to those who have been marginalized and who have suffered by promoting active policies to support overseas Koreans," OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol said. "We will continue to play the role of a strong fence for them so that they feel, 'I have a homeland too.'" [\[장\]](#)

1 OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol (6th from L) poses for a photo with officials from both sides after signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Shin Hee-young (5th from L), president of the Korea Marrow Donor Program, on Dec. 19, 2023, to support overseas Koreans with incurable blood tumors.

2 OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol (8th from L) takes a photo with officials after personally visiting the hometown village of Sakhalin compatriots in Ansan, Gyeonggi Province, on Dec. 21, 2023.

Sakhalin compatriots now able to return to Korea permanently with all their children

Amendment to Sakhalin Compatriots Act promulgated Jan. 16, effective July 17

A way has been opened for Sakhalin compatriots who immigrated to Sakhalin, Russia, due to forced mobilization during the Japanese colonial period to permanently return to their homeland with all their children. The Overseas Koreans Agency announced Jan. 16 that a partial amendment to the Special Act on Support for Sakhalin Compatriots (hereinafter referred to as the Sakhalin Compatriots Act) was promulgated on Jan. 16, including the provision that the target for the permanent return of Sakhalin compatriots to Korea will be expanded from “one direct descendant” to “children.” The amendment will take effect July 17, six months after the promulgation.

After completing preparations, such as revising the Enforcement Decree of the Sakhalin Compatriots Act and other subordinate laws, the OKA will expand the scope of accompanying family members to all children in 2025 and promote the project to support the permanent return and settlement of Sakhalin compatriots. This year’s permanent return project will accept applications in accordance with the current enforcement ordinance until June 30, before the amendment takes effect.

The Sakhalin Compatriots Act was enacted through diplomatic efforts with relevant countries in May 2020 to provide relief for the damage suffered by compatriots who immigrated to Sakhalin and to support the permanent return and settlement of Sakhalin compatriots and their accompanying families.

‘We will try our best to provide practical help to overseas Koreans’: OKA

Sakhalin compatriots and their accompanying families who were eligible for permanent return and settlement support in accordance with this amendment have received support from the Korean government, including ▲fares and initial settlement costs



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required for their return to the country, ▲ operating expenses for residential and living facilities, and ▲rental housing to settle in Korea.

However, family members who could permanently return to Korea with Sakhalin compatriots were limited to “a spouse, one direct descendant, and their spouse.” Accordingly, compatriots with multiple children had to go through a painful separation, such as leaving their children in Russia and returning permanently to Korea.

With the implementation of the amendment, parents and children of first-generation Sakhalin compatriots and brothers and sisters of second-generation Sakhalin compatriots will be able to return to Korea and live together instead of being separated.

In addition, the amendment also established new provisions to ▲mandate a fact-finding survey of compatriots returning permanently to the country and their accompanying families and ▲establish a basis for local governments to support Sakhalin compatriots, thereby providing more effective support.

“As the Sakhalin Compatriots Act has been promulgated, which has been the long-awaited wish of the Sakhalin community, the OKA will continue to do its best to provide practical assistance so that overseas Koreans can feel that the government is by their side,” said Jeong Seon-ho, manager of the Russian Compatriots Overseas Division at the OKA. 📖

1 Sixty-three Sakhalin compatriots who returned to Korea permanently and entered the port of Donghae, Gangwon Province, are thrilled to return to their homeland on March 17, 2023.

2 OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol (C) has a conversation with compatriots after visiting their hometown in Ansan, Gyeonggi Province, where Sakhalin compatriots who returned to Korea permanently reside, and delivering consolation prizes to them.

Adopted compatriots in their homeland: 'I will constantly ask who I am'

OKA holds Overseas Korean Adoptees Gathering

"I wanted to be a blonde, blue-eyed German girl, but I wasn't one. Growing up, I wondered whether I was German or Korean. I will continue to ask questions about who I am."

Yasmin Meiss from Germany spoke at the 2023 Overseas Korean Adoptees Gathering organized by the Overseas Koreans Agency to form bonds between adopted compatriots and their home country and to build solidarity between compatriots, held at the Grand Hyatt Seoul in Yongsan Ward, Seoul, on Dec. 11.

Meiss, 49, a psychotherapist specializing in trauma treatment, once had a strong negative image of Korea due to her adoptive mother, who hated Korea. However, her thoughts have changed a lot since then, and she participated in this gathering to establish her identity and sense of belonging as an overseas Korean.

At the forum that lasted for about 80 minutes, four people -- Meiss, Jenna La Noue (25, U.S.), Christina Levisen (42, Denmark) and Tom Evers (54, Sweden) -- participated as panelists and revealed their inner thoughts that they could not easily speak about before.

La Noue, a social worker, grew up in a family where six of her 10 siblings are Korean adoptees, which made her very interested in international adoption. Levisen serves as the administrative director of her research center and is very interested in language and cultural exchanges, which motivated her to earn her master's degree. In 2011, she was diagnosed with cancer and was unable to have children, which led her to think more deeply about her roots.

Evers works as a sales manager at an IT company in Sweden. He said that at one time he rejected his identity as Korean, but his thoughts changed as he raised his two daughters. He conducted a DNA test with the support of his daughters, but his biological family is yet to be found.

Four panelists of Korean adoptees say, 'Finding your roots is important'

The panelists commonly expressed their feelings about Korea with the word "complicated."

"I was excited about the idea of visiting Korea but was also scared because it was unfamiliar and foreign," La Noue said.

"There was both anticipation and curiosity, but I really didn't know what to expect from Korea," Evers said.



Four Korean adoptees, including from the U.S. and Denmark, participate as panelists and speak about identity and adoption at the 2023 Overseas Korean Adoptees Gathering, hosted by the OKA, at the Grand Hyatt Seoul in Yongsan Ward, Seoul, on Dec. 11, 2023.

Although they grew up in different environments, they were all the same in that they never gave up their interest in Korea.

"I stopped being interested in Korea at some point because my adoptive parents scolded me and asked, 'Why do you like Korea, which abandoned you?'" Meiss said. "But seeing my daughter become interested in Korean culture, the repressed memories came back, and I came on this journey to find my roots."

"When we had a crush on someone when we were young, don't we all have the experience of writing the person's name on paper thousands of times?" Levisen said. "My Korean name is Song Ja-young. I thought of Korea as I wrote my Korean name on the adoption documents numerous times."

Although they somewhat differed on whether to actively search for their biological parents, they all agreed that finding one's roots is important.

"I was instinctively interested in finding my roots," La Noue said. "(But) I don't want my sudden appearance to make life more difficult for my family, such as my biological mother."

"As I learned about my identity, I was motivated to find my roots," Levisen emphasized.

"I'm not sure if I actually want to start this journey of finding my roots," Meiss said. "There are some times I want to be with my adoptive parents, and I don't want to disappoint them."

"It doesn't really matter whether or not you can find your biological family," Evers said. 🇰🇷

First mayor of Korean descent elected in Georgia, U.S.

Former Brookhaven Councilman John Park wins runoff election



Former Brookhaven Councilman John Park (Korean name Park Hyun-jong), a Korean American, has been elected the mayor of Brookhaven, Georgia, U.S., in a runoff election. In the runoff election held Dec. 5, Park received 58.6 percent of the vote (3,564 votes), defeating Lauren Kiefer, who received 41.4 percent (2,520 votes).

Park, 49, made history as the first Asian American and first Korean American mayor in Georgia. Park beat Kiefer in the first round of voting in November last year, taking 43 percent of the vote, but fell short of a majority, triggering a runoff.

Park immigrated to the United States with his family in the 1970s. He studied business administration at Emory University in Atlanta and worked in technology consulting at IBM. He later worked for the U.S. defense contractor Northrop Grumman on contracts with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and as a technology consultant for national disease surveillance.

He was first elected to the council in a by-election in 2014 and served three terms over nine years at Atlanta's Emory University. He resigned from the council in August last year to run for mayor and will be officially sworn in as mayor in January.

Spearheaded the unveiling of Young Girl's Statue for Peace in June 2017

In June 2017, Park played a leading role in the unveiling of the Atlanta Young Girl's Statue for Peace in Brookhaven City Park. The statue was originally scheduled to be placed at the National Civil

Rights Center in the heart of Atlanta but was blocked by the Consulate General of Japan in Atlanta. Eventually, Park suggested Brookhaven City Park as an alternative site for the statue, which was agreed to by then Mayor John Ernst and the City Council.

"I'm so happy, I'm speechless," Park said in fluent Korean. Continuing in English, he said: "As a first-generation immigrant, I am proud to be Georgia's first Asian and Korean American mayor. I never imagined that the 'weird Asian boy' who played basketball at my local high school would one day become mayor."

"When I first started in the City Council nine years ago, I was overwhelmed by all the paperwork and didn't know what to do, but we all worked together in the spirit of doing good, and together with you, we won today. We will make Brookhaven a sustainable, green city," he said.

The Korean American community in Atlanta has been raising money and encouraging participation in the election since shortly after Park's announcement.

"We hope that John Park's victory as mayor will inspire other Koreans to run for public office in the United States," said Kim Baek-gyu, chair of the Atlanta Young Girl's Statue for Peace Committee. 🙏

1 John Park, mayor-elect of the city of Brookhaven, Georgia, U.S.

2 Mayor-elect John Park (4th from L) poses for a photo with supporters on the street after winning the runoff election in Brookhaven, Georgia, U.S., on Dec. 5 last year.

First Korean American police chief in NYPD's 178-year history

Capt. Heo promoted to superintendent after 25 years

The New York Police Department (NYPD) has named its first Korean American superintendent. The NYPD nominated Heo Jeong-yoon of the Queens precinct in New York City on Dec. 18 last year and officially appointed her to the position at a promotion ceremony on Dec. 22, four days later.

This is the first time in the history of the NYPD, which was founded in 1845, that a Korean American has served as a superintendent. The NYPD is the largest police organization in the United States, with 36,000 sworn officers and 19,000 civilian employees.

Chief Heo was hired in 1998 as the NYPD's first Korean American female officer. She went on to serve in Korean American neighborhoods in Manhattan and Queens, and in 2022, she became the first Korean American to be promoted to captain and then to superintendent again just over a year later, creating a series of firsts in the NYPD.

In the NYPD, you can advance through the ranks up to inspector by examination, but to advance above the rank of captain requires nomination. You need to have the right skills and be trusted within the organization to become a senior officer in the NYPD.

"I feel like I broke a high glass ceiling," Heo said in an interview with Yonhap News Agency on Dec. 19, when her appointment was internally confirmed. "I'm very happy to have helped raise the profile of Korean American police officers."

Born in Busan and graduating from university in South Korea before coming to the U.S., she cautiously speculates that her promotion to captain in the NYPD was due to a scientific personnel management system. It was a fair system that didn't discriminate based on origin or gender, so immigrants like her who came to the U.S. in their 20s could compete fairly on merit.

Known as 'True Lady' by her subordinates

"There is a military atmosphere in the police organization, so there




are many officers who give unilateral orders without any explanation to junior officers or subordinates, but I think I gave them a different feeling," she said with a laugh.

"When a rookie is on street patrol, I'll explain things like, 'There was an incident a few days ago, so you need to keep an eye on a certain direction,' and I solve problems through dialogue and explanation instead of giving unilateral orders," she said. Because of this, she said, the nickname "True Lady" is used among her subordinates as a sign of respect.

When asked about her future goals, Heo said she hopes to "pave the way for younger Korean American officers. I hope that younger, smarter people than I will come up through the ranks, and in the future, there will be a Korean American NYPD commissioner." The commissioner is the head of the New York Police Department and the leader of its 60,000 personnel.

"Whenever the Korean consul general in New York met with the NYPD commissioner, he emphasized that, 'We need more Korean American police officers,'" she said. "I think this kind of attention and effort has played a role in raising the profile of the Korean American community."

"The Consulate General of Korea in New York has consistently emphasized to the City of New York and the NYPD the need for a Korean American police superintendent," said Kim Eui-hwan, consul general of Korea in New York. "We hope that the first Korean American police superintendent will improve the safety of the Korean American community in New York." 

1 Heo Jeong-yoon, the first Korean American to become a police superintendent in the New York Police Department (Courtesy of The Korea Times)

2 Heo Jeong-yoon (center R), who became the first Korean American to be promoted to the rank of superintendent in the NYPD's history on Dec. 22, at a promotion ceremony at the NYPD Police Academy in College Point, Queens, where she was presented with a superintendent's badge by NYPD Commissioner Edward Caban. (Courtesy of The Korea Daily)

Repatriation of remains of victims of Japanese forced labor abroad stalled

Result of war in Ukraine and Japan-China non-cooperation

The repatriation of the remains of people who were forced to work in the Sakhalin region of Russia during the Japanese occupation has been delayed by the Russia-Ukraine war. The remains of the victims of the Ukishima incident in Japan and the victims of forced labor in Hainan, China, are also facing difficulties in repatriation due to non-cooperation from the respective countries.

According to the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, the government received eight applications for the repatriation of Korean remains in Sakhalin between 2020 and 2023, and selected the 17 most important remains for repatriation. Initially, it was planned to complete the repatriation in September last year and enshrine them at the National Mang-Hyang National Cemetery in Cheonan, South Chungcheong Province, but it was postponed after Russia said it was difficult to cooperate with the repatriation because it was at war.

Sakhalin is the site where tens of thousands of Koreans were forcibly taken during the Japanese occupation and subjected to grueling labor in coal mines and civil engineering work in factories. Scholars estimate that more than 40,000 Koreans remained in Sakhalin at the end of World War II. However, due to the Japanese government's neglect and relations with the former Soviet Union, they were not allowed to return home until the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and Russia in 1990. Many passed away in foreign countries without ever setting foot back in their homeland.

After reaching an agreement with the Russian government to excavate and return the remains of Koreans in Sakhalin, 71 remains were returned to Korea in seven rounds between 2014 and 2019. The coronavirus made it difficult to carry out the repatriation, and it wasn't until last year that the government resumed the program, but the war again blocked the way.



Shin Yoon-soon, chairwoman of the Korean Association of Survivors of Forced Labor in Sakhalin, speaks during a presentation of survivors' opinions on the Special Law to Support Victims and Families of Japanese Forced Mobilization at the St. Franciscan Education Center in Jung Ward, Seoul, on March 21, 2023.

There is still a long way to go for the return of the 275th victim of forced labor from Yutenji, Tokyo, Japan, who was killed in the Ukishima-maru incident in 1945. The Ukishima sailed from Aomori shortly after Japan's defeat in the Pacific War and sank in waters near Maizuru due to an unexplained explosion. The ship was carrying about 3,700 people, including victims of Korean forced labor, who were on their way home. The death toll from the accident was reportedly 549, including 25 Japanese crew members.

The government has been pushing to return the remains of the Ukishima victims since 2008. However, the process has been stalled for 15 years due to opposition from the families of the victims, who say that returning the remains could be used as an excuse not to investigate the truth of the disaster and could be seen as a reflection of Japan's lack of responsibility.

The return of the remains of victims of forced labor on China's Hainan Island has also come to a virtual standstill due to the Chinese government's non-cooperation. Hainan is the site of the Japanese massacre of Koreans after their defeat in 1945, with an estimated 1,200 remains buried there. The South Korean government has requested data on the status of China's investigation of the remains and a joint investigation of Hainan Island but has received no concrete response.

Despite the difficulties, some believe that the government should be more proactive in pursuing the repatriation, rather than just waiting for answers to official letters.

"When I went to Sakhalin in 2011, there were many graves without headstones, and only round stones remained, which had already deteriorated over the years," said Shin Yoon-soon, president of the Korean Association of Survivors of Forced Labor in Sakhalin, whose father was a forced laborer in Sakhalin. "The graves themselves are getting harder to find, but most of the survivors who are speaking out have passed away, and we are worried about who will actively push for the return of our remains when we die." 장

Relatives: 'We need to push harder for repatriation despite difficult external environment'

‘Beef’ sweeps Golden Globes for Korean performances

Won three awards: Best TV Miniseries, Best Actor, Best Actress

The Netflix drama “Angry People” (originally titled BEEF), directed by a Korean American director and starring a cast of Korean American actors, swept the major awards in the TV miniseries category at the Golden Globes, a prestigious American film awards.

At the 81st Annual Golden Globe Awards, held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles on the evening of Jan. 7, “Beef” won for Best Television Limited Series, Anthology Series, or Motion Picture Made for Television. The show’s lead actor, Korean American Steven Yeun, won Best Actor in the same category. This is the first time a Korean actor has won a Golden Globe for Best Actor. His co-star, Ali Wong, won Best Actress in the same category. This made a total of three wins for “Beef.”

The drama was directed, produced and written by U.S.-based Korean American writer/director Lee Sung-jin and stars a number of Korean actors, including Steven Yeun. “Beef” is a 10-episode drama that follows a group of people who become angry over a small incident in the parking lot of a large supermarket, leading to a catastrophic battle for revenge, and was released on Netflix in April last year.

The show was praised for its fast-paced storyline that kept viewers engaged and for its portrayal of modern people’s inability to control their anger. “Beef” is also nominated for 13 Emmy Awards this year in 11 categories.

Steven Yeun is nominated for an Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Miniseries, and this Golden Globe win gives him the green light for future Emmy wins.

“It’s so surreal,” he said in his acceptance speech. “The stories I tell myself are usually about loneliness and isolation, but when I have a moment like this, I think of everyone else. It’s like (Disney’s animation) ‘Frozen,’” he said, thanking his family and crew.

Song’s ‘Fast Lives’ not honored

Meanwhile, Korean Canadian director Celine Song’s “Past Lives” was nominated for five awards -- Best Motion Picture - Drama, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Non-English Language Film and Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Drama -- but did not win. The



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film, Song’s directorial debut, follows a couple who reunite in New York City 20 years after being separated as children and stars Korean American actress Greta Lee and Korean actor Yoo Tae-oh.

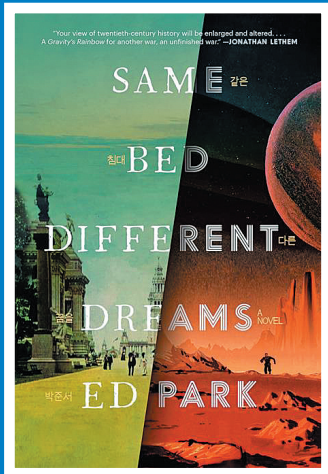
While the film failed to win at the Golden Globes, often referred to as the “Oscar weathervane,” it still has a chance to make the shortlist for the 96th Academy Awards in March. It is also nominated in six categories at the British Academy of Film and Television Awards and in three categories at the Critics’ Choice Awards in the United States. [\[3\]](#)



1 Korean American writer-director Lee Sung-jin (C) poses with Steven Yeun (L) and Ali Wong, who won best TV miniseries and movie for their Netflix drama “Angry People” (originally titled “Beef”), after winning Best Actor and Actress, respectively, at the 81st Annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles, California, on Jan. 7, 2024. (Reuters)

2 A promotional poster for the Netflix drama “Beef”(Courtesy of Netflix)

GLOBAL KOREAN



Two novels by Korean authors make New York Times' 100 Notable Books of 2023

Ed Park's and Esther Yi's works on Korean modern history and K-pop

Two novels by Korean authors about Korea's modern history and K-pop made The New York Times' list of 100 Notable Books of the Year. The NYT announced on Dec. 6 that "Same Bed, Different Dreams" by Ed Park (Park Jun-seo) and "Y/N" by Esther Yi were included on the list.

Park's book focuses on two people: Soon-shin, a Korean American writer who works at a large corporate company to make a living, and a black science fiction writer, who is a war veteran and believes he witnessed a UFO during the Korean War. The book delves into various scenarios, including the provisional government carrying out secret operations for the sake of the unification of the two Koreas. The NYT evaluated this work as "a poignant, comical and lyrical journey about Korean history and American madness."

Park, 53, was born in New York and debuted as a novelist in 2008 after working as an editor for The Village Voice newspaper. The nominated work is his second novel.

Yi's "Y/N" is the story of an American woman who buys a one-way plane ticket to Seoul after hearing the news of her favorite K-pop idol's retirement. The NYT praised the work, which is evaluated as examining how modern society blocks the possibility of individual achievement through the main character's obsession with K-pop, calling it "a strange yet wonderful work." Yi, 34, was born in Los Angeles and currently lives in Germany. The nominated work is her debut novel.

Korean American chefs' mulhoemyeon among NYT's Best Dishes of the Year

Creative cuisine from Bansang, a restaurant run by chefs Min Seung-hyun and Jin Lim

The menu offered by a fusion Korean restaurant in San Francisco was selected as one of the 23 Best Dishes of the Year by The New York Times.

The NYT announced the 23 dishes among the representative menus of restaurants across the United States on Dec. 12 and included "mulhoemyeon" from Bansang, a Korean restaurant in San Francisco. Mulhoemyeon is a creative dish topped with Korean-style "mulhoe" (a dish made with raw fish), radish and cucumbers.

"The characteristics of each ingredient seem distinct, but they get together in your mouth," it wrote. "It energizes you no matter what the season."



Bansang, which opened in San Francisco's Japan Town last year, is run by overseas Korean chefs Min Seung-hyeon and Jin Lim, who have worked at famous restaurants in the area.

Bansang is unique Korean cooking that uses Japanese and French ingredients and techniques, and is becoming popular on the West Coast.

"I want to be a gateway to introduce the taste of Korean food to people who are new to or unfamiliar with Korean food," Min told a local outlet.

Dasom Korean School publishes 'Life and Dreams of Korean-Americans'

Textbook recounts history of Korean immigration to America, focusing on historical figures

Dasom Korean School (Principal Choi Mi-young), located in Sunnyvale, California, recently published "The Life and Dreams of Korean-Americans," a textbook that introduces the history of Korean immigration to the United States with a focus on historical figures.

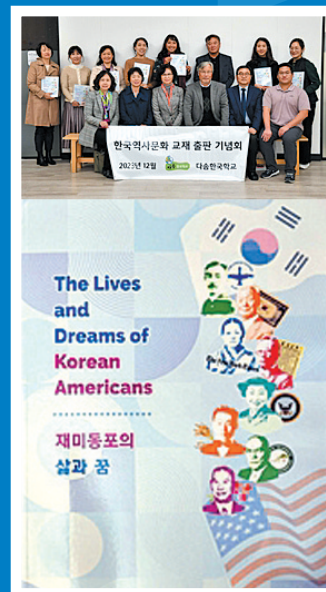
The book introduces independence activists Ahn Chang-ho, Seo Jae-pil and Rhee Syng-man, Ahn Chang-ho's daughter Susan Ahn, who is the first Asian female officer in the U.S. Navy; Yu Gwan-sun, who was introduced in The New York Times; Kim Jong-rim, the so-called "Rice King," who founded the Wallows Korean Flight School; and Kim Hyeong-soon, who first developed the nectarine breed of peach.

For the past year, Dasom Korean School has been conducting a Korean history and ethnic studies class at Korean schools and compiled the information into a textbook by summarizing the stories of people who left their marks on the history of Korean immigration.

A publication ceremony and forum were held Dec. 9 and were attended by Kang Wan-hee, director of the Korean Education Center in San Francisco; Kim Hyun-joo, chairman of the education committee of the Fremont Unified Education Bureau; pastor Park Seok-hyun of the Korean Presbyterian Church in San Jose; and Jeon Nam-jin, chairman of the board of Dasom Korean School.

In a congratulatory address delivered by principal Choi, Lee Key-cheol, the commissioner of the Overseas Koreans Agency, said: "I am grateful for the hard work that has been done in creating textbooks and teaching classes in Korean schools for eight years in relation to ethnic studies, which have become a requirement in the regular high school curriculum in the U.S. We will continue to provide support for the next generation of overseas Koreans so they can have a deep knowledge of their roots and take pride in them."

Dasom Korean School has decided to upload the contents of the book to Study Korean, the Korean language and culture education support website offered by the OKA, so that Korean schools around the world can utilize them. 장



Dr. Kim Jae-il, ‘big star of the nuclear world,’ passes away



Dr. Kim Jae-il, who passed away at the age of 87

Dr. Kim Jae-il, a Korean German scientist and a giant in the European nuclear energy community, passed away on Dec. 3 in Munich, Germany. He was 87 years old.

Born in Japan and a graduate of Seoul National University, the late Dr. Kim joined the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute in 1961, and while working there, he earned a Ph.D. from Ghent University in Belgium in two years and a teaching qualification degree from the Technical University of Munich (TUM) in 1977, with the help of the late Dr. Yu il-han, founder of the company Yuhan. Subsequently, he served as a professor at TUM, a distinguished professor at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Sweden and head of the Institute for Nuclear Waste Disposal at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) in Germany.

In 1987, he founded the international conference Migration and served as a member of the German federal government’s National Science and Technology Advisory Council for Energy, a member of the Nuclear Safety Commission, and a coordinator and evaluator for the European Union Nuclear Research and Development Program.

In 1973, he founded the European Association of Korean Scientists and the Association of Korean Scientists in Germany and served as its first president, and was awarded the Dongbaek Medal or South Korea’s Order of Civil Merit (1975), the Prime Minister’s Award (1986) and the Gunther-Wirth-Prize of the German Nuclear Society (1990) for pioneering new scientific fields.

As an academic bridge between Korea and Europe in the field of nuclear chemistry, he sponsored and trained numerous Korean scientists. He was named an honorary citizen of Seoul in 1995 and received the KBS Compatriot Award (Science) in 2001. He is survived by his wife and two daughters, both doctors. 장

Korean American becomes California prosecutor at age 18

Peter Park appointed Tulare County district attorney


A young man who was recently appointed as a prosecutor in the U.S. state of California after achieving success at a young age by passing the bar exam at 17 is making headlines because he is Korean. In a press release Dec. 6, the Tulare County District Attorney's Office in California announced that Peter Park, 18, who was recently appointed as a prosecutor, became the youngest person ever to pass the California State Bar Exam.

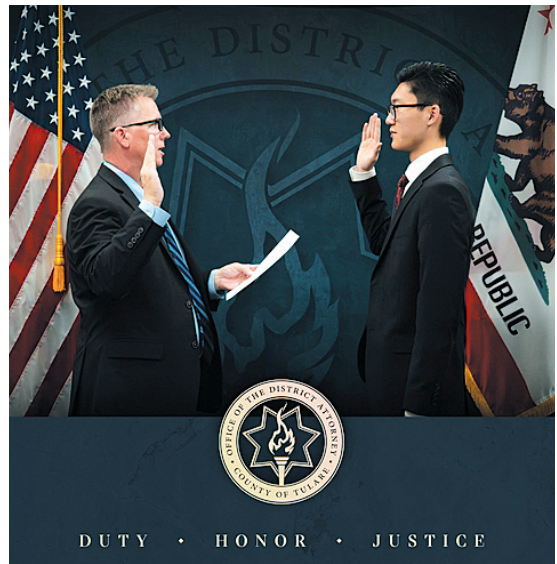
Peter Park took the bar exam for the first time last July at the age of 17 and passed on his first attempt. The previous youngest person to pass in California was 18. In 2019, when he was 13, Park enrolled at Oxford Academy, a high school in Cypress, Orange County, California, while simultaneously enrolling at Northwestern University School of Law.

California allows students to apply to law school without a high school diploma if they pass the College-Level Equivalency Examination (CLEPS). Two years later, in 2021, he passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE), which allows students to graduate early from high school and then focused on law school, graduating last year.

He began working as an assistant district attorney for the Tulare County District Attorney's Office in August and was officially hired as a prosecutor at the end of November, when he turned 18, the age of majority under state law. He was officially sworn in on Dec. 5.

"It wasn't easy, but it was worth it," said Peter Park. "It took discipline and strategy to pass the bar exam, and I did it in the end," he said. "I feel very blessed to have found this path and hope that more people will realize that there is an alternative path to becoming a lawyer.

"I aspire to be a prosecutor because I feel a moral imperative to defend freedom, equality and justice in society, and I admire the work prosecutors do to keep our communities safe and bring justice to victims." 



Peter Park (R) is sworn in as a prosecutor in the Tulare County District Attorney's Office in California. (Photo via Tulare County District Attorney's Office Facebook)

J-pop in South Korea and K-pop in Japan have exploded

20 years of fully opening Korea to Japanese music

At Hwajung Gymnasium at Korea University in Seoul on Dec. 17, a packed house sang along to the popular Japanese band Yoasobi's hit song "Idol."

"I'm happy to hold my first overseas solo concert in Korea," Yoasobi said.

K-pop girl group Twice performed a concert at the PayPay Dome in Fukuoka, Japan, on Dec. 28. The group's "surprise" announcement of plans to perform at the 70,000-capacity Nissan Stadium in July 2024 drew cheers from the crowd.

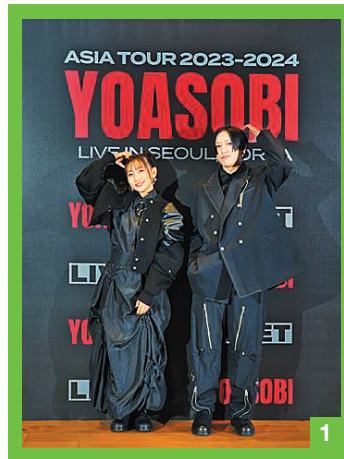
Jan. 1 marked the 20th anniversary of the complete breakthrough of Japanese pop music in Korea. Twenty years ago, there was a lot of concern in the Korean music industry that the Korean market would be overrun by the "heavyweights" of the Japanese pop culture market. However, K-pop proved to be a huge hit in the Japanese market and dispelled those worries.

In recent years, K-pop and J-pop have been growing together as J-pop has gained popularity, with the next generation of popular Japanese singers performing in Korea and releasing popular songs.

Domestic sales of Japanese music CDs allowed in 2004

On Jan. 1, 2004, South Korea allowed the domestic release of Japanese-language music CDs as part of its fourth opening of the country to Japanese popular culture. This followed the second opening in 1999, which allowed indoor Japanese popular music performances with a capacity of 2,000 seats or less, and the third opening of all Japanese popular music performances in 2000. As a result, CDs by famous Japanese musicians, such as X-Japan, Hikaru Utada and Dreams Come True, which were previously consumed behind closed doors, began to be officially sold in Korea.

At the time, some voices were worried about the growing influence of the Japanese music industry in the world's second-largest music market after the United States. However, in 2004, the winds of "hallyu" had already begun to blow in Japan, with the drama "Winter Sonata" being broadcast in Japan and the singer



BoA achieving great success. This meant there wasn't as much concern as during the first and second openings of Japanese popular culture in 1998-1999.

In fact, when the lid was lifted, the aftermath of the opening up of Japanese popular music was not significant. While Mika Nakashima sold tens of thousands of albums in Japan and reached the top of the mobile phone ringtone music charts after the opening, this was largely due to the popularity of her remake of "Snow Flower" (originally 雪の華), which was featured in the drama "Sorry, I Love You." In 2006, the popular Japanese group Arashi (嵐) performed a sold-out concert at Seoul Olympic Park, but this

was not part of a generalized interest in Japanese idols.

K-pop's popularity explodes in Japan, while Korea looks to next generation of J-pop stars

Conversely, K-pop has taken off in Japan over the past two decades. In 2002, when BOA took the top spot on Japan's Oricon Albums Chart for the first time with her first full-length album, "Listen to My Heart," it was a mainstream news story. By 2023, however, it had become a "rite of passage," with countless younger singers, such as BTS' Jungkook, Seventeen, Stray Kids and NCT reaching the top of Oricon.

K-pop hallyu in Japan is an ongoing phenomenon, starting with localized versions of BoA and TVXQ, followed by Girls' Generation and Kara, and then BTS, Twice and Seventeen. In particular, BTS became the first foreign artist to top annual sales in Japan for two consecutive years, surpassing all local artists in 2021 and 2022.

NHK's year-end special program, "Hongbaek Gathering," which features only the best singers in Japan, had performances by Seventeen, Stray Kids, girl group Le Sserafim and Twice's unit Misamo.

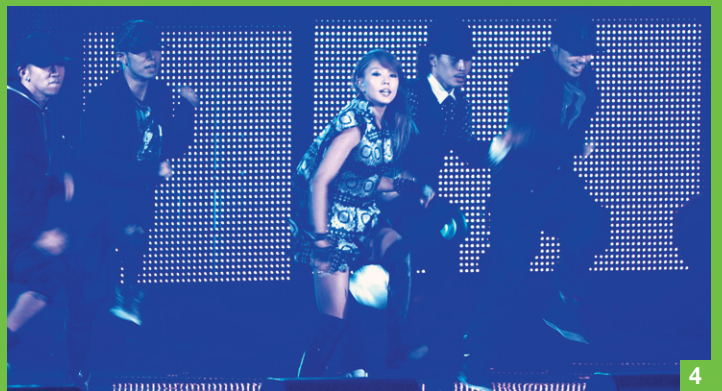
While not as hot as K-pop's Korean Wave, Japanese singers have also been making waves in Korea lately. They are groups who debuted in the 2000s and beyond, such as Yoasobi, Imase and Red



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Wimp, and are younger than famous J-pop singers, such as Ex Japan, L'Arc en Ciel and Amuro Namie, who had a cult following in the 1990s.

Yoasobi has also appeared on music programs, such as “M-Countdown,” after her OST “Idol” from the anime “My Favorite Child” became popular in Korea. Other popular K-pop stars, such as Ive, Le Sserafim and Aespa have also posted “Idol Challenge” videos.

K-pop takes new leap forward in Japan through ‘localized groups’

Many people in the music industry say the opening of Japanese music to Korean audiences at the dawn of the Korean Wave was well-timed and led to the strengthening of Korean music.

“In 2004, J-pop was on the decline in East Asia because it wasn’t as popular as it used to be, and at the same time, Korean music and dramas were starting to come into the spotlight,” said Lee Kyu-tak, a liberal arts professor at George Mason University in South Korea. “By opening up the country to Japanese music, the tendency for Korean music to mimic Japanese music disappeared, and the opening up of music led to a paradoxical situation of confirming the competitiveness of Korean music.”

K-pop is now taking another leap beyond “going to Japan” with Japanese-oriented localization groups. JYP’s NiziU and Hive’s &Team have already made their debuts, and SM is set to debut its Japan-based NCT New Team (tentative name) this year.

“K-pop’s unique content marketing strategy using global social media, such as TikTok and YouTube, has influenced its success in Japan,” a major music agency official said. “As the Japanese music market is global in scale, major agencies are making great efforts to localize for it.” 🇯🇵

Lee Tae-soo and Choi Jae-seo,
culture reporters, Yonhap News Agency

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- 1 Japanese two-member group Yoasobi poses for a photo during a press conference in Jung Ward, Seoul, on Dec. 18, 2023. (Photo courtesy of Rivet)
 - 2 BTS performs “Love Yourself-Japan Edition” at the Tokyo Dome in Japan in November 2018. (Photo courtesy of Big Hit)
 - 3 Popular Japanese idol group Arashi performs during a concert at the Fencing Stadium at Olympic Park in Seoul, South Korea, in November 2008. (Courtesy of J Storm Inc.)
 - 4 Singer BoA (C) performs at the 2009 Video Music Awards Japan, Japan’s largest music festival, at the Saitama Super Arena in Saitama, Japan, in May 2009.

Participants in Hangeul School Teacher Training ‘actively participate in promoting Korea’s development’

Invitees discuss ideas at OKA’s training forum

The 2023 Hangeul School Teacher Training Program, hosted by the Overseas Koreans Agency, concluded successfully after six days and seven nights at The K Hotel in Seocho-dong, Seoul. Starting with the opening ceremony and a keynote lecture by OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol on Jan. 8, the training consisted of four general training sessions, five breakout sessions on Korean teaching methods and educational technology, regional and general discussions, and historical and cultural experiences. On Jan. 14, the closing day, the completion ceremony and the outstanding trainee award ceremony were held.

On Jan. 10, small group discussions were held for each region on the topic of “Concrete measures to effectively communicate Korea’s development in home countries.” Participating teachers freely exchanged their opinions and strengthened their will to participate in the Promote Korea Project to foster the identity and self-esteem of the next generation of Koreans.



OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol delivers a keynote lecture to participants of the Hangeul schools’ teacher training program.

In the North America session, ideas included ▲Establishing communication channels with local education authorities through collaborations between organizations, such as the Korean Association and the Korean Language School Council; ▲Engaging the local education community, including PTAs (Parents-Teacher Associations), to offer classes on the Korean language and Korea’s development. In the Asia-Europe session, ideas such as ▲Holding seminars on Korean development for local education

officials, ▲Organizing classes for school parents, and ▲Establishing a communication channel for Korean language schools to report errors in local textbooks to the OKA were suggested.

In particular, out of 206 participants from 47 countries, 30 teachers from 16 countries expressed their willingness to actively participate in the network, and this is expected to create a favorable environment for the next generation of Koreans to feel proud of their country and successfully enter the local mainstream society.

Creating children’s book about Koreans in Sakhalin

Busan branch of International Youth Center organizes the project

The International Youth Center (President Kim In-soo), a nonprofit volunteer organization, is producing a children’s book that tells the story of Sakhalin Koreans who were forced to live in Sakhalin, Russia, during the Japanese occupation and were forgotten for a long time. The children’s book, titled “My Time Stopped in Sakhalin,” will be published by the Busan branch of the International Youth Center, which helps Koreans from Sakhalin who have permanently returned to Korea and settled in the Busan region.

Koreans who were conscripted to Sakhalin were exploited as laborers in various fields, such as mining, fishing and factories, and after liberation from Japanese rule, they had to spend a difficult time without being able to return home due to the barriers of the Cold War. The Busan branch of the International Youth Center met and

interviewed compatriots of the first and second generations of Sakhalin compatriots who returned to Korea and settled in Gijang-gun, Busan, to create the book.

“It is the pain and history of our people that cannot be seen in textbooks but must be remembered,” said an official from the International Youth Center. “We will make it easy for children to access it with stories and pictures.”

The center has recruited university student volunteers to create stories and illustrations, and plans to produce the book by the end of March and distribute it for free to children’s education and welfare facilities.



Promotional material for the Sakhalin compatriots storybook publishing project

'Searching for Koryo-saram Villages in Korea' published

Professor Im records histories of 28 locations across the country on foot

A new book has been published in which the author documents on foot the history of Korean villages scattered across the country. "Searching for Koryo-saram Villages in Korea" (Book Korea) is a booklet of travelogues written as a column in The AsiaN by Im Young-sang, a professor emeritus at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Korea, over a period of two years and four months, starting in June 2021.

The book covers 25 existing Koryo-saram villages in the Seoul metropolitan area (Seoul, Gyeonggi and Incheon) and regions (Gwangju, Gyeongsang Province and Chungcheong Province), as well as the cities of Yeongcheon in North Gyeongsang Province, Gimje in North Jeolla Province and Jecheon in North Chungcheong Province, which are pursuing Koryo-saram resettlement programs as a response to depopulation.

Professor Im, who has been studying overseas Korean communities for the past 20 years, was particularly interested in the possibility of Jecheon, a city known as the "Town of Uibeong"

(Righteous Armies), becoming the "Hometown of Koryo-saram." Jecheon took the first step in attracting Koryo-saram living in Korea last October and plans to start relocating Koryo-saram living abroad next year. A publication ceremony was held at the Jecheon City Overseas Korean Support Center on Dec. 14 last year.

"I hope that small and medium-sized cities in the region that are carrying out the pilot project of region-specific visas will refer to the example of Jecheon city and start attraction and invitation projects tailored to their local conditions, paying attention not only to the selection of foreign talent (Type 1) visas but also to Type 2 visas, which provide work visas for both compatriots and their families," Im said.



The front cover of "Searching for Koryo-saram Villages in Korea"

OKA conducts 3rd Overseas Korean Youth Motherland Training Program

264 participants from 21 countries experience winter in Gangwon Province

The Overseas Koreans Agency held the 3rd Overseas Korean Motherland Training (Winter) in Pyeongchang, Gangwon Province, from Jan. 18-24. The program was attended by 264 youths from 21 countries. They had the opportunity to cultivate their identities and develop a sense of pride in Korea by experiencing their native culture.

The Motherland Training Program is designed to provide the next generation of Koreans (ages 14-18) with the opportunity to experience the social, cultural and historical aspects of their home country and to enhance Korean identity and pride in their country through the process of understanding Korea's development. In particular, the winter training program allowed participants to experience winter sports, along with historical and cultural experiences of their motherland.

The winter training program was designed to include ▲An opening ceremony and winter sports experience at Yongpyong Resort in Pyeongchang, Korea; ▲Challenge Golden Bell Korean Language Games; and ▲Watching and cheering for the Gangwon



A total of 264 youths from 21 countries participating in the 3rd Overseas Korean Youth Motherland Training pose for a group photo after the opening ceremony at Monapark Yongpyong Resort in Pyeongchang-gun, Gangwon Province, on Jan. 19.

2024 Winter Youth Olympic Games.

"The OKA is promoting various projects to foster the identities of the next generation of overseas Koreans and their entry into mainstream society," Choi Young-han, the OKA's deputy commissioner, said in his opening remarks at the training program on Jan. 19. "I sincerely hope that overseas Korean youth will grow into shining leaders in the overseas Korean community and imagine themselves alongside their proud motherland."

Tribute song of Joseon's King Jeongjo: Yungneung and Geonneung in Hwaseong

Place to retrace history and appreciate natural beauty



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Royal tombs are great places to reflect on history and appreciate natural beauty. One of these royal tombs, home to some familiar stories, is the Yungneung Royal Tomb (Yungneung) and the Geonneung Royal Tomb (Geonneung) in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province. The intertwined stories of the Joseon Dynasty's King Yeongjo, his sons and daughters, Crown Prince Sado and Lady Hyegyeong of the Hong clan, and grandson Jeongjo have been the subject of TV dramas, movies and literature. There's a lot to love about the stories and the times surrounding them.

In the records of King Yeongjo, there is a story of a prince who was imprisoned and left to die in a rice chest in 1762. He laid his head down in front of his father, Yeongjo, who had decided to revoke his claim to the throne, and the royal grandson (later Jeongjo) bowed down behind him. Yeongjo embraced his grandson and sent him outside. The prince would eventually die eight days after being imprisoned in the rice chest at Yeongjo's behest. Many years later, in mourning for his son, Yeongjo gave him the title of Sado (思悼) Crown Prince. Jeongjo, who later ascended to the throne, felt so much longing for his father that he worked hard to build his royal mausoleum.

Colorful and beautiful Yungneung

Yungneung and Geonneung are close to each other and have the same entrance. When I arrived at the entrance to the royal mausoleum, I looked at the map, which showed Yungneung and Geonneung through a forest path, and after passing through the entrance, I came to a fork in the road. I turned to the right, toward Yungneung, where Crown Prince Sado and his wife, Lady Hyegyeong, are buried. After about 10 minutes, I could see the Hongsal Gate and the pavilion behind it.

With a local guide, we hiked up to the "neungchim" (陵寢, the tomb of a king or queen). We could see the stone horses, stone men, stone women, stone sunsets, stone tigers and stone lakes that surrounded the tomb. What stood out the most were the folding screen stones that surrounded the tomb. Lotus and peony shapes were visible, and the stones beneath them had tile-like patterns. It created a splendid and delicate atmosphere.

After Crown Prince Sado's death, his tomb was built on Mount Baebong in Dongdaemun Ward, Seoul, and was named Sueunmyo. After his son, Jeongjo, ascended to the throne, it was elevated and called Yeongwoowon, then renamed Hyunreungwon in 1789, when

it was moved to its current location. During his 11-year reign, Jeongjo performed 12 visits to the tomb. When Lady Hyegyeong died, she was also buried in Hyeonryungwon, and in 1899, the site was elevated to a ridge and became the current Yungneung.

Simple-looking Geonneung

This time, we headed to Geonneung, where Crown Prince Sado's father, Jeongjo, is buried. When I went up to the tomb with a guide, I realized that there were no folding screens, only stone railings. I got the impression that it was simpler than Yungneung because of the different time period.

Geonneung was initially built on the eastern hill near Hyeonneungwon, in accordance with the wishes of King Jeongjo, who wanted to be buried next to his father. Later, when Queen Hyoui passed away, it was intended to be combined, but it was suggested that the original location of the tomb was not favorable for feng shui, so the tomb was moved to its current location and became the combined tomb.

The original burial site of King Jeongjo can be found a short walk from the royal tomb by following a forest path with signs posted. The location was not known until 2011-2012, when a royal tomb-sized enclosure, fencing and artifacts were discovered. There is now a signboard that reads King Jeongjo's Chojangji (正祖大王 初葬地). Behind the ridge, pine trees stand neatly like folding screens.

Place for citizens to relax

There was no shortage of visitors to Yungneung and Geonneung. There were families, couples and friends. The straight and slightly curved lines of the pine trees were impressive as you traveled along the promenade. The benches were well placed, and people were sitting on them. It reminded me of a well-organized park.

As I descended the wooden stairs from Yungneung to Geonneung, I saw a spread of silver mallow. The scenery changed depending on the time of day. The pine forest looked refreshing when the sun was shining, but it felt lonely at dusk. The 40 tombs of the Joseon Dynasty in Korea, including Yungneung and Geonneung, were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2009 in recognition of their historical value.

Yongju Temple, built by King Jeongjo

About 2 kilometers from Yungneung and Geonneung is Yongju Temple. It is said to be a new temple built in 1790 by King Jeongjo in honor of Crown Prince Sado. Yongju Temple was originally founded as Galyang Temple during the Silla Dynasty but was burned down during the frequent wars in Goryeo, and Jeongjo later built a new temple on the empty site. The temple is enshrined with plaques of Crown Prince Sado, Lady Hyegyeong, and King Jeongjo and Queen Hyoui. After passing through the Hongsal gate, you will see the three gates. It is said to be a palace style not found in other temples.

After passing through the three gates, you will see Cheonboru, which is characterized by high stone pillars beneath wooden pillars. This is also similar to palace architecture. At Beomjonggak, you can see the national treasure, Yongju Temple, through a gap in the doorway. The information board says that it was built in the early Goryeo period in the Silla style. 장



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- 1 A view of the Yungneung (R) and Geonneung (L) tombs in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province, Korea
- 2 Yungneung, where Crown Prince Sado and his wife, Lady Hyegyeong, are buried together
- 3 An aerial view of Geonneung, where King Jeongjo is buried
- 4 The main hall at Yongju Temple, located 2 kilometers from Yungneung and Geonneung

Invitational training held for 206 Korean language school teachers from 47 countries

The Overseas Koreans Agency invited Korean language school teachers who are taking the lead in cultivating the identities of next-generation overseas Koreans to train and strengthen their capabilities from Jan. 8 to 14. A total of 206 teachers from 47 countries participated in the training at The K Hotel Seoul in Seocho Ward.

At the training, the teachers learned about various Korean language teaching methods and how to utilize educational technology, which is in high demand in the field, and shared cases of excellent Korean language school operations. By participating in programs to experience Korea's history and culture, they also bolstered their network among themselves.

"Teachers of overseas Korean language schools are modern-day independence fighters who strive to cultivate the identities of the next generation of overseas Koreans in difficult environments and are valuable partners in implementing the government's overseas Korean policy," OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol said at the opening ceremony on the first day.

"We have rationalized Korean language school operating costs and teacher service fees, and the budget for Korean language



Lee Key-cheol, the commissioner of the OKA, gives a speech at the opening ceremony of the training program at The K Hotel Seoul in Seocho Ward on Jan. 8.

schools has been significantly increased," he said. "Cultivating the identities of the next generation of Koreans is one of the important policy goals of the OKA. We will strive to ensure that this training will help improve the professionalism and boost the morale of Korean language school teachers, who are valuable partners of the OKA."

In his congratulatory address, Lee Bae-yong, chairman of the National Education Commission, said: "It is thanks to the Korean school teachers

who have dedicated themselves to teaching Korean language, our history and culture that overseas Koreans have maintained their identities around the world and raised the value of Korea. If there is any area where we can provide support in the mid to long term, we will be interested in collaborating."

Lim Jong-seong, senior vice chairman of the World Korean Democratic Conference of the Democratic Party of Korea, added, "As the role of Korean language school teachers is very significant in cultivating the identities and strengthening the capabilities of the next generation of overseas Koreans, we will ensure that there is more interest and support from the National Assembly."

2024 World Korean Business Convention to be held in Jeonju

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Key-cheol) held the 45th Operational Committee of the World Korean Business Convention at Booyeong Songdo Tower in Yeonsu Ward, Incheon, on Dec. 7 and selected Jeonju city of North Jeolla Province, the site for the 22nd World Korean Business Convention in 2024.

The committee, held both online and offline, reviewed the hosting plan, feasibility and on-site inspection of the three candidates -- Jeonju, Incheon and Jeju -- and made the decision through a vote.

The World Korean Business Convention, held every year since 2002 to help domestic small and midsized businesses advance



OKA Commissioner Lee Key-cheol (R) poses for a photo with Kim Woo-jae, chairman of the Mugunghwa Distribution Group, after appointing him chairman of the 22nd World Korean Business Convention in the conference room of OKA in Songdo, Incheon, on Jan. 16.

overseas, gathers Korean businesspeople from overseas and from Korea to create business opportunities and foster a global network.

The committee selected Kim Woo-jae, chairman of Indonesia's Mugunghwa Distribution Group, as the president of the 2024 convention. Kim, who also served as the president of the World Federation of Overseas Korean Traders Association, founded a business in Indonesia in 1978 and grew Mugunghwa Distribution into a group encompassing food, trade, tourism and construction.

Discussions regarding the overall planning and operation of the 2024 convention will be decided at the 46th Operational Committee to be held in China in the first half of this year.

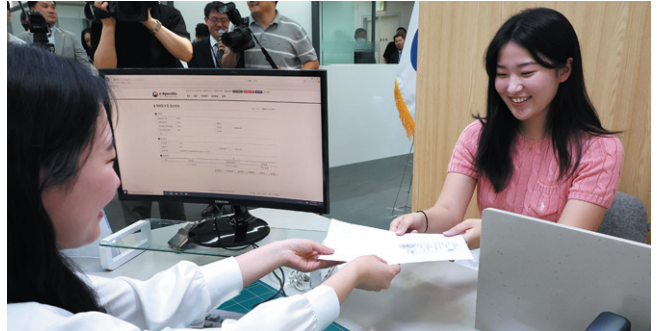
Civil services significantly improved for overseas Koreans

The Overseas Koreans Agency has begun to improve civil services for overseas Koreans. First, in cooperation with the Road Traffic Authority, the OKA simplified the driver's license renewal and reissue service process for overseas Koreans applying to embassies abroad and lowered the fees.

The time required for work carried out through overseas embassies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Road Traffic Authority (Western Driver's License Test Center) has been reduced from a period of four to eight weeks to a period of two to four weeks. This is because the procedures were simplified as the Road Traffic Authority dispatched employees to the OKA. The driver's license issuance fee was also reduced from \$14 to \$10.

In consultation with the National Court Administration, the fee for family relationship certificates issued by diplomatic missions abroad was lowered from \$1.50 to \$1.00. The OKA began applying the improved service on Jan. 1, 2024.

The OKA, which was launched on June 5 last year, now operates the Overseas Korean Service Support Center in Gwanghwamun, Seoul, which integrates and handles various civil complaints to improve civil service. The center provides "one-stop" administrative



An official (L) demonstrates document issuance at the OKA Support Center, which opened at the Twin Tree Tower in Jongno Ward, Seoul, on June 5, 2023.

services, such as nationality, military service, apostille (certificate issuance), overseas migration and family relationship verification. Civil service functions related to taxation, health insurance, national pension, driver's license, veterans affairs and employment have been added as well.

"We will continue to work closely with government ministries and public institutions to improve various services for overseas Koreans," an OKA official said.

Overseas Koreans Agency's movie recommendation



'Past Lives'

- Director Celine Song
- Produced by David Hinojosa, Christine Vachon, Pamela Koffler

This movie is an American romantic drama film released in 2023. The movie is the directorial debut of Korean Canadian Celine Song (36), who also wrote the screenplay. It was released for the first time worldwide at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival, and CJ ENM is scheduled to release it in Korea in the first half of this year.

During childhood, Nayoung and Haeseong are best friends. However, the two break up when Nayoung's family immigrates. After 20 years, the two people meet again in New York as Nora and Hae-seong and spend two fateful days together.

In this film, which is based on director Song's autobiographical



experiences, the main character is played by Korean American actress Greta Riga, and her counterpart is played by Korean actor Yoo Tae-oh. Most of the dialogues are delivered in Korean.

After its first screening at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2023 and receiving favorable reviews, the film was invited to the competitive section of the Berlin International Film Festival and won the Best Picture Award at the Gotham Awards, an American independent film awards ceremony, and the Best Picture Award from the National Society of Film Critics (NSFC). Director Song was nominated for the New Director Award awarded by the Directors Guild of America (DGA) on Jan. 10 of this year. The DGA nominated Song as a candidate for the Best Director Award in the First-Time Theatrical Feature Film category at the 76th Awards Ceremony.

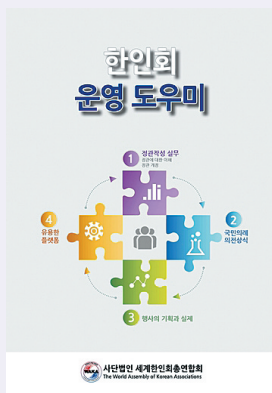


Association for Studies of Koreans Abroad holds academic seminar on human rights of returnees to Korea

The Association for the Studies of Koreans Abroad (President Im Young-un) held an academic seminar on the “Legal Status and Human Rights of Returned Koreans in Korea” at Chonnam National University School of Law on Jan. 26. The seminar, which was held in collaboration with the Center for Public Interest and Human Rights Law at Chonnam National University School of Law, first featured a presentation by Im Young-sang, a professor emeritus of the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, on the topic of “Returned Koryo Compatriots and Residency Rights.” Next, Jang Kyung-ryul, a member of the editorial board of the China Yanbian Daily, discussed the “Human Rights of Overseas Koreans in China and their Human Rights in Korea.” Finally, Bae Kwang-woong, a professor at the Osaka University of Education in Japan, presented on the “Legal Status and Human Rights of Korean Americans in Japan.”

World Council of Overseas Korean Leaders hosts charity event in Busan

The World Council of Overseas Korean Leaders (Chairman Kim Myung-chan) organized a rice and briquette distribution event in Yeonsan 3-dong, Yeonje Ward, Busan, to celebrate the end of the year for local senior citizens living alone and teenage minors who are the main income earners of their households. The event was attended by World Council executive members and domestic members participating from the United States, Vietnam, Australia and other countries. The council, which annually organizes events to honor soldiers in front-line units in their home countries, also held a similar event in Mokpo.



WAKA publishes ‘Korean Association Management Guide’

The World Assembly of Korean Associations (WAKA) recently published a “Korean Association Management Guide” to help with the running of Korean organizations around the world. The booklet discusses all the matters of running a Korean association, including information on how to write articles of incorporation for Korean associations, including examples, the carrying out of protocols, event planning and promotion, management of public chat rooms and videoconferencing options. The booklet is being distributed to Korean associations around the world and is also available as an e-book on the WAKA website (www.wakanews.org). Earlier last year, the organization also published the “Guidebook for Public Diplomacy Activities of Korean Associations” to help Korean associations conduct public diplomacy activities in their home countries. Established in 2021, the organization works to improve the status of Koreans around the world and contribute to the development of a cohesive Korean community by expanding cooperation activities with the motherland.

Korean association of New York celebrates 121st anniversary of Korean American Day

The Korean Society of New York held a celebration for the 121st Korean American Day at the Ziegfeld Ballroom in Manhattan on Jan. 13. More than 300 politicians and community leaders, including New York City Mayor Eric Adams, U.S. Rep. Andy Kim and U.S. Rep. Grace Meng, attended the event to reflect on the history and significance of Korean immigration. “With the slowdown in immigration, the Korean American community will continue to grow in different environments and conditions than before,” said Kim Kwang-seok, president of the Korean Association of New York. “We will continue to work on various systems to ensure that the next generation can participate in the community without any burden.”



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

The importance of overseas Korean schools

There is an African proverb that says, "It takes a village to raise a child." This means that in order to raise a child well, not just one family but the entire village must work together. A total of 1,462 weekend Korean schools (Hangeul schools) in 111 countries around the world are becoming villages for the next generation of overseas Koreans.

The goal of the Korean schools is not just teaching Korean language. It is also to foster the holistic growth of the next generation of overseas Koreans, establish their Korean identities and build Korean national pride in forming communities with their peer groups.

Dasom Korean School, where I am the principal, celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. As I looked back on the history of the school, I thought about what kind of Korean school would be essential for Korean students living in the Fourth Industrial Revolution era of the 21st century. Dasom Korean School has continued to grow and develop in many ways, and there have been significant changes in the composition of students and the educational environment.

As the composition of students has become more diverse, there have been many changes in educational goals, content and teaching methods. Having only taught Korean language, we studied how to teach Korean history and culture to suit the perspectives of overseas Korean students, and we are now even providing education to help them establish their identities as Korean Americans.

According to the OKA's research, in 2023, 120 years after the official immigration of Koreans to the U.S. began in 1903, there are now about 2.61 million Koreans residing in the U.S. This is the largest number among other countries around the world. Korean culture, represented by K, from Hangeul to K-pop to food, such as Korean chicken and kimchi, has now become an essential part of American society. Koreans are now living with pride and contributing to the diversity of America. Memorial days officially designated in the U.S., such as Korean American Day, Hangeul Day, Hanbok Day, Kimchi Day, Dosan Ahn Chang-ho Day and Jikji Day, are also recognized for their value.



Choi Mi-young,
principal of Dasom Korean School

Despite this, the students' 13-year regular school curriculum barely includes Korean history and culture or the history of Koreans in the Americas. In the elementary, middle and high school curricula of California, where about one-third of the total Korean American population lives, there were two types of content about Korea: the Korean War and the Japanese colonial period.

Meanwhile, in 2016, thanks to the efforts of Korean educators and parents, most of Korean history and culture were included in the general social studies curriculum and world history textbooks. Starting in 2020, Korean American history

was added to the ethnic studies curriculum and was designated as a required subject for regular high school graduation.

In this process, I strongly felt that education on Korean history and culture and the history of Koreans in the Americas tailored to the needs of Korean students should be taught not only in regular schools but also in Korean schools. This is because if students learn this in advance at weekend Korean schools, they can confidently share what they have learned with their peers from other ethnic groups at regular schools and expand their leadership skills.

The stories of Korea, which achieved remarkable economic growth and democracy in just half a century and emerged as a cultural powerhouse, and the stories of Koreans in America who overcame hardships as a minority and contributed to the U.S. and Korea, must be taught by Korean schools to be remembered for the future.

Only when the next generation of Korean students knows their roots well can they have a sense of history, pride as Koreans and a greater voice in public diplomacy. Based on these capabilities, we will contribute to the peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula, and ultimately, overseas Koreans will become essential partners that grow together with Korea. Beyond teaching the Korean language, Korean school is no longer an option but a necessity to establish a proper Korean identity overseas. ^장

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

Overseas Koreans Agency hosts Asia Regional Korean Compatriots Meeting

Meeting Overview

Date: Jan. 22 - Jan. 26, 2024 (5 days and 4 nights)

Location: Philippines (Manila), Thailand (Bangkok)

Purpose: To listen to the current issues of the local diaspora community and lay the foundation for policy formulation in Asia, and derive recommendations for improving overseas Korean community support programs

Main topics:

- Lecture on ‘Cultivating and Enhancing the Identity of the Next Generation’ for teachers of overseas Korean language schools
- Introduced the purpose of the Overseas Koreans Agency and its major policies and support programs, etc.
- Through the meeting, identify current issues and listen to suggestions from the Korean diaspora community
- Visits to local diaspora organizations and interviews with officials to identify improvements for overseas Korean community support projects

Full Schedule

Date	Time	Schedule
Jan. 23 (Tue)	Morning	Wreath-laying ceremony at the Korean War Memorial
		Tour of Manila Koreatown
	Afternoon	Filipino compatriot luncheon meeting
		Visit to Manila Korean International School (Philippine Hangeul School)
Jan. 24 (Wed)		Overseas Korean language school teacher meeting and lecture
Jan. 24 (Wed)		Visit to the Korea-Philippines Friendship Memorial
Jan. 25 (Thu)	Morning	Lecture for overseas Korean language school teachers
		Luncheon meeting with overseas Korean language school teachers
	Afternoon / Evening	Visit to Korean Association in Thailand
		Wreath-laying ceremony at Monument to Veterans of Korean War in Thailand
		Thai compatriot dinner meeting

OKA Commissioner’s Activities

Jan. 8: Attended the opening ceremony of the Korean language school teacher invitational training

Jan. 16: Preparatory visit to the 2024 World Korean Business Convention venue

Jan. 22-26: Participated in compatriot meetings in Asia (Philippines, Thailand)



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