



The Same Mountain, the Same 'Sorrow'

During the Korean War in 1950, Daejeon Prison inmates and members of the Bodo League were massacred by the police and military police in Gollyeonggol near Daejeon.

The cover image shows the massacre scene photographed by British journalist Alan Winnington superimposed on the present-day scene.



Overview of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Contents

Commission CI



A precise and discerning attitude in analyzing cases An image of harmony like the greenery that covers this world The impartial authority of a sound commission

The color green symbolizes hope and the color blue emphasizes the green

About the Commission

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of the Republic of Korea was relaunched on December 10 of 2020 following the revision of the Framework Act on Settling the Past Affairs for Truth and Reconciliation. The amendment was made as a response to the urgent calls of the survivors and victims' families who have sought truth and justice for past state violence.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in an independent investigative body that seeks to uncover the truth about anti-Japanese independence movements, history of the Korean diaspora overseas, civilians killed during the Korean War, various human rights violations during the authoritarian rule, and casualties by hostile forces.

Through this, we strive to move towards a better future.

Our commission will do our best in leading the way to uncovering the truth.



Legal Basis : Framework Act on Settling the Past Affairs for Truth and Reconciliation (amended on June 9, 2020)



Investigation Period : 3 years from the date of the first decision to investigate, can be extended up to one year

08



10



11



04

The 2nd Truth and Reconciliation Commission has initiated investigation for over 3,000 cases cumulatively

06

Application Status and Processing Procedure

08

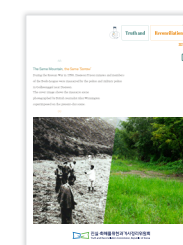
[Tour] Remains excavation site of the 'Sannae Incident' in Gollyeonggol, Dong-gu, Daejeon

12

The Investigation Report for the First Half of 2021 Published

13

Related News



'Daejeon Gollyeonggol remains excavation site' cover story



The 2nd Truth and Reconciliation Commission has initiated investigation for over 3,000 cases cumulatively

Cases of final judgment including the suspected fabrication of abducted fishermen as North Korean spies and Chang Chun-ha's suspicious death

To date, the 2nd Truth and Reconciliation Commission has initiated over 3,000 investigations cumulatively. Having made its first decision to commence investigation back on May 27, the Commission has made six separate decisions to initiate investigations as of August 12. A total of 3,092 cumulative investigations have been initiated. The category with the highest number of cases is mass atrocities of civilians before and after the Korean War, including incidents related to hostile forces, accounting for over 2,900.

At the 11th Commission Meeting on July 1, a decision was made to initiate investigations into cases of final judgment for the first time since the inauguration of the 2nd Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

As per the Commission resolution, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission may also investigate cases of final judgment if it is deemed necessary to find out the truth on the grounds for reexamination under the Civil Procedure Act and the Criminal Procedure Act (see Article 2 ②, Framework Act on Settling Past Affairs for Truth and Reconciliation). So far, the Commission has decided to start investigations into 19 cases of final judgment, including ▲ suspected fabrication of fishers abducted from Goseong to North Korea as North Korean spies, ▲ suspected fabrication of the violation of the National Security Act by the Hanul Group, and ▲ suspected fabrication of the National Democratic Education Struggle Committee Incident.

Suspected fabrication of fishers abducted from Goseong to North Korea as North Korean spies was a case in which fishers were abducted by a North Korean patrol boat while catching pollock in the sea near Goseong-gun, Gangwon in 1968, and returned to South Korea about seven months later, but were convicted on charges of violating the espionage and fishery laws.

Suspected fabrication of the violation of the National Security Act by the Hanul Group is a public security case that raised suspicions that the public security authorities fabricated the Hanul Group, a Christian faith group in Daejeon, formed around 1979, as an anti-state organization, the Hanulhoe. Those subject to the investigation claim that unfair judgments had been made based on false confessions resulting from illegal arrest and torture and brutal acts at the time.

National-level investigation into the suspicious death of Chang Chun-ha begins for the 4th time

Also, the investigation into the suspicious death of Chang Chun-ha has been re-initiated, as several national-level investigations in the past failed to reveal the truth. On July 22, the 13th Commission Meeting decided to start an investigation into the questionable death of Chang Chun-ha. This is the fourth investigation to be conducted at the national level.

The suspicious death of Chang Chun-ha is a case in which Chang Chun-ha, a key player in Korea's democratization movement who advocated for the revision of the Yushin Constitution, was announced as having died of a fall while climbing the Yaksabong Peak near Pocheon-si, Gyeonggi-do, in 1975. But contrary to the public announcement, the suspicion of murder by public authorities has been raised constantly.

The 1st Presidential Truth Commission on Suspicious Deaths (September 16, 2002) and the 2nd Presidential Truth Commission on Suspicious Deaths (June 28, 2004), which investigated the suspicious death of Chang Chun-ha, decided the 'implausibility to ascertain the truth' for the case.

The 1st Truth and Reconciliation Commission (April 13, 2010) also decided to 'suspend the investigation' due to the refusal to attend by key reference persons and the National Intelligence Service's refusal to submit data.

Then, in 2013, through remains analysis, it was announced that the skull depression was not a fracture caused by a fall but the damage caused by an external assault, which would have caused Chang's instant death shortly before the fall.

With the increasing public interest, investigations are also underway on serial murder cases and human rights violation cases, including ▲ numerous mass atrocities of civilians before and after the Korean War, such as the massacre of the National Guidance League (Bodo Yeonmaeng), ▲ human rights violations in group accommodation facilities such as the Brothers Welfare Center and Seongam Academy, and ▲ the serial killings by Lee Choon-jae.

As of July 31, a total of 8,472 applications for truth and reconciliation investigation have been received. Applications are open until December 9, 2022. 

Application Status and Processing Procedure

Application status (as of July 31, 2021)

Category	Cases	Applicants
Total	8,472	10,341
A. Anti-Japanese independence movement	58	64
B. History of Overseas Koreans	1	1
C. Mass atrocities of civilians	5,831	6,383
D. Human rights violations and alleged manipulation of charges	444	1,672
E. Incidents involving hostile forces	1,054	1,103
F. Reopening of judgement procedures	78	102
G. Miscellaneous	1,006	1,016

※ Upon submission, applications are processed to categorize and separate individual cases from group cases (cases involving the selection of representatives). These figures represent individual cases.

Application Status and Processing Procedure

Process after submission of the application



“If I could, I would have chosen to go hungry, rather than leaving my father buried in the ground for 71 years.”

[Tour] Remains excavation site of the ‘Sannae Incident’ in Gollyeonggol, Dong-gu, Daejeon



골령굴 '대전산내사건' 희생자 유해발굴 현장



Jeon Mi-kyung, President of the Association of Families of Daejeon Sannae Incident Victims

Many things fade away with time. However, some things never fade away. The same is true for Jeon Mi-kyung, who lost her father 71 years ago in the ‘Daejeon Sannae Incident’. Jeon currently serves as President of the Association of Families of Daejeon Sannae Incident Victims.

“When I see those wretched remains, I feel the pain that melts my heart. I am so ashamed that I lived on while my father laid low in that pit,” (said Jeon.)

At 10:00 am on August 2, we arrived at Gollyeonggol (near 13 Nangwol-dong) in Dong-gu, Daejeon. During the Korean War, Daejeon Prison inmates and members of the Bodo League were massacred by the police and military police here. In 2010, the 1st Truth and Reconciliation Commission estimated that the incident left at least 1,800 killed, 267 of whom have been identified.

The first remains excavation work in 2021, which started in June, is in full swing here. The 40-meter-long pit was full of the remains. There were so many of them, to the extent that we lost our sense of reality. It is estimated that there are at least eight burial sites in Gollyeonggol. If all of them were to be joined together, the total length of the pits would reach a whole kilometer, hence the befitting title ‘the longest tomb in the world.’ At Gollyeonggol, a total of 300 remains have been excavated until last year.

“This excavation of remains carries two important achievements. Firstly, it marks the first nations-level full-scale excavation of remains at the site of mass atrocities. Secondly, it has uncovered the reality of the long pit that matches many existing testimonies and photos,” remarked Lim Jae-geun, Executive Committee Chair of the Daejeon Sannae Gollyeonggol Task Force.

In 1950 the massacre scene photographed by British journalist Alan Winnington (left) and the present-day scene of the same site



As we continued surveying the scene, it suddenly started to rain. Excavation crew members and volunteers were becoming even busier.

They covered the site with a giant tarp and used shovels to make drainage ditches. Drenched instantly, the excavation crew members had to use a water pump to drain the water. The rain paused just around lunchtime.

OhmyNews reporter Shim Gyu-sang guided us to the temporary office of the Association of Families of Daejeon Sannae Incident Victims near the remains excavation site. Members of the bereaved families prepared a hearty lunch with their home-grown vegetables. The bereaved family members, including President Jeon, commute here every day to guard the site of the excavation of remains.

“It is unfilial of us that we could not hold a proper funeral for our fathers, who perished in injustice. Even if I had to go hungry and become homeless, I would not have left my father in the ground for 71 years. Knowing that my father’s remains are finally seeing the light of the day after 71 years, I couldn’t just sit at home,” lamented Jeon Mi-kyung.

After sharing a grateful meal, we returned to the excavation site. The excavation crew members and volunteers were having a late lunch. Over a dozen excavation crew members have been aided by 30 person-days worth of volunteers since last June. Volunteer Kim Chang-seok, whom we met that day, was on leave from his job and sweating profusely at the excavation site.



Members of the bereaved families, including President Jeon, visit the excavation site daily to observe the work. © Lim Jae-geun



An excavation crew member digging up a drainage ditch in the sudden torrential rain



Excavation crew members remove the tarp and prepare to resume the work after the rain

“I didn’t know much about Gollyeonggol, but it hurt my heart to find out more about it through a TV documentary. I told myself, ‘There has been such a painful history.’ So I decided to come and volunteer,” said Kim Chang-seok.

The excavation of remains at Gollyeonggol will continue until next year. After that, there is a plan to build a nationwide memorial facility for civilian victims before and after the Korean War. By 2024, about 40 billion won(KRW) will be spent to build a memorial hall, a history park, and exhibition and education halls.

Many things fade away with time. However, some memories should never fade away. Park Seon-joo, an emeritus professor at Chungbuk National University, who is in charge of the research on the excavation of the remains, talks about the history that we must remember and overcome.

“If you ask, ‘Why are you excavating the remains?’, we answer, ‘We do it to clear up the past. If we don’t clear the past, we can’t move forward into the future. Our work is meaningful for bringing a respectful closure for those who died seven decades ago, as well as for ushering the bereaved families back into our society after seven decades of social marginalization.’”

Written by Choi kyu-Hwa / Photo by Kim Il-Woo



Volunteers sweating as they remove soil from the excavation site © Lim Jae-geun



After the excavation of the remains, a national memorial facility for civilian victims of the Korean War will be built in Gollyeonggol © Lim Jae-geun



A ‘memory tree’ planted by the youth volunteers, symbolizing their pledge not to forget the past

"The Investigation Report for the First Half of 2021" Published

The first investigation report since the inauguration of the 2nd Truth and Reconciliation Commission



On August 12, the 2nd Truth and Reconciliation Commission published the Investigation Report for the First Half of 2021.

As the first investigation report since the inauguration of the 2nd Truth and Reconciliation Commission, it summarizes the activities of the 2nd Truth and Reconciliation Commission, from the date of its inauguration on December 10, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

The 130-page-long Investigation Report for the First Half of 2021 comprises: ▲ ‘Chapter 1. Establishment and Composition of the 2nd Commission’ introducing the general overview of the Commission ▲ ‘Chapter 2. Commission Opera-

tion Status’ summarizing the current status of commission meetings and the results of deliberations and resolutions ▲ ‘Chapter 3. Status of Receipt and Processing of Applications for Truth and Reconciliation’ detailing the application filing status ▲ ‘Chapter 4. Cases for which Initiation of Investigation has been Decided’ outlining the grounds for initiation of investigation for major cases ▲ ‘Chapter 5. External Cooperation, Public Relations and Education’ enumerating various activities carried out by the Commission to support its investigation efforts, and ▲ ‘Chapter 6. Evaluation and Prospects’.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission investigation reports are prepared for reporting to the President and the National Assembly on the activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission per Article 32 (1) of the Framework Act Settling Past Affairs for Truth and Reconciliation.

The reports are also distributed to relevant government bodies, local governments, relevant agencies, colleges and research institutes, associations of bereaved families, and civil society organizations to inform the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the progress of its investigations.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission publishes two investigation reports yearly during its active period and a comprehensive report within six months after the end of its activity.

The future investigation reports will include the decision letter of the major cases in which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has decided to find out the truth and the recommendations and processing status of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Investigation Report for the First Half of 2021 can be downloaded as a PDF file from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission website (Commission Data ► 2nd Commission ► Investigation Reports). [Download](#)



National Intelligence Service apologizes for human rights violations by KCIA and NIS



National level investigation underway for Yeo-Sun Incident, March 15 Uprising



Prime Minister Kim Boo-kyum apologizes at the 71st anniversary of the No Gun Ri Massacre



The first public-private joint memorial service for the Iyapo US Bombing Incident victims

On July 7, the National Intelligence Service publicly apologized to the victims and their families of human rights violations during the investigation by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency and the Agency for National Security Planning from the 1960s to the 1980s. The apology concerns 27 cases for which the 1st Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommended a state apology, including the People’s Revolutionary Party Incident and the South Korea Liberation Strategy Party Incident. In a letter in the name of Director Park Jie-won, the National Intelligence Service pledged, “We will do our best to completely clear the mistakes of the past and become an intelligence agency that is loyal and devoted only to the country and its people.”

The promulgation of the ‘Yeo-Sun Incident Act’ and the ‘March 15 Uprising Act’, which were approved by the National Assembly on June 29, was decided at the State Council meeting on July 13. This marks the start of national-level investigations and restoration of honor for the victims of the Yeo-Sun Incident and the March 15 Uprising after 73 years and 61 years, respectively. The Yeo-Sun Incident Act mandates the establishment of the Yeo-Sun Incident Commission under the Prime Minister’s Office to investigate the truth of the incident and restore the victims’ honor. The March 15 Uprising Act sanctions the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate the facts of the March 15 Uprising. Both laws will come into effect in January 2022.

On July 28, a joint memorial service for the victims of the 71st anniversary of the No Gun Ri Massacre was held at Nogunri Peace Memorial Park in Yeongdong-gun, Chungcheongbuk-do. “As Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, I apologize to the victims and their bereaved families that for a very long time this country has failed to properly protect our people during the war and uncover the truth of the falsely accused victims,” Prime Minister Kim Boo-kyum said in a video message on the same day. “We will do our best to restore the honor of the victims and alleviate the pain of the bereaved families,” he added.

The 71st anniversary memorial service for civilian victims of the Iyapo US Bombing Incident was held on August 3 at Iyapo Peace Memorial Park in Ando, Yeosu-si, Jeollanam-do. The first memorial service was held four years ago; this year’s service was the first public-private joint event to be held. The commemorative sculpture ‘Sky Flower’ created by installation artist Choi Byung-soo was also unveiled for the first time on the same day. Previously, the 1st Truth and Reconciliation Commission uncovered that civilians aboard a refugee ship in the Ando Sea were killed by the US bombing on August 3, 1950.



Submission Guide

**Submission
period _**

Dec. 10, 2020. ~ Dec. 9, 2022.
(excluding public holidays)

**Submission
method _**

Mail/visit
Truth and Reconciliation Commission,
Republic of Korea Local governments
Diplomatic Missions abroad

**Submission
documents _**

1 copy of the application for the investigation
Agreement of Usage of Personal Information
1 Copy of the applicant's ID
Other supplementary that can be used as a
reference for the investigation, etc.

* All necessary forms can be downloaded from the Commission
website (www.jinsil.go.kr) or local government's websites.

Inquiries _

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Scan the QR code to see
related information

