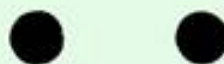


**FACT-FINDING WORK AND
COMPENSATION OF
“COMFORT GIRLS” AND
FORCED LABORERS**



**THE FACT-FINDING TEAM ON THE TRUTH
ABOUT FORCED KOREAN LABORERS**

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Team on the Truth about Forced
Korean Laborers

Address : 2-14-15, Fujimi-cho, Chiyoda-ward,
Tokyo, Japan

Telephone : 03 (3262) 7111

Drafting of Korean Laborers (Forced Labor)

The Fact-Finding Team on the Truth about Forced Korean Laborers

The Fact-Finding Team on the Truth about Forced Korean Laborers, which was formed in 1972 jointly by Korean residents in Japan and Japanese lawyers, scholars and intellectuals, has since been conducting research work to disclose the truth about the drafting of Koreans for forced labor by collecting data in Japan and sending members to the United States to obtain related materials there, and also by visiting places where they were made to work and interviewing witnesses. Here is a testimony by a forced Korean laborer.

So Jong U, who is 63 years old now, was told to "go to Japan to work there" by two Japanese and a Korean interpreter who came to him suddenly while he was working on the farm in his home village in South Kyongsang Province on April 21, 1943, when he was 14 years old. When he refused, they persuaded his family to let him go to Japan. Then, he was forcibly boarded on a truck and was taken to a coal mine of Mitsubishi Coal Mining Co., Ltd, on a small island, called "Gunkan (Warship) Island", in Nagasaki Prefecture. There were about 1,000 Koreans working there. Without sufficient food given them, they were forced to dig coal in the pit where temperature rose to 40C°. His health deteriorated because of harsh working conditions and poor food, but when he stopped working in the pit, a Japanese overseer told him to continue to work and beat him all over his body with an iron stick. In those days, So thought everyday he might die at any moment.

After working there for about three months, he was transferred to the Nagasaki Shipyard of Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Co., Ltd., and was made to do welding work, living in a prison-like dormitory which was surrounded by high fences. He was atom-bombed in Nagasaki on Aug. 9 while he was working. At that time, he was seriously injured as a piece of steel plate fell on his feet, and became a crippled person.

When the war ended soon, no Korean laborers at the shipyard were given labor certificate nor were they paid their wages in arrears of payment. In order to destroy evidence showing their work there, the company destroyed the lists of Korean workers who had been working there. Therefore, without a means of identification, they found it very difficult to obtain atom-bombed person's cards which were necessary to get medical treatment. At present, he

cannot work well because of the delayed effect of radiation and his crippled feet, so that he is meeting with great living difficulties.

1. Drafting of Koreans for Forced Labor

The Japanese government proclaimed the national general mobilization law in order to carry on the aggressive war, and under the labor mobilization plan and the national mobilization plan, which were based on this law, Koreans were mobilized in Korea and sent to Japan, and then under the national requisition ordinance, Koreans in Japan were also mobilized as forced laborers, and also as soldiers, civilians in the military service, female volunteers and "comfort" girls. The mobilization of all these Koreans is generally called the forcible drafting of Koreans.

No. of Drafted Persons, Their Destinations

In terms of administrative procedures, the forcible drafting of Koreans was classified into the following three categories, namely "recruitment" (March 1939 - January 1942), "government sponsored recruitment" (February 1942 - August 1944) and "manpower requisition" (February 1944 - August 1945).

According to explanations made by the Government-General of Korea at the 85th and 86th National Diet, "Monthly Special Police Reports" by the Police Bureau of the Ministry of Justice of the Japanese Government and other materials, about 1.5 million Koreans were taken to Japan, 4.5 million were forcibly recruited in Korea and worked there, and 330,000 were sent to Southeast Asian countries, and some numbers of them were sent to Taiwan, Sakhalin, and the Northeast of China.

Places of Forced Labor

Our group sorted out the 1,141 places of forced labour in Japan on the basis of our investigation.

Forced labor was employed in many parts of Japan. However, our research work was done mainly by private persons (except for a couple of local autonomies). About 10% of the total number of forced labor sites have been verified so far.

Let's examine it in terms of the categories of forcible drafting of Koreans - 1) Koreans who were mobilized for labour (forced labourers and female volunteer corps) and 2) Koreans who

were mobilized for military service (comfort girls, soldiers and civilians in the military service).

2. Forced Labor of Forcibly Recruited Koreans

Forced Korean workers were made to work in mines, in munition factories, on construction sites, on construction sites of military bases, for the construction of underground factories, etc. About 60 percent of those who were drafted and sent to work in Japan were forced to work in mines, and this was decided even when the formulation of the national mobilization law was planned (in fiscal 1939).

A classified report of the Welfare Ministry (dated Sept. 26, 1941) states that "up to 80-90 percent of the pit workers are Peninsular people (read "Koreans"). As this shows, Koreans were forced to do the hardest pit work in mines. In other workplaces, Koreans were made to work in the most dangerous places, so that the number of Korean victims was comparatively larger.

Management of Korean Laborers

Management of Korean laborers was done in close cooperation with the police authorities, as is clear from a "petition for posting policemen in connection with mass employment of Peninsular people (Koreans)" (a material submitted to a conference of the managers of mines of Nippon Mining Co., Ltd., in 1941). And as the number of Korean laborers increased, one policeman was posted per 550 Korean laborers (Cabinet approval, dated Sept. 26, 1941). This shows how the state authorities and enterprises cooperated closely to prevent the escape and resistance of Korean laborers.

Working Hours, Contract Term

Korean laborers were forced to work 10-12 hours a day. The contract term was 2-3 years, but the contracts were forcibly renewed when the term expired.

Wages

They were discriminated against in wages. For instance, according to a "report on the working conditions of Peninsular workers" released in 1943 by the Labor Science Research

Institute, the monthly wages of 75 percent of Korean workers were less than 50 against 18% for Japanese workers.

Japan Iron and Steel Works, (presently Nippon Steel Corporation), a leading steel company of the world, employed more than 10,000 forced Korean workers. According to a history of the company, the average monthly income of Japanese workers was Y144, while that of Korean workers was Y80. Travelling expenses to Japan, meal expenses, work shoes expenses, etc. were deducted from this low income, and the balance was forced to be deposited in order to prevent their escape. This fact is clear from the lists of Koreans whose wages remained unpaid and were deposited, which the company was made to submit the government after the war by order of the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Japan.

According to a report made by Japan Iron and Steel Works which was discovered by our investigation team in January 1992 at Komazawa University, deposited unpaid wages of 5,500 Korean workers at six of its factories amounted to about Y664,000. It is estimated that the total amount of deposited unpaid wages of Koreans exceeded more than Y50 millions if we apply the case to the unpaid wages of 300,000 Koreans, the most conservative estimate of the number of forced Korean laborers as of Aug. 15, 1945, given in a government report. The amount can be converted to the present value of about Y290 billions.

Deposit of Unpaid Wages

Then, why has this question been left unsettled for 47 years since their termination of the war? When they were liberated on Aug. 15, 1945, Korean workers there demanded that the *deposits of their wages forced by the company* be refunded and wages in arrears of payment be paid fully. The General Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Japan which occupied Japan in those days, sent a memorandum to the Japanese government stating that "discriminative treatment should not be made and that an end to such discriminative treatment should be guaranteed" (SCAPIN 360, Nov. 28, 1945). The Japanese government made the company submit a list of Korean workers and their wages in arrears of payment to the Deposit Bureau of the Ministry of Justice. When the list was submitted to the ministry, the company was obligated to inform the persons concerned that their wages in arrears of payment had been deposited. However, the Japanese government told the company that there was no need to make this notice on grounds of political unrest on the Korean Peninsula. As a result, the deposits are still kept in the vaults of the Bank of Japan. Forcibly recruited Koreans last year filed a suit, demanding that his wage in arrears of payment be paid fully. The government has so far refused to make public names of the Koreans on the plea of "protection of

privacy." It also claims that such a claim is barred by "prescription" since more than 10 years have passed since the case transpired.

* Therefore, hardly any of the large Japanese enterprises that had amassed fabulous profits by employing forced Korean laborers (presently, Sumitomo, Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Kajima Corporation, Ohbayashi-Gumi, Ltd., Kumagaigumi Co., Ltd. and other construction companies, Toyota, Nissan, Mazda and other auto companies) have yet made any payment of deposits or unpaid wages. Still less, they have made any apologies or compensations. This in spite of the fact that as private enterprises they employed forced labor in contravention of international law.

Female Volunteers

Twelve years old Korean girls were drafted as labor volunteers to work in munitions factories from 1943. According to a list of students recently discovered in Seoul, Korean girls of 12-14 years old were taken to Toyama Prefecture in July 1944 to work for "Fujikoshi." Some of these girls testify that they were not given sufficient food and that they were forced to work more than 14 hours a day. (The Dong-A Ilbo, dated Jan. 16, 1992)

Casualties among Forcibly Recruited Koreans

As a result of hard work in the most dangerous parts in pits, many forcibly recruited Koreans were injured or killed. The rate of casualties of Koreans were 3.5 to 6 times higher than that among Japanese workers, according to a research by the Labour Science Research Institute in 1943.

Our investigation group obtained lists of victims of accidents in the Mitsubishi Miike Mine in Hokkaido. They showed that 82 out of the 109 workers who were killed by a gas explosion on May 1944, were Koreans. A witness said to a member of our group, "The ashes of workers killed at that time must still remain." Remains of many Koreans were left as they were without grave markers in the places of forced labor throughout Japan.

Tens of remains were discovered in August this year at a construction site for a golf course in Fukuoka Prefecture. But bulldozers crushed them into pieces, making them impossible to be identified.

Those forced Korean laborers who made protests or attempted escape were lynched and sometimes massacred by Japanese superintendents or police.

No accurate number of casualties among forced laborers is available. But, it is said it is about 300,000 in Japan alone.

There were mass massacres recorded in the history of the 20th century. They were mainly conducted by solidiers. However, we can not find it in any example which the government and people jointly imposed slave labor on 6 millions of other nations, and lynched and massacred them, and made no apologies or compensations after the war.

3. Drafting of Koreans for Military Service

"Comfort Girls"

"Comfort girls" were those women who were forcibly taken to the battle front and were forced to prostitute for Japanese soldiers under the control of the Japanese Army. This began around the start of Japan's aggressive war against China in 1937. They were mostly unmarried Korean women. They were forced to become prostitutes against their will. The number is said to have been about 100,000-200,000.

Our investigation group flew to Okinawa in 1972 to investigate former "comfort women" there.

Kanejima Kiku, who did cooking for "comfort girls" testified as follows, "All of those girls were in their 20s (except one girl who was 19-year old). They came here in September 1944 with the Koga unit. These women did chores, carried food and did potato-digging and wood-cutting work with soldiers in the morning. They were forced to serve soldiers in the daytime and officers at night. I saw soldiers holding number cards in their hands, forming a queue. These women often said, 'I don't know when I will die,' 'I want to go back,' 'I want to see my mother,' and 'I want to see my brother.' Their sadness and sorrows mounted especially on a moonlight night. They would sing songs of their homeland sadly on such nights.

Pae Pong Gi, who was forced to offer herself as a prostitute in Okinawa and died there last year without setting foot on her home country again, had been taken to Okinawa in the spring of 1944, deceived by a recruiter in Pusan, Korea, who told her that she would be able to earn a lot of money if she went to Singapore. When she learned that she had to become a prostitute, she said, she felt her blood was flowing backward throughout her body. "My heart broke and I could not stop trembling with fear. I shouted aloud that this could not happen," she said, giving vent to her chagrin and regret. Speaking of the harsh life she had led, she continued, "My life has been filled with pains, and I have not spent even a day with a peace of

mind."

Forced Labor as Army Civilian Employees

As the Japanese aggressive war expanded, large numbers of Koreans were drafted for the construction of military bases and also as guards for prisoners of war. About 364,000 Koreans were drafted as soldiers and army civilian employees and were deployed in Japan, China and South East Asia, of whom 14,000 died or were missing as of May 1953. ("An Outlook on Korean Residents in Japan," published by the Public Security Investigation Agency). The Japanese relief law is not applied to these Koreans on the ground that they are not Japanese nationals.

4. Forced Recruitment of Koreans Constitutes a Violation of International Law

The International Military Tribunal for the Far East and the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg note that any inhumane conducts like massacre and enslavement of civilians are war crimes regardless of the domestic laws of an assaulting country.

(1) The forced recruitment of Koreans and forced labor imposed on them are also violations of Convention No. 29 on forced labor of the International Labor Organization. Japan ratified it on Nov. 21, 1932 and registered itself as a signatory to it. At present, this convention is ratified by about 120 countries, including Mauritius, which ratified it in 1970. The following are the articles of the convention which are applicable to this issue.

Article 11

Only adult able-bodied males who are of an apparent age of not less than 18 and not more than 45 years may be called upon for forced or compulsory labour.

Article 12

The maximum period for which any person may be taken for forced or compulsory labour of all kinds in any one period of twelve months shall not exceed sixty days, including the time spent in going to and from the place of work.

Every person from whom forced or compulsory labour is exacted shall be furnished with a certificate indicating the periods of such labour which he has completed.

Article 13

...and the hours worked in excess of the normal working hours shall be remunerated at the rates prevailing in the case of overtime for voluntary labour.

Article 14

With the exception of the forced or compulsory labour provided for in Article 10 of this Convention, forced or compulsory labour of all kinds shall be remunerated in cash at rates not less than those prevailing for similar kinds of work either in the district in which the labour is employed or in the district from which the labour is recruited, whichever may be the higher.

For the purpose of payment of wages the days spent in travelling to and from the place of work shall be counted as working days.

Article 21

Forced or compulsory labour shall not be used for work underground in mines.

The forced recruitment of Koreans and forced labor imposed on them are acts in contravention of almost all the other articles and paragraphs of the convention.

5. Response of the Japanese Government

The Japanese government has never made a serious study of this problem in the past.

On Forced Laborers

Foreign Minister Shiina said on Dec. 3 in 1965 in his reply to a question put in at the National Diet, "there is no way of confirming them (forced laborers)". Despite these words of his, it was known in August, 1990, that lists of about 67,000 forced laborers were preserved at the library of the Labor Ministry. However, they are not made public even today despite repeated petitions by the victims and our investigation group. And we, members of the investigation group, made lists of 145,000 forced Korean laborers and made public their names. The Japanese government has so far collected the names of only 90,000 such Koreans, and has not yet made public their names. Meanwhile, it was confirmed that the Welfare Ministry holds lists of 240,000 Koreans who were forcibly mobilized as soldiers and civilians in the military services.

On "Comfort Girls"

The Japanese government claimed that "comfort girls" were recruited by civilians and made no apology about this issue. As a document which proves the war-time government's role in recruiting these girls, was discovered in January 1992, the government made an apology for the first time.

The government on July 6, 1992 announced that it conducted a survey of war-time archives for six months and culled out a total of 127 documents, held by six governmental agencies. However, materials preserved in the National Diet Library and other public libraries were not included in them. We found 48 more items of material in the National Diet Library after the government's survey.

One of the 48 materials shows that Korean women had already been recruited as "comfort girls" as early as 1933 despite the Japanese government's claim that their first recruitment took place around 1937.

The government claimed after this insufficient survey that it did not find materials which prove these Korean had been forcibly recruited, adding that it had no plan to interview victims in future.

This is an attempt to conceal the truth and seek a political solution.

Cause

Then, why has the Japanese government desperately tried to cover up conducts which the war-time Japanese government, army and enterprises had committed in the past, and minimize the damage done?

It is due to Japan's claim that its past colonial domination of Korea was legitimate and valid.

The Tokyo government persists in its stand that "the Annexation Treaty and other treaties and agreements with Korea were legally concluded and implemented," that the forcible recruiting of Koreans including women as prostitutes for the army "was conducted in compliance with the then law and that, therefore, they are not entitled to any compensation." These remarks were made by a Japanese delegate at the first round of DPRK-Japan talks for the normalization of bilateral relations.

The Japanese government concluded the Treaty on Basic Relations between the ROK and

Japan and other agreements with south Korea in 1965, which justify the 1910-1945 colonial rule of Korea by Japan without its making any apology for it.

An accepted opinion in Japan is that the hosts of treaties and agreements leading to the 1910 treaty were forced on Korea at gun-point.

On the strength of these treaties and agreements, Japan argued that the 1910 Annexation Treaty was legally concluded so that it was unnecessary for Japan to make any compensation.

A reexamination of the treaty which was the fundamental cause of the question is required.

Here we would like to demonstrate that the treaty which gave rise to this fundamental issue, namely, the colonial rule of Korea, was forced on Korea, backed by military forces and that it is null and void.

The Korean Code of 1899 and the Imperial Ordinance of November 1884, which were then Korea's legal institutions, stipulated that all treaties or agreements with a foreign country should become effective only when they had the prior approval, signature and seal of the King. However, Japanese imperialism failed to force the King to affix his signature and seal to the treaty, whatever the pressure and blackmail it resorted to. The standard and principles for concluding a treaty were provided for in the then Japanese Constitution. International law stated that a treaty should be implemented only with the approval of the King and that it is a mere scrap of paper unless ratified by the state.

The Japanese government should admit the fact that Japan fabricated the treaty unjustly and colonized Korea, and make clear the truth about its direct involvement in forcibly drafting Koreans including "comfort women" on the basis of its deep self-examination.

The Japanese government will never lead itself anywhere so long as it continues to ignore the fact of forcible drafting by limiting compensation to former "comfort women."

If it hopes to build new relations through a critical review of its history of colonizing and victimizing other countries, the Japanese government should naturally make a full account of the issues concerned and make sincere reparations.

6. Future Task for Solution

We would like to make the following proposals for solution of the issue to the Japanese government.

(1) For the Japanese government to thoroughly investigate the truth about forced Korean laborers including "comfort girls," make public the results of its research and permit access to all the materials related to it.

(2) To investigate the cause of forcible recruitment of Koreans, admit its social, legal and

historical responsibility and make an official apology.

(3) To make full compensation to all the victims of the colonial rule of Japan, not limiting it to former "comfort girls." The victims should include martyrs who lost their lives for the independence of Korea, Korean "comfort girls" and forced laborers (forced laborers, volunteer corps and forcibly drafted soldiers and civilians in the military service.)

(4) To record all the historical facts of forced labor, erect a monument, build a memorial museum and adopt measures to preserve them permanently.

Indictment by the DPRK Committee for Measures on Compensation to the "Comfort Women" for the Army and Pacific War Victims

(Sept. 1, 1992)

The DPRK Committee for Measures on Compensations to the "Comfort Women for the Army" and Pacific War Victims which was inaugurated on Aug. 1, 1992 (its chairman is O Mun Han, concurrently the vice-chairman of the Korean Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries) published an indictment dated Sept. 1, accusing the attitude of the Japanese government and demanding that the Japanese authorities fully investigate into the issue and apologize for it.

Here is the gist of the indictment.

The issue of "comfort girls" constitutes one of the most atrocious and immoral criminal acts ever committed in the history of mankind and in the history of wars.

The act of recruiting Korean women for sex slavery as part of the method of recruiting forced laborers could be conducted only by the Japanese "Emperor's Army" which had spared nothing and resorted to all possible means to expand its aggression over the Asian Continent.

The Japanese imperialists started setting up comfort houses or brothels for the "Emperor's Army" in the 1920s and systematically used them as their indispensable "war supplies" as Japan intensified its invasion of the Asian Continent in the 1930s.

The Japanese government and army decided to recruit "comfort women" in Korea because it was cheaper and easier for them to mobilize a great number of women from the country which they had colonized.

Using Korean "comfort women" as an appendage to the Japanese army was thought to save soldiers from contracting venereal diseases and help check the leakage of military secrets, and further to lead to the accomplishment of Japan's policy of exterminating Koreans as a nation.

The most heinous crime committed by Japanese imperialism is that the government and

army themselves established a system of "comfort houses" and directly controlled and operated them.

The regulations concerning the use of soldiers' clubs issued by the Nakayama Garrison unit to its soldiers in May 1944, said; The adjutant should superintend the operation of the soldiers' club, the army surgeon should look after sanitation concerning the operation of the soldiers' club, and the paymaster should take charge of management concerning the accounting of the soldiers' club. It also regulates working hours and charges for its use.

The Japanese imperialists forcibly abducted hundreds of thousands of Korean women to make them sex slaves for the "Emperor's Army."

At first the government and army recruited Korean women by way of crafty allurement and vicious lies to turn them into sex slaves. However, as demand for "comfort women" increased, they took away Koreans at random, ranging from housewives to 12-13 year-old primary school girls to make them serve "the Emperor's Army."

A former logistics staff officer of the Kwantung Army said that he flew to the Government-General of Korea and requested it to carry out a plan to recruit some 20,000 Korean women in close cooperation with local police and authorities.

"The Dainippon Patriotic Labor Association took charge of forcibly recruiting Korean laborers," said Yoshida Seiji, former Japanese recruiter of forced Korean laborers, at a press conference.

It is a unanimous view shared by historians and scholars who study this issue that the Koreans who were made "comfort women" by the Japanese government and the Japanese military numbered more than 200,000, about 90% of whom were Koreans.

Another abominable crime was committed by the Japanese army when they forced an unbearable slavish life on Korean "comfort women". The Japanese army forced the "comfort women" to unconditionally obey "the Emperor's Army" in the name of the Emperor.

Shim Pyong Ok confessed that an officer had said to them, "From now on you must obey the army's orders. This is how your duties to our Emperor are fulfilled. If anyone disobeys an army order, she will have her head cut off." The Japanese army killed "comfort girls" brutally as examples when they resisted.

Yun Gyong Ae said, "One day, when one girl desperately resisted, a Japanese soldier tied her legs and arms to five horses and whipped the horses to kill her by dismembering her.

Li Pok Nyo said, "One day, a woman, aged 30, refused to be a victim of gang-rape. The Japanese hung her, top-down, from a tree and killed her by beating her with the butt of a rifle, cutting off her breasts and thrusting a bayonet into her vagina.

"The Emperor's Army" committed all sorts of brutalities to satisfy their sexual desire.

Chong Mun Bok said that she was violated by 30 to 40 Japanese soldiers in the daytime and 7 to 8 officers at night every day.

Kim Dae Il said that a Japanese soldier, surnamed Tanaka, raped a pregnant girl, called "Hanako" whose birthplace, she had said, was Pyongyang. She had a miscarriage. Tanaka cut out her belly when she became unconscious at the sight of his Japanese sword, and took out the baby out of her womb and raised it with his sword.

Kim Gun Suk confessed that one day Japanese soldiers cut off the breasts of a girl, who was in the room next to hers, and cut off her left leg and threw it out to the garden and that she fell unconscious at the sight.

Kim Dae Il, who was taken to Shanghai and then to Singapore to be made a "comfort girl", said that when women contracted diseases, they set fire to them to kill them. The Japanese soldiers, who had lost in battle, fired their rifles at random as if in revenge and pushed "comfort women" into a pit, and killed them by exploding a hand grenade.

Li Bo Mi said, "Many more women must have died, unidentified in their 'comfort houses', considering the fact that it was only five out of us 30 that survived."

The brutalities that the Japanese Emperor's Army committed are without a parallel in the world and constitute a grave violation of the fundamental articles of "Convention No. 29 on Forced Labor" of the International Labor Organization (ILO).

"The results of an investigation" by the Japanese government into the "comfort women" issue were superficial and are aimed at deliberately distorting the truth and evading its responsibilities.

The attitude of the Japanese government which defies international public opinion can never be tolerated in the present international society which cherishes human rights and humanitarianism.

Indictment by the DPRK Committee for Measures on Compensation to the "Comfort Women" for the Army and Pacific War Victims

(Oct. 29, 1992)

The DPRK Committee for Measures on Compensations to the "Comfort Women for the Army" and Pacific War Victims on Oct. 29 published an indictment exposing the heinous crimes of the Japanese imperialists in drafting more than 6 million Koreans.

Here is the gist of the indictment:

Even according to official data of the Japanese imperialists, the Korean youths and middle-aged persons taken to Japan, south sea islands, Sakhalin, etc, numbered more than 1.5 million and, when the 4.5 million people who were taken to various parts of Korea and forced to slave labor are included, their number added up to 6 million or more.

The Japanese imperialists whisked off Korean youths and middle-aged persons right and left and forced them to slave labor for more than 16 hours daily at underground pits of coal and ore mines thousands of feet deep and construction sites of munitions bases for their war of aggression. Worse still, they committed in the end the beastly atrocities of massacring numerous people, afraid of the leakage of "secrets of projects."

Six million people taken to various parts at home and abroad accounted for a quarter of the Korean population at that time. This figure shows that most of the young and middle-aged people of a nation were drafted by force. This is an inhumane crime without precedent in human history and a heinous state crime of Japan never to be condoned, which was directly linked with the Japanese militarists' policy of exterminating the Korean nation, the policy comparable only to the German Nazi's policy of exterminating Jews during World War II.

Far from investigating and opening to the public the truth of the drafting of Koreans and making an apology for that, the Japanese government intends to bury the history in obscurity, although it is nearly half a century since the war. This can never be tolerated in the international community today.

Uncovering the truth of the drafting of Koreans by Japanese imperialism, the indictment

says:

In the 1930s, the Japanese imperialists provoked a war of aggression on the continent and escalated it. This increased the demand for armed forces and manpower.

According to the announcement of the Japanese authorities at that time, the newly needed workforce was 1.1 million in 1939, 2.5 million in 1941 and 7.9 million just before Japan's defeat (P. 74 and 83, "Records of Forced Drafting and Labor of Koreans" brought out by Kentai Publishing House in 1974)

The Japanese imperialists solved the problem of labour in the colony of Korea at cheap price under the name of "conscription of manpower" to ensure the rapidly expanding munitions industry while making up the endless losses of armed forces on the front.

The Japanese imperialists promulgated the "National Mobilization Law" in April 1938, the "National Drafting Order" in July 1939, the "Labour Coordination Order" in February 1941, "Measures for the Use of Korean Labourers" in February 1942 and other evil acts to "legalize" the drafting of Koreans, says the indictment.

It furnishes many evidences proving that such "conscription of manpower" was, in every respect, a "forcible draft" by government power and the military and "slave hunting" in the form of kidnapping and its scope was so vast that the sources of supply of laborers got scarce in Korea.

The indictment exposes the inhumane maltreatment of the Korean draftees and sufferings forced upon them by the Japanese imperialists.

The employers drove the Korean draftees hard with the right to kill them or leave them alive. It was utterly forced labor without pay.

The Koreans were subjected to extreme national discrimination and were treated not as workforce but as wartime supplies.

The slave labor forced by the Japanese imperialists upon Koreans was an unprecedentedly, cruel and harsh one which claimed hundreds of thousands of Korean lives, says the indictment.

It brands the Japanese imperialists' drafting of Koreans and forced labor as a grave breach of the international law.

Noting that paragraph C, Article 5 of the Regulations of International Military Tribunal for the Far East and Article 6 of the Regulations of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg stipulate that murder, annihilation, enslavement, kidnapping and other inhumane practices committed against all civilians before or during war fall within the category of war-

time crimes, whether or not they contravene the domestic law of the country where crimes were committed, it notes that the Japanese imperialists' policy of draft and forced labor was a blatant crime because it was in crude violation of the international law on humanitarianism and its usage.

It is a crime also because it is a breach of the international law on the "Treaty on Banning Forced Labor," the indictment says, adding: Such anti-humanitarian criminal acts must not be repeated in the future.

The Japanese government authorities are unwilling to investigate and clarify on an overall scale the truth behind the Japanese imperialists' past drafting of Koreans and apologize for it. This is an attempt to defend the militarists' crimes, which tells that they may follow in the footsteps of their predecessors any time.

The DPRK Committee for Measures on Compensations to the "Comfort Women for the Army" and Pacific War Victims calls upon the world's progressive people, governments, international organizations and public organizations to pay due attention to the Japanese imperialists' crimes in drafting Koreans and put pressure upon the Japanese government to thoroughly probe the truth behind the drafting of more than six million Koreans and publish its results and adequately apologize and compensate for it.

Being Forced to Be a "Comfort Girl"

Li Gyong Seng

***75. born on July 29, 1917 in Orang County,
North Hamgyong Province, D.P.R.K.***

I lost my mother at the age of three and my father at the age of six. I was raised by my grandmother but she died soon. Becoming an orphan, I worked as a baby-sitter or a housemaid for landlords. When I was 12 year old, I was told to call upon the ward chief. I found Kim Gwan Son, Pak Su Bok and Yun Chun Son at the chief's house. These three girls were just about my age. "You have been undergoing hardships because you were born under an unlucky star. I am going to change your fortune and take you to a good place. What do you think about my offer?" asked the chief. I said "I will take it," and he added, "Any time I send for you, you must immediately come here, understand?" And I said "I understand."

At night, the chief sent a messenger to me, and I hurried to his home. The chief said that respectable Japanese were there to greet me. I saw three Japanese wearing Japanese swords at their sides. I was so afraid of them that I dropped a small scream. And the chief said, "Don't be afraid. They will take you to a good place." He handed us over to the Japanese and sent us off, saying "You change your life from today on. Go to a good place."

We didn't know what to do and just followed the Japanese who were heading for a station. We were put in a freight car of a train. Even though we were told that we were going to a good place, we were still children and we felt lonely and sobbed in the freight car. Near dawn, the Japanese ordered us to get out. We found a car and two Japanese waiting for us at a station. The two more Japanese aroused more fear in us. As we hesitated, these five men threw us into a car as if they were loading a truck with pigs, holding their tails. I don't remember how far we went, but we arrived at a mountain as it began to dawn. They said, "Get down" but we were so afraid of them that we couldn't move. Then, we were pulled down. "This is the place, get in," and we were taken to a house. I realized long afterward that it was a secret munition factory of the Japanese army in Changwon, Kyongsang Province.

I entered a room shown to me and stayed there still for a while, until a nurse came into my room with Japanese kimono (Japanese national costume) in her hand. She said to me, "Put off your Korean clothes and wear this." When I hesitated, she stripped me of my clothes and forced me to wear the Japanese style clothes. She attached a name card reading "Miiko" to

the chest part of my new clothes. "From today on, you are not a Korean but a Japanese. You have to work for the Emperor of Japan. Your name is Miiko. Don't speak Korean," she said.

For two weeks after that, I was given three meals a day without any work to do. I had undergone hardships so much that I simply thought that I came to a good place as the ward chief had told me.

When another two weeks passed, an officer came and ordered to me, "Wash your feet" and "cut you nails" but he didn't give me any job. But I was told to take a bath and undergo a physical examination. I did as I was told. And another two weeks passed.

One day, the girls were ordered to line up in the compound. There were about 20 girls including myself. High-ranking officers came to see us. An officer who was wearing a four-star military uniform, started leering at each girl and then drew me toward himself. I was the smallest in the line and was standing at an end of the line. He was followed by lower ranking officers who picked other girls one after another. These girls were put in officers' private rooms. I was taken to room No. 8. next to Yun Chun Son's room No. 9. After lunch, I was taken to a house which is about 800 meters away from the factory. There were 9 rooms in it, and I was also put in room No. 8. I heard long afterward that the rooms were for high-ranking officers.

At night, a man came into my room. He was the very officer who chose me in the morning. His name was "Togyo." He raped me who was 12-year-old. My body was immature. So, my vagina was split. The next morning, a doctor and a nurse stopped by my room to examine me. Despite my condition, the officer visited me to violate me every night. The same thing happened to the girls in other rooms. Yun Chun Sun rejected a Japanese officer, screaming loudly out of fear and disgust. The Japanese officer choked her to death. After having been forced to endure this life for one month, I was told by Togyo, "I am fed up with you. Do anything you like." Togyo never came to me after that. But he was replaced by seven to eight other Japanese soldiers who violated me every day. This is the way how my life as a "comfort girl" began at the munition factory.

Now, I would like to talk about Ms. Okran, 18, from Andong, North Kyongsang Province, who resisted Japanese soldiers by biting and scratching them. The Japanese hung her, top-down, from a utility pole of the factory for a day. A soldier asked the dying Korean girl, "Are you still going to resist us?" "I would rather die than to obey you," answered Okran. And she was tortured to death as an exemplary punishment. Her body was dismembered and put in straw bags. They were thrown into a river.

There was a beautiful woman named Kim Sam Nyo, about 20 year olds from North Chungchong Province. Tens of soldiers lined in front of her room every day. Unable to endure

the humiliation any longer, she refused at the risk of her life. As a warning to others, she was placed on a board with her hands and legs tightly bound. The Japanese army permitted about 30 soldiers to commit gang-rape on her. And she died. Watching the scenes of the three women's death, we were so frightened that we did not venture to protest or escape.

I was pregnant at the age of 16 before I was aware of it. An officer noticed my pregnancy and sent me to a military surgeon. When the pregnancy was confirmed, the officer said, "We don't need any Korean child who would not be loyal to the Japanese Emperor." I was put in a room where they cut my belly to draw up my unborn baby. The wound I got at that time still remains on my belly.

It's not long after that incident that a Korean maid in the factory named Shin Fa Ja came to us, and said, "All of you are very cute. It is a pity that you should end up your life in this place." "You can not get out from here alive because it is a secret factory. Find out some way to escape," she suggested. So we, the three from the same hometown, worked out a plan to escape.

Unlike officers, soldiers couldn't afford to drink enough liquor to satisfy themselves. We knew it and planned to make them drink as much as they wanted by offering them a lot of liquor. We secretly saved officers' remnants of food and liquor, and had three bottlefuls of liquor ready.

Officers went back home at weekends. We gave liquor to the gate-keepers on a weekend holiday. They got blind drunk as we had expected, so we managed to escape. We, the three, ran away separately to different places. I have never heard of them since.

I ran into deep mountains where there were no electric lines. I found a cottage where an old couple lived. They sheltered me. I lived there thanks to the kind couple. I got married through an arrangement made by people in the mountain to a man who had no relatives. Both of us were so poor that we were not married in a wedding ceremony nor did we have furniture for a home. People in the mountain gave us some goods so that we could start a new life. However I was always afraid of the shadows of Japanese pursuers. I repeatedly asked my husband to move to and live in China. So we had our new home in Hanyang, China.

I greeted the liberation of our fatherland in China. Then, I was suddenly seized by yearning for my native place. I asked my husband to go back home. "You wanted to go to China and now you ask me to go back to Korea. What is this?" my husband asked. However, I never told my past to him.

I returned to my fatherland in the 1960s. We worked on a cooperative farm in the fatherland which mainly produced paddy rice. I was very happy to work as a farmer and worked very hard.

On March 27, this year, my husband died, leaving me as his sole family member. I always shed tears profusely whenever I thought about my life, that part of my life I had to conceal even to my husband. I felt a sense of emptiness. How many times was I startled in my bed with an aching heart in the dead of night, tormented by the nightmare of the comfort house? I thought it would be a relief to me to confess my past rather than keep silence. I thought and thought about it for days. And finally I visited Pyongyang Central T.V. to become the first woman to declare, "I am a former 'comfort girl'."

I Was Used and Discarded

Kim Yong Sil

***68. born on October 21, 1923 at Pochon County,
Ryanggang Province, D.P.R.K.***

I was born as the eldest daughter of a seven-member family (my parents, grandmother, two younger sisters, a younger brother and myself). My family was so poor that I, at the age of 13, went to Faenyun, North Hamgyong Province, where my aunt was living. I heard I could find a better job there than in my home town. So I moved to stay at my aunt's and helped neighbours in their household chores. When I was 17 years old, I began to work at a bar. One day in 1941, a Japanese wearing a suit came to see me. "I will find a good job for you," he said. I thought "a good job" would allow me to send some money to my family. I worried about working among strangers since I had been with my aunt ever since I left my home. But I was attracted much more by the thought that I could afford to send some money back home, and I went to the house of the chief of the ward which was appointed as the place of meeting. There I found 14 to 15 Korean women of my age.

A truck was waiting for us in front of the house. We took a ride on it to go to Faenyun Station and got on a train there during the daytime. We arrived at Undok via Aoji early in the evening. We further went on to Chongak-dong and found a hooded truck waiting for us. A 30-minute drive on the truck took us to a deep mountain. There were many Japanese soldiers on the mountain. It was inside the border area between China and the former Soviet Union. We also found about 10 Korean women already working there. They said sadly to us, "You shouldn't have come here. The Japanese will never let you get out of here alive." I didn't know what they were talking about. A soldier came and led us into a warehouse. Japanese soldiers ordered us to put off our clothes to wear Japanese kimono (Japanese national costume). When I refused the order out of shame and fear, they punched and kicked me. They stripped me and forced me to wear Japanese costume. They also said, "Do not speak Korean or you shall die."

On that day, some women among us were taken to other places. I have no idea of where they were taken to or what happened to them. I was put in a room so narrow that it could accommodate just two persons.

At night, I was given a poor meal of rice boiled with barley, and soup. But I was so scared that I couldn't eat them up. I concentrated all my attention on seeking a way to escape. While

I was thinking so, an officer came into my room. He was the very man who had recruited us. He was wearing a three-star military uniform. And he suddenly attacked and raped me.

That man would often change his uniform to Japanese clothes and go out to "recruit" other Korean "comfort women." He would also take away Korean women from there to somewhere else.

On the first night, seven more soldiers came in to violate me. I still remember the number of the men because that was an experience too painful to forget, an unimaginable one, and because I wondered how many times I should go through this kind of humiliation in future. Unable to find any way of escape under a strict guard, I was being forced to be a "comfort woman."

Meals were poor. Many girls became ill due to malnutrition and overwork. If serious cases were judged as useless, they were taken to somewhere else along with the dead bodies. I don't know what happened to them. But the Tuman River was near from there. Even though I didn't go there, I guessed the river was their graveyard.

In the area, comfort houses were set up in Aoji, Chongak-dong, Kuron and Safae but not in Hongi-ri. So, we were sent there to make "comfort service" once or twice a week from morning till the morning of the next day. Sometimes, we were sent back at midnight after two-day and one-night service. Our group regularly consisted of 14 or 15 women. If someone was absent, her place was immediately filled by a new one.

One day, a Korean called "Tokiko" who was younger than I, spoke Korean. An officer who witnessed the scene, called all the women together. As a warning to us, he cut off "Tokiko's" head with his Japanese sword. There was one who screamed loudly and another who fell unconscious. I just looked down and didn't utter a word. After the incident, we, who don't understand Japanese well, talked to each other with our eyes.

A woman named "Junko" was near her time without knowing she was pregnant. Japanese soldiers made her serve as a "comfort girl" until just before she delivered a baby. One day, she bore a baby, and an officer came into her room and wrapped the baby in a cloth and took it away. "Junko" was too weakened. She must have been regarded as useless. She was taken to somewhere, too. I haven't heard of her since.

I thought I would be killed someday. On August 13, 1945, Japanese soldiers said, "We are going back to Japan and we will take you with us back home." We couldn't know what would happen to us if we went to Japan since we had suffered so much there. We discussed it and decided to run away from the comfort house. A collective escape would involve high risk. So, we ran away separately. I lay low in a corn field at night and headed for mountains at dawn. I hid myself in a mountain for two days, and visited a cottage where I was given something to eat. I was told there that our fatherland had been liberated. However, I couldn't believe it and continued to stay in the mountain, being frightened by the shadows of pursurers. I came down from the mountain and went to Chongjin in autumn.

Taken to Okinawa as a "Comfort Woman"

Pae Pong Gi

77. born in 1941 and died in 1991

in Okinawa, Japan

I divorced my husband for some reason. Since then, I had been wandering about throughout the country, helping people in their household chores. One day in 1944, I met a Japanese recruiter named "Condo" in Pusan. He said, "If you go to Singapore, you can make a fortune." As I couldn't find any good job and was going through hardships, I was taken in by him and was almost forcibly taken on board a ship. There were about 50 Korean women aboard the ship who were in similar circumstances.

The ship was supposed to go to Singapore, but called at Moji Port in Japan. I felt uneasy at that time. But I couldn't do anything. We were taken to Okinawa from Moji.

The women were dispersed in Okinawa. I was taken to an outpost of the Japanese army on Tokashiki Island along with six other women. Arriving at the island, I realized for the first time that I was cheated and would be forced to be a "comfort woman." I was scared. I felt like my blood was flowing backward throughout my body. My heart was bursting with grief. I was so afraid that I couldn't stop trembling. I resisted, shouting "This is impossible!" However, that was too late.

I was forced to change my name to "Akiko" at the comfort house. Japanese soldiers came to me from noon till midnight, forming a line. The life of "comfort women" who were compelled to serve tens of soldiers a day, was a hell on earth. The Japanese soldiers in Okinawa conducted brutal acts to us cold-bloodedly. They could do such brutalities because they were on the front-line, I guess. That's the reason why the "comfort girls" were treated not as human beings but as war supplies. My body would be numbed after a day's "work." I had hardly strength enough to rise to my feet.

In spite of this condition, we were made to do hard work from early in the morning, digging air-raid shelters and carrying military weapons. We were even made to crawl to the battle fields, carrying ammunitions. Despite this full day's work, we were not given sufficient food.

The U.S. army started landing on Tokashiki Island in March 1945. The Americans launched an all-out attack in June. At that time, a Korean "comfort woman" was killed by a bomb in the kitchen of the Japanese barracks.

Japanese soldiers would shelter in their dugouts when the U.S. started bombing. But we were not allowed to get into them. Therefore, we couldn't help sheltering ourselves in the barracks. On the day when a bomb hit the Korean woman, some other women and I ran into a bath room of the barracks. But the woman was unable to catch up with us and went to the kitchen where she was hit by a bomb. We were not permitted to get into the dugouts which were dug by ourselves. She had to sacrifice her life in a meaningless way. The "comfort women" were nothing but "playthings to satisfy the sexual desire" of Japanese soldiers.

We were held as prisoners of the U.S. army after Japan's defeat in the war. Becoming captives, we were humiliated again by American soldiers.

The reason why we were forced to spend a shameful life as "comfort women" was that Korea was a Japanese colony.

* * *

Ms. Pae Pong Gi died in October last year. She spent much of the rest of her life together with the chairman of the Okinawa Headquarters of Chongryun (The General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) and his wife, whom she called her "son and daughter." Ms. Pae had been despaired of her life as her fate. As she became acquainted with the couple, however, she learned about the historical situation of Korea and realized that her tragedy was due to Japan's colonial rule of her country. In her last months, she was always concerned about the developments in the on-going Korea-Japan diplomatic normalization talks. She would say that Japan should recognize its colonial rule in the past, adding "I want Japan to make an apology and settle its old debts." She held great expectations of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries, believing that would "enable the souls of sacrificed 'comfort women' to rest in peace."

Korean "Comfort Girls" Left to Die

Araki Kanichi

***69. born in 1923. He served as a cook aboard a supply ship
for the Japanese Army from 1942.***

Now he lives in Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan

I served aboard a supply ship for the Japanese army as a cook during the war from 1942. My ship shuttled between Japan and Asian Continent via various ports including Dalian. There was a Korean "comfort woman" named "Hanako" whom I made acquaintance with in Dalian. She said that she was taken from South Cholla Province. "I want to go back to Korea. I want to see my mother. If I suffer from a disease, I will not be given any food," she would say to me. When I brought rice balls to those "comfort girls," they were very pleased. They ate them as if they were enjoying eating them. I was overwhelmed with grief, seeing them.

They were unmarried young women. They said Sundays were the hardest, because they had to serve 15 to 20 Japanese soldiers on holidays. Actually, I watched many Japanese soldiers holding their shoes in their hands, in a line, waiting for their turns to spend time with these girls. So I could understand how they felt.

My ship was in a fleet of ships which were on a voyage to the Philippines. It stopped at Kaohsiung in Taiwan to load food. No sooner had the Japanese ships left Kaohsiung than they were attacked by U.S. warships. At that time, many Japanese soldiers and women were thrown into the sea. But my ship was saved from the attack so I worked to rescue Korean women on the deck when an officer gave an order, "Save the soldiers first, Do not rescue the 'Korean pees' (That's what the Japanese army called Korean comfort women). There are many 'comfort girls' as you want in Korea. The lives of ships and soldiers are more important now." We couldn't refuse any order of a higher-ranking officer during the war. We had no choice but to leave these women screaming for help and see them drowned and die without giving help. The horrible scene of the last moments of these girls still haunts me. I was in position to save their lives but let them die before my very eyes. I watched at least 14 to 15 girls sink to the depths of the sea at that time.

My testimony is based on what I had experienced. As far as I know, a considerable number of Korean girls were made to board Japanese military transportation ships and died in the South China Sea. These Korean women couldn't get married and were sacrificed by the Japanese army. The fates of these Koreans were not made public and their bodies remain on the ocean's bottom.