

Symposium on Japan's Past Colonial Rule Over Korea Held in Pyongyang

A Korea-Japan joint Pyongyang symposium on Japan's colonial domination of Korea and Japan's compensation to Korea was held on Aug. 14 at the People's Palace of Culture.

Present at the symposium were Oh Mun Han, chairman of the Committee for Measures on Compensation to "Comfort Women for the Japanese Army" and Victims of the Pacific War, and many Korean historians, lawyers, and journalists. The committee was inaugurated on Aug. 11.

Participants also included a Japanese delegation from the association for investigation into the forcible drafting of Koreans headed by Kurihara Toru, a delegate of the Japanese side of the joint Korea-Japan fact-finding team on the forcible drafting of Koreans, a delegation made up of local assembly members of the Social Democratic Party of Japan, Japanese lawyers and scholars.

The fact-finding group, which so far has done investigation activities in Japan, visited the DPRK to conduct an on-the-spot investigation in the capital city.

Sorano Yoshihiro, director of the secretariat of the National Liaison Council of the Japanese side of the fact-finding group on the forcible drafting of Koreans, made a report on the activities of the group.

He said the drafting of Koreans peaked in 1939 under Japan's "National Mobilization Act" and hundreds of thousands of Koreans were brought to Japan and were subjected to inhumane treatment from that time. Many Korean women were whisked away to various Asian areas as "comfort women for the army".

Japan must bear responsibility for many things that occurred in the period of the unfortunate history, he stressed.

Prof. and Dr. Ri Jong Hyon, a section chief of the Academy of Social Sciences, associate Dr. Kim Kil Sin, the head of a chair of Kim Il Sung University, and others

"treaties" which were utilized to legalize the occupation of Korea by Japanese imperialism and the insincere attitude of the Japanese government toward postwar compensation.

Takasaki Soji, professor at Tsudajuku University of Japan, and Japanese lawyer Takagi Kenichi in their speeches referred to the problem of "comfort girls for the army".

They said that the Japanese government must make compensation to the Korean women who were forced to serve as "comfort women for the army".

They stressed that the DPRK-Japan talks must not be concluded in the same way as the south Korea-Japan talks were.

At the symposium, participants adopted a resolution.

It stressed the need to strongly urge the Japanese government to take an independent and sincere attitude to the on-going intergovernmental talks, apologize and compensate for the past wrongs by Japan in the spirit of the joint declaration of the Workers' Party of Korea, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Party of Japan which was published on Sep. 28, 1990.

More Ex-"Comfort Girls" in DPRK Reported

A total of 123 north Korean women have identified themselves as former "comfort women" forced to serve in Japanese wartime brothels.

The information was disclosed by Oh Mun Han when he met the Japanese delegation. So far only 12 women had identified themselves as former comfort women

Korean Residents in Japan Celebrate Korea's Liberation



Thousands of Korean residents living in the Kanto Area gathered at the Tokyo Korean Cultural Hall on Aug. 14 to mark the 45th anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule. (Photo)

Koreans in the north, the south and abroad celebrate the liberation day (Aug. 15) every year to remember the 36-year Japanese colonial rule and to renew their determination to achieve their unaccomplished task: Korea's reunification.

Li Jin Gyu, first vice chairman of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryun), made a speech at the meeting.

He looked back on the colonial days, saying "...We were maltreated like slaves by Japanese because we lost our

motherland.

"We were overjoyed with the defeat of Japan in World War II and with our liberation from its colonial rule. But our joy was short-lived because our country was divided into two parts soon after the liberation."

He went on to say: "Now, the 3rd Pan-National Rally is being held at Panmunjom with the attendance of all Koreans in the north, the south and abroad. Achieving confederacy is the only way to reunify the country. We, Korean residents in Japan, should actively contribute to the realization of the national reunification in 1990s."

Many functions to celebrate the national liberation were held in every part of Japan where Koreans live.

throughout north Korea and his committee.

Oh, who is also vice chairman of the north Korean Red Cross Society, said 20 women were prepared to testify overseas but the remaining women were reluctant, fearing the effects of the revelations on

"comfort women" and six men who were forcibly brought to Japan as laborers during the war.

Jang Jin Su, 71, living in Haksu-dong, Pyongsong city, told the members about the three years of his hard work forced on him

subjected to inhumane treatment from that time. Many Korean women were whisked away to various Asian areas as "comfort women" for the army."

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Prof. and Dr. Ri Jong Hyon, a section chief of the Academy of Social Sciences, associate Dr. Kim Kil Sin, the head of a chair of Kim Il Sung University, and others spoke about the DPRK-Japan talks and the problem of the liquidation of the past wrongs by the Japanese government, the illegality and invalidity of all the old

Reported

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According to Oh, the old figure was revised as more women identified themselves as comfort women in interviews with newspapers and television stations



Participants actively exchange their views on Japan's past colonial rule at the Korea-Japan Joint Pyongyang Symposium on Japan's Colonial Domination of Korea and Japan's Compensation to Korea held on Aug. 14 at the People's Palace of Culture.

Keynote Report (South)

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And the anti-reunification evil laws such as the National Security Law and mechanisms must be removed and the Rev. Moon Ik Hwan, Rim Su Gyong and other reunification champions and political prisoners of conscience arrested under this law be released.

A nationwide agreement on the formula of reunification should be reached through the permission of free debate on reunification. To block the debate on reunification and leave the formula of reunification to the discretion of the group in power is to allow reunification itself to be used only for the vested rights of the ruling forces.

We hail and support the proposal for the

Keynote Report (Overseas)

(Continued from page 2)

since the north and the south agreed upon reconciliation on the basis of the common

convocation of national political consultative conference with the participation of representatives of various social strata, organizations and political parties in the north, the south and overseas and the authorities of the north and the south to reach a nationwide agreement on the formula of reunification.

A concrete discussion should be made on the proposal for reunification through confederacy designed to achieve peaceful reunification, the north and the south respecting the different systems of each other.

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throughout north Korea and his committee.

Oh, who is also vice chairman of the north Korean Red Cross Society, said 20 women were prepared to testify overseas but the remaining women were reluctant, fearing the effects of the revelations on their families.

He expected more women would come forward and said he hoped they would do so "on their own without the call of a government organization."

Investigation Activities In Pyongyang

On Aug. 12 and 13, the 14-member Japanese delegation conducted an investigation in Pyongyang and confirmed the crimes committed by old Japan by inflicting all sorts of misfortunes and sufferings upon Korean people after whisking them away in the names of "comfort girls", forced laborers, "draftees" during the Japanese colonial rule.

During its stay, the delegation also interviewed at a Pyongyang hotel four former

notion that they are the one and same nation.

I strongly demand that the south Korean authorities scrap the National Security Law, a legacy of the old era of confrontation, which defines fellow countrymen as the enemy and incriminates the pro-reunification patriotic movement.

I also demand an unconditional and immediate release of the Rev. Moon Ik Hwan, woman student Rim Su Gyong and other pro-reunification patriots who have been arrested under the NSL.

The second important question arising at present in achieving national reunification is to reach a nationwide agreement on the formula of national reunification.

We consider that reunification through confederacy in which neither side conquers the other or is conquered by it, the north and the south tolerating and respecting each other's different ideas and systems is the most reasonable and realistic formula.

Many functions to celebrate national liberation were held in every corner of Japan where Koreans live.

"comfort women" and six men who were forcibly brought to Japan as laborers during the war.

Jang Jin Su, 71, living in Haksu-dong, Pyongsong city, told the members about the three years of his hard work forced on him in Japan after being caught in the snare of "labor drafting" in Kyongju, North Kyongsang Province, on Aug. 16, 1942.

He cited the facts he had witnessed or experienced to fully expose the brutalities of the Japanese imperialists in Micronesia where they drove more than 30,000 Koreans to quarries and the construction site of an oil tank, and slaughtered them after working them hard as if they were beasts of burden.

He also testified to the tragic conditions of Korean "comfort women" and shuddering atrocities committed against them which he had witnessed.

The delegation members said they would report on the crimes committed by Japan against the Korean people in the past to the Japanese people and the world to prevent the recurrence of such inhuman brutalities.

The delegation members told Oh they hoped to invite some of the women, as well as historians, to Japan this fall or next year for a symposium and a public hearing on the issue.

The third task is to achieve a more solid grand national unity.

The preferential important task in achieving grand national unity at present is to condemn the moves of the anti-reunification forces for national division and their line of national confrontation and smash all the base obstructive machinations against the reunification movement.

The Overseas Headquarters of Pominryun will pool strength with the compatriots in the north and the south and wage a joint struggle to correct the history of the nation distorted by the Japanese imperialists in the past and settle scores for the shame suffered by the "comfort women for the army" and other daughters of the nation who underwent distress.

The overseas headquarters will actively strive to create a favourable international climate for national reunification and strengthen solidarity with the peace-loving people of the world.