



Special Interview

## “Taekwondo, which impresses people all around the world”

••• Interview with Yang Jin-bang, President of the Korea Taekwondo Association •••

By Yu-cheol and Ju Hyo-duk



Yang Jin-bang, President of the Korea Taekwondo Association

*The Asian Games will be held in Guangzhou, China, in 2 months. Among various sports, Taekwondo, which has gained worldwide popularity, is drawing particular interest from sports fans. Taekwondo, a traditional martial art of South Korea, holds even greater appeal for foreign athletes. Some countries were deeply moved when they won medals in Taekwondo at the 2021 Tokyo Olympics. It also brought a sense of excitement to the South Korean athletes and people. However, other countries have constantly tried to catch up with Taekwondo by proposing their own martial arts for Olympic inclusion, and martial arts such as MMA, Muay Thai, and Jiu-Jitsu are gaining significant popularity domestically. Furthermore, the declining population is causing a sharp decrease in the number of people practicing Taekwondo within the country. There are many other challenges threatening the status of Taekwondo. To address these issues, we met with Yang Jin-bang, President of the Korea Taekwondo Association to learn more about Taekwondo.*

**Q:** Please introduce the Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA) and yourself as its president.

**A:** The KTA was founded in 1961, though there were Taekwondo-related organizations even before that. The first president was General Chae Myeong-shin, commander of South Korean military forces in the Vietnam War. The third president, Grandmaster Choi Hong-hee, established the International Taekwondo Federation (ITF). He is famous for creating the name “Taekwondo.” However, later, he opposed the military dictatorship in South Korea and emigrated to Canada. In the 1980s, he unexpectedly began to engage in exchanges with North Korea.

The ITF also originated from the KTA. In short, the KTA itself can be called the “History of Taekwondo,” where everything related to Taekwondo worldwide started. I am the 29th president and have been in office since 2021. Taekwondo has been a significant part of my life, and I recently retired as a Taekwondo professor at Yongin University.

**Q:** Many people around the world are showing significant interest in learning about Korea’s Taekwondo. What do you think is the driving force behind Taekwondo gaining global attention?

**A:** Since the end of World War II, Eastern

martial arts started to gain international recognition, with Japan’s Karate taking lead position. Taekwondo emerged as a relative latecomer, but it miraculously surpassed Japan’s Karate during the late 1990s. This achievement owes much to the dedicated efforts of our Korean instructors who ventured abroad and persevered through challenging circumstances. Secondly, Taekwondo’s distinctive technical characteristics played a crucial role. With its focus on kicking techniques, Taekwondo stands out among Eastern martial arts, captivating Westerners with its sense of mystery, uniqueness, and thus inspiring further exploration and research. Lastly, the inclusion of Taekwondo as an Olympic sport has been a significant turning point. The KTA was instrumental in spearheading this initiative. All of these factors have contributed to Taekwondo’s current position as a leading force in the global

martial arts community.

**Q:** In the process of Taekwondo’s global establishment, there must have been numerous challenges and difficult moments. Could you highlight the strategies employed to overcome them?

**A:** The unique perseverance and determination of Koreans played a significant role, along with the continuous development of new techniques and pursuit of change. Traditional martial arts like Karate in Japan and Kung Fu in China tended to be conservative and resisted change. They believed that adhering to traditional martial arts was their distinctive value. In contrast, we have constantly developed, changed, and brought forth new things in Taekwondo. This constant evolution allowed Taekwondo to advance and adapt in the international sports arena.

**Q:** Then, what efforts is Taekwondo making in the areas of creative programs, techniques, and talent development?

**A:** The World Championships are held every two years, during which new techniques, competition rules, and match proceedings are showcased to people worldwide. Through each World Championship, athletes learn new skills and techniques, only to discover even more innovative ones in the subsequent events. Moreover, foreign athletes have also been known to introduce novel approaches. While the content of these new techniques is essential, the culture of continuously creating and innovating is equally crucial. Recently, Taekwondo has captured the attention of young individuals, particularly with the introduction of the “demonstration” category, which did not exist in the past. Athletes participating in this category ponder over what new creations they can present during competitions. In this regard, Taekwondo can be considered at the forefront of K-culture.

**Q:** In South Korea, various martial arts

such as Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), Muay Thai, and Jiu-Jitsu have also become quite popular. What are your thoughts on the current status of Taekwondo in light of this trend?

**A:** The emergence of MMA has had the most significant impact recently. Martial arts combine techniques, philosophy, systems, and culture into a complex entity. Arguments about which martial art is better or worse are somewhat childish. What is crucial is how each martial art expands its own territory while adapting to modern society. Taekwondo possesses distinct characteristics and the added prestige of being an official Olympic sport. We believe that we are doing well compared to other martial arts.

**Q:** I think Taekwondo has been taught as part of various activities, including religious endeavors. Efforts like these, especially those conducted overseas, have played a significant role in promoting Taekwondo and making it widely known among foreigners. In this regard, if there are any exemplary cases or figures related to this, please share them.

**A:** That’s true. Religious activities, especially Christian missionary endeavors, have played a significant role in the international dissemination of Taekwondo. In fact, many individuals have devoted themselves tirelessly to this cause. Among them, one notable figure is Jun Lee, a pioneering star of Taekwondo in the United States, who passed away about three years ago. Another prominent figure was Master Ko Eui-min, who made significant contributions to promoting Taekwondo in Germany, but unfortunately, he also passed away earlier this year. Currently, in South Korea, we have Master Kim Young-tae, who has been actively involved in propagating Taekwondo, particularly in the Ivory Coast, Africa. Some roads, gyms, and competitions are even named in honor of his contributions. (Continued on Page 5)

## Korean-developed rice variety spreads to Africa



By Chae Su-min

The “K-Rice Belt” project, which produces rice that can feed 30 million people annually in Africa, has officially launched this year, starting with Ghana. This project involves cultivating a newly developed variety of rice, which is an improved version of the “Tongil” variety, tailored to suit African climates. It serves as a leading initiative for South Korea’s official development assistance (ODA) to enhance its international influence. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) held the “K-Rice Belt Agriculture Ministerial Meeting” with 8 African countries at the JW Marriott Hotel in Gangnam, Seoul on July 10th and declared the official launch of the K-Rice Belt project. Ministerial representatives from

eight countries, including Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Senegal, Uganda, Cameroon, Kenya, and Guinea-Bissau, attended the meeting.

South Korea and eight countries have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to officially launch the “K-Rice Belt” project to spread Korean seeds and agricultural technology to increase rice production in Africa and establish a long-term international cooperation system. The K-Rice Belt project is an ODA project that shares Korea’s rice cultivation experience with African countries and supplies rice varieties. According to the MAFRA, the total consumption of rice in Africa by 2020 is 54,877,000 tons, but the production amount is 36.2 million tons. The rest of the shortfall is dependent on imports. Eight African countries participating in the project also saw their production (5,928,000 tons) fall far short of their consumption (1,263,600 tons). In many African countries, rice consumption is increasing by 6% every year due to factors such as urbanization, industrialization, and population growth, but rice production is stagnant and does not meet consumption. Consequently, resolving the food supply imbalance, including rice, has become a critical policy challenge for many African nations.

Korea plans to supply these countries with high-yielding varieties which are optimized rice varieties in Africa. These varieties are improved ones made by crossing Tongil rice and African varieties. The yield of rice per hectare of this variety is 5-7 tons, four times higher than that of existing African rice varieties (1.5 tons). The eight countries in which the project is promoted are countries that consume rice as a staple food but import a large amount because their production does not reach consumption. The MAFRA plans to build 430,000 hectares of rice production base in these countries by 2027. If the production is successful, the estimated production amount reaches 2 million tons. 30 million people can eat for a year.

## Special Interview

## Meeting with Korean exchange students in Tuscany, Italy

By Ilaria Righi



Ilaria (right in the left photo) and her classmate from Korea pose after the interview. In the right photo are her other classmates.



Thanks to the increasing popularity of Korean culture, more and more young Italians are choosing Korean studies as their major. However, the interest is not one-sided since Italian culture and the so-called “Italian lifestyle” have also become very popular in Korea. Obviously, despite the growing connection between both countries, Korean and Italian are not global languages, therefore the number of students choosing this path is relatively low compared to some international languages, including English. I had the chance to interview one Korean exchange student from Busan University of Foreign Studies (BUFS) who came to Tuscany last semester to improve his Italian language skills at the University for Foreigners of Siena.

**Q: Could you introduce yourself briefly?**

**A:** I’m Moon Han-gyeol and I’m a university student from Korea. Currently, I’m participating in the international exchange program at the University for Foreigners of Siena, in Italy.

**Q: Why did you choose Italian as your major?**

**A:** I wanted to study European foreign languages because they’re less popular compared to Asian languages. When I was in high school, I used to watch television

programs presenting Italian culture and that’s how I became curious about it. After I passed the university entrance exam, I applied for the Department of European Studies. Between French and Italian, I liked both languages, but to be honest, the Italian professor and Italian students were more interesting and fun, so in the end I opted for Italian.

**Q: Since you came to Italy as an exchange student, could you describe how the two university systems are different?**

**A:** In Korea, there is a national entrance exam valid for all universities. In Italy, each university has its rules for admission, ranging between a very difficult level and a simple assessment test. I would say it’s easier to get into university in Italy, but the curriculum exams are more intense. In Korea, we have fewer Crediti Formativi Universitari (CFU or University Credits) and we spread them over 4 years, while in Italy a Bachelor’s degree with 180 CFU lasts 3 years. Moreover, in Korea, students can decide to take a break for 1 or 2 years and then start from where they left, but in Italy it’s more complicated and not considered well by society. But again, here there is much less social pressure for university compared to my country. I would say that you

relationship between professors and students is similar, I would say that Italian professors encourage more questions and are more available compared to Korean professors. Considering university life, in Italy, most of the universities don’t have a campus, and extra-curriculum activities like university clubs are an exception.

**Q: When you came to Italy, did you have any expectations?**

**A:** Since I’d never been to Europe before, I didn’t have a clear idea. I just knew the Italian lifestyle was slower and more individualistic. The first month was pretty hard because I wasn’t used to living in a rented place and dealing with everything alone.

**Q: Could you tell me some pros and cons of living in Italy?**

**A:** One very negative thing is bureaucracy. The Italian administrative system, especially for foreigners who don’t know how to move around, is complicated and long. I’ve been waiting for my documents for one year. About general living, I could say that transportation is expensive and disorganized, you can’t always count on making it on time if you take the bus or the train. And if you need to go to a public toilet,

you always need to pay some money. But I love Italian people. They’re very friendly and it’s easy to socialize even with strangers. Something that really impressed me was the greetings. Italians really care about the answers when they ask “What’s up?” to someone they meet on the street, they wait to know how the person’s life is going. They want the full answer.

**Q: What about classes and university life?**

**A:** If we talk about language classes, both universities focus on grammar and vocabulary, but I’ve improved my skills mostly thanks to my Italian friends. Even though the

you always need to pay some money. But I love Italian people. They’re very friendly and it’s easy to socialize even with strangers. Something that really impressed me was the greetings. Italians really care about the answers when they ask “What’s up?” to someone they meet on the street, they wait to know how the person’s life is going. They want the full answer.

**Q: If we talk about society, did you ever experience any type of racism?**

**A:** Being Asian in Italy means being addressed as Chinese most of the time, but it’s not too bad. We have racism also in Korea, the difference is that in Italy there seem to be more young people who discriminate compared to the younger generations in Korea.

**Q: Could you give some advice to someone who wants to study languages as an exchange student in Italy?**

**A:** Don’t be afraid of having a conversation. At first, when I learned English, I was very scared to speak with other people. But with languages, we need to be forced to speak and listen. When you learn a new language, you become part of that world. It gives you many advantages and it’s always fun.

*Ilaria Righi is a university student at the University for Foreigners of Siena, in Italy. Her major is Cultural Mediation, specializing in Korean studies and English translation. This year she has worked as an intern at the Florence Korea Film Festival in Italy, helping with cultural mediation, language barriers and, mostly, promoting Korean movies and culture. – Ed.*

## Future Heritage: Hakcheon Bathhouse and Cafe Mokgan



By Lee Jong-dae (Editorial Writer)

I visited Cafe Mokgan located on Cheongju City in the afternoon on June 22nd. Cafe Mokgan was situated in the former Hakcheon Bathhouse building, which was selected as one of the top ten modern architectural structures in Cheongju by experts in 2022, along with the National Cheongju Museum. Completed in 1988, this building had two floors dedicated to men’s baths, two floors for women’s baths, and four floors consisting of VIP sauna rooms.

The Hakcheon Bathhouse was designed as an architectural masterpiece, emphasizing aesthetics. It is said that the late Mr. Park Hak-rae, who wanted to express his gratitude to his devoted wife and decided to build a magnificent building for her as a token of gratitude. He asked architect Kim Soo-geun sincerely several times and commissioned him to design it. Despite being ill, Kim

**The late Mr. Park Hak-rae, who wanted to express his gratitude to his devoted wife asked architect Kim Soo-geun sincerely several times and commissioned him to design it, who designed the main Olympic Stadium for the 1988 Seoul.**

Soo-geun, who devoted a great deal of effort to designing the main Olympic Stadium for the 1988 Seoul Olympics, made every effort in designing the Hakcheon Bathhouse but passed away in 1986. The Hakcheon Bathhouse was completed in 1988. Meanwhile, the late CEO Park Hak-rae, a prominent figure in the bathhouse industry, passed away on November 30th, 2010, and a funeral was held in the form of a democratic civic ceremony. Currently, he can only be seen through photographs. Afterward, the Hakcheon Bathhouse was operated by CEO Park No-seok, his son, but it closed down three years ago.

The memories of Cheongju citizens, who feel regretful about the closure of the bathhouse due to the decline of bathhouse culture and the impact of COVID-19, are still fresh. At the time of the closure, CEO Park considered how to continue the bathhouse tradition and decided to convert the business to a cafe. He transformed the interior of the cafe into a work of art by arranging various furniture and utensils used in the bathhouse like an art installation. It was a decision that reflected CEO Park’s artistic sensibility. When I visited there, guests were noticeably enjoying the transformed bathhouse over coffees.

The first thing that caught my attention was the wardrobe, which had allegedly been used for about 36 years. Wooden bath baskets were placed in front of the wardrobe,

which were used before plastic basins became available, reminding me of old memories. Numerous colored towels, previously used in the bathhouse, hung abundantly from the ceiling, creating the feeling of viewing an installation art piece. This was also CEO Park No-seok’s idea. Additionally, keys to the bathhouse, acupuncture rods, hair dryers, money boxes, admission tickets, and more were exhibited. It was evident that the Hakcheon Bathhouse had received a lot of love from the citizens, as items such as child tickets, adult tickets, VIP passes, bath fee receipts, thank-you notes, and money-counting machines were displayed.

One noteworthy item among the exhibited items was the “Hakcheon flower salt.” It was produced by utilizing the heat generated from a waste incinerator operated by CEO Park, who also ran four bathhouses in downtown Cheongju. The salt was supplied to the military.

On the way to the second floor, there was a mobile artwork resembling a towel, creating a vibrant atmosphere. A bathroom scale and a bath fee table were also displayed. On the second floor of the bathhouse, there were hot and cold baths. Currently, a red table was placed in the hot bath area, while a blue table was placed in the cold bath area. According to CEO Park, this symbolically represented the peace pursued by South and North Korea during the time when President Kim Dae-jung had taken office. There was also a space for body massages and equipment that sprayed water from all directions.

In the transformed cafe space, visitors, including couples and friends, were often seen enjoying their leisure time while looking at the bathhouse that was predominantly used by their grandparents’ generation. It was impressive to see how a beautiful architectural structure, considered a future heritage, had not disappeared but had been continued by changing its business and harmonizing traditional and modern culture.

# In a world where even teachers take their own lives!



The front gate of Seoi Elementary School is filled with condolence messages and flowers, as people pay their respects to a female teacher who passed away on July 18th due to an apparent suicide.

By Lee Jong-dae (Editorial Writer)

In July, Principal of Seoi Elementary School in Seoul issued a statement regarding the unfortunate incident of a teacher passing away on July 18th within the school premises. The late teacher had been newly appointed in March 2022, but she had shown great passion and dedication to her duties. She was an excellent teacher who arrived early in the morning to prepare diligently for the day with the students. Many people who learned about this news expressed their frustration, wishing it were just fake news.

The government has adopted "strengthening educational authority" as a national agenda and finalized the revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and its enforcement decree. At the end of

last year, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was amended to establish the authority of teachers in guiding students' behaviors and their lives. Then, at the end of June, the enforcement decree was revised to enable teachers to provide advice, counseling, attention, and discipline related to academic matters, safety, and character development. On July 24th, President Yoon instructed the Ministry of Education to establish guidelines and revise autonomous ordinances to strengthen educational authority.

After these measures were implemented, interest in the "Student Human Rights Ordinance," which some education administrative bodies including Seoul and Gyeonggi are implementing, has been renewed across the country. The Student Human Rights Ordinance focuses on enhancing students' rights. Of course, students' rights are essential. However, education cannot be done properly without strengthening educational authority. Emphasizing only students' rights does not guarantee proper education. The reality of teachers suffering from parental pressure, being ignored, and even physically assaulted in front of students needs to change. If the current absurd reality continues, where teachers cannot even inspect students' belongings, nor operate a reward and punishment system, nor praise and encourage students due to non-discrimination clauses, we cannot help concern ourselves about our future.

The issue of strengthening educational authority should not become a subject of political conflict. I earnestly implore that even if it is only a few politicians, treat teachers as educators. It is time to seriously contemplate why the older generation used to treat even young teachers with great respect. The reason for parents to show respect and courtesy to teachers is precisely for the sake of their precious children. Even if we cannot afford more economic provisions, shouldn't we at least provide spiritual support for the teachers?

## Lee Tae-seok Leadership School



By Yu Cheol

The Lee Tae-seok Foundation has run the Lee Tae-seok Leadership School (led by Director Ku Jin-sung) from June 10th to July 29th. The classes took place every Saturday at the Joonghun Pharmaceutical Hall, where the foundation office is located. The first program featured Olle Thorell, a five-term member of the Swedish Parliament, who conducted a two-day class on "Swedish Democracy, the Role of Leaders, and Servant Leadership." Olle Thorell visited Korea for a special lecture aimed at middle and high school students after hearing about this program from the foundation. His passion and lecture left a deep impression on the students and staff at Leadership School.

In his lecture, Olle Thorell stated, "I was deeply impressed while watching the film about the late Father Lee Tae-seok, who exemplifies the exact case of a servant leader that we emphasize. In Sweden, there are no laws granting privileges to politicians, and the most important quality for a leader is 'listening.' He also expressed his desire to collaborate with the foundation and mentioned that he would return to Korea in the fall to conduct special lectures for teenagers.

Director Ku said, "We initially planned to recruit 20 students for the leadership school, but more than 50 students showed up. Olle Thorell tried his best to provide as much information as he could. We were greatly moved by his passion and the students' serious attitude towards the classes."

The Lee Tae-seok Leadership School concluded its first term of classes in Korea with a special lecture by Chairperson Goo Soo-hwan of the Lee Tae-seok Foundation on July 29th. Chairperson Goo said, "Now that the class program in Korea has come to an end, we plan to organize a field trip to the Swedish Parliament and engage in volunteer activities in South Sudan. Just like one of my journalism school students became a newspaper journalist, I hope that the students of this leadership school, after ten years, will become leaders, practice service and servant leadership for our society."

## Massive Flood damage in South Korea

By Yoon Da-nyeong



Recent torrential downpours in South Korea have resulted in devastating flooding and landslides, causing many casualties nationwide and leaving many others missing. According to the National Emergency Management

Agency, on July 17th, the number of deaths due to the heavy rain was 39, and the number of injured was 34. Damage to public facilities is 628 cases. 146 cases of road slope collapse, 49 cases of road damage, 8 cases of damage to retaining walls, stonework, and fences, 108 cases of soil runoff, 169 cases of river embankment loss, 8 cases of falling rocks and landslides, and 22 cases of flooding of cultural assets.

The damage to crops was 19,769.7 hectares, and 56,100 livestock, including cows, pigs, ducks and chickens, were killed. 10,570 people in 6,255 households in 15 cities and provinces and 111 cities and counties were temporarily evacuated. Among them, 3326 households and 5788 people have yet to return home. 271 roads and 853 riversides nationwide are under control. As for the railroad, all regular trains have stopped operating, and some sections of the KTX are suspended or are running slowly. 16 flights were canceled.

At the site of the flooding of the Gongpyeong underpass in Osong, Cheongju, 12 people were killed and 9 were injured. As the nearby Miho River embankment collapsed due to heavy rain of more than 200 mm, about 60,000 tons of river water poured into the underpass in 3 minutes. At the time, 15 vehicles, including city buses, that were passing through the underpass were unable to escape and were isolated. Mr. A, who escaped by abandoning the flooded vehicle, said, "The water rose in an instant, so I got out of the car in a hurry and hung on the railing." Maritime police and rescue teams, including divers, are searching for the missing.

Baek Seung-joo, a professor at the Department of Fire and Disaster Prevention at Open Cyber University, shared his views on the cause of the accident, saying, "The Osong underpass is a place designated for flood risk, so traffic control had to be done in advance to suit the urgent situation."

### Word Search By Kim So-young

This puzzle was created using the 103rd edition of The Monday Times.

E	D	G	S	D	E	V	O	T	E	B	D	H	V
H	A	E	I	U	I	D	P	E	R	E	T	T	A
T	E	S	R	E	S	A	D	A	V	R	T	R	A
A	R	M	L	I	S	T	I	E	I	L	E	B	E
L	H	L	D	S	G	E	A	B	N	D	D	S	A
E	T	N	I	S	P	H	E	I	R	I	H	T	T
N	I	O	R	O	I	B	T	A	N	N	O	R	R
T	N	R	C	T	I	R	I	P	S	A	I	A	I
A	I	A	D	M	I	R	E	E	N	E	B	E	P
R	E	L	E	A	S	E	R	E	B	E	L	L	U
L	U	H	T	E	S	P	U	R	A	R	T	C	E
P	N	U	D	N	E	R	T	T	A	E	A	U	O
A	F	A	M	I	L	I	A	R	R	I	E	N	N
P	T	E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N	M	O	A

- |           |        |        |        |             |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|
| education | talent | aim    | spirit | release     |
| admire    | era    | devote | cope   | sustainable |
| nuclear   | trend  | birth  | right  | passion     |
| thread    | trip   | upset  | rebel  | familiar    |

### Word Search

Word Search 정답을 8월 13일까지 아래로 보내 주시면 추첨하여 소정의 상품을 보내 드리겠습니다. (정답 8월 14일 본사 홈페이지 게시)

보낼 곳: [mondaytimes@daum.net](mailto:mondaytimes@daum.net)

먼데이타임스 편집실

착한 업그레이드 된 기초영어 회화 첫걸음 (초중급용)

착한 여행영어 회화 (교재용)

## 영어의 실력이 올라간다

### 토마스와 앤더스의 착한 영어시리즈

- ★ 착한 팝송에서 배우는 영어회화 (QR코드로 음악 감상)
- ★ 착한 서비스영어 (비즈니스 영어)
- ★ 착한 여행영어 회화 (교재용)
- ★ 착한 업그레이드 된 기초영어 회화 첫걸음 (초중급용)

토마스와 앤더스의 착한영어시리즈는 각 주제에 맞는 영어 회화와 표현을 꼼꼼하게 담았습니다.

(주)진명출판사

착한 서비스영어 (비즈니스 영어)

착한 팝송에서 배우는 영어회화 (QR코드로 음악 감상)

# Kamilah Dreux gives a special lecture on global citizenship education



By Yu Cheol

On July 11th, at Okcheon High School, a special UNESCO club lecture program was held with guest speaker Kamilah Dreux, also known as Han Haeng-wun in Korea, majoring in Korean History from the Graduate School at Korea University. Kamilah, an American citizen, engaged with students during their lunch break, participating in a busking program, and sharing songs with them, creating a meaningful and enjoyable time together.

Following this, Kamilah proceeded with her special lecture titled "Han Haeng-wun's Story on Global Citizenship Education: Embracing and Utilizing Cultural Diversity in the Era of Globalization for Korean Youth." During the lecture, she had an open and candid conversation with students from Okcheon High School's UNESCO club. She shared her personal experiences in Korea as examples, emphasizing the essential qualities and values that today's youth need to cultivate as global citizens. The students actively reflected on the virtues and ethics presented by Kamilah and shared their thoughts and suggestions about their own global citizenship.

Kamilah stressed the importance of viewing foreigners, including herself, not as "foreigners" different from Koreans but simply as humans. She believed that by adopting this perspective, the issues of discrimination and exclusion prevalent in our society could be naturally resolved. Her perspective resonated strongly with the students, and they empathized greatly with her viewpoint.

Jeong Ji-hwang, a teacher at Okcheon High School, who planned and invited Kamilah for this program, evaluated the program's success by stating that it significantly broadened the students' horizons in terms of their global citizenship. He expressed gratitude to Kamilah for making the journey all the way from Seoul to Chungcheongbuk-do province. The students were also thankful for Kamilah's presence and admired her diverse background, particularly her profound knowledge of the Korean language and history. They considered this program a fantastic opportunity to contemplate how they should live as global citizens in the future.

## A reflection on Ms. Han Haeng-wun's lecture: On prejudice

By Kim Yu-yeong (Okcheon High School 2nd grade)



While attending a lecture by Ms. Han Haeng-wun, I had many thoughts. The lecture topic was about "foreigners," and it made me reflect on how I perceive them. In my view, foreigners are simply individuals from different countries, but in real life, the label "foreigner" seems to come with various prejudices that hinder

their experiences.

She mentioned that foreigners attract attention regardless of what they are doing, even when they are doing something as simple as eating or having fun, just the same way locals do. Even among locals, people have different skin colors and preferences, so why do we show more interest in foreigners just because they are foreigners? This aspect intrigued me, and I anticipate that I will probably continue pondering on this question. Moreover, Ms. Han emphasized that we should not confine ourselves to a narrow perspective of "foreigners" when we meet them but rather think of them as human beings interacting with us. I wholeheartedly agree with her. If I have prejudice toward someone and treat them accordingly, I won't be able to grow more than that as a person. I believe we should strive to like everyone without prejudice, though it is definitely not easy. I think humans should live as beings that treat all others

as equal, neither more nor less. I believe every human being deserves it.

She also said that she has had a keen interest in the independence movement in Korean history. She introduced us to the story of Hubert, a prominent figure in the independence movement, and I was thrilled to learn new information beyond what I already knew. It was fascinating and enjoyable to encounter Hubert outside of our regular class.

Lastly, when she stated, "The misfortune we face is not all that we will experience in our lives," I embraced this idea wholeheartedly. It reminded me that even if I encounter failure or misfortune, I should never give up on life. This inspiring statement encouraged me not to fear setbacks, as there will always be new experiences and opportunities ahead.

Furthermore, I found her name to have a wonderful meaning. The name signifies bringing luck to Korea, and I believe it could bring luck to people all over the world. This is because she is truly radiant, lovely, and warm like a spring breeze.

As I engaged in various conversations with her, I felt so happy that I couldn't help but think I would have regretted not attending this lecture. Having the opportunity to talk with Ms. Han brought me immense joy, and I am convinced that after taking this course, I would grow in a more positive direction.

## Reflecting on Han Haeng-wun's lecture

By Kim Yun-yeong (Okcheon High School 1st year)



During my UNESCO club activity class, I had the opportunity to attend a lecture by Ms. Han Haeng-wun, a guest speaker. After listening to her lecture, I seriously contemplated my perspective and biases towards foreigners.

She shared her experience of coming to Korea for the first time and receiving various uncomfortable gazes,

making her wonder, "Am I strange? Is there something on my face?" When I heard this, a thought briefly crossed my mind, remembering what I did before. As I glanced at a passing foreigner, I internally exclaimed, "Wow, he (or she) is a foreigner." I realized that even my gaze, albeit without malice, could have been uncomfortable for that foreigner. Simultaneously, I reminded myself to refrain from words and actions that may make others uncomfortable, even if I didn't have ill intentions. I made a renewed commitment to be mindful and avoid such behavior in the future.

I had always believed that I wasn't someone with prejudices, but as I pondered deeper on the concept of bias, I realized that I lacked a clear understanding of where biases begin and end. This lecture made me question whether I might actually have some traces of bias within me.

Before meeting Ms. Han in person and attending her lecture, I had watched videos and interviews related to

her. From those, I perceived her to be more Korean than I am, showing a genuine fondness for Korean cuisine and history. Particularly, I was deeply moved when I watched a scene where she naturally recounted historical facts while shedding tears during her visit to Seodaemun Prison History Hall. It made me feel grateful for her sincere love for our history, while also making me ashamed and reflective of my own inadequate knowledge about Korean history as a Korean.

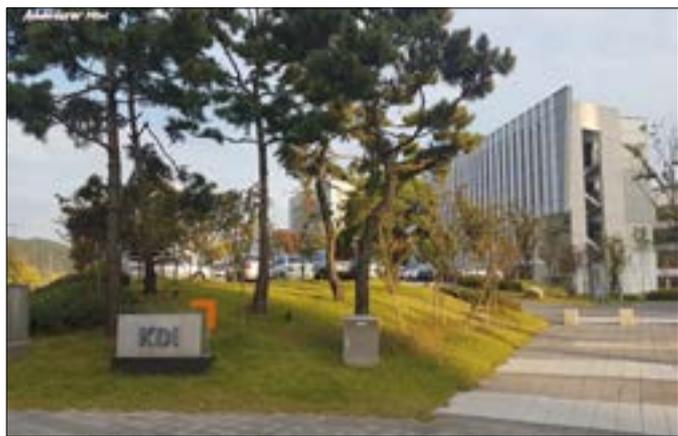
How many Koreans can truly comprehend and explain all aspects of Korean history? I couldn't help but be in awe of her exceptional historical knowledge. I have attended quite a few global citizenship education lectures and learned a great deal, but never have I encountered a lecture with such profound and impactful content.

At first, I struggled to respond confidently to the speaker's questions due to my initial awkwardness. However, as the lecture progressed, Ms. Han's warm demeanor, as she encouraged us to answer comfortably, and her bright smiles directed at each student, made it easier for me to open up and speak. Consequently, I felt a sense of regret and, should I have the opportunity to attend another lecture in the future, I vowed to participate with more confidence than before.

Lastly, I aspire to be like her, quickly discovering what I really feel passionate and diligently studying it to become someone who can impart knowledge to others.

Special Article

# KDI School to educate world-class scholars



The KDI School in Sejong City is home to students of all races and countries studying Public Policy, Development Policy, and Public Management, and most of the international students studying at the KDI School are local government officials or those working in the national policy industry.

By Amy Lim

Blond hair, blue eyes, hijabs, black skin, costumes and people from different countries, and a variety of languages. Such a scene is actually hard to find in Sejong City, but there is a place where you can easily find it. This is the KDI School, located in Bangok-dong, Sejong. The KDI School in Sejong City is home to students of all races and countries studying Public Policy, Development Policy, and Public Management, and most of the international students studying at the KDI School in Sejong City are local government officials or those working in the national policy industry. Currently, more than 200 government officials

and former ministers and prime ministers from 12 countries. What is the KDI School's competitive advantage that attracts people from all over the world?

First of all, the KDI School is a 100% English-language school, and its most of the professors are all Ph.Ds from the United States, who can teach in English. Students have the opportunity to give presentations and write papers in English, which is the official language of the school, and they also have the opportunity to meet alumni from all over the world. Foreign government officials who have studied at the KDI School will be able to return to their home countries and actively utilize the knowledge they have gained to contribute to

from more than 70 countries are studying abroad at the school, and more than 2,500 students have earned degrees in the 20 years since 1998, including current

the development of their countries, and their advancement will create a precedent for further development of the KDI School's reputation and network of contacts.

The accessibility of the KDI School's information is also a great strength of the school. Rather than simply relying on what is written in books, students learn how to apply the knowledge they learn in books to Korean society and the global economy. In other words, students at the KDI School are informed about how what they learn in the classroom is being used in Korean society and the global economy, and they actively utilize what they learn through research assistant (RA) opportunities and participate in papers and projects with the cooperation of their professors.

Furthermore, the KDI School offers a variety of internship opportunities. By supporting internships through agreements with international organizations and nearby national research institutes, on-campus and off-campus research assistantships, and dual-degree programs with partner universities, the KDI School provides students with active opportunities for career

exploration and career development.

Finally, foreigners living in Sejong City have the opportunity to spread the culture and education of various countries outside the classroom through educational programs provided by the KDI School at public schools and government offices. In addition to imparting knowledge, the curriculum includes relevant content so that foreigners have the opportunity to learn about Korea and develop a good understanding of various aspects of Korean politics, economy, society, and culture.

Yoon Chun-geun, an assistant professor at the KDI School, describes the unique essence of the KDI School as attracting and nurturing global leaders from diverse countries and backgrounds. "The diversity among students creates an enriching learning environment where individuals with varied perspectives, experiences, and cultures can come together. This exposure at the KDI School fosters an atmosphere of open-mindedness, respect, appreciation for different cultures and perspectives, and insights into global issues and challenges from multiple angles."

Through their time abroad, they are able to fulfill their role as a bridge between Sejong and the rest of Korea. We look forward to seeing KDI School's students and alumni actively engage in future leadership roles in an era where the world's economic trends are changing rapidly.

## Interview with President Yang of the Korea Taekwondo Association

**Q:** To contribute to the development of Taekwondo in our country, please share your vision and aspirations as President of the KTA.

**A:** Korea is referred to as the "homeland of Taekwondo," and we must fulfill a role equal to it. Until now, we have promoted Taekwondo overseas, established organizations to globalize the sport, and succeeded in making it an Olympic event through technical innovations. However, we find ourselves in a somewhat frustrating situation where it seems like there is nothing more we can do. We wonder what new content we can present to the world. We feel compelled to pursue something new and take on a role in that regard. If we don't keep creating new things and presenting them to people, Taekwondo can be simply forgotten. Therefore, there is much work to be done in this area. I will do my best to contribute to this aspect.

**Q:** Do you have any words of wisdom you would like to share with the youth, including Taekwondo practitioners, as a final message?

**A:** I think our youth, especially those who practice Taekwondo, may be reminded of athlete Lee Dae-hoon. He was a very dedicated and hardworking player, always striving for what he needed. Additionally, there are many other players that a lot of young people admire, including Jang Jun. I hope they can take these athletes as role models and work hard, just like them. One more thing, I hope that our Taekwondo athletes and demonstration team stars will have more opportunities to interact deeply with young people in the future.

## Korea Science Academy hosts world science fair for gifted students

By Yoon Da-nyeong

The Korea Science Academy (KSA), located in Busan and affiliated with the Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology (KAIST) as a science magnet school, held the 2023 KSA Science Fair (KSASF) from June 27th to 30th. This fair holds special significance as it marks the first face-to-face international event after the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Ninety science prodigies from 29 schools representing 20 countries, including the USA, China, Russia, the UK, the Netherlands, Singapore, Thailand, Kenya, and Australia attended the fair in teams. The fair featured six different categories: Earth and Environmental Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Convergence Engineering, and Computer Science. Under the theme "Science and the Future" with the slogan "Explore the Horizon," the KSASF 2023 emphasized humankind's role in the global community concerning science, technology, and the future society.

Choi Jong-bae, principal of the KSA, said, "The KSASF provides a platform for exchanging knowledge among participants and serves as an opportunity for the KSA to take a leap forward in the world by enhancing its internationalization capabilities. During the fair, participants shared scientific knowledge through group research presentations and engaged in various programs to foster their vision as future scientists. Additionally, they had the opportunity to visit renowned science facilities in Korea, such as KAIST Daedeok Science Town, Hanhwa Ocean Dockyard, Ulsan Hyundai Car Factory, and Busan National Science Museum.



The participants showcased many creative and impressive presentations. For instance, gifted students from a Dutch high school presented a somewhat unconventional yet intriguing research topic: "Differences in Bacteria from Dog Bites Versus Human Bites." Their study concluded that humans, like dogs, may have dangerous bacteria in their mouths, emphasizing the importance of not overlooking wounds and seeking medical attention.

These days, many prominent scientists are concerned about climate change and environmental issues. Most of these gifted students from around the world also focused on today's environmental issues which can affect subsequent generations. Lee Hoi Him and Tse Lok Yan from GT College, Hong Kong conducted a study on the amount of heavy metals in shellfish sold in the Hong Kong seafood market, raising awareness about this global environmental problem.

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# US soldier crosses into North Korea through DMZ

By Choi Mun-young

A US soldier defected to North Korea on Tuesday, July 18th, during a group tour at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea. Travis King, a private second class who had been stationed in South Korea, escaped two months of military detention for assault. He was one of 43 civilian tourists in a group tour of the Korean border village of Panmunjom in the Joint Security Area, who disappeared down a passageway between the DMZ's two buildings, reportedly laughing when bolting.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a press conference on Tuesday that Private Second Class King crossed the military demarcation line "willfully and without authorization" and was believed to be in the custody of North Korean armed forces. "We're closely monitoring and investigating the situation," Austin said. "I'm absolutely foremost concerned about the welfare of our troop."

King has served in South Korea as a cavalry scout in the First Armored Division since January 2021. Scheduled to board a plane to Texas to face military discipline and potential discharge from the service, he joined a tour group to the DMZ instead and ran across the border into North Korea. He is believed to be the first known American to be held in North Korea in five years and the first US soldier to do so since 1982.

This incident has the potential to be a diplomatic challenge for the US, as North Korea could be exercising leverage for political gain, amid rising tension between the two countries. On Monday, North Korea conducted short-range ballistic missile



tests as a protest against a nuclear-powered submarine named USS Kentucky (United States Ship) that arrived at Busan naval base in South Korea.

US-led United Nations Command (UNC) has initiated a discussion with North Korea about the defector. General Andrew Harrison, deputy commander of the UNC, said, "The primary concern for us is Private King's welfare." The 23-year-old's mother, Claudine Gates, said that she was shocked by her son's defection and added, "I can't see Travis doing anything like that. I just want him to come home, come back to America. Get my son home and pray, pray that he comes back."

# Flying taxis are one step closer to commercialization

By Sophia Choi



Technically known as eVTOL, the 6-person vehicles resemble small helicopters and are planned to be used as taxis. The company emphasizes that they are quieter and much more affordable than helicopters, with a price tag of 50 to 100 dollars per person.

While, for years, sci-fi films have been depicting flying cars in their storylines, this fictional concept could soon be a reality. Earlier last week, Brazilian aeronautics company Embraer's subsidiary, Eve, announced that they will build a factory that could commercially manufacture flying vehicles as soon as 2026.

Technically known as eVTOL (electric vertical take-off and landing), the 6-person vehicles resemble small helicopters and are planned to be used as taxis. The company emphasizes that they are quieter and much more affordable than helicopters, with a price tag of 50 to 100 dollars per person. Being electric, they are emission-free and more eco-friendly. The vehicles will be piloted by people but are planned to go driverless in the near future.

The development of drone technology has led to the fast-approaching "Urban Air Mobility" (UAM) flying car industry. Those in the industry promote the new vehicles, which are expected to reduce travel time, transportation costs, traffic congestion, and environmental pollution. With a higher growth rate than the electric vehicle, it is often described as an "aerial Tesla."

Government approval became a key challenge for the futuristic industry. The European Union (EU) has responded fast to the needs of the industry by establishing the UAM certification system. Despite a \$131 million contract with the US Air Force, Joby Aviation, US UAM industry leader, struggles to maintain company value as the Federal Aviation Administration only issued a "Special Airworthiness Certificate" for 'research and development purposes.'

South Korea has also jumped on the bandwagon to make a name for itself in the flying vehicle industry, forming K-UAM, whose system commercializes its service faster with government support. Earlier this year, Seoul Business Agency (SBA) presented the megacity as a tech hub "Seoul; City of Green Technology and Smart Transportation" at the Consumer Electronic Show (CES) 2023. According to the city of Seoul and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport, drone taxis can be commercialized as early as 2025. The future of flying cars has never been closer than it has now.

# Desertification advancing across the globe at 75%



By Seo Yoo-na

Desertification, a global concern, affects regions worldwide, not just distant lands like Africa. South Korea, known for its lush forests covering 64% of its territory, may seem immune, but desert expansion has become an urgent issue internationally. Once fertile grasslands in China have turned into arid deserts due to overexploitation, overgrazing, and climate change. The 2018 desertification map by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre shows that over 75% of the world's land area has already experienced desertification, with 90% expected to be affected by 2050. The impacts of desertification extend beyond the affected regions. Sand and dust storms resulting from desertification in China and Mongolia have significant consequences for South Korea, causing health issues, economic losses, and societal challenges. As desertification spreads further, concerns over sandstorms in South Korea will inevitably increase, emphasizing the need for collective action.

Recognizing the seriousness of desertification, the United Nations adopted the United Nations Convention to Combat

Desertification (UNCCD) on June 17th, 1994, designating June 17th as the "World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought." Over the last century, large-scale droughts have claimed over ten million lives globally, caused massive economic losses, and led to the loss of approximately 12 million hectares of land each year. Desertification has direct and indirect consequences, including destroying vegetation, causing soil erosion, and undermining the foundation for food production, significantly harming human society. Human activities account for 87% of the causes of desertification are responsible for 87% of desertification's causes, primarily excessive grazing, cultivation, and deforestation leading to soil degradation.

To effectively combat desertification, planting trees and restoring ecosystems in desertified areas is the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly solution. Reforestation not only prevents land degradation but also enriches biodiversity and enhances climate change resilience by stabilizing surrounding forests and natural habitats. International cooperation and multilateral negotiations can promote planting trees in desertification-affected and sandstorm-prone regions as a pre-emptive measure to prevent further deterioration.

Maintaining a stable environment that supports the healthy growth of planted trees is crucial in preventing desertification. Relying solely on completion status to evaluate the success or failure of desertification prevention projects would be shortsighted. International organizations and countries should share both success stories and lessons learned from failed endeavors, as identical reforestation techniques may yield vastly different outcomes due to varying local environments and cultures. By collectively analyzing and accumulating data on different conditions, more effective approaches to prevent desertification can be developed.

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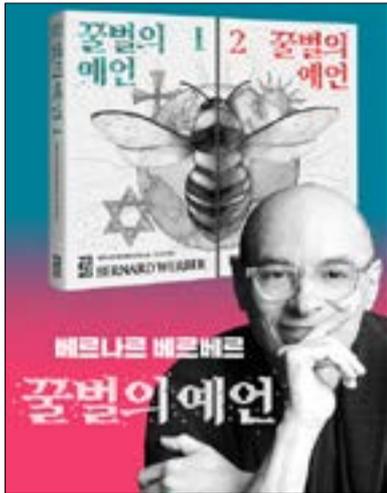
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# Bernard Werber, a reincarnated Korean, encounters Yi Sun-sin

By Min Byung-joon (Editorial Writer)



He has arrived, Bernard Werber, the French novelist, for his ninth visit to Korea. Having previously captivated the Korean literary scene with his *Ants* series, this time, Werber is intriguing Korean readers with *The Prophecy of Bees*. Nine visits can hardly be a coincidence. It signifies a powerful affection beyond mere curiosity.

In fact, when his novel *Ants* (1991) was first published, he was a rather unknown figure not only globally but even in his own country, France. However, when this novel was translated and published in Korea, a completely different picture emerged. With the publisher's sophisticated strategies

and enticing sales approaches, it became a massive success, selling over one million copies and elevating Werber to the ranks of a million-seller author, not just in Korea but also drawing significant attention in France.

So, what could be the reason behind Korean readers' enthusiastic response to his books? Perhaps it lies in the convergence of the author's somewhat eccentric imagination and readers' intellectual vanity. Anyone can imagine having a conversation with ants and understands the similarities and differences between the social lives of ants and humans. However, in the novel *Ants*, this situation unfolds as if it were real, leading readers to take a personal interest in the story.

*The Prophecy of Bees* is also a reflection of the author's interest in social animals. In this work, Werber warns that with the increasing human population and the extinction of bees causing significant disruptions in food production, humanity may be driven to a food war, leading to a potential Third World War. It's an extremely dystopian worldview, but Werber skillfully weaves a unique imagination of going back to the medieval world, following memories from a past life, in an attempt to resolve the crisis. With recent incidents like the mysterious decline of bees and environmental disasters caused by global warming, this seemingly far-

fetched fictional tale ironically draws closer to reality, leaving readers astonished and further immersed in the story.

Over the past 30 years, Werber's unique 30 science fiction novels have been published in over 30 languages, with approximately 35 million copies sold. Surprisingly, 30% of these sales come from Korean readers, which is quite astonishing. There is something remarkable about the author's love for Korea. He described Korean readers as intellectual and future-oriented, who understand and love his works exceptionally well. Werber himself feels a strong affinity for Korea, finding comfort as if returning to his hometown when he visits here, leading him to believe that he was undoubtedly Korean in his past life. Showing keen interest in our history, he highly evaluates our history as that of heroes. Despite being surrounded by powerful countries like China, Russia, and Japan, Koreans have overcome difficult situations with heroic spirit. Especially, upon encountering the achievements of the heroic figure Yi Sun-sin and being moved by his exploits, Werber revealed his plans to write a novel titled *The Queen's Diagonal*, inspired by that very spirit. We look forward to *The Queen's Diagonal*, which he was inspired by the hero Yi Sun-sin, to touch the hearts of readers worldwide, including those in Korea.

# Poetry recital gathering for the 82-year-old poet's collection



By Lee Jong-dae

At 7 p.m., on July 25th, a publication ceremony and poetry recital event for poet Lee In-hae's collection *Purple Boatlily Flowers* took place at the Dreaming Bookstore in Sangdang-gu, Cheongju City. The event was held in conjunction with the Inland Literature Society's poetry division meeting and was met with great enthusiasm, with a notable attendance of 45 participants, including former Cheongju University professor Lim Seung-bin and poet Yoon Seok-wi. Among the attendees were members of local literary circles around Cheongju, such as the Inland Literature Society and the Musicheon Literary Society, as well as individuals from various professions, including architects. Poet Kim Eun-suk, serving as the host, expressed her deep admiration for Lee In-hae's life in a touching voice and provided her heartfelt blessing for the publication of his poetry collection.

Born in Cheongju in 1943, Lee In-hae made his debut in the monthly magazine *Literary World* in 2001. Following that, he received the Inland Literature Award for his poetry collection *This Quiet Autumn*. In addition to *The Woman in Small Shoes*, which also earned him the Inland Literature Award, his other works include *A Mountain Path Hearing Birds Singing While Holding Hands*, *You Must Be a Fresh Tree*, and the digital poetry collection *Rebellion of Flowers and Birds*. Currently, Lee In-hae is an active member of the Inland Literature Society and the Chungbuk Writers Association, and he has served as the president of the Musicheon Literary Society.

In his poetic collection *Purple Boatlily Flowers*, Lee In-hae opens the door to his work with the words, "As a poet, I feel truly embarrassed and sorry for my calling/ After eighty years old, I still bind another poetry book with a lonely heart/ How sincerely did I express myself to the purple boatlily flowers/ in that field where I should take off my shoes/ Now even the habit of self-reproach wears away."

Essayist Lee Bang-joo likened the voice of the poet to celestial sounds. According to him, poet Lee In-hae's poems were not conversing with nature but lending an ear to the sounds of nature. Despite being 82 years old, Lee In-hae, who remains hale and hearty, has now released his sixth poetry collection, leaving readers eager to anticipate his next work.

# Kang Mi-sun wins top female dancer award at Benois de la Danse

By Song Eun-soo

Universal Ballet's principal dancer, Kang Mi-sun, has been honored with the prestigious Benois de la Danse award, often referred to as the "Academy Awards of dance." The organizing committee of Benois de la Danse named Kang Mi-sun and Qiu Yunting from the National Ballet of China as the joint-winners of the award at the ceremony held at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow. Kang Mi-sun is the fifth Korean to receive this award, following previous winners Kang Sue-jin (1999), Kim Ju-won (2006), Kim Ki-min (2016), and Park Se-eun (2018). Kang earned the award for her performance in the ballet "Mirinaegil", a story of a widow longing for her dead husband. The piece was premiered at the National Theater of Korea in March this year.

After finishing off the GALA concert following the awards ceremony, Kang said, "I didn't anticipate that I would win the award. I was very surprised when my name was called. I am very thankful to receive such an honorable award."

Benois de la Danse, one of the world's most prestigious ballet awards, was established in 1991 by the Russian branch of the International Dance Association to honor a French-born dancer and choreographer Jean-Georges Noverre (1727-1810). Each year, the committee evaluates performances from top dance companies around the world and holds the award ceremony in Moscow.

Kang joined Universal Ballet as an apprentice in 2002 and was promoted to principal dancer in 2012 without transferring to other ballet companies. Since her childhood dream was to become a ballet dancer in Universal Ballet, she has remained committed to it. She stated, "I have watched many performances of Universal Ballet since I was in middle and high school. Also, as I was on



the stage as a guest dancer, I felt affection for the company." She added that she came back to Korea after studying abroad to join Universal Ballet.

Moreover, she expressed that she is fond of pieces including Korean elements such as *Simcheong* and *Chunhyang* out of the Universal Ballet's repertoires. "Since they are fusion ballets with Korean elements added slightly to it, they may be unfamiliar to foreigners. But I have confidence in performing them as I am Korean and I also feel attached to them."

Although Kang had performed on many stages, she said she was deeply touched on her return stage, which was five months later after giving birth to her child. She reminisced that day, affirming, "I was truly grateful when many fans said that they waited for me. I was really moved during the curtain call." Now in her forties, Kang Mi-sun acknowledged the pressure related to her age, but she expressed her desire to continue performing as an active dancer and enjoy being on stage to the fullest.

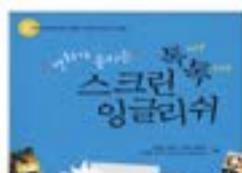
**The Monday Times**  
(주)먼데이타임스 영자신문사

FOUNDED OCTOBER 5, 2015

Publisher **Shin In-ho**  
Editorial Director **Yu Cheol**

웹사이트 [mondaytimes.net](http://mondaytimes.net)  
편집실 [mondaytimes@daum.net](mailto:mondaytimes@daum.net)

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