

## **Gwangju prize laureates against Jeju Island navy base**

We, Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Laureates, remember Jeju Island in Korea as a peaceful island with beautiful scenery and tragic history. These days, however, the tearful crying of Jeju is echoing in our ears caused by explosive blasting for construction of a navy base at Gangjeong village.

In the last few days, explosive blasting of the unique Gureombi laval-rock formation has started. A heavy contingent of police has been deployed once again against the Gangjeong villagers and their supporters.

Most seriously, people who hope the Island remain peaceful have been arrested or taken to the police including one who is currently undertaking his more than 30 days of fasting while in prison and vowed to give his life if the Gureombi rock is destroyed and the construction of the navy base not stopped.

Jeju, a Global Biosphere Reserve, is a beautiful island having three UNESCO World Natural Heritage sites and nine UNESCO Geo-Parks. The Island is formally declared the “World Peace Island” by the Jeju Peace Declaration at the Jeju Peace Forum in 2001 and should indeed be an island for promoting the purpose of world peace with its strategic location at the heart of East Asia (between Japan, China and Korea, with Russia and USA also as interested parties). Construction of the navy base would only serve to further the military tensions and obstacles to world peace in the East Asian region and between the countries involved.

We therefore urge the Korean government to stop the construction of the navy base and promptly release the prisoners regarding this matter.

*Basil Fernando (AHRC), 2001 Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Laureate*

*Wardah Hafiz, 2005 Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Laureate*

*Malalai Joya, 2006 Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Co-laureate*

*Angkhana Neelapaijit (Thailand), 2006 Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Co-laureate*

*Lenin Raguvanshi (India), 2007 Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Co-laureate*

*Muneer Malik (Pakistan), 2008 Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Laureate*

*Sushil Pyakurel (Nepal), 2010 Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Laureate*

*Binayak Sen (India), 2011 Gwangju Prize for Human Rights Laureate*

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Editor's note: More information regarding the situation in Jeju Island can be found at:  
<http://www.humanrights.asia/countries/choose-your-country/south-korea>