

北東アジア課長
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12月5日

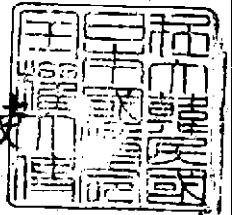
北東アジア課長

政第 4621 号

昭和 46年 12月 7日

外務大臣 殿

在 大 韓 民 國
金 山 大 使



(件名)

在日韓国人遺骨引渡

引用公・電信
日付・番号

往電¹³1238及¹³1242号

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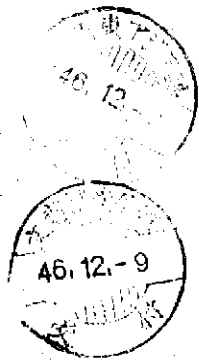
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384,841 Koreans Drafted

2,000 Pacific War Dead Remains Left Overseas

By Yun Yeo-chun

Wednesday will mark the 30th anniversary of the outbreak of the Pacific war with thousands of Koreans still missing the remains of their family members killed in the uniforms of Japanese imperialist soldiers.

It was reported that the Japanese colonial government mobilized nearly six million Koreans for combat and labor activities, both domestic and abroad. About 250,000 of them are believed to have been killed.

Only 246 remains of victims were returned from Japan only two weeks ago, 26 years after the ill-fated youths were forcibly placed on battlefields as Japanese soldiers.

The returned remains belong to only a few of the 384,841 Korean youths conscripted by the Japanese army for the Pacific war, which is often termed "the most reckless war throughout human history."

Official documents show that only 220,000 of them returned home alive after the war ended in 1945. The remaining about 160,000 others were believed to have been killed on unknown battlefields in Japan, Mainland China and some South Pacific islands.

It was around the end of the war that the imperialist Japanese government began to blindly draft Korean youths to supply the shortage of manpower needed to beef up their "unjustifiable" war.

As the manpower shortage reached its climax in 1944, the Japanese colonial officials used to attack innocent Korean farmers' houses at night to take away any man they found there to coal mines in Hokkaido or Kyushu in Japan.

The man-hunting colonial officials also picked up any Korean farmer they encountered on the fields or roads, just like the slave-merchants



Korea Times Photo

Families pray for the dead in a mass memorial service held at a Fusan temple last week for the recently returned 246 remains of youths killed in the Pacific war about 30 years ago. Nearly 2,000 other remains have yet to be returned.

who hunted Negroes in Africa to sell to Americans in the 18th century.

Thus, a total of 722,787 Koreans were drafted for war-making factories and mines abroad between 1939 and 1945, let alone about 4.6 million youths who underwent the munition mobilization in the country.

Earlier, the Japanese government announced that Korean laborers killed in Japan during the war numbered between 10,000 and 40,000. But many historians both in Korea and Japan calculate the death toll between 100,000 and 150,000.

However, the war victims have long been forgotten in the minds of Koreans, who suffered the Korean War only five years after the liberation. Even lists of the victims have not been available.

It was only on July 13, 1966 that the list, although incomplete, was disclosed for the first time by a Korean newspaper published in Seoul. The paper said that 2,331 remains had been hidden in a warehouse by the Japanese government for 21 years.

Many Koreans were surprised at the report that the remains had been treated badly for so long by the Japanese, who themselves had mobilized the innocent Korean youths as tools for the reckless world war.

The Korean government immediately started negotiations with the Japanese for return of the remains, but has made no progress due to political issues pending between the two countries.

The Japanese government reportedly rejected the Korean side's request to hand over all of the 2,331 remains, which include those of 480

youths from northern parts of Korea now occupied by the Communists.

The recent return of the 246 remains was made possible by the efforts of the "Jan. 20 Club" composed of Koreans who returned home alive after being conscripted by the Japanese colonists on Jan. 20, 1944.

Chong Ki-yong, a representative of the club, said that he saw the remains discarded in an old warehouse of the Japanese Welfare Ministry in October last year, when he visited there together with Kwak Sang-hun and Chon Chin-han, both former Assemblymen.

Chong said that his club spent one full year working for the return of the remains because the Japanese government had refused to transfer any remains unless it could verify the identity of the bereaved family in official documents. The 460 remains of north Korea origin were exempted from the return, according to Chong.

"The Japanese have recently taken away home from more than 5,400 remains of their youths killed and buried in Korea during the war. Why should we undergo such difficulties in our due efforts to have our friends' remains restored?" he said.

"But we'll continue our efforts to have the remaining 1,985 remains quickly restored. The remains were transferred from the old warehouse to the Yutenji Temple in Tokyo last June," said Chong.

He recommended the government immediately make public the list of the 20,000 war victims, which was allegedly handed over by the Japanese government, so the bereaved families may eliminate the victims' names from their census registers.