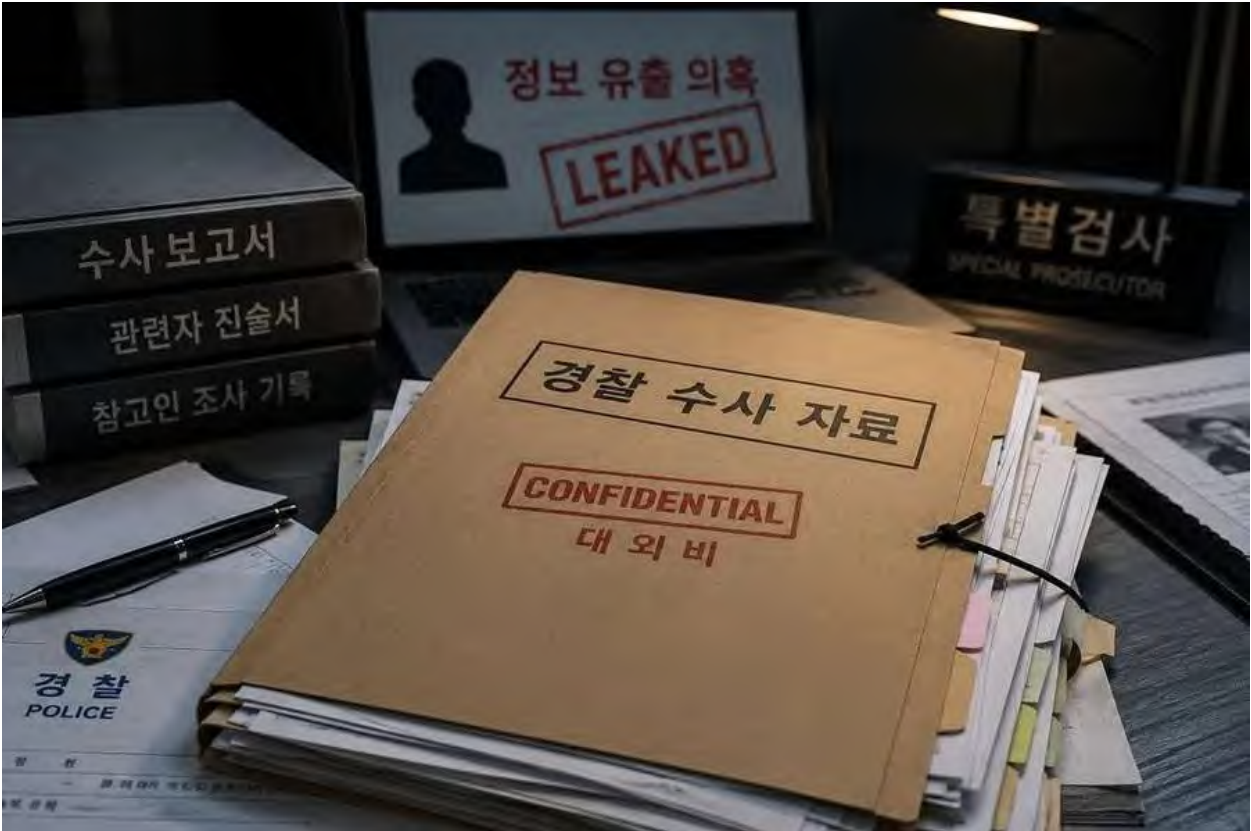


FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: S Korea Pols Fear Police Helped FamilyFed

Knut Holdhus
August 5, 2026



Leak of confidential document. Illustration: ChatGPT



MBC News



Aggressively promoting special prosecutor investigations: Lee Jae-myung, President of South Korea since June 4, 2025

Special prosecutors expand South Korean inquiry into police information leak as new Family Federation witness is called

South Korea's Second Comprehensive Special Prosecutor Team, an independent investigative body established to examine allegations connected to the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) - commonly called [Unificationism](#) (통일교) in South Korea - has according to a [report by MBC News](#) on 5th August widened its investigation by questioning another prominent figure linked to the [movement](#). The latest witness is a former vice chairman of the newspaper [Segye Ilbo](#), a publication founded by [Family Federation](#) co-founder [Sun Myung Moon](#) (문선명).

Unlike ordinary criminal investigations conducted by the public prosecution service, a special prosecutor (특별검사, translated as "special prosecutor" or "special counsel") is appointed by law to investigate particularly sensitive or politically controversial cases where an independent inquiry is considered necessary. Such investigations are typically limited in duration and focus on specific allegations authorized by the National Assembly. The current inquiry is being conducted by the Second Comprehensive Special Prosecutor Team, one of several special prosecutorial bodies created to investigate different aspects of major political

scandals from recent years mainly involving opposition politicians and their perceived supporters.

According to the [report](#), investigators recently questioned Yang (양), a former vice chairman of [Segye Ilbo](#), as a witness rather than as a suspect. Yang has held several senior positions within organizations affiliated with the [Family Federation](#), including serving as chairman of the board of the Unification Theological Seminary in the United States and chairman of the board of the Washington Times Foundation. He is widely regarded as a close associate of [Family Federation](#) President [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자).

The investigators reportedly focused on allegations that a police investigation into gambling by senior [Family Federation](#) leaders was improperly obstructed before it could develop into a full criminal case. South Koreans aren't allowed to gamble at casinos not regulated by the country. But this law extends even when traveling overseas.

The original investigation dates back to June 2022, when the Chuncheon Police Agency obtained intelligence suggesting that [Hak Ja Han](#) and several other senior [Family Federation](#) officials had gambled at casinos in Las Vegas between 2008 and 2011. Chuncheon is the capital of Gangwon Province in northeastern South Korea, and the Chuncheon Police Agency is the regional police authority responsible for criminal investigations within its jurisdiction. In South Korea, police agencies frequently begin investigations after receiving intelligence reports, anonymous tips, or other preliminary information that may indicate possible criminal activity.



The Korea Times wrote on [11th February](#) that a court testimony from February 2026 revealed that the case officially entered law enforcement channels via the foreign affairs division of the Chuncheon Police Station. An officer from that station testified that they compiled an intelligence report based on local leads.

Korea JoongAng Daily

The Korea JoongAng Daily pointed out in a [report](#) on 12th June 2025 that the original source to the allegations of illegal gambling in Las Vegas remains legally anonymous. At the same time, media speculation heavily focuses on the factional infighting within the [movement](#) resulting in a prolonged legal battle in the USA over funds and assets. Because of breakaway factions following [Sun Myung Moon](#)'s death in 2012, external observers and media analysts frequently speculated that disgruntled former insiders or rival factions leaked the financial and casino records to investigators.

In this context, a well-informed source in the USA draws attention to the fact that the niche news agency UPI under a leadership that includes Hyun Jin "Preston" Moon and Youngjun Kim, the leaders of one of the above-mentioned breakaway factions, has published a [string of investigative reports](#) on legal actions in South Korea regarding the [Unification Church](#) / [Family Federation](#). At an early stage after allegations of gambling had surfaced, UPI published a series of articles penned by Youngjun Kim highlighting the Las Vegas claims, in articles on [8th July](#), [15th July](#), and [10th October 2025](#).



Former lawmaker Kweon Seong-dong (January 2025)



Jeong Won-ju (Jan. 19, 2025)

According to the allegations, the gambling involved wagers totaling approximately 60 billion won, equivalent to roughly US\$45 million at the time. The figure refers to the total amount reportedly wagered rather than confirmed gambling losses.

However, the investigation allegedly never progressed as expected. Prosecutors are examining claims that confidential police information was leaked before investigators could proceed with a full inquiry. According to these allegations, details of the investigation reached political circles through Kweon Seong-dong (권창영), a former lawmaker from the conservative People Power Party, and that this disclosure ultimately contributed to the investigation being halted.

The [article](#) notes that these allegations overlap with an earlier investigation conducted by the Special Prosecutor investigating allegations surrounding former First Lady Kim Keon Hee (김건희). That earlier special prosecutor indicted both Kweon Seong-dong (권창영) and [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) in connection with the alleged exchange of confidential police intelligence. However, according to the report, that investigation did not fully determine how the confidential information had originally been leaked from within the police organization.

The current investigation is therefore examining a broader chain of events. Rather than focusing only on whether confidential information was shared, investigators are attempting to establish exactly how police intelligence left official channels, who received it, and whether those actions contributed to the alleged suppression of the gambling investigation.

As part of that effort, the Second Comprehensive Special

Prosecutor Team has recently questioned several individuals connected with the [Family Federation](#). Among them is former chief of staff Jeong Won-ju (정원주), who has already [been interviewed](#) regarding the alleged leak of investigative information. The questioning of former Segye Ilbo vice chairman Yang represents another step in the special prosecutor's attempt to reconstruct the events surrounding one of the most politically sensitive investigations involving the [Family Federation](#) in recent years.

Text: Knut Holdhus, editor

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A Search For Truth Shaping Unification Thought

August 1, 2026 • The News Desk



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The logo of the Segye Ilbo

He found the comprehensive explanation he sought: A life in search of truth led the

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SEARCH OF TRUTH LED THE thinker behind Unification Thought to Sun Myung Moon

What kind of legacy does a religion leave behind? Is it found primarily in its sacred texts and doctrines, or in the lives of the people it shapes? In a reflective [column](#) published on 31st July 2026, [Segye Ilbo](#) religion correspondent Jeong Seong-su (정성수) argues that the most enduring measure of a religious tradition is the character and achievements of those it inspires.



Dr. Sang Hun Lee (이상현 – 1914-1997), ca. 1974. Photo: [FFWPU](#). Improved resolution by ChatGPT, August 2026.



Religious affairs reporter Jeong Seong-su (정성수). Photo (2025): [Segye Ilbo](#)

As an example, Jeong turns to Lee Sang-heon (이상현 – 1914-1997, usually anglicized as Sang Hun Lee), a physician, philosopher, and one of the leading intellectual figures of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), in Korea generally referred to as [Unificationism](#) (통일교).

Although Lee devoted much of his later life to developing what became known as [Unification Thought](#) (통일사상) [[See editor's note 1 below](#)] – a systematic presentation of the teachings of Rev. [Sun Myung Moon](#) (문선명) – his path to religion was anything but straightforward. Before becoming a religious thinker, he was a young activist involved in Korea's struggle against Japanese colonial rule, experimented with communist ideas, and spent years wrestling with profound questions about human existence.

In his [article](#), Jeong presents Lee not simply as a religious leader but as someone driven by an intense search for answers. Rather than focusing on technical philosophical concepts, the column emphasizes the personal journey that led Lee from political activism to philosophy and ultimately to faith. It also places his work in the historical context of the ideological conflicts that shaped South Korea during the Cold War, when many intellectuals believed that competing worldviews were as important as military strength.

Sang Hun Lee (Lee Sang-heon) was not born into religious leadership. During Japan's colonial rule over Korea, he became involved in the anti-Japanese student movement, joining demonstrations that demanded Korean independence. In the course of his political activities, he also became associated for a time with communist organizations, which attracted many young activists who saw socialism as a possible path toward liberation from colonial rule.

His activism came at a high personal cost. Japanese authorities arrested him several times, subjected him to harsh interrogations and torture, and expelled him from school twice – once because of his anti-Japanese activities and once because of his involvement with left-wing political groups. His early years were shaped by political upheaval, personal



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sacrifice, and uncertainty. *The latest version of Unification Thought: [New Essentials of Unification Thought](#), published in 2006.*

According to Jeong, Lee eventually abandoned communism, not because of changing political circumstances but because he became dissatisfied with its understanding of human nature. He began asking questions that he felt political ideology alone could not answer.

He wondered where feelings such as patriotism and love for humanity ultimately came from. If people are simply products of biological evolution, he asked, how can one explain acts of complete self-sacrifice, in which individuals willingly risk or even give up their own lives for others? Such questions led him beyond politics into a broader search for life's meaning.

His inquiry soon became even more fundamental. Why do human beings exist? Why should they live? Why should they love one another? These were no longer political questions but questions about the purpose of human life itself.

Determined to find satisfactory answers, Lee immersed himself in the study of many different religious and philosophical traditions. He explored Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, and numerous works of philosophy. He also studied the teachings of the Japanese new religious movement Seichō-no-Ie [[See editor's note 2 below](#)], hoping they might provide the comprehensive explanation he sought.

Yet none of these traditions fully satisfied him. Looking back years later, Lee described this period as one of the darkest chapters of his life. He recalled feeling so overwhelmed by the apparent lack of meaning in life that he even considered suicide. Jeong presents this not merely as personal despair but as evidence of the seriousness with which Lee pursued his search for truth.

According to Lee's later recollections, everything changed in 1956, when he first met Rev. [Sun Myung Moon](#) (문선명) and encountered the [Unification Principles](#) (통일원리), the central theological text of [Unificationism](#).

Lee believed he had finally found a framework that connected the many questions he had struggled with for years. What particularly impressed him was its explanation of history, which sought to present human history, human purpose, and [God's](#) plan within a single coherent narrative. Rather than seeing history as a series of unrelated events, Lee felt he had discovered an interpretation that gave human life an overall direction and meaning.

To be continued. Part 2 coming soon

Text: *Knut Holdhus, editor*

Featured image above: *Sun Myung Moon (left) and Sang Hun Lee on a hike to the Korean mountain Mt. Seorak in 1972. Photo: [FFWPU](#)*

[Editor's note 1: Unification Thought] is a philosophical system developed by Sang Hun Lee (1914-1997) from the teachings of [Sun Myung Moon](#) (1920-2012). It was designed as a comprehensive worldview that integrates religion, philosophy, science, ethics, and social theory into a single framework centered on [God's](#) purpose for creation.

At its core, [Unification Thought](#) argues that reality reflects the nature of [God](#), understood as a being of "dual characteristics": internal character and external form, as well as masculinity and femininity in harmonious unity. Human beings, according to this view, are created to embody divine love through mature relationships, family life, creativity, and moral responsibility.

The system places strong emphasis on purpose and

The system places strong emphasis on purpose and relationality. Everything exists through “give-and-take action”, a dynamic process of interaction that produces harmony, growth, and development. Human history is interpreted as a providential process aimed at restoring the ideal world originally intended by God, overcoming alienation, conflict, and selfishness caused by the human fall.

Unification Thought also attempts to respond to modern ideologies. It criticizes both materialistic Marxism and purely secular humanism while also seeking to modernize traditional religious thinking. Its ethical and political applications include theories of education, art, economics, and social organization grounded in family-centered ethics and mutual cooperation. The philosophical system can be regarded as a synthesis of Eastern and Western thought, religion and science.]

[Editor’s note 2: Seichō-no-le is a Japanese new religious movement founded in 1930 by Masaharu Taniguchi. Its name can be translated as “House of Growth” or “Home of Infinite Life.” The movement emerged during a period of intense religious innovation in Japan and sought to present a universal spiritual message that could transcend the boundaries of traditional religions.



Masaharu Taniguchi, 21st December 1958. Photo: 日本教文社 / Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain](#) image.

At the heart of Seichō-no-le’s teaching is the belief that the material world is only a partial expression of a deeper spiritual reality. It holds that human beings are, in their true essence, children of God who possess an inherently perfect spiritual nature. Suffering, illness, and misfortune are understood primarily as the result of mistaken thinking or an incomplete awareness of this spiritual reality. By cultivating gratitude, positive thinking, prayer, and harmony with God, individuals can experience both spiritual and practical transformation.

The movement draws on a wide range of religious and philosophical traditions. Its teachings incorporate elements of Mahayana Buddhism, Shinto, Christianity, Confucian ethics, and Western idealist philosophy. Rather than insisting that only one religion is true, Seichō-no-le teaches that all major religions express different aspects of the same divine truth. This inclusive approach helped attract followers who were interested in spirituality without abandoning their existing religious backgrounds.

During the mid-twentieth century, Seichō-no-le became one of Japan’s largest and most influential new religious movements, publishing millions of copies of Taniguchi’s writings and establishing branches around the world. While it has at times been associated with conservative social and political causes in Japan, in recent decades it has increasingly emphasized environmental stewardship, peace, and sustainable living as practical expressions of its spiritual principles.

For intellectuals such as Sang Hun Lee, Seichō-no-le was attractive because it offered a systematic attempt to explain the relationship between God, humanity, and the universe. Although Lee ultimately concluded that it did not fully answer the philosophical questions that concerned him, his study of the movement formed an important stage in his broader search for a comprehensive worldview.]

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