

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: S. Korean President's Party's Corrupt Lobbying

Knut Holdhus
December 6, 2025



Hankyoreh journalists at work. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, with added logos



The party of President Lee Jae-myung who appointed the special prosecutors, is now being scrutinized as allegedly gifts extend into Democratic Party ranks

In an article published 5th December, the major South Korean daily newspaper Hankyoreh Shimbun, known for its progressive, liberal editorial stance, cracked open a new chapter in the ongoing story about special prosecutors detaining and interrogating persons they consider their enemies in or associated with the conservative People Power Party. The newspaper report had the long headline "[Yoon Yeong-ho: Tens of millions of won in Unification Church funds were delivered to Democratic Party lawmakers.](#)" It contains allegations that the governing Democratic Party will not find easy to respond to.



Yoon Yeong-ho, Dec. 5, 2021

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The recent revelations emerging from the investigation into alleged political lobbying by figures connected to the [Family Federation](#) have opened an unexpected and potentially consequential chapter in South Korea's ongoing political discourse. What began primarily as an inquiry into whether individuals within or around the previously ruling People Power Party may have received money or favors from the [religious organization](#) is now broadening in scope, following testimony that implicates senior members of the governing Democratic Party as well.

At the center of this expanding controversy is [Yoon Yeong-ho](#) (윤영호), the former head of the [Family Federation's](#) World Headquarters, who is currently in detention and on trial for delivering money and valuables to individuals close to First Lady Kim Keon-hee (김건희) through a figure known publicly as "Geonjin Beopsa", a fortune-teller named Jeon Seong-bae (전성배).

During interviews with the team of Special Prosecutor Min Jung-gi (민중기), [Yoon](#) reportedly acknowledged that his activities went beyond contact with conservative political circles. He stated that he had also provided substantial financial support - amounting to tens of millions of won - to influential Democratic Party lawmakers during the Moon Jae-in (문재인) administration.

These remarks, first revealed through The Hankyoreh's reporting, raise questions about the breadth of [Yoon](#)'s political engagements and whether investigators adequately examined all sides of the alleged lobbying network. With only about three weeks left before the special prosecutor's mandate runs out, the disclosures have triggered debate about potential investigative blind spots and the broader implications for political accountability.



Moon Jae-in, President of South Korea 2017-2022

According to the newspaper's findings, [Yoon](#)'s testimony came during early August interviews, at a stage when the investigation was still beginning to take shape. Yoon is said to have asserted that he delivered tens of millions of won each to two senior Democratic Party politicians during the Moon Jae-in administration (2017-2022).

The large daily reports that Yoon further stated that these politicians had visited the Cheon Jeong Temple - one of the [Family Federation](#)'s central holy sites located in Gapyeong, Gyeonggi Province - where they met with [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자), the leader and widow of the man she founded the [Federation](#) with - [Sun Myung Moon](#) (문선명). According to Yoon, the lawmakers were given funds following these visits.



One of the sacred sites of the [Family Federation](#) - the Cheon Jeong Temple in Gapyeong, South Korea. The building houses a museum in honor of the life of the [True Parents](#)

The Hankyoreh newspaper is known for its investigative reporting and critical coverage of government power - especially conservative administrations. Now it seems the paper is also taking a closer look at the ruling Democratic Party.



2024 logo of South Korea's Democratic Party - Minjudang

The daily writes that one of the two individuals [Yoon](#) mentioned, is reportedly still serving as a Democratic Party lawmaker representing a constituency in the Yeongnam region. The other is a former member of the National Assembly. [Yoon](#) allegedly told investigators that between 2018 and 2019, he delivered 40 million won (US \$ 27,200) in cash and a luxury watch valued at about 10 million won (US \$ 6,800) to the sitting lawmaker. To the former lawmaker, he said he provided 30 million won (US \$ 20,400) in 2020. These claims were not formalized in a written statement but

were instead documented in an investigative report summarizing his interview.

[Yoon](#) elaborated on these points during his 5th December court appearance before the 27th Criminal Division of the Seoul Central District Court. There, he described himself as having been closer to the Democratic Party than to the People Power Party during the years 2017 to 2021. He also added that

several Democratic Party-affiliated figures had direct interactions with [Hak Ja Han](#).



The special prosecutors have no comment on investigations into the Democratic Party. Here, Chief Special Prosecutor Min Jung-gi who sent [Dr. Hak Ja Han](#) and Pastor Son Hyun-bo to long-term detention. Min is the head of a huge team of special prosecutors with extensive investigative powers. Image generated by Chat GPT

[Yoon](#) asserted that he had provided the special prosecutor with a list containing four individuals - including an incumbent official at the ministerial level and sitting National Assembly members - to whom he claimed some form of support had been given. His remarks suggested that [Family Federation](#) outreach had not been ideologically one-sided but instead had sought political connections across the aisle, under the broader narrative of promoting national unity.

However, even as he affirmed that he had shared this information with investigators, [Yoon](#) did not disclose specific names during the court session, nor did he describe in detail the scale or nature of any alleged exchanges. His statements nonetheless introduce a new dimension to the investigation, broadening what had been largely viewed as a case involving elements within conservative political circles.

The [article](#) notes that the special prosecutor's team declined to answer the Hankyoreh Shimbun's questions about whether it had pursued follow-up investigations into the Democratic Party side of the allegations. Meanwhile, both lawmakers identified by [Yoon](#) have categorically denied his claims. The sitting lawmaker dismissed suggestions that he had ever visited the Cheon Jeong Temple or received large sums of cash or an expensive watch from

the [religious organization](#). The former lawmaker likewise stated that he had never met [Hak Ja Han](#) nor received any financial support from [Family Federation](#) affiliates.

As the investigation approaches its endpoint, these revelations place pressure on the special prosecutor to account for the breadth and even-handedness of its inquiries. Whether [Yoon](#)'s statements will lead to new investigative action or political repercussions remains uncertain, but they have undeniably complicated the narrative surrounding the [Family Federation](#)'s alleged role in political influence-peddling.

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Likely Long Legal Battle Ahead For Mother Han

• December 4, 2025

• Knut Holdhus

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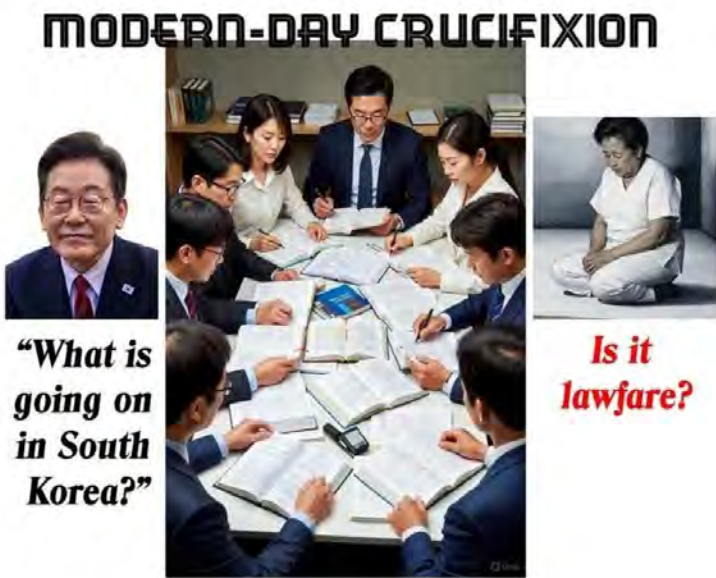
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Already at start of trial against Mother Han (82) it seems clear that legal troubles could persist as President Lee Jae-myung announces plan to dissolve religious groups he doesn't like

Second (final) part of extracts from a report by Dr. Michael Balcomb, President of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification in Europe and the Middle East, given at an international prayer meeting for Family Federation members on Zoom 3rd December 2025. It is Dr. Balcomb's personal report, not an official Family Federation document and has no legal significance. Slightly edited.



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Continued from [part 1](#).

They definitely want to be efficient and as quick as they can. There are about 12 witnesses that are going to be called. It was suggested having them come in in groups of three or four.

And the first stage will be to examine any previous written statements and authenticate any documents that are presented. Then in round two, there'll be questioning and cross examination.



From a prayer meeting in support of [Mother Han](#) outside Seoul Detention Center, November 2025. Screenshot from video by [FFWPU](#)

To [Mother's team](#), they asked,

"You must specify exactly allegations that you dispute. It's not enough to give a general response. You need to be specific, and you need to indicate whether you are disputing the electronic evidence or whether you admit that these contents are authentic."

Of course that doesn't mean admitting the interpretation that's put on them, but agreeing whether these are factual things. Otherwise a lot of time will be wasted.

To the prosecution side, the court wondered about this charge about foreign political contributions,

"Are they legal in those countries? And if they are, can we even think of applying our own law extraterritorially, in other words, in other countries?"

And then there was some discussion about this term that the prosecution's relying on painting [True Mother as the one at the middle of everything](#).

Generally, I can say that [...] there was **a lot of interest**. Actually, there was a lot of people queued up to be in the hearing. But that court had only 30 public seats. So, kindly the court provided an overflow room with a video link – in fact, they might have provided two.

There was a lot of press there, domestic press, foreign correspondents – several from Japan. And as you all know, it was immediately reported in the Korean press.

Court officers required discipline and stopped things that weren't allowed. The proceedings were orderly and restrained.

Perhaps the most important thing for us is that [Mother](#) was asked if she wanted to make a **statement**. And she did want to make a statement [...].

I must emphasize that this is an unofficial translation, and it might actually be taken from notes, but I'm going to read it to you.

"Even after passing the age of 80, I have lived with the dream of attending the Creator, our Heavenly Parent, here on earth. Therefore, in April 2025, since the Creator's dream according to the principles of

Dr. Michael Balcomb, Nov. 2025. Screenshot from live transmission by [FFWPU](#)

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[Mother Han](#), asked to make a statement on 1st Dec. 2025. Photo: [FFWPU](#)

creation was that he wished to live on earth with his **True Parents** embracing his children. Knowing this, I devoted my entire life of 80 years to fulfilling that dream.

And I made a firm resolution that I must build a **palace** where the Creator could dwell." – That, of course, is the **Cheonwon Temple** – "And so I invested myself completely in that mission.

I have no interest in the politics of this nation. My entire life, instead, I have educated people while praying for world peace, for one human family, and for all people who attend our Heavenly Parent to become true families, receive Heavenly Parent's love, and ultimately go to heaven.



US clergy and **Family Federation** members from Los Angeles outside Seoul Detention Center 4th December 2025. Photo: **FFWPU**

For this reason, political leaders, religious leaders and scholars around the world know me as the Mother of Peace, as **Holy Mother Han**.

Regarding this case as well, since they have observed me for a long time, it is true that they are deeply concerned about the current situation.

Many high level figures sincerely hope that this trial will be conducted according to proper democratic principles.

And finally, I am not the kind of person that the special prosecutor describes.

I have absolutely no fear before heaven. Rather, I love heaven.

Because my lifelong wish has been to realize Heavenly Parent's dream on earth, I ask you that if given the opportunity in the midst of this unfortunate incident, you come to Gapyeong and see for yourselves.

Please come to Gapyeong and see what I have done."



South Korean President Lee Jae-myung at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, USA 26th Aug. 2025. U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Fraser / Arlington National Cemetery. **Public domain** image. Cropped

[...] But the next day, President Lee Jae-myung – out of nowhere, almost – announced a **plan to request the dissolution of religious groups**.

We were not named. And we're not the only ones that are determined to be not for the public benefit, by which he actually means speaking out against the government.

Another pastor who's in prison, is Busan Pastor Son Hyun-bo. His son Chance points out,

"It's the prophetic duty of the church to rebuke evil and wrongdoing in public office."

If churches cannot do that, then they have no religious freedom worth mentioning.

But it's interesting that this came up the very next day.

And it was the same when **Mother** spoke two months ago when she was being questioned because it's a clear challenge that people should honor **God** and not the government of the day first.

So **what about bail**? That's a question in everyone's mind.

And I think Karen [the moderator of the above-mentioned Zoom event] said, “Maybe a decision will be made on the 4th or 5th December.”



From a rally at King Sejong's Plaza in central Seoul 13th Nov. 2025 led by religious leaders from a wide variety of faiths in support of *Mother Han*. Photo: *FFWPU*

Well, it might. The latest application was made on 1st December. But typically, that decision can take many days or even weeks.

And we don't know how long it will take. We don't know what pressures there might be to deny bail.

And until then, *True Mother* must remain in the detention center, the Kuchiso (구치소), as it is called in Korea.

And then finally, you might ask, “How long can all this take?”

I don't have an answer to that but just consider a few facts. This case will have to present a lot of evidence, and that evidence will have to be weighed and challenged. There are 12 witnesses, and on the first afternoon, one witness appeared by video, and it's not even clear if that witness is finished.

Also, you might think, “Surely they're meeting every day.”

No, there's only one hearing a week on average, maybe five a month. So it could take many weeks to work through these witnesses at that rate.

And the holidays are coming up, so frankly, a lot of prayer is still needed that this does not drive on and on and on.



From a prayer meeting in support of *Mother Han* outside Seoul Detention Center, November 2025. Screenshot from video by *FFWPU*

Of course, I wish I could give you more encouraging news. And I think it is true, as several people said, [...] that out of this challenge is going to come something great.

But at the same time, I think we also need to be realistic and manage our expectations. If the reality is we don't expect a decision on bail for a couple of weeks, then it would be a mistake to get upset if it doesn't happen the next day.

It would be important to have a sense of how the timing will be. I think it's very important to keep our devotion and dedication. [...] It's easy to think, “What I do doesn't matter. Everything that I've offered, every fast, every prayer, every effort made in Korea, doesn't seem to be working.”

But we don't know that. It's much too early to tell how *God* will use our devotion, how *God* will use this incredible offering that *True Mother* is making.

I want to encourage us all, to keep the faith, as it were, to keep making the same commitments and investments. They do make a difference.

And I know that they're incredibly encouraging to *True Mother*.

You can imagine her biggest worry – one of them – is that we will, in fact, lose faith and power and stop working.

So any testimony that we can give to the contrary – and we're going to

be in Korea next week – to say, “No, [Mother](#), actually, we’re working harder than ever before, and good things are happening!”

This is probably the very best way that we can support [True Mother](#) right now.

See [part 1: Balcomb: “Prosecutors’ Case Is Politically Driven”](#)

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Featured image above: Left: President Lee Jae-myung in USA 25th August 2025. Official White House Photo by Daniel Torok. [Public domain](#) image. Edited. Center and right: Illustrations by Grok xAI, 2025.

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