FFWPU Europe and Middle East: S Korea's Government Approves of Its Probe of Family Federation

Knut Holdhus
September 29, 2026

Min Joong-gi, the head of an army of special prosecutors with extensive investigative powers. Image: Grok xAI

고위공직자범죄수사처
Corruption Investigation Office For High-ranking Officials

CIO, Government of South Korea

No charges against South Korean special prosecutors after CIO finds insufficient evidence that investigators deliberately delayed or concealed the case

Yoon Yeong-ho, former director general of the international headquarters of the Family Federation, February 11, 2022

연합뉴스

Yonhap News, South Korea's designated public news agency and the country's largest wire service

The South Korean Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials (CIO) has cleared Special Prosecutor Min Joong-gi (민중기) and other members of the former Kim Keon-hee (김건희) special prosecutor team of allegations that they deliberately conducted a biased investigation into alleged political donations by the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. The decision, announced on 29th September 2026, concerned accusations that the special prosecutor's office had obtained evidence of alleged payments to politicians from both the ruling and opposition camps but had investigated only politicians affiliated with the conservative People Power Party.

See also Alleged Bias: Investigating the Investigators

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The decision was reported by a large number of South Korean media outlets.

Evidence was obtained but not immediately transferred

According to Yonhap News, the CIO concluded on 28th September that there was insufficient evidence to establish criminal responsibility. Its investigation confirmed that a prosecutor working for the Kim Keon-hee (김건희) special prosecutors had obtained testimony from former Family Federation World Headquarters director Yoon Yeong-ho (윤영호) indicating that money or valuables had been given to politicians. The prosecutors prepared a report on the interview, and the information was

subsequently reported to special prosecutor Min himself.

Prominent politician in governing party cleared: Jeon Jae-soo (2023)

However, Yonhap noted that the special prosecutor's team did not immediately undertake separate investigative measures concerning the testimony. The case was eventually transferred to the police in December 2025, approximately three and a half months after the testimony had been obtained.

The issue became politically contentious because Yoon had reportedly mentioned politicians from both major political camps. In particular, he said that he had given two expensive watches and tens of millions of won to Jeon Jae-soo (전재수), then a Democratic Party lawmaker and later Busan mayor, allegedly in connection with requests concerning Family Federation interests such as the proposed Korea-Japan undersea tunnel. Yoon also reportedly said that he had provided money to former Democratic Party lawmaker Lim Jong-seong (임종성).

The special counsel team had, however, treated these allegations as outside the scope of its investigation and did not formally investigate them at that time.

The CIO found no evidence of deliberate concealment

Hankyoreh, one of South Korea's largest and most influential daily newspapers

Hankyoreh focused particularly on what the CIO discovered about the special prosecutor team's internal handling of the information. It reported that the team had not simply ignored Yoon's testimony. Investigators found evidence that the testimony had been registered as a separate preliminary investigation and that the possibility of transferring the matter to another investigative agency had been considered.

According to the CIO, statements from the Special Prosecutor, former Special Prosecutor Deputy Park Sang-jin (박상진) and prosecutors involved in the matter were consistent: they said that they had considered accepting the case formally and then transferring it to another competent investigative body. Internal documents seized during CIO searches of the special prosecutor's offices also reportedly contained evidence of such discussions.

Hankyoreh further reported that the prosecutors consistently denied receiving instructions from Min or Park to delay or conceal the investigation.

Munhwa Ilbo, a conservative newspaper and South Korea's only national evening daily, ranking among the top ten dailies by circulation

Newspim, a prominent South Korean economic and financial news agency and multimedia company based in Seoul

Munhwa Ilbo likewise highlighted the significance of the internal documents. The newspaper reported that the CIO conducted two searches of the special prosecutor's offices and seized computers and mobile phones belonging to Min and Park. Investigators subsequently questioned members of the investigative team and, more recently, Min himself as a suspect.

Despite confirming that the testimony had been placed in the investigation record without additional immediate investigative action, the CIO concluded that this alone did not constitute criminal dereliction of duty.

The legal question was not simply whether there had been a delay

A central point emphasized by several outlets was the distinction between delayed action and the criminal offence of dereliction of duty.

Newspim quoted the CIO as explaining that, under Supreme Court precedent, merely delaying an investigation or making an error in the course of one's duties does not automatically constitute dereliction of duty. Prosecutors must establish that a public official consciously abandoned or neglected an official responsibility.

The CIO acknowledged that approximately three and a half months elapsed between the acquisition of

Yoon's testimony and its eventual transfer to the police. But it concluded that the delay itself was insufficient to establish criminal intent, particularly because internal discussions about registering and transferring the case had continued during that period.

Kyunghyang Shinmun, a large and influential South Korean national daily, ranked among the top ten in terms of circulation
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Special Counsel Act named after Former First Lady of South Korea Kim Keon-hee

Kyunghyang Shinmun similarly stressed the Supreme Court precedent that simple investigative delays or mistakes in carrying out official duties do not by themselves amount to dereliction of duty. The newspaper reported that the CIO found no evidence that Min, his deputy or other prosecutors had instructed investigators to delay or conceal the case.

Was the matter actually within the special prosecutor's jurisdiction?

Another important element of the CIO's reasoning concerned the legal scope of the Kim Keon-hee Special Counsel Act.

Yonhap News reported that the CIO said it would be difficult to conclude definitively that the alleged receipt of money by politicians fell within the statutory investigative mandate of the Kim Keon-hee special prosecutors. Consequently, even if Yoon's testimony were assumed to be truthful, the special prosecutor team could reasonably have considered the allegations outside its jurisdiction.

Hankyoreh made a related point: although the special counsel law contains provisions concerning the transfer of unfinished investigations when the special prosecutor's investigative period ends, it does not clearly specify a particular deadline for transferring a matter that the special prosecutors consider outside their statutory investigative scope.

This distinction was therefore central to the CIO's decision. The question was not simply whether the special prosecutor team should have acted sooner, but whether its handling of the information demonstrated an intentional abandonment of a legal duty.

The later investigation

Munhwa Ilbo reported that the case involving Jeon and other political figures was ultimately transferred to the police when the special prosecutor's investigative period ended in December 2025. It was subsequently investigated by a joint prosecution-police investigative unit dealing with alleged political-religious corruption.

According to the newspaper, the investigation into the alleged receipt of money by Jeon and other political figures was eventually closed through decisions not to refer the cases for prosecution or because prosecution was considered legally unavailable. Four people, including a former aide to Jeon, were instead indicted on evidence-destruction charges, with a first-instance ruling scheduled for 30th September.

MBC News, the news division of the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), one of South Korea's four major nationwide television and radio networks.

Meanwhile, MBC News summarized the CIO's conclusion as follows: although the special prosecutor team had obtained and internally reported Yoon's allegations, there was no evidence that Min or other investigators had ordered the investigation to be delayed or concealed. Nor could the alleged political payments necessarily be regarded as falling within the special prosecutor's statutory mandate.

The 29th September reports establish a distinction between the factual handling of Yoon's allegations and the criminal question of whether that handling amounted to intentional dereliction of duty. The CIO confirmed that the testimony was obtained, reported to senior members of the special prosecutor team, and not immediately transferred to another investigative authority. At the same time, it found evidence that the possibility of transferring the matter had been considered internally and found no evidence of an instruction to suppress or conceal it. On that basis, the CIO concluded that the evidence was insufficient to establish criminal responsibility and closed the case with a finding of "no charges" (혐의없음).

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toward a Kingdom that transforms the world

Dr. Michael Balcomb, speaking online on 20th September 2026. Screenshot from live transmission by FFWPU

The Kingdom Within

Part 3 *(final) of a sermon by Dr. Michael Balcomb, President of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification in Europe and the Middle East, given online at an international Sunday worship service for the Nordic countries on Zoom 20th September 2026.*

Continued from part 1: The Kingdom Within

Continued from part 2: The Inner Kingdom and the Outer Kingdom

There is a trap and a temptation which I think it's worth thinking about today. We can be tempted – and I think we are being tempted as a movement – to withdraw into this entirely spiritual path, treating "The Kingdom Within" as the main goal. I candidly see this as escapism or denial, pushing all the work back on God, and expecting all the results only in the far the future or after death.

Leo Tolstoy and his wife Sofia Tolstaya in Crimea in 1902. Unknown author. Public domain image. Cropped

We can look at two men who took this "Kingdom Within" thinking to extremes in relatively modern times, like Russian **Leo Tolstoy**, who underwent a radical conversion and wrote a book "The Kingdom Within" and proceeded to give away everything and renounce the world. But he did so without consulting his wife, leaving her to look after their 13 children and causing the whole family great grief.

Mahatma Gandhi and his wife Kasturba on their return to India from South Africa in 1915. Unknown author. Public domain image. Cropped

Or then there was **Mahatma Gandhi**, whose extreme asceticism became expensive and complicated for others to maintain. Later in life he resorted to bizarre demonstrations of self-control that today

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would be considered abusive [See editor's note below].

Yes, they were both saints, in their own way. But they missed the real point of life.

The True Parents teach us that all **three blessings** given by God in Genesis 1:28 must be fulfilled: to be fruitful, multiply, and take dominion. While we used to say that fulfilling them in the right order was the key and the wrong order led to the fall, in truth they have to be fulfilled in parallel and indeed cannot be fulfilled independently or alone.

This is why the True Parents' second motto – "Live for the sake of others" – is so important, to prevent the accomplishment of the blessings from being just selfish. We must not lose sight of the real goal: the Kingdom in substance. True Mother calls it "God's original dream".

Serenity in Difficult Times

Still, some might reasonably ask: Is it even still possible? Or have we blown it by our mistakes – and let's be honest about our real thinking here – by the mistakes of others?

I would say "not at all." Father Moon taught that the light and the dark follow each other naturally:

> "Nothing stands still in the universe, and everything has its turn. The sunny side is bound to become the dark side eventually, and the dark side is bound to turn sunny sooner or later. Therefore, once you are ready for the dark side, trained and conditioned to endure cold weather and difficulties, when you experience the sunny side, it is totally heaven for you. But the person who can deal only with the sunny side of life, and does not know how to cope with the difficult times will feel he is in total hell when the dark side comes around, which it inevitably will."

When things go wrong, it is not necessarily or always a sign of spiritual disfavour, punishment or judgment. It is part of the natural cycle.

Dr. Hak Ja Han, aka. Mother Han, being wheeled into the courtroom by her grandson Moon Shin-chul at Seoul Central District Court 31st August 2026. Photo: Dr. Michael Balcomb, resolution improved by ChatGPT, 6th September 2026

During my visits to the True Mother in confinement, I have witnessed her absolute serenity firsthand. She is unchanged no matter what

her absolute serenity firsthand. She is unchanged no matter what happens. Back in November last year at the detention center, and then just three weeks ago as she entered and left the court.

Going into the court, none of us knew what the judges would say. We were of course hoping for acquittal. I am sure she was too. But when she came out, I didn't see someone looking worried or distressed, but actually looking amazingly peaceful – no panic, no anger, no bitterness. Later we learned she told her lawyers, "Let's pray for the judges. They did their best. And this fight is not over." Her mindset is focused on how God can use the situation.

A New Thing

For our community, this is a testing time. I reflect on the Word of God in Isaiah 43:18-19 given to the people of Israel when they had lost everything – the Kingdom, the nation, the temple – and were in exile in Babylon:

> "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

I believe God is doing a new thing today. We are not going to be satisfied with the Kingdom within, though we will work on ourselves more diligently. We are not going to stay satisfied with a Kingdom amongst us, if it does not include everyone. We have to do it all: within, among, and throughout.

We're not going to win the world by theology or intellect or debate. The only way it will happen is if people can look at us and think,

> "I want what they have. They seem to be at peace. They seem to have something wonderful."

We have the teaching and the Blessing of True Parents. That light has to shine again. The troubles of today will one day be forgotten. But right now is an opportunity for all of us together to make a new start. We can't do it by ourselves; we have to do it as one family. And I know, and I can trust, that we will do it here together.

Thank you very much, everybody.

Continued from part 1: The Kingdom Within

Contrinued from part 2: The Inner Kingdom and the Outer Kingdom

***Featured image** above: Beyond the spiritual escapism of the "kingdom within". Illustration: ChatGPT, September 2026.*

[***Editor's note**: Late in life, Mahatma Gandhi practiced **brahmacharya** (celibacy) through controversial experiments to test his self-control and conquer sexual desire. He slept naked in the same bed as young women, including his teenage grandnieces **Abha** and **Manu**. While Gandhi insisted these tests were entirely spiritual and free of sexual contact, modern critics and historians widely view these actions as a serious **abuse of power** and emotional exploitation.]

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