

South Korea Cases, 1970-2012
Last Updated: 30 May 2019

torg	gname	onset	min	max
T702494	KOREAN YOUTH LEAGUE		1974	1974
T1662	CHONDAEHYOP (RADICAL STUDENT COALITION)		1990	1990
T1692	DO-OR-DIE CORPS FOR THE ABOLITION OF ANTI-PUBLIC TAXATION SYSTEMS		1990	1990

I. KOREAN YOUTH LEAGUE

Torg ID: 702494

Min. Group Date: 1974

Max. Group Date: 1974

Onset: NA

Aliases: None

Part 1. Bibliography

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Korean Youth League in Japan, Zainihon Chosen Seinen Domei

Group Formation: What is the earliest year the group was active? 1928 (Mitchell 1967) 1974 (GTD 2018).

Group End: What is the last year the group was active? 1974 (South China Morning Post, 1974). Why did it stop using political violence? Possibly repression - state forces raided the Youth League HQ six days after the assassination (South China Morning Post, 1974).

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

On March 21, 1928, the Korean Youth League formed in Japan as one of several pro-Communist organizations operating in the country (Mitchell 1967). Later, the group became affiliated with the Chosen Soren organization -- a pro-North Korean, pro-communist diaspora of Koreans living in Japan (Creamer 2003; South China Morning Post 1974).

Park Chung Hee became President of the Third Republic in South Korea after overthrowing the Second Republic through his coup in 1961. The initial years of his presidency saw restrictions and limits on individual freedoms and democracy. In 1972, Park imposed martial law. This, in turn, motivated groups such as the Youth Korean League to mobilize in response (Britannica, 2018). The group came to attention with their first attack in 1974 when they assassinated Park Chung Hee's wife instead of their initial target, the President himself (New York Times 1974). Their overall political aim wished to overthrow the regime after tensions arose after Park's declaration of the repression of natural rights and democratic practices (GTD 2018; Britannica 2018).

Geography

The Korean Youth League's first -- and likely only -- attack was in Seoul, South Korea in 1974 (GTD 2018). The group is based in Tokyo, Japan and planned the attack from there (Sifakis 2013; SCMP 1974).

Organizational Structure

No viable or significant information about the founder, structure, organization, size, membership, or funding resources of the Youth Korean League. The most prominent member of this organization was Moon Saw-Kwang, who assassinated Mrs. Park in 1974 (SCMP 1974). The Chosen Soren had formed after World War II by North Korean expatriates living in Japan.

External Ties

When this group was active, they did have some external ties and alliances with organizations such as the Korean Youth League in Japan and the Zainihon Chosen Seinen Domei, which were allies and branches of the Korean Youth League (Mitchell, 1967). The group was associated with the Chosen Soren, a pro-North Korean organization, according to testimony given by Moon Saw-Kwang during his trial (SCMP 1974; Creamer 2003). The Chosen Soren had formed after World War II by North Korean expatriates living in Japan. The group aimed to aid the North Korean government's efforts to reunify South and North Korea. However, the Chosen Soren found it difficult to pursue this goal after the Korean War and the growth of the US-Japanese military partnership during the Cold War (Creamer 2003).

Moon Saw-Kwang noted during his confession that the assassination was ordered by North Korean President Kim Il Sung, facilitated by two North Korean agents (Sifakis 2013). This would imply that the North Korean government might have been allegedly supplying resources to the Korean Youth League indirectly through the Chosen Soren.

Group Outcome

The group's first -- and last known -- violent attack was the political assassination of Korea's First Lady (GTD 2018). After the assassination of the First Lady, this group was heavily targeted by the government. Officials arrested the assassin -- Mun Se Kwang -- and charged him in court (Sifakis 2013). During the trial, Mun claimed to be acting on behalf of North Korean agents who had contacted him through the Chosen Soren organization (Sifakis 2013; South China Morning Post 1974). Japanese forces raided the group's headquarters six days after the assassination as well (South China Morning Post

1974). The group's political aims came to fruition in 1979 when the president's security chief killed him during a state dinner (Britannica 2018; Newton 2014).

Notes for Iris:

- only known political attack was in 1974 in an attempt to assassinate the president
- the group's aim becomes obsolete after 1979
- Park's rule triggered increase in political violence by student groups during the period (primarily leftist) -- crackdown on political opposition sparked change in

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II. CHONDAEHYOP (RADICAL STUDENT COALITION)

Torg ID: 1662

Min. Group Date: 1990

Max. Group Date: 1990

Onset: NA

Aliases: None

Part 1. Bibliography

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: National Association of University Student Councils, All Korea University Students Alliance, National Council of Representatives of University Students

Group Formation: What is the earliest year the group was active? 1987 (Macdonald)

Group End: What is the last year the group was active? 1992 as that was their second of their two only known attacks (Mickolus & Simmons, 1997). Why did it stop using political violence? Most likely because of government repression which led them to go into hiding after the 1992 attack and increasing pressures from courts, the police, and other forces, causing it to be banned (Mickolus & Simmons, 1997; Country Studies, 1990).

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

This group formed in 1987 as an umbrella organization of several existing student radical groups (MacDonald 2018). The group's principal grievance was directed towards the continued presence of US troops in South Korea. Many people, but especially students saw this continuance as a reminder of their blaming of the US for causing the permanent division of the Koreas, due to its involvement in the war.

As a result, Chondaehyop's political aims were to compel the US to withdraw its troops from Korea (Country Studies, 1990). The group also claimed to promote reunification with North Korea as a secondary goal (Macdonald 2018). As early as 1988, the group was directing students to attack US diplomatic and military sites (Country Studies 1990). However, the group's first independently organized attack was in May of 1990 when it damaged through arson and other means a US embassy in South Korea (GTD 2018).

Geography

This group operated primarily in South Korea. Their attacks mostly targeted foreign sites in Taegu, Kwangju, and Seoul (Country Studies, 1990; GTD 2018; Mickolus & Simmons, 1997; Significant Incidents 1990). There is no evidence of transnational attacks although the group did target foreign governments from within South Korea.

Organizational Structure

The leader of the group was Jong Chul (Los Angeles Times 1989). Many of Chondaehyop's members tend to be students and young radicalized individuals (Country Studies, 1990; Macdonald 2018; Hoare 2015). There is not a lot of information about the specific leadership structures of the leader or any information about its founder, but the main leadership tends to be elected as the head of its organization through a democratic-election style (The Chronicle, 1992). The Chondaehyop probably once had hundreds, if not more, members, as an event in 1990 involved over 300 people to stage an attack (Significant Incidents 1990, 21).

External Ties

Chondaehyop does have a lot of domestic alliances with other student organizations. This includes organizations such as the Seoul Area Federation of Student Councils or Soch'onngnyon (Country Studies, 1990). This group also held meetings with North Korean Student Committee shortly around the time of their first known attack in 1988 (Lee 1990). Additionally, this group was in a larger student alliance known as the Committee to Promote a Democratic Coalition (Hoare 2015).

Group Outcome

In 1989, Chondaehyop leaders were arrested under the auspices of the National Security Act (Country Studies 1990). These arrests hampered the group's ability to keep operating as it lost momentum; it had difficulty recruiting and retaining key members after 1989 (Country Studies 1990; Gittelsohn 1990).

After its 1992 attack in August, in which 50 students in South Korea bombed a US facility in Korea and a police department, the protestors fled. At an unknown date, the group was banned. However, an organization known as Hanchongryon later emerged as a future incarnation of Chondaehyop (AP 2003).

Notes for Iris:

- this is a student group, but they seem to be a wide-open source
- there were a lot of student groups protesting Park (and to some extent US occupation as well)
- Hanchongryon was a simpler (smaller) version of Chondaehyop that emerged in its wake

- III. DO-OR-DIE CORPS FOR THE ABOLITION OF ANTI-PUBLIC TAXATION SYSTEMS
Torg ID: 1692
Min. Group Date: 1990
Max. Group Date: 1990
Onset: NA

Aliases: None

Part 1. Bibliography

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<https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D8M333X4/download>

The Korea Times from May 12 cited an attack on 5/11 of an attack on a US cultural center by student radicals, but I could find no other evidence of a 'tax' attack around the same window.

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: No additional aliases.

Group Formation: What is the earliest year the group was active? 1990 (GTD 2018)

Group End: What is the last year the group was active? 1990 (GTD 2018). Why did it stop using political violence? Unknown.

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

There is not much information available about this group. It is known when it formed, but it came to attention for its first violent attack in May 1990 by damaging the South Korean government's tax commissioner office (GTD 2018). There is very little information about the specific details or motives of the attack. On May 11, there was an attack on a US cultural center by student radicals, but it did not seem to be related to this group (Korea Times 1990).

It is unclear what their specific aims were, but the group's choice of target might imply they were protesting the government's taxation systems.

Geography

The group's only known attack occurred in Seoul, Korea (GTD 2018).

Organizational Structure

No data or significant information about the overall organizational structure, leadership, founder, or funding of the group.

External Ties

No data on the external ties or alliances of the Do-or-Die corps with outside groups or states.

Group Outcome

After their one and only attack in 1990, there has not been another significant or major attack from the Do-or-Die corps. It is unclear the exact reason for their inactivity since 1990, but the government's stance on anti-public taxation systems did change after more relaxed stance on anti-public taxation systems, rather than their harsh enforcement in the years prior (Jun 2009).

Notes for Iris:

-correlation not causation but policy changes to taxation system did occur after