

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: S Korea's Vacillating Versions of Mother Han's Alleged Crimes

Knut Holdhus
August 10, 2026



Changing accounts of handbag and necklace. Illustration: ChatGPT



Yoon Yeong-ho, former director general of the international headquarters of the [Family Federation](#), February 11, 2022



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

Changing accounts, conflicting dates: Hak Ja Han's defense challenges prosecution's main witness Yoon over luxury gifts testimony

Part 2 of a 4-part series on the Hak Ja Han trial

See part 1: [How Reliable Is the Prosecution's Key Witness?](#)

As the 31st August verdict in the trial of [Family Federation](#) President [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) approaches, her defense team is challenging not only the chronology of the alleged 100 million won (in 2022 ca. US\$ 77,000) political contribution discussed in [part 1](#) of this series, but also former World Headquarters Director [Yoon Yeong-ho](#)'s accounts of luxury gifts allegedly given to former First Lady Kim Keon-hee (김건희).

A central question is whether [Yoon](#)'s testimony consistently supports the prosecution's allegation that [Hak Ja Han](#) - also called [Mother Han](#) - personally authorized the gifts. In its 6th August [statement](#) responding to an 5th August Munhwa Ilbo (문화일보) [report](#), the [Family Federation](#) argues that [Yoon](#)'s accounts changed repeatedly during the investigation and that documentary evidence raises serious questions about the chronology of at least one of the gifts.

The issues concern a Chanel handbag, a Graff necklace, and a separate episode involving a visit to then-President-elect Yoon

Suk-yeol (윤석열).

Why the gifts matter

According to Munhwa Ilbo's 5th August [report](#), the Special Prosecutor's Office alleges that [Yoon Yeong-](#)

[ho](#) (윤영호) gave expensive luxury items to former First Lady Kim Keon-hee (김건희) while seeking assistance with matters affecting the [Family Federation](#).

The prosecution's case is significant for [Mother Han](#) because it seeks to establish that these activities were not simply [Yoon](#)'s personal initiatives but were carried out with the knowledge or instructions of the [Family Federation](#)'s president.

[Hak Ja Han](#)'s defense disputes that interpretation. The lawyers argue that [Yoon](#)'s own accounts changed during the investigation and that other evidence suggests he sometimes acted independently.

Three versions of the Chanel handbag story



The defense's most detailed criticism concerns a Chanel handbag allegedly given to Kim Keon-hee. As reported by [Munhwa Ilbo](#), the defense says [Yoon](#) gave three different accounts at different stages of the investigation.

During his first investigation by the Seoul Southern District Prosecutors' Office, [Yoon](#) allegedly said that [Mother Han](#) selected the handbag first.

During a subsequent investigation, [Yoon](#)'s account reportedly changed. He said that he and

intermediary Jeon Seong-bae (전성배) had first decided on the handbag and then suggested it to [Mother Han](#).

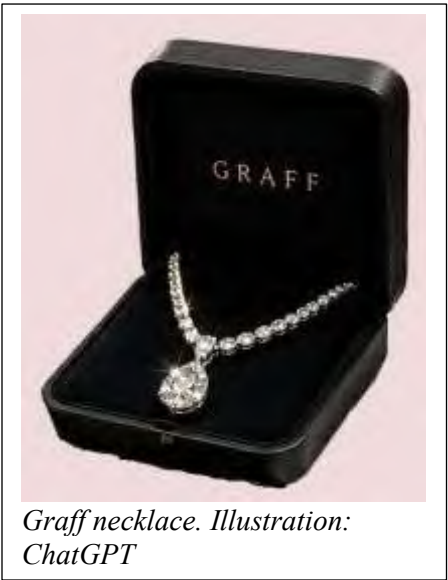
During questioning by the Special Prosecutor's Office, according to the defense, [Yoon](#) gave yet another version, saying that he had reported the specific model of handbag to [Mother Han](#).

The defense argues that these changes are important because they concern the fundamental question of who initiated the gift.

The [Family Federation statement](#) expands on this point by citing text messages that it says show [Yoon](#) telling Jeon Seong-bae (전성배) that he would send a gift before he learned that Kim Keon-hee (김건희) was planning an overseas trip.

The [Federation](#) therefore interprets the messages as evidence that [Yoon](#) had already decided to provide a gift and only learned about the First Lady's travel plans later.

That interpretation is disputed by the prosecution, and the court will have to determine what significance, if any, the messages have.



The Graff necklace and an apparent chronology problem

The defense considers the chronology surrounding a Graff necklace even more problematic.

According to the South Korean daily [Munhwa Ilbo](#), [Yoon](#) testified that he purchased the necklace in July 2022 on [Mother Han](#)'s instructions.

The [Family Federation statement](#) supplies a more detailed chronology. It says that [Yoon](#) explained the purchase as having been prompted by media reports concerning Kim Keon-hee (김건희) wearing a borrowed necklace during an overseas trip.

The problem identified by the defense is the date of those reports.

According to the [Federation](#), the relevant news story first appeared on 30th August 2022, while the purchase receipt for the necklace is dated 29th July 2022.

In other words, the defense says the necklace was purchased approximately one month before the media report that [Yoon](#) allegedly said prompted the purchase.

The [Federation](#) describes this as a case of "reversed causality": the alleged cause appears in the chronology after the alleged effect.

Put more simply, the defense is asking how [Yoon](#) could have purchased the necklace in July because of a news report that did not appear until August.

This is one of the clearest examples in the [Federation](#)'s statement of its broader strategy: rather than merely arguing that Yoon's recollection is unreliable, the defense seeks to compare his testimony with independently dated documents and events.

The visit to President-elect Yoon Suk-yeol

The defense also points to another episode that it believes illustrates a pattern of [Yoon](#) acting independently.



According to [Munhwa Ilbo](#), [Yoon](#) had claimed that he reported his planned visit to then-President-elect Yoon Suk-yeol (윤석열) to [Mother Han](#) in advance.

The defense, however, cited an earlier statement by [Yoon Yeong-ho](#) (윤영호) in which he allegedly said:

"I was unable to tell [Mother](#) that I was going to visit the President-elect, and when I informed her the following day, she was surprised."

The [Family Federation statement](#) adds that [Yoon](#) made this admission publicly at a gathering of hundreds of leaders on 8th April, two weeks after the visit.

The [Federation](#) also refers to other contextual evidence, including [Yoon](#)'s activities on the evening of the visit, which it says indicate that he did not immediately report the meeting to [Mother Han](#).

The defense uses the episode to challenge the prosecution's broader portrayal of [Yoon](#) as someone who routinely acted as [Mother Han](#)'s representative under her instructions.

A broader question about Yoon's role

Taken together, the Chanel handbag, Graff necklace and presidential visit form an important part of the defense's larger theory.

The [Family Federation](#) argues that [Yoon](#) had substantial independence in dealing with political and business figures. According to this interpretation, he sometimes made decisions himself and subsequently either reported them to [Mother Han](#) or failed to report them.

The prosecution, however, alleges that [Yoon](#)'s activities were connected to [Hak Ja Han](#), and that she directed or authorized at least some of them.



The difference is crucial. If [Yoon](#) acted independently, the defense argues, his actions cannot automatically be attributed to [Mother Han](#) simply because he held a senior position in the [Family Federation](#).

What will the court make of the inconsistencies?

The defense's challenge therefore has two dimensions.

First, it questions [Yoon](#)'s consistency as a witness, particularly where his accounts allegedly changed between different stages of the investigation.

Second, it points to objective chronology: text messages, purchase receipts, media reports and earlier statements that the defense says conflict with his later testimony.

The [Family Federation](#)'s 6th August [statement](#) presents these discrepancies as evidence that [Yoon](#)'s testimony should not be relied upon to establish [Mother Han](#)'s responsibility for acts classified as criminal.

That conclusion remains a defense argument, however. The court will have to assess the original documents, testimony and other evidence before determining whether the alleged inconsistencies materially affect Yoon's credibility.

With the first-instance verdict scheduled for 31st August, the question is becoming increasingly focused: did [Yoon Yeong-ho](#) act as [Mother Han](#)'s representative, as the special prosecutors allege, or did he sometimes act on his own initiative and later attribute his actions to the [Family Federation](#)'s president, as her defense contends?

The answer could have major implications for the court's assessment of [Mother Han](#)'s personal responsibility.

NB. This article summarizes arguments presented by [Mother Han](#)'s defense team and the [Family Federation](#), together with the account published by the South Korean daily [Munhwa Ilbo](#). The defense's allegations and interpretations should not be understood as established facts unless independently confirmed by the court or other reliable evidence.

To be continued. Part 3 and 4 coming soon

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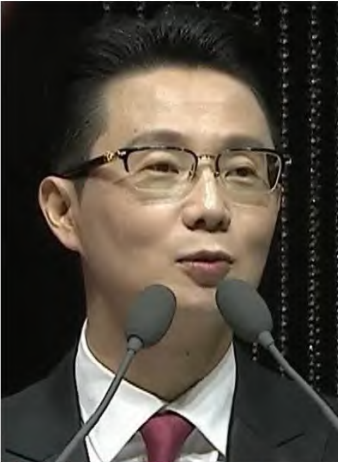
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Part 1 of a 4-part series on the Hak Ja Han trial

See part 2: [Yoon's Changing Accounts Challenged by Defense](#)



[Yoon Yeong-ho](#) (윤영호), whose testimony has become a major part of the prosecution's case. Here, 5th Dec. 2021. Screenshot from transmission by [FFWPU](#)

As South Korea approaches the 31st August first-instance verdict in the trial of [Family Federation](#) President [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) – also called [Mother Han](#) – one of the central questions before the *Seoul Central District Court* is the credibility of former [Family Federation](#) World Headquarters Director [Yoon Yeong-ho](#) (윤영호), whose testimony has become a major part of the prosecution's case.

In a [statement](#) issued on 6th August, the [Family Federation](#) closely

examined a [report](#) published the previous day by the South Korean daily *Munhwa Ilbo* (문화일보). The

[Federation's statement](#) goes considerably beyond the [newspaper's account](#), presenting a detailed chronology that it says casts serious doubt on [Yoon's](#) testimony.

The first and perhaps most concrete part of the defense argument concerns an alleged 100 million won (in 2022 ca. US\$ 77,000) political contribution to former *People Power Party* lawmaker Kweon Seong-dong (권성동) and what allegedly happened afterward.

The prosecution's basic allegation

According to the 5th August [Munhwa Ilbo report](#) by Hwang Hye-jin (황혜진), the *Special Prosecutor's Office* led by Special Prosecutor Min Joong-gi (민중기) alleges that [Yoon](#) delivered 100 million won to Kweon on [Mother Han's](#) instructions. The prosecution further alleges that [Yoon](#) subsequently reported the matter to her.

The prosecution has presented [Yoon's](#) testimony as important evidence supporting the allegation that [Mother Han](#) was involved.

[Hak Ja Han's](#) lawyers, however, argue that [Yoon's](#) account is contradicted by documentary and other objective evidence. The [Family Federation's](#) 6th August [statement](#) develops this argument at considerably greater length than the [Munhwa Ilbo article](#).



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



Allegedly received 100 million won: Former *People Power Party* lawmaker **Kweon Seong-dong** (권성동), here 23rd Dec. 2024. Photo: 국민의힘TV / Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC Attr 3.0 Unp](#). Cropped



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One of the defense's most important points concerns a document described as a "Special Report".

A one-year discrepancy in a key document

According to [Munhwa Ilbo](#), [Mother Han](#)'s lawyers told the court that [Yoon](#) claimed to have reported the payment to her after delivering the 100 million won (in 2022 ca. US\$ 77,000) in January 2022. However, the report document presented by the Special Prosecutor was actually created in January 2023.



Was the story doctored in order to support the arrest and detention of [Mother Han](#)? Here, being temporarily [released](#) from health-detrimental long-term detention for urgent medical treatment on 27th March 2026. Photo: [FFWPU](#)

The [Family Federation statement](#) provides more specific details. It says that a document bearing the date 3rd January 2022 was examined during the trial and found to have actually been created on 3rd January 2023. The [Federation](#) says the prosecution acknowledged that the date was an error.

The defense argues that this is much more significant than a simple typographical mistake. Its reasoning is that if a document is being presented as a contemporaneous record of a conversation or report in January 2022, but was actually created a

year later, its value as evidence of what happened at the time becomes questionable.

The [Federation](#) goes further, alleging that investigators and [Yoon](#) subsequently shaped their questions and answers around this chronology in order to support the arrest and detention of [Mother Han](#).

The disputed morning meeting

The defense also challenges the timing of another alleged conversation between Yoon and [Mother Han](#).

As reported by [Munhwa Ilbo](#), the lawyers argued that [Yoon](#) claimed Kweon conveyed his thanks to [Mother Han](#) shortly after the presidential election, and that [Yoon](#) passed this message to her between approximately 7 and 8 a.m.

The defense says there is no corresponding record in [Yoon](#)'s diary or in the "Special Report."



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](#). Photo: [FFWPU](#)

The Family Federation [statement](#) adds a more detailed challenge. According to the statement, access records show that [Yoon](#) entered the *Cheon Jeong Temple* premises at approximately 9 a.m. It also says that his own diary records his wake-up time as 9:30 a.m.

The Federation therefore argues that [Yoon](#) could not have met [Mother Han](#) between 7 and 8 a.m. as he allegedly testified.

This is presented by the [Federation](#) as a particularly serious contradiction because it does not depend simply on competing recollections. The defense says that physical access records and Yoon's own diary establish a timeline that is incompatible with his testimony.

Whether the court accepts this interpretation will ultimately depend on how it assesses the underlying records and the circumstances in which they were created.

Was Yoon acting on instructions – or independently?

The timeline argument forms part of a broader defense theory about [Yoon](#)'s role.



Has consistently maintained that [Hak Ja Han](#) did not give Kweon the 100 million won: Jeong Won-ju (정원주), here on 19th Jan. 2025. Screenshot from [FFWPU](#) video, improved resolution by ChatGPT, 31st July 2026.

The [Family Federation statement](#) says that Jeong Won-ju (정원주), another defendant and formerly a senior aide to [Mother Han](#), consistently maintained that [Hak Ja Han](#) did not give Kweon the 100 million won.

The Federation also points to recordings in which Yoon allegedly boasted that if he asked [Mother Han](#) to come, she would come. The defense interprets such remarks as evidence that [Yoon](#) possessed considerable personal influence and was

capable of arranging matters himself.

This leads to a fundamental disagreement between the two sides.

The prosecution's case, as described by [Munhwa Ilbo](#), portrays [Yoon](#) as acting on [Mother Han](#)'s instructions. The defense instead argues that [Yoon](#) sometimes **acted first and reported later – or did not report at all** – and that his later testimony has attempted to portray independently initiated actions as decisions made by [Mother Han](#).

The [Federation](#) also cites text messages that it says show Kweon himself wanted to visit the *Cheon Jeong Temple* – at the time [Mother Han](#)'s residence – while [Yoon](#) allegedly prevented or delayed such a meeting by referring to his own schedule. The defense regards this as further evidence that [Yoon](#) was exercising his own initiative rather than simply carrying out instructions from [Mother Han](#).

Why the chronology matters

The significance of these arguments extends beyond the individual dates.

[Hak Ja Han](#)'s defense is essentially asking the court to distinguish between evidence that directly establishes her involvement and evidence that merely relies on [Yoon](#)'s later recollection of events.

The [Family Federation](#)'s 6th August [statement](#) argues that when [Yoon](#)'s testimony is compared with document-creation dates, palace access records, diary entries and communications, a series of contradictions emerges.

The prosecution, by contrast, has presented Yoon’s testimony as important evidence supporting its case.

With the verdict scheduled for 31st August, the court will ultimately have to determine how much weight to give Yoon’s testimony and how the documentary and physical records affect its reliability.

For the defense, the issue can be reduced to a fundamental question: if the chronology of key events cannot be reconciled with the testimony used to establish Mother Han’s involvement, can that testimony safely support a criminal conviction?



Will ultimately have to determine how the documentary and physical records affect the reliability of Yoon’s testimony:
Presiding judge Woo In-seong.
Image: Grok xAI, 30th July 2026.

NB. This article summarizes arguments presented by Hak Ja Han’s defense team and the Family Federation. The allegations and interpretations described above have not been presented as established facts unless specifically identified as findings or statements reported by the court or other sources.

Continued in part 2: [Yoon’s Changing Accounts Challenged by Defense](#).

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Featured image above: Timeline discrepancies exposed.
Illustration: ChatGPT, 9th August 2026.

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