

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Calls for Renewal at Father Moon's Assentation Anniversary

Knut Holdhus
August 30, 2026



From the commemoration in Gapyeong, South Korea of the 14th anniversary of the ascension of [Father Moon](#)



[Sun Myung Moon](#)

Sun Myung Moon remembered at ascension anniversary as Family Federation seeks renewal amid mounting challenges during current wave of state persecution

Many South Korean media outlets reported on 30th August on the 14th anniversary of the Seonghwa (ascension) of [Sun Myung Moon](#) (문선명) - also known as [Father Moon](#). Generally, the reports portrayed the event not simply as a commemorative religious event, but as an occasion for the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) - in Korea often called [Unificationism](#) (통일교) - to reaffirm its identity, strengthen internal unity, and explicitly address the [religious organization's](#) present difficulties.

The reports were published while the four-day commemoration was taking place at the HJ Cheonju CheonBo Training Center in Gapyeong, Gyeonggi Province, from 28th August through 31st. Various outlets emphasized the international character of the gathering, saying that members from South Korea, the United States, Japan, Europe and elsewhere participated both in person and online.



The Seoul-based online media outlet TheReport (더리포트), in an [article](#) by Shin Dong-rip (신동립), presents the event primarily as an effort to remember [Father Moon's](#) legacy of "[true love](#)" and peace while renewing the [faith community](#).

The [article](#) reports that [Father Moon's](#) children and grandsons Moon Shin-chul (문신출) and Moon Shin-heung (문신흥) delivered Hyo Jeong Letters (letters of a heart of filial devotion), expressing their longing for and gratitude toward [Father Moon](#). They recalled what the [article](#) describes as his lifelong dedication to the will of our "Heavenly Parent", the salvation of humanity, and the causes of peace and unification.

[TheReport](#) places particular emphasis on their message in the context of the [Family Federation's](#) current difficulties. Moon Shin-chul (문신출) reportedly said that, despite the hardships facing the [movement](#), its "roots of faith" would not be shaken and that its members would continue to follow what they regard as the right path. Moon Shin-heung (문신흥) stressed the determination to pass on the tradition of love, faith and the [Blessing](#) to future generations and continue pursuing peace and unification.

The [outlet](#) also describes the formal program: a commemorative ceremony on 29th August, visits to Bonhyangwon - the sacred burial site and tomb - a memorial service, and special pilgrimage programs. At the 30th August commemorative worship service, Song Yong-cheon (송용천), president of the Korean chapter of the [Family Federation](#), emphasized [Father Moon](#)'s vision of a peaceful world in which humanity would live as one family beyond barriers of race, religion, ethnicity and nationality.



[Father Moon](#)'s and [Mother Han](#)'s grandsons Moon Shin-chul and Moon Shin-heung and daughters-in-law Moon (born Choi) Yeon-ah and Moon (born Pak) Hoon-sook presenting flowers on August 30, 2026 at the 14th anniversary of the ascension of Father Moon

Significantly, [TheReport](#) highlights Song's call for the [Family Federation](#) to rebuild public trust through transparent communication and responsible management. The [organization](#), it says, regards the anniversary not merely as a memorial but as an opportunity for self-reflection and renewal, acknowledging "moral responsibility" for matters that occurred during its past course and pledging to become a more faithful religious community.

The [article](#) also reports a [charitable initiative](#): 64 participating organizations and members donated 126 bags of rice weighing 10 kilograms each, or 1,260 kilograms in total, for distribution to socially marginalized people in the local area.

Finally, [TheReport](#) provides considerable historical background on [Father Moon](#), including his death in 2012 and the condolence message and "Fatherland Unification Award" reportedly sent by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un (김정은). It notes that North Korean authorities also sent condolence messages and wreaths on later anniversaries. See [Grand Celebration of 80th Birthday](#)



The investigative journalism media outlet [Choishin News](#) (최신뉴스 - literally: The latest news), in a report by Moon Dong-ju (문동주), follows much the same factual outline but places somewhat greater emphasis on spiritual solidarity among members and the messages from [Father Moon](#)'s children.

Its headline stresses the large overseas participation and the [faith community](#)'s determination to strengthen its spiritual bonds. The [report](#) highlights the statement of Moon Shin-chul (문신출) that the [movement](#)'s "roots of faith" remain deep and his appeal that members should "look after [True Mother](#)", referring to [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) - .

See also [Mother Han Sentenced to 2 Years in First Trial](#)

Moon Shin-heung (문신흥) is quoted as pledging to continue working toward a world in which humanity lives as one family beyond barriers of religion, race, nationality and ideology.

[Choishin News](#) also gives prominence to the call of Song Yong-cheon (송용천) to practice the values of

true love and peace emphasized by [Sun Myung Moon](#) and Hak Ja Han. Like [TheReport](#), it quotes Song calling for transparent communication and responsible administration in the [religious organization](#) so that it can regain the trust of the public and society.



The [outlet](#) says the anniversary should not remain merely a celebration of [Father Moon's](#) life and achievements. Rather, it should serve as an opportunity to consider how his ideals can be translated into practical action today. It reports the [Family Federation's](#) stated intention to use the occasion for reflection and renewal, while acknowledging its "moral responsibility" and promising to fulfill its religious role more responsibly toward society, the nation and the world.

[Choishin News](#) concludes by saying the [Family Federation](#) intends to use the anniversary as a starting point for serving its neighbors and society and putting the values of peace and coexistence into practice.

The regional daily [Kyeongbuk Shinmun](#) (경북신문), in an [article](#) by Kim Chang-hyeon (김창현), provides the most extensive account of the anniversary and particularly detailed quotations from Moon Shin-chul and Moon Shin-heung.



Moon Shin-chul is quoted as saying that the members' faith remains deeply rooted despite current trials and that their convictions will continue forward despite efforts to shake them. He also makes the unusually direct appeal that members should care for [Mother Han](#) ([Hak Ja Han](#)) and become a "tree" upon which she can rely.

Moon Shin-heung similarly presents the present period as one of exceptional hardship, saying that [True Mother](#) is carrying the burden of "cosmic suffering" on behalf of her children. He pledges that members will become more united around her and faithfully transmit the tradition of love, faith and the [Blessing](#) to succeeding generations.

[Kyeongbuk Shinmun](#) also gives particular attention to Song Yong-cheon's appeal for "[transparent communication](#) and sharing" and [responsible management](#), describing these as necessary to build a healthier faith society and restore public trust.

Like other reports, [Kyeongbuk Shinmun](#) emphasizes that the anniversary is intended to be more than commemoration. The [Family Federation](#) reportedly wants it to become a moment of institutional self-examination, renewal, normalization of the [movement](#), and renewed commitment to social responsibility.

The [paper](#) also reports the 1,260-kilogram rice donation and provides the same historical account of [Father Moon's](#) death, the large international mourning ceremony, North Korean condolences and the later commemorative gestures from North Korea.



The [Jeonguk Maeil Shinmun](#) (전국매일신문 - Nationwide Daily News) published a [report](#) by Han Yeong-min (한영민) about the anniversary. Its principal emphasis is particularly clear from its headline: "Reflecting on the life and peace legacy of [Sun Myung Moon](#) [...] 'Taking the lead in realizing a society of togetherness'"

Rather than focusing primarily on the commemorative ceremonies themselves, the [article](#) repeatedly stresses the [Family Federation's](#) stated intention to translate [Father Moon's](#) ideals of [true love](#) and peace into social responsibility. The [report](#) highlights the [organization's](#) pledge to reflect on its past, renew

the religious community, [operate more transparently](#), and regain public trust. The phrase "a society of togetherness" gives the [report](#) a somewhat more outward-looking emphasis than the purely spiritual language prominent in some of the other coverage.

The [Jeonguk Maeil Shimbun](#) presents the anniversary particularly as an opportunity for the [Family Federation](#) to reconnect [Father Moon](#)'s legacy with social service, peaceful coexistence and responsible engagement with society.

The emphasis of another daily, [Segye Ilbo](#) (세계일보), is turning remembrance of [Sun Myung Moon](#) into practical expressions of [true love](#), social service, and institutional renewal.

The [Segye Ilbo coverage](#) of the anniversary event is more outward-facing. It presents the [rice donation](#) as the central tangible expression of the anniversary: remembrance is linked directly to helping disadvantaged people in the community. The [Segye Ilbo article](#) by Jeong Seong-su (정성수) portrays the anniversary less as an internal religious commemoration and more as an attempt to demonstrate social responsibility and renewed public engagement at a time when the [Family Federation](#) acknowledges that it is facing difficulties.

Overall picture



From the commemoration in Gapyeong, South Korea of the 14th anniversary of the ascension of [Father Moon](#)

The most significant feature of the extensive media coverage of the anniversary is perhaps the language of "moral responsibility", "transparency", "responsible management", and "renewal". This represents a notable acknowledgment by the [Family Federation](#) that simply defending its founder's legacy is not sufficient; it also needs to address the [organization's](#) relationship with society and rebuild public trust.

Another noticeable feature of the South Korean media reports is that they remain largely event-oriented and sympathetic to the [Family Federation's](#) own framing. Some of the media coverage reproduces the [movement's](#) terminology - such as "[True Father](#)", "[True Mother](#)", "Heavenly Parent", "[True Love](#)", and "[Blessing](#)" - without independently examining those theological claims. Nor does the various reports substantially discuss the ongoing legal proceedings involving [Mother Han](#), even though the anniversary occurs immediately before her scheduled first-trial verdict on 31st August.

See also [Mother Han Sentenced to 2 Years in First Trial](#)

Thus, read in the context of the current controversy, the anniversary can be seen as serving two purposes simultaneously: commemorating [Father Moon](#) and reinforcing the movement's theological identity, while also presenting a public message that the [Family Federation](#) intends to emerge from its current crisis through reflection, reform, unity and renewed social responsibility.

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FOR WORLD PEACE AND UNIFICATION

NEWS AND INSIGHTS



How Many More Cases Against Mother Han (83)?

August 29, 2026 • The News Desk



AI image

Special prosecutors open new front against elderly and frail Hak Ja Han as number of cases grows in Lee administration's broader campaign targeting perceived political opponents

After **180 days of investigation yielded no evidence sufficient to warrant an indictment**, the special prosecutors nevertheless **declined to close the case**. According to **several South Korean media outlets**, Yoon Hee-keun (윤희근), a former Commissioner General of the *National Police Agency*, subsequently questioned how long the government intended to continue using what he called the **"political-retaliation special prosecutors"** as a political weapon. Yoon himself had been investigated by special prosecutors appointed by the current Lee Jae-myung (이재명) administration.

See also [Mother Han Sentenced to 2 Years in First Trial](#)

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Commenting on the same case, South Korea's daily *Segye Ilbo* likewise raised concerns in a 24th August **editorial** about whether the country was heading toward a situation in which special prosecutors could continue operating throughout the entire term of President Lee Jae-myung, whose current term runs until June 2030.

세계일보

The logo of the *Segye Ilbo*

Critics argue that this tendency is becoming increasingly apparent in the latest developments surrounding what they regard as the **left-leaning Lee administration's broader campaign against Hak Ja Han** (한학자) and the *Family Federation for World Peace and Unification*, an organization that South Korean media generally refer to as *Unificationism* (통일교) or the *Unification Church*.



New indictment. Illustration: ChatGPT, 29th August 2026, edited

On **28th August**, three South Korean news outlets – **News1, Newsis and Dailian** – reported that **Hak Ja Han** – also called **Mother Han** – and **three current or former senior officials of the religious organization** had been formally indicted over allegations that approximately **10.5 billion won (about US\$7.5 million)** in *Family Federation* funds had been embezzled over an eight-year period.

The reports concern a **new set of allegations involving the handling of the religious organization's funds**, and should be distinguished from the separate political-funding allegations for which **Mother Han** is already awaiting a verdict. Importantly, the reported embezzlement allegations are **prosecutorial**

allegations, not findings of guilt. An indictment means that prosecutors have formally brought a criminal case before a court; guilt or innocence will ultimately be determined through the judicial process.

In this context, the prosecution's theory appears to be that the defendants **had legitimate access to or control over Family Federation money because of their positions, but allegedly diverted some of that money away from its proper organizational purpose and into unauthorized personal control.**

That distinction matters. The reports do **not** say that investigators are simply accusing **Mother Han** of having personally spent 10.5 billion won on luxury goods, property, travel, or other personal expenses. Nor do they say that she personally withdrew every amount. The reported allegation is instead centred on the **diversion, falsification of accounting and storage of the money.**

What is the "Joint Investigation Headquarters"?

All three media reports mentioned above identify the investigating body as **합수본 (hapseubon)**, an abbreviation for *Joint Investigation Headquarters*. In these articles, it



refers to a special investigative body bringing together **prosecutors and police** to investigate allegations described as “**collusion between religion and politics**” (정교유착).

The Korean term 정교유착 literally combines 정교 (“religion and politics” or “church and state”) with 유착 (“collusive ties” or “improperly close connections”). It does **not** simply mean that religious organizations and politicians have contact with each other. Rather, in this investigative context, it refers to allegations that religious organizations and political figures developed improper or potentially corrupt relationships – for example, through political contributions, requests for political assistance, influence-peddling or other exchanges of benefits.

The Joint Investigation Headquarters is headed by **Kim Tae-hoon (김태훈), Chief Prosecutor of the Daejeon High Prosecutors’ Office**. It has been investigating a broad range of allegations involving the **Family Federation** and political figures.

The new embezzlement allegations



Logo of News1 (뉴스1), South Korea's largest private news agency and wire service.

According to **News1**, the Joint Investigation Headquarters indicted four people without detention on 27th August: **Hak Ja Han (한학자)**; Jeong Won-ju (정원주), her former chief of staff; Yoon Yeong-ho (윤영호), former Director-General of the **Family Federation's** World Headquarters; and a former head of its Central Administration Office, identified only as “A.”

“Indicted without detention” (불구속 기소) is an important feature of South Korean criminal procedure. It means that prosecutors have decided to prosecute the suspects while they remain at liberty rather than keeping them in custody pending trial. It does **not** mean that the allegations are considered less serious or that the defendants have been found guilty.

The three media outlets broadly agree on the central allegation. They report that the four defendants are accused of **diverting approximately 10.5 billion won in Family Federation funds between 2017 and 2025**.

The alleged mechanism is also described similarly. According to the investigators, senior **Family Federation** officials **acted in concert to falsify accounting records**, thereby concealing the movement of the money, and subsequently kept bundles of cash in a safe in **Mother Han's** private quarters.



The logo of South Korean news wire agency Newsis.

News1 describes this as the Joint Investigation Headquarters' assessment, while **Newsis** and **Dailian** similarly emphasize the alleged conspiracy among senior officials, the false accounting and the storage of cash in **Mother Han's** private safe. None of the three reports presents this account as

a judicially established fact.



The logo of Dailian (데일리안), a prominent South Korean internet-based general news outlet.

The investigation reportedly intensified in **May 2026**, when investigators carried out searches and seizures at the **Family Federation's Cheon Jeong Temple (천정궁)** complex in Gapyeong, Gyeonggi Province, as well as other related facilities, including its Seoul headquarters and the **Hyojeong Global Unification Foundation**, an **asset-management and property-holding body**. A search and seizure (압수수색) is an investigative measure through which authorities seek to secure documents, electronic records, financial records or other evidence potentially relevant to a criminal case.

How this relates to the existing case against Mother Han

The above media reports also connect the new indictment to the **already pending criminal proceedings against Mother Han and others** at the *Seoul Central District Court*.



Joint Investigation Headquarters. Illustration: ChatGPT, 29th August 2026.

The court's **27th Criminal Division**, presided over by Judge Woo In-seong (우인성), is scheduled to issue a verdict on 31st August in the existing case. That case involves allegations including violations of the *Political Funds Act* and the *Act on the Aggravated Punishment of Specific Economic Crimes*, including embezzlement. Newsis describes the 31st August proceedings somewhat differently, highlighting the Political Funds Act and the Improper Solicitation and Graft Act (*Kim Young-ran Act*).

A significant distinction is therefore necessary: the 31st August verdict concerns charges already before the court, while the 10.5-billion-won embezzlement allegations reported on 28th August have now resulted in a new indictment.

The 13-year sentence requested by prosecutors



Min Joong-gi (민중기), the head of an army of special prosecutors with extensive investigative powers. Image: Grok xAI, Jan. 2026.

All three reports mention that the **Kim Keon-hee** (김건희) **Special Prosecutor's Team**, headed by Special Prosecutor **Min Joong-gi** (민중기), requested a total sentence of **13 years in prison** at the final hearing last month.

News1 provides more detail, saying prosecutors requested **five years for the alleged Political Funds Act violation and eight years for the remaining charges**.

At her final statement, **Mother Han** rejected the suggestion that she had sought political influence through money, saying, **"I do not seek power through money."** She nevertheless apologized for having, as leader of the **Family Federation**, unintentionally caused controversy in various respects.

Thus, as presented by **News1, Newsis and Dailian**, the 28th August development represents a significant expansion of the legal case surrounding the **Family Federation**: alongside the political-funding allegations for which a verdict is expected on 31st August, investigators have now brought a separate

prosecution alleging that **10.5 billion won of the religious organization's funds was systematically misappropriated over eight years**. Whether those allegations can be substantiated remains for the courts to determine.

See also [Mother Han Sentenced to 2 Years in First Trial](#)

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Text: Knut Holdhus, editor

Featured image above: How many more cases in left-leaning Lee administration's broader campaign against Mother Han? Illustration: ChatGPT, 29th August 2026

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Will have to withstand strong political pressure when issuing verdict on 31st August 2026: Presiding judge Woo In-seong. Image: Grok xAI, 30th July 2026.

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