

Vol.44

Recent Trends of Law & Regulation in Korea

Issue and Law

- **Road Without Cars: Government's Regulations on Private Vehicles**
- **Time to be a Wiser Consumer: Reducing the use of disposable products**
- **Not All That is Thrown Out is Waste**
- **Moving Towards a Sustainable Society: Transition to Circular Economy**

Living in Korea

- **Leading an Eco-friendly Life in Korea**

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Editor's Note

Dear Readers

Marking the summer season, when environment-themed holidays such as International Plastic Bag Free Day and World Environment Day are concentrated, the 44th edition features the current status of Korea's environmental policies and regulations, which are likely to grab the attention of foreigners in Korea. Our "Issue & Law" section, a cornerstone of each edition, is dedicated to introducing our readers to the major theme. This edition delves into Korea's newly devised environmental policies, such as the Climate Card program and the Circular Resource Product Labeling policy. These initiatives are designed to make eco-friendly living more accessible and relevant to our readers' daily lives. Don't miss the "Case Law" section, which covers the Supreme Court's unprecedented ruling that significantly lifted the burden of proof off the victims of environmental pollution, or the "Living in Korea" section where a typical day of a Korean who practices green habits is described. We want to express our gratitude to our loyal readers, contributors, and the dedicated team behind the scenes. We kindly ask for your continued support and interest.

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Ministry of Justice

The Republic of Korea government has changed its official "government identity." The new logo conveys the dynamism and enthusiasm of the country with the three colors of blue, red and white. It echoes off Korea's national flag Taegeukgi with the taegeuk circular swirl and the blank canvas embodies in white. The typeface

was inspired by the font used in the "Hunminjeongeum" (1446), the original Hangeul text, in consideration of the harmony embodied in the taegeuk circle. Starting March 2016, the new logo is used at all 22 ministries including the Ministry of Justice and 51 central government agencies.

Road Without Cars

Government’s Regulations on Private Vehicles

Climate Card

If you’re living in Seoul, you may have recently seen a lot of people tapping a blue transportation card on the subway or bus. It is the Climate Card Seoul Metropolitan Government introduced in early 2024. It is a comprehensive transportation card offering unlimited rides on the subways and buses operating in Seoul for 30 days after charging a one-time fare. It saves you transportation costs, but its benefits do not end there. As the name suggests, this card aims to respond to the climate crisis by encouraging people to opt for public transportation over private cars and to relieve the financial burden of Seoulites amid soaring inflation. Mayor of Seoul Oh Se-hoon says Climate Card is expected to reduce the number of vehicles on roads by about 13,000 and greenhouse gas emissions by 32,000 tons per year. Now, it is becoming an essential item for Seoul citizens.

With its explosive popularity, the Climate Card sales surpassed the 1 million mark only 70 days after its launch on January 27th, 2024. The Seoul Metropolitan Government surveyed 2,823 Climate Card users, and 4%, or 127 respondents, said they had chosen public transportation over privately owned cars. Given that approximately 500,000 people use the Climate Card on weekdays, it can be assumed that 4%, or about 20,000 people, have pivoted to public transportation. This analysis suggests that Climate Card has taken about 11,000 cars off the road, translating to a whopping reduction of 3,600 tons of greenhouse gas.

License Plate Rationing

Another policy implemented by the government to boost the use of public transportation and reduce pollution is License Plate Rationing(LPR). It is a traffic management strategy where private vehicles are prohibited on certain days based on the last digit of a license plate. Article 8 of the Energy Use Rationalization Act mandates that public institutions implement the LPR scheme, making central administrative agencies, local governments, public corporations, national universities, and national/public schools subject to its adoption. The methods are specified in Article 17 of Provisions for Promoting the Rationalization of Energy Use by Public Institutions. One is restricting vehicles with a certain odd or even number as the last digit of their plates from being driven on roads on a particular day. For instance, vehicles whose last digits are neither 1 nor 6 can only travel on Monday.

[Energy Use Rationalization Act]

Article 8 (Measures for Efficient Use of Energy by the State and Local Governments)

- (1) Any of the following persons shall promote measures necessary for efficiently using energy in accordance with the purposes of this Act and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In such cases, the measures shall undergo deliberation by the Committee: <Amended on Apr. 17, 2018>
1. The State;
 2. Local governments;
 3. Public institutions under Article 4 (1) of the Act on the Management of Public Institutions.
- (2) Details of the measures necessary for efficiently using energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which shall be promoted by the State and local governments under paragraph (1), shall be prescribed by Presidential Decree.

[Provisions for Promoting the Rationalization of Energy Use by Public Institutions]

Article 1 (Purpose)

The purpose of this provision is to stipulate the matters that public institutions, including the State and local governments, must promote for the efficient use of energy and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions under Article 8 of the Energy Use Rationalization Act and Article 15 of the Enforcement Decree of the same Act.

Some may find it a one-sided campaign that disregards people’s driving rights on days they want. Still, they could see it from another side by focusing on the intent behind its introduction: encouraging people to build an eco-friendly society together.

Although public institutions are mandated to implement a License Plate Rationing system, any entity in the private sector is encouraged to participate. By voluntarily restraining passenger car use, they can enjoy incentives such as lower charges for causing traffic congestion and discounts on public facility usage fees, as stipulated in Article 17(2) of the Provisions for Promoting the Rationalization of Energy Use by Public Institutions. Meanwhile, people who drive small cars or eco-friendly cars, people with



disabilities, people who are pregnant, people who commute long distances, and so on are exempt from compliance even if they are employees of public agencies.

Background

Why is the Korean government encouraging people to switch to public transportation? Since urbanization and economic progress have led to a surge in private vehicle use, resulting in numerous environmental problems, including traffic congestion, air pollution, and noise pollution, a strong voice has been calling for addressing these pressing issues. The transportation sector alone accounts for around one-fifth of global CO2

emissions, three-quarters of which is from road travel. Although traffic problems have become prevalent worldwide, Korea is one of the hardest-hit nations since its auto ownership rate in 2023 was one per 1.99 population, which is a huge number considering its road capacity.

Both the Climate Card and License Plate Rationing(LPR) programs are helping reduce the use of private vehicles and thus tackle environmental contamination. Participation of more and more people in such green policies will likely take Korea to new heights as a green nation.

Time to be a Wiser Consumer

Reducing the use of disposable products

If you are a foreigner living in Korea, you would probably agree that Korea is no other than a food delivery service giant boasting super-fast speed and convenience. But sometimes, you might have been embarrassed because you forgot to leave a note requesting disposable cutlery, forks, spoons, or knives. You might have been quite frustrated with it, thinking they should be provided even without any prior request.

Neither restaurants nor delivery service providers are to blame. According to Article 10(2) of the Act on the Promotion of Saving and Recycling of Resources, food delivery applications must make “no disposable cutlery” the default choice for online food orders, and whether to receive it or not should be left to consumers’ discretion. Since food delivery applications are where foods are delivered through electronic commerce according to the definition under the Framework Act on Electronic Documents and Transactions, customers should choose whether to use disposable products.

[Act on the Promotion of Saving and Recycling of Resources]

Article 10 (Control of Use of Disposable Products)

(1) A business entity who runs any of the following facilities or types of business shall control the use of disposable products and shall not provide disposable products free of charge: Provided, that disposable products made of biodegradable resin may be provided free of charge:

(2) Notwithstanding the main clause of paragraph (1), disposable products may be used or provided free of charge in any of the following cases:
<Newly Inserted on Aug. 13, 2013; Mar. 28, 2023>

1. Where foods are provided, sold, or delivered to customers for consumption at places other than meal service facilities or food service business places. In such cases, where foods are provided, sold, or delivered through electronic commerce under the Framework Act on Electronic Documents and Transactions or unmanned information terminals prescribed by Ordinance of the Ministry of Environment, customers shall be allowed to choose whether to use disposable products;

Background

You may wonder whether this seemingly trivial change will lead to any substantial difference. But there are indispensable drivers behind the government’s push for a series of green policies. First, Korea has experienced a constant surge in delivery and small-scale purchases with



the rising number of one-person households. The National Waste Statistics survey reveals that some 703,327 tons of disposable waste are produced annually. The excessive use of disposables has accelerated the waste of resources, worsening environmental pollution and costing considerable waste disposal expenses.

One obstacle to recycling disposable products is that they tend to be contaminated with food. This is why the Korean government enacted the Act on the Promotion of Saving and Recycling of Resources to reign in the overuse of disposable items and protect our environment.

Consumers were once precluded from choosing whether to receive disposables when getting food delivered at home. But now, they can, which can translate into wider opportunities to make environment-conscious decisions in their everyday lives. It seems that more and more people regard themselves as stewards of the environment.

Not All That is Thrown Out is Waste

How often do you take out trash? It is highly likely that not a single day would go by without throwing things away at least once. According to the National Statistics, in 2022, 6,754,167.7 tons of domestic waste were produced nationwide. Among them were 3,937,195.2 tons of recyclable waste, which amounts to approximately 23.5% of the total household waste produced in the same year.

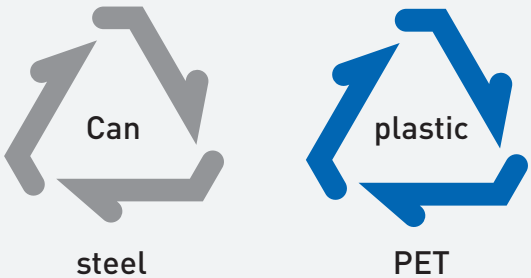
Koreans are famous for being enthusiastic recyclers. According to the Environmental Performance Index in 2022, Korea was ranked number 1 out of 180 countries in recycling rates. (EPI score: 67.10) Recycling is deeply ingrained in Koreans’ daily lives, but this recycling culture didn’t arise out of nowhere. Instead, it is attributed to the government’s long-term efforts to ensure recycling takes root through well-organized laws and regulations. Let’s closely examine how recycling is done in Korea and the legal background behind it.

Q: How can I know if a product is recyclable?

In Korea, manufacturers are required to put a separate discharge mark on recyclable products and packing materials. The mark is shaped like a triangle with circulating arrows, and its color may differ by recycling category. For example, a blue mark is placed on plastic products and a silver one on metal products.

Article 14 (Separate Discharge Mark)

A manufacturer, etc. of products and packing materials prescribed by Presidential Decree, for which it is necessary to put a separate collection mark for the facilitation of recycling of wastes shall put a separate discharge mark on such products and packing materials in accordance with the guidelines determined and publicly notified by the Minister of Environment.



Q: How can I separate recyclables? Why do I need to take out waste on designated days?

Waste disposal standards vary depending on municipal governments. The “Guidelines for Separate Collection of Recyclable Resources, etc.” stipulated in the Act on The Promotion of Saving and Recycling Of Resources elaborate standards for separating and recycling waste in Korea.

However, as each municipal government may apply them to suit its circumstances, you need to check out your local government’s (Si/Gun/Gu) website to make sure that you comply with its rules. Below are some tips on how to properly discharge your waste.

1. If you dispose of broken glass, you should not recycle it like we do with used glass bottles. Instead, you should throw it in a “general waste bag.” It would be best to cover it safely with newspaper, tissue, etc., to ensure the sharp edges do not cut the plastic garbage bags.
2. If you have moved into a new apartment, when would you have to discharge your waste? Under the “Multi-family Housing Management Act,” each multi-family housing unit shall have a management entity responsible for garbage collection. The management entity determines garbage collection dates at its discretion, resulting in differences in collection dates among units.

Multi-family Housing Management Act

Article 63 (Duties of Management Entity)

- (1) The management entity shall perform the following duties. In such cases, the management entity may use the common areas of multi-family housing to the necessary extent:
2. Security guard service, cleaning, disinfection and garbage collection within a multi-family housing complex;

Q: I saw people buying garbage bags from the supermarket. Do I have to use them to throw out my trash?

Yes. You only have to use designated garbage bags to throw your trash in Korea. Also, each district enforces the use of different-colored bags, meaning that you cannot use the garbage bags you purchased within your district if you are to throw out trash in another district. For example, if you buy a bag in Gwanak-gu, you cannot use this bag in Yongsan-gu. Known as the standard waste bag policy, it represents one of the unique characteristics of Korea’s pay-as-you-throw system in waste disposal. This means those who throw away more than others must pay more, incentivizing people to produce less waste to save on expenses. This policy was introduced in Korea in 1995, making Korea the first country in



the world to mandate a 'pay-as-you-throw system' in the world nationally. Though not everyone agreed that you must pay for your waste when it was first put in place, the system has now become an essential part of life in Korea almost 30 years after its implementation. You can refer to the legal background of the pay-as-you-throw system in Article 14, No.5 of the Waste Controls Act.

Waste Controls Act

Article 14 (Treatment of Household Wastes)

(5) A Special Self-Governing City Mayor, a Special Self-Governing Province Governor, or the head of a Si/Gun/Gu may collect service charges for the treatment of household wastes pursuant to paragraph (1), depending on the kind, quantity, etc. of the household wastes discharged. In such cases, the service charges shall be collected in the manner of selling standard waste bags, waste marks, etc. (hereinafter referred to as "standard waste bags and marks"), as prescribed by ordinance of the competent local government; but the service charges for food wastes may be collected in the manner of charging an amount calculated according to the discharged quantity. <Amended on Aug. 3, 2007; Jul. 23, 2010; Jun. 1, 2012; Jul. 16, 2013>

Q: What happens if I don't take out my trash correctly?

Under Article 12, No.3 of the <Act On The Promotion Of Saving And Recycling Of Resources>, the government has the legal right to impose fines on those who do not throw out their waste correctly. If you violate the regulations (e.g., do not correctly separate your waste), you may be fined up to 1,000,000 won.

Moving Towards a Sustainable Society

Transition to Circular Economy

Circular Economy in Korea

To protect the environment, it is essential to make the most of recyclables so that we produce less waste. Previously, the production-consumption process was linear: what was created and used was supposed to end up in the dump. However, the world is slowly shifting towards a circular economy, rebutting this conventional belief. This means the world is actively searching for ways to reuse, recycle, and upcycle as many used resources as possible.

"The Act of Promotion Of Transition To Circular Economy And Society"

"The Act of Promotion Of Transition To Circular Economy And Society (henceforth referred to as "the Act")" was put into effect on January 1, 2024. This law is a revised version of the previous "Framework Act on Resources Circulation." This revision aims to realize a sustainable society "by efficiently utilizing resources in the entire process of production, distribution, consumption, etc. of products."

ACT ON PROMOTION OF TRANSITION TO CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Article 1 (Purpose)

The purpose of this Act is to contribute to realizing a sustainable circular economy and society by efficiently utilizing resources in the entire process of production, distribution, consumption, etc. of products, by reducing the generation of wastes to a possible minimum, and by promoting the circular use of the generated wastes.

Q: What is the difference between circular resources and recycled products?

Circular resources and recycled products are two legally different concepts, even though they are typically indistinguishable in our daily lives.

The term 'recycled product' refers to products processed by recycling methods prescribed by Article 2, no.9 of the "Act On The Promotion Of Saving And Recycling Of Resources" and therefore is not considered waste by definition. On the other hand, 'circular resources' are in nature waste. They are specific types of waste that are 1) environmentally safe and 2) less likely to be reused. The government designates such wastes

as circular resources to facilitate the circular use of products. Once a circular resource fails to meet the criteria, it can be disposed of as regular waste.

Act On The Promotion Of Saving And Recycling Of Resources

Article 2 (Definitions)

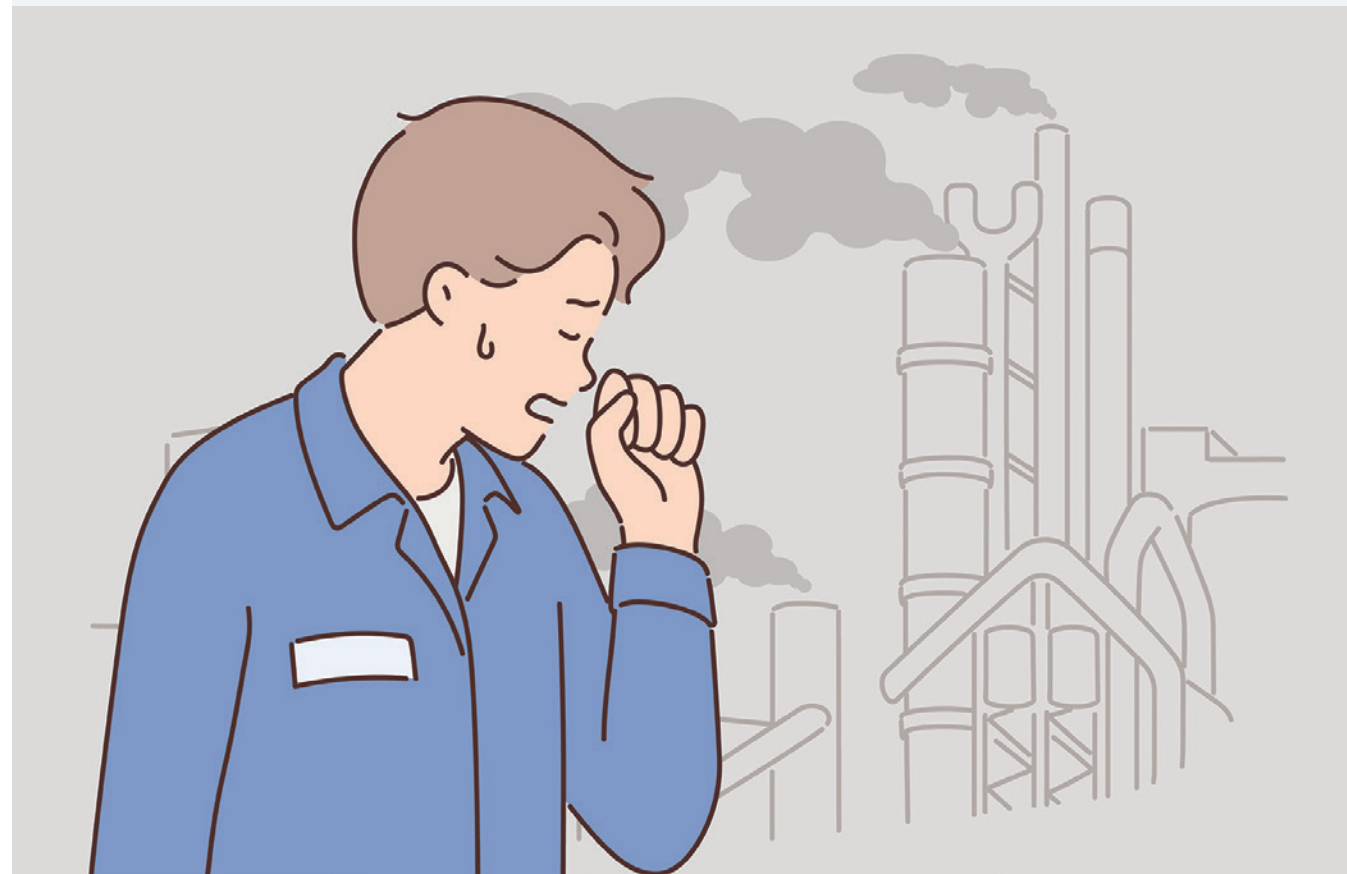
9. The term "recycled product" means products prescribed by Ordinance of the Ministry of Environment, which are produced by using recyclable resources;

With the implementation of the "Enforcement Decree Of The Act On Promotion Of Transition To Circular Economy And Society (henceforth referred to as "Enforcement Decree")" in January 2024, there have been many changes to everyday life in Korea. Here are some examples.

Circular Resource Product Labeling Policy

Now, it has become easier for consumers to identify environmentally friendly products, thanks to the introduction of the Enforcement Decree. In the Act on The Promotion Of Saving And Recycling Of Resources, the Ministry of Environment allowed circular resource marks to a famous global coffee chain's trays made of spent coffee ground and the IC trays of one of the leading chip manufacturers in Korea. These two products are the first labeled circular resources under the Circular Use Resource Product Labeling Policy in Korea, introduced in 2024 by the Enforcement Decree. Products that use circular resources for at least 10% of their raw material are eligible for this mark.

The Supreme Court's First Decision to Acknowledge Evidence Based Solely on Probability



Background Information

According to the National Environmental Dispute Resolution Commission of the Ministry of Environment, about 200 to 300 environmental disputes occur yearly. The high frequency of disputes exemplifies the environment's significant impact on every aspect of our lives. It is also a testament to the nature of the modern world, where environmental damage is the

inevitable company of rapid development.

Now, it is not an option but a must for us to explore ways to seek harmony with nature while reaping the fruits of development. In this section, we will focus on the Supreme Court's unprecedented decision in 2023 that evidence based on probability is sufficient to request the perpetrator to compensate for environmental pollution damage. Previously, according to the former Act on Liability and Relief for Environmental Pollution Damage, it was the responsibility of the victim to prove sufficient probability of the

causal relationship between the alleged cause and damage.

In other words, victims have shouldered the entire burden of proof, often grappling with compiling and interpreting complicated scientific facts as evidence to support their claims. Therefore, the Supreme Court's decision is expected to considerably ease the burden of proof for victims of environmental damage.

The Supreme Court's Decision 2019Da300866 Decided December 28, 2023

A. Case Facts

On June 4, 2016, a hydrofluoric acid leakage occurred at the Defendant's factory, resulting in the diffusion of hydrogen fluoride equivalent to approximately 33.04 kilograms into the air. The Defendant was a manufacturer of chemical materials for semiconductor processing in the village of Geumsan-gun, Chungcheongnam-do. The Defendant was running a factory with facilities to produce semiconductor etchant, stripping liquor, OLED mask cleaning solution, etc. The Plaintiffs, the village residents living near the factory, filed suit against the Defendant on charges of the environmental damage inflicted on them.

Hydrofluoric acid, which contains hydrogen fluoride, is defined as a "substance requiring preparation for accidents" under the Chemical Substances Control Act. Thus, the Defendant had loaded hydrofluoric acid onto tank lorries for transport in the aqueous solution.

On the day of the accident, around two hours after loading, it was found that 2,370 kilograms of hydrofluoric acid leaked inside the unloading facility and about 444.6 to 871.3 kilograms outside of it. The leakage evaporated and diffused into the air, hitting the residents.

B. Main Issue and Claims

Whether a causal relationship can be acknowledged between the accident in this case and the damage caused to the Plaintiffs

[1] Plaintiff's Claim

- After the leakage, the Plaintiffs evacuated to the elementary school gymnasium adjacent to the factory, and some were taken to the emergency room complaining of headaches, nausea, and difficulty breathing. Between June 4 and June 29, 2016, the Plaintiffs received treatment for symptoms such as cough, phlegm, sleep disorder, digestive disorder, bronchial discomfort, headache, and ocular pain. The Plaintiffs argued they had merit in their claim, citing Article 9 Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Environmental Pollution Damage Relief Act. It states, "Where it is highly probable to believe that a facility has caused environmental damage exists, such environmental damage is presumed to have occurred from the facility."

The leakage exposed the Plaintiffs to hydrogen fluoride, which triggered anxiety that additional damage might arise in the future due to the hydrofluoric acid that seeped into every corner of the village and that such an accident might be repeated. Such fear left the victims suffering from psychological damage, including insomnia.

[2] Defendant's Claim

- The hydrofluoric acid did not leak outside the factory during the accident. Also, the Defendant's employees at the accident scene or taking emergency measures did not suffer any physical damages from the hydrofluoric acid. Furthermore, considering that the Plaintiffs was outside the range of influence of hydrogen fluoride, that the wind was blowing from the village towards the factory, that the Plaintiffs' urine test results showed no hydrofluoric acid, and that the diagnosis was given only based on clinical estimation, the accident in question and the alleged damage to the Plaintiffs cannot constitute a causal relationship.

C. Ruling

The Defendant's appeal was dismissed. In the case where a victim is to hold a facility operator liable for damages under Article 6 Paragraph 1 of the former Act on Liability and Relief for Environmental Pollution Damage, the causal relationship between the facility and alleged damages shall be presumed where it is highly probable to believe that the pollutants discharged from the facility have inflicted damage on the life, body or property of the victim. In short, the "direct" causal relationship between the facility and the alleged damage shall be exempt from verification.

The business owner can be exempt from presumption by disputing the facts that constitute the evidence for the issue under dispute under Article 9 Paragraph 2 of the same Act, or by proving other reasons for the occurrence of environmental damage or his or her endeavors to prevent it under Paragraph 3 of the same Article.

D. Summary of Decision

[1] Evidence-based solely on probability

The former Act on Liability and Relief for Environmental Pollution Damage (hereinafter referred to as the former Act on Environmental Pollution Damage Relief) clarified liability for environmental pollution. Its purpose was to provide swift and fair relief to victims while reducing their burden of proof.

To achieve this purpose, the former Act on Environmental Pollution Damage Relief imposed strict liability on business owners under Article 6 Paragraph 1 for environmental pollution damage caused by the installation and operation of facilities. The damage includes harm inflicted on the victim's life, body (including mind), or property and other causes arising from the facilities.

In particular, it is stipulated explicitly that "when there is a reasonable probability that a facility may be considered to have caused environmental pollution damage, it is presumed that environmental pollution damage has



occurred due to that facility” under Article 9 Paragraph 1 of the same Act. Furthermore, in Article 9 Paragraph 2, it is stated clearly that “whether or not there is a significant probability under Article 9 Paragraph 1 is determined by the operation process of the facility, the equipment used, the type and concentration of substances input or discharged, weather conditions, the time and place of damage, the pattern of damage, and other factors.”

Still, in cases where it is proven that the business owner has fulfilled his obligations under Article 4 Paragraph 3, the presumption under paragraph 1 can be excluded.

Considering the legislative purpose of the former Act on Environmental Pollution Damage Relief and relevant regulations, if the victim proves that there is a significant probability that damage arose due to the reasons stipulated under Article 9 Paragraph 2 of the same Act, the causal relationship between the facility and the harm can be presumed. It precludes the responsibility of proving that the pollutants discharged from the facility reached and inflicted damage on the victim.

Meanwhile, the business owner can dispute facts that constitute the evidence for the issue under dispute under Article 9 Paragraph 2 of the same Act or prove other reasons for the occurrence of environmental damage or his or her endeavors to prevent it to exclude the presumption.

[2] Application to the Case in Question

1) The Defendant runs a hazardous chemical substance business under Article 27 of the Chemical Substances Control Act, and the factory in the case in question is a handling facility “that manufactures, keeps, stores, transports, or uses chemical substances” under Article 2 Paragraph 11 of the same Act. Therefore, the Defendant shall be held accountable for compensating for the damage caused by environmental pollution.

2) Hydrogen fluoride, in a gaseous state, rapidly diffuses into the atmosphere, reacting with water vapor in the air to form white smoke. Most of it falls to the ground in the form of hydrofluoric acid. In case of a slight leakage of hydrogen fluoride, the ideal evacuation radius is 0.2km during the day and 0.5km at night.

3) The accident occurred around evening. Most of the residents and the Plaintiffs were approximately 300 to 500 meters south of the location, and the wind was blowing from the north of the factory toward the village at a speed of 1.0 to 2.1 m/s.

4) The Plaintiffs unanimously complained of similar symptoms allegedly caused by hydrofluoric acid leakage. Immediately after the accident, they were transported to the emergency room or received hospital treatment. On the Plaintiffs’ end, the leakage was the undisputable culprit behind their sufferings.

5) The Defendant made counterclaims against the Plaintiffs, citing their urine tests that showed no hydrofluoric acid. However, the test results alone are insufficient to back the Defendant’s argument that there is no causal relationship between the leakage and the Plaintiffs’ symptoms, as most of the hydrogen fluoride that enters the body is excreted from the body within 24 hours.

In addition, although experts presume that the influence range of hydrogen fluoride would have been 102~149 meters, this may vary depending on geographical characteristics and climate conditions.

6) To put it simply, it can be determined that there is a significant probability that the hydrofluoric acid leaked from the factory spread into the air in a gaseous state and then fell to the ground, causing damages to the Plaintiffs.

E. Applicable Law

[Act on Liability and Relief for Environmental Pollution Damage], January 27, 2016*

*This was later revised on January 17, 2017.

Article 1 (Purpose)

The purpose of this law is to quickly and fairly provide relief to victims



from environmental pollution damage by establishing an effective damage relief system, including clarifying liability for compensation for environmental pollution damage and reducing the burden of proof on victims.

Article 6 (No Fault Liability for a Business Owner of Environmental Pollution Damage)

1. When environmental pollution damage occurs in connection with the installation and operation of a facility, the operator of the facility must compensate for the damage. However, this does not apply if the damage is caused by war, civil war, riot, natural disaster, or other force majeure.
2. If environmental pollution damage occurs due to circumstances prior to the suspension of operation of the facility, the business operator who operated the facility shall compensate in accordance with Subparagraph 1.

Article 9 (Presumption of Causality)

1. If there is a reasonable probability that a facility may have caused environmental pollution damage, it is presumed that the facility caused the harm.
2. Whether or not there is a significant probability pursuant to Article 9 Subparagraph 1 is determined by the operation process of the facility, the equipment used, the type and concentration of substances input or discharged, weather conditions, the time and place of damage, the pattern of damage, and other factors.
3. If environmental pollution damage occurred due to other causes, or if the business owner complies with all environmental and safety-related laws and license conditions related to the cause of environmental

pollution damage prescribed by Presidential Decree and makes efforts to prevent environmental pollution damage, etc., proving that the business owner has fulfilled his obligations under Article 4 Subparagraph 3, the presumption under Subparagraph 1 is excluded.

F. Implications

So far, liability lawsuits under the Act on Environmental Pollution Damage Relief have placed the burden of proving the causal relationship between alleged causes by the perpetrator and the victim's damage on the victim.

However, it poses a risk of unfair judgment and costs the victim a lot of time and effort. While defendants, most of whom consist of employers or organizations, tend to be in an advantageous position in investigative efforts based on their capital, plaintiffs, who are primarily individuals, struggle with them. Add to this, the risk has remained that defendants might be tempted to conceal the cause of the accident, exploiting their favorable position after finding it in the investigation process.

The recent ruling was made amid such concerns. For the first time, it stated that victims do not need to directly prove that pollutants discharged from the facility reached them and inflicted damage on them. It is now predicted that the burden of proof for victims in environmental pollution damage lawsuits will be significantly eased.

There are still some incomplete aspects to the decision in this case in that only the Defendant's liability for the mental damage caused to the Plaintiffs excluding physical damage, was accepted. Still, there is no doubt that the ruling has set an exemplary case in easing the burden of proof for victims in environmental pollution suits.

Protecting the Public from Environmental Hazards

Introducing the National Institute of Environmental Research

Kim Sue Jin

Director of the Environmental Health Research Division

Q: *What are the main tasks of the National Institute of Environmental Research (NIER)? Please give a brief introduction of your organization as well.*

The National Institute of Environmental Research (NIER), under the Ministry of Environment, is a national comprehensive research institute in the environment field. Our goal is to support the establishment and implementation of environmental policies through scientific research.

As the nation's sole research institute that cuts across every sector of the environment, NIER is currently employing around 1,000 staff, including public service workers and 363 government officials, including researchers.

The institute has five research departments and 25 divisions: Environmental Health Research Department, Climate & Air Quality Research Department, Water Environment Research Department, Environmental Resources Research Department, and Environmental Infrastructure Research Department.

NIER is proud to have a team of highly qualified researchers, with 80% holding master's and doctorate degrees. This expertise, combined with our top-tier environmental research facilities such as the Environmental Satellite Center, National Environmental Health Specimen Bank, and Environmental Hazard Assessment Research Building, enables us to conduct cutting-edge research.

Our vision is to "realize a better environment and higher quality of life through scientific research." We are deeply committed to environmental research, which will help create a sustainable society and a healthier, more promising future for all.

Our research tasks are focused on a wide range of environmental issues, including ①Response to climate change and implementation of carbon neutrality, ②Establishment of the industrial ecosystem to realize a circular economy, ③Future-oriented environmental research for innovations, ④Clean air, pleasant and healthy life, ⑤Clean and safe water, and ⑥Environmental hazard-free life.

Q: *Please walk through the significant roles its affiliated centers (Four Major River Research Centers, Intensive Air Quality Monitoring Stations, 2 Water Quality Monitoring Centers, etc.) play.*

NIER has three types of affiliated centers, each playing a significant role in the efficient conduct of environmental research specific to regional circumstances: Four Major River Research Centers, two Water Quality Monitoring Centers (Waegwan, Mae-ri), and eleven Intensive Air Quality Monitoring Stations.

Four Major River Research Centers conduct field research at four major river basins by operating river system-specific measurement networks, providing scientific assistance with implementing water environment policies for preserving water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

Intensive Air Quality Monitoring Stations, with their first station opening on Baengnyeong Island in 2008, operate in 11 regions nationwide. Their research is focused on various air environment issues, monitoring contaminants, such as fine dust that travel long distances and analyzing the causes behind the formation and high concentration of fine dust.



Water Quality Monitoring Centers Stations are designed to tighten control over unregulated trace contaminants in the Nakdong River water system and secure the safety of drinking water. The Waegwan center (situated in Chilgok County, North Gyeongsang Province) and the Mae-ri center (located in Gimhae City, South Gyeongsang Province) operate water environment monitoring systems at mid- and upstream and downstream, respectively.

We aim to scientifically identify the causes behind increasingly complicated environmental issues and find solutions by conducting in-depth research through these facilities.

Q: *The Korean National Environmental Health Survey (KoNEHS) began this July. Could you explain this survey and its purpose?*

Under Article 14 of the Environmental Health Act, the KoNEHS is carried out every three years using the biomonitoring technique to measure the exposure levels of environmental chemicals, such as heavy metals, in people's bodies and identify determinants of exposure.

The KoNEHS was launched in 2009 and marks its 6th survey this July. The Ministry of Environment has been utilizing the survey results to identify major environmental chemicals and exposure sources that adversely affect public health and implementing policies to reduce exposure. The U.S., Germany, and Canada are also conducting a biomonitoring program nationwide, and KoNEHS is known as the sole population-representative national biomonitoring program whose results are published as national statistics in Asia.

Q: *What does the KoNEHS examine?*

The survey has three parts: a questionnaire, environmental chemical analysis using biospecimen, and a clinical test.

The first part, a questionnaire, consists of questions on indoor and outdoor environmental factors, diet habits, and the frequency of consumer chemical product use to determine environmental chemicals' exposure routes and levels.

The second part analyzes biospecimens such as blood and urine and a wide range of environmental chemicals to which we are easily exposed daily. While the first survey analyzed 19 types of substances, including lead and mercury, the upcoming 6th survey (2024-2026) will look into some 71 types by expanding the category of persistence organic pollutants (POPs) such as PFAS chemicals.

The third part conducts basic health examinations and clinical tests related with environmental chemicals.

Q: *Who is subject to the KoNEHS?*

Participants are sampled nationwide among people of all ages from 3 years, considering gender, age, and population density by region. About 5,000 to 6,000 people, representing one in 10,000 people in Korea, will be recruited in the survey for the next three years. The participants will receive the analysis reports on environmental chemicals, such as heavy metals, detected in their bodies, which will serve as scientific evidence for establishing environmental health policies.

Infants under three years old are precluded from sampling due to the difficulties that may arise while taking their biospecimens, such as blood and urine. When participants are selected for the survey, their consent is obtained prior to the participation.

The recent release of articles on the upcoming 6th survey has generated interest among the public, leading to inquiries about participation. We would like to ask for their understanding as targets are recruited through nationwide sampling methods.



Q: *What will the applications of the KoNEHS results be?*

The KoNEHS is a three-year cross-sectional survey on environmental chemicals exposed to the general population. Therefore, its results can be utilized as basic data for verifying the effects of past environmental policies or drafting new ones. In addition, it helps compare the environmental chemical exposure levels of residents living in regions vulnerable to environmental pollution, such as those near large-scale industrial complexes and coal-fired power plants, against the average exposure level of the entire population, providing evidence to support countermeasures.

The survey results are also applied in other areas such as environmental health and preventive medicine sectors, where many researchers use them as raw data.

Q: *Is there any ongoing or scheduled biomonitoring study conducted on a large scale?*

Yes, there is. As mentioned in the answer to Question 6, the KoNEHS excels in its ability to keep track how the levels of internal environmental chemicals change over time, but has limitations in identifying the relation between those substances and their impact on health.

This is why the Ministry of Environment embarked on the Korean Children's Environmental Health Study (Ko-CHENS) in 2015. This study on cohorts of children was designed to investigate the effects of

environmental chemicals on children's health.

Korea stands out among a few countries that adopt both representative population sampling and follow-up methods in biomonitoring studies at a national level.

These two studies by NIER were introduced in the educational materials on human biomonitoring published in 2023 by the World Health Organization (WHO)

Q: *Please share more details about the Ko-CHENS.*

A cohort is a group of individuals who share a statistical factor (such as the period of birth or marriage).

The Ko-CHENS is a long-term longitudinal study of 70,000 pregnant women and their children selected between 2015 and 2021, following them from infancy to adolescence so that the causal relationship between environmental exposure and its health effects can be identified.

Blood, urine, cord blood, etc., will be taken from mothers in the early to later stages of pregnancy to analyze harmful substances in their body. The children will be subject to a follow-up study of their biospecimens, their development of physical, cognitive, and social abilities, and their disease records, including hospital records, in the first 6th and 12th month, and then annually.

The biospecimens collected during the survey will be classified into analysis categories or types of specimens depending on analysis needs. The Ko-CHENS is slated to carry on until 2036.

Q: *The number of samples collected for environmental health programs must be enormous. Where and how are they stored?*

The rising number of biospecimens used in national environmental health survey programs has accelerated the need for facilities dedicated to supporting research requiring biospecimens and systematically managing samples.

To meet these needs, the Ministry of Environment broke ground on the National Biobank for Environmental Health in 2020 and opened it in 2023.

The two-story building comprises research offices, laboratories and cryogenic sample storages equipped with 50 liquid nitrogen tanks and 60 deep freezers capable of the storage at up to -180°C and -80°C , respectively.

Q: *Could you explain the requirements for collecting and storing samples at the National Biobank for Environmental Health and their current status?*

All biospecimens taken from environmental health research are transported to clinical laboratories within 24 hours and frozen after being divided by the characteristics of each analysis category. The ones for long-term storage are regularly stored in the bank.

Logistics Order Management Systems (LOMS) manage every biospecimen's inbound and outbound transportation. The bank currently has about 700,000 blood samples and 400,000 urine samples.

The stable storage will contribute to ensuring the accuracy of sample analysis data, enabling systematic long-term storage that will support sample analysis with advanced future technologies. This will be widely used for environmental exposure assessment in the future. The Biobank will serve as important human biosample storage to identify scientific evidence for the health effects of potential environmental exposure. It will enable the comparison and evaluation of environmental health status over time and pave the way in establishing environmental health policies.

Q: *Is there any case where the environmental health research by the institute has involved foreign collaborators or participants?*

The study (2013 – 2016) on the health impact of environmental pollution in the Asian Pacific region, including Mongolia and Cambodia, exemplifies our efforts for global collaboration. We visited heavy-metal contaminated areas, such as those near mines, to conduct health surveys and collect hair and urine of residents to analyze heavy-metal concentration levels.

The latest example is the participation of pregnant foreigners residing in Korea in the Ko-CHENS. They represent about 1% of the entire pregnant

women participants at 750 people.

In addition, the Environmental Health Research Department has been dedicated to international cooperation since 2014 as one of the centers collaborating with the WHO. We've supported the training programs to assist low-income countries in the Western Pacific region with reinforcing their environmental capabilities.

Q: *How do you picture a landscape of environmental health research spearheaded by NIER?*

We're seeing mounting public concerns over the harmful health effects brought by intensifying threats of environmentally hazardous substances such as fine dust. It is regretful that much hasn't been revealed about how and to what extent they can adversely impact our health.

NIER will continue to be committed to protecting our people's health by conducting diverse environmental health studies laser-focused on the environmental chemicals we can easily encounter in daily life and the health risks they may cause.

Leading an Eco-friendly Life in Korea

Did you know that Korea is the number one country in recycling among OECD countries? According to the OECD, Korea tops the list of best-performing nations in waste recycling and recovery, boasting the highest recycling rates.

Koreans' commitment to environmental protection is not limited to recycling. A plethora of environmental organizations, laws, and regulations make Korea one of the world's most eco-friendly countries. The following is a story about Minsu's typical day, where you can catch a glimpse of how Koreans are adopting eco-friendly practices in their day-to-day lives for a greener future. Minsu is already awake and getting ready for the busy day ahead. Let's jump in!

[7 A.M.] Reducing Delivery Packing Materials Usage

The first thing Minsu does as soon as he wakes up is rush to the front door to get his piled-up packages delivered last night. Korea boasts a fast and convenient delivery service. Customers can get their orders by early

morning the next day with just one click. Purchasing products, including groceries online, seems to gain traction every year, with online sales exceeding 50% of the total sales in the distribution industry for the first time last year since data started being compiled, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy.

But the flip side of such rapid growth in the delivery industry is a surge in waste, particularly packaging materials. We are facing countless packaging wastes, from boxes to ice packs made of chemical refrigerants to keep groceries fresh.

To tackle this challenge, online distributors have scrambled to devise solutions, many of which share many similarities. To prevent the indiscriminate use of boxes, some companies have started consolidating multiple items for one order in the same box instead of shipping them separately, thereby reducing the use of parcel boxes.

Others have replaced conventional disposable boxes with insulated bags that can be used repeatedly. After retrieving their orders, customers simply put the insulated bags back on the doorstep. Delivery workers usually pick them up that day or the next day.

As for ice packs made of chemical refrigerants, which are difficult to



recycle, many have replaced them with ones filled with water, easing the burden of customers from disposing of chemical refrigerants. They only need to cut open the ice packs and pour the water out. Returning to Minsu, he brings all the insulated bags delivered to his home and takes his items out. Thinking the sandwich he ordered last night for breakfast this morning looks mouth-watering, he cuts the ice pack and pours the water. He wraps up his morning routine by returning all the emptied packages to the doorstep.

[11 A.M.] Reducing Carbon Footprint with the Climate Card

Minsu, a college student, is very excited as the semester ended last week. To blow away his stress from preparing for final exams over the past few weeks and spend some leisurely time, he decides to ask his foreign friend, Hailey, to ride a bicycle along the Hangang River, a resting place loved by Seoul citizens.

Seoul, the capital of Korea, has a highly developed public transportation system, such as buses or subways. It boasts convenient access to almost every corner of Seoul and suburban areas, high speed, low fares, and fast Wi-Fi connection, all of which explain its popularity among people. Another reason people opt for public transportation aside from these benefits is its environmental effect on lessening carbon emissions.

As part of efforts to tackle intensifying environmental issues, the City of Seoul launched the 'Climate Card' on January 27, 2024. With the card, you can travel almost anywhere in Seoul except for a few sections by various



modes of public transportation such as subways, buses, and bicycles 'Ttareungi' for a flat monthly fee of KRW 65,000 (KRW 62,000 for the option excluding Ttareungi). The card offers unlimited use of public transportation for 30 days with a one-time charge. The card could be a big money saver if you use public transit more than 45 times a month, in case you purchase a card worth 62,000 won.

The Climate Card is also available for foreigners residing in Korea. They can choose either a physical or mobile one. However, mobile cards can only be used on Android mobile phones with OS 12 or higher, and in the case of physical cards, you must register the card on the T-Money Card & Pay website to validate it. For more information, visit the Seoul Metropolitan Government website and check the Climate Card introduction section.

Coming back to Minsu, he can benefit from an additional discount applied to young people aged between 19 and 39. The card, including Ttareungi, is 58,000 won; without it, it is 55,000 won. In this case, it is clearly a good deal if you take the subway or bus more than 40 times a month.

Minsu gets on the subway with his Climate Card to arrive at the Hangang River. His foreign friend Hailey has already arrived and waves her hand as she spots Minsu. Minsu runs towards her, and the two walk together to rent Ttareungi.

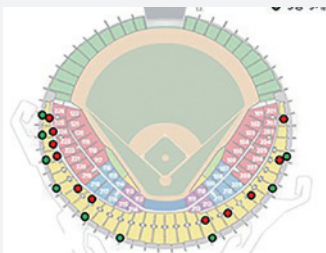
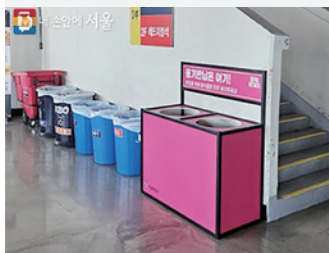
[2 P.M.] Enjoying ChiMaek in Reusable Containers

After a long ride while enjoying the beautiful scenery at the riverside, both head to Jamsil Baseball Stadium to watch a baseball game. The two, starving to death, first go to the food court to grab some snacks. The name Chicken and Beer catches their eyes. Famously known for its portmanteau ChiMaek (Chicken and Maekju, or beer in English), many Koreans call it the best snack for outdoor activities, especially when watching a baseball game. It isn't long before their crispy and juicy ChiMaek gets delivered in reusable containers.

Since last April, the government has been enforcing the use of reusable containers at 38 food and beverage stores within Jamsil Baseball Stadium. Ten different types of reusable containers can be used to purchase various food, snacks, drinks, and other items.

According to the 5th National Waste Statistics Survey conducted in 2018, the amount of waste produced from sports facilities in Korea amounted to some 6,176 tons per year, with baseball stadiums accounting for 2,203 tons, constituting 35.7% of the total. Aware of the gravity of this issue,





Seoul City has begun promoting reusable containers, which has contributed to reducing plastic waste by about 24 tons, as 800,000 reusable containers have been used during the major league baseball season between April and November.

The city has also ensured visitors do not suffer inconveniences when using reusable containers. As part of its efforts, 20 reusable container return boxes were placed at exits, including the stadium entrance.

Containers collected in the return box are handled at Jahwal centers in Seoul and undergo professional cleaning to be recycled. Additionally, periodic hygiene inspections are conducted on the containers to ensure they are neat and clean.

[7 P.M.] Secret of Namsan Seoul Tower

After enjoying lunch, Minsu and Hailey visited Namsan Seoul Tower, situated on the top of Namsan Mountain in the center of Seoul. Namsan Seoul Tower was initially built as a transmission tower, but now it is

positioned as one of Seoul's most representative landmarks. In particular, couples have long loved it as a popular dating spot. Inside the tower are various spaces such as restaurants, lock zones — where lovers hang locks on the wall wishing for their eternal love —, an observation deck, and many more. Well aware of what it means to take a girl to this Tower, Minsu seems somewhat nervous.

“Do you happen to know the hidden meaning behind the lights of this tower?” Minsu asks, hoping that she finds this intriguing.
“Absolutely not. Are there any special meaning in them?” She asks back.
“Well, yes. You see the one glowing blue now? It means that the micro dust level today is good. You can tell the level of micro dust on a day just by checking the colors of Namsan Seoul Tower's lighting.”
“Interesting! Tell me more about other colors as well!”
Gaining confidence from her reaction, Minsu continues,
As the color gets close to red, micro dust levels go up. Green means “fair,” orange means “bad,” and red means “extremely bad.” So if the color is red, you should wear masks or stay inside.”

“I’ll keep that in mind. Thanks, Minsu, it’s very helpful. I never imagined that there would be such an interesting fact about the tower!”
“Well, there is one more thing that you might find interesting. . . .” Minsu murmurs.
“Are you talking about the love locks?”
“How did you know!” Minsu jumps to his feet.
“Well, the tower is famous for that, isn’t it? I had already heard about it when you asked me to go to Namsan Seoul Tower. Come on, let’s get going!”



Join the Green Wave of Korea!

Tracking Minsu's day for 12 hours starting at 7 a.m., we have looked at how eco-friendly practices are incorporated into Koreans' daily lives. First, Minsu took out his food from the insulated bags, which were kept fresh thanks to ice packs made of water. Next, Minsu used his Climate Card to take the subway to Hangang River and ate his late lunch delivered in biodegradable containers. Lastly, Minsu explained the hidden meanings of the Namsan Seoul Tower lights to his friend, Hailey.
Besides what we have looked at in this section, many other measures are being designed and taken for environmental protection. Paying attention to how people in Korea are practicing eco-friendly activities in their daily lives would add enjoyment to your life in Korea.

Useful websites to refer to:

Climate Card
Seoul Metropolitan Government: news.seoul.go.kr/traffic/

Real-Time Air Quality
AIRKOREA: www.airkorea.or.kr

Ministry of Justice Held 17th Together Day Ceremony



The 17th Together Day ceremony, hosted by the Ministry of Justice, was held under the slogan “Warm Companionship, Happiness for All” in Gwacheon Citizen Hall on May 20. Together Day is a legal holiday designated by law in 2007 to create a social environment where Korean and foreign nationals live together with respect to each other’s cultures and traditions. Since its inception in 2008, it has been celebrated on May 20 annually.

Approximately 600 participants, a diverse mix of Korean and foreign nationals, including representatives from the diplomatic corps to Korea, the International Organization for Migration(IMO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees(UNHCR), Dr. Yohan Ihn, Mayor of Gimpo(Chair of The National Multicultural Cities Council), and the Mayor of Gwacheon,

came together to celebrate this significant event.

The ceremony was accompanied by the video screening conveying the message of the 17th Together Day, a commemorative speech by the Minister of Justice, congratulatory remarks by the Ambassador of Ireland to the Republic of Korea, a representative of foreign diplomatic missions, and Dr. Yohan Ihn, South Korea’s first naturalized citizen, as well as presentation of government awards and congratulatory performances by art groups including Woori Multicultural Children’s Choir.

The event featured various outdoor activities, from trying on global costumes to getting a caricature drawn and enjoying free rice cakes, adding a fun and interactive element to the ceremony.

During the awards ceremony, 17 awards were presented to individuals



and organizations, including the prestigious Presidential Citation and the Prime Minister’s Citation. These awards recognized their significant and long-standing contributions to supporting foreign residents in their settlement and integration into Korean society.

Sr. Gerardine Ryan(Immigrant of the Year) and Team Leader Nani Lee of Gimpo City Foreign Resident Support Center were honored with Presidential Citation for Individuals for their 50-year service and sacrifice for people with disabilities and 21-year settlement support for multicultural families, respectively.

The Presidential Citation for Organizations went to the Seongdong Global Migrant Center(Director Jinkyong Ahn), which is dedicated to helping foreign nationals integrate and adapt to life in Korea and enhancing their rights through various activities, such as operating a free clinic.

For those who could not attend in person, the event was made accessible through live streaming on the official YouTube channels of the Ministry of

Justice and Korea Immigration Service and the Together Day website.

Minister of Justice Sungjae Park emphasized in his commemorative speech that “the Ministry of Justice will step up its cooperation with local governments to ensure foreigners’ smooth settlement in our society and promote social integration policies to shape our society that facilitates mutual understanding and respect between Korean and foreign nationals while managing the inflow of foreign talent in an orderly and systematic manner.” And he added such efforts will “help us maintain the growth momentum and catapult Korea into a global leader where its nationals and immigrants prosper together.”

Ministry of Health and Welfare Expand Caregiver Work Visas



universities to work in the caregiving sector.

The plan involves allowing a maximum of 400 foreign residents to acquire temporary Special Occupation(E-7) visas annually for the next two years. The <Caregiver Training Guide>, revised by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in January 2024, now grants those who graduated from Korean universities eligibility to apply for caregiver certification tests.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare has expanded the eligibility to include undergraduates starting in July 2024, while the Ministry of Justice has decided to grant Special Occupation(E-7) visas to foreign graduates from Korean universities if they land a job in care facilities after acquiring the caregiver certification.

In addition, the Ministry of Justice will allow overseas Koreans with Work and Visit(H-2) visas to benefit from a change of visa status to Overseas Korean(F-4), repeatedly extendable during the period of stay if they acquire caregiver certificates.

The decision is expected to lead to long-term employment of active caregivers with Work and Visit(H-2) visas and boost the inflow of applicants.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health and Welfare will be committed to improving the treatment of Korean caregivers by expanding long-term employment subsidies and caregiver promotion schemes and relieving their workload by optimizing the ratio of patients to caregivers.

Minister of Justice Sungjae Park said, “To prepare for a looming super-aged society, we joined the Ministry of Health and Welfare to encourage excellent foreign talents to enter the workforce in the caregiving field while devising measures for better treatment for Korean caregivers.”

Minister of Health and Welfare KyooHong Cho expressed the expectations that “the relaxation of eligibility rules would help alleviate a shortage of young caregivers in long-term care institutions” and demonstrated the determination to “keep collaborating with the Ministry of Justice in visa assistance and promote the exploration of treatment improvement plans to encourage more Korean nationals to begin working in the caregiving profession.

The Ministry of Justice, headed by Minister Sungjae Park, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare, led by Minister KyooHong Cho, have introduced a plan. This plan has two main objectives: ①to enable the employment of international students with bachelor’s degrees in Korea’s caregiving sector and ②to encourage more overseas Koreans residing in Korea to contribute to this field.

The plan has been introduced in response to the pressing need for caregiving services. With Korea projected to become a super-aged society by 2025, the diminishing domestic caregiver population is creating a shortage of care providers. This underscores the importance of actively engaging a young and professional foreign workforce with caregiver certificates.

In response, the Ministry of Justice has added “Caregiver” under the four subtypes of E-7 visas, allowing international graduates from Korean

Eligibility for University Research Student and Researcher Visas Expanded To Attract Global Science and Technology Talents

The Ministry of Justice, led by Minister Sungjae Park, has expanded eligibility for University Research Student(D-2-5) and Researcher(E-3) visas to draw foreign talents in science and technology.

The University Research Student(D-2-5) visa eligibility has been limited to foreigners with master’s or doctorate degrees and international undergraduate students invited by five designated research institutions in Korea. However, criticism has been voiced that this limits the attraction of more researchers from abroad as most other universities are prevented from inviting them.

In light of this situation, the Ministry of Justice has decided to open the window of opportunities for universities within the top 200 universities of THE Rankings and the top 500 of QS Rankings to invite engineering undergraduate students from overseas as University Research Students(D-2-5 visa).

On the other hand, there has also been criticism surrounding the Researcher visa(E-3), which has been issued only for master’s and doctoral degree holders. This rule requires that masters have at least three years of work experience after taking the degree, making it inhospitable to foreign researchers who wish to come to Korea.

This has led the Ministry of Justice to change the eligible stay status for Researcher(E-3) visas to accept master’s degree holders with no 3-year work experience if they are either graduates from the world’s best universities or authors of highly cited academic journals.

The Ministry of Justice plans to gradually expand visa eligibility for persons wishing to stay for research activities to secure global talents in science and technology. In addition, the Ministry will listen to various opinions from relevant ministries and science and technology circles and incorporate them into improving the visa system.



The 13th Asia-Pacific ADR Conference

The Ministry of Justice co-hosts the 13th Asia-Pacific ADR* conference at COEX on October 30, 2024, in collaboration with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), and the Korean Commercial Arbitration Board (KCAB).

The Special Session, held by the International Legal Policy Division of MOJ and Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific (RCAP) on October 29, will discuss the directions of development for recently drafted international norms and systems.

The main sessions scheduled for the next day will dive deep into ADR, focusing on the current status of international commercial disputes and constantly advancing procedures in the field.

Details can be found on the MOJ website (<https://www.moj.go.kr>)

*Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR): Arbitration, mediation, and other processes to resolve disputes without reliance on litigation



The 11th Walk Together Festival



The 11th Walk Together Festival will be held on October 20, 2024, at Yangcheon Park in Yangcheon District, Seoul.

The Walk Together Festival, which marks its 11th anniversary this year, is co-hosted by the Seoul Immigration Office and Campaign Office for Healthy Society. This event aims to provide a venue for foreigners residing in Korea and Korean nationals to deepen mutual understanding and friendship while walking together.

Apart from the walk, the festival offerings include government-sponsored consultation, cultural experience booths, congratulatory performances, and more. Participants can seek advice on immigration, laws, healthcare, welfare, etc.

Please note that the content of the festival is subject to change. Details will be posted on the Seoul Immigration Office's Facebook (facebook.com/seoulmigrationoffice)

The 3rd Asia Pacific Expert Conference for Criminal Justice

The Korean Institute of Criminology and Justice (KICJ) co-hosts the 3rd Asia Pacific Expert Conference for Criminal Justice at the Shilla Stay Seocho on August 13, 2024, in collaboration with the UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence (CoE).

The conference, which marks its 3rd edition this year, will be held under the theme of "Evidence-Based Policy & Digital Technologies: The Future of the Asia-Pacific Region's Crime Victimization Survey (CVS) and Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics (CCJS)." For further information, visit the website (<https://www.kicj.re.kr>)

The Korean Institute of Criminology and Justice (KICJ)

The KICJ was founded in 1989 as the only national crime and criminal justice research institute in South Korea. Originally established as the Korean Institute of Criminology (KIC), it underwent a name change in 2021, expanding its research scope to include areas such as civil affairs, international law, and immigration law under the broader umbrella of justice.

The KICJ conducts proactive interdisciplinary research to formulate and implement evidence-based policies for improved national crime prevention and criminal justice system, continually expanding its research endeavors in these diverse areas.



Government Departments

Anti-Corruption & Civil Rights Commission

<http://www.acrc.go.kr/eng/index.do>
82-44-200-7151~6

Constitutional Court of Korea

<http://english.ccourt.go.kr/>
82-2-708-3460

Fair Trade Commission

<http://eng.ftc.go.kr>
82-44-200-4326

Financial Services Commission

<http://www.fsc.go.kr/eng/index.jsp>
82-2-2156-8000

National Assembly Law Library

<http://law.nanet.go.kr/eng/index.do>
82-2-788-4111

Judicial Research & Training Institute

<http://jrti.scourt.go.kr/>
82-31-920-3114

Korea Communications Commission

<http://eng.kcc.go.kr/user/ehpMain.do>
82-2-500-9000

Korea Consumer Agency

<http://english.kca.go.kr/index.do>
82-43-880-5500

Korea Customs Service

<http://english.customs.go.kr/>
82-1577-8577

Ministry of Food and Drug Safety

<http://www.mfds.go.kr/eng/index.do>
82-43-719-1564/ 82-1577-1255

Korean Intellectual Property Office

<http://www.kipo.go.kr/kpo/user.tdf?a=user.english.main.BoardApp&c=1001>
82-42-481-5008

Korea Law Service Center

<http://law.go.kr/LSW/main.html>
82-2-2100-2520
(Ministry of Government Legislation)/
82-2-2100-2600
(Legislative Research Services)

Korea Meteorological Administration

<http://web.kma.go.kr/eng/index.jsp>
82-2-2181-0900

Korean Bar Association

<http://www.koreanbar.or.kr/eng/>
82-2-3476-4008

Korean Library Information System Network

<http://www.nl.go.kr/kolisnet/index.php>
82-2-590-0626

Korean National Police Agency

<http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp>
82-182

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

<http://english.mifaff.go.kr/main.jsp>
110 (from Korea) / 82-2-6196-9110 (from overseas)

Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

<http://www.mcst.go.kr/english/index.jsp>
82-44-203-2000

Ministry of Education

<http://english.moe.go.kr/enMain.do>
82-2-6222-6060

Ministry of Employment and Labor

<http://www.moel.go.kr/english/main.jsp>
82-52-702-5089 (National Labor Consultation Center)
82-44-202-7137 (International Cooperation Bureau)
82-44-202-7156 (Foreign Workforce Division)

Ministry of Environment

<http://eng.me.go.kr/>
82-44-201-6568 / 82-1577-8866

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

<http://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/index.do>
82-2-2100-2114

Ministry of Gender Equality and Family

<http://www.mogef.go.kr/eng/index.do>
82-2-2100-6000

Ministry of Government Legislation

<http://www.moleg.go.kr/english>
82-44-200-6900

Ministry of Health and Welfare

<http://www.mohw.go.kr/eng/index.jsp>
82-44-202-2001~3

Ministry of Justice

http://www.moj.go.kr/moj_eng/index.do
82-2-2110-3000

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport

<http://www.molit.go.kr/english/intro.do>
(Day) 82-44-1599-0001, (Night) 82-44-201-4672

Ministry of National Defense

<http://www.mnd.go.kr/mbshome/mbs/mndEN/>
82-2-748-1111

Ministry of the Interior and Safety

<https://www.mois.go.kr/eng/a01/engMain.do>
82-2-2100-3399

Ministry of Economy and Finance

<http://english.moef.go.kr/>
82-44-215-2114

Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy

<http://www.motie.go.kr/language/eng/index.jsp>
82-2-1577-0900 / 82-44-203-4000

Ministry of Unification

https://www.unikorea.go.kr/eng_unikorea/
82-2-2100-5722

National Assembly Library

<http://www.nanet.go.kr/english/>
82-2-788-4211

National Intelligence Service

<https://eng.nis.go.kr/>
82-111

National Research Foundation of Korea

<https://www.nrf.re.kr/eng/index>
82-2-3460-5500 / 82-42-869-6114

National Tax Service

<http://www.nts.go.kr/eng/>
82-2-397-1200 / 82-1588-0560

Network of Committed Social Workers

<http://www.welfare.or.kr/>
82-2-822-2643

Public Procurement Service

<http://www.pps.go.kr/eng/index.do>
82-70-4056-7524

Ministry of SMEs and Startups

<https://www.mss.go.kr/site/eng/main.do>
82-1357

Statistics Korea

<http://kostat.go.kr/portal/english/index.action>
82-2-2012-9114

Supreme Court Library of Korea

<https://library.scourt.go.kr/base/eng/main.jsp>
82-31-920-3612~3

Supreme Prosecutors' Office

<http://www.spo.go.kr/eng/index.jsp>
82-2-3480-2337

The Board of Audit and Inspection of Korea

<http://english.bai.go.kr>
82-2-2011-2114

The Supreme Court of Korea

<http://eng.scourt.go.kr/eng/main/Main.work>
82-2-3480-1100

The National Assembly of the Republic of Korea

<http://korea.assembly.go.kr/index.jsp>
82-2-788-3656

National Library of Korea

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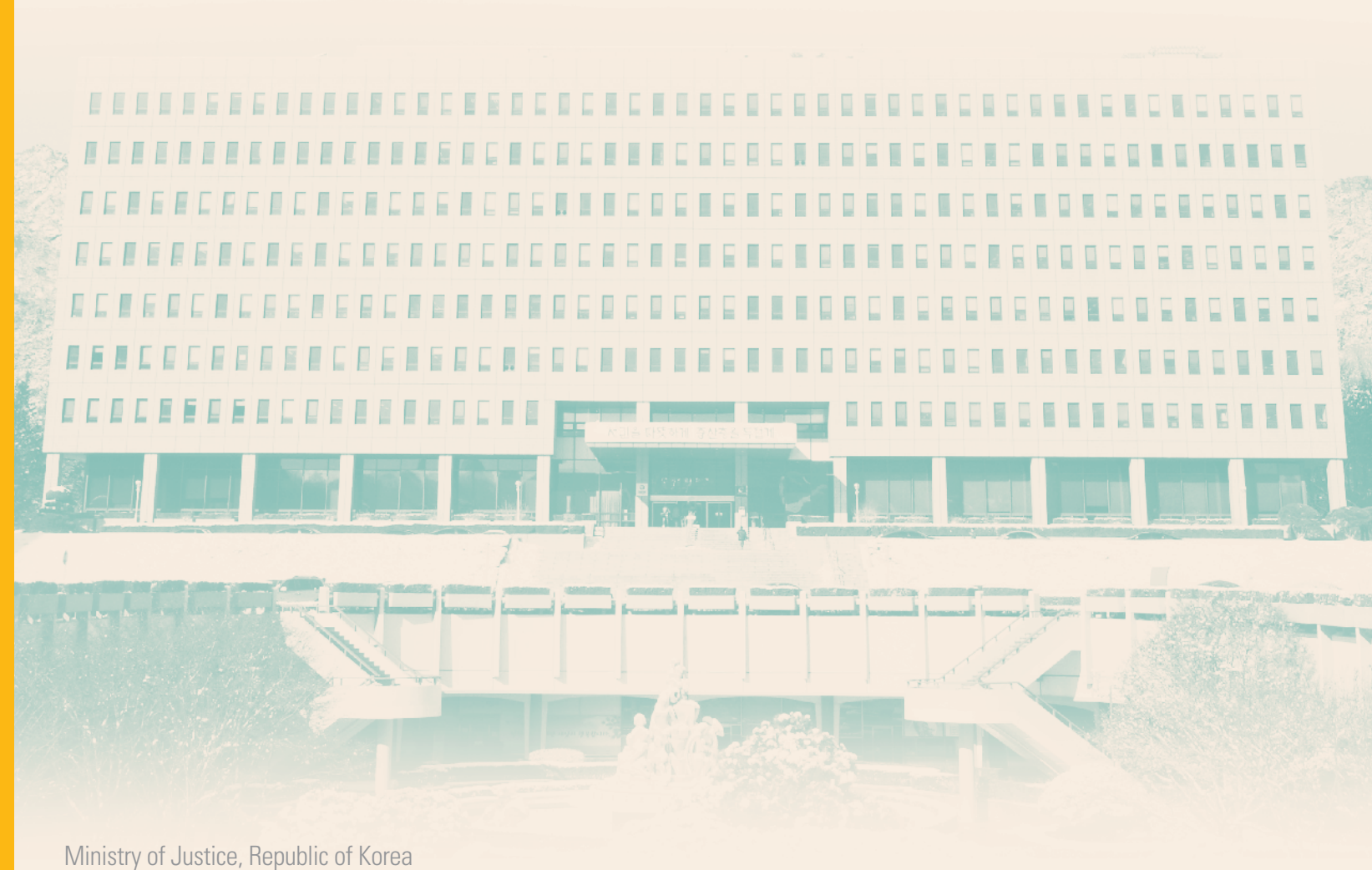


The Rule of Law for Fairness and Compassion

Emblem

The Republic of Korea government has changed its official "government identity." The new logo conveys the dynamism and enthusiasm of the country with the three colors of blue, red and white. It echoes off Korea's national flag *Taegeukgi* with the *taegeuk* circular swirl and the blank canvas embodies in white. The typeface

was inspired by the font used in the "*Hunminjeongeum*" (1446), the original *Hangeul* text, in consideration of the harmony embodied in the *taegeuk* circle. Starting March 2016, the new logo is used at all 22 ministries including the Ministry of Justice and 51 central government agencies.



Ministry of Justice, Republic of Korea

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