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Seoul stocks rally on foreign investors, strong US economic data

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Economic pulse-taking Kim In-young, president of the Seoul Economic Daily, a sister paper of The Korea Times, speaks at the start of the two-day Seoul Forum 2013 that will address President Park Geun-hye's call for the "Second Miracle on the Han River" at Lotte Hotel in downtown Seoul, Wednesday. **Related story on page 10**
Korea Times photo by Lee Ho-jae

INSIDE
NATIONAL Page 2
The U.S. Department of Defense announced that Capt. Lisa Franchetti, who has been selected for promotion to rear admiral, will be assigned as commander of the U.S. Naval Forces Korea.

BUSINESS Page 10
The National Tax Service (NTS) said Wednesday it has launched a full investigation into suspicious offshore tax evasion cases involving 23 firms and individuals.

SPORTS Page 20
 Pitcher Ryu Hyun-jin gave up just two hits and struck out seven en route to his first complete game in the majors, as the Dodgers beat the Los Angeles Angels 3-0 at Dodger Stadium.

MARKETS
KOSPI: 2,001.20 (+14.98)
KOSDAQ: 585.69 (-0.07)
WON/DOLLAR: 1,132.90 (+6.00)

WEATHER in SEOUL
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high (°C) low (°C)

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'Korea not follower but now trendsetter'

By Kim Tae-gyu
voc200@ktimes.co.kr



President Park Geun-hye

President Park Geun-hye presided over a top economic advisory council, Wednesday, reviving an important policymaking body to spur the sagging economy.

Park appointed 30 economic scholars and experts as members of the National Economic Advisory Council (NEAC) where she is the ex officio chairwoman.

"The current economic situation is not that favorable for us as slow growth continues and our growth potential keeps falling. We also have such hitches as a fast aging population and North Korean threats," Park said.

"To overcome the challenges and achieve an employment rate of 70 percent, I ask you to help transform our economy from a follower to a trendsetter."

As Park's deputy, Professor Hyun Jung-taik of Inha University will take charge of managing the council.

Former President Kim Dae-jung initiated the NEAC in 1999 following the Asian financial crisis and it also assumed significant responsibilities under his successor Roh Moo-hyun.

However, President Park's predecessor Lee Myung-bak created a slew of economic advisory entities so the NEAC became a nominal entity during his five-year stint.

Park scrapped all the economic advisory outfits and plans to beef up the functions of the NEAC whose quarterly meetings also involve five of her senior secretaries and ministerial officials as ex-officio members.

The council painted a gloomy picture for the economy at the initial meeting. It said a commissioned report showed the average annual economic growth rate would plunge to 3.6 percent in the 2010s and 2.7 percent in the 2020s.

"The government must overhaul the public segment and secure fresh growth engines as well as manage the macro economy in stable ways," it said.

It took issue with the maturity of the existing growth strategy, weak competitiveness of small companies and the fast aging society.

The number of the economically active population aged between 16 and 64 is expected to peak at 37 million in 2016 before plunging.

"The report is an objective evaluation on the Korean economy presented through the collaboration of authoritative think-tanks," presidential senior economic aide Cho Won-dong said.

The state-run Korea Development Institute, Samsung Economic Research Institute, and Goldman Sachs and McKinsey prepared the report for the council meeting.

Cho said the NEAC will play a key role in dealing with economic concerns as the only presidential economic council. It will convene once every three months while gatherings of sub-committees will take place more frequently.

"NEAC is composed of four sub-committees of macro finance, creative economy, economy for ordinary people and fair competition. We appointed the cream of the crop as its members," Cho said.

Some migrant wives have broken hearts

Brokers prey on foreign brides; not all despair

This is the fourth part in a year-long series, "Multiculturalism: The Great Experiment." — ED.

By Kim Ji-soo
jane@ktimes.co.kr

Sabina Gurung, a 22-year-old Nepalese woman, remembers the first time she met her Korean husband in Nepal in 2011.

"He was good-looking, he looked so nice and down to earth," said Gurung, during an interview at a cafe in Osan, a city south of Seoul. The marriage broker told her that he had good habits and didn't smoke or drink.

"The marriage broker told me that if I married a Korean man, I would get my own car, have a house and enjoy shopping," said Gurung, who asked that her real name not be used. Gurung had liked Korea ever since she was in 8th grade. She was a fan of Korean dramas and films, and she wanted to marry a Korean man.

Her Korean husband was 37, an auto repairman from Busan who made good money. They married just three days after meeting and she arrived in Korea in May 2011.

But when Gurung arrived in Korea, the promised good life became a nightmare. Two years later, she lives with her 10-month-old son and has no ID card or passport after fleeing from her husband. He hit her when he was drunk and asked her to perform sexual acts that he saw on porn videos. The couple lived with the husband's mother, who treated Sabrina as if she was a maid, often asking her to clean the four-room house.

She fled after nine months, spent time at a shelter in Daegu and then came to Osan. She lives with a Nepalese friend. The friend has two children, but got divorced and is working at a bar in Osan to support her own family in Nepal.

Gurung explained that it would be shameful for her to return to Nepal as a single mother. "Nepalese people would think it strange, maybe that I



Sabina Gurung, a 22-year-old Nepalese woman, visits the Vietnamese Embassy in Seoul to help her Vietnamese friend with an interpretation service. She broke up with her Korean husband after nine months of marriage because of spousal abuse. Korea Times photo by Yoon Sung-won

Full page cover story on page 5

had done something unfaithful," she said. Her mother has told her not to return, and is sending her a small sum of money to support her. Asked what she plans to do, Gurung repeatedly said "I have no idea."

She refuses to reunite with her husband, who wants Gurung to hand over their son to him and then return to Nepal. She is adamant about keeping her son. "He's the only one that makes me laugh. Otherwise I would be crying all the time," she said as she showed her son's photos.

As for her Korean broker, she describes him as "a bad man."

Gurung said she will return to Daegu, a city that is bigger than Osan and has better support systems for migrant wives and multiracial families. She hopes to find a way to start a new life in Korea because she said she wants her son to grow up as a Korean.

Many of the calls received at the 24-hour hotline run by the Emer-

gency Support Center for Migrant Women, which was set up by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, concern complaints by foreign wives that what the brokers told them about their Korean husbands turned out to be false.

A Vietnamese woman said that after meeting her husband through a broker, she arrived in Korea to find he was unemployed and living with his sister. He would only come home several times a month, giving her just 20,000 to 30,000 won.

Even after having two children, he still didn't get a job and she was forced to work on a farm to support the family.

According to a survey by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, multiracial couples are splitting up because of spouses running away (32.8 percent), personality differences (30.9 percent), economic problems (10.6 percent) and conflicts with in-laws (10.3 percent).

To help foreign woman with marital problems, the Ministry of Gender, Equality and Family set up the 24-hour hotline in 2006 to offer multilingual counseling. The government also provides shelter and rehabilitation programs to the women deemed to be in abusive marriages. The shelters are closed to the public to protect the women's privacy.

Many of conflicts in multiethnic marriages can be traced to unreasonable and extravagant promises made by the brokers to the couples.

Kim Suck-ju, a marriage broker who deals with Vietnamese women, said making false promises is bad for business, but she said she has heard other marriage brokers "tell Vietnamese brides that the men will transfer money to her family once they are married, something that is not told to the husband and may be untrue."

As such marriages increase in number, Korean husbands have also become victims.

Lee Kyu-seok, 39, who lives with his parents in Jincheon, North Chungcheong Province, is petitioning the Korea Consumer Agency to get a refund from a marriage broker.

See migrant on page 13

Mixed reactions on death with dignity

By Kim Jae-won
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A hearing on the legalization of the right to die with dignity drew general support among interested parties Wednesday despite lingering differences about the details.

The Presidential Committee on Bioethics invited patients' advocates, doctors and religious leaders to participate in the meeting.

Two previous attempts at legalizing

"death with dignity" were largely unsuccessful.

"We welcome an effort to legalize the right to die with dignity. However, patients or their family members should decide it rather than doctors," said An Ki-jong, co-head of the Korea Organization for Patient Groups.

An said the bill should not limit people's right to get life-sustaining treatment, if they so choose.

Heo Dae-seok, a doctor at Seoul National University Hospital

(SNUH), said that Korea needs to adopt the U.S. model of advance care planning called Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST).

The SNUH doctor said that POLST is a form that states what kind of medical treatment patients want toward the end of their lives. Printed on bright pink paper, and signed by both doctor and patient, POLST offers terminally ill patients more control of the type of end-of-life choices they can make.

Gas leak forces 2,000 to evacuate campus

A gas leak at a Seoul university Wednesday caused more than 2,000 people to be evacuated, according to police investigators. No casualties were reported.

The leak was reported just past 4:20 p.m. at Sejong University in eastern Seoul, investigators said. About 1.5

kilograms of liquid boron tribromide, known as BBr3, had leaked in the form of a gas after being exposed to air during an experiment with solar panels in a laboratory, they said. BBr3 is colorless but has a pungent odor and can cause lung-related illnesses. It can result in death if a person is not exposed to a

sufficient amount of oxygen after inhalation.

Three people were inside the lab at the time of the accident, but they safely fled after taking all emergency measures, and the university alerted everyone in the building to evacuate, investigators said. (Yonhap)

Money is often hidden cause for breakup of interracial couples



Five Korean men and their brides from Vietnam and the Philippines pose after holding a traditional Korean wedding ceremony at the Secho Cultural Arts Center in Yangjae-dong, southern Seoul, on May 22. Yonhap

Foreign brides keep coming in search of better life

By Kim Ji-soo
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Beginning in the early 1990s, middle-aged Korean bachelors in the countryside found it difficult to find Korean brides as younger women left for the city in search of a better life.

As a result, arranged interracial marriages became popular as local governments, fearing depopulated rural areas, helped finance marriage brokers seek foreign brides for farmers and others and offered additional support for couples if they met certain requirements.

Korea, like many Asian countries, has long had a tradition of arranged marriages and marriage brokers have been accepted as part of the process. Interracial marriages were also not that unusual since Korean men and women working abroad have often found foreign mates.

Kim Mose, 60, chairman of Sky Multiculturalism Corp., witnessed it firsthand.

"I turned my eyes overseas after Korea established diplomatic relations with China and Vietnam in 1992," said Kim, a veteran marriage broker.

As Korea was a relatively homogeneous society, the initial pool of foreign wives was sought among Korean-Chinese brides in the three northeastern Chinese provinces of Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang.

"Brides at the time were hardworking and really tried hard to settle down in rural households," Kim said.

But when the 1997 financial crisis hit Korea, Korean bachelors lost their appeal among Korean-Chinese women, who at the same time were finding it easier to obtain work visas in Korea on their own.

Marriage brokers then turned to Vietnamese women, with the number of such marriages increasing rapidly between 2002 and 2006. Kim said during this period that he was arranging as many as 30 marriages a month.

As of January 2012, there were a total of 220,687 migrant wives and husbands in Korea. The largest group consists of ethnic Koreans from China at 56,602, followed by ethnic Chinese women and those from Vietnam, the Philippines, Japan, Cambodia, Mongolia and Thailand.

Marriage brokers normally make a profit of between 1 million and 5 million won for each marriage. The husband bears most of the cost, normally spending 12 million won or more for introduction meetings, the marriage ceremony and honeymoon, and gifts and money to the bride's family.

Brokers draw up contracts detailing the pro-



Interracial couples and North Korean defectors tie the knot in a joint ceremony for a total of 50 couples at the KBS Hall in Yeouido, Seoul, in this April 21 file photo. Yonhap

cedures for the arranged marriage and how much it will cost. The marriages usually take place in the bride's native country.

After the brokers collect their money once the couples are married, few of them are interested in helping the foreign wives if they face problems in Korea.

Brokers usually only remain involved in cases where a marriage is dissolved within the first 90 days because the bride failed to come to Korea or ran away. In these cases, the brokers must compensate by setting up another meeting with a prospective foreign bride or pay back some of the money to the husband.

The wives enter with an F-6 marriage visa,

and within 90 days of marriage, can receive a foreign registration card that legally grants them a stay of three years in theory. In practice, the Ministry of Justice grants a one-year valid foreign registration card and then renews it for two more years after ensuring that the marriage is real and valid.

If brokers are found to have provided incorrect information about either marriage partner, operated without a certified license or recruited a foreign bride younger than 18, local government officials can decide on a punishment ranging from a fine and jail term to closing the business. Officials are also cracking down on online broker agencies that

often operate without a license.

But there are only a small number of local government officials who supervise marriage brokers. Investigations largely depend on complaints against brokers filed with the authorities.

During the second half of 2012, only 43 violations that were punishable by administrative orders were filed against the 1,531 registered marriage brokers, according to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family.

The government is trying to strengthen the law to make life difficult for unsavory brokers and imposing new rules screening Korean groom.

In response to the rise in interracial marriages, the government began regulating marriage brokers in June 2008. Brokers are now required to provide basic information on the health and employment of the applicants, including any mental health problems — after a Korean man with a history of insanity killed his young Vietnamese bride in August 2010, just a week after she arrived in Korea.

In addition, the government has mandated that from August marriage brokers must have 100 million won in assets to be legally registered in a move to weed out shady one-man marriage merchants.

Kim Suck-ju, who matches brides from Vietnam with Koreans, is seriously considering whether to continue with her business. "Putting up 100 million won in capital is not easy," she said.

Kim Mose is waiting to see what happens to the brokers market.

"We're all watching to see what happens. But my feeling is that the small ones will be weeded out," he said.

The gender equality ministry suggests that those using marriage brokers should make sure that they are legally registered and have warranty insurance. The brokers should also be able to certify that foreign brides should have the right qualifications to receive an F-6 marriage visa.

Mo Kuoung-soon, chief director of the Emergency Support Center for Migrant Women, said the main problem with marriage brokers was their prime motive in making money.

"I think we should ban international marriage brokers if we can," said Mo. "But if that is impossible, we need to regulate them strictly," such as limiting the number of interracial marriages a broker can arrange in a set period of time.

Kim Suck-ju disagreed. "Banning brokers will only lead to the emergence of shadier brokers."

Marriage brokers acknowledge that money

Number of foreign wives

(Cumulative figures as of January 2012)

	Total	Women
Total	220,687	196,789
Ethnic Koreans from China	66,410	56,602
China	54,670	49,797
Vietnam	47,385	47,187
Philippines	13,426	13,148
Japan	11,375	10,335
Cambodia	5,290	5,281
Mongolia	2,893	2,832
Thailand	2,861	2,815
United States	2,417	608
Russia	1,485	1,401
Taiwan	1,315	982
Others	11,160	5,801

Source: Ministry of Security and Public Administration

is an important factor behind interracial marriages.

Kim Mose says that an Uzbek female high school graduate, for example, makes only one-10th of the amount of money that a Korean man from a similar background makes, so she sees the marriage as a form of financial security.

"When someone is under financial pressure, he or she takes bold risks. It's not something just anybody can do," Kim said.

Most of the Korean men are in their 40s and see marriage with a foreign bride as a last chance to have a family.

"Brokers should be sensitive to the needs of their clients and make sure that both parties have the desire to enter and stay in a marriage before introducing a couple," he said.

"I think that for brokered international marriages, the man should visit the foreign country at least twice before the marriage so he understands local customs as well as gets to know his prospective partner better," Kim said. "I think the government should make that a legal requirement."

Kim says that money alone should not be the reason for interracial marriages. "Money is obviously one factor. But I think people who go into interracial marriages should be aware that they are making a choice. I think there are many merits to such a marriage, and I would encourage it. In fact, my sister-in-law is Vietnamese."

Documentary features multicultural children's struggle

By Kang Hyun-kyung
hkang@ktimes.co.kr

Korea's government-managed programs and schools designed only for multiracial children won't protect them from discrimination, says an American documentary director.

Cindy Lou Howe's forthcoming documentary, "Even the Rivers," is about the grim realities facing multiethnic children here. She said the government's policy on multicultural education is misguided.

She said such programs seem designed to separate multiethnic children from Koreans for the purpose of protecting them from bullying and discrimination, but only isolates them further.

"Many students who are highlighted in the film are fluent in Korean, so creating separate

schools to segregate them in order to teach them Korean language skills or Korean culture isn't necessary," Howe told The Korea Times.

"Even for the children who speak accented Korean, however, I learned that achieving Korean language fluency will not create full acceptance. The larger issue is that multiethnic children face discrimination in Korean society simply because of their heritage."

According to the Ministry of Education, some 50,000 children from multiethnic backgrounds were enrolled at primary and secondary schools as of 2012. These children have adjustment problems because they often face discrimination and bullying.

Some of them drop out of school. The education ministry had no accurate data regarding the dropout rate of multiracial students. Social workers claim this rate could be significantly higher than estimated by the



Cindy Lou Howe

authorities. These problems prompted the ministry to finance alternative high schools that accept multiracial children only.

Last year the Dasom School opened in Jecheon City, South Chungcheong Province, as a boarding facility. All students there benefit from state scholarships covering tuition and dormitory fees.

Howe, however, said such multiethnic children-only programs won't be helpful because the root cause of discrimination

stems from perceived national homogeneity.

"While I think the government's plan to segregate multi-ethnic and immigrant students is misguided, I'm confident that Korean society can learn from other countries' mistakes as it embraces a multicultural future."

Howe and her crew are now editing her film, in which dozens of activists, educators, children and lawmakers were interviewed.

The title of the film was taken from an old Korean saying that: "In 10 years, even the rivers and mountains change."

The documentary will be screened later this year.

Howe said it highlights the yawning gap between what multiethnic Korean families needs and the education policies the Korean government is implementing.

"There is an emotional scene in the film where a Korean mother of a multicultural

child talks about some of the challenges she has faced raising her daughter," she said. "At one point, the mother describes how thankful she is for the programs that bring together other parents and multicultural families... Many of these parents, children and families can feel isolated so government or community-based programs that support them and build a sense of community are vital."

Howe was born in Korea in 1978 to a Korean mother and African-American father. Her family moved to America shortly after she was born because her parents were concerned that she would face discrimination here.

She returned to Korea in 2008 and taught students at an international school. After seeing first-hand the discrimination facing many multiracial children, Howe is running a program with the Pearl S. Buck Foundation to teach the children English.

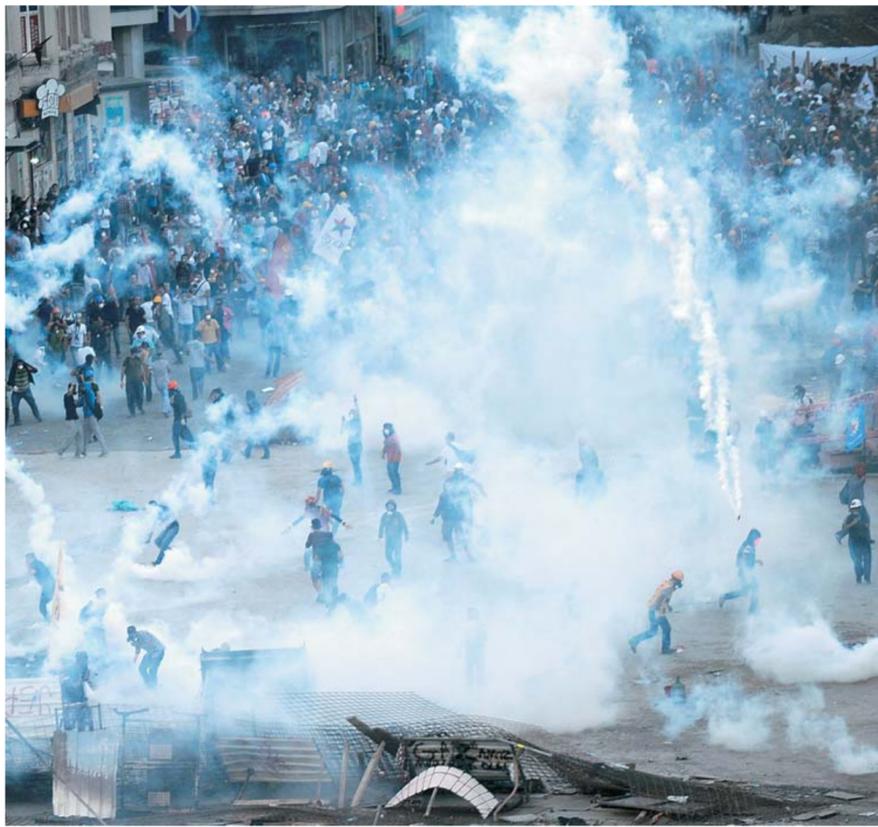


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Hamburg forward expected to sign with Bayer Leverkusen soon

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Crackdown on protests in Turkey Protesters clash with riot policemen on Taksim Square in Istanbul, Tuesday. Turkish police fired massive volleys of tear gas and jets of water to disperse thousands of anti-government demonstrators in the square. The gas sent the crowd scrambling, raising tensions on a 12th day of violence after Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned he had "no more tolerance" for the mass demonstrations. **Related story on page 7**

INSIDE
NATIONAL Page 3

Oh Soo-young, 39, the mother of a nine-year-old boy, has not seen her son for the last 128 days because she has been on the bell tower of Hyejwa Catholic Church in Seoul since February, taking part in a rooftop protest.

HALLYU Page 12



The Visit Korea Committee (VKC) has opened a Moving Service Center to facilitate foreigners visiting major destinations across the nation.

EDUCATION Page 14

Mixing fashion with passion is what a young designer has pursued to realize his dream of putting his creative thinking into action. Yeom Ji-hong, 33, calls himself a "passion designer."

MARKETS

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Gov't to reduce role in 'hallyu' promotion

By Kim Tong-hyung
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Previous administrations had approached the international boom for Korean cultural products with zealous mercantilism, considering "hallyu" as a tool of soft power to raise the country's profile.

However, there were also arguments that the government's aggressive marketing was beginning to breed weariness over Korean popular culture as foreigners recoiled from the smell of nationalism.

Yoo Jin-ryong, the new minister of culture, sports and tourism, seems to be taking these concerns seriously, telling journalists Wednesday to expect a decreasing government role in the promotion of music, television dramas and films.

"I admit to the criticism that the government had been too aggressive in past years. It was funny and inappropriate that policymakers were so passionate about pumping up K-pop and other pop cultural products instead of letting the market do it," Yoo said in a meeting with culture and sports editors of newspapers and television networks at the Press Center in Seoul.

"We will let the market function and do what it should do. The government should instead focus its administrative support and taxpayer money on areas that have cultural value but aren't supported by the market. These include promoting Korean food and Korean culture, for example the traditional ondol house heat-

ing system that has the potential to be applied to contemporary architecture."

In countries that have driven the boom in Korean cultural exports, hallyu fatigue seems to be setting in quickly.

A survey of more than 3,600 people in Asian countries, Europe, North America and Russia by the Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE) showed 66 percent of the respondents predicting hallyu becoming irrelevant as a commercial force in their countries in the next four years. More than 15 percent of them believed hallyu has reached that point already.

Yoo said that the talks about cultural exports should be balanced with discussions about inspiring cultural exchange.

"The government should concentrate on promoting the Korean way of living and exploring what value they could provide to people today," Yoo said.

"I have been talking actively with ambassadors from several nations, including countries in Africa and the Middle East, over organizing and supporting their cultural programs here. We can't expect others to be accepting of our culture when we aren't fully ready to embrace theirs."

On other issues, Yoo said the ministry will conclude by the end of this month whether to approve plans for two new casinos on Yeongjong Island, near Incheon International Airport. Officials are evaluating the financial capabilities of the foreign investors that have submitted the bids and their track records in corporate responsibility.



Yoo Jin-ryong
Culture Minister

Emily's broken dreams

After fractured nose, Filipina speaks about abusive Korean husband

This is the fifth part in a year-long series, "Multiculturalism: The Great Experiment."
— ED.

By Kim Rahm
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She was bleeding badly with her nose broken and left eye swollen because of another fractured bone after her husband kned her in the face.

The beating was no private affair but took place on the street, which may have saved Emily from further injuries. A shop owner witnessed the incident and called the police. When Emily arrived at the hospital, she told the police that she wanted to file a complaint. "I want him to go to jail," she declared.

The ordeal of violence appeared to have ended for Emily, a 31-year-old Filipina who had suffered six months of beatings after marrying her Korean husband.

Emily, who asked that her real name not be used, met her husband in 2006 while working at a bar on an entertainment visa. They dated and then she got pregnant. But he was already in a fake marriage with a Nepalese woman.

She went back to the Philippines when her visa expired and gave birth to a son in 2008. Meanwhile, her future husband was jailed for the fake marriage, but was released two years later. Emily married her son's father and returned to Korea in 2010.

It took only one month before the husband began beating her and the son. "He beat the boy because the baby cried. He wanted the boy to be manly, no crying. He also beat me because I stopped him from beating the boy," Emily said.

"He rolled up a wall calendar and beat me and the boy on every part of our bodies. My son couldn't even sit down because he had bruises on the

buttocks," she said.

As the husband did not have a regular job with a stable income, Emily resumed working at a bar. One night after working at the bar, she wanted to go home but her husband insisted they drink with his friends. She refused and they fought, ending with his physical assaulting her on the street.

The husband was jailed and they divorced. However, with a young son and without money and a place to live, Emily returned to her ex-husband.

She got pregnant again, and the beatings began again. Five months pregnant, she finally left him for good. Emily has stayed at shelters for immigrant women, and gave birth to a second son in March.

Her story is one of the many domestic violence cases being reported between Korean men and their foreign spouses.

A 2010 survey by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family revealed that 69 percent of immigrant wives experienced some form of abuse, either physical, mental or sexual abuse, or were subject to unreasonable control over their daily activities or spending. The physical abuse often occurs under the influence of alcohol.

Kim, 48, an ethnic Korean-Chinese, came to Korea in 2011 after marrying a Korean man who was introduced by her uncle who had been in Korea. When they were introduced, the man's hands shook. He explained it was because he was nervous. "I believed it. I never knew it was a symptom of alcoholism," she said.

Soon the husband began swearing at her after drinking. He often told her, "You married me not because you like me but because you want to make money here. Go away." He then began hitting her when he was drunk. After two days of serious beating, Kim filed for divorce and the court granted it in May.

In the case of a Vietnamese woman, Tayan, 35, her husband started beating after they were married in May



Emily, a Filipina migrant wife married to an abusive Korean husband, recently talked to The Korea Times. The Times respected her wish not to have her photo and real name used.

Full page coverage on page 5

2008 whenever they had trouble having sex. The 58-year-old husband would call her an "idiot" or "bitch."

Tayan's husband, who has two adult children from his previous marriage with a Korean woman, told Tayan's family in Vietnam before marrying that all his family members agreed to the second marriage. This turned out to be lie since the husband concealed the marriage from his children.

"I've never met his Korean family. I even don't know whether his parents are alive," she said.

Whenever his children visited him, the husband would pack all of Tayan's belongings and force her to leave the house until they left.

When she got pregnant twice, he forced her to have abortions. "He said Vietnamese people are stupid, so the baby would be stupid, too," she said.

Tayan, however, does not want to divorce because she will have to leave Korea because the husband did not allow her to take necessary steps to obtain Korean citizenship, which immigrant spouses are eligible to obtain if they stay in the country for at least two years.

Many husbands use the legal right to residency as a weapon to control their foreign wives.

A 25-year-old Filipina, who identified herself as Catherine, had her alien registration certificate and passport seized by her husband because he claimed she would run away if she kept them.

See broken on page 6

Samsung cool on share price fall

By Kim Yoo-chul
yckim@ktimes.co.kr

The CEO of Samsung Electronics rebutted, Wednesday, a JPMorgan report that predicted significant setbacks in Galaxy S4 sales which triggered a selloff of the tech firm's stocks.

Meanwhile, Samsung said it has no plans to sign a peace treaty with Apple over the 50 ongoing patent disputes on four continents.

"I can say sales of the Galaxy S4 smartphone are fine. It's been selling well," Shin Jong-kyun told reporters after Wednesday's regular meeting with presidents of Samsung affiliates at the group's main office in Seocho-dong, southern Seoul.

"The report (by JPMorgan) was based on its own analysis. Probably, the bank may have corrected its previous bullish estimate about the S4 sales," he said.

Shin is responsible for the global unveiling of the Samsung smartphones and tablets.

His comment marked a rare occasion for the company to specifically mention a market report.

Referring to slow demand for the flagship S4 smartphone, JPMorgan cut its share-price estimate for Samsung by 9.5 percent and lowered its 2013



Shin Jong-kyun
Samsung Electronics CEO

Related story on page 11

earnings estimates by 9 percent.

JPMorgan insisted Samsung was expected to ship 7 to 8 million phones per month from July. Samsung is aiming to move 100 million

in total; however, analysts now expect this figure to be closer to 60 million

Morgan Stanley, another major U.S.-based investment bank, also lowered its target on Samsung shares, citing less-than-expected S4 sales.

Thanks to the JPMorgan report, Samsung shares fell as much as 6.2 percent by the end of Seoul trading, recently, a four-month low and the largest single-day drop in nine months.

Shin's comments came as part of Samsung's quick response to cut down on the impact. The company's investor relations team contacted major local brokerages and provided them with background information about sales of the S4, according to

Samsung officials.

Samsung said it shipped 10 million S4s globally in the month since the device was released.

Shin also confirmed a plan to release a sequel of the Galaxy Camera — the Galaxy Camera2 — at an event in London set for June 20.

"Samsung will release our latest mirrorless camera that runs on Google's Android software," he told reporters.

Samsung is investing heavily in mirrorless cameras as it thinks increased corporate awareness and undisputable leverage in manufacturing will help it get a bigger stake in the lucrative and promising market.

The CEO confirmed Samsung has no intention of ending the patent disputes with Apple. "Patent disputes against Apple will be continue," Shin said.

The comments are the first since the U.S. International Trade Commission recently ordered the Cupertino-based outfit not to sell some old versions of its iPhones and iPads in the United States as those devices infringed on Samsung patents.

U.S. President Barack Obama has 60 days to decide whether to accept the final ruling by the trade panel or reject it.

Snowden's leak sparks fierce Internet freedom debate

Rights group lodges suit against phone snooping

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A fierce debate about Internet privacy and the limits of U.S. executive power erupted on Tuesday, in a victory for the young intelligence technician at the center of a global leak storm.

While 29-year-old Edward Snowden has gone to ground in Hong Kong and may yet face legal action for blowing the lid on Washington's vast Internet snooping program, he has triggered the public battle he said he wanted.

A bipartisan group of U.S. lawmakers, civil liberties groups and even one of the web giants accused of collaborating with the intelligence sweep separately urged President Barack Obama's administration to lift the veil of secrecy.

"We can't have a serious debate about how much surveillance of Americans' communications should be permitted without ending secret law," said Jeff Merkley, one of eight senators proposing a bill to increase transparency.

"Americans deserve to know how much information about their private communications the government believes it's allowed to take under the law," he said, arguing this could be done without "tipping our hand to our enemies."

Snowden's leaks to the Guardian and Washington Post newspapers published last week revealed PRISM, a top secret program of the U.S. National Security Agency to collect and analyze data from Internet users around the world.

US intelligence leak

U.S. intelligence chiefs insist the sweep has saved American lives by helping agents thwart terror plots, and authorities have opened an investigation that could see the contractor extradited from Hong Kong to face charges.

But many inside and outside the United States were outraged by the breadth and secrecy of the operation, which was carried out under the broad brush terms of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) and the Patriot Act. Under these, Internet companies like Google, Facebook and Apple have been obliged to secretly provide customer data to the NSA when ordered to do so by the secret FISA court, and last week's leak embarrassed the web giants.

Human Rights Watch executive director Kenneth Roth warned other governments could "see U.S. practice as a green light for their own secret surveillance programs," tarnishing U.S. credibility on the issue of Internet freedom.

Separately, a coalition of Internet and rights groups including the Mozilla Foundation, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Greenpeace USA, the World Wide Web Foundation and more than 80 more also demanded more openness.

The groups launched a website, StopWatching.us, and called on

Congress to launch a full investigation.

"We don't want an Internet where everything we do is secretly logged and tracked by government," said Alex Fowler, head of privacy and public policy for Mozilla, which produces the Firefox browser.

The ACLU also launched a separate law suit alleging that another spy program unveiled by Snowden, one in which the phone records of millions of U.S. citizens were seized, was unconstitutional.

But the debate about PRISM — and about Snowden's actions — is not one-sided. Popular daily USA Today summed up the Snowden question neatly in its front page headline: "A hero, or is he a traitor?"

Obama's spy chief, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, has described the leaks as gravely damaging, and inquiries are under way by both the Justice Department and the intelligence community.

"There is a review of how these leaks may have damaged important intelligence community programs," a U.S. intelligence official told AFP. "The Office of the National Counterintelligence Executive is coordinating the review."

Snowden, a technician working for the private defense contractor Booz Allen Hamilton, traveled from Hawaii to Hong Kong on May 20 with a cache of secrets harvested from NSA servers, according to the Guardian newspaper.



House Intelligence Committee Ranking Member Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, D-Md., is followed by reporters following a closed all-member briefing on the NSA on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday. AP-Yonhap

White House sidesteps 'traitor' debate

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The White House on Tuesday stopped short of branding Edward Snowden, a 29-year-old American who leaked details of a vast U.S. telephone and Internet surveillance program, a "traitor."

President Barack Obama's spokesman Jay Carney fended off all questions about Snowden, who was last known to be in Hong Kong, on the grounds that a legal investigation was under way.

"I won't characterize him or his status. We believe it is the appropriate posture to take to let the investigation move forward," he said.

Carney said the White House would leave it up to the FBI and the Department of Justice to make judgments on Snowden's conduct.

Asked what government employees who believe they detect waste or illegal activity in government programs should do, Carney said the Obama White House has introduced new protections for so-called "whistleblowers."

He said that Obama had signed an executive directive requiring protections for intelligence community whistleblowers who use

"appropriate" channels — implicitly not leaks to newspapers as Snowden did — to expose alleged wrongdoing.

Asked whether he would describe the former CIA technician and intelligence contractor as a "whistleblower" or a "leaker," Carney demurred.

The White House says the National Security Agency intelligence programs are legal and are subject to adequate oversight by Congress and the judiciary.

The Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, John Boehner, earlier described Snowden's actions in leaking details of NSA programs to the Guardian and Washington Post as a "giant" violation of law.

"He's a traitor," Boehner told ABC News in an interview.

"The disclosure of this information puts Americans at risk. It shows our adversaries what our capabilities are," Boehner said.

California Senator Dianne Feinstein — the Democratic chairwoman of the Senate Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence — has said U.S. authorities are vigorously pursuing Snowden.

Germany to seek answers

BERLIN (AFP) — The German government said Tuesday it planned to send a list of questions to the U.S. administration over revelations that Washington is running a worldwide Internet surveillance program.

"We have drawn up a list of questions which will be sent to our American friends," Interior Minister Hans-Peter Friedrich told a news conference to present the domestic intelligence service's 2012 report.

"We are going to ask them what the extent of this activity is, why such an activity, and when I have the answers I will tell you... probably," he said after a brief hesitation, prompting laughter among journalists.

The German minister said questions would also be addressed to organizations such as Google and others to find out what type and how much data had been made available to the authorities.

Germany's intelligence head Hans-Georg Maassen also told reporters he had not known anything about the surveillance program until reading the reports in the Washington Post and Guardian newspapers.

Google asks to publish more US gov't info

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Google is asking the Obama administration for permission to disclose more details about the U.S. government's demands for email and other personal information transmitted online in an effort to distance itself from an Internet dragnet.

In a show of unity, Google rivals Microsoft Corp. and Facebook Inc. also supported the attempt to pressure the U.S. Justice Department to loosen the legal muzzle that limits disclosures about government surveillance authorized by courts to protect national security.

Google made its plea in a Tuesday letter to Attorney General Eric

Holder and FBI Director Robert Mueller. Google is trying to debunk media reports that the company has created a way for the National Security Agency to gain access to large amounts of its users' online communications as part of a secret program code-named "PRISM."

The reports surfaced last week after a government contractor leaked confidential documents revealing the NSA has been tapping into the computers of Google Inc. and many other Internet services to retrieve information about foreigners living outside the U.S. The other companies linked to PRISM are: Microsoft, Facebook, Yahoo Inc., Apple Inc., AOL Inc., Paltalk, Google's

YouTube and Microsoft's Skype.

All the companies and services have denied giving the U.S. government unfettered access to user data. The companies say they only turn over user data under legally binding orders, and try to regularly resist orders considered to be too broad.

Minimizing the appearance of their involvement in PRISM is important to the technology companies. The companies don't want Web surfers to become paranoid about sharing personal information on their services or, worse yet, avoiding their websites altogether. Attracting big audiences helps the companies sell more advertising.

60 Shiites killed in clashes with rebels in Syria

BEIRUT (AFP) — At least 60 Shiite residents of a village in eastern Syria were killed on Tuesday in clashes with rebel forces, a day after they attacked an opposition post, a watchdog group said.

"Armed Shiite villagers attacked a nearby rebel post yesterday and killed two. Today rebels attacked the village and took control of it, killing 60 Shiite residents, most of them fighters," Rami Abdel Rahman, director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, told AFP.

The clashes came in the majority Sunni village of Hatlah, in eastern Deir Ezzor province.

At least 10 rebels were also killed in the fighting on Tuesday, and in the wake of the violence, Shiite residents of Hatlah were fleeing, Abdul Rahman said.

The Syrian government, which has been battling an uprising for more than two years, has created local militias in some parts of the country, training and arming sympathetic communities.

The conflict pits a Sunni-dominated opposition against the Syrian regime, led by President Bashar al-Assad, who comes from the Alawite community, an offshoot of Shiite Islam.

The fighting has taken on increasingly sectarian overtones as it has continued, with both sides accusing the other of carrying out massacres of different religious communities.



Colorado wildfire Visitors and employees leave the Royal Gorge Bridge park as smoke billows skyward Tuesday afternoon, from a fire near the gorge in western Fremont County west of Canon City, Colo. The fire burning on an estimated 300 acres south of the Royal Gorge Bridge and the Arkansas River led to the evacuation of the park. AP-Yonhap

Iranian reformists rally behind moderate in vote

TEHRAN (AFP) — Reformists led by ex-president Mohammad Khatami have rallied behind the sole moderate candidate standing in Friday's presidential vote, as they seek to loosen the conservative grip on power in Iran.

Khatami urged voters to support Hassan Rowhani hours after the only reformist candidate Mohammad Reza Aref pulled out of the race.

"Due to the duty I have to the country and the fate of the people of Iran I will vote for my esteemed brother Hassan Rowhani," Khatami said on his website.

"I ask all, especially reformists and those who seek the dignity and elevation of the nation," to vote for

Rowhani "in order for their demands to be met."

Rowhani also won a second major endorsement from pragmatic former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who said the former nuclear negotiator who champions better international ties is "more suitable" for the post.

"I will vote for Dr. Rowhani, who entered the race after consulting me," Rafsanjani said in remarks reported by the ILNA news agency on Tuesday.

The reformist support is seen as improving the chances of Rowhani, 64, of mounting a credible bid against the other major contenders, mostly conservatives seen as close to



Presidential candidate Hasan Rowhani, a former top nuclear negotiator, gestures to his supporters at a rally in Tehran, June 1. AP-Yonhap

supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The election is for a successor to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whose eight years in office have been marked by stiff Western sanctions over Tehran's controversial nuclear drive and the economic turmoil they have caused.

from page 1 Broken

Although she has been in Korea for five years, her spoken Korean is very poor because her mother-in-law did not allow her to attend language classes at a multicultural family support center. "She told me that 'your husband works hard to make money but you enjoy yourself and have fun at the center. You also have to work hard and make money,'" she said.

Catherine had to endure the restrictions and beatings because she wanted to stay with her two children and feared she would lose them if she divorced. But finally she ran

away because she could not stand the beatings and is now staying at a shelter. She is preparing to file for divorce, but has decided to give custody of her two children to her husband because she does not make enough money.

Seo Kwang-seok, president of the Migrants' Social Integration Support Center in Incheon, said "visible" domestic violence in interracial families, meaning physical abuse, is decreasing, but there are other types of violence.

"Korean husbands often say, 'I paid a lot of money to the marriage broker to bring you here' or 'I won't let you get Korean citizenship' and treat the immigrant wives roughly.

These kinds of abuses hurt the wives," he said.

"Especially the threat to their legal status to stay, such as renewing visa or acquiring citizenship, makes those women unable to resist their husbands," he said.

Han Ga-eun, who heads a counseling team at the Women Migrants Human Rights Center, said, "Korean women who are subject to domestic violence have family and friends here, so they can seek help relatively easily and stay with them if they leave their husbands. But immigrant wives can't. Many of them just put up with violence as they can't stay in Korea legally if they split up with their husbands."

7 out of 10 foreign wives experience domestic violence



A woman sheds tears during a rally to call for stronger punishment for Korean husbands wielding violence against their foreign wives, in central Seoul, in this July 18, 2012, file photo. Three deaths of immigrant wives at the hands of their husbands were reported last year. Korea Times

Ignorance leads to abuse in interracial couples

By Kim Rahn
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Overall, Korea has relatively high rates of domestic violence. According to a survey conducted in 2010 by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, 65.6 percent of married couples aged between 19 and 65 said they experienced domestic violence at least once during the last year.

The figure among interracial couples is even higher, 69.1 percent. For the survey on multiethnic couples, all respondents were foreign women married to Korean men.

Various forms of violence defined in the survey were included. When multiple replies were allowed, 13.4 percent of the victims in interracial families said they were physically beaten. Mental abuse, such as using insults or swearwords, threats, or destroying the victim's belongings, was reported by 21.5 percent.

More than 15 percent said they were subject to tight financial control because the husbands did not give the foreign wives money to buy daily necessities or managed the household income. Sexual abuse was a problem for 5.2 percent, while 22.5 percent said their husbands treated them as inferiors.

About half of them, or 47.2 percent, said that their husbands controlled their daily activities, including preventing them from meeting friends or other people, always wanting to know where they were, or suspecting they are dating somebody else.

The number of respondents of the survey, however, was only 307. Experts say the actual ratio of those suffering domestic violence is likely to be higher.

"It is impossible to conduct the survey on all foreign wives. Three related ministries conducted a joint survey on multiethnic families in 2009, and they could only survey about half of the 131,700 families at that time because many were unavailable," said Seo Kwang-seok, president of the Migrants' Social Integration Support Center.

"Regarding women who can come to support centers and ask for help about their husbands' violence, I guess their situation is better than those who never contact us," said Seo, adding that he personally estimated the ratio of foreign wives suffering domestic violence was around 85 percent.

Legal stay fetters wives

Experts say that a lack of communication, resulting largely from a language barrier, is the main cause of violence.

"It is very natural for a couple to have conflicts even when the couple is Korean. So conflicts involving multiethnic couples can be even more difficult to solve since the husbands and wives have different cultural backgrounds," said Lee Jeong-hee from the Ministry of Gender Equality.

"It is desirable for them to solve the troubles by talking. But conversations can be limited since the foreign spouses often lack Korean language skills and so are unable to express

Ratio of domestic violence among interracial couples

Total	Physical assault	Mental abuse	Financial control	Sexual abuse	Treatment as inferiors	Control over daily activities
69.1	13.4	21.5	15.3	5.2	22.5	47.2

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family

No. of counseling for domestic violence

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1,674	2,315	4,205	4,672	5,744	8,417

Source: Support Center for Women's Hotline

their opinions properly. As a result, conflicts often end with physical or other types of abuse," she said.

Seo said that it may take 10 years for a foreign wife to adapt herself comfortably to a new home country and it requires the husband and in-laws to be patient.

"However, many husbands are impatient. They seek counseling here and complain that 'My wife has been here for six months but she doesn't speak Korean yet and doesn't know how to make Korean food. Should I get a divorce?'" he said.

Han Ga-eun, the head of the counseling team at the Women Migrants Human Rights Center, said the way multicultural marriages are arranged is another cause for abuse.

Many marriages between Korean men and women from China or Southeast Asia are made through marriage brokers. Such couples only have a very short time, usually two or three days, to decide whether to get married and the men are often

responsible for paying the match-making and wedding fees.

"The marriage process is too fast. Since the husbands pay all the costs for the marriage, some of them think they have 'purchased' the women," Han said.

Brokers sometimes offer false information to the would-be couples in violation of the law. "They do so because they can make money when the couples get married. They tell a foreign woman that her future husband has three cars, when he actually lives in a shabby flat," Seo said.

The socioeconomic status of the husbands and their age are also seen as contributing to domestic violence.

According to the ministry's survey, 31.9 percent of the multicultural families had less than 2 million won in monthly income, while 16.6 percent had less than 1 million won. Forty-eight percent of the Korean husbands were only high school graduates.

"Many men seeking foreign wives

come from socially low levels, so the couples often have financial problems," Lee said.

The age gap between the husbands and the wives can cause "generational conflicts." The survey revealed that 49.2 percent of the wives were in their 20s, while 48.7 percent of the husbands were in their 40s. "Many of those 'old' husbands still have patriarchal views. But the wives are too young to accept them," Han said.

Despite the violence, the victims usually put up with it mainly because they could lose their legal status to remain in Korea if they divorce or separate.

"Husbands threaten that they will not renew their wives' visas or will prevent them from obtaining Korean citizenship if the wives report cases of abuse and beatings to support centers or the police. So those women can't seek help easily. The husbands and his family members take advantage of this and treat the women badly," Seo said.

Han said children are another reason. "Even though the victims decide to separate, it is difficult for them to gain child custody because they do not make enough money to raise children. The courts would not grant custody to the wives unless they have a minimum amount of money to rent a house," she said.

Education for husbands

The government offers education programs about basic living conditions in Korea to immigrant spouses on their arrival. They are also

informed of where they can seek help in case of domestic violence and what kind of support they can get. However, this advice is not often followed.

Kim, an ethnic Korean-Chinese woman who married to a Korean man but divorced him due to his alcoholism and domestic violence, said, "I knew of the program. But at that time, I didn't pay attention to it because I never thought about such a thing. Foreign wives come here in expectation of a happy marriage life. Who would think about such a tragic future?"

The program has been criticized for failing as a preventive measure since education about domestic violence should be directed at husbands and their family members rather than the foreign wives.

In response, the government has made it mandatory for Korean husbands to receive education regarding international marriage laws and cultural differences. But the three-hour education is not comprehensive or long enough, experts say.

"I doubt the effectiveness of the education program. A husband's alcoholism, for example, cannot be treated if husbands do not agree to get treatment," Han said.

Kim Young-lan, professor at Sookmyung Women's University, said that not only husbands but also their family members need to be educated on cultural differences. "They need to understand the culture of their wives homeland, rather than forcing them to learn about Korean culture. Multiculturalism does not mean assimilation," she said.

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Can tighter visa rules protect migrant wives?

By Jun Ji-hye
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Detractors say new regulations may reverse multicultural trend

The government recently introduced new rules regarding the issuance of marriage visas to foreign spouses, provoking a debate on whether the intention within the legislation, to protect foreign brides from domestic abuse, could actually reverse a current trend in which increasing numbers of interracial families are living in Korea.

At the end of May, the Ministry of Justice announced a plan to require foreign spouses to speak at least a basic level of Korean in order to obtain a marriage visa starting next year.

"We've decided to strengthen the screening criteria to issue marriage visas because existing policies have focused only on those who were already married and had moved to Korea. This made it difficult to deal preemptively with problems such as domestic violence and social maladjustment," said a ministry official.

Under the new rules, foreign brides will be required to take a Korean proficiency test during the visa interview. Those who have obtained a beginner level certificate from the Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK) will be exempt from the test.

If foreign spouses fail the test, their visa applications will be reviewed again after six months, and if they fail again, they must complete government-sponsored courses for social integration before a marriage visa is issued.

"If they can prove that they are able to communicate with their spouses in other languages, a marriage visa will be granted regardless of Korean language proficiency," the justice ministry official added.

With the overwhelming majority of multicultural marriages being between Korean men and foreign wives, the husbands will also have to prove to the authorities that they have an income sufficient to support their wives.

The government will also issue marriage visas to foreign spouses if their Korean partner has been divorced from another foreign spouse within the last five years, while a Korean partner can marry foreigners only twice during their lifetime if they are to apply for a marriage visa for their spouse.

"This rule is meant to prevent Korean men from thinking that they can easily get married to foreign brides by simply paying fees to marriage brokers. This distorted practice in international marriages has raised suspicions about the human trafficking of women and has caused diplomatic friction," the justice ministry official explained.

Although there is a consensus that the government needs to do more to protect foreign wives from domestic abuse, there are differing opinions on what the impact of the new rules will be in promoting multiculturalism in Korea.

Jasmine Lee, a representative from the ruling Saenuri Party in the National Assembly and one of the most prominent foreigners in Korea, said she supports the government's move.

"Marriage should be based on mutual love



A Korean groom and a foreign bride smile at each other during their traditional Korean wedding ceremony with other four couples in a park in Yangjae-dong, southern Seoul, May 22. The Ministry of Justice announced a plan to tighten rules on issuing marriage visas at the end of last month, drawing a mixed reaction from migrant women.

and trust. But in some international marriages, there is a lack of trust as marriage brokers give misleading information to foreign women about their prospective Korean husbands because they want to make money," said Lee, who immigrated from the Philippines.

Lee said that the ministry's plans to strengthen visa rules will make people think about the seriousness of foreign marriages and prevent divorces. "I believe, if these rules are implemented in an objective and substantial manner, the nation will be able to see positive effects," she said.

The new rules are also supported by some of those involved in protecting the rights of foreign wives. "Most of the nation's multicultural marriages are arranged by marriage brokers. Many foreign brides have difficulties due to a lack of communication skills and cultural differences because most of these marriages are arranged within one week without a sufficient understanding of one another's language and culture," said Han Kuk-yom, head of the Women Migrants' Human Rights Center.

"I partly agree with the justice ministry that a certain level of mutual communication skill is necessary to maintain an amicable marriage," she said.

Han also welcomed the government's plan to examine the income of Korean spouses. "Many foreign wives who visit my center for consultation speak about economic difficulties. Some wives are forced to work because their Korean husbands are poor. Assessing the income of Korean spouses is necessary to

spouses. Strictly speaking, this is not the government intervening in international marriage, but rather regulating marriage fraud."

However, the new rules could slow down the influx of foreigners into Korea. After the government last year tightened rules on marriage brokers by requiring them to provide more information about prospective Korean husbands, the number of marriage immigrants fell to 11,550 in 2012 from 13,760 in 2011, according to the Justice Ministry.

Rep. Chun Soon-ok of the main opposition Democratic Party (DP) said that the new rules will actually cause some foreign wives to be left in a legal

limbo. "If the new rules are implemented, there could be cases where women come to Korea and then fail to get a marriage visa." She added that the testing for Korean language proficiency could add to the financial burden of multicultural couples because the wives will be forced to study for the exam.

Bae Jong-chan, director of the department of social research at Research & Research, said the government measures might have unintended consequences. The tougher visa rules "might force some couples to live together without applying for marriage visas. This will

increase the number of illegal immigrants and cause more problems for families, especially those with children."

Bae suggests instead that "the government needs to draw up more substantial and realistic measures. Instead of testing the Korean proficiency of foreign wives before issuing marriage visas, the government needs to offer them more effective Korean educational programs. Foreign wives usually have hectic schedules, including working or supporting their in-laws and children. Providing visiting teacher programs or remote education courses could be more effective."

The Justice Ministry's measures are also triggering a backlash from marriage brokers who claim that the government acts as if all interracial marriages cause problems and that all marriage brokers are potential swindlers.

"Since last August when the government began to draft tougher rules, many marriage brokers have suffered setbacks to their businesses. We have not been able to arrange any foreign marriages for six months," said Lim Chun-hyo, director of Interwed International Marriage Information, a marriage broker in Seoul.

Following the government's crackdown on international marriage brokers, the number of marriage brokers fell to 1,276 at the end of last year from 1,370 in 2011, according to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family.

Lim said that marriage problems and domestic abuse are not just confined to foreign marriages but also affect Korean marriages.

"There are many international couples who live happily with their children. I agree that brokers that tell lies about potential Korean husbands should be stamped out. But the government should not prevent people from marrying foreign wives. International marriages contribute to Korean society while the local birthrate is falling steadily," said Lim.

Foreign wives themselves remain divided on the new rules. "I think the plans are very reasonable since some foreign wives are tricked into marrying Korean men. Requiring language skills in Korean is proper because the language problem is one of the top causes of difficulties facing foreign spouses," said Bayarsaikhan Nergui, a Mongolian who has lived in Suwon since her marriage in 2006.

Hong Thu from Vietnam, who married a Korean man in 1998, said the measures "will support momentum in providing more correct and accurate information about prospective spouses," she said.

However, Jeon Thi Hien from Vietnam expressed skepticism.

"The plan appears to deprive the rights of those who do not have enough money to get married. Restricting how many times people can marry also seems inhumane. The government's move will keep Korean society from becoming more multicultural," she said.

Foreign brides will be required to take a Korean proficiency test to get a marriage visa starting next year.

protect their human rights and I expect this measure will make a big difference," said Han.

Kim Joon-sik, chairman of Asian Friends, agrees. "The government usually does not intervene in people's marriages because it is a private affair. However, multiethnic marriages sometimes involve human rights violations.

Many irresponsible Korean men lie about their age, job status and background to bring young brides to Korea. This makes it no longer a private matter, so it is proper that the authorities check the credibility of Korean

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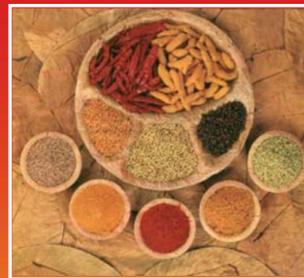
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Reservation : 02)796-2255 (Eng)
예약 : 02)796-1149 (Kor)
Email reservations : reservation@chakraa.co.kr

We serve halal food