



Ministry of Patriots and
Veterans Affairs

PRESS RELEASE

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March 31, 2024

Independence Activist of the Month: Yoo Gi-dong, Kim Man-su, Choi Byeong-ho

[Korea, March 31] The Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (Minister Kang Jung-ai) announced the designation of Yu Gi-dong (awarded the Independence Medal in 1963), Kim Man-su (awarded the Independence Medal in 1963), and Choi Byeong-ho (awarded the Independence Medal in 1963) as the “Independence Activist of the Month” of April 2024, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Harbin Consulate Incident, in which they assassinated a high-ranking Japanese police officer and engaged in armed resistance against Japanese forces in Manchuria.

After Korea lost its sovereignty due to Japan's forced and unlawful annexation in 1910, numerous independence activists sought refuge in Manchuria. Despite the harsh environment and difficult living conditions, they pioneered bases for the independence movement and nurtured future warriors for independence.

These efforts led to significant achievements after the March 1st Movement, resulting in victories in the independence war such as the Battle of Cheongsanri and acts of righteous force by groups and individuals. Notably, the Harbin Consulate Incident in April 1924, carried out by Yu Gi-dong and two other young men, is known as a prominent example of such righteous acts.

Yu Gi-dong, born in Andong, Gyeongsangbuk-do, in 1891, moved to Manchuria early on and joined the Heungupdan to engage in the independence movement.

Kim Man-su, born in Andong, Gyeongsangbuk-do, in 1892, moved to Manchuria and committed to the independence movement by farming and military training. In 1920, he joined the Seorogunjeongseo (“Southern Military Administration Office”), an armed independence group in Manchuria, conducting fundraising activities for the military, and also continued his independence activities in the Hanjokhoe, a Korean self-governing entity and independence group in Southern Manchuria.

Choi Byeong-ho, born in Uljin, Gyeongsangbuk-do, in 1903, moved to Manchuria and actively participated in various independence movements as part of the Seorogunjeongseo's military police.

Kim Man-su and Choi Byeong-ho planned to assassinate pro-Japanese factions and Japanese police in the Harbin area and destroy Japanese institutions after hearing rumors that the high-ranking police officer Kuniyoshi and Sergeant Matsushima of the Harbin Consulate were brutally oppressing Koreans in Harbin. They hid and planned their righteous act together with their former comrade Yu Gi-dong, whom they met by chance.

However, before they could execute their plan, their hideout was discovered, and they were surrounded by numerous enemies. After a fierce resistance, they assassinated the Japanese police officer, Inspector Seiho Kuniyoshi, and engaged in combat with the Japanese police and Chinese military throughout the night until they heroically sacrificed themselves on April 8, 1924.

Yu Gi-dong, Kim Man-su, and Choi Byeong-ho fought bravely against the Japanese until the very end of their lives, dedicating themselves to the independence of their country.

Their act of righteousness served as a great lesson to the armed independence movement in Manchuria and marked a turning point in strengthening the armed resistance against Japan after the independence units were unified in June 1924.

The government posthumously awarded the Independence Medal, which is a Grade 3 Order of Merit for National Foundation, to Yu Gi-dong, Kim Man-su, and Choi Byeong-ho in recognition of their contributions.

For further information, please contact the International Spokesperson Mr. Seongwon Lee (reasonwon@korea.kr / +82-44-202-5021) of the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs.

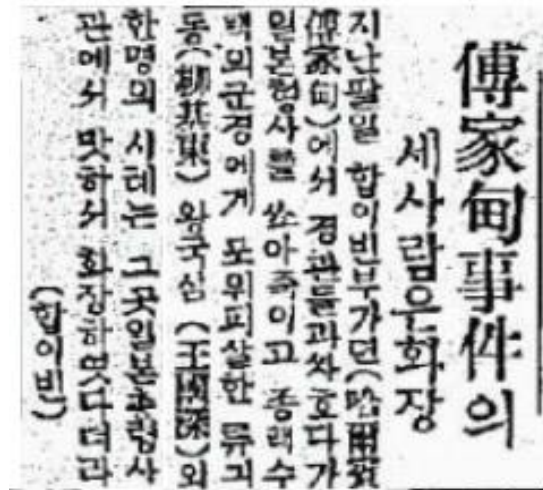
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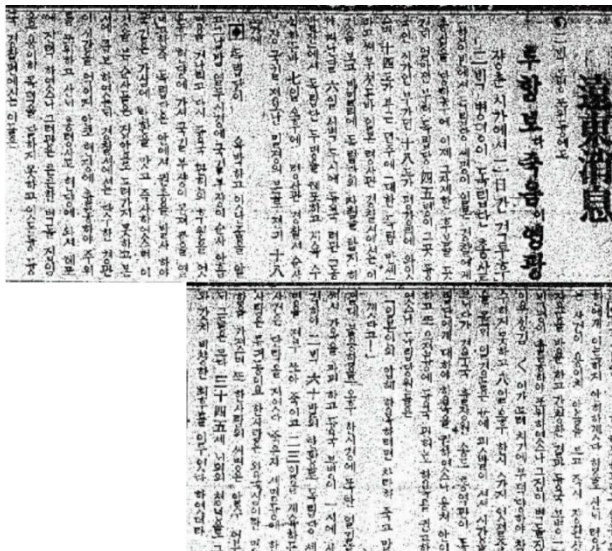
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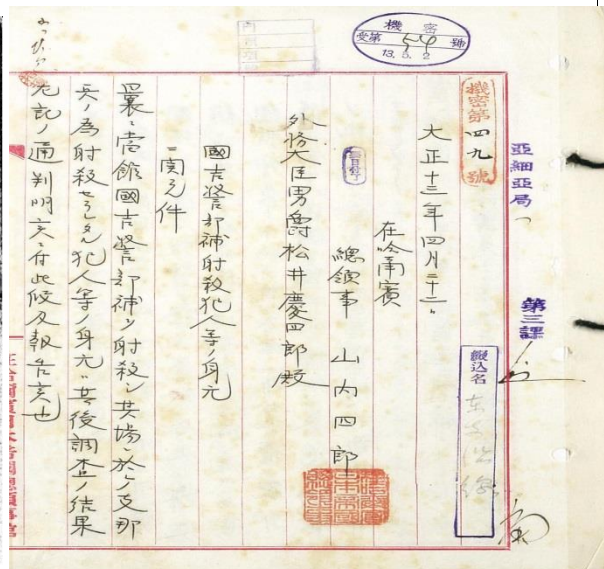
Site of the Harbin Japanese Consulate
(Copyright: Independence Hall of Korea)



<Three Activists of the Harbin Incident
Cremated >
(Donga Ilbo, April 15, 1924)
(National Institute of Korean History)



<An Honorable Death Than Surrender Whilst
Surrounded by 200 Men>
(Shinhan Minbo, May 15, 1924)
(National Institute of Korean History)



<On the Identities of the Criminals who
Killed Inspector Kuniyoshi>
(April 22, 1924)
(National Institute of Korean History)