

03-30-2010 S Korea – Han Joo-ho- NAVY PSD - Rescue Diver – Recovery Attempt



<https://silentpro.wordpress.com/2010/04/07/r-i-p-han-ju-ho-%ED%95%9C%EC%A3%BC%ED%98%B8-south-korea-udtseal-warrant-officer/>

R.I.P~ "Han Ju ho" (한주호) South Korea UDT/SEAL warrant officer.



South Korean Navy's Underwater Demolition Team warrant officer **Han Ju-ho** (C, wearing diving suit), 53, and fellow soldiers stand on its Landing Ship Tank transport vessel Seonginbong as they search for possible survivors from the sunken naval ship Cheonan off Baengnyeongdo, an island near the border with North Korea March 29, 2010. Han experienced difficulty in breathing after working underwater, had a fall and died on March 30, 2010. The South Korean naval ship sank on Friday night near the disputed maritime border with the North and 46 sailors were reported missing. Picture taken March 29.

South Korea Cheonan warship sinking: Diver dies during rescue efforts

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2010/0330/South-Korea-Cheonan-warship-sinking-Diver-dies-during-rescue-efforts>

By Ben Hancock, Correspondent MARCH 30, 2010

Strong currents frustrated rescue efforts for 46 sailors thought to be trapped on the sunken South Korea Cheonan warship, dimming their hopes for survival

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA- Efforts to enter the hull of the [sunken South Korea Cheonan warship](#) were foiled Tuesday by strong underwater currents, dimming hope for the survival of the 46 sailors thought to be trapped inside.

Divers worked throughout the day to no avail trying to gain access to the Cheonan, a Navy corvette that was blown in two Friday night in a mysterious explosion and now sits 40 meters under water. Fifty-eight other sailors were pulled from the ship as it sank near the disputed [Yellow Sea](#) border with [North Korea](#).

An estimate for when survivors inside the broken ship would run out of air passed Monday night, but rescuers were continuing to pump oxygen inside the vessel, hoping to extend the window.

One South Korean rescue diver died aboard a [US Navy](#) ship after having difficulty breathing, [the BBC reported](#). A spokesman for [US Forces Korea](#) could not immediately be reached to confirm. The USNS Salvor, a salvage ship, was in the area to aid the rescue effort.



South Korean Navy's salvage ship searches for missing unit members of the sunken South Korean Cheonan warship, near Baengnyeong Island, South Korea, on Tuesday.

As the rescue effort entered its fifth day, politicians began to raise questions about the nation's response to the tragedy.

A floating crane that could lift the stern of the 1,200-ton vessel, where most of the sailors are believed to be trapped, was not dispatched until Monday and likely won't arrive at the site of the wreckage until the weekend.

Opposition skepticism

Some opposition lawmakers have suggested the presidential Blue House is withholding information about the explosion's cause and seeking to put the case to bed. So far the government has remained cautious in making its theories public, but it recently put forth the possibility that a mine floated over from North Korea.

"Basically the opposition party is highly [discontented] with the way the Blue House is handling [the investigation]," says Jaung Hoon, a political scientist at [Chung-Ang University](#).

Professor Jaung says the lawmakers are also frustrated with the way the Blue House has been "inconsistent" about the implications of the possibility that North Korea was behind the sinking.

[Kim Tae-woo](#), an analyst at the [Korea Institute for Defense Analyses](#), is skeptical.

"The opposition party's attitude is always like that," says Kim. "Usually they try to find fault with what the government is doing. But [whether the government is withholding information] is a question ordinary South Korean civilians may want to ask also."

Dispute over North-South maritime border

After things have cooled down, Kim says, South Korea may also have reconsider its defenses along the Northern Limit Line. The sea border between North and South, drawn by the US at the end of the Korean War, is disputed by North Korea.

A momentary outburst from the victims' families erupted yesterday after a defense official mentioned a funeral, suggesting they had given up hope. But Kim says that seems to have passed.

"What we see is silent frustration," he adds. "The families of the victims are very tired."

Diver dies at South Korean warship rescue site

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8594226.stm>

30 March 2010

A South Korean military diver searching for survivors from a navy ship that sank off North Korea has died.

The diver lost consciousness as he searched wreckage of the Cheonan warship which sank after an explosion on Friday, the military said.

Rescuers have been working to get inside the ship, split in two by the blast. Forty-six sailors are missing.

The cause of the explosion is not yet clear, but a senior official has said it could have been a North Korean mine.

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak visited the scene of the wreck on Tuesday, flying in by helicopter to Baengnyeong island near the disputed inter-Korean border.

He also ordered the military onto alert, saying: "Since the sinking took place at the front line, the military should thoroughly prepare for any move by North Korea."



Teams of divers and salvage crews have been searching for survivors

Dangerous waters

Fifty-eight crew members were rescued when the Cheonan went down late on Friday.

Officials say they believe that some of the 46 sailors still missing could have survived in water-tight cabins in the stern of the ship.

More than a dozen South Korean ships are involved in the rescue effort, plus a US vessel.

The diver who died was one of dozens brought in to try to gain access to the wreckage. The cause of death is not known.

Another diver was also been taken to hospital, military officials said.

A navy spokesman said the divers were working in "a very vicious environment" with swift currents and murky visibility.

"Our goal is to get into the ship and find any survivors but at the moment it is extremely hard to do so," the navy spokesman said.



On Monday, teams used a hose to inject oxygen into the stern via a crack, but divers who knocked on the hull received no response.

The cause of the blast that sank the ship remains unclear.

Defence Minister Kim Tae-young has said it could have been caused by a mine laid by the North during the 1950-53 Korean War.

He said it could also have been a mine that the communist state intentionally sent floating towards the South Korean vessel.

But an internal malfunction has not been ruled out and military officials said establishing the cause of the blast might have to wait until the ship is salvaged.

Pyongyang has made no official comment on the incident.

It does not accept the maritime border, known as the Northern Limit Line, which was drawn unilaterally by the US-led United Nations Command at the end of the Korean War.

The area has been the scene of deadly clashes between the navies of the two Koreas in the past.

South Korea mourns hero diver who died in Cheonan ship rescue

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/04/01/south.korea.sunken.ship/>

By Andrew Salmon, for CNN

April 1, 2010



South Korean marines search the shoreline for possible survivors and bodies from the sunken warship

Seoul, South Korea (CNN) -- South Korean President Lee Myung-bak demanded a transparent investigation into the sinking of the corvette Cheonan Thursday, while the nation mourned a hero as the navy diver who died during rescue attempts on the wreck was memorialized.

The Cheonan sank in dangerous waters off North Korea Friday, following an as-yet unexplained explosion. Fifty-eight men were rescued; 46 remain missing.

"As it is a very sensitive and important question, (the government) will find the cause through a thorough and scientific investigation," Lee said to officials, a presidential official told CNN. Lee added that South Korea's "international credibility" rested on a transparent inquiry into the tragedy.

In 20-minute phone call with Lee the same day, U.S. President Barack Obama offered technical assistance, the official added.

Questions have been raised locally by media, politicians and grieving family members over whether the South Korean armed forces have the appropriate equipment for the job, and whether they responded appropriately.

Thirteen South Korean ships and two U.S. ships are on the scene, with 207 Korean divers and 15 American divers aboard. Diving operations were halted for a second day Thursday due to rough weather conditions.

Navy Chief Master Sergeant Han Joo-ho, 53, died after diving on the wreck Tuesday. Officials including Defense Minister Kim Tae-young and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Kim Sung-chan visited a memorial altar set up at a naval hospital in his memory; family members of those missing on the Cheonan also attended. Online, thousands have posted messages of condolence.

His funeral will be held Saturday.

Han, 53, was not ordered to dive on the wreck. "He was a coach at the naval diving school so did not have to be on the diving team," an official at the Defense Ministry told CNN. "He volunteered."

His son, an active-duty army officer, told local reporters that he had asked his father not to take risks diving on the wreck, but his father, "...used to say he wanted to live with honor."

The Cheonan's stern and bow lie over 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) apart on the seabed. The bow is 25 meters (27 yards) under water, while the stern, where the 46 missing crew members are believed to be, is 45 meters (49 yards) under water.

With currents under water exceeding 5 knots (6 miles per hour) and visibility below one meter (one yard), the wreck is extremely dangerous. Han, one of the Korean navy's most experienced divers, fell unconscious after reportedly exceeding recommended times and depths under water. Two other divers were hospitalized the same day. Both have now been released.

It is unclear whether intense public pressure contributed to the divers taking excessive risks.

Family members of the missing have consistently criticized the navy for what they consider an inadequate response to the disaster. The media is rife with speculation over what caused it -- theories range from [North Korean](#) suicide boats manned by female commandos to an errant mine -- and has been demanding answers.

A 130-ton patrol boat sunk in the Yellow Sea after a naval firefight in 2002 took three weeks to raise. The Cheonan, 1,200 tons, is considerably larger, and also in two pieces. The defense ministry source said that it may take a month to raise the wreck.

Naval warrant officer Han Joo-ho praised as true hero

<http://www.korea.net/NewsFocus/Society/view?articleId=80841>

Apr 09, 2010 By Kim Hee-sung Korea.net Staff Writer

Last Thursday on April 1, coffin rites for the late naval warrant officer Han Joo-ho, 53, took place at the Armed Forces Medical Command. The almost one-hour-long rites were attended by his bereaved family, colleagues and friends; about 30 people or so in all.



Han's wife and daughter, still in shock, repeatedly passed out amid the crying. His son Han Sang-ki, 25, himself serving in the army as first lieutenant in the 1st Army Division, was there to calm his family. The rites ended as the national flag of taegeukgi was wrapped around Han's wooden coffin.

Han was in the middle of a rescue operation in search of the missing sailors who went down with the sinking of the naval ship Cheonan -ho in the West Sea (also called Yellow Sea) on March 26. Of the total 104 crew members, only 58, including the captain, were rescued. The other half disappeared beneath the waves together with the 1,200-ton combat corvette. Han over-worked himself in trying to mark the location of the sunken ship, spurred on by the agony of the families of the missing sailors waiting ashore. On the fifth day of the operation he fell unconscious underwater. He was taken to the hospital immediately but it was too late.

Thousands lined up to show their respects to the courageous man – soldiers of all division and stripes as well as politicians, including President Lee Myung-bak. Online message boards, too, filled with netizens writing condolences for the fallen hero.

The living legend of the UDT (Underwater Demolition Team) is what the late Han Joo-ho was called among his colleagues. His body as fit as those in their 20s and experienced with age, he always took his responsibilities as a soldier seriously.

Han was known for always standing at the forefront of every operation. Although he was set to serve in a different post from this coming September, he volunteered for the rescue operation the moment he heard of the tragedy. On March 29, during the process of installing a buoy at the spot in the sea where the ship is believed to have sunk, it was again Han who volunteered to be at the front despite high waters. "I'm a veteran and have much experience in this so I'll take care of it," Han said at the time. After completing the tough operation 25 meters underwater, he also took part in installing search ropes in the sunken captain's cabin the following day, not giving himself an ounce of rest.

A true veteran in his field, he served as the head of many special units, took the first place at the high-level navy combat training and even completed a course for U.S. navy combat training. It was no coincidence that Han was one of the early

divers to take part in underwater operations after the Cheonan-ho incident. Similarly in the past, he volunteered to take part in a navy unit dispatched to the Somali coast and participated in countering pirates in the region seven times. He especially showed his prowess by being the first to mount a pirate's ship in the process of rescuing one Bahaman ship that was being held hostage.



He was 18 when he first joined the navy in February 1975. He served for over 35 years. As a drill sergeant for the past 18 years he trained hundreds of UDT soldiers and was known to be quite strict. Outside the training course, however, he was respected and loved for the deep consideration he showed to younger soldiers.

He was proud of his son who joined the military just like him. Son Han Sang-ki remembers how his father who made soldiers' honor his top priority. "As a soldier I have to be a role model for my son – that was what he used to say," the junior Han said.

"I feel sorry for the death of Han who did his best to do his duty to save others, despite all the risks. At the same time as a soldier I can't be proud of him enough and I believe it is our duty to keep his spirit alive," one of the soldiers said in an interview.

Han was conferred with the Gwangbok Medal, 5th class Order of National Security Merit by the Ministry of National Defense.

36 bodies found as stern of sunken South Korean warship is raised

<http://articles.latimes.com/2010/apr/16/world/la-fg-korea-warship16-2010apr16>
April 16, 2010|By John M. Glionna and Ju-min Park

A huge crane raises the craft on live television. Despite suspicions, the North denies being involved in the explosion that scuttled the ship.

Reporting from Seoul — As tearful families looked on, the South Korean military recovered the bodies of 36 crewmen from the stern of a sunken warship raised Thursday from the floor of the Yellow Sea.

The naval corvette Cheonan sank March 26 after a mysterious explosion broke the 1,200-ton vessel in half.

Throughout the day, South Korean television carried live coverage of a towering crane that lifted part of the ship to the surface. Late Thursday, the South Korean Defense Ministry confirmed that salvagers had recovered the bodies of 36 of the 44 sailors who were still missing weeks after the nighttime disaster.

The cause of the explosion has not been determined, but many here suspect that the Cheonan was hit by a North Korean torpedo as it patrolled the disputed sea border between the North and South.

President Lee Myung-bak has come under criticism for not pressing the issue with North Korea, which has denied involvement, according to press reports.

Bad weather and turbulent seas have hampered the recovery effort, which itself has been beset by tragedy. A navy diver died while trying to drill a hole in the hull, and a fishing boat assisting in the effort sank after a collision. Two fishermen died and seven are missing.

Divers earlier had recovered the bodies of two Cheonan crewmen. In all, 130 experts from several countries have helped in the recovery effort.

As the crane began hoisting parts of the ship's stern Thursday morning, naval officials held a memorial service for the missing sailors. The mournful moan of a horn sounded for 15 seconds.

The Yonhap news agency reported that several bodies were found when salvage workers entered the ship's stern to install water pumps after the crane raised it out of the water.

Lee Jung-guk, head of a committee of relatives of the missing, said the families did not expect all of the remains to be recovered.

"I am sure that divers cannot find anything under the sea 100%," he said. "The only thing that we prioritize is the return of our fallen soldiers. Then we will schedule our next plan."