

2021



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April Fools' Day

April Fools' Day, also called All Fools' Day, in most countries the first day of April. It received its name from the custom of playing practical jokes on this day—for example, telling friends that their shoelaces are untied or sending them on so-called fools' errands. Although the day has been observed for centuries, its true origins are unknown and effectively unknowable.



April: Diamond

The April birthstone, diamond, in addition to being a symbol of everlasting love, was once thought to bring courage. In Sanskrit, the diamond is called vajra, which also means lightning; in Hindu mythology, vajra was the weapon of Indra, the king of gods.

April: Daisy & Sweet Peas

The daisy conveys innocence, loyal love, and purity. Yet, the daisy is also a flower given between friends to keep a secret; the daisy means "I'll never tell!"

The other April flower is the sweet pea. With their lovely scent, sweet peas are a lovely flower to grow. While sweet peas may signify blissful pleasure, they are also used to say good-bye.

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UPCOMING DATES

April 2, 2021: Good Friday April 3, 2021: Jeju Uprising April 4, 2021: Easter

April 7, 2021: World Health Day

Global health awareness day celebrated every year on April 7, under the sponsorship of the World Health Organization (WHO)

April 19~23, 2021: Mid-Term Exam Period April 20, 2021: International Day of Disabled Persons April 21, 2021: Science Day April 25, 2021: Law Day

App

of the Month

Jeju Remembers

The narrow, muddy hike up Dongbaekdongsan is full of branches and leaves hindering your every step. You get irritated, struggling to keep up with the rest of your group, before you realize this was the path dozens of villagers from Seonheul-ri took to reach where they believed would be a safe haven from death. The harrowing moment comes when you realize you are headed to a graveyard of 20 men and women -- elderly and children -- slaughtered, on a night in 1948 by soldiers who had sworn to protect them. Dottle Cave in Seonheul-ri, Jeju Island, is one of several caves where islanders hid from the massacres by the South Korean military 70 years ago. It is part of Jeju Dark Tours that commemorates those killed in one of the worst abuses of state power in the country's history. Simply known as the Jeju Uprising, Jeju Massacre, or 4.3 Incident, referring to April 3, the incident does not yet have an official name.

The tragedy

In 1948, Korea had been freed from the shackles of Japanese colonialism but not from the ideological divide that ails Koreans to this day. On March 1, 1947, tragedy struck during a commemoration of the March 1st Movement. A mounted policeman -- allegedly unwittingly -- injured a child with his horse, sparking off a protest by an angry mob. The police, mistaking it as an attack against them, shot and killed six people and injured six others. Instead of apologizing to the public, the authorities cracked down on the protesters, leading to further furor and a nationwide general strike on March 10.

An armed revolt on April 3, 1948 was actually not a major incident in the grand scheme of things, but led to a horrifying massacre that took the lives of nearly 30,000 -- mostly civilians -- from October 1948 to March 1949. "Back then there were a lot of people up in the mountains who came down to the village at night and put leaflets on the walls. In the morning, policemen would beat people up for it," said Ko Wan-soon, 80, who was a 9-year-old living in Bukchon-ri in 1949. The people up in the mountains referred to armed rebels. "One day, adults were clamoring over something and I heard that the mountain folks shot and killed two soldiers. They carried the bodies to the police station, and (the policemen) shot them all to death, except one who was a family member of a policeman," she said.

What followed was one of the largest killings in the Jeju Incident.

"My family was dragged out to a school playground, where they told us all to kneel down. Then I heard shots being fired and people collapsing. I crawled like an ant until I came across something. Blood all over the ground, and a baby looking for mommy. "My baby brother was screaming on the back of my mother. He went quiet after a soldier came along and struck him twice in the head." It was by happenstance that she managed to survive. As she and her family were waiting for what seemed the inevitable, a jeep came along to order the men to stop shooting.

Commemorating the victims

Jeju Dark Tours invite participants to visit the memorial halls and sites related to the 1948 massacre. This includes the Peace Park, the aforementioned Dottle Cave, Banmot Cave on the same mountain where people hid and Bukchon-ri where hundreds were slaughtered. The Neobeunsung Sacred Memorial for Victims of Jeju 4.3 stands in the town of Bukchon in memory of the victims. Monuments stand on fields where the victims awaited their doom. The stones are deliberately scattered all over the place to symbolize their bodies.

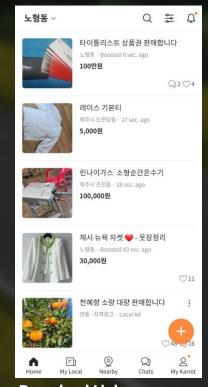
Another place for the Dark Tours is the house of Jin A-yeong, a woman who was shot in the face during the 4.3 Incident and lost her chin. Jin, who died in 2004, was known as the "cotton cloth lady" for the cotton cloth she wore around where her chin was supposed to have been.



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