



The Origins of Busan's Place Names |

The historical background of Busan's regional names

How did Busan get its name? During the Joseon dynasty, Busan was originally called "Dongnae." At the time, the local government office was located in present-day Suan-dong, Dongnae-gu, while Busanpo, a major port in Dongnae, served as one of several coastal defense forts. Since Busanpo fell under Dongnae's jurisdiction, it developed as part of Dongnae's administrative system. However, after the port opened, the area grew into a new regional center, and it gradually became better known as "Busan" rather than "Dongnae." As such, the name "Busan" evolved through various historical changes over time. This article explores the history and origins of some of Busan's major district names.

The name "Busanjin" was closely associated with the area's military role, as it originated from the military base established near Busanpo, where "Jin" refers to a military camp or defensive fortress. Therefore, the name itself reflects the area's role as a coastal defense base. The Joseon dynasty document "Revised and Expanded Edition of the Survey of the Geography of Joseon" records Busanjin as a military facility located near Busanpo, indicating its important role in the coastal defense system at the time. This role is also mentioned in other historical documents. Although its military function has disappeared, the name remains in use in local place names such as Busanjin Station today, preserving the region's historical identity.

There are two main theories regarding the origin of the name "Dongnae." One theory, based on the "Samguk Sagi," a historical record of the Three Kingdoms (Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla), states that Dongnae-gun, a former administrative region of Gyeongsangnam-do during the Silla period, was originally called Geochilsan-guk. But during the reign of King Gyeongdeok, it was renamed Dongnae-gun, and the name has continued to this day. Another theory suggests that the name originated from "Dokro-guk," which is mentioned in the "Samgukji," a 3rd-century Chinese historical record, as one of the 24 states of the Samhan period. According to this theory, the pronunciation gradually evolved from "Dokro" to "Dongne," becoming "Dongnae."



The name "Suyeong" in Suyeong-gu originated from the area's geographical and historical military role. It emerged with the establishment of the Headquarters of the Naval Commander of Gyeongsang-jwa-do during the Joseon dynasty. "Su" means military camp where many soldiers were stationed. The name was not merely administrative, but one that directly reflected the area's important role at the time. Historical records such as "Dongnaebuji" describe the area as related to naval forces, explaining the origin of the name. Despite urban development and various historical changes, the name "Suyeong" has remained and is still widely used today as the name of Suyeong-gu.

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The origin of the name "Haeundae" is related to a scholar of the Silla Dynasty, Choi Chi-won. On his way to Gayasan Mountain, he was impressed by the breathtaking scenery of the area now known as Dongbaek Island in Haeundae. Choi Chi-won then engraved his pen name "Haeun," meaning "sea and clouds," on a rock on Dongbaek Island. Over time, people began referring to the rocky hill by the engraved name, and later it became the name of the area. Today, the Haeundae Stone Inscription is officially designated as Busan Metropolitan City Monument No. 45. The name, derived from a pen name engraved on a rock, still symbolizes the area today, reflecting its historical significance.

District names are one of the oldest historical data, reflecting both the geographical features shown on old maps and the administrative roles recorded in historical texts. In a Joseon dynasty map, the mountain behind Choryang is depicted as resembling an overturned cauldron. This shows that the name "Busan" was not randomly created: the Chinese character "Bu" (釜) literally means "cauldron," proving the name directly reflected the actual shape of the land. While "Busan" reflects geographical features, other place names such as "Haeundae" originate from the courtesy name of a scholar, while "Dongnae," "Suyeong," and "Busanjin" reflect the administrative and military functions of the past. Together, these place names form a vivid record of the region's unique identity.

THE PUKYONG HERALD

Published by Pukyong National University
President Bae Sang-hoon
Executive director Kim Jung-kyu
Chief editor Han Tae-yeong
Tel 051-629-6924
E-mail hty_herald@pukyong.ac.kr
Printed by 부산일보사

2026 South Korea Local Elections

Conversations with Busan mayoral candidates

This year, South Korea is holding the 9th Nationwide Simultaneous Local Elections on June 3. In this election, voters elect superintendents of education, heads of metropolitan and local governments, and metropolitan and local council members. This May, university media outlets in Busan held interviews with each of the Busan mayoral candidates: Chun Jae-soo of the Democratic Party of Korea, Park Heong-joon of the People Power Party, and Jeong Yi-han of the Reform Party. The interviews highlight the three candidates' visions for Busan's future.



Jeong Yi-han

Q: What is the main reason young people are leaving Busan, and which youth policy do you believe can best address this issue?

A: The biggest reason is that there aren't quality jobs. The top-priority initiative is the "Three Major Busan Job Reform Packages," a strategy that brings together the attraction of companies outside Busan, the growth of local businesses, and young people's regional settlement. The starting point of Busan's new Youth Policy is to create a city where young people want to live longer, rather than a city that just provides piecemeal subsidies.

Q: You emphasize your strength as a young candidate. What distinctive perspectives can this bring to youth policies in Busan?

A: It is important to understand the challenges people face in life. If existing politics have often viewed young people as "target beneficiaries" for benefits or welfare, I see them as "active contributors" who will lead the redesign of Busan's future. I will build an administration where people can truly feel their lives improving.

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Chun Jae-soo

Q: What opportunities can your core vision, "Busan, the maritime capital," provide for young people in Busan?

A: It has a very direct effect. Right now, SK Shipping and H-Line Shipping headquarters have relocated to Busan. Public institutions that moved to Busan are employing Busan graduates. Additionally, global shipping companies like Maersk and MSC have recently increased their orders for eco-friendly ships. The jobs created by these opportunities are now a very important example.

Q: Even with the "creating 10 Seoul National Universities" policy, local youth still feel a gap between Seoul and re-

gional areas. How will Busan address this with local universities?

A: We can't really make 10 SNUs as they excel in everything from philosophy to high-tech AI semiconductors. The real goal of this policy is to create region-specialized universities, which means making universities in Busan more focused on the marine field than SNU. We need to build universities that can develop regional competitiveness. After that, the universities will cultivate related jobs and opportunities.



Park Heong-joon

Q: What can young people benefit from the "Global Hub City Special Act"?

A: The Global Hub City Special Act aims to make Busan an attractive investment destination. If companies relocate to Busan, the city can sign agreements with them to connect local young people with employment opportunities. If this act is passed, it is expected to create more jobs. The passage of the act will help Busan grow into an international free business city.

Q: What youth-related policies have you achieved as Busan's mayor?

A: There were many changes over the past five years. Among the special metropolitan cities, Busan now ranks first in job growth. Employment rate, Busan's regular worker growth rate also exceeded 1 million for the first time in the era of regular workers, according to the OECD. The most important thing now is the relocation of the Korea Development Bank. Strengthening the financial industry is essential for Busan to develop into a financial hub.

| Science |

Why Does Spring Rain Smell So Fresh?

Spring arrives with cherry blossoms in full bloom and the excitement of new beginnings. However, as the season gradually progresses, the scent of spring slowly fades into rain, signaling the approach of summer. Have you ever noticed that the smell of spring rain feels more refreshing than the rain of other seasons? Think of the moment when you step outside and take a deep breath in spring. You might think it is simply the scent of the warm air and rain, but there is actually a scientific reason behind the refreshing smell of spring rain.

Many may have guessed that this feeling comes from differences in environmental conditions between seasons, such as humidity and temperature. That is indeed one of the main reasons. In winter, the activity of microorganisms such as bacteria slows down due to low temperatures, reducing the production of odor-causing substances. In summer, high humidity weakens the diffusion of odor particles, making smells less noticeable. In contrast, spring provides a balance of moder-

ate temperature and relatively dry conditions, which support active microbial activity and lead to the wider dispersion of smells.

In addition to differences in environmental conditions between seasons, the unique smell of spring rain can also be explained from a more detailed chemical perspective. One of the key compounds causing this smell is geosmin, which is produced by microorganisms in the soil and released into the air when the soil becomes wet. This phenomenon is even more noticeable in spring because the soil has remained dry during the winter. After the winter, spring rain turns the soil soft again, creating the familiar scent of rain. This smell is known as petrichor, the earthy scent we notice after rainfall.

Now that spring is over, how about taking a moment to notice the smell of rain mixed with soil on the next rainy day? A small moment that might normally be overlooked can unexpectedly stay in your heart as a warm memory of the season.

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| Health |

Running Makes Our Lives Better

In the past, running was simply considered a form of physical activity. Today, however, running has become a lifestyle for many people. According to the Harvard Health Report (2018), about 50 million people in the United States participate in running each year. This activity is gaining popularity among people of all ages as a way to maintain health and practice self-management, since it can be started without any special equipment. Let's take a look at how running changes both the body and mind.

According to research published in the Journal of the American Heart Association (AHA), the relationship between running and cardiovascular death risk was investigated among adults aged 18 to 100. The results showed that runners have a 45% lower risk of dying from heart disease and live about three years longer than non-runners. Running is also effective for weight management; those who ran for 30 minutes a week for eight weeks lost an average of 1.3 inches from their waists compared to those who just

walked for the same amount of time.

Beyond physical health, running also improves mental well-being. Humans are often exposed to long-term stress in daily life, which can lead to health problems and mental illness. However, running can help reduce these issues. A study conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA) highlights that running increases blood flow and oxygen delivery to the brain. This helps stimulate the growth of new brain cells, leading to relief from stress, anxiety, and depression.

Despite many benefits, running does not always have positive effects, as it is a high-intensity exercise. If people push themselves too hard, they may experience injuries such as pain and stress fractures. However, these risks can be sufficiently prevented through proper intensity control and appropriate running methods. To maintain long-term health, remember to start slowly at your own pace, warm up properly, and get enough rest.

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| Reader Submissions |

The Fish We Overlook May Matter Most



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People often mobilize to conserve large, charismatic animals such as whales, pandas, and tigers. Indeed, these species dominate conservation campaigns, attracting public sympathy and global attention. Yet beneath the surface of calm rivers and lakes, another crisis is unfolding. Small endemic fish, species restricted to specific geographic locations, are disappearing at an alarming rate. In contrast to their larger and more charismatic counterparts, their decline frequently goes unnoticed and unreported.

Part of this issue lies in how nature is perceived. Large animals are easier to admire and widely associated with greater economic value. By comparison, small endemic fish rarely generate comparable interest. They are seldom consumed, sparsely attract tourists, and infrequently appear in media coverage. As a result, they are overlooked not only by the public but also by policymakers. Although some attempts have been made to incorporate certain species into aquaculture or the aquarium trade, they remain mainly neglected.

This neglect carries serious consequences. Regardless of size, small endemic fish play essential roles in maintaining ecosystem stability. They form key components of aquatic food webs, acting as prey for larger fish, birds, and other wildlife. Thus, their loss can trigger cascading effects: predators are deprived of food sources, population structures shift, and ecosystems become increasingly unstable. What may seem like the disappear-

ance of a minor species can initiate broader ecological disruptions. In addition, these fish function as early indicators of environmental change. Many endemic species are highly sensitive to variations in water quality, temperature, and habitat conditions. Population declines often reflect deeper ecological stress, while pollution, habitat degradation, and climate change are commonly expressed through their presence or absence. In this sense, overlooking small endemic fish represents not only an ecological oversight but also a missed environmental signal.

There is also a more intangible dimension to this loss. Each endemic species contains unique genetic information shaped over thousands to millions of years of evolution. Once lost, this biological heritage cannot be recovered. The ecological roles they perform and their potential contributions to science, medicine, or ecosystem resilience may never be fully understood. In this context, extinction signifies not only the disappearance of a species but also

the loss of untapped possibilities. The decline of small endemic fish highlights a broader bias in conservation priorities. Efforts are typically driven by visibility and public appeal rather than ecological importance. Ecosystems are not structured around human preferences; they rely on complex, interconnected relationships in which even the smallest organisms contribute to system integrity.

Ultimately, the fate of small endemic fish is closely linked to human well-being. Healthy freshwater systems provide clean water, sustain fisheries, and support livelihoods. As these systems degrade, the consequences extend beyond species loss, affecting essential natural resources. Conservation should not be guided solely by size. In fact, the species that receive the least attention may underpin ecosystem stability, and by the time their importance is fully recognized, it may already be too late. Immediate action is therefore essential to safeguard biodiversity!

| PKNU |

One Stage, Many Cultures

International students celebrate the university's 80th anniversary with performances

As part of Pukyong National University (PKNU)'s 80th anniversary celebration, the university organized a talent contest for any international students currently enrolled in PKNU, giving them a chance to showcase their talents and share the cultural backgrounds of their countries through performances. Open to both individual and team acts, the competition featured talents such as singing and musical performances, highlighting the diversity of the university's international community. In this article, we speak with an international student about what participating meant to her.



▲Rzayeva Nigar

Q. Can you introduce yourself and tell us what you performed?

Nigar : My name is Rzayeva Nigar, I am from Azerbaijan and a graduate student at PKNU. I sang for this year's talent show.

Q. What made you decide to partici-

pate in the talent show?

Nigar : I've always enjoyed singing, and I've had the chance to perform on the university stage a few times before, so I thought it would be nice to come back and experience that feeling again. Performing in front of an audience is always exciting, and I wanted to challenge myself once more. Of course, the prize money was also an extra motivation to participate.

Q. How did you feel during the preliminary round? Did you encounter any difficulties?

Nigar : To be honest, I was quite nervous. I am used to singing at karaoke, where the atmosphere is much more casual and comfortable, but performing on a real stage is completely different. Knowing that people in the audience are watching and judging your performance makes

the experience much more intense. However, there was a problem with the stage setup. Not just me, but all the students had issues with the volume because it was too low, making it difficult to hear the music clearly.

Q. Did your performance represent your culture or personal story?

Nigar : It didn't really represent my culture, but it did reflect my personal story. The song I chose is called "Stay," and it feels very personal to me because many people I love are far away or have left, and I miss them deeply. Living abroad gives you many opportunities, but it also comes with sacrifices. Being away from family, friends, and loved ones is part of the price you pay, and this song expresses those feelings in a way I can truly relate to.

Q. How has this experience been for

you as an international student?

Nigar : It has been quite exciting. Being on stage and competing with people from different countries and cultural backgrounds made the experience feel even more special. It was a unique opportunity to connect with others through music despite our differences.

Q. Would you encourage other international students to participate in the future?

Nigar : Of course! I know so many students who have amazing hidden talents but are too shy to go on stage, or they think they are not good enough. But that does not matter. We should all follow our dreams, and even if we fail sometimes, that is certainly not the end of the journey.

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Resting or Left Behind: Korea's Jobless Youth

College students or young people preparing for employment have likely heard of "economically inactive youth." According to Statistics Korea, as of March 2026, about 402,000 young people were economically inactive, representing 1 in 20 young adults. When asked why they remained inactive, 31% responded that they struggled to find desirable jobs.

Many attribute this phenomenon to a lack of motivation among young people. However, experts trace the main cause to structural problems in the job market rather than to personal attitudes. While the number of university graduates increases each year, job creation fails to keep pace. As companies increasingly prefer experienced workers, entry barriers for

new job seekers have risen significantly. According to EBS reporting, inactive youth have wage expectations similar to those of actively job-seeking youth. The sharp increase in previously employed inactive youth - from 360,000 in 2019 to 477,000 in 2025 - demonstrates that these individuals did not avoid work from the start.

When frustration over failing to find a job continues, isolation and withdrawal often follow. According to EBS data, the likelihood of withdrawal among inactive youth is six times higher than that of employed youth. A youth welfare expert explains, "When people feel there is no second chance after job-search failure, they choose to give up to avoid shame."

However, one career counselor offers a different perspective: employment gaps should be understood as exploratory periods within a changing labor market, not as evidence of insufficient motivation. The counselor noted, "Unlike previous generations, today's graduates face a job market that requires extended preparation periods. We must reconsider whether 'inactivity' is an accurate term."

To address this crisis, the government has launched various support programs. These include job-search allowances, savings accounts with government matching funds, and wage subsidies for young workers at small companies. Busan's "2026 Youth Challenge Support Program" offers counseling, career exploration, and

job skill training. Yet, these measures offer only temporary relief. They cannot solve the fundamental problem of insufficient jobs, and employment gaps continue to disadvantage applicants in future hiring.

For students approaching graduation, this issue directly affects their own futures. The success of youth policy ultimately depends not on how many support measures exist, but on how effectively these resources reach young people. Since youth inactivity is now a structural societal challenge, experts emphasize the need for more substantive approaches to address systemic barriers in the employment market.

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— Culture —

Kick, Flip, Throw: A Guide to Korean Traditional Games

Long before mobile phones and video games existed, children in Korea created excitement and competition through simple yet meaningful traditional games. These games were commonly played during holidays, school events, and family gatherings, and many are still enjoyed in Korea today. Among the most famous Korean traditional games are "Yutnori (윷놀이)," "Jegichagi (제기차기)," and "Ttakjichigi (딱지치기)."

One of the most popular traditional games is yutnori, a board game usually played during Seollal, the Korean Lunar New Year. The game uses four thick wooden sticks called "yut" and small playing pieces placed on a yutnori board. Players throw yut sticks, and the way they land - depending on whether they face up or

down - determines how far the players can move. Some combinations allow players to move one step, while others allow several steps or an extra turn. The goal is to move all the pieces around the board before the opposing team does. Players can also capture opponents' pieces and send them back to the starting point, which makes the game even more competitive and thrilling. Since yutnori is often played in teams, it encourages cooperation and communication between family members and friends.

Another famous Korean traditional game is jegichagi. The name "jegichagi" literally means to kick a shuttlecock. In this game, players kick a small shuttlecock with fringed ends called a "jegi" and try to keep it in the air without letting it fall to the

ground. The player who keeps the jegi in the air for the longest time wins. Although the game appears simple, it requires balance, coordination, and concentration. Traditionally, Korean children played jegichagi during the winter holidays because it helped them stay active in cold weather.

Ttakjichigi is another well-known traditional Korean game. To play, players fold paper into thick square tiles called "ttakji." Each player places their ttakji on the ground and takes turns throwing another tile at it. The objective is to flip the opponent's ttakji using the force of the throw. If the tile flips over, the player wins the round.

Traditional Korean games such as yutnori, jegichagi, and ttakjichigi are



▲ Yutnori, ttakji, and jegi

not only entertaining but also teach teamwork and creativity. Even in modern society, these traditional games remain meaningful because they allow younger generations to experience an important part of Korean heritage.

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Filial Piety Today: How It Has Changed from the Past

Filial piety, "Hyo (효)" in Korean, has long been one of the core values in Korean culture. The Chinese character for filial piety (孝) shows that children should respect and care for their parents. In traditional Korean society, especially during the Joseon Dynasty, hyo was not only a personal virtue but also an important principle for maintaining social order. However, the meaning and practice of hyo are no longer the same as they were in the past.

One of the most noticeable changes is the transformation of family structure from extended families to nuclear families, which consist only of parents

and their children. As families have become smaller and family members no longer live together as often, family gatherings and activities have decreased. Traditional ancestral practices, such as visiting ancestors' graves and commemorative rites, have also been reduced. While these rituals once played a central role in expressing filial duty, they are now often replaced by simplified ceremonies involving only a few family members. In some cases, families even skip ancestral rites due to changes in lifestyle and busy schedules.

The system of elderly support has also shifted. In the past, children

were primarily responsible for providing financial support to their parents. Today, however, both older and younger generations are providing financial assistance to one another. This change shows that filial piety has become more shared, as parents help with education expenses, while children assist by providing extra pocket money or covering medical expenses.

Beyond financial support, modern filial piety is not limited to economic assistance. Instead, it has expanded to include caring for parents' health and offering emotional support. For example, children may regularly check

on their parents' well-being and accompany them to hospital visits, make phone or video calls, and spend quality time together through meals, travel, or shared hobbies.

Overall, filial piety has evolved alongside changes in family structures and social values. While its form has changed, its core values of respect and gratitude toward parents remain an important part of Korean culture today. May, often considered a month for families in Korea, can be a meaningful time to practice filial piety in daily life.

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