



The Taekwondowon: *Landmark for Taekwondo's Future or Monumental Misstep?*

Udo MOENIG and Hyun Min CHOI

Abstract

As taekwondo gained global prominence, the Kukkiwon was established as the World Taekwondo Headquarters in 1972 to meet the needs of its time. However, in due course, it became evident that the Kukkiwon's facilities were inadequate to support taekwondo's continued international growth. This realization led to the conceptualization of a Taekwondo Park, later renamed Taekwondowon. Despite the significant investment and opulence of the Taekwondowon, it has been plagued by questionable decisions regarding its purpose and location, remote in the Deogyusan mountain region near Muju town. This article begins by providing a brief overview of the founding of the Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA), the Kukkiwon, and the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) for contextualization. It then examines the conceptualization, political maneuvering, and objectives behind the creation of the Taekwondowon. Finally, it analyzes the languishing state of the Taekwondowon, primarily attributed to conflicts among the various taekwondo institutions.

Keywords: Taekwondowon, Taekwondo Park, Kukkiwon, World Taekwondo (WT), Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA)

This study was supported by the Youngsan University Research Fund 2025. Although this article follows the Revised Romanization system as used by Korea Journal, familiar spellings are retained for certain taekwondo terms, including taekwondo itself.

First and corresponding author: Udo MOENIG is a tenured professor in the Department of Taekwondo, Youngsan University. E-mail: udomoenig@yahoo.com.

Second author: Hyun Min CHOI is an associate professor at Youngsan University. E-mail: sbvfef@hanmail.net.

Introduction

After World War II and the Korean War (1950–1953), rising anti-Japanese sentiment in South Korea led the martial arts community to distance taekwondo from its Japanese karate roots, constructing a narrative tying it to Korean tradition. As a consequence, taekwondo gained official status as Korea's nominal *national sport*¹ in 1971 under President Park Chung-hee (in office, 1962–1979), fostering a sense of Korean identity (Y. Kim 1990; Kang and Lee 1999; Madis 2003; Moenig 2015a; Moenig and Kim 2016, 2017; Capener 1995, 2016).

Subsequently, the journey of taekwondo to Olympic recognition was deeply intertwined with South Korea's ambitions to promote its national identity on the global stage. After founding the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF; now renamed World Taekwondo, WT) in 1973, the Korean government, seeing the sport's potential for international prestige, initiated a global campaign to promote taekwondo, inspired by Japan's success in securing judo's Olympic status. This campaign aligned with South Korea's aspirations to host major events like the 1988 Seoul Olympics, positioning taekwondo for global exposure. Key to taekwondo's Olympic debut was Kim Un-yong (1931–2017), who, after assuming the presidency of the Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA), the Kukkiwon, and the World Taekwondo Federation, and eventually vice-presidency of the IOC (International Olympic Committee), relentlessly lobbied for the sport's inclusion. Despite taekwondo's initial perception as a Korean-dominated field, Kim worked to increase international participation, addressing concerns about its cultural insularity. Initially, this strategy led to taekwondo's selection as an Olympic demonstration sport in 1988 and 1992, and eventually securing full Olympic status in 2000. Kim's influence in the Olympic movement, however, later faced scrutiny, as allegations of corruption and nepotism culminated in his resignation and imprisonment in 2004. Ultimately, taekwondo's Olympic success was achieved through Kim's powerful connections and strategic

1. The South Korean National Assembly belatedly declared taekwondo the official "National Sport" of South Korea in 2018.

maneuvers within an IOC environment marked by widespread corruption (Jennings and Simson 1992; Jennings 1996; Lee and Lee 2024; Capener 2016; Moenig and Kim 2017; Choi et al. 2024).

During taekwondo's rise to prominence, the Kukkiwon was established as the World Taekwondo Headquarters in 1972, serving as the central institution for setting standards and governance, and hosting events such as the inaugural World Taekwondo Championships in 1973. However, over time, the physical Kukkiwon building became outdated. In contrast to China, which had the Shaolin Temple as a global symbol of its martial arts heritage (Shaolin Temple n.d.), Korea lacked a comparable landmark for taekwondo. This led to the conceptualization of a "Taekwondo Park," later renamed Taekwondowon. However, despite its significant expense and opulence, the Taekwondowon was from the outset marred by questionable decisions regarding its location and purpose. In light of these considerations, it is necessary to critically assess whether the Taekwondowon has been able to fulfill its original mission and objectives or if it has primarily been a missed opportunity. Given the Korean taekwondo establishment's typical avoidance of critical self-reflection, it is necessary to scrutinize this topic, especially since the project has been primarily funded by Korean taxpayers.

This study is principally a literature review of various sources, including newspaper articles, internet sites, materials from related organizations, and academic papers, complemented by a few short interviews with relevant figures.² The article begins by providing a brief overview of the founding of the Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA), the Kukkiwon, and the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) to provide context. It then examines the conceptualization, political maneuvering, and objectives behind the Taekwondowon. Finally, the study analyzes the failing state of the Taekwondowon, largely attributed to conflicts among the various taekwondo institutions.

2. The individuals interviewed for this study were aware of the use of their information for this article.

The Formation of the Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA), the Kukkiwon, and the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF)

The Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA)

During the 1950s, the martial arts community in South Korea was characterized by division and fragmentation. However, in 1959, leveraging his influence as a military general and his strong connections with the Syngman Rhee administration (1948–1960), Choi Hong Hi (1918–2002) secured support from the Ministry of Education and the Korea Amateur Sports Association. With their backing, he compelled several significant *gwan* 館³ to join the newly formed Korea Taekwondo Association under his leadership. However, the organization was short-lived due to President Rhee's forced resignation in 1960 and the ensuing chaos, which led to several *gwan* breaking away. Subsequently, in 1961, amid widespread social and political instability, Major General Park Chung-hee (1917–1979) staged a military coup. Under martial law, the new military regime enforced sweeping changes across society, including the martial arts community. The various *gwan* were urged to unite under one umbrella organization, resulting in the formation of the Korea Taesudo Association⁴ in 1961. Although Choi Hong Hi initially supported the 1961 military coup, he held conflicting views of and personal

3. The term “*gwan*” literally means “hall” or “house,” but in the context of Japanese and Korean martial arts, it refers to a gymnasium, school, style, or organization. The precursors of modern taekwondo consisted of various martial arts styles and fighting techniques, known by different names and taught in five schools across Seoul. These martial arts schools, or *gwan*, were all established between 1944 and 1946, and later designated the “founding *gwan*.” During the Korean War (1950–1953), several *gwan* founders went missing, leading their students to establish new gymnasiums and styles. Additionally, disputes among members prompted the creation of new schools. From the Korean War until the 1970s, over 40 distinct *gwan* were established (Kang and Lee 1999; Moenig and Kim 2017).

4. The name “*tae-su-do*” 跆拳道 was a compromise, incorporating the first character from the recently coined term “*tae-kwon-do*” 跆拳道, the second character from the karate terms “*tang-su-do*” 唐手道 (in Japanese, ‘*kara-te-dō*’ or ‘way of the Tang hand,’ referring to the Chinese Tang dynasty) and “*kong-su-do*” 空手道 (in Japanese, ‘*kara-te-dō*’ or ‘way of the empty hand’), and the common character “*do*” 道, meaning “way” or “method” and is common to most modern Japanese and Japan-based Korean martial arts.

animosity toward Park Chung-hee. Consequently, in 1962, the Park regime dismissed Choi from the military and appointed him ambassador to Malaysia, which diminished his influence in Korea's martial arts community. However, after being recalled to Korea in 1964, Choi maneuvered to become president of the Korea Taesudo Association, renaming it back to the Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA) in 1965. His authoritarian actions, however, led to his expulsion within a year. Shortly afterwards, Choi founded the International Taekwondo Federation (ITF) in 1966, creating a rival organization. This split marked the divergence of Choi's taekwondo from the KTA's, which later evolved into the KTA/WTF-style Olympic taekwondo (Kang and Lee 1999; Madis 2003; Moenig and Kim 2017).

Despite Choi's removal, the name "taekwondo" has been retained to this day and the KTA has been functioning as the official governing body for taekwondo in South Korea. The KTA was allocated an office at the Korea Sports Council Office in Dongsung-dong, Seoul, as headquarters in 1963, where it remained until 1986, as it was not permitted to move into the Kukkiwon after its construction was completed in 1972. In 1986, the KTA relocated to the Olympic Park in Seoul, and subsequently moved several times within the park, where it remains today (Jeong 2024).

The Kukkiwon: World Taekwondo Headquarters

The foundation of the Kukkiwon⁵ was initiated by Kim Yong-chaе (b. 1932), who served as the 5th president of the KTA from 1967 to 1971. Kim played a pivotal role in securing construction funds for the Kukkiwon. His political clout, as a founding member of the then-dominant United Liberal Democrats,

5. The name "Kukkiwon" is derived from the Japanese national sport sumō and its headquarters, the Ryōgoku Kokugikan (両国 国技館). Built in 1901, Ryōgoku is the neighborhood in Tokyo where the gymnasium is located. The first characters in the terms Kukkiwon and Kokugikan, 國 and 国, are the same, with the former in traditional Chinese characters and the latter in simplified form. The first two characters in Kukkiwon (國技院) are the Korean transliteration of the first two characters of the Japanese term Kokugikan (国技館), only the last character 館 was replaced with 院, since the KTA tried to unify the different *gwan* 館 at that time (Moenig 2015a, 52).

led the principal engineers of the KTA, Lee Chong Woo (1929–2015) and Uhm Woon Kyu (1929–2017),⁶ to invite him to assume the presidency of the KTA. The invitation for Kim to serve in this position was primarily motivated by his political connections and fundraising capabilities (Kang and Lee 1999, 62–64; Lee Chong Woo, as cited in Moenig and Kim 2017).

Following Kim Yong-chaes resignation in 1971, the Park regime was unwilling to leave the newly designated national sport under the control of individuals frequently embroiled in leadership disputes and personal conflicts. They sought a trustworthy and reliable leader who would prioritize the interests of the Park regime. Consequently, the regime endorsed Kim Un-yong. Despite his limited practical martial arts background, Kim was invited to assume the presidency of the KTA in 1971. Upon taking office, Kim's immediate priority was to establish a central taekwondo headquarters to unify the divided community. Practically, the KTA needed a gymnasium for events like promotions, tests, and competitions. Thus, finally, the construction of the KTA's *jungang dojang*, or central gymnasium, soon after renamed Kukkiwon, and also referred to as the World Taekwondo Headquarters, began that same year (Kang and Lee 1999, 62–64; Moenig 2015a, 51–54; Moenig and Kim 2017).

The completion of the Kukkiwon in 1972 marked a turning point, symbolizing the centralization of power in taekwondo. From that point on, the KTA style of taekwondo has frequently been termed "*kukki taekwondo*," distinguishing it from other styles like those of the ITF. The Kukkiwon's creation was largely funded by political influence, with contributions from corporate *jaebol* (conglomerates, or chaebol), and land donated by the city of Seoul. Lee Chong Woo noted that these contributions were secured largely due to Kim's influential position in the Presidential Protective Force. This centralization also served the Park regime's goal of consolidating taekwondo under a unified national and cultural identity. By adopting symbols from Korean nationalism and elements from East Asian philosophy in connection

6. Lee Chong Woo and Uhm Woon Kyu were leading figures and major architects during and after the formation of the KTA, WTF, and the Kukkiwon. They held various leading positions in these institutions, such as vice-president, over the years. Eom assumed the presidency of the Kukkiwon after Kim Un-yong's forced resignation in 2004.

with taekwondo philosophy, such as the yin-yang and the trigrams associated with the South Korean flag, taekwondo's image was crafted to appeal to both Korean identity and Western interest in the *mystical* Orient. The development of standardized forms, the Taegeuk Poomsae 太極 品勢 (Taegeuk Pumsae, or forms),⁷ aligned with this national symbolism, further reinforced this structure (Kang and Lee 1999, 62–64; Lee 2004; Moenig 2015a, 51–54; Lee Chong Woo as cited in Moenig and Kim 2017; Kukkiwon n.d.).

During the late 1970s and beyond, the Kukkiwon's role expanded to include a monopoly over black belt (*dan* 段) certification and instructional standards, which fortified its authority within the taekwondo community and internationally (Moenig and Kim 2017). Ultimately, these systematization and institutionalization efforts of taekwondo by the KTA and the Kukkiwon leaders illustrate how political agendas can shape cultural practices, molding them to serve broader state narratives and national identity.

Initially designed to accommodate approximately 3,000 individuals, the Kukkiwon met the needs of its time but later faced its limitations in meeting the demands of taekwondo's global growth. During the worldwide rise and expansion of taekwondo, the Kukkiwon, a rather antiquated gymnasium by modern standards, was suddenly perceived as not being glamorous enough or otherwise sufficient to serve as the World Taekwondo Headquarters any longer. The lack of adequate facilities not only reflected poorly on Korea as the home of taekwondo, but also left a negative impression on international taekwondo practitioners. Moreover, government officials frequently criticized Kukkiwon's outdated facilities, highlighting the inadequacy of its infrastructure as a global hub for taekwondo (B. Park 2000). Thus, the

7. The term “*taegeuk*” 太極 (*taiji* in Chinese) is widely recognized in Chinese martial arts training, particularly in the different Taiji and Taijiquan 太極拳 forms. Additionally, it has been used in Funakoshi Gichin's Shōtōkan karate for his beginner forms, known as Taikyoku kata 太極型. Thus, the use of “*taegeuk*” for forms was not particularly original. It is possible that its adoption was influenced by symbolism and nationalism, given that South Korea's national flag, the Taegeukgi, prominently features the *taegeuk* symbol at its center. Overall, the symbolism resonates with Western fascination for oriental mysticism. Likewise, with the newly invented Taegeuk forms, the Korean term “*hyeong*” 型 (*kata* in Japanese) for forms was replaced with the newly invented term “*poomsae*” (*pumsae*) during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

idea arose of constructing a new taekwondo Mecca—the Taekwondo Park, reflecting the upgraded status of taekwondo globally.

The World Taekwondo Federation (WTF)

After the completion of the Kukkiwon in 1972, the Korea Taekwondo Association, the intended beneficiary of the project, never occupied the building. Instead, the newly established World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) took residence in 1973. The World Taekwondo Federation was founded as the international governing body for (sport) taekwondo. It was established in response to the earlier global expansion of the International Taekwondo Federation, serving as a counterbalance. It should be noted that although the Kukkiwon housed the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF), these institutions have been distinct entities with different tasks and responsibilities. However, since Kim Un-yong held the presidency over all these organizations—the Kukkiwon, the KTA, and the WTF—there was no rivalry between these entities at that time, as they were all under the same leadership. Lower-ranking officials were frequently shuffled between these institutions as well. This cozy dynamic changed with Kim's forced resignation in 2004, after which different individuals took on leadership roles in these organizations (Kang and Lee 1999; Lee 2004; Moenig 2015a, 51–54; Moenig and Kim 2017; Capener 1995, 2016).

Over the decades, it became clear that the Kukkiwon was too small, prompting the World Taekwondo Federation to relocate its headquarters multiple times. In 1994, the headquarters moved to Yeongdong-daero, Gangnam-gu, Seoul, and again in 2012 to Seongnam, to a building owned by Booyoung Construction Company. At that time, the son of the company chairman, who was the vice chairman, sponsored the federation several times in hopes of becoming president of the WTF, a position he ultimately did not secure (S. Kim 2021). Instead, Choue Chungwon (b. 1947) assumed leadership of the WTF in 2004 following Kim Un-yong's resignation, continuing to serve as president to this day. In 2018, the WTF moved once more to Bangi-dong, Songpa-gu, with each relocation driven by the need to save on rent. Additionally, in 2017, the World Taekwondo Federation rebranded itself as

World Taekwondo (WT) to avoid the negative connotations associated with the acronym “WTF.”

It became clear that the Kukkiwon building was outdated and too small to accommodate both the World Taekwondo Federation and the Kukkiwon institutions. Even after the WTF relocated, the Kukkiwon building remained insufficiently sized for the Kukkiwon institution and events, such as competitions and seminars, necessitating its move to a new location. However, the ultimate driving force behind the concept of the Taekwondo Park may have been a similar project undertaken in North Korea.

The Inter-Korean Politics behind the Initiative of the Taekwondowon

Choi Hong Hi, a South Korean army general, who was instrumental in coining the term “taekwondo” in 1955 and founding the initial Korea Taekwondo Association (KTA), was expelled from the KTA in 1965. Following his expulsion, he established the International Taekwondo Federation (ITF) in 1966 as a rival organization. Due to ongoing conflicts within the taekwondo community and his strained relations with the Park regime, Choi emigrated to Canada in 1972. Facing financial difficulties over time and enticed by the North Korean regime, Choi decided to introduce taekwondo to North Korea in 1980 (Gillis 2008; Moenig et al. 2022).

Since the introduction of taekwondo to North Korea, its government has taken a unique approach by making it a mandatory part of military training and promoting it widely through workplace and school athletic programs. In addition, North Korea collaborated with Choi Hong Hi to establish a Taekwondo Park in partnership with the ITF, headquartered in Vienna, Austria. North Korea declared its intent to emphasize the martial art’s values of justice and peace and strengthen its bonds with the global taekwondo community. In 1992, North Korea completed a Taekwondo Hall, which was ten times larger than South Korea’s Kukkiwon. Since its opening, it has hosted a variety of international taekwondo competitions, including the ITF World Taekwondo Championships. By 1998, North Korea expanded its efforts with the construction of the Taekwondo Sanctuary in the Rajin-Sonbong Free

Economic Zone, intensifying its pursuit of taekwondo globalization (An 2010, 1–44; Yi 2018).

In response, South Korea formulated plans to establish a Taekwondo Park in the Seoul metropolitan area, particularly ahead of the 2000 Sydney Olympics (Mookas 2007). However, the project faced numerous challenges, including site selection and project scale issues. Progress initially halted during the 1997 Financial Crisis (Kim et al. 2008). Despite the potential removal of taekwondo as an Olympic sport, funds for the park's construction were raised through public donations and corporate sponsorships. In 1997, following recommendations from the Korean Olympic Committee, the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism reviewed the Taekwondo Park construction plans. Under President Kim Dae-jung's administration in 1998, the government invited local municipalities to apply to host the Taekwondo Park. By 2000, the government officially announced the "Taekwondo Park Establishment Plan" (Space docent 2015).

In 2007, South Korea enacted the Taekwondo Promotion and Taekwondo Park Establishment Act, laying the legal groundwork for the park's construction. Despite launching its Taekwondo Park project later than North Korea, South Korea relied on strong government and sports organization support to maintain and develop taekwondo as an Olympic sport. However, the project encountered additional controversy over its name. Initially referred to as "Taekwondo Seongji" 跆拳道聖地 (Taekwondo Holy Place), it was later changed to "Taekwondo Seongjeon" 跆拳道聖殿 (Taekwondo Sanctuary), and finally named "Taekwondo Gongwon" 跆拳道公園 (Taekwondo Park) upon completion. However, this last name was also rejected due to its recreational connotations. Critics argued that "Taekwondo Park" lacked the symbolic weight to represent the facility's role as an educational, research, and content center. A survey among domestic and international taekwondo practitioners led to the decision to rename it "Taekwondowon" 跆拳道院 (Taekwondo Institution or Academy) in 2012, conveying the idea of uniting the world through taekwondo (Money Today 2012). However, not only did finding the right name for the institution lead to controversy; the selection of its location also initiated a struggle.

The Political Wrangling for the Selection of the Taekwondowon Site

Despite efforts by the Kukkiwon and the Korea Taekwondo Association to spearhead the project, the lack of a concrete strategy and systematic planning resulted in indefinite delays. Under the Kim Dae-jung administration (1998–2003), the Taekwondo Park project was revived in earnest. Collaborating with relevant agencies and taekwondo organizations, the government began accepting applications from local municipalities interested in hosting the facility. Enthusiasm for the project was evident as 29 municipalities across the country offered approximately 1 million *pyeong* (about 3.3 million square meters) of land for free to secure the park. Reflecting this nationwide interest, the government redefined and clarified the project's direction (*NoCut News* 2014).

From 2000 to 2004, intense competition unfolded among local governments vying to host the Taekwondo Park. By 2004, 17 municipalities had submitted bids, with Gyeongju, Muju, and Chuncheon emerging as the top three candidates in the first evaluation stage. Each of these locations argued its advantages, as follows:

- **Gyeongju** highlighted its historical ties to the Hwarang spirit, promising to integrate the park with its rich cultural tourism resources through festivals and development initiatives.
- **Chuncheon** showcased its successful hosting of the annual Korea Open Chuncheon International Taekwondo Championships since 2000, and its efforts to cultivate taekwondo talent by establishing a professional taekwondo team.
- **Muju** focused on analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of its proposal, emphasizing its suitability as the site. Muju also conducted active promotions, including displaying banners expressing the region's aspirations for the project.

After a second evaluation and on-site inspections, Muju emerged as the final choice due to its high scores in balanced regional development, site suitability, and local capacity. Muju scored first, surpassing Gyeongju (second)

and Chuncheon (last). However, Gyeongju and Chuncheon contested the results, leading to legal disputes and ongoing controversies. In fact, the selection of Taekwondowon's location was influenced by political factors. Muju and Pyeongchang both contended for the 2016 Winter Olympics. After Pyeongchang was awarded the event, Muju was likely chosen for the Taekwondowon's location as a form of compensation, leaving Gyeongju and Chuncheon as the losers in this process (*Dong-A Ilbo* 2004; Moenig and Kim 2017).⁸

The Construction of the Taekwondowon and Its Supposed Purpose

Despite many challenges, the Taekwondo Promotion Foundation (TPF) and Muju County moved forward with the park's development in a phased manner. In December 2005, the TPF opened its office at the Danam Building in Seoul, officially launching the Taekwondo Park construction and related promotional projects. By 2006, the park's basic plan was established, including discussions on special legislation, human network development, and strategies for taekwondo's globalization. In 2006, the World Taekwondo Federation General Assembly designated September 4th as "Taekwondo Day" to commemorate the inclusion of taekwondo as an official Olympic sport on September 4, 1994. This was later institutionalized through the Taekwondo Promotion Act in 2008. In 2008, the TPF announced the Taekwondo Promotion Basic Plan (2009–2013), which outlined comprehensive strategies to develop taekwondo into a global cultural asset. This plan included fostering a taekwondo cultural environment, linking the martial art with education and industry, and cementing taekwondo's historical significance (Taekwondowon 2024b; Taekwondo Promotion Foundation n.d.).

In 2007, the Taekwondo Promotion and Taekwondowon Act was passed by the National Assembly, providing a legal framework for the project. This legislation outlined the foundational objectives of Taekwondowon, including

8. Lee Kyu Seok (WT Asia president and WT vice-president), interview by authors, November 12, 2024.

its layout, spatial composition, and key facilities. Moreover, according to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (2008), the Taekwondowon was supposed to function as a cultural and tourism destination, introducing Korean culture to the world. Specifically, the Taekwondowon was intended to be a Mecca of global taekwondo tourism, as well as a venue for large-scale international taekwondo events, such as the world championships.

According to the official Taekwondowon narrative, designed to embody the core principles of taekwondo—*che* 體 (body), *ji* 地 (land), and *in* 人 (people)—the Taekwondowon seamlessly blends traditional architectural aesthetics with the natural environment. The landscaping and design are highly regarded for symbolically expressing Korean cultural values and utilizing the geographical features of the site to metaphorically convey the spirit of taekwondo (Taekwondowon 2024b). The groundbreaking ceremony for the park was held on September 4, 2009, followed by a construction contract with Samsung C&T. Work officially began in March 2010, marking the start of the project's full-scale implementation. The Taekwondowon's first phase was completed in August 2013, occupying an area ten times the size of Seoul World Cup Stadium (H. Choi 2019, 2–28), or approximately 700,000 *pyeong* (around 2.3 million square meters). A seven-month trial operation began in September 2013, during which the Taekwondowon hosted cultural events and promotional activities. On April 1, 2014, the Taekwondowon officially opened, becoming the world's largest taekwondo training space. Beyond serving as a national facility, the Taekwondowon was envisioned as a sacred site and cultural exchange hub for global taekwondo tourism and practitioners (*Money Today* 2012).

However, the original objective of the Taekwondowon was ostensibly to serve as a replacement for the Kukkiwon building. The expectation was that the Kukkiwon institution would relocate to the Taekwondowon, along with the World Taekwondo Federation. The rationale behind this move was to create a centralized hub for taekwondo activities, encompassing both administrative and training functions. However, none of these objectives materialized, a topic that will be explored in the following section.

The Actual Circumstances of the Taekwondowon

The Taekwondowon is situated in the remote Deokyusan mountain region near Muju in Jeollabuk-do province, an area known for its winter sports. Traveling from Seoul to the Taekwondowon takes approximately three to four hours, whether by car or by the high-speed KTX train; there is no nearby airport option. The train journey requires a transfer in Daejeon (about 50 km from Muju) to a bus. All bus options require a transfer in Muju, which then provides a shuttle bus to the Taekwondowon (Romeo2Rio). The final leg of the journey, about 10 km between Muju and the Taekwondowon, involves an old two-lane mountain road that has not been significantly upgraded since the Taekwondowon's inauguration, making it particularly inconvenient during the snowy winter months. As a result, the widening of the road was already planned in 2016 (Han 2017); however, nothing has changed even up until the present. In any case, the commute to the Taekwondowon is inconvenient and time-consuming.

The infrastructure in Muju, a small town of about 9000 people, and the surrounding region is notably deficient, lacking adequate transportation, housing, educational, and entertainment facilities. As a result, officials and staff of the various taekwondo institutions have been hesitant to move their families to such a remote location. Weekly commutes are not a favorable option as the journey from Seoul to Muju is inconvenient and long. Moreover, initially, due to low salaries and a poor working environment, employees continued to resign and turn over. This had a negative impact on the operational efficiency and service quality in the early years of the Taekwondowon (Han 2017). Furthermore, the Taekwondowon has experienced difficulties after opening, such as some facilities not being completed due to insufficient operating funds. In particular, the completion of the higher located symbolic districts, Taekwonjeon 跆拳道殿 (Taekwon Palace or Pavilion), supposed to honor the spirit and history of taekwondo, and Myeongingwan 名人館 (Hall of Fame),⁹ a commemorative space established to honor famous taekwondo masters, were delayed due to insufficient

9. The Hall of Fame was initially part of the museum, but was recently moved to the newly established Myeongingwan.

donations. These important features of the Taekwondowon were only finished in 2020 (Oh 2014; *Nocut Sports* 2021), and began operations in 2022.

In 2004, under the guidance of taekwondo experts, committees spearheaded the practical implementation of the Taekwondowon project. After the funds were sharply reduced, the construction of the Taekwondowon still cost KRW247.5 billion (about USD170 million), and it was largely financed by the Korean government (G. Park 2014).

According to the National Assembly Budget Policy's "2016 Fiscal Year Analysis Report" the Taekwondowon was estimated to receive 1.88 million domestic and international visitors in its first year of opening. In addition, the Korea Development Institute's (KDI) preliminary feasibility study report in 2008 also predicted annual demand to be over 1.78 million people immediately after construction. However, the number of visitors to the Taekwondowon was recorded as 160,000 in 2014, the first year of its operations, 250,000 in 2015, and 270,000 in 2016. Compared to the expectations of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the KDI, this was only 10 to 15 percent the anticipated volume of visitors. During these three years (2014–2016), the Taekwondowon generated sales of KRW11.3 billion (about USD7.7 million), but the budget spent on operating expenses alone over these years had reached KRW13.1 billion (approximately USD8.94 million), leading to a huge deficit. In 2017, the deficit decreased slightly due to the World Taekwondo Championships (Yun 2017).

In 2019, the Taekwondowon officially reported revenues of approximately KRW4.96 billion (around USD3.5 million) and attracted around 143,000 visitors. However, these numbers drastically declined during the COVID-19 pandemic. By 2023, the situation had improved, with revenues rebounding to about KRW5 billion (around USD3.5 million) and visitor numbers rising to 310,000 (*Consumertimes* 2022; Y. Choi 2023).

Although the post-pandemic visitor count exceeded pre-COVID figures, it still fell far short of initial estimates made before the opening of the Taekwondowon. Revenue figures have remained consistent with pre-pandemic levels, but the Taekwondowon has not disclosed information regarding their financial losses, which are being absorbed by the Korean taxpayers.

Interestingly, save for during taekwondo events, the Taekwondowon

Table 1. Taekwondowon Revenues and Visitor Numbers

Year	Revenues		Losses	Visitors
	KRW	USD	KRW	
2014–2016	11.3 billion	7.7 million	1.8 billion	160,000/250,000/270,000
2019	4.96 billion	3.5 million	N/A	143,000
2022	3.3 billion	2.24 million	N/A	N/A
2023	5 billion	3.5 million	N/A	310,000

Source: Compiled by authors based on Y. Choi (2023), *Consumertimes* (2022), and Yun (2017).

Note: Some numbers are not publicly available. Exchange rate is according to December 2024.

is predominantly frequented by the general public, with about 60 percent of users being non-taekwondo practitioners.¹⁰ Many of the visitors to the Taekwondowon's accommodation, the Doyakgawan, often likely choose it for its budget-friendly rates. Instead of practicing taekwondo, they enjoy hiking in the summer and skiing in the winter months in the Deokyusan mountains. The alarming financial situation and visitor statistics of the Taekwondowon raise questions about the efforts of the various taekwondo institutions in supporting and promoting the center.

The Broken Relationships between the Taekwondo Institutions

Some tasks have been reassigned from other institutions to the Taekwondowon. For example, the (then) World Taekwondo Federation's international education program, the WT Partnership Taekwondo Program (present name), established in 2005 and managed by Kyung Hee University, was transferred to the Taekwondowon. The current president of World Taekwondo (WT), Choue Chungwon (Jo Jeong-won), was formerly a co-owner of Kyung Hee University. However, following a dispute with his brother, Jo In-won, who is now the sole

10. Kim Beom-yong (Taekwondo Promotion Foundation, Public Relations and Marketing Department), interview by authors, November 26, 2024.



Figure 1. The inside of the Taekwondowon Arena (main building), the largest of its kind (exclusively used for taekwondo) in the world; primarily underutilized by small groups, such as minor taekwondo organizations, clubs, and academies, often with children

Source: Photograph taken by authors (October 12, 2024).

proprietor, Kyung Hee University lost the program. This situation highlights the persistent influence of personal interests on decision-making processes within taekwondo institutions (*Sportcal* 2005; Moenig and Kim 2017).

Regarding the utilization of the Taekwondowon for international taekwondo events, it has hosted some significant competitions like the 2015 World Youth Taekwondo Championships, the 23rd World Taekwondo Championships in 2017, and the 2023 World Taekwondo Grand Prix Challenge. However, it has primarily hosted minor events, such as the International Open Virtual Taekwondo Competition in 2023. Overall, the facilities have not been sufficiently utilized for major events.

The Pyeongwon Gwan at the Taekwondowon is another gymnasium that serves as the comprehensive training facility for the Korean national team. However, it only occasionally hosts training sessions for the taekwondo Poomsae national team members, junior national team members, and various demonstration teams. Instead, the Poomsae national team primarily trains at universities in the Seoul area, such as Yong In University. Meanwhile, sparring, which is the only taekwondo activity represented at the Olympics, has its national team training at the Jincheon National Training Center in Chungcheongbuk-do, established by the Korean Sport and Olympic Committee for Olympic sports.¹¹

Officially, in 2023, the Taekwondo Promotion Foundation signed a five-party business agreement to strengthen the role of the Taekwondowon as the WT central training center (*Chosun Ilbo* 2023). In reality, although the WT Partnership Taekwondo Program is held every year at the Taekwondowon, the relationship with the Taekwondo Promotion Foundation is not very good. The WT(F) wanted cooperation with the Taekwondowon and established the World Taekwondo Center at the Taekwondowon in 2016, but due to the Taekwondowon's uncooperative attitude, the office currently exists but is still empty.¹² Moreover, instead of moving to the Taekwondowon, the WT signed an agreement in 2023 with the city of Chuncheon, one of the original contenders of the Taekwondowon, to relocate there after the construction of the facilities are finished, scheduled for 2027 (World Taekwondo 2023). Chuncheon is located close to Seoul and can be conveniently reached in about one hour by car or train, which probably also influenced the choice. As a result, the 2024 World Taekwondo Junior Championships were not held at the Taekwondowon but awarded to Chuncheon.

While the Kukkiwon's relationship with the Taekwondowon is fairly forthcoming, leading to the relocation in 2017 of the Taekwondo Academy (established in 1983 within the Kukkiwon) to the Taekwondowon and the

11. Lee Kyu Seok (WT Asia president and WT vice-president), interview by authors, November 12, 2024.

12. Ryu Jeong-seok (Education Division Manager at World Taekwondo), interview by authors, November 23, 2024.

dispatch of personnel for various projects such as training programs and forums, the Kukkiwon's headquarters planned to relocate elsewhere, not to the Taekwondowon. The controversy regarding the potential relocation of the Kukkiwon due to its aging infrastructure was addressed at the Seoul Metropolitan Council's audit on November 8, 2024. Kukkiwon president Lee Dong-seop stated that, instead of relocating, they would focus on remodeling the existing 50-year-old building in Gangnam, which is in poor condition. Despite signing an MOU with Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon for a potential move in May 2022, the substantial budget required made relocation unfeasible. Given the Kukkiwon's global significance, the decision was made to remodel the current building to better accommodate international visitors (*Dongbuk Ilbo* 2024; Lee and Lee 2024).

Since August 2024, Kim Jung-heon has served as the current chairman of the Taekwondo Promotion Foundation, overseeing the operations of the Taekwondowon. He asserts that the foundation maintains positive relations with the Kukkiwon but acknowledges various deficiencies in its interactions with World Taekwondo. Additionally, he concedes the numerous shortcomings of the Taekwondowon itself, while expressing an optimistic outlook for its future.¹³

The Taekwondowon attempted to establish itself as the world-wide Mecca of taekwondo, but neither attracted the headquarters of the World Taekwondo nor the headquarters of the Kukkiwon, which has raised controversy over the utility and purpose of the Taekwondowon (J. Park 2023).

Conclusion

In the taekwondo power structure, securing funds and wielding political influence have consistently taken precedence over practical taekwondo experience and knowledge. This trend is particularly evident in the leadership of the World Taekwondo (Federation), as demonstrated by its only two

13. Kim Jung-heon (chairman of the Taekwondo Promotion Foundation), interview by authors, February 24, 2025.

presidents. The same applies to the Kukkiwon and the Korea Taekwondo Association, which have frequently been led by non-taekwondo political figures as well. However, these leaders have not always made decisions that align with the best interests of taekwondo's development. A notable example is the widely criticized adoption of the electronic scoring system (Protector and Scoring System, PSS) in competitions, or the recent disputes between the World Taekwondo and the Kukkiwon over black belt promotional rights (Moenig 2015b; Moenig and Choi 2024).

Similarly, the selection of the Taekwondowon's site was likely influenced by questionable political decisions and rivalry. Infighting among different taekwondo institutions and officials led to various dubious decisions regarding the Taekwondowon's purpose and management. Furthermore, the questionable choices regarding its location and rationale have raised doubts about its viability and long-term sustainability. From the onset there has been a reluctance to relocate taekwondo institutions, officials, and staff to the facility, primarily due to its isolated location in Muju.

Conversely, choosing Gyeongju or Chuncheon over Muju for the Taekwondowon's location might have been a more prudent decision given Gyeongju's rich cultural heritage and significance, or Chuncheon's superior transportation accessibility, overall better infrastructure, and closeness to Seoul. Ironically, Chuncheon was recently awarded the World Taekwondo's new headquarters.

Despite its significant cost and high expectations, the Taekwondowon was neither a financial success nor has it become a global symbol of taekwondo heritage or a popular taekwondo tourist destination. The project's reliance on public funding without delivering proportional benefits to the taxpayers adds another layer of scrutiny. Moreover, the exact annual losses of the Taekwondowon have been largely shrouded in confidentiality. Despite the significant investment, the Taekwondowon has been underutilized, hosting only a few major events since its inception. Internal conflicts and rivalries among different taekwondo organizations have hindered its effectiveness. Apart from its extremely inconvenient physical location, the lack of cooperation and alignment between key stakeholders has prevented the Taekwondowon from reaching its full potential as a unifying force in the taekwondo community.

REFERENCES

- An, Jae-chan. 2010. "Taegwondo-ui wisangjego-reul wihan taegwondogongwon-ui banghyangseong" (Direction of Taekwondo Parks for Enhancing the Status of Taekwondo). Master's thesis, Korea National Sport University.
- Capener, Steven D. 1995. "Problems in the Identity and Philosophy of *Taegwondo* and their Historical Causes." *Korea Journal* 35.4: 80–94.
- Capener, Steven D. 2016. "The Making of a Modern Myth: Inventing a Tradition for Taekwondo." *Korea Journal* 56.1: 61–92.
- Choi, Hyeok-gyu. 2019. "Taegwondo jinheung jeongchaek-e ttareun taegwondo gongyeon munhwa bunseok-gwa hwalseonghwa bangan" (Analysis of Taekwondo Performance Culture and Revitalization Plans based on Taekwondo Promotion Policies). Master's thesis, Myongji University.
- Choi, Hyun Min, et al. 2024. "The Institutionalization of Taekwondo in South Korea." *Revista de Artes Marciales Asiáticas* 19.1: 39–54.
- Choi, Yeong-su. 2023. "Taegwondowon 'olhae bangmungaek 31-manmyeongmaechul 50-eogwon dolpa'" (Taekwondowon "This Year, 310,000 Visitors and Sales Exceeded 5 billion Won"). *Yonhap News*. December 18. <https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20231218119800055> (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Chosun Ilbo*. 2023. "Taegwondowon, segye taegwondo yeonmaeng jungang hullyeon senteo yeokhal ganghwa" (Taekwondowon Strengthens Its Role as the Central Training Center of the World Taekwondo Federation). July 17. https://www.chosun.com/sports/sports_general/2023/07/17/FLGEG6WP5JNQEORSSA7OJ4XJLI/ (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Consumertimes*. 2022. "Taegwondo jinheung jaedan taegwondowon, 2-nyeon sai suik 71.2% geupgam" (Taekwondo Promotion Foundation Taekwondowon, Profit Plummeted by 71.2% in Two Years). October 14. <https://www.consumertimes.kr/46666?> (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Dong-A Ilbo. 2004. "Taegwondo gongwon huboji gyeongju muju chuncheon apchuk" (Taekwondo Park Candidate Sites Down to Gyeongju, Muju, and Chuncheon). December 14. <https://www.donga.com/news/Sports/article/all/20041214/8138941/1>.
- Dongbuk Ilbo*. 2024. "Lee Dong-seop gukgiwonjang, 'gukgiwon ijeon daesin rimodelling chujin' balkhyeo" (Lee Dong-seop, President of Kukkiwon, Announced, 'We are Pursuing Remodeling Instead of Relocating Kukkiwon'). November 10. <https://www.dongbukilbo.com/etnews/?fn=view&no=35566&c&id=21090100> (accessed December 2, 2025).

- Gillis, Alex. 2008. *A Killing Art: The Untold History of Tae Kwon Do*. ECW Press.
- Han, Hye-jin. 2017. "Muju taekwondowon jikwon 'jul-toejik' geupgam...iyu iteotne!" (Muju Taekwondowon Employees Are Drastically Decreasing...There Is a Reason for This!). *Mookas*. November 24. <https://mookas.com/news/16006?> (accessed December 2, 2025).
- Jennings, Andrew. 1996. *The New Lords of the Rings: Olympic Corruption and How to Buy Gold Medals*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Jennings, Andrew, and Vyv Simson. 1992. *The Lord of the Rings: Power, Money and Drugs in the Modern Olympics*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Jeong, Dae-gil. 2024. "KTA samusil 6-wol an-e ijeon" (KTA Office Relocation in June). *Taekwondo Shinmun*. <http://www.tkdnews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=1444> (accessed December 2, 2025).
- Kang, Won-sik, and Kyong-myong Lee. 1999. *Taekwondo hyeondaesa* (a Modern History of Taekwondo). Bokyeong munhwasa.
- Kim, Hyeon, et al. 2008. "Taekwondo gongwon gyehoek" (Planning for Taekwondo Park). *Nongchon gyehoek* (Journal of the Korean Society of Rural Planning) 14.1: 73–82.
- Kim, Seung-jon. 2021. "Buyeong geurup-ui namdareun taekwondo sarang...Segyehwa gyeolsil" (Booyoung Group's Extraordinary Love for Taekwondo...Fruit of Globalization). *Pressman*. March 27. <https://www.pressman.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=41820> (accessed December 2, 2025).
- Kim, Yong-ok. 1990. *Taekwondo cheolhank-ui guseong wolli* (Principles Governing the Construction of the Philosophy of Taekwondo). Seoul: Tongnamu.
- Kukkiwon (World Taekwondo Headquarters). "Introduction of Kukkiwon: Chronology." <https://www.kukkiwon.or.kr/eng/contents/view?contentsNo=101&menuLevel=3&menuNo=79> (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Lee, Brian. 2004. "Fall from Grace Taekwondo Takes a Bad Tumble." *Korea JoongAng Daily*. February 29. <https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/2004/02/29/features/Fall-From-Grace-Taekwondo-takes-a-bad-tumble/2102667.html> (accessed December 2, 2025).
- Lee, Jeong-min, and Seungjoo Lee. 2024. "Gukgiwon-ui nan...ijeon dolbalcheolhoero 'daehonran'" (Kukkiwon's Affair... 'Chaos' Due to Sudden Withdrawal). *Munhwa Ilbo*. August 29. <https://munhwa.com/news/view.html?no=2024082901071227307001> (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Madis, Eric. 2003. "The Evolution of Taekwondo from Japanese Karate." In *Martial Arts in the Modern World*, edited by Thomas A. Green and Joseph R. Svinth, 185–209. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. 2008. "Taekwondo jinheung mit taekwondo

- gongwon joseong deung-e gwanhan beomnyul” (act on the Promotion of Taekwondo and the Creation of Taekwondo Park). <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0074287> (accessed December 2, 2025).
- Moenig, Udo. 2015a. *Taekwondo: From a Martial Art to a Martial Sport*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Moenig, Udo. 2015b. “Rule and Equipment Modification Issues in World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) Competition.” *Ido Movement for Culture: Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology* 15.4: 3–12.
- Moenig, Udo, and Hyun Min Choi. 2024. “World Taekwondo (WT) versus the Kukkiwon: Disputes over Black Belt Promotional Rights.” *Korea Journal* 64.1: 101–122.
- Moenig, Udo, et al. 2022. “The Founder of the International Taekwon-Do Federation (ITF) Choi Hong Hi: An Exploration of Fiction and Fact.” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 38.17: 1832–1855.
- Moenig, Udo, and Minh Kim. 2016. “The Invention of Taekwondo Tradition, 1945–1972: When Mythology Becomes ‘History.’” *Acta Koreana* 19.2: 131–164.
- Moenig, Udo, and Minh Kim. 2017. “A Critical Review of the Historical Formation of Olympic-Style Taekwondo’s Institutions and the Resulting Present-Day Inconsistencies.” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 34.12: 1323–1342.
- Money Today*. 2012. “‘Taekwondo gongwon,’ ‘taegwondowon’-euro myeongching byeongyeo” (Renaming the Taekwondo Park to Taegwondowon: Symbolic Significance and Design). February 22. <https://news.mt.co.kr/mtview.php?no=2012022215102241172> (accessed December 2, 2025).
- Mookas*. 2007. “Taekwondo gongwon eoje-wa oneul” (Taekwondo Park: Past and Present). July 4. <https://mookas.com/news/5314>. (accessed November 29, 2025).
- NoCut News*. 2014. “Soksal gamchwojin mureungdowon-sinbipum-eun jayeon seongji...Dungjit-eun taekwondo meka” (a Hidden Paradise, a Natural Sanctuary Filled with Mystery...A Taekwondo Mecca Nestled in the Heart of the Land). May 22. <https://www.nocutnews.co.kr/news/4028418> (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Nocut Sports*. 2021. “[Gijacheheom] Muju ‘Taegwondowon’ jedaelo jeulgigi... ‘Teugbyeolhan myeong-ingwan taegwonjeon’ (2)” ([Reporter’s Experience] Enjoying Muju ‘Taegwondowon’... ‘Special Master’s Hall of Taekwondo Experience’ [2]). May 23. <https://sports.nocutnews.co.kr/news/5557068> (accessed December 3, 2025).
- Oh, Jung-ho. 2014. “Taegwondowon gaewon apdugo ‘ijunggo’” (‘Double Hardship’ Ahead of Taegwondowon Opening). *KBS News*. February 4. <https://news.kbs.co.kr/news/pc/view/view.do?ncd=2802036> (accessed November 29, 2025).

- Park, Byeong-sik. 2000. "Taegwondo seongji sullye mit suryeonkoseu gaebal bangan" (Developmental Strategy of Taekwondo Pilgrimage Areas and Training Courses). *Gwangwang-hotel gyeongyeong yeongu* (Journal of Tourism & Hotel Management) 2.1: 84–110.
- Park, Chan. 2016. "Taegwondowon jinipdoro hwakjang, sukwon puleotda" (Taekwondowon Access Road Expansion, Long-awaited Fulfillment). *Jeonju Ilbo*. August 31. <https://www.jjilbo.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=145781> (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Park, Gi-hong. 2014. "Muju taegwondowon, gyeongjeok hyogwa uimunsi" (Muju Taekwondowon, Economic Effectiveness Questioned). *Jeonbuk Domin Ilbo*. October 16. <https://www.domin.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=1043272> (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Park, Ju-hyeon. 2023. "Segye aegwondo yeonmaeng bonbu 'yuchi silpae' ieo gukgiwondo 'ppaetgil wigi'...Muju taegwondowon 'aemuldanji' jeollak, mal ppunin 'taegwondo seongjihwa'" (Following the 'Failure to Attract' the World Taekwondo Federation Headquarters, Kukkiwon is also 'In Danger of Being Taken Away'...Muju Taekwondowon is Reduced to a 'Complex of Sorrows' and 'Taekwondo Mecca' is Mere Lip Service). *Jeonbuk Ilbo*. May 27. <https://www.jbsori.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=11443> (accessed November 29, 2025).
- Romeo2Rio. "How to get from Seoul to Taekwondowon." <https://www.rome2rio.com/s/Seoul/Taekwondowon> (accessed November 22, 2025).
- Space docent. 2015. "Mujugun-taegwondo/Samuseolge + CA jogyeong" (Muju County – Taekwondo/SAMOO Architects + CA Landscape). April 28. <https://m.blog.naver.com/archur/220342765225> (accessed November 22, 2025).
- Sportcal. 2005. "WTF-University Taekwondo Training Program Gains Popularity." July 28. <https://www.sportcal.com/pressreleases/wtf-university-taekwondo-training-program-gains-popularity/> (accessed November 22, 2025).
- Taekwondo Promotion Foundation. "Joseong-gaeyo" (Composition Overview). <https://www.tpf.or.kr/tpf/contents/tpf020101.do> (accessed November 22, 2025).
- Taekwondowon. 2024a. "Taegwondo-ui nal sogae" (Introduction to Taekwondo Day). https://www.tpf.or.kr/t1/contents/tkdnotice6_1.do (accessed November 22, 2025).
- Taekwondowon. 2024b. "Taegwondowon sogae" (Introduction to the Taekwondowon). December 5. <https://www.tpf.or.kr/t1/contents/tkdinfo1.do> (accessed November 22, 2025).
- World Taekwondo. 2023. "Implementation Agreement on Relocation of Headquarters of World Taekwondo signed at Gangwon Chuncheon 2023 World Taekwondo Cultural Festival." August 19. <https://www.worldtaekwondo.org/news/NS/>

- view?nid=140319#:~:text=CHUNCHEON%2C%20Korea%20(aug%2019%2C,2023%20World%20Taekwondo%20Cultural%20Festival (accessed November 22, 2025).
- Yi, Yeong-ho. 2018. "Buk taekwondo gwageo-wa hyeonjae...Segye yeonmaeng bangbukdan, taekwondo seongjigwan deung bangmun" (North Korea Taekwondo Past and Present...World Federation of North Korea Delegation Visits Taekwondo Shrine Center, etc.). *Yonhap News*. November 1. <https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20181101190800007> (accessed November 22, 2025).
- Yun, Dong-il. 2017. "Taegwondowon hwalseonghwa, gukgiwon wanjeon ijeon-jeongbu jiwon jeolsil" (Revitalization of Taekwondowon, Complete Relocation of Kukkiwon, Urgent Need for Government Support). *Jeonmin Ilbo*. August 22. <https://www.jeonmin.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=174074> (accessed November 22, 2025).
- Zhongguo Songshan shaolinsi (Shaolin Temple of Songshan, China). http://m.shaolin.org.cn/eng_index.html (accessed November 22, 2025).