

ISUS NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF URBAN SCIENCES – UNIVERSITY OF SEOUL



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **103rd ISUS Urban Infra Forum:**
Evolution of the Transport Policy and Onward
- ★ **ISUS Sports Day 2026:**
More Than Competition, a Day of Friendship and Laughter
- ★ **Reunited in Dhaka:**
ISUS Alumni Share a Meaningful Evening in Bangladesh
- ★ **MUD Cultural Field Trip to Korean Folk Village**
- ★ **MGLEP 12 Field Trip:**
Seoul Energy Dream Center
- ★ **Urban GIS Field Trip:**
Exploring Cities Through Data and Experience
- ★ **A Trip to the DMZ:**
Discovering History and Urban Development
- ★ **Alum of the Month:**
Sreyneang Srun (MUAP 8)

Pocket News

- ✳ Spring Under the Sun:
Picnic Moments and Little Escapes in Seoul



103rd ISUS Urban Infra Forum: Evolution of the Transport Policy and Onward

The 103rd ISUS Urban Infra Forum featured Dr. Hwang Kee Yeon, former President of the Korea Transport Institute (KOTI), a leading government research institute in transportation, aviation, and logistics. Under his leadership, KOTI was recognized as the Best Research Institute for three consecutive years. Dr. Hwang is also known for his role in the restoration of the Cheonggyecheon Stream in Seoul, for which he received the Order of National Merit from the South Korean government. Dr. Hwang later served as Professor of Urban Engineering at Hongik University, where he also held several leadership positions, including Vice President and Dean of the College of Engineering. The forum was attended by 139 participants and, as in previous sessions, chaired by Professor Hyeon Park.

Dr. Hwang explained how South Korea's rapid growth, often called the "economic miracle," was strongly supported by smart transportation strategies. In the early stages of development, transportation was used as a tool to improve national productivity and connect markets across the country. Although this growth created economic success, it also brought challenges such as regional inequality that the government later worked to address.



Starting in the 1970s, South Korea focused on building strong transportation infrastructure. Major projects such as the Seoul–Busan Expressway, the KTX high-speed railway, and Incheon International Airport became important foundations for industrialization and export growth. To support these large-scale developments, the government established a special infrastructure fund in 1994 using fuel tax revenue.

As cities became more crowded, transportation policy gradually shifted toward “Green Growth” and sustainable mobility. Instead of simply building more roads, the government introduced solutions such as dedicated bus lanes, congestion pricing systems, and advanced public transportation technology. One of the most famous examples was the restoration of the Cheonggyecheon Stream, where an old highway was removed and transformed into a public park for citizens.

Dr. Hwang also discussed how the “Digital Revolution” changed transportation beginning around 2007. With the rise of smartphones, Korea introduced new services such as car-sharing platforms and taxi-calling applications. Today, superapps like KakaoMobility combine transportation, delivery, and banking services into one platform, creating a more user-centered and data-driven travel experience.

More recently, the Covid-19 pandemic brought major changes to transportation patterns, especially with the growth of remote work and online shopping. As demand for traditional bus services declined in some areas, Korea introduced “Demand Responsive Transport” (DRT), which uses flexible mini-buses that passengers can book through mobile applications. This system provides more personalized services while reducing operational costs and improving passenger satisfaction.

Looking toward the future, South Korea is now entering the era of Artificial Intelligence and autonomous vehicles. The government aims to commercialize fully self-driving vehicles by 2027. Dr. Hwang explained that the next challenge will not only be developing the technology itself, but also creating safe operating systems and policies. Future transportation systems will focus on “Driving Service Providers” that manage autonomous vehicle fleets and handle safety and legal responsibilities in a driverless society.



Today, Dr. Hwang continues to play an active role in future transportation development, especially in autonomous vehicle research and smart mobility policies. He is currently Invited Professor at the Department of Electrical Engineering at KAIST, Director of Spacelnsight, and a member of the National Academy of Engineering of Korea. He serves on several important professional committees related to urban planning and transportation innovation. A respected scholar and researcher, he earned his Ph.D. in Urban and Transportation Planning from the University of Southern California and has published more than 150 journal articles and 10 books in the fields of transportation and urban planning. (N.J.Nash)





ISUS Sports Day 2026: More Than Competition, a Day of Friendship and Laughter

The question everyone was asking throughout the afternoon was simple: “Which team will become the champion of the ISUS 2026 Sports Day?” But as the games continued and the cheers became louder, it quickly became clear that the true highlight of the day was not only about winning, it was about sharing laughter, excitement, and unforgettable memories together. Participated in by ISUS students, professors, staff members, and alumni, the event brought the entire ISUS community together in a lively atmosphere filled with energy from beginning to end. Hosted by ISUS Korean Student Association, and emceed by Choi Chan-hee (SUD) and Regina Pinta Roatur (MGLEP 11), the Sports Day immediately felt less like a formal competition and more like a festival where everyone could simply enjoy being together.



For many international students, the event became even more special because it was their first time experiencing traditional Korean-style games in real life. Some participants excitedly shared that they had only seen games like the Mugunghwa Flower Game in *Squid Game* or Korean dramas before, making the experience feel both familiar and completely new at the same time. Seeing students laugh while trying not to move or passionately cheer during tug-of-war created scenes that felt just like a real Korean university festival. Beyond simply playing games, the Sports Day became a unique cultural experience where international students could directly experience the fun and atmosphere of Korean campus culture together with their friends.



Perhaps the most memorable part of the day was how naturally everyone came together regardless of nationality, language, or department. Teammates encouraged each other during difficult moments, celebrated every small victory together, and even after losing a game, many could still be seen laughing and taking photos with one another. The loud cheers echoing across the field perfectly reflected the warm and vibrant spirit of ISUS. Special recognition was also given to outstanding participants, with Delphine Uwahiriwe (MUAP 18) and Boniface Nthai Kimuyu (MUD 9) receiving the MVP awards for their energy, teamwork, and performance throughout the event, while Jose Francisco Murillo Diaz (MUAP 18) was awarded Best Cheering Person for bringing endless enthusiasm and spirit to the games. As the event concluded with awards, group photos, and happy faces everywhere, many participants shared the same feeling: “We really became closer today.” More than just a sports competition, the 2026 ISUS Sports Day became a meaningful day of friendship, cultural exchange, and precious memories that will stay with the ISUS family for a long time. (R.R)

"I felt very happy and grateful to be selected as the Women's MVP during the ISUS Sports Day, and it became one of my most memorable experiences at ISUS. Since ISUS brings together students from different countries, I really loved how the sports day allowed us to connect through new games, teamwork, encouragement, and laughter, while also creating beautiful memories of our life at ISUS and in Korea." – **Delphine Uwahiriwe (MUAP 18)**



"The sports day was wonderful, a really good refreshing experience too. Having the ISUS Professors, faculty members and students participating was a great time to bond outside the curriculum setting." – **Boniface Nthai Kimuyu (MUD 9)**

"The sports day was a super fun day that allowed all the different ISUS programs to interact and build stronger ties through healthy competition. Everyone's PERFORMANCE across the games was simply great." – **Jose Fransisco Murillo Diaz (MUAP 18)**



Reunited in Dhaka: ISUS Alumni Shared a Meaningful Evening in Bangladesh



In late April 2026, a warm and memorable gathering took place in Dhaka, Bangladesh, bringing together faculty and alumni of the ISUS. Prof. Seung Beom Seo, Mr. Sang Chul Lee (alumnus GC), and Mr. Sovichet Kreng (current IDC) visited Dhaka for the kick-off meeting of the NSEZ Water Resources and EcoFriendly Wastewater Treatment Project Feasibility Study. They were joined by Mr. Sang Yeong Kim (SUD), a distinguished ISUS alumnus currently working in Dhaka.

Taking advantage of their time together abroad, the group organized a special alumni dinner attended by 13 IUDP graduates based in Dhaka. The evening was filled with lively conversation, fond memories of campus life, and enthusiastic exchanges about ongoing and future projects. It was a powerful reminder that the bonds formed in the classroom continue to flourish well beyond graduation.



Another highlight of the gathering was a warm invitation from Mr. Rokonzaman, Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Planning and an IUDP (MGLEP) alumnus, who graciously opened his home for the occasion. He treated the guests to a wonderful spread of traditional Bangladeshi cuisine, offering an authentic taste of local culture and hospitality. Gathering around a home-cooked meal added a deeply personal and heartfelt dimension to an already meaningful reunion.

Events like this underscore the vitality of the ISUS alumni community, which remains united by a shared commitment to international cooperation and a lasting affection for the University of Seoul. We look forward to many more moments of connection as our graduates continue to make their mark on the world stage.





MUD Cultural Field Trip to Korean Folk Village

Have you ever watched a Korean historical drama, also known as a Sageuk (사극)? Popular dramas such as Moon Lovers: Scarlet Heart Ryeo, The Moon Embracing the Sun, Hwarang: The Poet Warrior Youth, have introduced global audiences to the beauty of Korean heritage and culture. These dramas showcase majestic palaces, elegant hanbok, traditional calligraphy, royal court paintings, palace etiquette, and the Confucian values that shaped Korean society during the Goryeo and Joseon eras.

Inspired by these cultural narratives, students from MUD Module Basic Korean 02 joined a field trip on 10 April 2026 located in Giheung-gu, Yongin-si and Gyeonggi-do. This living cultural site preserves the traditional lifestyle of the late Joseon Dynasty and allows visitors to experience authentic Korean heritage. It showcases traditional houses, food, clothing, crafts, and customs, offering a realistic view of how Korean society once lived and how its cultural identity has been preserved through rapid modernization since the 1960s.



Participants also enjoyed hands-on activities such as traditional cookie-making while exploring preserved cultural sites and attractions throughout the village.

The visit showed that history and culture can be learned in a more engaging and meaningful way through real-life experiences. By exploring Korea's traditional heritage firsthand, participants gained a deeper appreciation of the country's rich cultural identity. Through such cultural experiences, Korean heritage becomes more than history from the past; it becomes a living story that continues to inspire people today. (N.J.Nash)



MGLEP 12 Field Trip: Seoul Energy Dream Center



As Korea's first public net-zero energy building, the center is designed to produce as much energy as it consumes. One of its most impressive features is its solar energy system. Solar panels installed on the rooftop, overhangs, and surrounding areas generate approximately 280,000 kWh of electricity annually, enough to support the building's full energy needs. The building also uses advanced LED lighting systems with smart sensors to reduce unnecessary energy consumption.

Another interesting feature is the use of geothermal technology. Underground geothermal systems help provide heating during winter and cooling during summer, making the building more energy efficient. The wedge-shaped roof design is not only visually attractive but also practical, as it protects visitors from sunlight and rain while supporting solar panels for renewable energy generation. Inside the building, the square-shaped atrium allows natural sunlight to brighten the space, reducing the need for artificial lighting.

Beyond its modern design and technology, the center also plays an important role in sustainability education. Visitors of all ages are introduced to the importance of renewable energy, environmental protection, and net-zero energy practices. At a time when many countries are facing energy challenges, Korea demonstrates how combining different renewable energy sources can support long-term sustainability.



On May 8, 2026, participants from MGLEP12 had the opportunity to visit the Seoul Energy Dream Center and experience these innovations firsthand. One participant, Ariane NYIRINGANGO, shared that the interactive exhibitions helped the group better understand renewable energy, climate change, and how green technology can shape future cities.

Key Takeaways From The Visit:

- The visit showed how countries can better utilize natural resources such as solar and geothermal energy for sustainable development.
- Participants learned the importance of environmentally friendly building designs that maximize renewable energy use.
- The trip highlighted the strong relationship between the construction sector and environmental policies.
- Participants gained greater awareness of sustainable industries, recycling practices, and urban mining as part of climate change solutions.
- Most importantly, the experience inspired participants to think about how sustainable ideas and technologies can be adapted within their own countries.

Overall, the visit to the Seoul Energy Dream Center provided valuable knowledge and inspiration about renewable energy, sustainable construction, and climate-resilient development for a greener future. (N.J.Nash)



Urban GIS Field Trip

Exploring Cities Through Data and Experience

On May 8, 2026, students joined the Urban GIS Field Trip, a learning experience that brought classroom concepts into real urban spaces. The trip began with a visit to the National Geographic Information Institute, where students were introduced to Korea's advanced mapping technologies, spatial data systems, and the important role of GIS in urban planning and policymaking. Listening to experts explain how geographic data is collected and applied in real situations gives students a clearer picture of how cities are planned, managed, and continuously improved through technology and analysis.





Reflecting on the experience, Minh Doanh Ly from MGLEP 12 shared that the field trip was both meaningful and memorable for her. She explained that visiting the National Geographic Information Institute helped her understand how spatial data is used in real life, while the visit to Gwanggyo Lake Park showed her how urban planning and green spaces can harmoniously coexist. For her, the trip made what she learned in class feel more real and easier to connect with. Beyond gaining knowledge, she also enjoyed spending time with classmates outside the classroom, making the experience not only educational but also enjoyable and inspiring. (R.R)





Special Guest Lecture: Learning from Korea's Development Journey

On May 4, 2026, Global Urban Leaders Program (GULP) at ISUS hosted a special guest lecture titled “Beyond Grants: How Korea’s Development Finance Experience Offers Lessons for Sustainable Growth,” delivered by Sangyung Chon, Vice Director of the Center for Global Industry-Academy Technology Cooperation at Inha University. As a leading expert in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Prof. Chon drew from his extensive experience in international development cooperation to guide participants through Korea’s remarkable economic journey. He traced the country’s transformation from an aid-dependent nation into a donor country, highlighting the industrial takeoff between 1962 and 1979, the rapid economic growth before entering the OECD, and the reforms that shaped modern Korea. Listening to Korea’s story felt especially meaningful for many students, as it showed that behind today’s advanced cities and global influence was once a nation facing hardship, uncertainty, and the challenge of rebuilding itself.

Prof. Chon explained that Korea formally joined the OECD in December 1996 as its 29th member, marking a symbolic transition from receiving aid to becoming a global development partner. He noted that this milestone



came just before the 1997 Asian financial crisis, a difficult period that tested the country's resilience and forced major structural reforms, but ultimately strengthened Korea's governance and financial systems. Throughout the lecture, he emphasized that sustainable growth is built not only through grants and financial support, but also through strategic planning, investment in education and vocational training, and the courage to continue reform during difficult times. By sharing his personal experiences working across different countries and projects, Prof. Chon reminded participants that every nation's development journey is unique, yet the values of resilience, human capital, and strong institutions remain universal.

Reflecting on the lecture, Yared Tekalign Tuji from MUDSIP 8 shared that the session gave him hope and inspiration, especially as a student from a developing country. For him, the lecture was not only about Korea's history, but also a reminder that resilience, education, and long-term vision can shape a nation's future. His message resonated deeply with ISUS students, offering not only historical insight, but also hope and inspiration for countries striving to build a more sustainable and independent future. (R.R)



A Trip to the DMZ: Discovering History and Urban Development

What comes to your mind when hearing about the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ/ '디엠지'), locally known as Bimujang Jidae ('비무장지대')? Many people often associate the DMZ with conflict and the separation between North and South Korea. However, beyond its historical background, the DMZ also symbolizes peace, resilience, and hope for future reunification.

On April 17, 2026, under the Module: National Territorial Urban Development Policy and Planning led by Dr. Moon Jeong Ho, MUD graduate students visited several important locations in the Ilsan–Paju area, including Ilsan Lake Park, Odusan Unification Observatory, and Unjeong New Town. The field trip provided students with valuable exposure to Korean history, peace and reunification efforts, urban planning, sustainable development, and transportation innovation.

One of the main highlights of the trip was visiting the Odusan Unification Observatory, where students could view North Korea from a distance while learning about the Korean War, the history of the DMZ, and reunification efforts between the two Koreas. The visit encouraged students to reflect on the importance of peace, diplomacy, and international cooperation.

The group also explored Ilsan Lake Park, a beautiful public park that combines nature, recreation, and modern urban living. In addition, Unjeong New Town introduced participants to Korea's smart urban planning, modern residential development, and sustainable city design.

On the way back, participants also had the opportunity to experience riding the GTX-A, Korea's modern high-speed metropolitan railway system. The experience allowed students to observe how advanced public transportation systems can improve urban connectivity, reduce travel time, and support sustainable urban growth.



Throughout the field trip, students learned how South Korea transformed from a war-affected country into a modern and developed nation through education, innovation, infrastructure planning, and long-term development strategies. The visit also highlighted the importance of balancing modernization with environmental sustainability and quality urban living.

For international graduate students, the trip provided meaningful lessons on peace-building, sustainable development, transportation systems, and urban planning. More importantly, the experience encouraged participants to think about how similar strategies and ideas could be adapted within their own countries to support future development.

Overall, the visit to the Ilsan-Paju area offered an educational and memorable experience, helping students gain a deeper understanding of Korean history, culture, sustainability, and future-oriented development. (N.J.Nash)



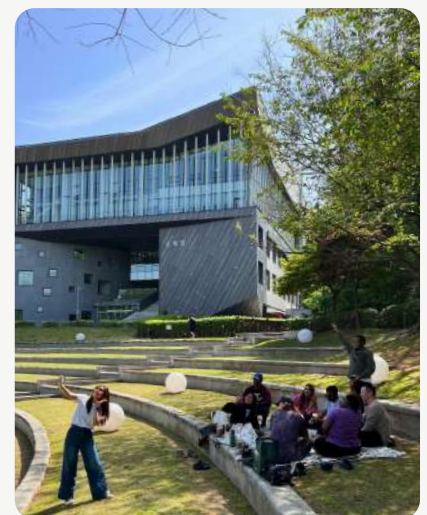
Spring Under the Sun: Picnic Moments and Little Escapes in Seoul

With warmer weather, blooming flowers, and longer afternoons, spring quickly became one of the most anticipated seasons for ISUS students. Across Seoul, students could be seen carrying picnic mats, snacks, coffee, and cameras, making the most of the season before the heat of summer arrived. Many gathered at nearby spots such as Baebongsan Mountain and the Music Hall area at the University of Seoul, proving that even places just a few minutes from campus could turn into cozy picnic destinations during spring. Some spent hours simply sitting under the trees, listening to music, sharing food, playing badminton, or chatting while watching petals fall with the breeze. Others visited Seonyudo Park, where the riverside scenery, blooming flowers, peaceful atmosphere created the perfect setting for photos and quiet moments away from busy city life.





What made these picnic moments meaningful was often not anything extravagant, but the simplicity of being together. Store-bought meals shared on picnic mats somehow felt more special when enjoyed with friends under the spring sky, while home-cooked food brought by classmates carried a warmth that reminded many students of home. As assignments, presentations, and thesis work gradually became more demanding, the picnic moments became small but important pauses in students' routines. Sitting together under the spring sky, laughing over simple conversations, and enjoying Seoul's brief but beautiful season reminded many students that university life is not only about deadlines and academic pressure, but also about the friendships and memories created along the way. (R.R)



Alum of The Month: Sreyneang Srun (MUAP 8)

Sreyneang Srun (MUAP 8) currently serves as Deputy Governor of Kandal Province, Cambodia, where she focuses on public health, community welfare, and inclusive local development. Drawing on her experience at ISUS, she continues to promote citizen-oriented governance, women's empowerment, and sustainable community development while strengthening cooperation among local authorities and development partners.



First of all, congratulations on your appointment as Deputy Governor of Kandal Province. Could you briefly introduce your current role and the main responsibilities you are focusing on these days?

Greetings = Chumreapsur !

My name is SRUN Sreyneang, an ISUS alumni. I joined MUAP 8, 2015-2017. Currently, I serve as deputy governor of Kandal province. After I graduated from University of Seoul, I resumed my job at Phnom Penh Municipality and then moved to Sihanouk Provincial Administration for more than 2 years, where I was promoted to be the Director of One-Window Service Unit and the deputy director of General Administration of Preah Sihanouk Province.

In my current role, I work closely with the provincial administration to support the implementation of government policies and coordinate development initiatives across different sectors. My main responsibilities include promoting local governance, improving public services, supporting socio-economic development, and strengthening cooperation among local authorities, communities, and development partners. More recently, I have been focusing particularly on public health, community welfare and public service. Beside the mentioned roles, I am also sparing my time to help the Cambodia Red Cross, Kandal Branch and plus the Union Youth of Federation of Cambodia In Kandal province too.

Since completing the MUAP program at ISUS, how has your experience in Seoul influenced your professional growth and your approach to public administration and local development?



The MUAP experience that I gained at ISUS has greatly influenced not only my professional but also my personal development. I acquired essential information related to public administration, leadership, urban development, and international cooperation. In particular, I was inspired by Korea's effective governance systems, technological innovation, and community-centered development approaches. It reshaped how I see the city's development from the ground to the political perspective. These experiences encouraged me to apply more strategic thinking, efficiency,

and citizen-oriented approaches in my work, especially result-oriented working system (빨리빨리-Ppal-li-ppal-li). The program also helped me build strong international networks, which continues to be meaningful for professional exchange and collaboration for the benefit of our people and countries. Additionally, the multiculturally diverse nature of our campus helped expand my outlook and become more efficient in dealing with people from different cultures.

As Deputy Governor, what are some of the key challenges and priorities you are currently addressing in Kandal Province, particularly in areas such as public health, community well-being, and inclusive development?

With a population of around 1.4 million people, Kandal Province consists of 13 districts, 127 communes, and 1,010 villages. Located around the capital city, Kandal Province has strong potential for growth due to its strategic location, transportation connectivity, and expanding economic activities. The province continues to play an important role in trade, agriculture, industry, and tourism while developing rapidly alongside urbanization. At the same time, rapid development also brings challenges.

One of our key priorities is ensuring balanced and inclusive development so all communities can benefit from social and economic progress. We are working to improve healthcare services, education, sanitation, local infrastructure, and support for vulnerable groups to strengthen community well-being.



Another important challenge is encouraging greater public participation and changing traditional mindsets that can slow progress in areas such as health, environmental protection, gender equality, and community responsibility. Therefore, we believe sustainable development depends not only on infrastructure and policies, but also on education, awareness, and active community involvement.

As Head of the Women's Community, I am committed to empowering women and promoting gender equality across Kandal Province. I believe educated and confident women play an important role in building stronger families and communities. Through collaboration with local authorities, women's organizations, and community stakeholders, I continue supporting women's access to education, vocational training, health awareness, and entrepreneurship opportunities, while encouraging younger women to become confident future leaders.

Finally, what message or advice would you like to share with current ISUS students and fellow alumni?



I would like to encourage current ISUS students and fellow alumni to continue learning, stay open-minded, and make the most of every opportunity to grow both academically and personally. The experiences and friendships built at ISUS are valuable assets that can positively shape your future career and leadership journey.

In addition, I also encourage everyone to contribute actively to their communities and society with integrity, responsibility, and compassion. No matter where we come from, we all have the potential to create positive change. Lastly, I hope ISUS alumni will continue strengthening our global network and supporting one another in our respective fields. I look forward to gaining more international exposure through academic seminars and workshops in Korea, which I believe will further enhance my knowledge, skills, and global perspective while allowing me to connect with people from diverse backgrounds.





Editing Team

Shin Lee, Dabin Kim, Nasyrah Jemaludin, Regina Pinta Roatur

Collaborators

Seung Beom Seo, Yared Tekalign Tuji, Awantha Nilupa Mahaliyana, Ariane Nyiringango, Nirmala Basyir Alwi, Nurdian Kurniawan, Reksy Rakasiwie, Minh Doanh Ly, Delphine Uwahiriwe, Boniface Nthai Kimuyu, Jose Francisco Murillo Diaz, Pich Chhara Chy



UNIVERSITY OF SEOUL

ISUS International School of Urban Sciences

University of Seoul 163, Siripdaero, Dongdaemun-gu, Seoul 02504 KOREA

Tel. 82-2-6490-5137~8
E-mail. isus@uos.ac.kr

Fax. 82-2-6490-5141
Homepage. <http://isus.uos.ac.kr>

