

'My last stand': in South Korea, a protester's *lone* fight against Samsung

Overlooking the busiest intersection in Seoul is an 82-foot traffic camera tower. At the top is Kim Yong-hee, a 60-year-old man with a sleeping bag, plastic sheeting and placards denouncing Samsung. He has been there for 315 days.

lone 独身的; 寂寞的

behemoth 巨兽; 巨大的

"This is my last stand against that evil *behemoth*." Kim said by telephone from his midair protest camp, from which he can see the soaring towers of Samsung's headquarters.

Kim said Samsung fired him in 1995 for organizing an independent labor union. He has spent the past quarter-century trying to get his job back, as well as compensation and an apology from the company.

Known around the world for its smartphones, Samsung is the biggest of the *chaebol*, the family-controlled *conglomerates* that dominate South Korea's economy. And it stands out for another reason. Huge strikes have crippled operations at other chaebol, like the shipbuilding and automaking giant Hyundai, but Samsung has never experienced serious labor *strife*.

chaebol 韩国财阀

conglomerate 企业集团; 聚合物

strife 冲突; 争吵

sabotage 妨碍; 破坏

Two court rulings in December cast some light on the reasons. Thirty-nine people, most of them current and former Samsung managers, were convicted of conspiring for years to *sabotage* efforts to organize independent unions. It took prosecutors more than six years of investigation and trial to win the rare convictions.

Top Samsung executives have been found guilty of *felonies* over the years, but have spent little time *behind bars*.

felony 重罪

behind bars 坐牢

"When you think of Samsung, you may first think of its modern image from its smartphones," said Ha Sung-ae, a religion scholar who has helped organize a support group for Kim. "But few

cases can better illustrate what can happen when you challenge Samsung over its dirty underside than that of Kim Yong-hee."