

South Korea President to be Impeached?

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Region: [Asia](#)

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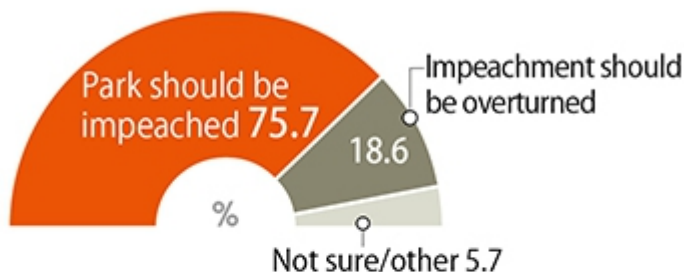
Massive protests in South Korea are barely covered by the Western media. More than 15 million have demonstrated against president Park who is supported by Washington (M. Ch. GR Editor)

Public opinion poll shows that support for Park's impeachment has remained above 80% since December

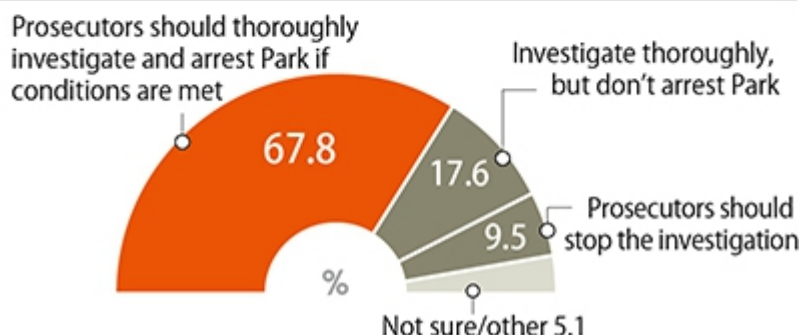
Over eight in ten South Koreans feel prosecutors should conduct a thorough follow-up investigation of President Park Geun-hye even if she leaves office with a Constitutional Court decision upholding her impeachment, a survey shows.

Opinion poll on President Park's impeachment

Opinion on Constitutional Court ruling on Park's impeachment



How to judicially prosecute Park after impeachment



Opinion poll on President Park's impeachment

Findings from a Research Plus survey conducted on Mar. 3-4, commissioned by the Hankyoreh and the Hankyoreh Economy & Society Research Institute (HERI), showed 67.8% of respondents answering that prosecutors should "thoroughly investigate [Park] and arrest her if the conditions are met" when asked what judicial measures should be taken if the Constitutional Court confirms her impeachment. Another 17.6% of respondents answered

that “prosecutors should investigate thoroughly, but she should not be arrested.”

Beyond the question of arrest, the results showed an overwhelming 85.4% of respondents calling for a thorough investigation by prosecutors, compared to just 9.5% who said prosecutors should halt their investigation if Park’s impeachment is confirmed.

While politicians are likely to unanimously shift course toward early elections if the Constitutional Court does support the impeachment with its anticipated ruling this week, a majority of South Koreans still would like to see an investigation of the government interference scandal and clear punishments resulting from it. “The high level of interest in the prosecutors’ investigation is set to continue even after the impeachment [ruling],” said Han Gwi-young, head of HERI’s social research center.

“There looks to be a serious possibility that prospective candidates in the presidential election will face a backlash if they suggest exempting President Park from judicial handling,” Han said.

Public support for Park’s impeachment, which stood at nearly 80% when the National Assembly voted it through in December, has repeatedly been found remaining at more or less the same level even as the ruling approach. The latest survey showed 75.7% of respondents agreeing that Park “should be impeached,” while just 18.6% said her impeachment “should be overturned.” Another 5.7% said they were “not sure.”

Support for impeachment outweighed opposition across all regions and age groups. Even respondents who voted for Park in the 2012 presidential election supported impeachment by a 48.1% to 43.5% margin. When asked how they would take a Constitutional Court decision that went against their own feelings, 53.9% of respondents said they would “not accept it,” more than the 39.7% who answered that they would “accept it.” When asked whether they thought the ruling should go ahead even if Park resigns beforehand, 63.4% said the Court’s decision should “continue regardless of her resignation,” while 32.9% said the impeachment trial “should be halted.”

By Seok Jin-hwan, staff reporter

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