



THE PENINSULA

Yoon Suk Yeol's Impeachment Trial: A Legal Timeline

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This timeline is the fourth part of a series that covers major events in the aftermath of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's declaration of martial law on December 3, 2024. Below includes all major court dates, their participants and other details related to the impeachment proceedings. Time stamps follow Korea Standard Time.

December 14, 2024

The National Assembly votes in favor of impeaching President Yoon Suk Yeol. The motion passes with 204 lawmakers voting in favor of impeachment, clearing the required 200-vote threshold. The National Assembly then notifies the [Constitutional Court](#) and the [Office of the President](#), and President Yoon's term is put on hold.

December 16, 2024

The Constitutional Court holds its first internal meeting to discuss President Yoon's impeachment trial. Justice Cheong Hyungsik, a Yoon-appointed justice, is [selected](#) via computerized randomization as the lead justice of the trial.

December 23, 2024

The National Assembly holds a hearing for the justices nominated by the Democratic Party (DP), Chung Kyesun and Ma Eun-hyuk. Lawmakers from the People Power Party (PPP) boycott the hearing, claiming that Acting President Han Duck-soo did not have the authority to appoint justices.

December 24, 2024

The National Assembly holds a hearing for the justice nominated by the PPP, Cho Hanchang. PPP lawmakers boycott the hearing once again, claiming that Acting President Han did not have the authority to appoint justices.

December 26, 2024

The Constitutional Court holds its second internal meeting to discuss President Yoon's impeachment trial. On the same day, the National Assembly votes in favor of appointing the three justice nominees. Acting President Han, however, refuses to appoint the three justices, and DP lawmakers file the first-ever motion to impeach an acting president.

December 27, 2024

The Constitutional Court holds the first preparatory hearing of President Yoon's impeachment trial. On the same day, the National Assembly votes in favor of impeaching Acting President Han for refusing to appoint the three nominees, and Han's term is put on hold.

December 31, 2024

Acting President Choi Sang-mok appoints nominees Chung Kyesun and Cho Hanchang but refuses to appoint Ma Eun-hyuk, citing the lack of agreement between the DP and PPP on the nomination.

January 3, 2025

The Constitutional Court holds the second preparatory hearing of President Yoon's impeachment trial.

January 6, 2025

The Constitutional Court holds its third internal meeting to discuss President Yoon's impeachment trial and the first meeting with the two new appointees present.

January 14, 2025

The Constitutional Court holds its fourth internal meeting to discuss President Yoon's impeachment trial. Later that day, the court convenes the first official hearing of the impeachment trial, but the session adjourns in four minutes as President Yoon fails to appear in person. The court also rejects the motion filed by Yoon's defense team to

exclude DP-nominated Justice Chung Kyesun from the trial and swiftly designates the dates for future hearings, which Yoon's team opposes on the grounds that additional time is needed for preparation.

January 16, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the second official hearing of President Yoon's impeachment trial. Yoon is absent once again, but the court moves forward with the hearing, citing Article 52 of the Constitutional Court Law, which allows trials to continue if the plaintiff or defendant is absent for the second hearing. During the hearing, the National Assembly emphasizes the grounds for Yoon's impeachment. Yoon's defense team lays out the reasons why the declaration of martial law was unavoidable, citing election fraud and "a state of national emergency."

January 21, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the third official hearing of President Yoon's impeachment trial. President Yoon is present at the hearing and makes his first public appearance since the passage of his impeachment motion. Yoon denies allegations that he tried to stop the National Assembly's vote to lift martial law.

January 23, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the fourth official hearing of President Yoon's impeachment trial. President Yoon is present, and former Minister of National Defense Kim Yong-hyun is also in court as a witness. Yoon claims that his martial law was legal given the "state of national emergency" and that his martial law did not fail but concluded early, as he had expected. He claims it was a peaceful martial law with the purpose of warning the DP and appealing to the public for support. Yoon questions Kim about the number of troops that entered the National Assembly building, the reason for deploying troops to the DP headquarters and public polling firm Flower, and the content of the Martial Law Command Decree Number 1. Yoon accepts that parts of the decree's wording may be against the law but that the decree itself was a mere formality and that he did not expect it to be carried out. Yoon also denies the charge that he tried to "paralyze" the National Assembly and the claim that he attempted to establish an "emergency legislative body" in lieu of the National Assembly.

February 4, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the fifth official hearing of President Yoon's impeachment trial. Participating as witnesses are former Defense Minister Kim Yong-hyun, former Commander of the Capital Defense Command Lee Jinwoo, former Commander of the Defense Counterintelligence Command Yeo In-hyung, and former First Deputy Chief of the National Intelligence Service Hong Jang-won. President Yoon claims that "nothing happened" during martial law and denies the charge that he tried to obstruct the National Assembly's vote to lift martial law, instead claiming that the troops were sent to maintain law and order. Yoon also denies that he ordered the cutting of electricity and water to the National Assembly building. Kim claims that Yoon ordered him

to “drag out” *yo-won* (soldiers) and not *eui-won* (lawmakers). Lee refuses to answer most queries, citing his own ongoing criminal law trial. Yoon claims that he directed troops to the National Election Commission but denies the charge that he attempted to seize or destroy its servers, claiming that soldiers were there to inspect them. Yeo refuses to answer whether he received a list of people to arrest, citing his ongoing criminal law trial. Hong claims that Yoon ordered him to arrest politicians, but Yoon counters that he asked Hong to “bring in” spies, not “arrest” anybody.

February 6, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the sixth official hearing of President Yoon’s impeachment trial. Participating as witnesses are former Head of the ROK Army’s 707th Special Task Force Kim Hyun-tae, former Commander of the ROK Army’s Special Warfare Command Kwak Jong-geun, and the Presidential Office’s Chief Economic Adviser Park Chun-seob. Kim claims that Yoon told him that the number of lawmakers in the National Assembly should not pass the required 150-vote mark but denies that Yoon ordered him to drag lawmakers out. Kwak claims that Yoon indeed ordered him to drag lawmakers out—contradicting former Defense Minister Kim’s remarks in the fifth hearing—and that it was Kwak who ordered the troops to leave the premises of the National Assembly and not Kim.

February 11, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the seventh official hearing of President Yoon’s impeachment trial. Participating as witnesses are former Minister of the Interior and Safety Lee Sang-min, former Third Deputy Director of the National Intelligence Service (NIS) Baek Jong-wook, and Secretary General of the National Election Commission (NEC) Kim Yong-bin. Lee denies that Yoon ordered him to cut the electricity and water of media outlets, although he acknowledges that he saw a piece of paper with such content. Much of the hearing focuses on the allegations of election fraud, with Baek testifying that the NIS found weaknesses in the election servers and Kim testifying that improvements had been made at the NEC to better protect its servers.

February 13, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the eighth official hearing of President Yoon’s impeachment trial. Participating as witnesses are Director of the National Intelligence Service Cho Tae-yong, former Chief of the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency Kim Bong-sik, and Commander of the Capital Defense Command’s 1st Security Brigade Cho Seong-hyun. Cho Tae-yong expresses doubt that Yoon would have ordered First Deputy Chief Hong to arrest politicians. Kim mentions that he was handed a document by former Defense Minister Kim but could not recall its contents. Cho Seong-hyun claims that his superior, former Commander of the Capital Defense Command Lee Jinwoo, ordered him to drag lawmakers out of the National Assembly building.

February 18, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the ninth official hearing of President Yoon's

impeachment trial. Yoon's defense team claims that if Yoon had wanted to prevent the lifting of martial law by the National Assembly, he would not have declared it on a day when a lot of lawmakers were nearby and when soldiers and police would be on standby. The National Assembly's legal team reveals an investigation record showing President Yoon ordered then Commissioner General of the National Police Agency Cho Ji-ho to arrest lawmakers, at which Yoon's defense team exits the courtroom.

February 20, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the tenth official hearing of President Yoon's

impeachment trial. Participating as witnesses are former Prime Minister and Acting President Han Duck-soo, former First Deputy Chief Hong, and former Head of National Police Cho Ji-ho. Han testifies that Yoon did not notify him beforehand of his intent to declare martial law and that the cabinet meeting held prior to the declaration differed from normal cabinet meetings. Hong counters the claim of Yoon's defense team that he fabricated details by bringing the memo on which he took notes from President Yoon. Cho claims that he denied requests from Martial Law Commander Park An-su and Defense Counterintelligence Commander Yeo In-hyung to cooperate on martial law.

February 25, 2025

The Constitutional Court convenes the eleventh official hearing of President Yoon's

impeachment trial. In his closing comments, President Yoon states that if he were reinstated, he would expand the authority of the prime minister and would focus on revising the Constitution. The National Assembly legal team reemphasizes calls for Yoon's impeachment.

March 24, 2025

The Constitutional Court rules against the National Assembly's impeachment of Prime Minister Han Duck-soo. Han is reinstated as acting president.

Late March/April, 2025

The Constitutional Court is expected to announce its decision on whether to uphold the National Assembly's impeachment of Yoon Suk Yeol. If upheld, he will be permanently removed from office, and South Korean voters will elect a new president precisely sixty days after the court releases its decision. If the court overturns the National Assembly's impeachment vote, Yoon will be reinstated as president to serve out the remainder of his five-year term.

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