

The Mass People's Resistance against KorUS FTA has started

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In South Korea, the Mass People's Resistance has started

On November 22nd, in the capital of Seoul and throughout the surrounding Kyung-gi Province, from Choong-chung to Kang-won, from Jun-book to Kwang-ju City in Southern Cholla Province, in 17 places around the country all toll, the Mass People's Resistance against the KorUS FTA began. November 22nd was only the first of three mass demonstrations, the second and third of which will occur on November 29th and December 6th. These protests are an organized outcry against the KorUS FTA, a great collective demand for an end to rising social polarization and respect for the basic rights of farmers and laborers be—a struggle of all common people in South Korea. On November 22nd workers, farmers, poor people and other Korean citizens raised their voices in anger, refusing to be silent in the face of the injustices before them. While in most areas, public buildings became the targets of the people's censure and condemnation for the entire day, administrative offices in Choong-nam, Kang-won and Jun-nam and the city hall in Kwang-ju City were temporarily overtaken by workers and farmers, rightly filled with rage.

What do the events of November 22nd show us? They show us clearly that the opening of agricultural markets and other neoliberal policies of the Noh Moohyun administration are crushing lives, and the people of Korea can only but respond with rage and indignation. They show us that the people of Korea will not tolerate the KorUS FTA, which they know will further destroy basic labor rights and strengthen social polarization.

In a time when people around the world are crying for peace on the Korean peninsula, the Noh administration has responded to the rightful demands of Korean worker and farmers only with violence.

We have already watched in broad daylight as policemen answer the farmers' cry for their basic right to a livelihood and the workers' cry for their basic labor rights with not words but deadly blows of from their clubs and shields.

Now again, the Noh administration is turning away from the people's demands, from peace and from democracy and indulging in bloodshed and repression.

The government, which has always ignored the outcry against the FTA, now claims the farmers and workers are holding "violent" protests for no reason at all, as if it is not obvious that the people of Korea have many reasons to protest. And, while the right to demonstrate is protected by the South Korean constitution, the government has denying permits for further rallies. What is more, the government has now delivered summons to leadership of the Korean Alliance against KorUS FTA (KOA), the number having reached 80 people around the country. In a true mockery of democracy, the police have begun raids, targeting regional KOA, and especially Korean Peasant League offices and stealing all kinds of instruments and documents. The government and the mainstream media together do not report why the farmers and workers are fighting. Instead they paint a distorted image of those who protest as simply violent criminals.

This is the government repression that began on November 22nd and is continuing to spread like a forest fire.

However, the people's struggle to block the KorUS FTA will not end here. On November 29th and December 6th the people's voices will rise again in a great cry of outrage. Through our united struggle, the workers, farmers and common people of Korea will, without fail, stop the KorUS FTA.