

Aborigines protest ROC repression

Written by Taipei Times

Sunday, 02 January 2011 10:05 -

While the government was staging a series of events to celebrate the Republic of China's (ROC) centennial, dozens of Aborigines staged a demonstration in front of the Presidential Office early yesterday morning in which they accused the ROC government of repression and exploitation of the nation's Aborigines.

Early in the morning yesterday, dozens of Aborigines — mostly Atayals from New Taipei City (新北市), Taoyuan, Hsinchu, Miaoli and Yilan Counties as well as from Greater Taichung — gathered at Liberty Square in Taipei not long after a New Year's flag-raising ceremony in front of the Presidential Office ended and the crowd was walking away from Ketagalan Boulevard.

At 8am, they walked onto Ketagalan Boulevard and staged a "sun-shooting" skit there.

Tribal elders handed traditional Atayal bows and arrows — all made of bamboo — to younger members of the tribe, and one after another, they shot the "sun" on the ROC flag.

"We Atayals are here to condemn the invasion and exploitation of traditional Aboriginal domains," one of the demonstrators, Sangas Yumin, told reporters at the scene. "From the Japanese colonial government to the ROC colonial government, we Aborigines have lost not only lands, but also dignity."

"As the ROC celebrates its 100th anniversary, we are here to recount our sufferings over the past 100 years," he added.

Sangas said that, in the past century, Aborigines were forced to leave their native lands and traditional hunting grounds and give up their rights to use and manage natural resources in their traditional domains, and their traditional ways of life were destroyed.

Former deputy minister of the Council of Indigenous Peoples Atung Yupas, a tribal leader, said that the "sun-shooting" skit comes from an ancient Atayal story.

Aborigines protest ROC repression

Written by Taipei Times

Sunday, 02 January 2011 10:05 -

Legend has it that, once upon a time, there were two suns in the sky, which caused much suffering for the Atayals, and the people were finally saved when ancient Atayal warriors shot down one of the suns, Atung said.

“The ROC government is the evil sun of modern times for Aborigines and we must fight against it — we must fight against it until the day we walk onto the Bridge of Rainbows,” he said.

The Atayals believe that a Bridge of Rainbows connects their world to the world of their -ancestral spirits, and only those who live as a warrior can walk along the Bridge of Rainbows after death to the world of their ancestral spirits.

Indigenous Peoples Action Coalition of Taiwan secretary-general Omi Wilang, agreed, and said that if the Aborigines do not protest, the land will protest.

“Massive mudslides devastating the country is the protest by the land,” he said.

At the end of the demonstration, those who shot the sun handed the bows and arrows to young children, symbolizing that the task would be passed down to the next generation if it could not be completed by this generation.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2011/01/02](#)