

Aboriginal protest site on Ketagalan Blvd cleared

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Police yesterday use a bulldozer as Aboriginal activists are evicted from their campsite on Ketagalan Boulevard.

Photo: Cheng Hung-ta, Taipei Times

Aboriginal protesters were evicted from their campsite on Ketagalan Boulevard in Taipei yesterday following repeated conflicts with the police over blocking road lanes during their 100-day occupation.

More than 100 police officers arrived at the site during yesterday's torrential rains, surrounding protesters' tents with metal roadblocks before forcing protestors outside, spending several hours methodically demolishing the site.

A handful of demonstrators affiliated with the Aboriginal Transitional Justice Classroom have been occupying the strip of road facing the Presidential Office Building since February to protest newly announced guidelines for demarcating the "traditional areas" within which Aboriginal communities would be able to reject further development.

While government guidelines only call for demarcating public lands, protesters maintain that private land should also be included.

"I really do not understand why the government chose to evict us today when there is so much flooding to attend to — is there really that much hatred between us and [President] Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文)?" Aboriginal protester Nabu, a Bunun, told a news conference outside police roadblocks as the final pile of debris was being loaded into trucks for disposal.

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“We will keep fighting and continue to live on the road,” singer-activist Panai Kusui, an Amis, said.

During the occupation, police had repeatedly cleared the road, only to see protesters expand from their sidewalk tents, using plastic chairs, painted rocks, a dugout canoe and other objects to block multiple lanes.

“We hope the Democratic Progressive Party [DPP] will stop using violence before it runs off a cliff,” said New Power Party (NPP) Legislator Kawlo Iyun Pacidal, an Amis, who joined the protesters.

The clearing of the site made it difficult to believe there was any chance demarcation guidelines would be revised and land rights returned, she said.

NPP Legislator Freddy Lim (林錫山) criticized the DPP for dragging its feet in passing promised amendments to the Assembly and Parade Act (集會遊行法) to improve protesters' rights.

Police said that the protesters were removed on the grounds that they had failed to apply for usage rights of the road.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2017/06/03](#)