

Shincheonji Gathers 25,000 for Peaceful Rally Supporting Religious Freedom at Gyeonggi-do Provincial Government

Monday 18 November, 2024

In opposition to the Gyeonggi Tourism Organisation's cancellation of the approval to rent a religious event scheduled for the 30th of last month at Imjingak Peace Nuri in Paju, Shincheonji Church of Jesus held a protest rally around the Gyeonggi Provincial Government on 15th November with 25,000 people, including believers.

The Gyeonggi Provincial Government and the Gyeonggi Tourism Organisation suddenly notified the cancellation of the rental on 29th of last month, citing anxiety about North Korea, Shincheonji said. "On the 30th of last month, not only Shincheonji events but also other events were scheduled at Peace Nuri, and it is a biased administration and religious oppression to leave them as they are and notify Shincheonji of the cancellation."

Since Paju City was selected as a dangerous area due to tensions with North Korea, we have asked related agencies several times to see if there is any problem with the event's progress and received responses that there is no plan to cancel it, said Lee Ki-won, General Secretary of the Shincheonji General Assembly.

Police deployed more than 400 personnel from six mobile squads on the roads around Gwanggyo Central Park and the provincial government, where believers gathered, to prepare for an emergency. In addition, some lanes of the road from Gate 2 of the provincial government to the north gate were blocked, causing no conflict with the rally participants.

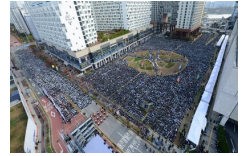
Earlier, the Gyeonggi Tourism Organization cancelled the rental approval related to the "Religious Leader Forum and Graduation Ceremony," an event related to Shincheonji scheduled at Imjingak Peace Nuri in Paju on the 29th of last month.

An official from the Gyeonggi Tourism Organisation explained, "As it is an event where more than 30,000 people gather at Imjingak Peace Nuri, a close border with North Korea, we decided to cancel it in consideration of the recent escalating tensions between the two Koreas."

Gyeonggi Province has set three cities and counties, including Paju City, Gimpo City, and Yeoncheon County, where Imjingak is located, as "dangerous zones" on the 15th of last month to block the spread of leaflets to North Korea in advance.

After the rally, Shincheonji will deliver a letter of protest demanding an official apology from Gyeonggi Province and compensation for the damage.

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