

Coordinadora de Pueblos Indígenas joins strike in Panama

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The government of President Laurentino Cortizo approved a temporary fuel subsidy freezing its price at USD \$3.25 per gallon. | Photo: Prensa Latina

Panama City, July 21 (RHC)--The National Coordination of Indigenous Peoples of Panama (Coonapip) began a strike this Wednesday to demand the Government the titling of lands, as well as access to the gasoline subsidy in force since this week.

The indigenous groups obstructed among other places the bridge over Lake Bayano, 100 kilometers from Panama City, where the people dressed in traditional costumes chanted slogans such as: "The land is not for sale, the land is defended."

"The settlers are illegally invading our lands, cutting down trees, contaminating our environment, we have preserved Lake Bayano so that it works successfully; we are the ones who take care of it and invaders are coming," said the spokesman of the Madugandí indigenous community, Linares García.

The indigenous confederation Coonapip, formed by seven native ethnic groups of the country, pointed out that the closing of the highways as a sign of protest against the settlement of settlers and invaders of their lands, joins other blockades led by union, indigenous and trade union organizations for more than two weeks in the nation.

He added that among the demands are the reduction of fuel prices, of the basic food basket, as well as compliance with the ruling of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights that favors the Madungandí and Emberá Territory of Alto Bayano.

Last Tuesday, during the demonstrations in the province of Veraguas, the indigenous groups, evicted by the police with tear gas, destroyed a police car, seven people were detained and an equal number of police officers were injured.

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