

# Protests over post-vaccination deaths spread across South Korea

One of the most vaccinated nations on earth is seeing increased public pushback over COVID-19 jabs, as demonstrators in South Korea are demanding accountability for deaths that they blame on the shots.

Protesters gathered in Busan on Sunday after a similar rally was held in Seoul on Christmas Day. Aggrieved demonstrators held up large portraits of deceased family members - like those typically displayed at funerals in South Korea - and testified as to how their loved ones died soon after being vaccinated against COVID-19.

Dozens of funeral portraits were displayed at Saturday's demonstration at the government complex in Seoul. Protesters called for the government to identify the causes of adverse reactions and admit that vaccines are to blame.

More than 1,000 South Koreans died shortly after receiving COVID-19 shots, but the government has confirmed a causal connection to vaccines in only a few of those cases. In one of the rare instances where a serious adverse reaction was acknowledged, a nursing assistant was recognized in August as a victim of an industrial accident and awarded government benefits after suffering paralysis in the wake of receiving AstraZeneca's COVID-19 shot.

Just one week into its rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in late February and early March, South Korea's Disease Control and Prevention Agency said that seven people had died and 24 had reported serious adverse reactions after receiving their AstraZeneca jabs. The government reportedly began an investigation in August after a teenager with no underlying health conditions died following inoculation with the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

An association called the COVID-19 Vaccine Victims and Families Council has held rallies in several South Korean cities. Demonstrators on Sunday marched from Busan City Hall to Busan National University of Education, Yonhap News reported.

Vaccine safety may become a contentious issue in South Korea's presidential

election. The opposition People's Power Party last week held a public hearing on vaccine side effects, inviting alleged victims and their family members to offer suggestions for support measures that presidential candidate Yoon Seok-yeol may adopt.

Kim Jong-in, the party's campaign chairman, reportedly accused President Moon Jae-in's administration of being indifferent on vaccine damages. The administration has pledged to compensate victims of vaccine side effects, but it's also the arbiter of whether injuries and deaths are attributed to the jabs. "I think the people have reached a point where they can't trust the government," Kim said.

South Korea typically has some of the world's highest jab rates for various vaccines, and the COVID-19 shots have been no exception. About 83% of South Koreans have been vaccinated against COVID-19, easily the highest rate among G20 nations.

(RT.com)

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