

South Korea protests U.S. mass arrests at Hyundai Georgia plant



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SEOUL/WASHINGTON, Sept. 5 — South Korea expressed strong concern after U.S. immigration authorities detained hundreds of workers, including Korean nationals, during a raid on Hyundai’s electric vehicle plant in Georgia, calling the action an “unjust infringement” of citizens’ rights.

The Department of Homeland Security said the raid was conducted under a federal warrant citing alleged “unlawful employment practices and other serious crimes.” Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), joined by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and other agencies, reported more than 450 arrests at the Bryan County site. The 3,000-acre facility, operational for a year, has been promoted by state officials as the largest economic development project in Georgia’s history.

Seoul’s Foreign Ministry said it had dispatched diplomats to the plant and conveyed its “concerns and regrets” directly to the U.S. Embassy in Korea. “The economic activities of Korean investment companies and the rights and interests of Korean citizens must not be unfairly infringed upon during U.S. law enforcement operations,” the ministry said in a statement.

Videos circulating on social media showed federal agents lining up workers and informing them of a search warrant. Reports suggest several hundred South Koreans may be among those detained, though official figures remain unclear.

The raid also forced a temporary shutdown of construction at an adjacent Hyundai battery facility, according to CBS News.

Hyundai is among South Korean firms pledging billions of dollars of new investment in U.S. manufacturing as part of efforts to expand production and avoid trade tariffs.