

Koryo youth: 'I want to study like other Korean students'

OKA hosts meeting with Koryoin youth



At the "Dialogue with Koryoin Youth" meeting hosted by the OKA at the Overseas Koreans Welcome Center in Yeonsu-gu, Incheon, on July 4, Commissioner Lee Sang-duk (3rd from L, front row), along with representatives from Koryoin organizations and Koryoin youth, poses for a commemorative photo.

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Sang-duk) hosted a "Conversation with Koryoin Youth" on July 4 at the Overseas Koreans Welcome Center in Yeonsu-gu, Incheon, inviting approximately 30 Koryo youth.

The meeting was designed to hear about the difficulties faced by Koryoin youth who were born and raised in Russia and Central Asia (CIS) and then returned to Korea with their parents, and to reflect these experiences in policy.

The event was attended by Koryo high school students attending Rodemnamu International Alternative School (Chairman So Hak-seop) in Anseong, Gyeonggi Province, along with representatives from the Anseong Office of Education, the Asia Development Foundation, the Koryoin Global Network (KGN), the Kyung Hee University Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation, the Koryoin Youth Education Council and the Green Umbrella Children's Fund.

The students in attendance openly shared their experiences of difficulties and discrimination across various areas, including language, culture, education and career paths, and called for practical support and institutional improvements.

"I want to attend school and study like other Korean students, but I often feel intimidated by the unfamiliar environment and discriminatory attitudes," Kim Anna said.

Lee Seo-hyun, a graduate of Rodemnamu International Alternative School who now teaches there, said: "I faced many

challenges during the settlement process, but it was frustrating not knowing where to turn for help. It is a great comfort to be able to share our stories at a gathering like today."

The meeting on this day also presented recommendations for government policies. KGN Chairman Chae Ye-jin emphasized, "Korean language education must be further strengthened, as many students are seeking to settle in Korea."

Cho Nam-cheol, executive director of the Asia Development Foundation, added, "It is also necessary for Koryoin youth to actively engage in efforts to enhance their understanding of their ancestors' history."

Chairman So Hak-seop expressed his gratitude, saying: "I am grateful for the opportunity to directly convey the voices of Koryo youth to the government. I hope the government will develop practical measures to address various settlement issues."

OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk stated: "The OKA will continue to support Koryo youth so they can grow into proud members of the Republic of Korea. Based on the grievances shared today, we will develop policies that provide practical assistance."

Meanwhile, OKA's Policy Director Lee Ki-seong attended the "2025 First-Half Koryo Youth Education Cooperation Association Forum" held at Hoseo University in Asan, South Chungcheong Province, on July 11, and heard expert opinions on education and career support measures for Koryoin youth. 