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A Tibetan nomad shot dead in Amdo Golog, hundreds arrested

On 21 March 2008, the Tibetans in Ponkor Township staged a peaceful protest in Darlag County, Golog "TAP", Qinghai Province, according to reliable information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD).

According to sources, on 21 March 2008, the Tibetan people from Ponkor Toema and Mema Townships in Darlag County staged a peaceful protest by pulling down a Chinese national flag and replacing it with the banned Tibetan national flag.

During the protest, the Tibetans protested against the Chinese authorities who came to the protest scene. The Chinese authorities responded the protest by dispatching five big and small military vehicles to Darlag County on 22 March 2008. While the military vehicles were entering into Darlag County, a group of 350 horsemen charged and blocked the Chinese military vehicles from entering. During the blockage, the Tibetan horsemen protested against the Chinese authorities.

On 23 March 2008, the monks of Ponko Monastery and a local religious lama Gurlu intervened and pacified the escalating tension on both sides. On the same day, around 30 Chinese military vehicles came to Darlag County to quell the peaceful protesters.

On 24 March 2008, around 50 Tibetans from Ponkor Toema and Mema Township were arrested by the Chinese security forces for taking part in peaceful protest. Later on 25 March 2008, 10 Tibetans and 40 other Tibetans were again arrested. In the backdrop of persistent arrest threats and intimidation by the Chinese security forces, around 400 Tibetans from Ponkor Toema and 100 Tibetans from Ponkor Mema Townships fled and sought hide outs on nearby mountain tops on 26 March 2008. In response, around 860 Chinese security forces have surrounded the mountain from various sides. Days later the Chinese security forces were luring the hiding Tibetans to surrender by promising leniency in punishment. Ironically on 27 March 2008, two Tibetans voluntarily surrendered themselves to the Chinese security forces but were severely beaten and tortured.

Sources told TCHRD that in the following weeks, hundreds of Tibetan protesters were arrested by the Chinese security forces. Many of the them, who were later released from the detention were charged with a hefty fine of 20,000 Chinese yuan as a punishment (US \$ 2,500).

On 28 April 2008, events took a dramatic turn when the armed Chinese security forces surrounded a nomadic hamlet in Ponkor Toema Township. At the breaking of a dawn, the armed security forces fired live ammunition on the nomads. Moments later, 22-year-old nomad Choetop was killed during the gun fire. The Chinese security forces took the dead body with them and till date the dead body was not returned to Choetop's family for funeral rites. The situation in Ponkor Toema Township was said to be tense and more and more Chinese security forces were beefing up in Ponkor Township.

TCHRD expresses its grave concern over the condition of Tibetan people in Ponkor Township. The Centre calls upon the Chinese authorities to restrain from stepping up restrictive measures and violent crackdown on the peaceful Tibetan protesters.



A 22-year-old Choetop who was killed during the gun fire