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Bold protests in earthquake-hit area over government reconstruction plans

International Campaign for Tibet
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Hundreds of Tibetans in Kyegu town held bold peaceful demonstrations over three days starting late last week to protest against Chinese government policies of reconstruction and allocation of land in the Kyegu area after last year's major earthquake leveled the area, killing over 2,600 people.

According to Tibetans in exile in contact with locals in Kyegu, the demonstrations were held from April 1 through the 3rd, before security personnel broke up the crowds. Over 40 of the demonstrators were detained, according to the same sources. On April 14, 2010 last year, a 6.9-magnitude earthquake struck the area (also referred to as Jyekundo or Kyegudo), in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province (Tibetan area of Kham).

Local Tibetans were protesting government claims to what is seen as the best locations in the area, leaving many Tibetans with limited options. In pictures obtained by ICT, the protesters are seen holding banners and signs with slogans, including "Fairly and legitimately resolve this issue, "Our land belongs to us," and "Help for the Yushu disaster area should put ordinary people's benefits first. This concerns people's lives. Reasonably plan the land of our lives."

In an interview with Radio Free Asia's (RFA) Tibetan service, one of the participants in the demonstrations said that "the protesters were beaten, and many were injured. Several of them were detained and taken away." Another local Tibetan told RFA that approximately 12 of the 40 detained were released by April 5 (see: '[Tibetans protest land grab](#) [1],' RFA, April 5, 2011)

Tibetan protests have persisted throughout the reconstruction process, due in large part to a lack of transparency and responsiveness on behalf of the authorities, who have also excluded most all Tibetan involvement in the reconstruction planning process, despite Yushu being a Tibetan area with a strong sense of Tibetan identity and maintaining historically significant religious and cultural institutions (see: '[The Kyegu earthquake: six months on](#) [2],' ICT, October 18, 2010).



(These banners hung by protesters in Kyegu read: "April 1, 2011 Kyegu. Help for the Yushu disaster area should put ordinary people's benefits first. This concerns people's lives. Reasonably plan the land of our lives.")



(Hundreds of Tibetans in Kyegu town held bold peaceful demonstrations over three days starting late last week to protest against Chinese government policies of reconstruction and allocation of land in the Kyegu area; over 40 of the demonstrators were detained.)



Protesters in Kyegu holding banners and signs reading "Fairly and legitimately resolve this issue," and "Our land belongs to us."

International Campaign for Tibet
1825 Jefferson Place NW | Washington, DC | 20036 | United States of America
Phone: (202) 785-1515 | Fax: (202) 785-4343 | info@savetibet.org
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