Violent protests in China after student falls to his death



one verified video, a policeman is seen beating a protester with a baton

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In the videos shared on social media, protesters can be seen hurling objects at police and officers beating some demonstrators in Pucheng in Shaanxi province.
Authorities said the teenager fell to his death on 2 January in an accident at his school dormitory. But following his death allegations began spreading on social media that there had been a cover-up.
Protests erupted soon after and lasted a few days, before they were apparently quelled earlier this week. The BBC has seen no further evidence of protest in Pucheng since then.
Public demonstrations are not uncommon in China, but authorities have been particularly sensitive about them since the 2022 White Paper protests against Covid policies, which saw rare criticism of the Chinese Communist Party and President Xi Jinping.
tate media has been silent on the protests in Pucheng. Any clips or mention of the demonstrations have been largely censored from Chinese social media, as is usually the case for incidents deemed sensitive by authorities.
But several videos have been leaked out of China and posted on X.
The BBC has confirmed these videos were filmed at the Pucheng Vocational Education Centre, and found no earlier versions online prior to the reported outbreak of the protests over the past few days.
When contacted by the BBC, a representative from the publicity department of the Pucheng government denied there had been protests. There was no answer when we rang an official handling media queries.
In a statement released earlier this week, local authorities said that the teenager surnamed Dang was a third-year student at the education centre in Pucheng.
Prior to his death, Dang had been woken up in the night by other students chatting in his dormitory, their statement said. He got into an argument and altercation with a boy, which was resolved by a school official.
Later that night, his body was found by another student at the foot of the dormitory block.
The statement described it as "an accident where a student fell from a height at school". It added that the police had conducted investigations and an autopsy, and "at present exclude it as a criminal case".
But allegations have swirled online for days that there was more to the story and that the school and authorities were hiding the truth.
One account claimed, without proof, that Dang killed himself after he was bullied by the boy he'd fought with earlier.
Unverified remarks from his family have been circulating, alleging that the injuries on Dang's body were inconsistent with the authorities' version of events and that they were not allowed to examine his body for long.
The allegations appeared to have incensed many in Pucheng, sparking protests that drew at least hundreds of people.
Bullying has become a highly sensitive topic in China in recent years, with past cases of student deaths triggering protests