

Second Protester Killed at Peruvian Copper Mine



Lima, May 7 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Protesters from the Peruvian region of *Arequipa* entered their 44th day of an indefinite strike on Wednesday against a copper-silver mining project, one day after clashes resulted in the death of a protester. Henry Checlla, 35, became the second victim in protests against the Tia Maria project.

On Tuesday, Interior Minister Jose Luis Perez Guadalupe condemned the violence and called for talks. Perez called on the protesters to end the strike as part of engaging in dialogue with the government. His comments come nearly two weeks after a government-lead delegation comprising the newly appointed prime minister, Pedro Cateriano, and the ministers of agriculture, energy and mines, and the interior met with local protesters.

After the failed negotiations, Agriculture Minister Juan Manuel Benites stated that the government would not send any high-ranking official to Arequipa until the strike is called off.

Following the latest death, strike leader Jesus Cornejo of *Junta de Usuarios del Valle del Tambo* group, said that the people of Mollendo will “protest more aggressively following the death of our brother.”

In Arequipa, civil society organizations called for a 72-hour regional strike on May 12 in support of protests against the Tia Maria project.

In 2011, Tia Maria was put on hold following large-scale street protests over fears from local residents that the mining project would wreak havoc on local water supplies, endangering residents and agricultural activities. Despite legitimate environmental concerns, the Mines and Energy Ministry approved Tia Maria's environmental impact study on August 2014, one of the main permits required for development.

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