

Dear All,

The report about protests in front of journalists in Labrang, that Tashi posted a short while ago, is starting to get picked up. The journalists had left for Xiahe yesterday by the time it was reported that there was a visit. I know some TSGs were ringing round to see who was on the trip; agency reports quote Caroline Puel of France's Le Point magazine, Jonny Erling of Die Welt and South Korean Yonhap News Agency

As with the Jokhang monks, it would be important for Tibet Groups to contact Foreign Ministries today, draw their attention to these press reports (see links to more below), and ask them to:

1. Call the Chinese Ambassador today to demand a guarantee that these monks will not be punished in any way.
2. Your Foreign Ministry should also get your embassy in Beijing to raise concerns directly with the Chinese Government, asking for similar guarantees.
3. Ask - as followup from the last press visit to Lhasa - that your FM requires China to confirm that the Jokhang monks are not detained nor facing charges or other punitive measures, and that they, and monks from the other monasteries in Lhasa have freedom of movement (ie not confined to their monastery).

* Always repeat the demand that China must allow free and unfettered access to ALL Tibetan areas by journalists immediately so that they can report the true situation in Tibet

Further reports:

AFP: <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5g9gkOUHzb2o6PFGX8U5qiaBIMFfw>

PA: http://ukpress.google.com/article/ALeqM5io7nhbk4Zi2QvAhnWFGvsjs_nWKw

Guardian (using Reuters) <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/apr/09/china>

Alison

ITSN Secretariat

Des moines tibétains manifestent devant des journalistes en Chine

Pékin - Des moines tibétains ont manifesté devant des journalistes étrangers, a indiqué un témoin. Ces journalistes visitaient un monastère du nord-ouest de la Chine sous l'égide des autorités.

Une quinzaine de moines de la lamaserie de Labrang, dans la province du Gansu, portaient des bannières et ont crié leur soutien au Dalaï-lama devant les reporters étrangers, a expliqué Caroline Puel, correspondante de l'hebdomadaire français "Le Point", membre de la délégation.

Selon Caroline Puel, les moines leur ont dit: "Nous voulons plus de liberté, plus de droits de l'Homme, nous voulons voir le Dalaï-lama".

Certains d'entre eux ont eux affirmé que sept moines avaient été arrêtés par les autorités à la suite des manifestations anti-chinoises du mois dernier dans le district de Xiahe, où se trouve le temple de Labrang, l'un des six plus importants temples de l'école guélougpa du bouddhisme tibétain, celui du Dalaï-lama.

Par ailleurs, la police du Tibet a interpellé jusqu'à présent 953 personnes impliquées dans les émeutes sanglantes de Lhasa le mois dernier, a indiqué un haut responsable de la région du Tibet. Plus de 400 ont été inculpées.

Quelque 362 personnes se sont rendues d'elles-mêmes à la police, mais 328 ont été relâchées, car leurs délits étaient mineurs.

La Chine accuse des "émeutiers" tibétains d'avoir tué 18 civils et un policier lors des émeutes de Lhasa.

L'ensemble des comités nationaux olympiques a rejeté les appels au boycott des jeux Olympiques de Pékin. "La consultation des 205 comités olympiques présentés ou représentés ne donne aucune indication d'un non-soutien aux Jeux", a déclaré à la presse le président de l'Association des comités olympiques nationaux.

XIAHE, China, April 9 (Reuters) - A group of 15 Tibetan Buddhist monks interrupted a state-sponsored media tour of a riot-hit region of western China on Wednesday, demanding the return of the Dalai Lama and yelling that they had no human rights.

In the second such incident in as many months, the monks, carrying a banned Tibetan flag, burst out of a building at the Labrang monastery in the town of Xiahe, in the northwestern province of Gansu, and rushed across a plaza to a group of 20 visiting Chinese and foreign journalists.

"The Dalai Lama has to come back to Tibet. We are not asking for Tibetan independence, we are just asking for human rights, we have no human rights now," one monk told the reporters in Chinese.

Many of the monks had their heads covered in robes. They said other monks were still being held by authorities and that armed plainclothes agents were stationed throughout Xiahe.

Hundreds of monks from the Labrang monastery led a march through Xiahe last month, after riots erupted in the Tibetan regional capital Lhasa on March 14.

Last month, about 30 monks stormed a briefing by a temple administrator for a select group of foreign journalists at the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, shouting that the reporters were being lied to.

China has said Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and his associates are behind the unrest. The Dalai Lama, who fled into exile in India in 1959 after an abortive uprising against Chinese rule, has denied the accusation.



Tibetan monks protest in front of foreign reporters: witness

09 april 2008

BEIJING (AFP) — A small group of monks at a major Tibetan Buddhist monastery in northwest China defied authorities and staged a protest in front of foreign reporters on Wednesday, a witness and state media said.

About 15 monks from the Labrang monastery in Gansu province approached the journalists carrying banners and voicing support for exiled Tibetan leader the Dalai Lama, said the witness, who was on a government-controlled media tour.

"They said in Chinese, 'We want more freedom, more human rights and we want to see the Dalai Lama'," said Caroline Puel, a journalist with France's Le Point magazine.

The protest lasted about 10 minutes and ended when government officials conducting the tour urged the foreign journalists to leave.

China's official Xinhua news agency also confirmed that a group of monks had "interrupted" the media tour, but gave few other details.

The incident marks the second time that protesting monks upstaged a media tour organised by the government through areas hit by recent Tibetan rioting.

On March 27, monks at the Jokhang temple in Lhasa interrupted a similar tightly-controlled media tour aimed at showing calm had returned to the Tibetan capital.

The Jokhang monks called for the return of the Dalai Lama and denounced official Chinese versions of the Tibetan unrest as "lies".

Anti-Chinese rioting erupted in Lhasa on March 14 and spilled over into Tibetan-populated areas elsewhere in China, such as Gansu.

Labrang monks led a rally of up to 4,000 people at the monastery on March 15, according to the Free Tibet Campaign, and foreign reporters were subsequently barred from the area.

Labrang is one of Tibetan Buddhism's most important monasteries.

Tibetan exiled leaders say more than 150 people have been killed in the Chinese crackdown on the protests. China says it has killed no-one, and blamed Tibetan "rioters" for the deaths of 20 people.

China has blamed the unrest on a small number of agitators controlled by the Dalai Lama, who fled into exile in northern India after a failed uprising in 1959 against Tibetan rule.

China has denied that simmering anger at Beijing's rule played a role in the unrest.



Tibetan Buddhist monks protest near the historic Labrang Monastery



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Tibetan Buddhist monks speak to foreign journalists at Jokhang temple in Lhasa