

Protests Fueled by Patriotic Education Continue Amidst Lockdowns

*Officials Acknowledge More than 4,400 Detentions, Claim All Are Linked to “Riots”
Dalai Lama Issues Strong Statement Following Use of Lethal Force Against Protestors*

Thursday, April 10, 2008

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Tibetan protests (reportedly peaceful) continue to pop up in areas where authorities have established security lockdowns. Officials are implementing an aggressive “patriotic education” campaign in at least some of the areas where Tibetans have protested (or rioted). Some recent peaceful protests, including an April 5 protest met with security force’s weapons fire, are rooted in monastic refusal to fulfill official demands to condemn the Dalai Lama. Authorities seek to prevent information about protests and their aftermath from leaving China by confiscating cell phones and computers, turning off cellular transmission facilities, and interfering with Internet access, according to unofficial accounts. Tibetan protests have spread to one new county-level area since the release of the April 4 CECC Analysis, based on reports available to the CECC. Information about protests in March continues to seep out of Tibetan areas. The number of counties in which Tibetan protests have been reported since March 10 stands at 52.

China’s state-run media has acknowledged the surrender or detention of nearly 4,000 “rioters” in Lhasa and in Gannan (Kanlho) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Gansu province (Xinhua, April 9). The disclosure raises by more than 2,000 the previous total of officially acknowledged surrenders and detentions in Lhasa and Gannan. Authorities have released more than half of the nearly 4,000 persons and formally arrested more than 400 persons on undisclosed criminal charges. The Xinhua reports refer only to “rioters” detained during specific time periods, and cover only 7 of the 52 county-level areas where Tibetan protests have reportedly occurred.

Please see the CECC Analyses of March 14, 18, 21, 27, and April 4 for background.

Current Status

- **PROTEST.** Since March 10 when Tibetan protests began in Lhasa, one or more instances of protest have been reported in each of at least 52 county-level locations, as well as in Chengdu (the capital of Sichuan), Lanzhou (the capital of Gansu), and Beijing.
 - **Locations of the 41 counties:** Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), 15; Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures (TAPs) in Qinghai, 12; other county-level locations in Qinghai, 2; TAPs in Gansu, 6; TAPs in Sichuan, 17. More than two-thirds of the county-level locations are outside the TAR.
- **DEATH.** An incident of People’s Armed Police (PAP) weapons fire on peaceful Tibetan protestors took place in Daofu (Dawu) county (Sichuan) on April 5, following the April 3 PAP shooting of peaceful protestors in Ganzi (Kardze) county (Sichuan) that resulted in as many as 15 fatalities.
 - **The April 5 shooting wounded between 5 and 10 Tibetan protestors, some seriously,** but no fatalities were reported. Like the April 3 incident, the April 5 incident was rooted in official interference with the norms of religious practice by Tibetan Buddhist monks, including religious devotion to the Dalai Lama.
 - **PAP used lethal force in three adjoining Ganzi TAP counties in a period of less than three weeks.** Luhuo (Draggo) county, the site of a March 24 lethal fire incident, adjoins Daofu and Ganzi counties. Ganzi county has been site of more political imprisonment of Tibetans than other county outside the TAR since 1987, according to the CECC Political Prisoner Database.

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- **The Tibetan government-in-exile (TGiE) reported “well over 140” Tibetan deaths** as of April 10. The TGiE has named 57 of the Tibetans allegedly killed by use of lethal force. Official Chinese media asserts that the persons listed by the TGiE as deceased either do not exist or are alive.
- **DETENTION.** Xinhua reported on April 9 a total of 4,434 persons who either surrendered voluntarily to authorities for engaging in “beating, smashing, looting, and burning” during riots, or whom police detained for on suspicion of engaging in such activity.
 - **The April 9 Xinhua reports cover specific incidents in seven county-level areas:** Lhasa (activity linked to the March 14 riot), and six counties in Gannan TAP (activity linked to “riots” from March 14-19). (Less current information reported by other sources is available for two additional counties, Linzhou and Aba.)
 - **Number and location of 3,041 persons who surrendered:** Lhasa (362 by April 9); Linzhou (Lhundrub) county (94 by March 17); Gannan (Kanlho) TAP, Gansu (2,204 by April 9); Aba (Ngaba) county, Aba Qiang and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan (381 by March 24).
 - **Number and location of 1,393 officially reported detainees:** Lhasa (953 by April 9); Gannan (440 by April 9).
 - **CECC estimates that at least 2,000 Tibetan protestors may have been detained in addition to the officially reported 4,434 “rioters”** based on analysis of fragmentary, unconfirmed information, the apparent non-inclusion of peaceful protestors in official accounts of detention, and the omission of more than 40 county-level areas where protests occurred from official accounts of detention.
 - **TCHRD estimated on April 5 that officials have detained more than 2,300 Tibetans,** and states that it has information about the identities of 301 detainees. The extent to which the TCHRD estimate includes persons whom official sources also report as detained is unknown.
- **LEGAL PROCESS.** CECC has not seen official Chinese sources that confirm international media reports (AP, SCMP) that Lhasa officials intend to complete trials and sentencing of over 1,000 persons by May 1. Citing China Tibet News, TCHRD reported that law enforcement officials aim to submit cases to courts by May 1.
 - **Summary: Official data on Lhasa and Gannan.**
 - **2,566: number of persons who surrendered themselves by April 9** to authorities in Lhasa (March 14 riot) and in Gannan TAP (March 14-19 riots). The figure includes 519 monks in Gannan.
 - **1,393: number of persons whom police detained by April 9** in Lhasa and Gannan (allegedly in connection to the riots on the specified dates): 1,393.
 - **3,959: total number of voluntary surrenders and police detentions** in Lhasa and Gannan (allegedly in connection to the riots on the specified dates): 3,959.
 - **Officials released 86 percent (2,198 persons) of the 2,566 persons** who voluntarily surrendered in Lhasa and Gannan by April 9.
 - **368 (14 percent) of the 2,566 persons who surrendered in Lhasa and Gannan remain detained.** The reports do not disclose any information on how many of them authorities have formally arrested or on what charges.
 - **411 (30 percent) of the 1,393 persons whom police detained in Lhasa and Gannan have been formally arrested** (403 in Lhasa and 8 in Gannan).
 - **Information about the number of detainees who have been released is not available.** Available data suggests that, as official surrender ultimatums stated would be the case, persons who surrendered would be more likely to be released than persons whom police detained (captured).
 - **The status of nearly 1,000 cases in Lhasa and Gannan is unknown.**

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- **Details: Official data on surrender and detention in Lhasa.**
 - **The Xinhua report raised by about 150 (from 800 on April 3 to 953 on April 9) the number of persons whom officials acknowledge as detained** by police in connection with the March 14 Lhasa riots.
 - **Authorities have formally arrested 403 of the detainees.**
 - **The Xinhua report raised by 64 (from 298 on April 1 to 362 on April 9) the number of persons whom officials acknowledge surrendered** to authorities in connection with "burning, smashing, looting, and arson" during the March 14 Lhasa riots.
 - **328 (91 percent) of the 362 persons who surrendered have been released** due to "minor offenses and willingness to cooperate."
 - **34 (9 percent) of the 362 persons who surrendered to authorities remained in police custody** as of April 9, based on the report. The data suggests that *at most* 34 of the 403 persons formally arrested in connection with the March 14 Lhasa riot are persons who *surrendered*, and that *at least* 369 of the 403 persons arrested are persons whom *police detained*.
- **Details: Official data on surrender and detention in Gannan TAP.**
 - **The Xinhua report raised by 1,915 (from 289 on March 23 to 2,204 on April 9) the number of persons whom officials acknowledge surrendered** to Gannan authorities in connection with "riots" in during March 14-19.
 - **Of the 2,204 persons who surrendered, 519 were monks.**
 - **Police released 1,870 (85 percent) of the 2,204 persons by April 9, including 413 monks.**
 - **334 (15 percent) of the 2,204 persons who surrendered, including 106 of the 519 monks, remained in police custody** as of April 9, based on the report.
 - **Gannan police detained 440 persons suspected of involvement in the "riots," including 170 monks, in addition** to persons who surrendered.
 - **Of the 440 detainees, police have formally arrested 8 persons.** The report does not provide information about the criminal charges against the eight persons, or whether any of them are monks.

The Dalai Lama's April 6 Statement

- **The Dalai Lama issued a strongly worded statement** on April 6, following the April 3 and April 5 incidents in Ganzi TAP.
 - He did not restate his warning that he would withdraw from the political sphere if violence continues.
 - He appealed repeatedly to Chinese authorities and Tibetan protestors to cease violence, and for Tibetans living in exile not to "engage in any action that could be even remotely interpreted as violent."
 - He restated his support for the Beijing Olympics and noted that the Tibetan struggle is with the Chinese government, not with the Chinese people.
 - He restated his support for the Middle Way Approach.
 - He called on Tibetan government and Party members to safeguard "the larger interests of Tibet" by reporting "the real sentiments" of Tibetan people to their superiors, and to provide unbiased guidance to Tibetans.
 - He described as "very commendable" the "courage and determination" of Tibetan protestors "who have, for the greater interests of Tibetan people, demonstrated their deep anguish and hopes by risking everything."
 - He stated that he has pressed the Chinese leadership to "immediately stop their suppression in all parts of Tibet and withdraw its armed police and troops," and said that if such results were achieved, he would "advise the Tibetans to stop all the current protests."

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What can government officials say to China?

The Chinese government should: (1) exercise tolerance and restraint in order to help to reduce risks created by continuing violence and escalating tension, and require local officials to do the same; (2) refrain from holding the Dalai Lama responsible for the statements and actions of Tibetan groups that he does not seek to control and that do not seek to be controlled by him, and that do not support the Dalai Lama's policies; (3) distinguish between peaceful protestors and rioters, honor the Chinese Constitution's commitment to the freedoms of speech and association, and not treat peaceful protest as a crime; (4) provide a detailed account of Tibetan protest activity in each location where such activity took place; (5) provide details about each Tibetan detained or charged with a crime, including each person's name, the charges (if any) against each person, the name and location of the prosecuting office ("procuratorate") and court handling each case, and the name of each facility where a Tibetan is detained or imprisoned; (6) allow access by diplomats and other international observers to the trials of persons charged with protest-related crimes; (7) allow access by international observers and journalists to the Tibetan autonomous areas of China; (8) meet directly with the Dalai Lama.

CECC Analysis

Friday, April 4, 2008

Tibetan Protests Are Fewer, But Recur Amidst Lockdowns

*Officials Acknowledge Nearly 2,000 Detentions; Estimates Add At Least 1,000 More
China Says Trials of Nearly 1,100 Lhasa Protestors And Rioters Will Be Over Before May 1
China Asserts Tibetan NGO Activism As Proof That The Dalai Lama Planned Riots, Protests*

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The spread of Tibetan protests has slowed in the presence of substantial security forces, but protests continue to pop up in locations where security lockdowns are already established. Authorities in some areas are taking measures to prevent citizens from providing information to outsiders by turning off cellular communication towers, confiscating cell phones, and warning citizens against sharing information, according to reports. As of April 4, the number of counties in which protests have been reported since March 10 stands at 48. Official Chinese sources have acknowledged more than 1,000 detentions of persons who surrendered to authorities for rioting in Lhasa and other locations, and approximately another 800 persons whom police detained in Lhasa.

Please see CECC Analyses of March 14, 18, 21, and 27 for background (attached).

Current Status

- **PROTEST.** Since March 10 when Tibetan protests began in Lhasa, one or more instances of protest have been reported in each of at least 48 county-level locations, as well as in Chengdu (the capital of Sichuan), Lanzhou (the capital of Gansu), and Beijing. Most recent protests took place in areas where protest activity has already occurred and where heightened security measures have been established.
 - **Locations of the 48 counties:** Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), 13; Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures (TAPs) in Qinghai, 12; other county-level locations in Qinghai, 2; TAPs in Gansu, 6; TAPs in Sichuan 15. About three-quarters of the county-level locations are outside the TAR.
- **DEATH.** The first report of violence since a March 24 incident in Luhuo (Draggo) county (Sichuan) was reported by official and unofficial sources to have occurred on April 3 in Ganzi (Kardze) county (Sichuan).
 - **Security forces shot and killed as many as 15 Tibetans** when a “clash” developed following official attempts to institute “patriotic education” and compel monks and other residents to denounce the Dalai Lama (RFA). Xinhua did not report any Tibetan casualties, but said that police fired warning shots after rioters attacked a government office and injured an official.
 - **Prior to the April 3 incident,** the Tibetan government-in-exile (TGiE) reported over 140 Tibetan deaths and the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) reported at least 79. Neither organization has explained why the estimates differ.

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- **DETENTION.** In response to official ultimatums, authorities reported by the end of March the surrender of a total of at least 1,062 persons who engaged in “beating, smashing, looting, and burning” during riots. Most Tibetan protests and protestors have been peaceful, according to unofficial reports, but accounts sometimes conflict sharply. For example, TCHRD (April 1) described a March 16 incident in Aba (Ngaba) county as a “peaceful protest” during which security forces shot and killed 23 Tibetans. Xinhua (April 3) said the incident was a violent “riot” by Tibetans in which shops and vehicles were burned and more than 200 persons were injured.

- **Number and location of 1,062 persons who surrendered:** Lhasa (298 by April 1); Linzhou (Lhundrub) county (94 by March 17); Gannan (Kanlho) TAP, Gansu (289 by March 23); Aba (Ngaba) county, Aba Qiang and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan (381 by March 24).

- **An official said that police in Lhasa detained an additional 800 persons** following the March 14 rioting, according to unofficial reports (AP, SCMP). If accurate, the report represents an increase of about 400 detentions over the previously acknowledged official total in Lhasa (414).

- **A current unofficial estimate of the number of detained Tibetans is not available.** TCHRD and the TGiE have reported a total of more than 650 detentions linked to protests that took place after TCHRD reported on March 25 an estimate of more than 1,200 detentions of Tibetan protestors. The TCHRD figure did not include Tibetans who surrendered to authorities. TCHRD and the TGiE have also reported incidents that resulted in large but unspecified numbers of detentions. For some reported protests, no information about detention is available.

- **CECC estimates that a total of at least 3,000 Tibetans may be under detention**—some for peaceful protesting, some for violent activity during rioting—based on analysis of available information, which is fragmentary and unconfirmed.

- **LEGAL PROCESS.** As of April 4, official detention and charge information is available for fewer than 15 cases of peaceful protest (Lhasa, March 10).

- **Lhasa officials intend to complete by May 1 the trials of nearly 1,100 persons** who surrendered to Lhasa authorities, or whom security officials detained after the March 14 rioting, according to reports (AP, SCMP). Lhasa will reopen for tourism on May 1, according to Xinhua.

- **Appointments and transfers of officials to prefectural-level courts and prosecuting offices** (“procuratorates”) in Rikaze (Shigatse) and Shannan (Lhoka) prefectures were reported on March 30 by an official source. Appointments to the TAR High People’s Court and the provincial-level prosecutor’s office were also reported. It is not clear whether or not the personnel changes, which appear to create increased case-handling capacity in Rikaze and Shannan, are routine. No appointments or transfers to the other prefectural-level courts in the TAR were disclosed in the report.

- **Rikaze and Shannan are the nearest prefectural capitals to Lhasa** and are in a position to assist Lhasa with the disposition of cases if the official objective is to complete all the legal proceedings by May 1. The prefectural capitals in Rikaze and Shannan are the nearest and most easily reached from Lhasa.

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China Claims Tibetan NGO Objectives are Proof that the Dalai Lama Planned Riots, Protests

- According to “evidence” presented by China’s Ministry of Public Security (MPS) in media articles beginning on March 30, the “Dalai clique” “organized, premeditated, masterminded and instigated” the March 14 Lhasa riots.
 - **None of the purported evidence is linked directly to the Dalai Lama.** The MPS characterizes as evidence circumstances and events that involve groups to which it refers collectively as “the Dalai clique,” but not circumstances and events directly linked to the Dalai Lama.
 - **None of the groups support the Dalai Lama’s Middle Way proposal** to accept genuine autonomy under Chinese sovereignty. The groups seek Tibetan independence.
 - **None of the NGOs have previously-demonstrated capacity** to exert significant influence on events in the Tibetan areas of China.
 - **The Dalai Lama promotes a pluralistic Tibetan community-in-exile** in part by encouraging Tibetans to exercise freedoms of speech and association and to establish groups that thrive on lively and sometimes heated debate. He does not promote the notion that Tibetans should conform to his views.
 - **The MPS focused on the Tibetan People’s Uprising Movement** (TPUM, www.tibetanuprising.org), an alliance formed in January 2008 of four Tibetan NGOs and the India chapter of the US-based Students for a Free Tibet. The most prominent of the Tibetan NGOs is the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC, www.tibetanyouthcongress.org).
 - **TPUM objectives include reviving the “spirit” of the 1959 Tibetan uprising and using the Olympics to highlight the repression of Tibetans.** (“[R]evive the spirit of the Tibetan national uprising of 1959, and by engaging in nonviolent direct action, bring about an end to China’s illegal occupation of Tibet;” “seize the Olympic spotlight and shine it on China’s shameful repression inside Tibet.”)
 - **The MPS accused the TYC of intending to wage guerilla warfare** in Ganzi TAP (“recently issued orders to conduct long-term guerrilla warfare in [Ganzi]”). The TYC does not renounce violence and calls on members to “struggle for the total independence of Tibet even at the cost of one’s life.”
 - **Then-TYC President Kalsang Phuntsok** said in December 2005 that some TYC members are **attracted to “violence-infested movements,”** such as those in the Middle East, that they see “achieving results.”
 - **Former TYC President Lhasang Tsering** told Tibetans in February 2007 at a public forum in India that the Olympics provide an opportunity to **sabotage public infrastructure in cities such as Beijing and Shanghai** during a period when Chinese officials “most need to be ‘well-behaved’.” (“[C]ut a telephone line in Beijing or throw an iron rod on the power cables in Shanghai”).

What can government officials say to China?

The Chinese government should: (1) refrain from holding the Dalai Lama responsible for the statements and actions of Tibetan groups that he does not seek to control and that do not seek his control, and that do not support the Dalai Lama’s policies; (2) distinguish between peaceful protestors and rioters, honor the Chinese Constitution’s commitment to the freedoms of speech and association, and not treat peaceful protest as a crime; (3) provide a detailed account of Tibetan protest activity in each location where such activity took place; (4) provide details about each person detained or charged with a crime, including each person’s name, the charges (if any) against each person, the name and location of the prosecuting office (“procuratorate”) and court handling each case, and the name of each facility where a person is detained or imprisoned; (5) allow access by diplomats and other international observers to the trials of persons charged with protest-related crimes; (6) allow access by international observers and journalists to the Tibetan autonomous areas of China; (7) meet directly with the Dalai Lama.

CECC Analysis

Thursday, March 27, 2008

Tibetan Protests Continue and Spread Further Official and Estimated Detentions Surpass 2,000 Senior Delegation to Lhasa Signals Continuation of Policies Causing Tibetan Grievances

March 27, 2008

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Please see the CECC Analyses of March 14, 18, and 21 for background.

Tibetan protests have continued and spread even in the presence of substantial security forces. As of March 27, the number of counties in which protests have occurred has increased to at least 42. Official Chinese reports have acknowledged more than 1,000 detentions of persons who surrendered to authorities for rioting. In addition, unofficial reports estimate that authorities have detained at least another 1,200 Tibetan protestors.

Current Status

- **PROTEST.** As of March 27, Tibetan protests were reported in at least 42 county-level locations, as well as in Chengdu (the capital of Sichuan province), Lanzhou (the capital of Gansu province), and Beijing. Protests have occurred at multiple locations in several counties.

- **Locations of the 42 counties:** Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), 10; Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures (TAPs) in Qinghai, 12; TAPs in Gansu, 6; TAPs in Sichuan, 12; other county-level locations in Qinghai, 2. These figures show that about three-quarters of the county-level locations are outside the TAR. It remains unclear whether the protests have or have not spread widely in the TAR, or if information about their spread is unavailable.

- **DEATH.** The estimated number of Tibetan deaths currently reported by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) and the Tibetan government-in-exile (TGiE) differ significantly.

- **TCHRD reported** on March 25 a total of 79 Tibetan deaths.

- **The TGiE reported** approximately 140 deaths as of March 25, and published a list of the names and details of 40 of the Tibetan deaths on March 26.

- **Following the Dalai Lama's March 18 statement** that he would "resign" his role in political affairs if violence continued, the CECC saw no reports of violent incidents occurring on March 19-23.

- **A March 24 clash between Tibetan protestors and security forces** in Luhuo (Draggo) county in Ganzi (Kardze) TAP resulted in the deaths of one Tibetan and one policeman, and injuries to other Tibetans and security personnel.

- **On March 25, the Dalai Lama repeated his intention to resign** if violence continues.

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CECC Analysis

Thursday, March 27, 2008

Tibetan Protests Continue and Spread Further Official and Estimated Detentions Surpass 2,000

Senior Delegation to Lhasa Signals Continuation of Policies Causing Tibetan Grievances

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• **DETENTION.** In response to official ultimatums, authorities reported by March 27 the surrender of a total of more than 1,000 Tibetans who engaged in “beating, smashing, looting, and burning” during riots. Such information is not available for every area where rioting occurred. Most—but not all—Tibetan protests and protestors were peaceful. As of March 25, official detention and charge information is available for fewer than 15 cases of peaceful protest (Lhasa, March 10).

- **Number and location of 1,044 surrenderors:** Lhasa (280 by March 25); Linzhou (Lhundrub) county (94 by March 17); Gannan (Kanlho) TAP, Gansu (289 by March 23); Aba (Ngaba) county, Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan (381 by March 24).
- **TCHRD estimated that authorities detained more than 1,200 Tibetan protestors** as of March 25. The figure does not include Tibetans who surrendered to authorities.
- **The unofficial estimate of 1,200 detainees may be low.** The number of protestors whom police detain is likely to be significantly higher, perhaps by a multiple, than the number of Tibetans who surrender voluntarily for committing violent acts during a riot.

Senior Delegation to Lhasa Signals Continuation of Policies Causing Tibetan Grievances

• **SENIOR OFFICIALS VISIT LHASA.** The first high-level delegation of senior Party and government officials to Lhasa since the outbreak of the protests visited Lhasa on March 23-24. Minister of Public Security Meng Jianzhu led the delegation. The group visited sites including Drepung and Sera Monasteries and the Jokhang Temple. In addition to Meng, the delegation included Minister Ye Xiaowen of the State Administration for Religious Affairs, as well as Zhu Weiqun and Sita, senior officials in the Party’s United Front Work Department—among the officials most directly associated with the policies and conditions against which Tibetans have protested.

- **Attacks on the Dalai Lama, Patriotic Education.** Meng told members of management committees at the monasteries that the Dalai Lama is “unfit to be a true follower of Buddhism,” and that the Party and government would “deepen education in patriotism” in monasteries.
- **Interference with the Institution of Tibetan Buddhist Reincarnated Teachers.** Ye Xiaowen oversaw the issuing last year of national regulations that control the recognition, seating, and instruction of persons whom Tibetans believe are reincarnated Buddhist teachers.
- **Stalled China-Dalai Lama dialogue.** Zhu Weiqun and Sita have served as interlocutors for the Dalai Lama’s envoys during their visits to China since the dialogue resumed in 2002. The Dalai Lama’s Special Envoy issued his least optimistic statement to date following the most recent round of dialogue in June-July of 2007.

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CECC Analysis

Thursday, March 27, 2008

Tibetan Protests Continue and Spread Further
Official and Estimated Detentions Surpass 2,000
Senior Delegation to Lhasa Signals Continuation of Policies Causing Tibetan Grievances

March 27, 2008

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What can government officials say to China?

The Chinese government should: (1) distinguish between peaceful protestors and rioters, honor the Chinese Constitution's commitment to the freedoms of speech and association, and not treat peaceful protest as a crime; (2) provide a detailed account of Tibetan protest activity in each location where such activity took place; (3) provide details about each Tibetan detained or charged with a crime, including each person's name, the charges (if any) against each person, the name and location of the prosecuting office ("procuratorate") and court handling each case, and the name of each facility where a Tibetan is detained or imprisoned; (4) allow access by diplomats and other international observers to the trials of Tibetans charged with protest-related crimes; (5) allow access by international observers and journalists to the Tibetan autonomous areas of China; (6) meet directly with the Dalai Lama.

CECC Analysis

Friday, March 21, 2008

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Tibetan Protests Continue to Spread Surrender Ultimatum in Gansu

March 21, 2008

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Tibetan protests have continued to spread even as Chinese security forces maintain existing security lockdowns, impose additional lockdowns in new protest locations, and implement preventive security measures in other locations. The CECC has not seen reports of violent Tibetan protest activity taking place after the Dalai Lama's March 18 statement that he would "resign" (from involvement in political affairs) if violence continued. The last reported Tibetan deaths resulting from lethal force used to suppress protests or riots were on March 18.

Current Status

- **PROTEST.** The cascade of Tibetan protests that began on March 10 has spread despite strict security measures and localized lockdowns across the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and the Tibetan autonomous areas of Qinghai, Gansu, and Sichuan provinces.
 - **By March 21, Tibetan protests were reported in 34 county-level locations,** mostly in Tibetan autonomous areas, as well as in Chengdu (the capital of Sichuan), Lanzhou (the capital of Gansu), and Beijing. Reports emerged on March 21 of protest activity that occurred on March 20 in four counties where protests previously had not been reported.
 - **Locations of the 34 counties:** TAR (6); Qinghai (11); Gansu (6); Sichuan (11). It is not known if the reason there have been fewer reports of protest activity in the TAR is that there actually have been fewer protests, or that information about protests has not been leaving the TAR. Security levels are generally higher in the TAR than in other areas where Tibetans live.
- **DEATH.** The estimated total of Tibetan deaths declined even as the number of Tibetans reportedly shot and killed by Chinese security forces in Sichuan and Gansu during protests on or prior to March 18 increased. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy reported on March 19 a total of at least 70 deaths, lower than the estimate of about 100 deaths reported previously. The reason for the change, and whether the estimated number of deaths in Lhasa has declined, is not known at this time.
 - **Away from Lhasa, security forces reportedly shot and killed** 3 Tibetans on March 11 in Daocheng (Dabpa) county (Sichuan), up to 23 Tibetans on March 16 in Aba (Ngaba) county (Sichuan), up to 19 Tibetans on March 16 in Maqu (Machu) county (Gansu), and at least 3 Tibetans on March 18 in Ganzi (Kardze) county (Sichuan), according to unconfirmed reports.
- **DETENTION.** Security officials continue to detain large numbers of Tibetans in house-to-house searches in Lhasa and locations in Qinghai, Gansu, and Sichuan. Few detainees have been named, and only in unofficial reports. The total number of detentions is likely to have surpassed 1,000 and to be rising steadily, but estimates are increasingly unreliable in the absence of solid information.

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Surrender Ultimatum: One Passed, One Approaching, Others Possible

- **183 “Lhasa riot perpetrators” turned themselves in by March 21** (Xinhua) in response to the March 15 notice posted by the TAR provincial-level court, prosecutor’s office, and public security bureau, which demanded that persons who engaged in “beating, smashing, looting, and burning” during the March 14 Lhasa riot must surrender to authorities by midnight March 17 or face severe punishment.
 - **94 Tibetan residents of Linzhou (Lhundrub) county**, adjoining Lhasa, surrendered to county authorities by the March 17 deadline (Tibet Daily). It is likely that the 94 Linzhou residents are in addition to the Lhasa total, which reached 105 by March 18.
- **Tibetan residents of Gannan (Kanlho) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture** (Gansu) involved in protests must surrender by midnight March 25, according to a joint notice posted by the prefecture court, prosecutor’s office, and public security bureau. Details of the ultimatum are not available. It is not known whether the ultimatum follows the Lhasa example and targets persons who engaged in violent activity.
 - **Six of Gannan’s eight counties** are reportedly sites of protest activity. Several of the protests included large numbers of monks and/or ordinary Tibetans. The total number of protestors in Gannan may exceed substantially the total number of protestors in Lhasa.
- **Ultimatums in Qinghai and Sichuan** have not been reported to date, but may be in place based on the examples established in Lhasa and Gannan, and given the consistency previously observed in the implementation of security policies.

What can government officials say to China?

The Chinese government should: (1) distinguish between peaceful protestors and rioters, honor the Chinese Constitution’s commitment to the freedoms of speech and association, and not treat peaceful protest as a crime; (2) provide a detailed account of Tibetan protest activity in each location where such activity took place; (3) provide details about each Tibetan detained or charged with a crime, including each person’s name, the charges (if any) against each person, the name and location of the prosecuting office (“procuratorate”) and court handling each case, and the name of each facility where a Tibetan is detained or imprisoned.

See CECC Analyses of March 14 and March 18 for additional background.

CECC Analysis

Tuesday, March 18, 2008

Tibetan Protests Spread

Tuesday, March 18, 2008

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Tibetans have maintained efforts to protest at a significant scale and across a wide geographic area. Authorities establish a security lockdown at new protest locations, but protests continue to develop in other locations. Authorities have detained substantial numbers of protestors, many of whom could face prosecution and imprisonment.

Current Status

Tibetan protests that began on March 10 have set in motion a cascade of protest incidents. Some have been peaceful but in others Tibetans attacked and damaged government offices and non-Tibetan businesses. Conditions are volatile and sometimes chaotic. People's Armed Police (PAP—distinct from the PLA) deployed throughout Tibetan areas suppress protests and lockdown monasteries or town areas, but new protests pop up elsewhere. Chinese authorities block foreign news reporters and tourists from entering Tibetan areas, however Tibetans have succeeded in getting limited reports out.

- **Protest.** By March 18, Tibetan protests occurred in more than 20 counties, most of them in Tibetan autonomous prefectures located in Qinghai, Gansu, and Sichuan provinces. Monks are leading many of the protests, but ordinary Tibetans and students are protesting as well. Tibetan independence and support for the Dalai Lama, including his return to Tibet, are principal themes. Tibetan university students in Beijing and Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu province, have held candlelight vigils.
- **Death.** By March 18, Tibetan sources reported as many as 100 Tibetan fatalities. Approximately 80 Tibetans were reportedly shot by PAP in Lhasa on March 14. The Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) governor, Jampa Phuntsog, claimed that PAP were unarmed and did not fire a shot. The governor reported that Tibetans were responsible for 16 deaths of “innocent civilians.” Video footage of rioting in Lhasa showed Tibetans attacking and beating non-Tibetans. Security forces have shot and killed Tibetans in locations outside the TAR, including at least 15 persons in Aba county in Sichuan province.
- **Detention.** Despite the difficulty of obtaining and verifying information, a review of reports suggests that by March 18 the total number of detentions is likely to be approaching or to have surpassed 1,000. Authorities may release a substantial number of detainees if they cooperate with interrogators, but the rest are likely to face criminal prosecution and imprisonment, or be ordered (without trial) to serve periods of up to three years of reeducation through labor.

Planned or Spontaneous?

Chinese officials claim that protests have been “organized, premeditated, and carefully plotted by the Dalai clique.” The charge as stated is unlikely to be valid for a number of reasons. For example:

- **China's security establishment** has the expertise and resources to detect such plans and prevent their completion. Chinese security resources include monitoring technology and informants embedded in Tibetan monasteries in China and in Tibetan communities in India.

(continued →)

Tibetan Protests Spread

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- **Tibetan resentment and anger** have been increasing sharply since 2005. Tibetans view the run-up to the Olympics as a window of opportunity during which international onlookers may take greater notice of issues and protest actions.
- **Collective Tibetan willingness** to risk protest and punishment, evidenced by the spreading protests, has reached high levels after more than 10 years of declining protest due in part to China's effective security measures. The missing catalyst has been opportunity, which Lhasa monks sensed on March 10. The monks could have arrived at a decision on their own and set out to protest within a few hours.
- **The monks appear to have been inspired** by the Burmese Buddhist monastic protests of September 2007. From the time Tibetans began to rebuild Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in the early 1980s, there has been no precedent for Tibetan monks by the hundreds, wearing robes, to leave monasteries and attempt to walk into an urban center to protest against the Chinese government.
- **The only alternative to blaming "the Dalai clique"** available to Chinese officials would be for them to recognize the failure of Chinese policies and legal measures to protect Tibetan culture, language, and religion, and the failure so far of the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law to empower Tibetans to manage their local affairs. Instead, officials choose to blame their problems with Tibetans on external factors, especially the Dalai Lama, and to conflate Tibetan objections to Chinese policies and legal measures with criminal attempts to incite "splittism."

Surrender Ultimatum, "People's War."

On March 15, the TAR provincial-level court, prosecutor's office, and public security bureau issued a joint ultimatum that Tibetans involved in rioting in Lhasa on March 14 must surrender to authorities by midnight on March 17 or face severe punishment. On March 17, the TAR Communist Party newspaper called for a "people's war" against separatism that would strike back "tit-for-tat" at "the Dalai clique" and draw on their "bitter hatred of the enemy."

- **Tibetan rioters who carried out violent activities** during the March 14 riot appear to be the target of the ultimatum, based on a translation posted on the International Campaign for Tibet Web site.
- **The ultimatum states three points:** (1) persons who surrender and provide information about the criminal activity of other persons will receive lighter or no punishment; (2) persons who shelter "criminal elements" will face severe punishment; and (3) citizens who "actively report and expose" the crimes of others will receive commendations and awards.
- **Lhasa security personnel detained** "hundreds" of persons in house-to-house searches starting on March 15 (before the deadline), and "hundreds" more after the deadline, according to reports.

What can government officials say to China?

The Chinese government should distinguish between peaceful protestors and rioters, honor the Chinese Constitution's commitment to the freedoms of speech and association, and not treat peaceful protest as a crime. No official Chinese response to the protests could result in greater risk or less benefit for China than to further intensify the campaign to demonize the Dalai Lama. On March 18 Premier Wen Jiabao reiterated the Chinese government's assertion that the door to dialogue is open if the Dalai Lama renounces independence. Premier Wen should make good on the offer and arrange talks with the Dalai Lama before this situation becomes even more tragic.

CECC Analysis

Friday, March 14, 2008

Tibetan Protest

Friday, March 14, 2008

Widespread reports emerging from Tibetan areas of China starting on March 10 suggest that simmering Tibetan frustration is turning into a boil.

1) Background. Tibetan resentment and anger have been increasing over the past two and one half years in three key areas of Tibetan life: religious, urban, and pastoral.

a. New legal measures closely regulating monastic life in the Tibet Autonomous Region starting in January 2007, and new nationwide measures controlling the identification and seating of reincarnated Tibetan teachers from last September, have fundamentally changed the outlook for Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhists.

b. The new Qinghai-Tibet railway is fundamentally changing the economic and employment outlook for Tibetans in Lhasa and nearby urban centers, as well as changing the ethnic and cultural character of those urban areas.

c. The program to settle nomads into fixed communities is nearing completion and has brought severe disruption to that large and not-so-visible sector of Tibetan culture. Now the new measures on religion are interfering with the monasteries and the reincarnated teachers that Tibetan nomads cherish.

2) Why now? March 10 is linked very closely to the Dalai Lama (particularly Tibetans' loss of the Dalai Lama when he escaped into exile in March 1959). The Dalai Lama's remarks in this year's March 10 speech were more frustrated and poignant than any in recent years. The remarks were not incitement to action, but Tibetans would have been moved deeply by his candor. Several exiled Tibetan activist groups were explicitly seeking to "renew the rebellion" (the 1959 Lhasa Uprising) by attempting to march to Tibet, but it is unlikely that these groups have influence enough to have played a significant role in Monday's events.

3) Current government strategy. During the first days of the confrontation, authorities in Lhasa and other places appeared to be trying to contain the situation by locking down the hotspots and generally avoiding confrontation that could result in casualties and detentions. By Chinese government standards, that is restrained behavior. But by late Friday, reports of gunfire and civilian casualties emerged, which if accurate would signal a shift to a more aggressive approach by authorities.

4) Key variables. The two key variables are whether, (1) Tibetans will maintain their efforts to protest on a significant scale in more locations than Chinese authorities can control, and if Tibetans renew the effort to protest whenever the lockdown eases; and (2) if authorities begin to utilize more aggressive security measures to deal with protestors, or if authorities quietly start detaining and imprisoning key actors in the protests over the coming days, weeks, and months. If either happens, the situation could worsen and spread in unpredictable ways.

5) How likely is a repeat of Lhasa 1989 (when China declared martial law)? Not very likely at this point unless authorities become desperate to quell major disturbances. The Chinese government has nothing to gain by conspicuous exercise of firepower or the imposition of martial law. Authorities likely will want this to subside without roiling the domestic or international scene in the run-up to the Olympics. Declaration of martial law in Lhasa would come at considerable cost to Chinese officials if calls for an Olympic boycott intensify as a result.

6) What can government officials say to China? Tibetans have come under increased pressure to accept changes to their culture and religion determined in Beijing. If the Chinese government would live up to its commitment to implement its own Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law in a manner that allows Tibetans to protect their culture and manage their daily affairs, the outlook for ethnic stability would improve.