

“The Tibetans have already made clear their frustrations and where their loyalties lie.”

-ICT



Military police are used to suppress Tibetans engaged in the “farming boycott”, Sichuan Province.

PROTESTS, ARRESTS AND DEATH SENTENCES IN WAKE OF TENSE SERF EMANCIPATION DAY

Tensions remain high in Tibet following compulsory celebrations to mark ‘Serf Emancipation Day’, declared by authorities in the Tibet Autonomous Region and intended to mark an end to what the government calls Tibetan ‘feudalism’. For Tibetans, March 28 marks the defeat of the 1959 Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule, the dissolution of the Tibetan government, and 50 years of separation from the Dalai Lama. Beijing has consistently justified its rule in Tibet by stating that it wiped out “theocracy, feudalism and slavery” there. However, the government does not allow open and frank debate on Tibet’s history.

Mary Beth Markey, Vice President for International Advocacy for the International Campaign for Tibet, said: “A government extravaganza will not fix the problems resulting from 50 years of Chinese rule in Tibet. The Tibetans have already made clear their frustrations and where their loyalties lie. Compulsory participation in this charade of history is likely to deepen the crisis.”¹

Tibetans continue to defy the authorities, with recent reports of protests, a farming boycott movement, arrests and death sentences in different parts of Tibet:

- On March 21, around 2000 locals and monks of Ragya Monastery in Machen County, Qinghai came out in the streets in protest after hearing reports of the suicide of Tashi Sangpo, a Tibetan monk of Ragya Monastery. It is alleged that Sangpo feared being caught after Chinese security forces claimed to have found a Tibetan national flag and political leaflets in his room.²
- The Tibetan centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), on March 21 reported on the arrest of 27 year old Jampa Kalden for his involvement in the farming boycott movement that has been gaining momentum as an act of civil disobedience in the Eastern Tibetan region of Kardze in Sichuan province. In response, Chinese authorities made an official announcement that “anyone who defies farming will face arrest and their land will be officially confiscated.” On March 23, TCHRD reported three more Tibetans

were arrested for their involvement in the farming boycott movement.³

- More than a hundred monks who held a peaceful candlelit vigil on the first day of Tibetan New Year (February 25) have been taken from their monastery, Lutsang, in Mangra county (Chinese: Guinan in Qinghai (the Tibetan area of Amdo), for ‘political education’ at an unknown location while a number of the remaining monks have undergone interrogation, torture and beatings.
- Chinese State Media reported on April 8, that two Tibetans namely Lobsang Gyatse [Gyaltzen] and Loyar, have been sentenced to death by the Lhasa Municipal Intermediate People’s Court for starting fires which resulted in seven deaths and the destruction of five shops in Lhasa. This is the first report of death sentences given out for the March 14, 2008 unrest in Lhasa that Chinese officials say killed 22 people. Three others were also sentenced in connection with the fires – two received suspended death sentences – and the third was sentenced to life imprisonment.⁴

¹ For more details, see: <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/tensions-high-tibet-eve-%E2%80%98serf-emancipation-day%E2%80%99>

² See ICT report: <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/amdo-monks-taken-%E2%80%98study%E2%80%99-after-peaceful-protest>

³ See ICT weekly updates: http://www.savetibet.org/files/documents/TibetUpdate_032309.pdf

⁴ For more details, See ICT report: <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/two-tibetans-sentenced-death-lhasa>



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Still image from the footage shows police beating Tibetan protesters as they lay down handcuffed and tied

DISTURBING NEW FOOTAGE OF POLICE BRUTALITY IN TIBET - CHINA CUTS OFF ACCESS TO YOUTUBE

Days after the 50th anniversary of the March 10 Tibetan uprising, footage has been released by the Tibetan government in exile of brutal police treatment meted out to Tibetans during protests against Chinese rule in March 2008 that swept across the Tibetan plateau and continue sporadically to this day.¹

In a statement from Dharamsala, India, the Tibetan government in exile said: "Though there is much footage of the protests taking place throughout Tibet last year that were splashed across the world, the following is rare footage of police beating of protestors, the suffering and death of a captive, and paramilitary presence in Lhasa, which managed to make its way to the outside world."

The footage clearly refutes China's denials of torture and beatings of prisoners in Tibet. The Beijing authorities have sought to represent the unrest across the Tibetan plateau over the past year as one violent riot, referring to events in Lhasa on March 14, 2008. For weeks after March 14, state-run television showed selective footage of monks apparently hurling rocks at police, protestors destroying shop fronts, and plumes of black smoke from burned-out cars in Lhasa. A DVD of the '3/14' incident was even produced and disseminated by Chinese embassies worldwide, while the Chinese government sought to suppress news of Tibetans who were shot dead or tortured to death during the subsequent crackdown. Due to the climate of fear and severe measures imposed to prevent information leaving Tibet, the footage released by the Tibetan government in exile is the first such visual documentation of torture of Tibetans in custody since the crisis began in March 2008.²

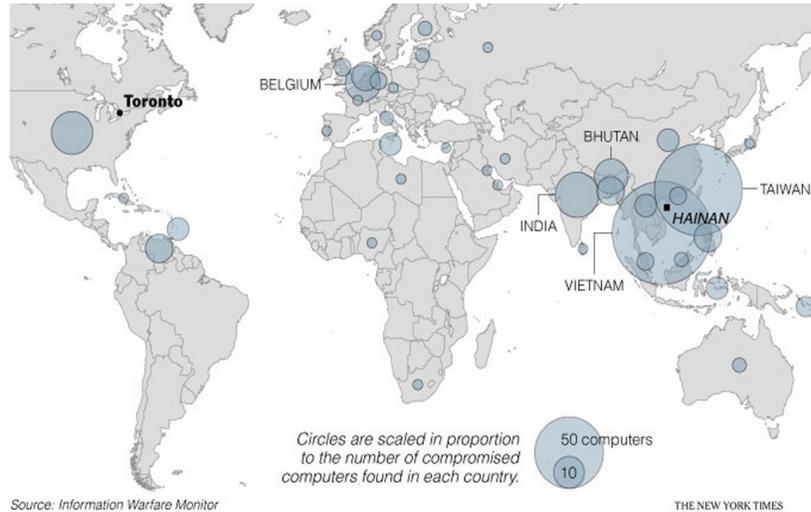
International news reported that Beijing had censored YouTube access in China in the days after the release of the video. Leslie Harris, the President of the Centre for Democracy and Technology (CDT) said, "China's apparent blocking of YouTube is at odds with the rule of law and right to freedom of expression".³

This is not the first time that YouTube has been blocked in China, as it occurred when the Dalai Lama was being awarded a Congressional Gold Medal in Washington in 2007. ■

¹ The graphic and disturbing footage can be seen at: <http://www.tibetonline.tv/torture/>

² For more details, See ICT report: <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/disturbing-new-footage-police-brutality-tibet-released-tibetan-government-exile>

³ See, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/7962718.stm>



GhostNet was tracked to computers in embassies and government institutions, as well as the International Campaign for Tibet

VAST CYBER ESPIONAGE NETWORK SYSTEM TARGETS COMPUTERS IN 103 COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE DALAI LAMA'S OFFICES

On March 30, the New York Times reported that Canadian researchers from the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto have concluded that a vast electronic spying operation has infiltrated more than 1,000 computers and has stolen documents from hundreds of government and private offices around the world, including those of the Dalai Lama and the International Campaign for Tibet.

Thubten Samphel, the official spokesperson from Tibetan government in exile said, "We have been experiencing this injection of viruses into our computer system. Our experience is that these viruses sent out information, both confidential and non-confidential and because of the load of viruses, our computers somehow malfunctioned." Greg Walton from Munk Centre adds: "We uncovered real-time evidence of malware that had penetrated Tibetan computer systems, extracting sensitive documents from the private office of the Dalai Lama."

The researchers said that the system was being controlled from computers based almost exclusively in China, but that they could not say conclusively that the Chinese government was involved. The newly reported spying operation is by far the largest to come to light in terms of countries affected. This is also believed to be the first time researchers have been able to expose the workings of a computer system used in an intrusion of this magnitude. A spokesman for the Chinese Consulate in New York dismissed the idea that China was involved. "These are old stories and they are nonsense," the spokesman, Wenqi Gao, said. "The Chinese government is opposed to and strictly forbids any cyber crime." The Toronto researchers,

who allowed a reporter for The New York Times to review the spies' digital tracks, have published their findings in Information Warfare Monitor, an online publication associated with the Munk Center.¹

The Canadian researchers named the cyber espionage network GhostNet. According to the report, "GhostNet is capable of taking full control of infected computers, including searching and downloading specific files, and covertly operating attached devices, including microphones and web cameras". It is discovered that one third of infected targets are "considered high-value and include computers located at ministries of foreign affairs, embassies, international organisations, news media and NGOs". This web of espionage network has been developed in the last two years.

Another report from Cambridge University has found that the cyber attacks originating from China are very effective and in fact, "few organisations, outside the defence and intelligence sector, could withstand such an attack".

The Cambridge University report documented real consequences of the cyber attacks: "The office of the Dalai Lama [...] was under surveillance while setting up meetings between His Holiness and foreign dignitaries. They sent an email invitation on behalf of His Holiness to a foreign diplomat, but before they could follow it up with a courtesy telephone call, the diplomat's office was contacted by the Chinese government and warned not to go ahead with the meeting." ■

¹ See, <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/tibet-news/vast-spy-system-loots-computers-103-countries-including-dalai-lamas-tibetan-exile-centers>

US AND EUROPE CALL FOR RENEWED CONTACT BETWEEN CHINA AND DALAI LAMA

During Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi in Washington in the beginning of March, both President Obama and the U.S. House of Representatives stated that the U.S. government expects Beijing to negotiate with the Dalai Lama's representatives on a durable solution for Tibet, despite repeated demands by Chinese officials to drop the Tibet issue.

On March 11, the House of Representatives passed a bipartisan resolution that "calls upon the Government of the People's Republic of China to respond to the Dalai Lama's initiatives to find a lasting solution to the Tibetan issue." The resolution (H.Res. 226), which also commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's exile, was introduced by Representatives Rush Holt (D-NJ) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), and approved by an overwhelming vote of 422 to one.¹

In a resolution adopted by the European Parliament on Thursday 12 March to mark the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule, the EP urged the Chinese Government to resume talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives with a view to "positive, meaningful change in Tibet", not ruling out autonomy, which the parliamentarians believe does not compromise China's territorial integrity. The European Parliament called on the Chinese government "to consider the Memorandum for Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People of November 2008 as a basis for substantive discussion leading towards positive, meaningful change in Tibet, consistent with the principles outlined in the Constitution and laws of the People's Republic of China". The resolution calls on the EU Council Presidency to adopt a declaration along the same lines.² The resolution was adopted by 338 votes to 131 with 14 abstentions.

More recently, on March 31, the European Parliament made a strong statement condemning the current crackdown in Tibet and called on the Chinese government to re-open sincere and result oriented dialogue with the Dalai Lama's envoys based on the basis of the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy presented by the Tibetan representatives during the eighth round of dialogue. The statement said, "[The E.U.Parliament] ... strongly condemns the crackdown against Tibetans following the wave of protests that swept across Tibet beginning on 10 March 2008 and the repression by the Chinese government that has increased in Tibet since then, and calls for the restart of a sincere and results-oriented dialogue between both parties based



Presidents Hu and Obama, and Sec. of State Clinton meet on the margins of the G20 Summit in London, April 2009

on the "Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People." The draft report prepared by Raimon Obiols i Germà (PES, ES) on behalf of the EP's Human Rights Subcommittee was adopted by the Foreign Affairs Committee by 41 votes to 1 with 5 abstentions.³

The European Parliament has followed events in Tibet closely over the years. After the repression of demonstrations by Tibetans a year ago, the EP adopted a resolution condemning "all acts of violence from whichever source". EP President Hans-Gert Pöttering then announced on 10 July that he would not attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games last August because talks between China and the Dalai Lama had made no progress. The Dalai Lama himself addressed the European Parliament on 4 December 2008 as part of Year of Intercultural Dialogue. ■

¹ The full text of the resolution can be found at <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=hr111-226>

² For more details, See: <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/in-us-and-europe-a-unified-message-china-negotiate-with-dalai-lama-tibet>

³ See, <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/european-parliament-organizes-a-public-hearing-tibet-fac-and-adopts-its-2008-report-huma>