

U.S. GOVERNMENT:

China expresses relief as Rights take second place on Clinton China visit: AFP reports that the official English-language China Daily published an enthusiastic editorial, saying Clinton's visit to China reassured Beijing saying that many had waited anxiously for the new administration's China overtures, and that they finally received the much sought-after relief. When asked what happened to human rights, she said "Human rights is an essential part of U.S. foreign policy." CBS said that Clinton told **Andrews** off camera that the U.S. will still push on women's rights and Tibetan freedom, but suggested that compared to the global agenda with China, human rights have a lower priority. Human rights activists said Clinton just made it easy for China to suppress Tibet and internal protests at will. "She really gave them a completely undeserved and totally unexpected Christmas present," said Sophie Richardson of Human Rights Watch. <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/02/21/world/main4818135.shtml>
<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hKXiGwCGrOBdlkukhb9rYooq3WeA>

INSIDE TIBET:

ICT Report: China's crushes Tibetan dissent with armed response as Secretary Clinton visited China: On February 19, as Secretary Clinton prepared to visit China, news emerged of an incident where police opened fire on Tibetans in Nagchu county in the Tibet. Sources said that a conflict between a Tibetan and Chinese taxi driver in Nagchu escalated into a fight, which resulted in People's Armed Police arriving on the scene and opening fire. On the same day, an editorial in the official Tibet Daily called on people to "Firmly crush the savage aggression of the Dalai clique, defeat separatism, and wage people's war to maintain stability." On January 27, in the monastery town of Derge (eastern Tibet), police opened fire on a group of five monks as they started a protest calling for Tibetan independence and the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet. These are indicators of increasing tension in Tibet in the buildup to the Tibetan New Year on February 25, the first anniversary of the waves of protest that swept through Tibet last year, and the historic 50 yr anniversary of the Dalai Lama's flight into exile. Mary Beth Markey, Vice President of Advocacy for the International Campaign for Tibet, said: "China is determined to fuel tensions in Tibet rather than do the work of peaceful conflict resolution with the Dalai Lama. If China's hard-line position on Tibet is immutable, then Secretary Clinton and others deeply concerned for the difficult situation in Tibet - and for peace in stability in China - will have to face a real and significant obstacle to good relationships with China." <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/inside-tibet-reports/emerging-news-armed-response-eve-clinton-visit-chinese-government-vows-crush-tibetan-d>

China closes Tibet to foreigners ahead of Tibetan New Year: The Chinese government had earlier said that foreign journalists would be welcome in Tibet in March in order to cover an event in March that it has dubbed "Serf Liberation Day." However, the Telegraph says that attempts by journalists to arrange trips to Tibet over the anniversary period were firmly rebuffed. Tourist agencies were contacted on February 18 by officials and told to cancel all trips for the foreseeable future. Wan Feng, at Tibet Yak Travel said, "We had a meeting with the tourist bureau and were asked to stop all groups from entering Tibet for at least the next couple of months." Another company, Tsedang China Travel, said it was unsure whether travel would even be possible in April. Tensions are already high this year ahead of the historic 50 yr anniversary of the Dalai Lama's escape. Earlier in January, many Tibetans refused to take part in the Chinese New Year and there are now several reports of Chinese soldiers being posted to monasteries and one witness said snipers had been placed on roofs of important temples in Lhasa. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/tibet/4688657/China-closes-Tibet-to-foreigners.html>

Resentment simmering, Tibetans engage in civil disobedience by refusing to celebrate Tibetan New Year:

On February 21, McClatchy Newspapers writes that on the cusp of the first anniversary of last spring's widespread protests in Tibetan areas that marked the worst ethnic unrest in China in nearly two decades, Tibetans still seethe at living under China's thumb. Tibetan monks, nomads and students interviewed recently by McClatchy Newspapers said ethnic tensions have deepened. Dorje, a Tibetan nomad, simply calls them "the Chinese," the majority Han, who he says will get no respite from Tibetan frustration this year - or for generations. At the Kumbum Monastery, which once housed 4,000 monks but is down to 800 today, a 29-year-old monk said Tibetans were defying China by refusing to celebrate the Tibetan Lunar New Year which falls on February 25. He said, "How could there be celebrations? Last year, they shot so many of us." Local Chinese officials have been encouraging celebrations by handing out money to buy fireworks for New Year festivities.

<http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=23876&article=A+year+after+China+quashed+revolt%2c+Tibetans+simmer+with+resentment&t=1&c=1>

TIBETAN GOVERNMENT IN EXILE:

The Tibetan Government in exile asks China to withdraw "undeclared martial law" in Tibet : On February 21, the Kashag (the executive Cabinet of the Tibetan Government in exile) asked China to withdraw "undeclared martial law" and to call off the strike hard campaign. The Kashag regretted the fact that the PRC had deployed additional troops across the Tibetan plateau and said that the recent remarks by Chinese authorities that they "will wage a people's war" to crush any potential protest was inflammatory and would only further ethnic tensions. In view of the grave and urgent situation in Tibet, the Kashag called upon parliaments, governments, human rights organizations, Tibet Support Groups and concerned individuals around the world to actively intervene to persuade China to exercise restraint, and prevail upon them that repression and military might will not resolve any problems and that tolerance and engagement are the only effective means to bring stability in Tibet.

<http://www.tibet.net/en/index.php?id=723&articletype=flash&rmenuid=morenews>