

List of prisoners and “disappeared” Tibetans in Ngaba crackdown: situation provokes US government concern

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A list of 34 Tibetans detained in Ngaba during the crackdown against monks and the lay community at Kirti monastery over the past few weeks is [available here](#). The U.S. government expressed its concern about the “onerous restrictions on the monks and the general public” in a statement by the State Department yesterday. The Dalai Lama today appealed to the international community “to persuade the Chinese leadership to exercise restraint in handling this situation.” **(See the Dalai Lama's full statement here)**

Tension has escalated in the area since a 20-year old monk, Phuntsog, set fire to himself on the third anniversary of a major protest in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) on March 16. (ICT update, [Crisis at Kirti monastery intensifies: rare public statements by lama in exile](#)). According to the latest information from the area today, lay people were allowed to deliver food to Kirti monastery, which is still under lockdown and surrounded by armed troops.

Monks are still not allowed to leave the monastery, but following dialogue with senior religious figures in the area and the local government authorities, a group of 15 monks spoke to the prefectural Religious Affairs Bureau about their serious concerns regarding the tense situation. Full details of the discussion are not known, but monks are believed to have raised concerns about the overall restrictions on their movement, as well as mentioning the overall security situation, the impact of the patriotic education campaign on religious practice, and the closure in 2008 of the Kirti monastery school.

The list ([available here](#)) documents known detentions and disappearances in the area over the past month, including of a 16-year old boy who was seized during a late-night raid by police, and the brother and uncle of the monk who died. Due to the authorities' attempts to impose an information blackout in the area, full details are not known of all detainees and others who have disappeared or been beaten and tortured.

The situation in Ngaba remains dangerous for local people. In two separate public statements from exile (translated into English by ICT from the original Tibetan), Kirti Rinpoche appealed both to the Tibetans and Chinese central and local government officials. To the Tibetans, he wrote in part: “I offer condolences to the relatives and children of those killed or injured, and make prayers and invocations that the deceased may once again be reborn as humans with sound faculties and personal freedom able to find the Buddhist teachings, that the afflictions of the wounded will swiftly heal, that the imprisoned may soon get out of jail, and that the people as a whole, lay and monastic, may soon be released from the dreadful suffering of living in a state of terror.” To the Chinese government officials, he wrote in part: “The senior leadership must find the courage to accept that constant repression born of suspicion and the attempt to enforce ‘harmony’ with the power of the gun cannot address the real situation.” (ICT report, [Crisis at Kirti monastery intensifies: rare public statements by lama in exile](#)).

State Department Acting Deputy Spokesman Mark Toner, in response to a question at yesterday's daily press briefing, said: “We have seen that Chinese security forces have cordoned off the Kirti monastery in Sichuan province. They've also imposed onerous restrictions on the monks and the general public. And we believe these are inconsistent with internationally-recognized principles of religious freedom and human right. We continue to monitor the situation closely, and are obviously concerned by it.”

Asked if the US has raised this matter with China, Toner said: “Yes, I believe we raised it with the Chinese, as we would raise any human rights concerns.” The next round of U.S.-China human rights dialogue takes place later this month.