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## Resttlements in Ngaba

26 April 2008

(Xinhua) He Wentao, official of the Commission for Development and Reform in Ngaba Tibetan and Autonomous Qiang prefecture (Chin: Aba), announced that until 2013 about 77,000 residents, or 17,067 households, most of them Tibetans, will be resettled in an attempt to eradicate the endemic Kashin-Beck disease. In the prefecture, 41,184 people are said to be affected by the incurable bone disease which destroys the joints of the patients. The costs of the resettlement program are given as 1.1 billion yuan (UK£80.8m; EUR€102.2m; US\$157.4m). New homes for the resettled families are under construction. The program aims at reducing the rate of new contaminations from the current 20% to 5% within 10 years.

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## China: rail link to Nepal via Tibet in 5 years

27 April 2008

(Reuters) Nepali officials reported that China intends to extend the railway link from Tibet to Nepal's border in five years in order to boost trade and tourism. Ai Ping, director general of China's international department, met Nepali Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and told him that the rail link would bolster their diplomatic and trade ties, officials said. *"They discussed the benefits of the project"*, Basanta Gautam, special secretary in Koirala's office, said. *"The railway link should be complete in five years"*. The planned railway project would link Tibetan capital Lhasa with Khasa/Zhangmu, the last town before the Nepal border. *"It will be an extension of the railway link between China and Tibet"*, Gautam said. After the completion of the Golmud-Lhasa section in Summer 2006, Nepali officials have engaged into what they see as a competition with India to become the ultimate destination of the railway. How advanced the planning for the further extension of the route is, is not known

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## Pro-Tibet rally gathers thousands in Bern

27 April 2008

(Swissinfo) More than 7,000 people have demonstrated in the Swiss capital Bern to show their solidarity with Tibetans. The demonstrators, which included many exiled Tibetans living in Switzerland, demanded that the Swiss government officially receive the Dalai Lama, who will visit Bern in October following an invitation from the city authorities. Economics Minister Doris Leuthard was also asked to request from the Chinese government the authorisation for an international fact-finding committee to travel to Tibet. Leuthard will travel to China in June 2008.

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## Further Tibetan protests in Nepal

27 April 2008

(Phayul) Tibetans in Nepal again protested near the Chinese Consulate in Kathmandu. Police stopped them at Nagpokhari near the Consulate and arrested 130 of the 140 protestors. Two demonstrators received injuries and a Tibetan man was allegedly charged with attacking an officer and taken separately to Kamal Pokhari Police Station. Khumbu Tibetan Community in Namche Bazaar in the Everest region held a candlelight vigil on 25 April amidst heavy security in the region in connection with the planed Olympic torch relay on Mount Everest (Chin: Qomolangma).

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## Tutu urges leaders to miss Beijing opening

28 April 2008

(Reuters) Archbishop Desmond Tutu urged world leaders to stay away from the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics in August. *"The leaders of the free world, for goodness sake, don't attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games until it is quite clear that they [the Chinese] mean business and that they will stop the violence against the Tibetans"*, Tutu said at a Cape Town ceremony for the Tibetan Independence Torch. South Africa's Nobel Peace laureate lit the Tibetan Independence Torch, which was kindled in Delhi on 30 January and will travel to cities on five continents

before arriving in May back in Dharamsala. "Let us make China know this is a moral universe", Tutu said.

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### **Dalai Lama attends religious service for Tibetan victims**

28 April 2008

(Phayul) The Dalai Lama presided over a Buddhist prayer session, at the Tsuglag-Khang (main Tibetan temple) in Dharamsala, for the Tibetans victims of the recent crackdown in Tibet. A prayer ceremony marked the symbolic 49th day since Chinese authorities clamped down on Tibetan demonstrators in diverse locations across the Tibetan Plateau. Tibetan Buddhists believe 49 days or seven weeks is the time deceased people spend in limbo before being reborn into a new life.

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### **South Korea vows 'diplomatic measures' over Chinese torch violence**

29 April 2008

(AFP) Violence by Chinese students at the Beijing Olympic torch relay in Seoul injured South Korea's national pride and "legal and diplomatic measures are necessary", Prime Minister Han Seung-Soo told a cabinet meeting, according to the Yonhap news agency. Public anger is growing over the violence on 27 April, recorded on widely circulated video clips, in which Chinese students attacked Koreans staging peaceful protests at Beijing's human rights record. Justice Minister Kim Kyung-Han told the cabinet: "The justice ministry will sternly deal with those responsible, regardless of their nationality". The government expressed "strong regret" to China's ambassador at the behaviour of the students. Newspaper editorials and Internet users slammed the youths and the largest-selling daily questioned whether Beijing is fit to host the Olympics. "We cannot but doubt whether China has the common sense and standards to host the Olympic Games", the newspaper Chosun Ilbo said, criticising the government and police for failing to stop the violence.

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### **'Free Tibet' flags made in China**

29 April 2008

(BBC) Police in southern China have discovered a factory manufacturing Tibetan flags. The factory in Guangdong had been completing overseas orders for the flag of the Tibetan government-in-exile. Workers said they thought they were just making colourful flags and did not realise their meaning. But then some of them saw TV images of protesters holding the emblem and they alerted the authorities, according to Hong Kong's Ming Pao newspaper. The factory owner reportedly told police the emblems had been ordered from outside China, and "he did not know that they stood for an independent Tibet". Thousands of flags had already been packed for shipping. Police believe that some may already have been sent overseas, and could appear in the forthcoming Olympic torch relay in Hong Kong. The authorities therefore stepped up the inspection of cars heading to the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone and onwards to Hong Kong.

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### **Over 4000 Tibetans in Nepal march to OHCHR**

29 April 2008

(Phayul) An estimated 4,000 Tibetans supported by dozens of Nepali Buddhists and a number of foreigners marched from Mustang monastery, Swayambhu, to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Chauni, Kathmandu in order to hand over a report on the number of allegedly confirmed deaths and detentions in Tibet. The silent solidarity march organised by the Nepal Tibetan Solidarity Forum (NTSF) marked the 49th day of Tibetan protests worldwide. At the end of the march, there was a rally at the monastery, and Yungdrung Gyaltzen, of NTSF, briefly addressed the gathering and thanked those attending, particularly non-Tibetans. He also said that OHCHR would send their report and request to the concerned UN bodies that have been observing the Tibetan protests in Lhasa. The event had the largest number of participants of any of the recent demonstrations in Kathmandu.

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### **Nepal deports US Everest climber for Tibet banner**

29 April 2008

(Reuters) Nepal deported a US national and banned him from climbing in the country for two years, after he was found carrying a "pro-Tibet banner" on an expedition to the Everest, an official said. Security forces frisking mountaineers at the Everest base camp found the banner in one of the bags of William Brant Holland. It was not clear what the banner said. Nepal has restricted access to Mount Everest between 01 and 10 May and posted armed soldiers to discourage protests against the Olympics torch when it is taken to the summit by Chinese authorities.

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### **CTA: 203 Tibetans killed in China's crackdown**

29 April 2008

(Phayul) The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) in Dharamsala said 203 Tibetans were confirmed killed following China's clampdown on Tibetan demonstrators across Tibet between 10 March and 25 April. Speaking at a press briefing, CTA spokesperson Thupten Samphel said the figures were based on information from six different news sources, including China's state media and that of its own. Chinadigitaltimes.net, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), Lhasa Radio, and Radio Free Asia (RFA) are the other sources it used. The list also includes Tibetans reportedly injured and arrested or detained during the protests that broke out since 10 March. "Various facts and figures given by the different sources have been meticulously examined and tallied with each other. After having done this, we confirm that the actual figure for the number of dead is 203, the number of injured is more than 1,000 and the number of those still detained is more than 5,715", Mr Samphel said. He also said the actual figure could be even much higher. He blamed Beijing's restrictive measures placed in Tibet as the main hindrance to compile a more conclusive and comprehensive list.

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### **China jails 17 over Tibet riots**

29 April 2008

(BBC; Xinhua) Chinese state media reports that a court in Lhasa has jailed 17 people for taking part in riots in the capital Lhasa last month. The

prison terms are reported to range from three years to life. According to Xinhua, seven schools, five hospitals and more than 100 homes were set on fire in the violence. Chinese reports say the rioters killed at least 19 people. The Intermediate People's Court in Lhasa handed down the verdicts at an "open court session" attended by more than 200 people, including Buddhist monks, medical workers and "masses from all walks of life", state television reported. The court said that one of the two men sentenced to life imprisonment had been convicted of "arson and disrupting public services". It said the other had attacked fire engines and police stations and assaulted firemen.

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### **Lhasa sentences criticised**

30 April 2008

(Xinhua; HRW; Tibet.net; Reuters) Sentences imposed by a Lhasa court on Tibetans accused of participating in violent protests on 14 March have been widely criticised. Although Xinhua claimed it was an open and transparent trial, earlier proceedings, in which evidence from the prosecution was introduced, had been conducted covertly on undisclosed dates in April. Lawyers who had publicly offered to defend protesters were forced to withdraw their assistance after judicial authorities in Beijing threatened to discipline them and suspend their professional licenses. The authorities justified their actions by saying that the Tibetan protesters were "not ordinary cases, but sensitive cases". New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) cited flaws in the legal process including: failure to establish a distinction between peaceful and violent protesters; statements by the Procuratorate (the Public Prosecution) at the time of the suspected protesters' arrest that assumed their guilt rather than their innocence; and secret trial proceedings. The CTA in Dharamsala issued a statement saying the trial was "not fair and transparent". "We strongly condemn the arbitrary sentences imposed on the 30 Tibetans involved in the recent protests in Tibet", the statement said, adding: "These sentences are disproportionate to what the Chinese authorities say are the 'crimes' they committed". "These trials did not follow the due process of law and the accused were denied independent lawyers to defend their case", the statement said. The US government has also expressed concern. "We are concerned", White House spokeswoman Dana Perino told reporters when asked about the sentences. "We don't think that anyone should break the law. But we also believe in freedom of expression and assembly".

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### **US concerned over Nepal's treatment of Tibetan protestors**

01 May 2008

(Phayul) The US Ambassador to Nepal Nancy Powell has expressed concern over the Nepali government's violent break up of peaceful protests and rallies held by Tibetans in Kathmandu. This was brought up during a meeting with the Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala. The US Embassy in Kathmandu issued a statement saying: "Ambassador Powell expressed official US concern about the treatment of Tibetans by Nepali authorities. She urged the Prime Minister to ensure that the right to peaceful protest was maintained and that the human rights of Tibetans in Nepal are respected".

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### **Chinese editor fired over Tibet commentaries**

06 May 2008

(Reuters) Renowned Chinese columnist Zhang Ping, who writes under the pen name Chang Ping, was sacked as deputy chief editor of the Southern Metropolis Weekly magazine, the Paris-based Reporters Without Borders said. The group said that Zhang's departure was "because of his editorials about Tibet", including the controversial piece: "How to find the truth about Lhasa?". "We deplore this unfair removal of a well-known member of the liberal press", the group said. Zhang declined to comment when reached by telephone. A further source, requesting anonymity, confirmed the sacking but declined to provide further details. Zhang's articles were published mainly in his magazine's sister newspaper, the Southern Metropolis Daily, and called on the government to allow more media freedom in covering the unrest in Tibet and to review its policy on Tibet.

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### **Lobsang P Lhalungpa dies**

07 May 2008

(TibetNet) Lobsang P Lhalungpa, who established the first Tibetan language programme on All India Radio and had dedicated himself to the preservation of Tibetan Buddhism and culture, died on 28 April, aged 82. According to an obituary published by the CTA, he died of internal injuries suffered as a result of a car accident in Santa Fe in New Mexico, USA. A funeral service was conducted on 01 May. On 04 May, a group of monks from Drepung Loseling monastery led a memorial service, attended by a mixed group of some 400 people from the Tibetan communities in Santa Fe and Albuquerque. The Dalai Lama, through his representative based in office of Tibet in New York, conveyed a condolence message and prayers to the bereaved family members. Lobsang Lhalungpa translated extensively over the past 40 years for the Dalai Lama, and also translated his English speeches into Tibetan.

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### **Reports on Shenzhen talks**

08 May 2008

Following the Sino-Tibetan talks held on 04 May 2008 in Shenzhen, southern China, between the Dalai Lama's envoys Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen and United Front Work Department officials Zhu Weiqun and Sitar, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang told a regular news briefing in Beijing "I want to stress that this current contact is only the beginning (...) we agreed to continue with the contact when it is appropriate". "The central government's contact with the Dalai is sincere", Qin said. The meeting in Shenzhen was a "good first step", according to Lodi Gyari, who said he believed a date for the seventh round of Sino-Tibetan dialogue would be finalised soon after mutual consultations. Mr Gyari described the main purpose of the informal meeting as to "discuss the critical situation in Tibet" and as an agreed "meeting of principals without aides". "There were strong and divergent views on the nature as well as the causes of the recent tragic events in Tibet" and "these views were expressed in a frank and candid manner", Mr Gyari said. "Despite major differences on important issues both sides demonstrated a willingness to seek common approaches in addressing the issues at hand", he said referring to the current situation in Tibet. "As a result, an understanding was reached to continue the formal round of discussions", he added. Mr Gyari said the long relationship with Chinese counterparts for the last several years made it possible to "have open and frank discussions in a friendly and respectful atmosphere".

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### **Olympic torch on Everest**

08 May 2008

(AP; Der Spiegel) Live television footage showed a Chinese mountaineering team holding up a specially designed Olympic torch along with Chinese and Olympic flags on the top of Mount Everest. *"One World, One Dream"*, team captain Nyima Cering yelled as the torch was lit on the final incline leading to the peak, repeating the slogan for the Beijing Olympics. *"We have lit the torch on top of the world"*, another climber said. The 19-member team was dressed in red parkas emblazoned with Olympic logos. Organisers hope the dramatic image of the torch atop Everest will counter some of the damaging publicity from protests during the international leg of the torch relay. The Dalai Lama says he understood why Tibetan exiles were angry that the Olympic torch reached the top of Everest but had advised them against protesting. *"If the times were quiet, I would not get excited about it. But as things are, I understand the protests, of course without supporting them"*, the Dalai Lama told Germany's Der Spiegel magazine. He made the comments in an interview and said that he had been worried about border clashes between protesters and armed guards and so advised exiles against holding demonstrations.

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#### **US senators urge Bush to visit Tibet during Olympics**

09 May 2008

(AFP) Several US senators have asked President George W. Bush to visit Tibet when he travels to China for the Olympics to back Washington's push for human rights in the region. President Bush is going to the Olympics in August although it is not certain if he will attend the opening ceremony. Senior Democratic Senators Joseph Biden, John Kerry and Barbara Boxer and Republican Senator Olympia Snowe sent a letter to the White House, calling for his administration to take specific actions to help resolve the crisis in Tibet, including the requested visit. They also wanted him to press Beijing to open a US consulate in Tibet's capital Lhasa and expand access to the region for international humanitarian officials and journalists.

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