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KIRTI MONASTERY, Dharamsala PRESS RELEASE: MARCH 30, 2008

CONTACT: Lhakpa Kyizom: mobile +91 (0) 98165 82633

According to monks of Kirti Monastery in Dharamsala, India, at 11 AM Beijing time on March 28th, 2008, thousands of black and green uniformed Chinese security forces entered 6 monasteries in Amdo in North-Eastern Tibet (Sichuan province)

- 5 of the monasteries are in Amdo Ngapa county: Ngaba Kirti monastery, Ngatue Amdu monastery, Gomang monastery, Dongri monastery, and Tsennyi monastery.
- 1 monastery (Taksang Lhamo Kirti) is in Dzoerge county

The security forces raided each monk's room and confiscated all means of communication with the outside world, including cell phones.

The monks were interrogated and were forced at gunpoint to step on photographs of the Dalai Lama.

The security forces staged and videotaped the following scenes of the Kirti Monastery monks in their rooms.

- They forced some monks to hold up a portrait of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan national flag
- A small monk was forced to hide half his body underneath the wooden floorboards and made to place his hands on the keyboard of a lap top computer.

One of the monks managed to make a secret phone call to the Kirti monks in Dharamsala, India. The monk in Tibet said:

“I am worried that the CCP is creating false evidence to try to show that His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the mastermind behind the protests in Tibet. The security forces forced us to act out these scenes against our will with guns pointed at us. I appeal to the people of the world, do not be persuaded by these fake videos.”

From March 28 to March 30 2008, around 572 monks including 10-year-old monks of Kirti Monastery have been arbitrarily arrested.

On March 29 around 17 monks of TAKSTNG LHAMO KIRTI MONASTERY in Dzoerge county of Sichuan Province were arbitrarily arrested

On the morning of March 30th 80 PRC staff members with security forces raided the monk's rooms of the same monastery. They confiscated knives, arrows, and antique guns that were on display in the chapel of the monastery's protector deity.

These items are ancient traditional offerings to the protectors, and symbolize the overcoming of obstacles and negative emotions.

The monks are concerned that these items are being misrepresented in the propaganda of the PRC and its mouthpiece Xinhua on March 30, 2008, as being evidence of monks taking up arms. Xinhua reported that there were other weapons along with the afore-mentioned items, which the monks claim is completely fabricated.

Nobody knows the whereabouts of the monks who were arrested.

STATEMENT FROM KIRTI MONKS, DHARAMSALA:

"These ongoing recent events in Tibet have caused the Tibetan people much anguish and the monks from Kirti Monastery, Dharamsala, condemn the allegations made by the Chinese government against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We pray for all Tibetan martyrs to be reborn as Tibetans and pledge to them that we will live to fight against the injustice through nonviolent means and methods."