

# China axes Tibetan guides

Associated Press

BEIJING, July 15. — Chinese authorities have forced travel agencies in Tibet to fire ethnic Tibetan tour guides who have been educated in schools abroad run by the Dalai Lama, a local official said today.

The step is aimed in part at making sure visitors hear China's version of Tibet's history, an official of the Tourism Bureau of the Himalayan territory said. She would give only her surname, Ms Huang.

"The history they learned in schools is different from ours. What they have told the tourists was to confuse right and wrong... It's a threat to our state security, too."

Officials wouldn't say how many Tibetans have been fired in the crackdown launched earlier this year, but one agency said it hired 40 new guides to replace dismissed ones. There are about 400 to 500 tour guides in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, according to Ms Huang.

The crackdown is aimed at "guides who had illegally left... and studied in the schools of the Dalai Lama," Ms Huang said.



# PM's deal suits China's interests, say Tibetans

Debasis Sarkar  
SILIGURI 4 JULY

THE Tibetans are, predictably, none too happy about the opening up of the Sino-Indian trade route through Tibet.

They have called this "negative" development Prime Minister Vajpayee's "biggest mistake." Irate with India's recognition of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) as a part of China, more than 1.25 lakh Tibetan refugees in India and a core group for the Tibetan cause (CGTC), representing 250 Tibet support groups (TSGs), have threatened to relaunch their anti-China movement from August 27. This will be in defiance of Mr Vajpayee's assurance to the Chinese government that no anti-China activities will be allowed in India.

"The demonstration can turn violent," Dawa Gyalpo, central committee member of the Tibetan Youth Congress, told ET. "During his previous visit to Chi-

na as Union foreign minister, Mr Vajpayee had said he was in favour of a sovereign Tibet, which would act as a convenient buffer between India and China. Besides, China is yet to accept Sikkim as an Indian state," Mr Gyalpo said.

Through its memorandum, dated June 14, the TSGs requested the Prime Minister to play a more proactive role in persuading the Chinese government to grant true autonomy to Tibet. The CGTC felt that the Sino-Indian agreement suits China's military interests but leaves India's trade interest exposed. "China never spared the Indian market. It thought nothing of illegally exporting consumer goods, which proved disastrous for the indigenous SSIs. This is bound to increase manifold now," said CGTC convenor N.K. Trikha.

Supporting Mr Trikha's argument, TSG convenor S. Lhundrup referred to China's ongoing Tibet railway network programme, stretching from 100 km

off Nathula in the west and Nefa in the east. China's arsenal within Tibet is believed to include eight missile bases, with nearly 100 ICBMs, each with a range of 13,000 km.

The railway network will allow easy transportation of these ICBMs to the Indian border in very short notice by 2007, making the border very vulnerable, Mr Lhundrup argued.

"Prior to the Chinese aggression in Tibet, the Indo-Tibetan border used to be guarded by 16 police posts and 78 policemen only," he said. According to the Indian Army 33 Corps, at present, it costs the Indian exchequer Rs 6 crore per day to guard the 3,520-km border. The current scenario is likely to aggravate further, putting more pressure on the Indian economy, he felt.

"The railway project is a political decision and we would make it succeed at all costs, even if there is a commercial loss," China's President had told the New York Times on August 10, 2001.

*The Economic Times*

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# Young Tibet up in arms <sup>SR 17</sup>

*SR 17*  
**Rituparna Bhowmik**  
in New Delhi

July 3. — The Tibetan Youth Congress has raised the banner of revolt against the Dalai Lama. The provocation being what the TYC sees as the exiled leader's insufficient criticism of the recent Sino-Indian agreement on Tibet. During the Prime Minister's China visit, the two governments had signed a declaration that had India agreeing that "the Tibet Autonomous Region is a part of the People's Republic of China".

This, the TYC says, is unacceptable. And to oppose it they're ready to defy the Dalai Lama, even to the extent of considering "guerrilla activities".

"This is where the TYC falls out with the Dalai Lama who has said time and time again that he will not 'accommodate any violent action'. But we will resort to any action, violent or non-violent, if it is necessary for our cause," the TYC president, Mr Kalsang Phuntsok, told The Statesman over telephone from Dharamshala.

He said: "We're planning to train our members for six-seven months in guerrilla warfare but it's still in the thinking process... We also plan to go to the Indian people, especially to the schools and colleges, with our cause..."

According to officials, the TYC's statements are a result of "internal dynamics within various factions of Tibetans". The official representative of the Dalai Lama in Dharamshala had "greeted" the joint India-China Declaration, an official

said, and there was no mention of any "sell out". For now, however, the TYC is approaching the issue carefully. It had initially planned demonstrations in all of its 77 centres across the world.

"Although we condemn this declaration and want to show our unhappiness by holding the demonstration, yet the decision taken by the headquarters to postpone the stir is after giving a thought to the repercussions that such a move might invite," said Mr Phuntsok.