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PUBLIC STATEMENT

China: Tibetan translator must be released immediately

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Tsering Dorjee, a 26 year-old Tibetan who was detained in Haixi prefecture, Qinghai province on 15 August.

Tsering Dorjee was acting as translator for two westerners -- Daja Meston of the USA and Gabriel Lafitte of Australia -- who were attempting to talk to local people about a controversial World Bank project in the region, when all three men were detained.

The human rights organization is urging the Chinese authorities to carry out an immediate investigation into the detentions and the circumstances which lead to Daja Meston sustaining serious spinal injuries. He reportedly jumped from a window to avoid detention by the police, and is said to be in a serious but stable condition.

Daja Meston's return to the USA is currently being negotiated. Gabriel Lafitte has already arrived back in Australia after being deported from China and banned from returning for five years.

According to the official Xinhua news agency Meston and Lafitte were "photographing in closed areas where clearly marked restriction signs were posted".

Background

Tsering Dorjee, a junior middle school teacher from Tsekok county, has also worked as a translator for Medecins Sans Frontieres and the European Union.

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