

## Tibet envoys in 'China for talks'

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(BBC; Reuters) Envoys of the Dalai Lama are in China for talks on allowing the region some form of autonomy, his office has announced. The meeting with Chinese officials is the fifth since contacts resumed in 2002. Discussions are conducted behind closed doors and details rarely emerge. The Dalai Lama's office said the negotiating team was led by the same envoy who had been involved in earlier rounds, Lodi Gyari. Thubten Samphel, spokesman for the government-in-exile, said the previous round of talks, in 2005, which he described as "very intensive" and "frank", had given Tibetans hope. "Our ultimate hope is to resolve the issue of Tibet on the basis of negotiated settlement with the Chinese leadership so that Tibet's people will have the freedom to preserve what is important to us, which is our cultural identity", he said. While declining to comment on the Tibet issue since it was an "internal affair", the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said, at a regular press conference, that some "overseas Tibetans" were visiting their motherland in a "private capacity". "The Chinese Government cares for the future of overseas Tibetan compatriots."

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