

[China to lodge representations to India over Dalai Lama's visit](#)

China said on Wednesday it will lodge solemn representations to India over the Dalai Lama's visit to the disputed border region.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying made the remarks at a routine press conference, responding to media reports that the Dalai Lama, regarded by China as a political exile who has attempted to split Tibet from Chinese territory under the cloak of religion, arrived in the so-called "Arunachal Pradesh" for a visit on Tuesday.

Despite China's concerns, India persisted in arranging the Dalai Lama to visit the disputed zone in the eastern part of the China-India border area, severely damaging China's interests and China-India relations, Hua said.

"China firmly opposes this and will lodge solemn representations to India," Hua said.

"Our stance on the eastern part of the China-India border is clear and consistent," Hua said. "Well aware of the Dalai Lama's role, India reneged on its commitments on Tibet-related issues and stirred up the border dispute by hosting the Dalai Lama in the sensitive disputed region," Hua said.

This move runs counter to the development of bilateral relations and will not bring any good to India, the spokesperson said, warning that China will take necessary measures to safeguard its territorial sovereignty and legitimate interests.

The spokesperson demanded India immediately stop using the Dalai Lama to damage Chinese interests and refrain from playing up the sensitive issues between the two countries or damaging the foundation for border talks and bilateral relations.

"India should work to protect the big picture of bilateral relations with real action," Hua said.

[Officials removed after fatal road accident in China](#)

Three officials have been removed from their posts after a road accident in central China's Hunan Province Monday killed 12 people, local authorities said Tuesday.

A truck owned by a landscaping company overturned at about 5:50 p.m. Monday as it was transporting workers after they finished their tree planting work in Chenzhou City, the city's publicity department said.

Another 19 were injured and receiving treatment.

According to the department, Zhou Yong, deputy head of the city's Suxian District, who oversees the district's forestry work, has been removed from office on Tuesday night. The director and chief engineer of the district's forestry bureau were also removed from their posts.

The investigation continues.

Radio interview with Brian Carlton, 7AD

BRIAN CARLTON:

Prime Minister good morning

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah great to be with you.

BRIAN CARLTON:

Now was this a hard deal, a hard agreement to reach? And to what extent were you sort of pressured into it with the threat of having to actually physically run the hospital if you'd not agreed to this deal?

PRIME MINISTER:

Oh look I think the most important thing is to celebrate the outcome. We were there, as you would have seen at the hospital, you can see how thrilled the community is and it's a wonderful hospital. You know, there are people there that have worked for 30, 40 years. Julie Duff, the Head of Nursing, working there for 42 years. When she started there as a 17-year-old she told me her mother was a registered nurse there, so long ago they were wearing veils then. And, you know, the sense of relief in the community that the funding is now secure, the hospital will be owned again by Tasmania which was obviously the right level of Government to own it and the funding is secured there for ten years.

There's a real sense of joy and relief, I was delighted to be able to go there and meet with them and see the great work they're doing. It's a great team, it's not the biggest hospital in Australia but, gee, it's got a big heart.

BRIAN CARLTON:

It certainly does punch above its weight more often than not Prime Minister, no doubt about that. Tell me, did you have any interest whatsoever in maintaining ownership of the hospital?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well Brian, look I think the important thing is our interest is in ensuring that Tasmanians and indeed all Australians have access to the finest public health, finest hospital care that can be provided. And so the outcome, my focus and that of the Health Minister Greg Hunt, was very much on what is the right outcome for Tasmanians and clearly it is part of the Tasmanian Government's public health system, it clearly should be able, it shouldn't be operating in a silo.

And we were talking to the Head of the Emergency Department there and she made exactly that point, that this will make it so much easier for them to work and collaborate with the other hospitals in the region you know the North-West Regional Hospital and of course Launceston General and so that collaboration between the, you know, the professional medical teams is going to be made a lot easier, so I think that's good.

BRIAN CARLTON:

Now Prime Minister how did you manage to find \$730 million in one hit in the current budget period and with the current considerations?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well we'll set all that out in the Budget. I'm getting lots of questions on the Budget Brian at the moment and all I can say is the Budget is in May. But all of that will be set out in the Budget.

BRIAN CARLTON:

Okay, but you're guaranteeing that it will be delivered in one tranche not over a period of years?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes.

No, no it's being paid, it's being paid. This represents the funding that would have been provided over ten years paid in one you know lump sum now and of course that gives the state great flexibility, it gives them greater freedom and it means this hospital is Tasmania's. They've made an absolutely iron clad commitment to maintaining the hospital and its services but they've now got, it gives the state greater flexibility and autonomy in managing the financial side of it and that's good because it's a great state led by a great Premier in Will Hodgman.

BRIAN CARLTON:

I know your time is short Prime Minister, just a quick one if I may – there was a good deal of consternation in the State a week or so ago, in fact two weeks ago when the announcement was made by Christopher Pyne to establish what's being seen as a parallel college in the marine space to the one we already have here, the AMC in Launceston, that \$24 million if I'm not mistaken to establish a similar operation in Adelaide was looked at as – hang on, why are we doing that? We could create the defense hub here and spoke it into Adelaide. We're already the hub, now we're becoming the spoke? A lot of people are a bit upset about that plan, pork barreling is a term that's been used.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I was actually just speaking to Christopher Pyne about this as I have done on several occasions. The big naval ship building program that we have and the bigger ships will be built in Osborne in South Australia.

It is an enormous boost for the Maritime College in Tasmania, an absolutely enormous boost because it's going to provide the demand for thousands of skilled workers in all of the areas of naval architecture and every trade and profession associated with that, and of course it's also going to require a lot more seafarers as well.

This is a very big opportunity, the technical college which is a trade technical college that will be set up at Osborne was designed to be there where the work is being done. So clearly you're going to have your trades training done in parallel with the construction but of course a lot of the work, a lot of the trainees, the students will be doing training in Launceston and indeed elsewhere in Australia. This is a huge national enterprise.

This ship building, naval ship building exercise is the biggest commitment to naval ship building in our peace time history.

You know for six years the Labor Party didn't commission one Australian ship from one Australian yard.

So what we're doing now is making this massive commitment. We need it to give our Navy the capability to keep us safe. But it is also providing the commitment to the advanced manufacturing, the skills, the long term manufacturing industry base that we need to secure our future.

And Tasmania and the Maritime College is going to play an enormous part in that. Believe me, this is a, this should, what's happening in Osborne should be seen as an opportunity, as a real opportunity for greater demand and greater growth from the Maritime College in Tasmania.

BRIAN CARLTON:

PM it was just a sense that the AMC here, the Maritime College could be the hub rather than the spoke.

Look I know your time is very short, one quick thing, very disturbing story –

what are your briefings telling you about, intelligence briefings, about what's occurred in Syria in the past 24 hours? We're getting messages of a gas attack. The finger is already being pointed at the Assad regime. What are your intelligence briefings telling you this morning?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, let me just say this, this attack we absolutely condemn this horrendous attack. The, if the Assad regime has used chemical weapons as is being alleged, that constitutes a war crime. It constitutes a shocking war crime.

The Assad regime should abide by the laws of armed conflict and there should be and will be I've no doubt, a full investigation into the circumstances of what appears to, well what has been, appears to be, a horrendous use of chemical weapons which we condemn.

BRIAN CARLTON:

It's an interesting thing for the Syrians to do just when it was becoming the realpolitik of the regime that would have to stay in Damascus until at least the ISIS situation and the rebel situation is sorted out then we deal with them. It just doesn't make any logical sense for Assad to go on a chemical rampage, and 48 hours after that sort of determination has been made.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah, well again I can say that we absolutely condemn the use of chemical weapons. The Assad regime must end their production and the use of chemical weapons immediately. We co-sponsored a resolution of the UN General Assembly establishing an independent mechanism for collecting evidence on crimes of this kind committed in Syria and we absolutely support the measures to ensure that those responsible for this use of chemical weapons are held accountable.

Now the United States, well, as I said, I won't go any further than that. But this certainly has been condemned by Governments around the world. The United States has concluded that the attack was made by the Assad regime and both the President and the US Secretary of State have condemned these attacks in the same terms that I am condemning them now.

BRIAN CARLTON:

Will there be any kind of stronger response?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well that is the next step. There are already sanctions in relation to Syria and we'll be talking with our allies in this conflict to determine what the next step of response and sanctions can be.

BRIAN CARLTON:

Appreciate your time this morning Prime Minister, thank you.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you so much.

BRIAN CARLTON:

And appreciate also the deal, the \$730 million deal for the Mersey Hospital. That is absolutely a good outcome no doubt about that.

[ENDS]

No deal is better than a bad deal

The Prime Minister was right to say that. Those who think leaving is a complex negotiation should grasp that we would not have a negotiation unless we are willing to walk away. We would have dictation by the other side.

Fortunately the PM understands the strength of the UK position, and understands that No deal would work better for us than for them. It would be a lot better than a punishment deal of the kind some in the Commission have flirted with. In reality it need not be a negotiation at all. It is a series of choices for the rest of the EU, where a friendly and positive UK offers them various advantages which they may or may not want to take up.

If they take up none of our offers when we leave we will be like most of the other 160 countries around the world that are not part of the EU. We will trade with the rest of the EU on WTO most favoured nation terms, just as we trade with China, India and the USA today. We will no longer have special sharing arrangements on defence and Intelligence, other than through our common partnership in NATO. We will impose WTO tariffs against their agricultural exports to us, with the options of growing more at home and inviting in more produce tariff free from elsewhere in the world where it suits our industry and consumers. We will reclaim our fishing grounds. We will spend our own money on our own priorities.

The UK is making a positive and generous set of offers. We are proposing that the rest of the EU keeps tariff free access to our lucrative market, with no new barriers of other kinds. They just need to agree the same for us, and they can carry on exporting so much more to us than we sell to them.

We are proposing that the UK continues to share its Intelligence with them, and to make a contribution to European defence and security initiatives and commitments.

We are proposing that the UK develops a number of friendly collaborations and partnerships in science, education, joint investments and the rest.

These need not be negotiations. They are choices for the EU to make. If they are sensible they will wish to maximise the contribution the UK makes and the access they have to our market. I remain an optimist, thinking well of our partners and expecting them to take the offers that are so manifestly in their own interest. If by any chance they do not, the UK will be just fine. Accepting the very limited tariffs on our exports allowed under WTO rules would be much cheaper than the mountainous bills some have in mind for us to pay. The tariffs we imposed on their exports to us would be much larger and could be given back to UK consumers and businesses as compensation.

If we get a decent free trade Agreement between the UK and the EU I do not expect them to ditch it at the last moment because they wish to advance Spain's claim to Gibraltar. Gibraltar's sovereignty rests with the Gibraltarians, who have made clear their wish by overwhelming vote to remain attached to the UK.

[News story: Champions League policing bolstered by £1.4m UK Government grant](#)

The security operation surrounding the Champions League final in Cardiff has been boosted by a £1.4million contribution from UK Government, Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns announced today.

The UK Government has confirmed that it has approved a Special Grant application made by the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner to cover the additional costs of policing the biggest game in European club football on 3 June.

Cardiff's Principality Stadium will play host to the showpiece event which is expected to attract a worldwide audience of several hundred million and generate £45m for the Cardiff economy.

The City of Cardiff Stadium will also host the women's Champions League final (1 June) and around 250,000 people are expected to descend on the capital to enjoy the four-day festival of events during the week.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Cardiff has consistently proven its calibre in delivering high profile events on an international stage. The eyes of the world will once again be upon us as we prepare to host the Champions League finals.

The safety and security of the hundreds of thousands of people set to flood into the city and surrounding areas at this time is of

paramount importance. The UK Government is determined to ensure that Wales, and the UK, are seen in the best possible light on the worldwide stage and the policing of the event will be crucial in achieving this.

I am delighted that we have been able to provide this funding for South Wales Police. I know the whole city is looking forward to giving visiting supporters a wonderful welcome at what will be a safe and successful Champions League final later this year.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Brandon Lewis said:

I am pleased to confirm that £1.4million in special grant funding has been allocated to support South Wales Police at the Champions League final in Cardiff. I am sure it will be a fantastic event for the city of Cardiff to host.

The UK Government has protected police funding since the 2015 Spending Review and it is right that in exceptional circumstances we provide additional resources in order to make sure we keep our communities safe and secure.