

Dalai Lama praises India, was 'anxious' ahead of Arunachal trip

Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama said in remarks to be telecast Monday that he was 'anxious' ahead of his Arunachal Pradesh visit and praised India for standing up to China.

'I was very anxious before going to Tawang (in Arunachal Pradesh),' the Dalai Lama said in an interview to NDTV.

'I did not want things to escalate between India and China,' the Tibetan leader said.

Sino-Indian relations became tense ahead of the Dalai Lama's trip to a Tibetan monastery at Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, a sprawling region Beijing claims as its own.

China had demanded that the Dalai Lama, whose government-in-exile is based in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, should not be allowed to visit Arunachal Pradesh.

New Delhi made it clear that the Dalai Lama was an honoured guest of India and was free to visit any part of the country.

The issue came up for discussions between Prime Ministers Manmohan Singh of India and Wen Jiabao of China at Hua Hin in Thailand, after which Chinese criticism of [New Delhi](#) appeared to tone down.

The Dalai Lama felt that his host since 1959 had stayed firm against China in recent months despite intense pressure from Beijing.

He also defended US President Barack Obama, who has come under criticism for not putting much pressure on China over the Tibet issue during his visit to Beijing this month.

'Obama is not soft on China, just has a different style,' said the Dalai Lama, who said that he was 'not disappointed' over the failure of Obama to meet him.

He said he believed that the US president would discuss Tibet with Manmohan Singh in Washington. 'I think Obama and the PM will discuss Tibet in Washington.'

The Dalai Lama is one of some 100,000 Tibetans who live in India.

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