



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on July 7, 2009

## Violence and Riots in China Continue

"My husband was taken away yesterday by police. They didn't say why. They just took him away," an Uighur woman identified as Maliya told Reuters. Almost 1,500 Muslim ethnic Uighurs were detained by the government over the unrest, prompting family and friends to take to the streets again demanding their release. The minority was originally protesting against the deaths of two Uighur factory workers who died at the hands of members of China's main ethnic group, the Han — when riots broke out Sunday. Since then, the ethnic strife has only intensified.



More than 20,000 armed police and soldiers have been deployed to Urumqi, the heart of the unrest, in an effort to quell the violence. Access to the Internet has been cut off to prevent further organizing of rioters, the local head of the Communist Party said. The government even declared a three-day holiday. A curfew was also imposed. Witnesses said police have fired tear gas and live rounds at the rioters, even crushing some under armored vehicles.

On Monday, armed Han counter-protesters roamed the streets seeking revenge, according to multiple reports. "Protecting our home, protect our family members," they shouted between singing the national anthem and ripping down government signs urging residents to preserve "social harmony." "They attacked us. Now it's our turn to attack them," a Han protester told Reuters.

A government statement released on Monday said, "The violence is a pre-empted and organized crime. It is instigated and directed from abroad, and carried out by outlaws in the country," referring to a banned dissident group advocating independence known as the Uighur World Congress. The Munich-based Muslim separatist organization is led by former businesswoman Rebiya Kadeer, who spent years languishing in a Chinese jail on charges of harming national security.

"The authorities should ... acknowledge that their failure to take any meaningful action to punish the Chinese mob for the brutal murder of Uyghurs is the real cause of this protest," the World Uighur Congress said in a statement. Kadeer, the group's leader and a mother of 11, defended the protesters, saying, "They were not violent as the Chinese government has accused. They were not rioters or separatists." But she blasted "the violent actions of some of the Uighur demonstrators," adding that her organization only supports peaceful protests.

Rumors apparently helped fuel the spread of the riots, with Han Chinese believing Uighurs had killed patients at the local hospital, among other atrocities. According to the *Telegraph*, some Uighurs were under the impression that hundreds of their women had been raped by Han, or that 600 Uighurs had been killed and chopped into small pieces by Han factory workers. Early Tuesday, the province's Communist Party boss said that although Sunday's unrest had dissipated, "This struggle is far from over."

*Photo: AP Images*



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