

## British Horse Society Appeals for Release of Jailed Rider

**After entering India to seek medical and veterinary help, the rider was denounced as a "Chinese spy" by the authorities and thrown into jail.**

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British Horse Society president Noel Edmonds has written to Indian president Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam to plead for the release of jailed British equestrian Daniel Robinson.

Robinson, 38, was arrested last October for not having a visa after entering India to seek medical and veterinary help. He was nearing the end of a 200-day, 3000 kilometer ride along the ancient trans-Himalayan Tea Horse Caravan Road from Dequn in Yunnan Province, southwest China, to the Tibetan capital Lhasa.

The rider was denounced as a "Chinese spy" by the Indian authorities, thrown into jail and subsequently sentenced to a year's imprisonment. He is now said to be sleeping on the floor of an overcrowded cell containing 150 prisoners.

The U.S.-based Long Riders Guild, an invitation-only international association of equestrian explorers, has told The British Horse Society that when Robinson's appeal is heard tomorrow the prosecutors are set to call for his sentence to be increased to 10 years.

In his letter, Edmonds acknowledges that Robinson committed a visa offense, while asking the Indian President to recognize that harm was neither intended nor committed, because the rider was merely seeking urgent medical and veterinary aid.

"The British Horse Society asks the Indian government to accept that no disrespect of Indian law was intended, that no harm to the peace and well-being of the Indian people was ever likely to ensue from Daniel's error in looking to the Indian authorities for humanitarian assistance," Edmonds wrote. "To prolong his imprisonment would be to continue to punish a man for an offense which was committed wholly without intention to do harm."