

Dalai Lama remains at Mayo clinic after canceling US events

Doctors urged Nobel peace laureate to rest for several weeks after annual checkup, but there are no details about the state of his health

Reuters in Rochester, Minnesota

Monday 28 September 2015 05.37 AEST

Tibet's exiled Buddhist leader, the Dalai Lama, on Sunday remained at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, for evaluation following a medical visit his office said was a routine annual checkup.

The 80-year-old Nobel peace laureate canceled a planned October visit to the US at the advice of doctors following a medical checkup this week, his office said in a statement on Friday.

The statement said doctors had urged him to rest for several weeks, though it gave no indication that he was ill nor details about his state of health.

On Sunday, Mayo spokeswoman Ginger Plumbo confirmed he remained at the clinic for evaluation but said she could offer no further details about his stay.

The Dalai Lama's India-based secretary, Tenzin Taklha, said in an email last week the Dalai Lama was going to the Mayo for an annual medical checkup but was not ill.

The Dalai Lama's checkup came as heads of state and diplomats were gathering for the annual United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York, but he had no plans to meet with any world leaders in conjunction with the session, Taklha said on Thursday.

Chinese president Xi Jinping was due to make his UN debut. China has ruled Tibet since communist troops took over the Himalayan region in 1950 and regards the Dalai Lama as a dangerous separatist.

The Dalai Lama, who fled into exile in India in 1959, has denied claims that he is seeking independence for Tibet, advocating instead for greater autonomy of the region through dialogue with Beijing.

His presence in the US also coincided with the visit of Pope Francis, who met President Barack Obama and addressed the UN on Friday.

Smith College issued a statement on Friday saying the Dalai Lama had canceled scheduled appearances for October there and at two nearby Massachusetts schools, Amherst College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

CNBC reported that the Dalai Lama had also been due to appear next month in Boulder, Colorado, Salt Lake City and Philadelphia.

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