



# TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 19 - ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2015

## FOCUS

China Co-opts a Buddhist Sect in Global Effort to Smear Dalai Lama

\*\*\*\*

## DOCUMENTATION

Statements of Kashag and Tibetan Parliament on the 26th Anniversary of  
Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama

\*\*\*\*

## FEATURE

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Inaugurates New Tashi Lhunpo  
Assembly Hall at Bylakuppe

\*\*\*\*

## WORLD PRESS

China's Database of 'Living Buddhas' is the Latest Attempt  
to Control Tibetan Affairs

\*\*\*\*



Jhangtse Choeje, Gaden Tripa, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Sharpa Choeje outside the newly constructed Office and Residence of the Gaden Tripa (Gaden Trithok Khang) in Mundgod, Karnataka, India on December 8, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay addressing the students and faculties of Christ University in Bangalore on 14 December.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with special guests Karnataka PWD Minister Dr HC Mahadevappa and Hunsur MLA, HP Manjunath during celebrations commemorating the 26th anniversary of his receiving the Nobel Peace Prize at Gyumey Tantric College in Hunsur, Karnataka, India on December 10, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

---

## FOCUS

9. China Co-opts a Buddhist Sect in Global Effort to Smear Dalai Lama  
- Reuters
14. Dharamshala Honours His Holiness the Dalai Lama – Messenger of Peace – on Nobel Peace Prize Day
- 

## DOCUMENTATION

15. Statement of the Kashag on the 26th Anniversary of Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great Dalai Lama of Tibet
17. Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the 26th Anniversary of Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great Dalai Lama
- 

## FEATURE

21. His Holiness the Dalai Lama Inaugurates New Tashi Lhunpo Assembly Hall at Bylakuppe
22. His Holiness the Dalai Lama was Chief Guest at Abdul Kalam Seva Ratna Awards Ceremony
- 

## WORLD PRESS

24. China's Database of 'Living Buddhas' is the Latest Attempt to Control Tibetan Affairs  
- TIME Magazine
26. China Passes Controversial Counter-Terrorism Law  
- Reuters
27. A Showcase of Tibetan Culture Serves Chinese Political Goals  
- The New York Times
28. China Still Uses Medieval Torture Methods Against Opponents – Amnesty  
- The Guardian
29. Pelosi on Rare Visit to Tibet by US Congressional Delegation  
- Associated Press
30. Tibet is the Canary in the Coal Mine  
- Al Jazeera-America

## REGULARS

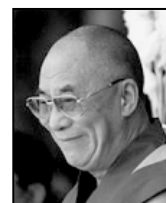
News From Tibet & Exile .....4  
Contact ..... 31

Quotes .....32



# TIBETAN BULLETIN

*Tibetan Bulletin* is an official bi-monthly journal of the Central Tibetan Administration.



Signed articles or quotations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Central Tibetan Administration. Contributions are welcome and may be addressed to the editor, Tibetan Bulletin. However the publisher regrets its inability to return unused articles unless they are accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with adequate postage.

Tibetan Bulletin is distributed free of charge. To subscribe please email the circulation manager or see inside back cover□

Editor  
Jamphel Shonu  
Email: tibbul@tibet.net

Asst. Editor  
Tenzin Yangchen

Layout & Design  
Dorje Tsering

Circulation Manager  
Tenzin Rabka  
Email: circulation@tibet.net  
Tibetan Bulletin is published by:  
Department of Information and  
International Relations,  
Central Tibetan Administration,  
Dharamshala- 176 215 H.P. India  
Tel: +91-1892-222510 / 222457

Vol. 19, Issue 6

**NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2015**

## Sikyong Attends Halifax International Security Forum

At the invitation of the organisers, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the democratically elected political leader of the Tibetan people, attended the Halifax International Security Forum from 20 – 22 November.

At the forum, Sikyong participated in the panel discussion “From India to Japan: The Importance of Democratic Asia” along with experts on democracy and prominent leaders from Asia. Dr. Daniel Twining, Senior Fellow for Asia, German Marshall Fund of the United States hosted the panel.

During the panel discussion, Sikyong spoke on the universality of democracy and China being the new frontier, particularly the need for like minded democracies in Asia to cooperate for common objective of freedom and mutual respect.

The opening speech of the forum was delivered by Mr. Harjit Singh Sajjan, Minister of National Defense, Canada.

Over 300 world leaders and security experts from 60 countries took part in the three-day forum including Mohammed Abulouh, head of Justice and Building Party, Yemen; General John Allen, Center for 21st Century Security, NATO generals, high ranking military officials from Asia-Indo Pacific region and governmental ministers including US Senators Tim Kaine, John Barrasso, among others.

The forum deliberated on a wide range of issues, from taking the fight to Daesh on the ground and on the web, to Russia’s and China’s growing military aggression, and the need for the world to accept its collective responsibility to welcome refugees fleeing conflict zones.

Sikyong’s panel was off the record and therefore it was not allowed to take pictures or record their discussions.

Halifax International Security Forum is a non-profit, non-partisan organisation based in Washington, D.C. It brings together informed leaders and engaged decision-makers from governments, military, business, academia, and the media to consider international security threats and build democracy, creating opportunity and promoting peace.

## UN Experts Press China on Use of Torture in Prisons

U.N. experts pressed Chinese officials about the allegations of rampant use of torture in its prisons during a two-day scrutiny of China’s human rights record at a forum held at Geneva in November 2015.

The United Nations Committee Against Torture (CAT) questioned China on issues ranging from employing torture methods, including interrogation chairs, solitary confinement, medical access for detainees and prisoners and other related issues. It particularly requested information about political prisoners, including ethnic Tibetans and Uyghurs.

However, the Chinese delegation categorically denied holding any political prisoners or torturing them. It further evaded questions refusing to go into details about the number of police or prison guards prosecuted for torture and the treatment of high-profile prisoners, including several who died in custody.

“There are no such cases of political prisoners. The allegation of cruel treatment of suspects from ethnic minority groups is groundless,” said Jin Chunzi of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, adding that China uses solitary confinement only as a management tool.

“We use the interrogation chair to guarantee the safety of the detainee, to prevent the detainee from escaping, from self-harm or attacking other people. The chair is sometimes packaged with soft padding to increase a sense of comfort, a sense of safety,” he said, referring to the chair used during interrogation of

prisoners by Chinese authorities.

Committee chairman Claudio Grossman said in his summary: “I was surprised to hear that solitary confinement is a ‘management tool’. I want clarification because it is certainly perceived as a penalty.”

The only political prisoner on whose case China responded pertained to Tibetan political prisoner Tulku Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, who died while in Chinese custody on 12 July 2015.

Contrary to widespread media reports, the Chinese delegation claimed that Tulku Tenzin Delek Rinpoche received adequate medical treatment and that his body was cremated according to local customs and his ashes scattered locally along with his family in attendance.

Golog Jigme, a former Tibetan political prisoner who escaped from Chinese prison in 2012, was present at the two-day CAT session. Voicing disappointment and outrage, he said, “I can honestly say there was not the slightest truth in anything they said today. Regarding the interrogation chair, which was highly debated today, they said it was for the detainee’s safety. Look at my wounds, on my hands and feet, in fact it was brutal torture.”

The Chinese delegation’s response at the CAT China review also evoked derision and outcries from rights activists and Chinese dissidents. “Not only did the delegation provide false information to the committee but they also failed or refused to answer specific questions based on allegations made by victims, human rights organizations and others,” they said.

Wu Hailong, China’s permanent ambassador to the United Nations headed the Chinese delegation at the two-day CAT session.

The Committee Against Torture (CAT) is the body of 10 independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading treatment or Punishment by its State parties.

## Sikyong Speaks at 2nd India Ideas Conclave in Goa

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay spoke on 'Mother Earth, Mother Nature – The Eastern Wisdom' on 16 November during a panel discussion at the three-day 2nd India Ideas Conclave in Goa.

The theme of the conclave was 'Learnings From Civilisation' – an ode to understanding contemporary India and its global context through a civilisational lens of a society on the forward move.

Over 350 intellectuals including Union Ministers, professionals, journalists, politicians and social activists are participating in the prestigious three-day conclave. Prominent personalities include Union Railways Minister Suresh Prabhu, Prime Minister of Bhutan Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay, Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar, Goa's Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar, Minister of State for Finance Jayant Sinha, Rajya Sabha MP M J Akbar and Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, the spiritual leader and founder of Isha Foundation.

In his remarks, Sikyong spoke on the importance of the fragile Tibetan plateau and the global impact of Tibet's ecological destruction. He implored the world to commit to a strong climate change agreement at the upcoming COP21 summit for the health and sustainability of the entire world.

"The Tibetan plateau is going through a disastrous experience of illegal mining, deforestation, damming of rivers, etc. This is harming the environmental health of not only Tibet but also of its neighbors, particularly the countries lying downstream," Sikyong said.

"Tibetans, as Buddhists, are peaceful and maintain harmony with nature. So much so that mountains and the soil are considered sacred and revered as the abode of gods and deities. We are governed by a concept of Mahakaruna:

that you need to have Karuna for everything including nature as well as sentient beings," Sikyong explained.

However, Sikyong explained that the modern man with science as a weapon is moving on a self-destructive mode. "The modern man thinks he can dominate everything including Mother Nature. They say they want to win the battle with nature. But if you think carefully, if humans win the battle with nature, they are actually on the losing side because if nature loses, you lose," he said, underlining the need for harmony between nature and the survival of humanity.

"Most of the natural calamities including tsunami and global warming are created in part by man. The recent heat wave across Europe, for instance, was caused by melting of glaciers in Tibet according to some environmental experts from China," Sikyong noted.

Emphasising the need for recognition of the Tibetan plateau's global significance, Sikyong said: "Tibet is not only the largest and highest plateau in the world; it is home to the third-largest store of ice and the largest source of accessible fresh water on the planet. It is also the head source of Asia's six largest rivers, flowing into the 10 most-densely populated nations. Therefore, Tibet should be central to the environmental discussions."

Chief Guest at the Inaugural session was the Bhutanese Prime Minister and the keynote Speaker of the session was Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev. Chair of the valedictory session was Hon'ble Governor of Goa H.E. Smt. Mridula Sinha and valedictory address was delivered by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry (Independent Charge).

The second India Ideas Conclave was held in Goa from 15 – 17 November. India Foundation, an independent research centre focused on issues, challenges and opportunities of the Indian polity, organised the conclave.

## DIIR Secretary Interacts with Delhi IIMC Students

Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Secretary of Information of the Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration spoke to a group of 32 media students and a professor from Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) at DIIR hall on 25 November 2015.

Underlining details of the democratic structure of the Central Tibetan Administration i.e. Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission (Judiciary), Tibetan Parliament (Legislative) and the Kashag (Executive), the Secretary said that the establishment of the Central Tibetan Administration in India is a continuation of Tibetan governance prior to Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1949.

He further highlighted the evolution of the Tibetan democratic polity since the establishment of Commission of Tibetan People's Deputy in 1960 and the transition of Holiness the Dalai Lama's political authority from a semi-retirement in 1991 with the direct election of Kalon Tripa by the exiled Tibetans followed by entire devolution of political authority to an elected Tibetan leadership in 2011.

The students visited Upper TCV and had meetings with heads of the Environment and Development Desk and Tibet Policy Institute of DIIR as well as representatives of Tibetan NGOs, Director of Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives during their visit. They also had an audience with His Eminence Gyalwang Karmapa Rinpoche at Gyutoe tantric monastery.

The tour, from 24-27 November, was arranged by New Delhi based India-Tibet Coordination Office (ITCO) as a part of its annual awareness program on Tibet. It was aimed to forge a better understanding and awareness about Tibet and its struggle among the Indian public.

## China State Sanctioned Repression in Diru Exposed

The contents of a leaked official document exposes the intensive anti-religious campaigns sanctioned by the Chinese government in Diru County, according to the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD).

“These campaigns aim to systematically convert Tibetan monastic institutions into Chinese government offices and the monastic population into Chinese Communist Party members,” said Ms. Tsering Tsomo, Director of TCHRD at a press conference on 9 November.

“Yet in general policies that aim to restrict the Tibetans have had little or no success. In July 2013, official Chinese media reported the implementation of the party’s ‘adhere to mass line and building harmony’ campaign for the third time in Diru County. The officials and framer of such policies are taken back by its lack of effectiveness reflected clearly by protests and self immolations,” she added.

The campaigns were implemented through local County government and party. It severely curtailed the right to freedom of religion and belief of local Tibetans, particularly the monastics many of whom have been expelled and punished, as the authorities exercise absolute control over the functioning and administration over religious institutions, the rights group said.

The document obtained by TCHRD contains a set of regulations divided into three chapters, 24 sections and 74 articles and has been circulated among relevant County, Township/town level offices, Monastery Management Committees, relevant management committees, monastic and village based permanently stationed cadres.

The regulation identifies and targets 24 activities through which religious institutions (monasteries, temples

and hermitages) will be “purged and reformed” in Diru County. For instance, the Chinese authorities will keep an account of all monastic properties, and retain the sole authority to decide over their storage and repair. The authorities will monitor and control religious gatherings and ceremonies restricting local Tibetans from organizing or participating in important religious rituals.

The Chinese authorities will control all financial activities of religious institutions including offerings made to reincarnate or senior monks. Restrictions are placed on monasteries, reincarnate or senior monks, and individual monastics from making donations towards victims of natural disasters, or offering help in the form of loans to poor Tibetans. The regulation intensifies attempts to replace religious vows of monks and nuns with state ideology by making political education mandatory. Every Thursday monks and nuns at all religious institutions in Diru County are required to attend political education sessions.

The Diru County government retains the sole right to recognize and appoint reincarnate or other prominent religious personalities. These religious personalities are forced to lead and participate in political education campaigns, which is aimed at making monks and nuns into spokespersons of the party and the government.

## DIIR Kalon Implores World to Protect Tibetan Plateau

Kalon Dicki Chhoyang of the Department of Information and International Relations, implored the international community to protect the fragile ecosystem of Tibet and make Tibet a key issue in any global climate change conference at the conclusion of two-day All-India Tibet Support Group Meeting in Guwahati.

Speaking at the conference, DIIR Kalon said: “On 20 October, we launched a campaign called ‘Tibet – Climate Ac-

tion for the Roof of the World’. During the campaign, His Holiness the Dalai Lama recorded a special video message in which he said this blue planet is our only home. And Tibet is the roof of that home.”

“This campaign was launched because in November-December at Paris, there is going to be a very important conference on the environment and climate change where world leaders like President Obama, Xi Jinping, will be present to try to reach an agreement on climate change. And we want to highlight the climate change issues on Tibet that have a global impact and share that with the rest of the world including India and the people of the northeast, who are directly affected by several of these issues such as erosion of permafrost, drying of rivers or melting of glaciers,” she said.

DIIR Kalon also spoke about the campaign’s 10-point call to action that urges the United Nations to recognize the global significance of the Tibetan plateau and commit to a strong climate change agreement at COP21. It also called on China to respect the traditional way of life of Tibetan pastoral nomads, regulate urbanization and implement its own recently adopted environmental protection law.

DIIR Kalon also spoke about the historical bond shared by the two countries of Tibet and India, drawing on the Tibetan script, religion and poetry that are largely derived from ancient Indian cultural heritage.

“Tibetan and Indian cultures are like the two branches of the same Bodhi tree. The Tibetan script is derived from the Gupta script of India and the Buddhism adopted by Tibetans is referred to as the Nalanda tradition,” DIIR Kalon said, adding that there is also a third aspect to the Indo-Tibetan bond that is of great interest.

“There is a large portion of Indic culture that has been incorporated into the Tibetan heritage. Tibetan poetry is based on the Kavyadarsh (classical Sanskrit poetry), Tibetan morality and norms are based on the Neeti Sastra (collection of

morals written by Baddena, a Telugu poet) and the Tibetan treatises on the music are based on the *Natyashastra* (an ancient Indian treatise on theater, dance and music). So, as you can see, we have a multi-dimensional, longstanding and deep-rooted friendship, and partnership with India,” DIIR Kalon said, drawing a large round of applause from the participants.

DIIR Secretary Sonam Norbu Dagpo in his address spoke about the present situation of Tibet, underlining the critical political and human rights situation prevailing inside Tibet under the repressive policies of the Chinese government. He also spoke about the growing international support for Tibet.

“Since China’s invasion of Tibet, the situation inside Tibet has been of grave concern to everyone. Therefore, in order to whitewash the reality of Tibet and to portray a harmonious and prosperous image of Tibet, China has published a series of White papers on Tibet. But in reality, Tibetans do not have human rights, they do not have rights to practice their own religion and culture, and Tibetan language has been banned and Tibetan Buddhist teachings have been restricted,” he said.

“After the death of Mao Zedong, there was a slight liberalization. Tibetans tried to revive the monasteries and religious centers. However, though the monasteries are rebuilt, restrictions were imposed on the number of monks. Moreover, Communist Party officials called Democratic Management Committees are constantly monitoring the monasteries,” he added.

Others who spoke at the concluding session of the conference include Dr. N.K. Trikha, National Convener of the Core Group for Tibetan Cause, Mr. Jigme Tsultrim, Coordinator of India-Tibet Coordination Office (ITCO), among others.

The event was widely covered in the local and national dailies including the Times of India, The Assam Tribune, The Telegraph, The Sentinel, Janasadhara, Dainikpurvoday, etc.

## Tibet Owes Democratic Polity to His Holiness: Speaker Penpa Tsering

“The contemporary Tibetan democratic polity is an outcome of years of strenuous study of global politics by His Holiness the Dalai Lama,” Speaker Penpa Tsering of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile said at the third day of the Leadership Workshop for class X students conducted by the Department of Education at Lower TCV.

The Speaker reiterated that His Holiness had always aspired to have a democratic form of Tibetan administration since assuming the role of temporal and spiritual leadership of Tibet. He further mentioned that the concept of democratisation of the Tibetan administrative system struck his mind during his visit to China and India in 1954-56 where he observed two complete contradictory forms of governments.

Explaining in detail about the Tibetan Parliament, Speaker said that the democratisation of Tibetan administration has endured several phases to evolve itself to its current status. He categorised the evolution of Tibetan democratic form of administration into three phases; from 1960-1990, 1991-2001 and from 2001-2011.

“After the establishment of Tibetan Government in Exile in 1959 in the north Indian hill station of Mussoorie which later shifted to Dharamshala in 1960, His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the first time outlined a detailed program designed to introduce the practice of democratisation. His Holiness advised setting up an elected body with three exile representatives each from the three provinces and one each from the four religious schools of Tibetan Buddhism-13 representatives were elected and designated as “The Commission of Tibetan People’s Deputies (CTPD).”

“In early 1990s, as per the vision of bringing the system closer to the core

of democracy, His Holiness convened a special meeting announcing further democratic reforms including election of an interim Kashag (Cabinet members) and expanded the strength of the Tibetan Parliament from 13 to 46,” he said, explaining the composition of the members of the Tibetan Parliament.

“The Tibetan Parliament in Exile, on the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 2001, suggested direct election of Kalon Tripa- the highest executive authority and subsequently Professor Samdhong Rinpoche was elected the Kalon Tripa by the people of Tibet. The Kalon Tripa then nominates other minister (Kalons/ Cabinet members) and seeks the approval of the parliamentarians for their appointment. It was when His Holiness announced his semi-retirement.”

“In 2011, in a historic development in the Tibetan democratic polity, His Holiness the Dalai Lama devolved the entire political authority to an elected Tibetan leadership. In August 2011, Dr Lobsang Sangay became the first political leader after the devolution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s political authority.”

Speaker mentioned that the Tibetan Parliament currently comprised of 45 members; ten representatives each from the three traditional provinces, 2 each from the five religious schools, 2 each from Tibetan communities in Europe and North America and 1 from Tibetans in Australasia.

Underlining the significance of comprehensive study of Tibetan history, Speaker said that different people narrate different accounts on Tibetan history thus urged the students to garner multi-perspective study of the Tibetan history to have individual assessment and avoid misconception and deception.

Speaker lamented the lack of awareness about Tibetan politics among the younger generation and said that Tibetans have quite happily placed the responsibility of the Tibetan struggle solely on His Holiness. He said this mentality needs to be addressed and urged that the Tibetan struggle is the responsibility of each and every Tibetan.



## Tibetan from Ngaba Detained Following Solo Protest

A young Tibetan was arrested by Chinese security forces after he staged a solo protest against the Chinese government's repressive policies in Tibet on 19 December.

Dressed in traditional Tibetan attire with a Buddhist flag on his shoulder and a huge portrait of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in his hands, Tashi Dondrub took to the main street of Dzoeg county in Ngaba (incorporated into China's Sichuan Province) criticising China's repressive policies in the area.

The Chinese security forces immediately arrived at the spot and arrested Dondrub. No information could be attained regarding his current status since then.

Chinese security forces also arrested Dondrub's paternal uncle Yeshe the next day.

Dondrub, who is also known as Chebe, lives with his mother in Section 3 of Ponkya village in Thangkor township.

## US Sanctions Six Million Dollars in Aid for Tibetans

In an expression of strong support for the Tibetan people, the US Congress in its budget for the fiscal year 2016 sanctioned a massive six million dollars in aid for Tibetans in India and Nepal.

The Congressional budget appropriation bill states "Of the funds appropriated by this Act under the heading, "Economic Support Fund" not less than \$6,000,000 shall be made available for programs to promote and preserve Tibetan culture, development, and the resilience of Tibetan communities in India and Nepal, and to assist in the education and development of the next generation of Tibetan leaders from such communities".

Notably, the six million dollar fund sanctioned this year by the US Congress is a

100% increase from the one sanctioned last year. The US Congress sanctioned \$3 million under a new line item to aid the Tibetan community in India and Nepal last year in its budget.

Expressing his profound gratitude, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay, the democratically elected political leader of the Tibetan people, said: "The Central Tibetan Administration would like to express its deep gratitude and thank the US government and Congress for their generous assistance towards the Tibetan community."

The massive six million dollar fund for the Tibetan people was part of the US Congressional budget worth \$1.8 trillion approved by US lawmakers for the financial year 2016. The US Congressional budget itself was a result of a rare bipartisan action after years of damaging fiscal fights in the Congress.

The Senate voted 65-33 to approve sweeping legislation that averted a government shutdown, locked in billions of dollars of tax breaks and scrapped a 40-year-old ban on the export of U.S. oil.

The budgetary bill was signed into law by President Barack Obama at a low-key Oval Office ceremony later in the evening on Friday, 18 December.

## Sikyong Speaks on 'India, Tibet and Asia'

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay spoke on 'Tibet, India and Asia – Geopolitical, Environmental and Historical relationship' at Christ University in Bangalore on 14 December.

Sikyong was welcomed by an appreciative audience from the Law and Political Science departments and the faculties.

Speaking on the relationship between Tibet, India and Asia from the geopolitical, environmental and historical perspective, Sikyong highlighted the intrinsic spiritual bond of teacher and student shared by India

and Tibet from the sixth century.

Paying respect to the great Indian scholars like Nagarjuna, Shantideva, Kamalashila, and the founder of Tibetan Buddhism Guru Padmasambhava, Sikyong remarked on the Indian roots of Tibetan Buddhism.

"Buddha Dharma spread from India to whole of Asia and particularly Tibet. The Indian scholar from Nalanda University were the ones who introduced Buddhism in Tibet. Therefore, historically Tibetan monasteries here in India and the Tibetan scholars are scholars and monasteries of Nalanda tradition," he said.

However, Sikyong went on to say that the practice of Buddhism as a distinct and organised religion gradually declined in the land of its birth, and the ancient Nalanda tradition was preserved in the form of Tibetan Buddhism.

"Therefore, we Tibetans take great pride in the fact that the best preserved Buddhist teachings are only in the Tibetan language. In some sense, we Tibetans brought the Nalanda tradition back in its origin," he admitted.

Emphasising on the strategic importance of Tibet in the geopolitical engagements between India and China, Sikyong said: "Before Tibet was invaded, it served as a zone of peace between the two largest populated country in the world. Once China occupied Tibet, the buffer zone was removed."

Sikyong then spoke on a more recent, environmental issue that China is reportedly diverging rivers from Tibet into China. He added that the Tibetan glaciers which contributes to the flow of these rivers are retreating at an alarming rate, posing an extra threat for the 1.3 billion people for whom these rivers are a source of life.

As Sikyong said, Tibet occupies a unique position in the world and said: "the good news is that nearly 200 countries at the COP21 climate summit signed an agreement to keep global temperature rise well-below 2 degree celsius."



## China Co-opts a Buddhist Sect in Global Effort to Smear Dalai Lama

By David Lague, Paul Mooney and Benjamin Kang Lim, Reuters

ALDERSHOT, England – Thousands of Buddhists from all over Britain packed into the Aldershot football stadium southwest of London on June 29, quietly waiting under a hot sun to see the Dalai Lama.

Just outside the turnstiles, another group of Buddhists awaited the Tibetan spiritual leader.

“False Dalai Lama, stop lying, false Dalai Lama, stop lying!” they chanted over and over through megaphones, drummers pounding out a rhythmic tempo. When he spoke, only snippets of his remarks could be heard above the cacophony.

“China must be thrilled at this,” said Gary Beesley, a British devotee of Tibetan Buddhism who had travelled from Manchester to hear the Dalai Lama. “They really must love it.”

The Aldershot demonstration was part of a pattern: Noisy protesters are following the globetrotting Dalai Lama almost everywhere he goes, denouncing him in terms that echo the invective heaped upon the Nobel Peace laureate by China’s ruling Communist Party.

On the surface, the commotion appears to stem from an arcane, centuries-old schism in Tibetan Buddhism. But a Reuters investigation has found that the religious sect behind the protests has the backing of the Communist Party. The group has emerged as an instrument in Beijing’s long campaign to undermine support for the Dalai Lama, a political exile who commands the loyalty of millions of Chinese citizens and whom Beijing accuses of plotting secession for Tibet.

The protesters are members of a sect that worships Dorje Shugden, a deity its devotees revere as a protector. The Dalai Lama discourages the practice,

advising his followers that Dorje Shugden is a malevolent spirit. The Shugden worshippers accuse the Tibetan spiritual leader of persecuting them for their beliefs.

This quarrel was once confined to the temples and monasteries of the remote Tibetan plateau and exile communities in India. But it has now been exported to the streets and stadiums of North America, Europe and Australia.

Tibetan and foreign protesters say the demonstrations are organized by an umbrella group called the International Shugden Community, which in the United States is registered as a charity in California. Members of this group say they are fighting purely for religious freedom and deny China plays a role in the demonstrations.

“There is no connection at all between Dorje Shugden and the Communist Party,” said Nicholas Pitts, a Hong Kong-based spokesman for the International Shugden Community who frequently appears at its protests.

But a leaked internal Communist Party document shows that China is intervening in the dispute. The party document, issued to officials last year, said the Shugden issue is “an important front in our struggle with the Dalai clique”.

A monk and prominent former member of the Shugden movement who was based in India and Nepal, Lama Tseta, told Reuters that China paid him and others to plan and coordinate the activities of the sect’s followers overseas. Tseta said officials from the Communist Party’s powerful political special-operations unit, the United Front Work Department, control the effort and allocate funding. These officials direct the protests through senior Shugden monks in China and the Tibetan exile community in India and the West, who are the spiri-

tual leaders of the sect, he said.

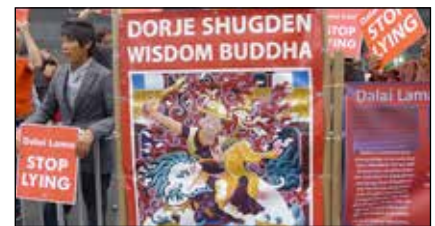
“The Chinese are using them as a tool to make the Dalai Lama look fake, to achieve their own ends, to undermine Tibetan Buddhism and to fragment Tibetan society,” Tseta said in an interview.

These senior Shugden monks are treated as honored guests at official functions in China and publicly embraced as patriotic allies in Beijing’s campaign to crush support for the Dalai Lama, according to eyewitness accounts, reports in China’s state controlled media and postings on Dorje Shugden websites.

A core group of ethnic Tibetans living abroad who follow these senior monks spearhead the demonstrations. They travel the world to harangue the Dalai Lama. Some attend government functions in China, and have contact with Chinese diplomats at Beijing’s embassies and consulates. But they deny that China plays any role in the protests. They say they are purely demonstrating for religious freedom and pay their own way.

### “SERIOUS POTENTIAL THREAT”

The majority of protesters, though, are foreign recruits like Pitts, mostly Westerners. Lama Tseta said Chinese officials had instructed senior Shugden monks to enlist these foreigners in the



*DISPUTED DEITY: Protesters display a poster of the Dorje Shugden deity at a July 9 demonstration outside the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York. REUTERS/Paul Mooney*

demonstrations. Reuters has no independent evidence of direct Chinese financing of the protests. But a senior Indian Interior Ministry official said Indian authorities are aware that the Shugden sect receives funds from China.

“We also keep a close watch on them because they get funding from China via Nepal,” said the official, who supervises the activities of India’s internal security agency, the Intelligence Bureau, and spoke on condition of anonymity.

In response to questions from Reuters about the Communist Party’s support for the Shugden sect, the Chinese foreign ministry said the Dalai Lama was practicing “religious tyranny.”

“The 14th Dalai Lama has in recent years used all sorts of means, including violent terror methods, to force certain people to abandon their religious belief,” the ministry said.

The office of the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala, India, said the Tibetan spiritual leader was occupied with teaching in Southern India and was unable to answer questions for this article.

How much the campaign will tarnish the Dalai Lama is unclear, but the Shugden protesters are having an impact. Coverage of the Dalai Lama’s visits in the United States, Europe and Australia now regularly includes accusations from Shugden spokespeople that he is a religious bigot with no right to speak for Tibet. The protests have become so strident that the Tibetan spiritual leader has been alerted by U.S., Indian and other intelligence agencies that there is “now a serious potential threat to the Dalai Lama’s well-being,” according to a briefing document reviewed by Reuters.

That assessment is contained in the 18-page briefing prepared for the Dalai Lama’s official representative in the United Kingdom, the Office of Tibet, ahead of the Tibetan religious leader’s two trips to Britain this year. The document, which was provided to the British Foreign Office, also reported that the U.S., Dutch and Swiss governments had tightened security during the Dalai Lama’s recent

visits. The memo makes no allegations of a Chinese government role in the security threat.

A former U.S. official said the State Department’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security was aware of the Dorje Shugden group and had to pay particular attention to it.

“There’s a lot of passion around this from Shugden practitioners, and the Chinese have fostered this Shugden worship as a way to split Tibetans,” said Kelley Currie, a senior State Department advisor on Asia and Tibet from 2007 to 2009. Currie previously worked for the International Campaign for Tibet, an advocacy group promoting human rights for Tibetans.

A State Department spokesperson said the bureau provided protection for the Dalai Lama during his visits to the United States but declined to discuss operational details.

China’s effort to neutralize the Dalai Lama is part of a systematic and often secretive global campaign to silence criticism abroad and bring the world around to its views.

A Reuters investigation this year exposed how China has used front men to set up a covert international radio network that is broadcasting pro-Beijing news. A second article revealed how China is using government-backed groups masquerading as NGOs to intimidate its critics at the United Nations Human Rights Council.

In the case of the Dalai Lama, Beijing hasn’t just co-opted a Buddhist group to challenge the Tibetan spiritual leader. It has also used the country’s economic and diplomatic clout with Western governments to marginalize its Tibetan foe.

Some Western capitals are acquiescing. British Prime Minister David Cameron, former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg are among the world leaders who have chosen not to meet with the Dalai Lama in the past year and a half.

Abbott and Solberg did not respond to questions from Reuters.

## TAILED IN LONDON

Beijing’s strategy has been especially effective in the United Kingdom. Britain, unlike other Western governments, doesn’t provide the Tibetan leader with official security during his visits. Ahead of the Dalai Lama’s two tours this year, his organizers officially requested protection because of fears for his safety, as laid out in the 18-page memo.

The Cameron government refused the request, according to visit organizers.

At the end of the Dalai Lama’s second trip, protesters pursued him through the streets of London on his way out of the country.

As he left his central London hotel on September 21, members of his entourage say they spotted a car that appeared to be tailing the motorcade. Wangdue Tsering, first secretary at the Office of Tibet in London, was in one of the vehicles behind the Dalai Lama. “We noticed the car turned out very quickly and ran through a red light,” he said. “From that point we suspected it was following us.”

Tsering said the Dalai Lama’s security team called the police. Within 10 minutes a patrol car pulled the pursuing vehicle over. Tsering said the Tibetan security team recognized one of the two people in the car as a Shugden protester. “We know who he is,” Tsering said.

A London police spokesman said the department had no record of the incident.

Asked why the government had declined to provide security for the Dalai Lama, Tim Loughton, a pro-Tibet member of parliament in Cameron’s ruling Conservative Party, said: “I don’t know, other than kowtowing to the Chinese.”

Britain’s Home Office said it did not comment on security matters.

“We regard the Dalai Lama as an im-

portant religious figure, and he has been welcomed to the U.K. on many occasions,” Cameron’s office said in response to questions from Reuters. “We are robust and consistent in raising human rights issues with the Chinese authorities.”

A month after the Dalai Lama’s U.K. tour in September, Cameron rolled out the red carpet for Chinese President Xi Jinping’s first state visit to the country. Britain secured contracts with China worth almost 40 billion pounds (\$60 billion) during the trip, according to the U.K. government.

### THREE EYES AND A SWORD

More than five decades ago, the Dalai Lama fled into exile in India following a failed uprising against Chinese rule. Today, the 80-year-old religious leader retains a powerful influence over more than six million ethnic Tibetans within China’s borders. He travels the world promoting a message of greater autonomy for Tibetans.

Beijing accuses him of attempting to split Tibet from China. Now, the avowedly atheist Communist Party has thrown its weight behind the worship of Dorje Shugden – a spirit depicted in temples and monasteries as a wrathful three-eyed figure wielding a sword and mounted on a lion.

China’s ultimate objective is to entrench its authority over a vast, resource-rich and strategically vital region that still chafes under Communist rule. More than 140 Tibetans have self-immolated since early 2009.

Some of the Dalai Lama’s leading supporters say his global standing remains intact. He still draws large crowds. In February, U.S. President Barack Obama and the Dalai Lama attended a prayer breakfast in Washington, where the president praised the Tibetan as a “good friend.”

“It’s unfortunate, but they are not sophisticated things they are doing,” said

actor Richard Gere, chairman of the International Campaign for Tibet, which is based in Washington and is sympathetic to the Dalai Lama. “It’s childish denouncing – very much the way the Chinese denounce His Holiness.”

Beijing’s strategy on Shugden worship is contained in an internal Communist Party document setting out guidelines for officials in Tibet on how to deal with the dispute. The document, issued on February 20 last year by the Communist Party Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region, was leaked this year to the International Campaign for Tibet.

Officials, the directive said, should avoid publicizing the dispute over Shugden worship. But they should recognize that the Dalai Lama camp is using the schism as a pretext to split the motherland and sow discord. The party must “decisively grind into dust” this plot, the document added.

Chinese officials should organize community visits by respected, patriotic religious leaders to expose and denounce the Dalai Lama’s “ban” on Shugden worship, the document said. And supporters of the Dalai Lama’s views on Shugden who attempted to “create disturbances” around the issue in China “must be strictly punished according to law.”

“I do not feel you could fairly use this document to say, look, this is evidence that the Chinese government is supporting the Shugden issue,” said Nicholas Pitts, the Hong Kong-based spokesman of the International Shugden Community. He pointed to a section of the document where authorities were urged to punish anyone, believer or non-believer, who used the Shugden issue to cause “public gatherings and disturbances.”

### LAMA TSETA’S ALLEGATIONS

Two authorities on Tibetan Buddhism who reviewed the document – Columbia University’s Robert Barnett and Elliot Sperling of Indiana University – said they believe it is genuine.

“It’s not about Shugden, it’s about politics,” said Tseta, the former Shugden member.

Tseta, 42, said he was a senior figure in the Shugden sect and was responsible for dealing with Chinese officials between 1997 and 2006. He left the movement in 2008. He identified the Communist Party’s United Front Work Department as the lead agency coordinating Beijing’s efforts to undermine the Dalai Lama through the Shugden movement in India and the West.

The United Front is the powerful body charged with enlisting support for the party from influential non-Communists at home and overseas. Other Tibetan monks and scholars who study the dispute identify the United Front as the key agency in China’s bid to cement control over Tibet.

One of the key United Front officials directing the Shugden movement’s anti-Dalai Lama activities in recent years was Zhu Weiqun, Tseta said.

Zhu, 68, a veteran official, was executive vice minister of the United Front while Tseta was active in the Shugden movement. He is now head of an ethnic and religious affairs body that advises China’s parliament. Zhu is frequently quoted in the official media as a leading government authority on Tibet, and mocks the Dalai Lama in speeches and interviews. He holds a rank equivalent to a provincial governor. Zhu did not respond to a Reuters request for an interview.

Tseta said he and other Shugden monks travelled on multiple occasions to Nepal and China, including Tibet, where they met Zhu and other Chinese officials. In the interview with Reuters, Tseta produced two of his Chinese passports with stamps showing 15 visits to China. Tseta said he was last in Tibet in 2006.

While Zhu vilifies the Dalai Lama, he has heaped praise in the Chinese media on another Tibetan monk: Lama Gangchen. Based in Milan, Gangchen is the most influential Shugden leader out-

side China, according to Tseta and Western scholars of Tibetan Buddhism. Tseta showed Reuters photographs of himself with Gangchen.

“Gangchen is the strongman of the Shugden movement,” said Thierry Dandin, a French scholar of Tibetan Buddhism and director of the website Tibet-InfoNet. “He’s the most committed one to the Communist Party and the authorities in China.”

Tseta said Gangchen organized the first meetings between Shugden leaders in India and Chinese officials in 1997.

### A VIP MONK

Born in 1941, Gangchen studied at monastic universities before going into exile in India in 1963, according to his personal website, Lama Gangchen Peace Publications. He later moved to Europe and has become an Italian citizen.

Gangchen is a regular visitor to China, where he meets top leaders and is feted at government-sanctioned religious gatherings. China’s state-controlled media published photos of his arrival with other Buddhist dignitaries at a forum in the city of Wuxi in October. Indiana University’s Sperling and Tibet scholar Dibyesh Anand of London’s Westminster University said they have both seen Gangchen at government and United Front events in China, where he is treated as a VIP.

A spokeswoman for Gangchen said the monk declined to be interviewed for this article. “Lama Gangchen has no role in the Shugden movement,” she said. “He is merely a devoted practitioner of this lineage.”

Tseta said he began to have misgivings about his own role in the Shugden movement, and by 2006, the Chinese were growing suspicious of him. He was detained for 25 days in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, he said, but was released after persuading authorities he was a devoted Shugden monk. Reuters has no independent confirmation of Tseta’s detention.



*SHUGDEN DEFECTOR: Lama Tseta, pictured here near his home in Connecticut, said China paid him and others to plan the sect’s activities abroad when he was a prominent member in the Shugden movement. REUTERS/Paul Mooney*

On a trip to the U.S. later in 2006, he applied for asylum. Tseta showed Reuters documents indicating he was granted political asylum in 2007. He said he is speaking out now about his role in the Shugden movement because the protests against the Dalai Lama are dividing Tibetans.

From protest coverage, photographs, television news footage, online video postings and Shugden publicity materials, Reuters was able to identify leading ethnic Tibetans involved in demonstrations in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Europe.

Sonam Rinchen is one of the most visible. Rinchen, 53, a stonemason living in South Deerfield, Massachusetts, is a Tibetan spokesman for the International Shugden Community, the group that leads the protests.

He said in a phone interview he had twice been questioned by Federal Bureau of Investigation agents about security threats to the Dalai Lama, most recently at his home in 2012 while the Dalai Lama was visiting Boston. “They wanted to know if anybody paid by the Chinese wanted to kill the Dalai Lama,” he said. These were “ridiculous” allegations that the Central Tibetan Administration, the Tibetan government in exile, had passed to the FBI to smear the Shugden protesters, he said.

The FBI declined to comment.

### “IT COSTS SO MUCH MONEY”

China isn’t involved in the demonstrations, said Rinchen, who said he has lived in the U.S. for almost three decades. “I am sure they are pleased, but we do not protest to please China,” he said. “We are interested in getting our religious freedom back.”

This year, Rinchen joined the protests in Britain during the Dalai Lama’s September visit. He said demonstrators paid their own airfares and hotel bills, while the International Shugden Community paid for local transport and meals.

“This is the hard part of it,” he said. “It costs so much money.”

Not for everyone. In December 2014, the International Shugden Community offered 40 free return flights from Manchester to Rome when the Dalai Lama was scheduled to attend a meeting of Nobel laureates in the Italian capital, according to a notice that was posted on the group’s website. The offer included meals and accommodation for protesters.

The International Shugden Community was incorporated as a charity in California in 2014, according to corporate records. It listed assets of \$27,471 and income of \$69,235 in its 2014 filings.



The majority of rank-and-file protesters are Westerners who follow the New Kadampa Tradition, or NKT. Members say the group plays no role in the protests. It doesn't disclose how many devotees it has, but former members estimate there are about 6,000 worldwide.

The NKT's leader and founder is Kelsang Gyatso, a Tibetan monk who moved to Britain in 1977. The NKT, a registered U.K. charitable trust, has 1,200 centers and branches in 40 countries, according to its website. It had 21.8 million pounds on its books at the end of 2014, U.K. charity commission filings show.

**NEGATIVE PRESS**

Carol McQuire, a former member of the NKT in the U.K., said many of the protesters are unwitting agents of Beijing. "I am sure that having the protests done 'for free' by ignorant Westerners makes (the Chinese) very content," said McQuire, who became disillusioned and left the movement nine years ago.

The protests are attracting attention. On the Dalai Lama's 2015 tour of the United States, many media outlets (including Reuters) carried reports covering the demonstrators and their grievances. During his 12-day visit to Australia in June, the Sydney Morning Herald and Melbourne's The Age published an opinion piece by the International Shugden Community's Pitts, who is also an NKT member.

"He has been the political leader of the Tibetans for decades but, unlike virtually every other political leader in the world, no one seems to hold him to account or check whether what he says matches what he does," Pitts wrote.

On the Dalai Lama's September visit to Britain, the BBC and ITV covered one of his engagements amid noisy Shugden protesters. Both outlets interviewed Pitts.

ITV's report covering both sides – the Dalai Lama's appearance and his chanting critics – showed how the protests are

chipping away at the Tibetan spiritual leader's image. "Here in the West, we are used to seeing the Dalai Lama portrayed as a very popular, a very respected figure," said reporter Matthew Hudson. "But, this demonstration and the entrenched animosity I've heard from both sides shows that in our complex world of geopolitical and religious affairs, no one is immune from criticism."

Beijing has applauded the shift. On the sidelines of China's annual parliamentary session in March, religious-affairs official Zhu Weiqun said the international media was "less and less interested in the Dalai Lama."

Still, because of his popular authority, the Dalai Lama's disapproval of the Shugden deity has sharply reduced the sect's prevalence in Tibetan areas of China and among Tibetan exiles in India, Tibetologists say.

Some Tibetan Shugden devotees complain that discrimination from Dalai Lama supporters has seen them ostracized in Tibet and abroad. They say they have been dismissed from jobs, refused service in shops and forced to live in spiritual ghettos.

Some Dalai Lama supporters acknowledge there have been cases of discrimination. But they say it is not systematic and not encouraged by the Dalai Lama.

**AN EYE-CATCHING BILLBOARD**

When the Shugden protests began in 1996, they were low key, sometimes even respectful. Now they are vitriolic. At each stop, Shugden protesters wait in

ambush. In the past two years, protesters have penetrated the Dalai Lama's security cordon to confront him personally. In May last year, Shugden Buddhists attempted to check in to the hotel where he was staying in the Netherlands, according to the security briefing provided to the British government. Hotel security staff ejected them, visit organizers said.

Days ahead of his two-day visit to New York starting July 9, a giant billboard reading "False Dalai Lama Stop Lying" was posted two blocks from where he was due to speak. An adjacent billboard depicted the Dorje Shugden deity.

Both were taken down on July 8 after Tibetans in the U.S. complained to the advertising company, according to Dalai Lama supporters. The company declined to disclose who paid for the billboards.

The Dalai Lama spoke to a sold-out crowd at Manhattan's sprawling Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. About 100 protesters gathered across the street. Some held up a caricature of the Dalai Lama in military boots, his eyes screwed up in fury and hands balled into fists, standing on a pile of helpless Shugden monks.

The same poster was on display outside the football stadium at Aldershot in June, where Shugden protesters drowned out the Dalai Lama's 40-minute address.

*(Inputs by Rupam Nair in New Delhi, John \ Shiffman and Warren Strobel in Washington, Ben Blanchard in Beijing, Elizabeth Piper and Michael Holden in London, and Gwladys Fouche and Henrik Stolen in Oslo )*



## Dharamshala Honours His Holiness the Dalai Lama – Messenger of Peace – on Nobel Peace Prize Day



*The dignitaries, including chief guest Shmt Sarveen Chaudhary, former HP minister and current MLA, at the celebration to mark 26th anniversary of the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 10 December 2015.*

Hundreds of Tibetans and local Indians gathered at the Tsuglagkhang courtyard on 10 December to celebrate the 26th anniversary of the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

As the official ceremony began, the chief guest Shmt Sarveen Chaudhary, former minister of Himachal Pradesh and current MLA from Shahpur district, was welcomed on the stage with much fanfare. Other dignitaries at the ceremony include Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, Speaker Penpa Tsering of the Tibetan Parliament, Chief Justice Commissioner Mr Kargyu Dhondup, and senior officials of the Tibetan administration.

Describing His Holiness the Dalai Lama as the Messenger of Peace, the chief guest Shmt Sarveen Chaudhary expressed her deepest reverence for His Holiness and lauded the messages of peace and harmony that His Holiness espouses.

She remarked that the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1989 was truly a victory for peace and the Tibetan people in their peaceful approach of resolving the Tibet issue.

She said: “Since coming into exile in 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama kept alive the struggle for Tibet from India.

He exerted constant efforts to maintain peace and harmony even in the face of extreme adversity caused by Chinese brutalities in Tibet. It is due to this peaceful spirit of reconciliation that Tibet enjoys the fervent support of India and the whole world.”

“Even the prize money that His Holiness got from winning the Nobel was distributed towards various charitable causes including the eradication of leprosy, promotion of peace, etc. This in itself is a great lesson for humanity that we all need to emulate,” she added.

Emphasising the bond shared by Tibet and India, Shmt Chaudhary explained that the two countries share religious, cultural and linguistic connections, and described Tibet as a sacred place for Indians as it is the abode of Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar where Indians go for pilgrimages every year.

She also highlighted and encouraged the sustenance of that centuries old bond even in exile between the Tibetan community and the local Indian population by retaining the friendly exchanges of culture performances and mutual respect for each other’s traditions and languages.

Speaking about the impact of environmental degradation on the Tibetan plateau, Shmt Chaudhary said that Tibet is the major source of freshwater in Asia

and urged the need to safeguard the fragile environment of the Tibetan plateau for a safe and secured future.

Expressing gratitude and respect, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, in his speech said, “His Holiness the Dalai Lama advocates nonviolence and dialogue to resolve the issue of Tibet, interfaith harmony, human values and environment. For these extraordinary contributions, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1989.”

Sikyong recalled that this year – 2015 – was being celebrated by Tibetan people and the Central Tibetan Administration as the year His Holiness the Dalai Lama attained eighty-years of age. He said that the contribution which His Holiness the Dalai Lama made to the political cause of Tibet and the revival of Tibetan culture outside Tibet will forever be etched in the memories of the Tibetan people and in history.

Speaker Penpa Tsering of the Tibetan Parliament, in his speech, referred to His Holiness as the champion of world peace. He said that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has shouldered hundred-fold hardships, traveling repeatedly to many places in countries both in the East and West to bring peace and happiness to the world.

Shri. Ram Swaroop from the Indo-Tibetan Friendship Association, in his speech, applauded the contributions of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to bring peace in the world and for affirming brotherhood among diverse peoples.

The speeches were followed by cultural performances by local Indian and Tibetan dance troupes.

The ceremony also included the launch of a new thematic report “The Panchen Lama Lineage: How Reincarnation is being Reinvented as a Political Tool” by the Department of Information and International Relations.

## Statement of the Kashag on the 26th Anniversary of Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great Dalai Lama of Tibet



*Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay at the ceremony to mark the 26th anniversary of the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 10 December 2015.*

Today, as we celebrate this auspicious occasion of the 26th anniversary of the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, the Kashag pays humble respect and bows down in gratitude to our most revered leader, and joyously extend heartiest greetings to the Tibetan people, friends and well-wishers around the world.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama advocates nonviolence and dialogue to resolve the issue of Tibet, interfaith harmony, human values and environment. For these extraordinary contributions, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1989.

For decades, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has travelled to over 50 countries, published more than 100 books on the values of compassion, non-violence, universal responsibility and secular ethics. Deriving admiration and inspiration from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, more than 150 prizes and honorary degrees have been awarded to him.

Envisioned by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Middle Way Approach is the official policy of the Central Tibetan Administration. It is aimed at the long-term benefit of both the Chinese and

Tibetan people, and has galvanized support from governments, opinion makers, intellectuals including many Chinese writers and scholars. Among the governments, the White House issued statements strongly supporting the Middle Way Approach. At the summit meeting, President Barack Obama this year publicly urged Chinese President Xi Jinping to engage in dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or his representatives. President Obama emphasised the importance and the need for dialogue to resolve the Tibet issue. On behalf of the Tibetan people, the Kashag would like to express our appreciation for such statements of encouragement and support.

The US Congressional delegation led by Leader Nancy Pelosi to Tibet also urged the Chinese authorities for dialogue and expressed concerns regarding human rights situation in Tibet. The delegation also conveyed to the Chinese government the strong, bipartisan support His Holiness the Dalai Lama enjoys in the Congress of the United States and among the American people. Similarly, Congressmen Jim McGovern, a member of the delegation, said that they had 'some very heated exchanges' with Chinese officials regarding issues related to

Tibet. He has stated that His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the solution, not a problem, to resolving the issue of Tibet.

The European Union delegation to China and Tibet also expressed concerns on the human rights situation in Tibet and the need for dialogue to resolve the issue of Tibet. The German Human Rights Commissioner, Mr. Christoph Strasser, strongly rebuked the Chinese government for showing an incorrect reality of Tibet during their visit. We would like to express our gratitude to both the US Congressional and EU delegation for standing up for the Tibetan people and supporting dialogue to resolve the issue of Tibet.

It is also our considered view that the recent meeting between President Xi Jinping and President Ma Ying-jeou in Singapore will lead to peaceful resolutions of all outstanding issues between People's Republic of China and Taiwan.

Today is also World Human Rights Day and the 67th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, Tibetans inside Tibet have nothing to celebrate as the human rights situation inside Tibet is continuously deteriorating. The Chinese government's white paper claims a 'golden age for Tibet' but in reality, neither economic benefit nor basic freedom is granted to the Tibetan people. Tibetan people continue to suffer political repression, economic marginalization, social discrimination, cultural assimilation and environmental destruction under China's authoritarian rule. The self-immolation by 142 Tibetan men and women since 2009 is clearly a protest against Chinese government's repressive policies and denial of the fundamental freedom of the Tibetan people. Mr. Chen Quanguo, party chief of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region recently said that the party members and cadres secretly practicing religion and following the "Dalai Clique" must be identified and subjected to severe punishment. Similarly, Mr. Zhu Weiqun,



an official of the self-declared atheist communist party of China claimed that Chinese government has the right to approve reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. No rational person will accept such blatant lies. The final authority based on both history and religious traditions in selecting the next Dalai Lama rests solely on the present Dalai Lama. Neither the muscle nor money of the Chinese government will change the belief of the Tibetan people in His Holiness the Dalai Lama to appoint the next Dalai Lama.

We call on the international community for their support and demand the Chinese government for the release of the Panchen Lama, Jadrrel Rinpoche and thousands of other Tibetan political prisoners. We also urge the release of Mr Liu Xiaobo, the Chinese Nobel Peace Prize winner.

Protection of Tibet's environment is a matter of utmost importance. Coinciding with global climate change summit – COP 21 – attended by leaders from various countries, Tibet's spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama has urged them to save Tibet's environment. He said, "This blue planet is our only home and the Tibetan plateau is its roof. Globe's third pole is as vital as the two poles. Therefore, the Tibetan plateau needs to be protected for the environmental health and sustainability of the entire world." The environmental destruction in Tibet is immense, with major deforestation, extraction of mineral resources worth billions of dollars, damming of rivers in unscientific ways and rapid melting of glaciers causing negative impact on the environment particularly in Asia. Our environment delegation has successfully created awareness on Tibet's environment and exchanged views with NGOs at the climate change summit in Paris. We also would like to thank all those who participated in the COP21 awareness campaign organised by Tibetans and friends of Tibet.

As we all know, Tibetan Democracy is a gift of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his people. Since the devolution of political authority by His Holiness in 2011, this year's Sikyong and TPiE elections has

an added significance. Demonstrating their maturity, the Tibetan exiles have increased their participation in the democratic process. Freedom of speech is a right and social media is a means. However, both should be utilized responsibly for the unity of the Tibetan movement. By and large, Tibetan people are exercising their free speech and using their democratic rights in a mature way. However, regardless of the immense contribution His Holiness the Dalai Lama has made and the reverence with which the Tibetan people hold him, few individuals have made baseless allegations. The Kashag would like to categorically state that these individuals are wrong.

As we all are aware, the year 2014 was observed as the year of gratitude in honor of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Similarly, this year is being celebrated by Tibetan people and the Central Tibetan Administration as the year our most revered leader attained eighty-years of age. The contribution which His Holiness the Dalai Lama made to the political cause of Tibet and the revival of Tibetan culture outside Tibet will forever be etched in the memories of the people of Tibet and in history. On behalf of the Tibetan people, the Kashag would like to express our deepest reverence and prayer of respect for His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Decades of help and assistance so generously provided by people of India, Central and State Governments can never be forgotten. Availing the present opportunity, the Kashag would like to offer profound gratitude to India. A special thanks to the people and Government of Himachal Pradesh for hosting His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Central Tibetan Administration in the beautiful hill town of Dharamshala. We feel grateful for the opportunity to partake in the International Himalayan Festival hosted in honor of Tibet's leader. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Governments, Parliaments, Leaders, Tibet Support Groups, NGOs etc. for their solidarity and support to the Tibetan people.

Finally, we offer our prayers for the healthy and long-life of our most revered leader His Holiness the Great Dalai Lama of Tibet. May all his wishes be spontaneously fulfilled, and peace and happiness prevail for the benefit of all humankind. Above all, may the day for the union of Tibetans inside and outside Tibet emerge swiftly.

The Kashag  
Central Tibetan Administration  
December 10, 2015

## Sikyong Offers Condolence to Victims of Paris Terrorist Attacks

I offer my sincere condolences to the families and friends of the victims and strongly condemn the attacks undertaken by a few misguided fanatics," Sikyong said.

"Terrorism is an attack on mankind and those who perpetrate such attacks do not represent any faith or community. It is a scourge and cannot be justified in any way through moral, political or religious affiliations," he added.

"This tragedy once again reinforces the need for coordinated and collaborative international approach to combat terrorism and restore security and stability in the world."

"The Tibetan people stand united with the people of France in this painful time," Sikyong said.

## Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the 26th Anniversary of the Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama



*Speaker Penpa Tsering delivering the statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 10 December 2015.*

Today is a unique and auspicious day. This day commemorates the World Human Rights Day of 10th December, 1989 when the earth's highest and most majestic recognition of accomplishment, the Nobel Peace Prize, was conferred on His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the divinely obligated protector deity of all sentient beings of the Snowland of Tibet, the embodiment of compassion among the pantheon of enlightened beings, and the supreme Bodhisattva-lord of this earthly realm in human manifestation. With the presentation of this award, the reputation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a great champion of world peace and information underlying the justness of the Tibetan issue spread across the vast terrains of this world. On this fortunate occasion of commemorating this uniquely auspicious day, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, speaking on behalf of all Tibetans in Tibet and in exile, offer our greetings with happiness, faith and elation, and with reaffirmation of gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In his efforts to bring peace, freedom, and happiness across the world, His Holiness

the Dalai Lama has shouldered hundred-fold hardships, travelling repeatedly to many places in countries both in the East and West for those purposes. During those multitudes of travels, His Holiness has delivered messages of compassion, kindness, tolerance, altruism, non-violence and so on. They were given in languages marked by simplicity of words and terms adapted to affording instant comprehension by all sections of his devout listeners in keeping with the diversity of their mentalities and yet which also fully conveyed the profundity of their meanings. In this milieu, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has, in particular, directed his efforts at ensuring harmony amongst the followers of the different religious traditions in this world on the basis of adhering to their own beliefs and solidarity. He has made efforts to explain and thereby spread his message of secular ethnics. Besides, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has made special efforts to charter a new course in the form of a dialogue between science and religion. Because of these and other kinds of highly laudable efforts in which he has continued to be fully involved at all times, honours and

awards recognizing his contributions have been presented to him in enormous numbers and without any abatement. Therefore on behalf of all the Tibetan people who flourish under the protective shelter of his compassionate deeds, we offer His Holiness the Dalai Lama words of infinite gratitude with a sense of great joy and obeisance.

The Nobel Peace Prize for this year of 2015 was awarded to and will be presented to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet. The group was awarded the prize because it had, in order to bring about reconciliation between groups with mutually opposed positions, taken steps to address the causes of their differences in their thinking in a gradual manner so that a harmonious society could evolve and take root in the country in due course of time. This is what the Nobel Peace prize recognition to the group represents and it is no doubt a worthy example for others to follow. The Tibetan Parliament in Exile therefore takes this opportunity to offer its congratulations and compliment to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet.

In its announcement of reasons for the conferment of the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Nobel Peace Committee said: "His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the leader of the Tibetan people, is a person whose priority is to strive for harmonious coexistence in this world by relying solely on the approach of mutual respect, tolerance, and non-violence. It is on this basis that he has accomplished the admirable results of the preservation of the unique historical and cultural heritage of his people with all their noble qualities. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a person who strives to protect in an effective way the rights and interests of the entire humanity as well as of the world's natural environment. In addition, he has consistently offered constructive suggestions for the resolution of all types of international

conflicts in a peaceful manner.”

At that time, His Holiness said in one of his responses to the Nobel Peace Prize Committee that the conferment of the world's most reputed peace prize on him signified recognition for those who pursue their goals by relying solely on the path of peace and non-violence and likewise as a profound attempt to fully understand all aspects of the situation in his world. He therefore called it an especially ennobling compliment. He spoke of his commitment at all times to adhere to the ideals of compassion, kindness, tolerance, and altruism with a sense of affection towards others. He said that to treat all others in this world with a sense of respect was something that everyone could practice for ensuring the happiness and well being of both oneself and others, adding that this approach was both important and a priority. Besides, His Holiness the Dalai Lama also said that he was since childhood inspired by Mahatma Gandhi of India who had renounced all kinds of violence and who had committed himself to relying solely on the method of non-violence and that he had always admired and praised him for it.

From the international community, the most effective support for the Tibetan people's struggle for their just cause comes due to the position or policy of Middle Way Approach which is currently the fundamental stand of the Central Tibetan Administration and which is the desire of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In 1956, when His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited India, he had expressed a desire to stay back in the country. However, at that time, the Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, pointing to several of the provisions of the 17-Point Agreement, told His Holiness that on the fundamental issue of Tibet, it was for the Tibetan people inside Tibet alone to fight for it; that there was no way the major powers of the world such as the United States of America will take on China, including by engaging in a war to help the Tibetan people. Given this ground reality, he conveyed to His Holiness the Dalai Lama his opinion that it would be better if he returned to Tibet. His Holiness took this advice to heart and returned to Tibet. He then tried

to work with the Chinese government in accordance with the provisions of the 17-Point Agreement imposed by China. However, the communist Chinese government itself not only gradually violated provisions of that agreement but also made the situation in Tibet so tragic and unbearable through armed aggression and various other means that His Holiness was left with no other option but to escape into exile to India.

However the issue of Tibet is such that there is no other way to ensure its resolution but only by undergoing the trials and tribulations of exposing oneself to the fires – and risking the burns – of dealing with the Chinese government. It was for this reason that since 1974 His Holiness the Dalai Lama held a series of discussions with the Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile and other top officials of the Central Tibetan Administration on the subject of his proposal for a Middle Way Approach to dealing with the Government of China. And in keeping with the opinions of the general Tibetan public, he explained his proposal in his speeches before the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus and the European Parliament at Strasbourg. The opinions of the general Tibetan public were again sought thereafter and more than 64 percent of the Tibetan people expressed their support for the proposal. Hence, it was with the highest standard of democratic support that the Middle Way Approach was adopted by the Tibetan Parliament in Exile in keeping with the democratic process. Hence the Middle Way Approach is the fundamental policy of the Central Tibetan Administration.

However, there are still a fair number of those who, failing to give in-depth consideration to the imperatives underlying the adoption of the Middle Way Approach, give all sorts of interpretations to this policy. The reality is that the Tibetan people are today faced with a dire situation marked by crippling hardship, with the dangers being obvious that it will not be long before the identity of Tibet and the Tibetan people, their precious culture and religious traditions, and their noble traditions and customs could disappear. His Holiness the Dalai Lama ex-

pressed his concerns about this situation in his speech during the ceremony of Long-Life Offering made to him on the Buddha's Descend from Heaven festival day on 3 November 2015 at the Thekchen Choeling Tsuglakhang. At that time the monastic and laypeople of Sogshoe offered to him a gold medal while the monastic and laypeople of Barkham Rongpo offered to him a golden Dharma wheel. And in his speech, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said: “Today we have arrived into the 20th and 21st centuries. Phenomenal changes are taking place across the world. Given this reality, we should proceed on the basis of being of benefit to one another. This is what the Middle Way Approach is about. Today you have told me that you follow the Middle Way Policy with a genuine sense of commitment and belief in it and that there is no change in your stand. This had made me feel enormously happy. The Dalai Lama is a person with concern about Tibet. He will think only about what is beneficial to Tibet. He has shouldered responsibility as the temporal head and spiritual leader of Tibet for nearly 60 years. Today, when I have reached 80 years of age and am in retirement and am being told that what I had done was improper, sometimes I feel a little disappointed. I have worked with a genuine sense of commitment. If instead of being thanked I am now told that there has been a shortcoming on my part, I feel upset. Do you understand? Hence, being told that you are wholeheartedly committed to the approach that we have adopted as our fundamental stand and are working diligently for it has made me feel very happy. I want to express my thanks to you for it.” Such were the kind of saddening things His Holiness the Dalai Lama felt constrained to say in his speech. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the heart in the bosom of all Tibetans, and the eyes on their brows and we all refer to him as the “wish-fulfilling precious one”. He is our great patron and the object of gratitude for both this life and our next life as well as for all time realms. That His Holiness himself felt driven to express such a feeling of disappointment in his speech is a cause of unbearable concern in our hearts. It is of utmost importance that all Tibetans discern with clarity the wishes of His Holi-

ness the Dalai Lama on the basis of the reality of his words and deeds. Besides, we all should bear in mind at all times the gratitude we owe to His Holiness for his kindness and show concern for the greater good of the collective merits of the Tibetan public in general on the basis of the approach of “no mistakes, no regret”. The time to do that is now and we take this opportunity to reiterate our appeal accordingly.

From the side of the leadership of the Chinese government too, there should be an actual implementation of the approach of seeking truth from facts, which is something they talk about all the time, instead of adhering stubbornly to their currently rigid hardline policy. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has offered a Middle Way Approach which does not seek “victory for oneself and defeat for the other side” but is mutually beneficial to both the Chinese and Tibetan sides and which is, in particular, fully within the framework of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China. The Middle Way Policy therefore offers a basis for a solution to the problems on both the Chinese and Tibetan sides. It will enable China to see the fulfilment of its desire that Tibet should not secede from it. The desire of the Tibetan people not to see their traditional identity, religious traditions, culture, and environment disappearing or destroyed will also be fulfilled. We therefore reiterate our appeal to the leaders of China to pick up the requisite amount of substantive courage to realize in a timely manner the imperative to work for the fulfilment of these aspirations.

Today is an important day also for the reason that it commemorates the World Human Rights Day. However, in Tibet there is no end even to this day to the endless campaigns by such means as self-immolations by the Tibetan people, indicating in unmistakable terms the total absence of respect for human rights there. In addition to the extremely poor human rights situation, restrictions on the Tibetan people keep on being tightened without any limit. For example, the Chinese government of Kham Driru Dzong has implemented various kinds of numerous controls and restrictions

on the local Tibetans’ religious freedom. The monasteries have been placed under controls and restrictions in all aspects of their functioning; monks and nuns have been expelled from their religious institutions, and bans and restrictions have been placed on the local laypeople’s practice of their religious faith. The monasteries have been turned into semblances of Chinese government offices while monks and nuns have been forced to act like members of the Communist Party of China. These have been highlighted by the Dharamshala-based Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in a recent report. With great concern over the urgency of the situation, the centre’s report appealed to the international media and human rights organizations to pay attention and put pressure on the government of China to end the repressive practices. The centre referred to the fact that on 19 September 2015 the Driru County government notified a Document No. 224. And the document’s title stated that it was to “deepen further than before the work to carry out rectification and purge and to make new models of the religious community”. The title referred to “Four Powers” with regard to the monasteries and called for legal means for their further enforcement with a thorough identifying of those to be entrusted with responsibilities under it. It was notified as a criminal law enforcement measure to be implemented on a temporary basis. The Document was in three Parts, had 24 Chapters and 74 Sections and was circulated among the relevant County, Township/ town-level offices, Monastery Management Committees, relevant management committees, monastic and village based permanently stationed cadres. The document called for strict control over the religious activities of the monasteries and further strengthening of measures to ensure that the monasteries adhere to the ceiling on the number of monks and nuns allowed to be enrolled in each religious institution, for the expulsion of monks and nuns not legally to register to enrol in them and so on. It is impossible to mention here all the numerous information about the repressive measures. However, it can be stated that they lead to the conclusion that the measures were designed

to fundamentally destroy the traditional identity of the Tibetan people as well as their religion and culture with the sole aim to transform Tibet into a colony of China. Likewise, the campaign of investigating corruption in Tibet was ordered was to be used as a means to resolutely crackdown on officials and party members who follow the Dalai Lama. Thus party and government officials showing religious faith in His Holiness the Dalai Lama, people believing in religion, those receiving religious teachings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and those who had sent their children to study in schools run by the “dalai clique” have been ordered to be placed under investigation. In the case of the situation in a place like Driru Dzong, the enormity of the tragedy resembles the period of the Great Cultural Revolution which had wrecked China in the past. In the Ngaba region of Tibet, China very recently tried and jailed two Tibetan Buddhist monks for over three years. Other Tibetans continue to be arrested. Besides, even today, countless numbers of innocent Tibetans, including especially the young Panchen Rinpoche reincarnation, continue to remain disappeared after they were taken away or jailed. And under the violent repression of the Chinese government, they continue to endure untold suffering, including beating and torture. We therefore also take this opportunity to make a strong appeal to the international human rights organizations and others to bring urgent pressure on the government of China to release these innocent Tibetans forthwith and also to put an immediate end to its unrestrained atrocities on the Tibetan people which are not only inhuman but in gross violation of all norms of international law.

With a view that the aspiration of the Tibetan people in Tibet who with indomitable courage and a selfless sense of brotherhood towards fellow-Tibetans continue to protest against the government of China, as well as with the hope that their immediate suffering may be seen come to an end, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile has continued to carry out a series of campaign action. These have included carrying out various kinds of appeal actions directed at governments across the world,

parliaments, prominent public figures, the news media, and the general public; and our campaigns continue without end. From the international community too there has been continuing support with showing of understanding, active displays of concern, and showing of sympathy and solidarity. We take this opportunity to thank all those in the international community who have given us support and emphatically urge them for continued support in future too.

Just recently, a delegation of members from the United States House of Representatives led by former House Speaker Ms. Nancy Pelosi – who is also the current House Democratic and Minority leader – was able to visit China and Tibet and we offer them our congratulations. The members of the delegation discussed the issue of Tibet with the Chinese leaders both in Tibet and in Beijing. Again, recently, Mr. Christoph Straesser, the Human Rights Commissioner of the German government, visited China and parts of Tibet to investigate the human rights situation there and also discussed the issue of Tibet with Chinese leaders. We offer our thanks to him too. We remain hopeful that in future too, delegations like these from other countries as well as journalists will also make efforts to undertake visits to Tibet. We also call on the government of China to allow delegations, journalists, and others from other countries to undertake their visits without any orchestration or stage-management of events or concealment of the real situation in Tibet.

The Snowland of Tibet, which is known as the roof of the world, is the reservoir of the largest concentration of glacial ice after the two poles of the globe. Its environment in general and especially the fact that it is a critically important source of rivers that flow into many countries of Asia makes the situation there an area of major international concern. Nevertheless, today, under the implementation of a policy of violent repression, the government of China is ravaging the environment there in the courses of exploiting its mineral resources, damming and building of related other kinds of infrastructure over its rivers, by con-

verting the territory's nomadic grassland into newly built townships and so on. Information about the devastation being unleashed on the Tibetan plateau in such manners under Chinese rule have been publicized and distributed during the global climate conference which is being organized by United Nations and which opened recently in the French Capital Paris. Tibetan delegates visiting the conference have strongly drawn the attention of world leaders, especially the government of China, to the urgent need to protect the environment of the Tibetan Plateau and the issue also became a subject of discussion at the conference. We appeal that in future too, the environmental situation in Tibet and ways to protect it be discussed with the critical importance it deserves in all international and national meetings concerned with the issue of environmental protection.

Along with commemorating today as the anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama, an International Himalayan Festival is being held here at Dharamshala. This occasion is also being organized by the local host community to honour His Holiness the Dalai Lama

for his noble deeds and to symbolize the bond of unassailable friendship between the Tibetan people and the local Indian people. These are highly laudable objectives and we take this opportunity to express our thanks to all those who are participating in the festival, including those who are taking the responsibility to organize it. The gratitude we owe for the friendship and help the government and people of India both in the centre and the state could never be forgotten. Today, we again reiterate our gratitude to them and appeal to everyone to continue to jointly contribute towards strengthening the existing fraternity between the Tibetan and Indian peoples.

Finally, we pray that His Holiness the Dalai Lama and all the great religious leaders of Tibet live a long life, that all their noble wishes spontaneously fulfilled, that peace and well being be ensured for all the sentient beings of this world, and that the just cause of the Tibetan people may be accomplished in all speediness.

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile  
10th December 2015

## Speaker Penpa Tsering Expresses Condolence to French President

Mr. Penpa Tsering, speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile expressed his condolences to French President Francois Hollande for the deadly terrorists attacks that took place in Paris on Friday, 13 November.

“I was completely appalled by the barbaric acts of the terrorists in Paris that ended lives of hundreds of innocent people and condemn these acts in the strongest possible words. On behalf of Tibetan people inside and outside Tibet, we express our condolence to the families of the all those who lost their lives,” he wrote.

“We Tibetans believe that all conflicts in this world should be resolved through dialogue and by non-violent ways and means. We not only abhor violence of any kind nor should these acts of violence be condoned,” he added.

“As His Holiness the Dalai Lama has always said, the 21st century is the century of dialogue. We hope and pray that such acts are not repeated in the future in any parts of the world,” he said.



## His Holiness the Dalai Lama Inaugurates New Tashi Lhunpo Assembly Hall at Bylakuppe



*His Holiness the Dalai Lama looking over the crowd attending the inauguration ceremony for Tashi Lhunpo Monastery's new assembly hall in Bylakuppe, Karnataka, India on December 19, 2015. Photo/ Tenzin Choejor/OHHD*

A grand inauguration ceremony was held on the morning of 19 December in full public view on the veranda of the new Tashi Lhunpo Assembly Hall. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama emerged into the sunshine, Tibetan opera dancers performed the Tashi Shölpa Long Life dance. Everyone stood as Tibetan Children's Village Students played the Tibetan National Anthem.

Abbot of Tashi Lhunpo, Kachen Lob-sang Tsetan welcomed His Holiness as the emanation of Avalokiteshvara, Ganden Tri Rinpoche, Sharpa Chöjey and Jangtse Chöjey, senior lamas, other dignitaries and guests. He thanked them all for attending this formal inauguration. He explained that Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Tibet was originally founded by Gendun Drup, the First Dalai Lama, when he was 57 in 1447. After Gendun Gyatso was recognised as Gendun Drup's reincarnation he was enthroned at Tashi Lhunpo. Under the 4th Panchen Rinpoche, Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltzen, the Monastery became a seat of learning for studies of both Sutra and Tantra. Consequently it became a bastion of Tibetan culture in Central Tibet.

In the 1970s a few Tashi Lhunpo monks re-established the Monastery here in Bylakuppe. Since then, due to His Holiness's kindness and with the support of the Dalai Lama Trust, all the traditions

of Tashi Lhunpo have been completely restored. The Gyalwang Karmapa has been unstinting in his interest and support too.

The Abbot pointed out that the statues in the new Assembly Hall were consecrated by Ganden Tri Rinpoche according to the rituals of 13 Deity Vajrabhairava. He also declared that with regard to the malignant spirit Dolgyal, Tashi Lhunpo, its monks and supporters have no connection with it whatsoever. What's more, there are some in the guise of monks who have, particularly in Tibet, sought to propagate this bad practice in the name of the Panchen Rinpoche. He said, "We forthrightly oppose them."

He added that Tashi Lhunpo supports the Middle Way Approach. While thanking all the guests for coming, many of them from distant parts of the world, the Abbot concluded with the wish that His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the 11th Panchen Rinpoche, Gendun Chökyi Nyima live long and healthy lives.

To mark His Holiness's 80th birthday this year and as a token of gratitude, the Monastery presented him with a delightful sandalwood statue of Gyalwa Gendun Drup, a gold coin and a conch shell ornament.

In his speech Sikyong Lobsang Sangay

paid his respects to his fellow guests and congratulated the Monastery on the achievement of re-establishing itself and building this new hall. He paid tribute to the 11th Panchen Rinpoche, who has not been seen since he was recognised by His Holiness. He said the CTA takes every opportunity to call for his release. He drew attention to the long-standing historical connection between Tashi Lhunpo and the people of the Himalayan region. Speaker Penpa Tsering also offered his congratulations.

In his address, Ganden Tri Rinpoche alluded to the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas as Father and Son (Yabsey Nyi). He went on to say that Trijang Rinpoche had once remarked on the Drepung Loseling Debate Yard that wherever the teaching of the Buddha spreads there will be peace and happiness - and that depends on His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Since the Chief Guest, the Governor of Karnataka's arrival was delayed, His Holiness began to address the crowd. He expressed appreciation of the monastery's environmental setting and its being a centre of learning. He remarked that it's important to engage in the study of the Dharma. He said that while Buddhism spread the length and breadth of Tibet, the public were still not very educated. In the Himalayan regions he has met people who recite the words for taking refuge, but who do not clearly know what the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are.

"Because we need to be 21st century Buddhists, with an understanding of what the Buddha taught, we have to promote more education. All religious traditions are good since they help people. China, Korea and Japan also follow the Nalanda tradition, but it's only among Tibetans that you will find the kind of rigorous, detailed study that we follow in our centres of learning. Now, we need more people capable of communicating that knowledge to others. In India and



*His Holiness the Dalai Lama teasing Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Penpa Tsering and the elected political leader of the Central Tibetan Administration Sikyong Lobsang Sangay during inauguration ceremony for Tashi Lhunpo Monastery's new assembly hall in Bylakuppe, Karnataka, India on December 19, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL*

elsewhere interest in Buddhism is growing.”

The Governor, Shri Vajubhai Rudhabhai Vala, arrived and His Holiness went down to meet him. Both climbed the steps together and then joined hands in lighting the lamp. His Holiness presented the Governor with a memento on the Monastery's behalf.

“Brothers and sisters, I am very happy to be here,” the Governor said, speaking in Hindi. “It's a great privilege. Best wishes to all of you.

“Tibetans have long been our guests here in Karnataka; you have built beautiful Buddhist temples, which attract interested tourists. India is the land of the Buddha and we have had links with Tibet since King Songtsen Gampo first took interest in Buddhism. I'm happy to see the fine statue of the Buddha here too.

“At the same time I regret that the Panchen Rinpoche is not here with us. He has not been seen since His Holiness announced his recognition in 1995. His predecessor, the 10th Panchen Rinpoche was someone who had worked tirelessly for the welfare of the Tibetan people.

“I'm happy to know that many students from the Himalayan regions have been made welcome here at Tashi Lhunpo. I

want you to know that we Indians are always with you, Tibetans and Indians have to work together. Tibet will be free, and you have to keep up your non-violent approach just as Gandhi-ji did for us. Never lose heart; never lose hope.”

The crowd cheered and applauded as the Governor, smiling broadly, sat down. Responding to his rousing speech, His Holiness paid his respects to the His Excellency the Governor, monastics and other distinguished guests.

“Dharma friends, I'd like to thank you all for coming. In the 1960s, Pandit Nehru, the Prime Minister, wrote to the various state governments asking if any

could provide land for Tibetans to settle on. The most fulsome response came from the then State of Mysore and its leader Mr Nijalingappa. We began settlements at Mundgod, Kollegal and here at Bylakuppe. We will not forget the kindness of Karnataka and remember Nijalingappa in our prayers.

“We've maintained our culture of compassion and non-violence alive for more than a thousand years and keeping it alive now is our priority. We set up schools in the settlements so Tibetan children could receive both a modern and a Tibetan education. Over the years the results have been good.

“Tibetan Buddhism, with its roots in the Nalanda tradition, is the most comprehensive Buddhist tradition today. And although the practice of Buddhism is really only of interest to Buddhists, the traditions of logic and epistemology, as well as the science of mind, can be of interest to everyone. Several of our great seats of learning have been re-established here in Karnataka, with Sera, Tashi Lhunpo and Namdroling Monasteries here in Bylakuppe.

“I'd like to thank the Governor again for coming here today and for the concern you have shown for the young Panchen Rinpoche.”

Words of thanks followed and lunch was offered to all the guests.

## His Holiness the Dalai Lama Expresses Sympathy for Flood Victims in Chennai

His Holiness the Dalai Lama wrote to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha on 4 December to express his sadness at the unprecedented destruction and disruption of normal life in Chennai as a result of the heaviest rains in several decades. He remarked:

“Chennai was one of the Indian cities I visited when I first came to India in 1956 for the Buddha Jayanthi celebrations. Over the years I have visited this beautiful city several times, most recently three weeks ago as these rains began.”

As a token of his concern for those who have suffered in this catastrophe, he wrote that he was directing the Dalai Lama Trust to make a donation of Rs. 1500000/- (Rupees fifteen lakhs) towards ongoing relief and rescue operations. He concluded:

“I would like to convey to you and the people of Tamil Nadu my prayers for all those who have suffered loss of life and property.”



## His Holiness the Dalai Lama was Chief Guest at Abdul Kalam Seva Ratna Awards



*His Holiness the Dalai Lama presenting the Abdul Kalam Seva Ratna Awards during ceremonies in Chennai, TN, India on November 9, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL*

Hundreds of Indians and Tibetans jam-packed the periphery of Music Academy, Chennai on 9 November to witness the maiden Abdul Kalam Seva Ratna awards 2015 being honoured by His Holiness the Dalai Lama despite a thunderstorm in the city.

The award ceremony was introduced by the Abdul Kalam Vision Movement and supported by the Madras Management Association (MMA). It aspires to recognise and honour individuals or organisations contributing in creating a developed India as reinforced and envisioned by the late former President of India Dr. ABJ Abdul Kalam.

Dignitaries at the mega occasion include Mr. V. Ponraj, the Scientific Advisor of the late President, Mr. T. Shivaraman, President of the MMA, Mr. T. S. Krishnamurthy, former Chief Election Commissioner of India, Mr. D. R. Karthikeyan, former CBI special director and Dr. Nazeema Bagum, niece of the late President.

Addressing the gathering, His Holiness the Dalai Lama initially expressed his heartiest greetings to the awardees and urged them to work harder and continue their contributions. He also

paid reverence to the late President and thanked the organisation for the invitation.

Considering the huge materialistic development in the recent history, His Holiness said that people should also focus on developing inner peace to attain peaceful mind. His Holiness also mentioned that the essence of inner peace is certainly apparent since there are many people abroad who are highly developed in materialism and modern education yet living relatively unhappy lives.

Appreciating India's 'unity in diversity', His Holiness said that India is the only country where all the major religions live harmoniously, possessing rich blend of profound ancient knowledge on human emotions and modern science.

Calling for the younger generation to work for the better world, His Holiness said that the generation of the 20th century has caused enough chaos in the world and the responsibility is on the 21st generation to work find the solution.

"If we really start to make effort now, within your lifetime latter part of the 21st century can be more peaceful, more

harmony, more compassionate world. All these problems essentially are man-made problems, our own creation so, logically we must have the ability to reduce the problem and eventually can eliminate it."

Since the entire humanity revolves in interdependency, His Holiness demanded mutual understanding among people and added, "We need 'Sense of Oneness' among seven billion human beings. All the rest of the seven billion human beings are our brothers and sisters. Then there is no business to kill them. Different faith, different race, different caste; all these are minor, not important. Important is that we are same human being, mentally, emotionally, physically, all have same rights to achieve happiness."

His Holiness also shared his views on the need of serious attention on the current education system, which mainly focus on physical aspects. He stated that more efforts should be rendered on an overall development of people. He further suggested that destructive emotions should be reduced and constructive emotion must be increased.

"Since the basic innate nature of human being is compassionate then there is hope if we use human intelligence according to our basic human nature, then we can build happy humanity, happy world," His Holiness concluded optimistically.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama honoured the Abdul Kalam Seva Ratna Awards 2015 to the top organisations amongst five categories; Tree Plantation and Growing Mission, Reviving Water Bodies Mission, Providing Safe Drinking Water Mission, Creating Clean and Green Campus, Village and City Mission and the De-addiction Mission.

The Abdul Kalam Seva Ratna Award comprise of a gold medal, a 10gm gold coin, a citation and certificate apart from a cash prize of Rs. 1 lakh.

## China's Database of 'Living Buddhas' Is the Latest Attempt to Control Tibetan Affairs

By Hannah Beech, TIME Magazine



*Cave monastery, Lhasa, Tibet*

Chinese bureaucracy excels at record-keeping, and the ruling Chinese Communist Party's official atheism isn't preventing the latest effort in meticulous documentation. Earlier this month, the Chinese government announced that Beijing would be compiling a database of the nearly 360 "living Buddhas" — holy men considered reincarnations of Tibetan Buddhist luminaries — who are resident in China.

The State Administration for Religious Affairs, which has charged itself with compiling the living-Buddha database, did not respond to written questions from TIME. But the database announcement follows the issuing in September of a government white paper reiterating that Beijing "has undeniable endorsement right on the reincarnation system" of living Buddhas. A Chinese state media report said the spiritual cataloging, which will be available online, is designed to prevent the rise of unscrupulous pseudo living Buddhas who lure followers without proper religious credentials. Concern has grown because Tibetan Buddhism has gained a growing following among members of China's Han majority, who are drawn by the sense of religious purity emanating

from the Tibetan high plateau. (Locals, meanwhile, complain that an aggressive police presence in Tibet means they cannot access some of their holiest sites as freely as Han tourists can.)

The Chinese government's self-declared right to choose living Buddhas extends to the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism. The current Dalai Lama, considered the 14th reincarnation of a 15th century abbot, has lived in exile since a failed uprising against Chinese rule in 1959. Although the now 80-year-old monk has consistently called for meaningful autonomy for Tibet, as opposed to outright independence, Beijing considers the Dalai Lama a dangerous separatist and accuses him of orchestrating deadly 2008 protests across the Tibetan plateau, as well as the more than 130 self-immolations by Tibetans over the past few years — charges he rejects.

Traditionally, the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama is chosen by a coterie of high lamas, as senior Tibetan Buddhist monks are known. But the Communist Party now considers reincarnation one of its official duties. "This living-Buddha database and the whole policy toward reincarnation is clearly a preemp-

tive move by the government to control what happens after this Dalai Lama," says Nicholas Bequelin, regional director for East Asia at Amnesty International, who has tracked Tibetan topics for years. "They want to get ahead of the issue and prepare the ground for when the Dalai Lama dies."

Meanwhile, the Tibetan spiritual leader has suggested that his replacement will not come from a Tibet where religious repression and cultural control have endured for more than half a century. "If the present situation regarding Tibet remains the same, I will be [reincarnated] outside Tibet away from the control of the Chinese authorities," the Dalai Lama is quoted as saying on his website. "This is logical." The Nobel Peace Prize laureate has also speculated that the long line of Dalai Lamas could end with him. "Whether the institution of the Dalai Lama remains or not depends entirely on the wishes of the Tibetan people," he says on his website. "It is for them to decide."

On Dec. 10, Lobsang Sangay — the Tibetan Prime Minister in exile, who has taken over some political responsibilities from the Dalai Lama — released a statement coinciding with World Human Rights Day and the 26th anniversary of the Dalai Lama being chosen to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. "Neither the muscle nor money of the Chinese government," he wrote, "will change the belief of the Tibetan people in His Holiness the Dalai Lama to appoint the next Dalai Lama."

In 1995, the Dalai Lama designated a 6-year-old Tibetan boy as the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, the second holiest figure in the Tibetan-Buddhist cosmology. But shortly afterwards, Chinese authorities picked their own boy as Panchen Lama. The Dalai Lama's choice, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, has not been seen in public for more than two decades. A Chinese official was quoted

in official media in September saying that the now grown boy is “living normally and growing healthily [and] does not want to be disturbed by anyone.” This month, the government-selected Panchen Lama celebrated the 20th anniversary of his enthronement. During an official ceremony, the 25-year-old, who is a vice president of the Buddhist Association of China, thanked the Chinese government for its “help and care,” according to Xinhua, China’s state news agency.

While Beijing’s Panchen Lama has been glorified in Chinese state media for his efforts in “incorporating Tibetan Buddhism into socialist society,” the Dalai Lama continues to be vilified in official circles. In ethnically Tibetan areas outside of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), such as in Yunnan or Gansu provinces, images of the Dalai Lama can be openly displayed, along with photographs of other high-ranking monks who have escaped into exile. But in the TAR proper, government oversight is harsher. Simply possessing the exiled leader’s image can earn monks jail sentences. Clerics complain that they are forced to attend patriotic-education classes in their monasteries and denounce their spiritual guru. “We must say their bad words [toward the Dalai Lama] but our hearts are full of love for His Holiness,” says one Tibetan monk from Labrang monastery in Gansu. “They cannot kill our love.”

Beijing counters that it has raised living standards dramatically in Tibetan areas, which are among China’s poorest. For instance, the central government spent \$1.25 billion to educate Tibetan children in boarding schools, according to a state media report this month. Yet critics consider plucking young Tibetan nomads from their families as little more than crude Sinification by the Chinese state. There’s an economic imperative to the trend too. Tibetans who want to secure jobs with the state-owned companies flooding Tibet to mine its plentiful natural resources know they must master Mandarin, China’s national language, over any Tibetic language. More change is coming to the high plateau: next year, Lhasa, the regional capital, will welcome its first KFC outlet.

## China Passes Controversial Counter-Terrorism Law

- Reuters

China passed a controversial new anti-terrorism law on Sunday that requires technology firms to help decrypt information, but not install security “backdoors” as initially planned, and allows the military to venture overseas on counter-terror operations.

Chinese officials say their country faces a growing threat from militants and separatists, especially in its unruly Western region of Xinjiang, where hundreds have died in violence in the past few years.

The law has attracted deep concern in Western capitals, not only because of worries it could violate human rights such as freedom of speech, but because of the cyber provisions. U.S. President Barack Obama has said that he had raised concerns about the law directly with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

While a provision in an initial draft that would require companies to keep servers and user data within China was removed from the final law, technology companies will still have to provide help with sensitive encryption information if law enforcement authorities demand it.

Speaking after China’s largely rubber-stamp parliament passed the law, Li Shouwei, deputy head of the parliament’s criminal law division under the legislative affairs committee, said China was simply doing what other Western nations already do in asking technology firms to help fight terror.

“This rule accords with the actual work need of fighting terrorism and is basically the same as what other major countries in the world do,” Li told reporters.

This will not affect the normal operation of tech companies and they have nothing to fear in terms of having “backdoors” installed or losing intellectual property rights, he added.

The installing of security “backdoors” was also initially mooted by China for the law.

Officials in Washington have argued the law, combined with new draft banking and insurance rules and a slew of anti-trust investigations, amounts to unfair regulatory pressure targeting foreign companies.

China’s national security law adopted in July requires all key network infrastructure and information systems to be “secure and controllable”.

The anti-terrorism law also permits the People’s Liberation Army to get involved in anti-terrorism operations overseas, though experts have said China faces big practical and diplomatic problems if it ever wants to do this.

An Weixing, head of the Public Security Ministry’s counter-terrorism division, said China faced a serious threat from terrorists, especially “East Turkestan” forces, China’s general term for Islamists separatists it says operate in Xinjiang.

“Terrorism is the public enemy of mankind, and the Chinese government will oppose all forms of terrorism,” An said.

Rights groups, though, doubt the existence of a cohesive militant group in Xinjiang and say the unrest mostly stems from anger among the region’s Muslim Uighur people over restrictions on their religion and culture.

The new law also restricts the right of media to report on details of terror attacks, including a provision that media and social media cannot report on details of terror activities that might lead to imitation, nor show scenes that are “cruel and inhuman”.

*(Editing by Jacqueline Wong; Editing by Michael Perry)*



## A Showcase of Tibetan Culture Serves Chinese Political Goals

- By Edward Wong, The New York Times



*Tibetan riders at a horse festival in July. Chinese officials stage such events to signal that Tibetan culture is thriving. Credit Gilles Sabrie for The New York Times*

**BATANG GRASSLANDS, China** — Women came in finery, wearing bright silk dresses, silver belts and necklaces with turquoise and coral. Men sauntered across the field in boots and cowboy hats. Some nomads had ridden motorcycles for days from valleys in Sichuan Province.

They came to this green-carpeted plain for the annual Tibetan horse festival, three days of horse racing, yak riding and archery.

But Tibet being Chinese-ruled Tibet, the Himalayan rodeo also had a display of martial force.

On the second morning, between races beneath an azure sky, two dozen ethnic Han members of a Chinese paramilitary unit marched through the middle of the race grounds. They held batons and wore helmets and black body armor over green camouflage fatigues. An officer with a walkie-talkie barked orders.

As they walked once around the oval track, the mostly Tibetan audience stayed quiet. Then the soldiers marched off. Minutes later, the next race began, with young jockeys clinging to galloping

steeds that kicked up clouds of dust.

These days, horse festivals on the Tibetan plateau are not just about equestrian prowess. They are political affairs with a propaganda goal — Chinese officials hold them to signal to people here and abroad that traditional Tibetan culture is thriving, contrary to what the Dalai Lama and other critics say.

The image of Tibetans showcased by the festival is one that China has long promoted of its ethnic minorities, that of dancing, singing, happy-go-lucky, costume-wearing, loyal citizens of the nation. But there are dissonant notes, including the presence of Han soldiers, who have been posted to horse festivals across the plateau since a Tibetan rebellion in 2008.

The festival this year on the Batang Grasslands, at 12,000 feet near the market town of Yushu, or Gyêgu in Tibetan, drew thousands of nomads, monks and merchants. But even as they were swept up in the excitement of the races, for many the occasion was tainted by its role as a tool of government propaganda.

“Many people might think Tibet is de-

veloping well and in the right direction after watching the horse race,” said Tashi Wangchuk, 30, a businessman in Yushu who is fighting to preserve Tibetan culture. “The government holds this kind of big horse-racing festival to advertise Tibetan people’s lifestyle to the outside world — that our life is very happy and joyful.”

The government promotes this image, he said, even as it restricts the teaching of Tibetan language, tries to control Buddhism and presses Tibetans to assimilate into the dominant Han culture.

“So much of our lives is controlled by the government,” said a Tibetan man from Sichuan. “This festival is no different.”

The festival here celebrates the Kham culture of eastern Tibet. Kham, a region of valleys, ravines and hillside monasteries, was traditionally home to Tibet’s fiercest warriors. Although they were conquered in 1950 by the People’s Liberation Army, the people of Kham have remained feisty. Many took part in the 2008 uprising that spread from Lhasa across the plateau, and there have been self-immolations protesting Chinese rule in recent years. On July 9, only two weeks before the horse festival, a young monk in Yushu died after setting fire to himself.

The first of the recent government-run Kham festivals was held in the Yushu area of Qinghai Province in 1994 in an effort to “establish Khampa culture as an international brand, to continue the traditional friendship and to promote mutual development,” according to an official Yushu County news website.

Four counties took turns hosting it every four years. Recently, they began holding the festival annually, with Yushu hosting it both last year and this year, in part to show that the town has recovered from a 2010 earthquake that killed at least

3,000 people.

The opening ceremony was held in town. Most residents could not get tickets because the event was limited to officials and government employees. Mr. Tashi said that had been the case last year, too.

“In this way, they ensure that only reliable people can go,” he said.

The grasslands where the main events were held are by an airport about a half-hour drive south of Yushu. On the road there, Chinese flags fluttered from posts, and President Xi Jinping smiled at travelers from a billboard.

Many people drove motorcycles or sport-utility vehicles. Some held tailgate parties in the parking fields. Entrepreneurs sold steamed buns, watermelon slices, bottled water and yak meat from the backs of their cars.

In the crowd, too, were monks liberated that day from the obligations of monastery rituals. “You don’t want to miss it,” said one, Phuntsok.

There were dance performances daily. The number that closed the first day’s events featured a wide circle of dancing Khampa men who wore traditional black robes and red tassels in their hair. The same men returned for a campfire performance at the festival’s end.

Horse acrobatics on Day 2 opened with a Khampa man on a galloping horse holding aloft the red flag of the People’s Republic. Tibetan music played over loudspeakers. Other riders followed, one by one. Some shot at a bull’s-eye with a rifle while on a moving horse; others bent to the ground to pick up a white scarf as they raced past.

Most of the announcements were made by a woman speaking Chinese rather than Tibetan, even though the only ethnic Han attending were a handful of journalists, photographers and tourists. They were ushered to front-row seats so they could get good photos.

Wrestling matches had been scheduled next. But in the late afternoon, an an-

nouncer said the event had been canceled. People jeered.

“They treat us like their children, but this is our land,” one man said.

Police officers in black uniforms, most of them Tibetan, told spectators to go home and pointed to the main road back to town, which soon began filling with cars.

Lian Xiangmin, a senior researcher at the China Tibetology Research Center in Beijing, said in an interview later that “there is nothing traditional about this horse festival,” adding, “It’s a tourism event organized by local governments.”

In the early days of Communist rule, horse festivals were local affairs that had minimal government input, if any, said Tsering Woesser, a Tibetan writer. During the decade-long Cultural Revolution that began in 1966, the festivals shut

down. When that period ended, local governments revived the festivals and maintained control over many.

“The political connotation of the government-held festivals was very strong,” Ms. Woesser said. “For example, the once-famous horse festival in Litang was chosen to be held on Aug. 1, which is the day to celebrate the founding of the People’s Liberation Army.”

The Litang festival in Sichuan has been canceled since 2007, when a former nomad and father of 11, Runggye Adak, delivered an impromptu speech at the festival calling for the return of the Dalai Lama. Police officers later arrested him, and only this July was he released.

“From the outside, if people see there’s such a horse festival or event, the world thinks this area is very open and free,” Mr. Tashi said. “But it’s not like that.”

*Jonah Kessel, Sarah Li, Mia Li and Adam Wu contributed research.*

## His Holiness the Dalai Lama Congratulates Aung San Suu Kyi on Victory in Myanmar’s General Election

Writing to fellow Nobel Peace Laureate, Aung San Suu Kyi to congratulate her on her party’s remarkable victory in the general elections in Myanmar, His Holiness the Dalai Lama wrote:

“It is a reflection of the people’s confidence that you will be able to help them fulfill their hopes and aspirations.

“These elections are a historic milestone for Myanmar. There is immense goodwill and worldwide support for this flowering of democracy in Myanmar. I am confident that all interested parties will make the most of this opportunity in a spirit of peace and reconciliation.”

He also reminded her that when the two of them had met previously, they had discussed some of the problems facing Myanmar, including the situation of the Muslims. He added:

“As a fellow Buddhist, may I again alert you to the need to reach out to all sections of society. There is a need to build closer inter-religious relations among the whole population. This will not only earn the world’s goodwill and respect, but is also the proper and realistic way to take the country forward. Above all, I feel it is in the best interest of Myanmar.”

His Holiness ended by expressing appreciation of Aung San Suu Kyi’s friendship, wishing her good health and the strength in meeting the many challenges that lie ahead in securing the development of Myanmar and the flourishing of its people.

## China Still Uses Medieval Torture Methods Against Opponents – Amnesty

- Tom Phillips, The Guardian

BEIJING: Chinese security agents continue to employ a medieval array of torture methods against government opponents, activists, lawyers and petitioners, including spiked rods, iron torture chairs and electric batons, a report claims.

The Amnesty International report, called *No End in Sight: Torture and Forced Confessions in China*, is based on interviews with nearly 40 Chinese human rights lawyers and contains chilling details of alleged beatings and torture sessions endured by those taken into police custody.

Patrick Poon, the report's author, said that despite government pledges to reform, Amnesty had documented recent cases of torture in virtually every corner of the country. "From Beijing to Hunan to Heilongjiang to Guangdong – there are cases of torture in many, many places. The problem is still very widespread in different provinces. It isn't just concentrated in a certain area of China," he said.

Poon said most of those targeted were human rights lawyers, Communist party officials taken into custody by anti-corruption investigators, and practitioners of the banned spiritual movement Falun Gong.

One of the most shocking cases described in the report was that of Cai Ying, a 52-year-old human rights lawyer from Hunan province. Cai claimed that after being detained in 2012 he was forced to sit on a "hanging restraint chair" – a contraption that immobilises a prisoner by dangling them in the air with their hands and chest strapped to a board.

In a recent interview with Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post*, Cai recalled excruciating torture sessions. "I was humiliated so badly I thought of ending it all, but then I thought of my daughter," he said. "The humiliating experience filled my heart with hatred."

Yu Wensheng, another lawyer, said that after being detained last October for protesting outside a detention centre where a client was being held, he spent more than three months in custody suffering torture.

Yu claimed he was held with death row inmates for 61 days, during which he was questioned about 200 times. At one point officers handcuffed him to an iron chair with his hands behind his back.

"My hands were swollen and I felt so much pain that I didn't want to live," he was quoted as saying. "The two police officers repeatedly yanked the handcuffs. I screamed every time they pulled them."

Speaking to the *Guardian* earlier this year, Yu described the despair of his time behind bars. "I felt helpless and lonely," he said. "It is both physical and psychological suffering. I don't think I could bear going back to jail for a long stretch again. If I get sent back to jail again, I will go on hunger strike – I would rather die than face a long spell in jail."

Poon said the Chinese government had taken some steps over the past five years to tackle the problem of torture. In 2012 Beijing vowed to "enforce preventive and remedial measures to prevent extortion of confession by torture and collecting evidence through illegal methods". *Xinhua*, China's official news agency, has reported on plans to introduce real-time monitoring and control management of interrogation sessions using audio and video equipment.

However, Amnesty said such reforms had "in reality done little to change the deep-rooted practice of torturing suspects to extract forced confessions". Chinese law outlawed only certain acts of torture and did not cover acts of mental torture, the group said. Lawyers trying to investigate or seek redress

for such cases were "systematically thwarted by police, prosecutors and the courts".

Human rights activists believe the situation has deteriorated since President Xi Jinping took control of the Communist party three years ago. Xi, who some describe as China's most authoritarian ruler since Mao, has tasked the country's security apparatus with dismantling any potential source of opposition to the party.

A renewed crackdown on human rights lawyers has been under way since July, and at least 12 people – including the prominent rights lawyers Wang Yu, Li Heping and Zhang Kai – are still being held in undisclosed locations on state security charges. Activists fear those prisoners are likely to be suffering psychological and possibly physical torture.

"The government's attitude to lawyers has become even more hostile than before under [former president] Hu Jintao," said Poon. "If they continue to crack down on lawyers and to allow this kind of torture to happen, it won't help maintain social stability but will only create even more social unrest. If lawyers face such treatment, imagine ordinary people."

Asked to comment on the Amnesty report, a foreign ministry spokesman said China was working to bring "fairness and justice" to all.

"China is a country governed by the rule of law," the spokesman said at a press briefing on Thursday. "Extracting confessions through torture is explicitly banned by China's laws. Anyone found using torture during interrogation will be subject to punishment."

*Additional reporting by Christy Yao*

For detailed news visit:

[www.tibet.net](http://www.tibet.net)



## Pelosi on Rare Visit to Tibet by US Congressional Delegation



*The US Congressional delegation led by House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, in front of the Jokhang temple in Lhasa.*

U.S. House of Representatives Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi has led a delegation on a rare trip by foreign politicians to Tibet, during a visit to China that included meetings with officials in Beijing.

Pelosi, the former House speaker, has been a frequent critic of China's human rights record, including in the remote Himalayan region where Beijing is accused of suppressing demands for greater religious and cultural freedoms.

She was asked about her Tibet trip during a meeting Thursday with Zhang Ping, a vice chairman of the Chinese parliament, but her response was inaudible to journalists in the room. The Tibet visit was not announced in advance.

Pelosi made no direct reference to Tibet in her opening comments at the meeting with Zhang at the Great Hall of the People, the seat of the legislature in the heart of Beijing.

"We consider (the meeting) an important one, to be with your distinguished colleagues, as we increase our relationship between the two Congresses and we'll talk about our two countries as

well and the success of the presidents' meetings," Pelosi said.

The visit by Pelosi and six other Democrats was intended to focus on boosting trade ties, along with talks on national and cyber security, climate change and human rights.

Pelosi has been outspoken on the issue of human rights throughout her nearly 30 years as a Democrat representing California in Congress. She last traveled to China in 2009.

Some of Pelosi's strongest comments on Tibet came during a March 2008 visit with the Dalai Lama at the headquarters of his self-declared government-in-exile in the northern Indian town of Dharamsala. She then called for an international probe into deadly anti-government riots in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa earlier in the month. It had triggered unrest in many ethnically Tibetan regions across western China in the days that followed.

"If freedom-loving people throughout the world do not speak out against China's oppression and China and Tibet,

- Associated Press

we have lost all moral authority to speak on behalf of human rights anywhere in the world," Pelosi said.

Since the 2008 riots, Tibet has been largely off-limits to foreign media and diplomats, and travel there by ordinary foreign tourists requires a special permit. During sensitive political dates, such as the anniversary of the riots, visits are even more tightly restricted.

Details about the length of the delegation's visit to Tibet and its agenda were not immediately available.

China refutes accusations of human rights abuses in Tibet, claiming instead to have brought development to what it describes as a backward theocracy prior to the arrival of communist forces in 1950. The Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959 amid an abortive uprising against Chinese rule and is shunned by Beijing as a die-hard separatist.

Pelosi's most recent trip to China comes amid questions about Chinese hacking attempts on American corporate intellectual property, as well as tensions over U.S. challenges to Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea.

Pelosi was joined by Democratic Reps. Jim McGovern of Massachusetts, Betty McCollum and Tim Walz of Minnesota, Joyce Beatty of Ohio and Alan Lowenthal and Ted Lieu of California.





## Tibet is the Canary in the Coal Mine

It was Dec. 10, 1989, and the Dalai Lama had just emerged from his Oslo hotel in the winter dusk after being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. I was among supporters from all over the world waiting there to celebrate a symbolic moment — the first global recognition not only of this humble monk in exile but also of his cause, his land and the people and wisdom culture of Tibet.

In those simpler days, before he would be swept to presidential meetings in motorcades, the Dalai Lama walked among us. On that evening, he embraced us one by one as our candle flames flickered in the darkness. People started to sing spontaneously, in many different languages, but somehow it became one song, one language, one voice.

I recall this magical moment today with a particular poignancy, because this Dec. 10 coincides with the COP21 climate talks in Paris that are critical to the survival of our planet.

One of the reasons the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Dalai Lama was for his promotion of global interdependence and protection of the environment. In his acceptance speech, he said, “Both science and the teachings of the Buddha tell us of the fundamental unity of all things. This understanding is crucial if we are to take positive and decisive action on the pressing global concern with the environment.”

This vision has never been needed more, as governments attempt to forge a global treaty to limit carbon emissions and bring financial assistance to the poor, who will be the worst hit by a threat that is potentially more catastrophic than any war or disaster ever known.

One of the most alarming findings by international scientists — among them, many Chinese — is that the Dalai Lama’s home, Tibet, now under Chinese control, is warming nearly three times as fast as the rest of the earth. This matters to all of us. The size of Western Europe and the world’s highest and largest plateau, Tibet,

the roof of the world, is also known as the earth’s third pole because it contains the biggest reserves of freshwater outside the Arctic and Antarctic. Its changing climate affects not only the monsoon in Asia but also weather patterns in Europe and across the rest of the Northern Hemisphere. Tibet may be the canary in the coal mine.

As the source of most of Asia’s major rivers, including the Yangtze, the Mekong and the Brahmaputra, Tibet’s fragile ecology is of critical importance to hundreds of millions of people in the water-dependent societies downstream. And yet, relatively unnoticed by the rest of the world, the Chinese government has built and is building dams on all the major rivers running off the Tibetan plateau — one of the most seismically active and unstable areas of the world — with potentially devastating consequences.

In Tibet’s vast grasslands, nomadic herders have for thousands of years made a sustainable living uniquely adapted to the harsh conditions, migrating with their herds of yak and sheep according to the seasons. Now they are being displaced from their ancestral lands and removed to bleak concrete block settlements, resulting in both broken communities and increased environmental degradation.

This is despite the many authoritative Chinese voices — scholars and range-land experts in the People’s Republic of China — among a global scientific consensus that indigenous stewardship and herd mobility is essential to the health of the grasslands and to help mitigate climate change.

With its source glaciers rapidly retreating and with Tibet’s river waters being diverted to Chinese cities far from the plateau, China is fulfilling its strategic objectives without regard to the needs of countries downstream. The transboundary implications of China’s control over Tibet are starker than ever. Access to water has become a serious security issue throughout East and Southeast Asia.

Given its critical importance, the impact

- Richard Gere, Published in Al Jazeera of climate change and freshwater scarcity on the Tibetan plateau is not only a regional but a global issue.

The Chinese leadership has acknowledged at the highest levels the scale of the environmental crisis it faces. The disastrous results of breakneck industrial growth over environmental sanity has now convinced many in China that tackling climate change and protecting the environment are in their national and personal interests. As increasing numbers of Chinese environmentalists and experts have made clear, this must include conserving the Tibetan plateau.

A 21st century commitment to sustainability requires a halt to the displacement of nomads from the Tibetan grasslands and the integrated participation of Tibetans in management of the land. A new report by the International Campaign for Tibet, published to coincide with COP21, highlights new strategies that are required, based on inclusive dialogue that brings together vulnerable communities, regional and local governments and Chinese, Tibetan and other Asian scholars, scientists and NGOs. A regional framework for the governance and management of water resources urgently needs to be developed among all the nations in South and Southeast Asia, including China.

As the Dalai Lama says, “This blue planet is our only home, and Tibet is its roof. The Tibetan plateau needs to be protected, not just for Tibetans but for the environmental health and sustainability of the entire world.”

It is the world’s loss that, as a leader exiled from his country, the Dalai Lama could not be at the table in Paris. But it is imperative for us to pay attention to his words on the anniversary of that day in Oslo in 1989 by emphasizing in Paris and beyond that Tibet needs to be a serious priority in the global conversation on climate change.

And that — even given China’s territorial claims — Tibet belongs to us all.

## TIBETAN MEDIA

Sheja (Official Tibetan monthly)  
Department of Information & International  
Relations, Dharamshala-176215, HP, India  
Email: sheja\_editor@tibet.net  
Web: www.bod.asia

Tibetan Freedom (Official Tibetan weekly)  
Department of Information & International  
Relations, Dharamshala-176215, HP, India  
Email: tibfreedom@tibet.net  
Web: www.bod.asia

NewsTibet  
241 E. 32nd Street  
New York, NY 10016  
Web: www.tibetoffice.org

Tibet Bulletin (Official Chinese bi-monthly)  
Department of Information & International  
Relations, Dharamshala-176 215, HP, India  
Email: chinadesk@tibet.net  
Web: www.xizang-zhiye.org  
www.tibetonline.tv



## TIBETAN BULLETIN

## NEEDS YOU

## AN APPEAL

Tibetan Bulletin promotes awareness and provides facts of the situation in Tibet and Tibetans in exile. Published bi-monthly and distributed free around the world, we are looking to increase our readership and improve the Tibetan Bulletin with your kind help and suggestions.

If you have enjoyed this issue and would like to help achieve our aims of dissemination of news and views about Tibet, we would be most appreciative of your donation.

Help us to publish your favourite journal on Tibet.

Kindly address your donations to:

a) For Cheques and Drafts from outside India: His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Charitable Trust

b) For Cheques and Drafts from within India: Tibetan Administrations Welfare Society (TAWs)

c) For Money Order: Department of Information and International Relations

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ PostCode: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## POSTAL ADDRESS:

Circulation Manager, DIIR,  
Central Tibetan Administration,  
Dharamshala 176 215, H.P., India

## Contacts for the Central Tibetan Administration

### INDIA

Department of Information & International  
Relations, Central Tibetan Administration,  
Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamshala - 176 215  
H.P., India Tel: +91-1892-222510/222457  
Fax: +91-1892-224957 Email: diir@tibet.net  
www.tibet.net

Bureau of H.H. the Dalai Lama, 10-B Ring Road,  
Lajpat Nagar IV, New Delhi 110 024, India  
Tel: +91-11-26474798, Fax: +91-11-2646-1914  
Email: rep.in@tibet.net www.tibetbureau.in

Chief Representative (South Zone), No. 7,  
Sampangiramaiah Garden, Srinivagalu Tank,  
Viveknagar Post, Bangalore-560047  
Karnataka, India Tel: +91-080-5506842 / 5506843  
Fax: +91-080-5506966  
Email: chiefrep@bgl.vsnl.net.in

### NEPAL

The Office of Tibet, Tibetan Refugee Welfare Of-  
fice, Gaden Khangsar, Narayan Gopal Marg-270.  
Lazimpat, Ward 2, P.O.Box No. 310,  
Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: +977-1-4419903/4420799  
Fax: +977-1-4411660 Email: rep.np@tibet.net

### UNITED STATES

The Office of Tibet, 1228, 17th Street NW, Wash-  
ington, DC - 20036, U.S.A. Tel: +1-212-213-5010,  
Fax: +1-703-349-7444  
Email: rep.us@tibet.net www.tibetoffice.org

### BRAZIL

Tibet House  
Alameda Lorena, 349 Jardim Paulista,  
Sao Paulo, SP, 01424-001 Brazil, South America  
Tel: +55(11)989635128  
Email: latin@tibet.net

### SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO EUROPE

Office of the Special Representative of H.H. the  
Dalai Lama, P.O.Box CH-8036 Zurich  
Tel: +41-79-349-2448 Fax: +41-43-536-2909  
Email: specialrep.eu@tibet.net  
www.tibet-europe.com

### SWITZERLAND

The Tibet Bureau, Place de la Navigation 10  
1201 Geneva, Switzerland Tel: +41-22-7387-940  
Fax: +41-22-7387-941 Email: rep.ch@tibet.net  
www.tibetoffice.ch

### JAPAN

Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tibet House  
Nishi Ochiai 3-26-1 Shinjuku-ku,  
Tokyo 161-0031, Japan  
Tel: +81-03-5988-3576, Fax: +81-03-3565-1360  
E-mail: rep.jp@tibet.net www.tibethouse.jp

### UNITED KINGDOM

The Office of Tibet, 1 Culworth Street, London,  
NW8 7AF, U.K. Tel: +44-207-722-5378,  
Fax: +44-207-722-0362 Email: rep.uk@tibet.net  
www.tibet.com

### FRANCE

Bureau Du Tibet, 84 BD Adolphe Pinard, 75014,  
Paris, France, Tel: +33-1-46-565-453,  
Fax: +33-1-41-170-014,  
Email: tibetoffice@orange.fr

### BELGIUM

Bureau du Tibet, 24 Avenue des Arts,  
1000 Brussels, Belgium Tel: +32-2-280 4922  
Email: rep.be@tibet.net

### AUSTRALIA

Tibet Information Office, 8/13 Napier Close, Dea-  
kin, Canberra, ACT 2600, Australia Tel: +61-2-6285-  
4046 Fax: +61-2-6282-4301  
Email: rep.au@tibet.net  
www.tibetoffice.com.au

### RUSSIA

Tibet Culture & Information Centre,  
Korn # 110, POB # 7, St. Bolshaya Novodmitrovsk-  
kaya - 14 Moscow 127015, Russia  
Tel: +7-495-786-4362 Fax: +7-495-685-11-32  
Email: rep.ru@tibet.net  
www.savetibet.ru

### SOUTH AFRICA

Office of Tibet, P.O. Box. 16812, Lyttelton 0140,  
Republic of South Africa. Tel: +27-12-664-1193  
Fax: +27-12-664-1194  
Email: rep.sa@tibet.net  
www.officeoftibet.com

### TAIWAN

Tibet Religious Foundation of H.H. the Dalai Lama  
10th Fl. 4 & 5, No. 189, Sector - 2, Keelung Rd.,  
Taipei, Taiwan (ROC)  
Tel: +886-2-2736-0366 Fax: +886-2-2377-9163  
Email: rep.tw@tibet.net/www.tibet.org.tw

## QUOTES

*“The twentieth century was a violent one, and more than 200 million people died due to wars and other conflicts. We now see a spillover of the previous century’s bloodshed in this century. If we emphasize more on non-violence and harmony, we can herald a new beginning. Unless we make serious attempts to achieve peace, we will continue to see a replay of the mayhem humanity experienced in the 20th century,” - His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the France terror attacks.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*“Mr Zhu Weiqun, an official of the self-declared atheist communist party of China claimed that Chinese government has the right to approve reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. No rational person will accept such blatant lies. The final authority based on both history and religious traditions in selecting the next Dalai Lama rests solely on the present Dalai Lama. Neither the muscle nor money of the Chinese government will change the belief of the Tibetan people in His Holiness the Dalai Lama to appoint the next Dalai Lama,” - Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay in the statement of the Kashag on 10 December 2015.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*“In his efforts to bring peace, freedom, and happiness across the world, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has shouldered hundred-fold hardships, travelling repeatedly to many places in countries both in the East and West for those purposes. During those multitudes of travels, His Holiness has delivered messages of compassion, kindness, tolerance, altruism, non-violence and so on. They were given in languages marked by simplicity of words and terms adapted to affording instant comprehension by all sections of his devout listeners in keeping with the diversity of their mentalities and yet which also fully conveyed the profundity of their meanings,” - Speaker Penpa Tsering in the statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 10 December 2015.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*“Those of you who’ve come from abroad, tomorrow’s the start of 2016 – a Happy New Year to you all. Now you’ll go home, but those of us who are still here will meet again when we hold the Kalachakra Empowerment in Bodhgaya in January 2017. We were supposed to conduct the 34th Kalachakra initiation in January 2016. However, due to my medical reasons and treatment, I had to postpone it. Anyway, what I have postponed last year, I will do it next year in the 11th month of the traditional Tibetan calendar which falls in January 2017,” - His Holiness the Dalai Lama to devotees on 31 December 2015 at Tashi Lhunpo monastery in Bylakuppe, South India.*

\*\*\*\*\*