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Editor
Jamphel Shonu
Email: tibbul@tibet.net

Asst. Editor
Tenzin Phende
Tenzin Saldon

Layout & Design
Tenzin Phende

Circulation Manager
Norbu Wangdue
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

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FROM THE EDITOR

With the 'New Era' proclaimed by President Xi Jinping, China has declared itself as one of the superpowers of the world. Superpowers, by nature, purport to portray an air of confidence and security, and China is no exception.

With a newfound confidence, Chinese government and its leaders have been singing – ad nauseam – a song of a new world order led by China and its economic prowess. So much so that they are often caught sanctimoniously lecturing other governments of the world.

The outward appearance of confidence and security however seem to conceal a deep sense of insecurity: a fear of its own people and nervousness about its territorial integrity. This insecurity was exposed once again in the recent case of Marriot Hotel's questionnaire gaffe.

The Marriot gaffe is not the first incident to invite the anger of China's paid nationalist netizens. Like Marriot, US based Delta Airlines, European fashion line Zara and medical device maker Medtronic have also attracted the ire of China over similar gaffes recently. These companies were also forced to offer apologies and take immediate measures to amend their 'vices.'

However, these recent incidents represent just the tip of the iceberg in the corporate world's Faustian relationship with China. Multinational corporations have repeatedly sacrificed their moral stand to secure the prospect of a vast market. Even industry leaders like Apple has been known to kowtow to China and turn a blind eye to China's blatant violation of human rights, transgression of international rules and fair trade practices to gain access to its huge market.

China's economic intimidation and coercive tactics have become a routine affair of late and it has induced self-censorship and nervous adjustments from companies, universities and governments over the past few years. These incidents have signified mounting control and domination of these foreign corporations by China and the growing dependence and erosion of independence of the other.

While these instances may depict confidence and strength of China, it also underlies an insecurity complex. This insecurity emerges from the fact that the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation or Xi Jinping's China Dream rests on a fragile foundation of national integration.

Driven by a false notion of irredentism, China has occupied its smaller neighbors such as Tibet and Inner Mongolia et al in a quest to reclaim what they call 'lost lands' and attain past greatness. However, these regions still remain restive and haven't completely accepted Chinese rule. And the reality is not lost on China's leadership.

As a result, China's leaders harbor a deep fear and nervousness that these regions could one day rise up. Already, popular sentiments against Chinese rule in places like Hong Kong are gaining ground. In Tibet, sentiments are currently bottled up under strict surveillance and draconian rules. However, despite China's fear of its own people, the solution to these issues is not inconceivable. The Tibetans led by the Central Tibetan Administration have renounced separatism and have called for genuine autonomy of the Tibetan people based on the Buddhist notion of the Middle Way Approach conceived by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

President Dr Lobsang Sangay of the Central Tibetan Administration, the political leader of Tibet, has called on China to address the legitimate grievances of the Tibetan people. If China reforms its policies and resolve the Tibet issue based on the Middle Way Approach, at least the territorial integrity of the Chinese nation will be safeguarded. That would be one monkey off China's back, to say the least.

But the Chinese leadership is known to be paranoid. Instead of redressing the Tibetan people, and reforming its failed policies, China have resorted to imposing harsher measures generating even more resentment and the possibility of unrest.

The underlying question is how long can China maintain stability by relying on repression borne out of paranoia? Andy Gove of Intel has said that 'only the paranoid survive'. But the paranoia that afflicts China is borne out of its own misdemeanors and historical fallacies. It's time the Chinese leadership see sense and wisdom in the Tibetan approach to resolving the issue of Tibet and thereby harness the potential of the Middle Way Approach.

Jamphel Shonu, Chief Editor

CTA President Drums Up Norway's Support for Tibet

The President of Central Tibetan Administration, Dr Lobsang Sangay called on Member of the Norwegian Parliament Ola Elvestuen, from the Liberal Party and Petter Eide from the Socialist Left Party and former Secretary General of Amnesty Norway at the Norwegian parliament and advocated the cause of Tibet and lobbied for stronger political support for Tibet.



CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay with MP Petter Eide and MP Ola Elvestuen

The parliamentarians voiced their clear support for human rights and environmental issues in Tibet and expressed their commitment to re-establish a Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet in the Parliament. Dr Sangay expressed his gratitude for their support and welcomed their statement on setting up a Parliamentary Support Group.

President Dr Sangay began the final day of his visit to Oslo by addressing a breakfast meeting at CIVITA, a leading Norwegian liberal think tank on the topic "Economic interests or human rights: How should liberal democracies interact with China?" along with fellow panellists John Peder Egenæs, Secretary General of Amnesty International Norway and Stein Ringen, Visiting Professor, Department of Political Economy, King's College, London.

Dr Sangay stated that the question is not about how liberal democracies should interact with China, but rather the question is of choice, a choice that the liberal democracy can either choose their way of liberal democratic culture or that of China's. He urged the Norwegians

to speak for Tibet not just for the sake of Tibetans, but more so for freedom, human rights and environmental rights and human values that the Norwegians strongly believe in.

Dr. Sangay also met with Mr Bjorn Engesland, Secretary general of Norwegian Helsinki Committee, a non-governmental human rights organisation, over a working lunch.

President Dr Sangay concluded his two-day visit to Oslo in November with an interview with *Aftenposten*, Norway's largest circulated newspaper.

Restore Tibet as Buffer Zone Between India and China: CTA President at Halifax International Security Forum

The President of Central Tibetan Administration Dr Lobsang Sangay spoke at the 9th Halifax International Security Forum that concluded on 20 November. Dr Sangay was featured as one of the speakers at the panel session titled 'India-China Relations'.

Dr Sangay affirmed that Tibet remains the core issue in the India-China relation, given its significance as Asia's water tower and the 3500 km border Tibet shares with India. He made a premonition of destabilisation and tension between the two Asian giants so long as the Tibet issue remains unresolved.

"India and China never shared a border, it always was between India and Tibet. It best serves India's interest to restore Tibet's status as a buffer zone between India and China," said President Dr Sangay.

Commenting on the Doklam issue, Dr Sangay's postulation evinced it as only the beginning of China's expansionist design and not a one-off standoff.

Speaking on the relevance of Tibet in



CTA President at the Halifax International Security Forum in Canada.

today's world, Dr Sangay said that apart from Tibet's environment on which hinges the global weather conditions, even the cell phones made in China that are cheap and available in the market is made of lithium mined from Tibet's sacred mountains. Advocating for the stewardship of Tibetan people, Dr Sangay said the Tibetan Plateau needs to be protected and Tibetans must be made the stewards of their own land so that the roof of the world can be protected.

Dr Sangay also dwelled on how China's overseas influence operations have rubbed off on every country from Denmark to Australia to South Africa.

The other speakers on the panel on 'India-China Relations' were Dr. Alyssa Ayres, Senior Fellow for India, Pakistan, and South Asia, Council on Foreign Relations, Ambassador Husain Haqqani, Director and Senior Fellow, South and Central Asia, Hudson Institute, Dr. Daniel Twining, President, International Republican Institute. The session lasting 90 minutes was moderated by Dr. Carla Robbins, Adjunct Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations.

Over 300 participants from 80 countries attended this year's forum organised by Canada's Ministry of National Defense led by Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan.

This year marks President Dr Sangay's fourth consecutive participation in the forum which is North America's leading foreign affairs and defence conference that brings together government officials, media personals and scholars who are at the forefront of decision-making and policy formulation impacting the global political discourse.

Integrate but don't assimilate: CTA President to Young Canadian Tibetans

The President of the Central Tibetan Administration, Dr Lobsang Sangay interacted with young Canadian Tibetans in Toronto on 22 November. The importance of embracing and preserving Tibetan identity was the highlight of the interaction.

Speaking on the existential question that the younger generation sometimes is faced with, Dr Sangay affirmed that one remains Tibetan regardless of the citizenship one holds. He further added that though one must integrate into the Canadian system, but one must not assimilate. "You can be a proud Canadian but you are always a Tibetan. We should be who we are," he added.

Elucidating on the importance of reconnecting with one's roots, Dr. Sangay iterated the importance of learning Tibetan language. "My Tibetan was bad," said Dr. Sangay. Recalling his own experience, he shared how he put in hours of hard work to improve his knowledge of Tibetan language. "I am still learning, I am still working hard and there is no end to learning. It's not easy but one must strive forward," he said.

Speaking of the various platforms and resources one can avail to learn Tibetan language, Dr Sangay urged the audience to participate and make use of such platforms.

Iterating the significance of the CTA, Dr Sangay emphasised that the CTA is the nerve centre of the Tibetan freedom movement and the custodian of Tibetan culture and Identity. He also highlighted the role of Tibetan schools, monasteries and the Tibetan settlements in exile in preserving and inculcating the essence of our identity. "If CTA collapses, Tibetan movement collapses and if the schools, monasteries and the settlements collapses, our identity collapses and it is important to remember that," he said.

Taiwan Parliament Passes Bill to Dissolve Mongolia Tibet Affairs Commission

According to a report filed by the Office of Tibet based in Taiwan, the Taiwan Legislative Yuan has approved a bill to dissolve the Mongolian Tibet Affairs Commission (MTAC).

Forum organised by Department of Information and International Relations in October this year. Speaking at the concluding session, MP Kolas reassured the audience that the bill to dissolve the Mongolia Tibetan Affairs Commission will be passed in less than two months time.

Welcoming the historic move, President of Central Tibetan Administration Dr. Lobsang Sangay said, "MTAC



Member of Taiwanese Parliament Kolas Yotaka, of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) at the Five-Fifty Forum, Dharamshala, 8 October 2017. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

Ruling Democratic Progressive Party legislator Lee Chun-yi, also a member of the committee for dissolving the commission, said, "As things change with time, our concerns for issues regarding Mongolia and Tibet should have changed course much earlier. What we should do is protect the Mongolian and Tibetan community in Taiwan, and guarantee that Mongolian and Tibetan culture will continue to be respected in Taiwan. Here we ask to disband the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission. The remaining 46 members of the commission will be transferred to the culture ministry and the Mainland Affairs Council, so we can officially dissolve the commission. Let us respect the people of Mongolia and Tibet and their culture. This is what we should do."

Member of Taiwanese Parliament Kolas Yotaka, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) who was among the legislators to table the bill attended the Five-Fifty

has been a sore point and source of misunderstanding between Tibetans and Taiwanese. Personally, I have opposed MTAC since my college days and I am glad to see it shut down."

Members of the Taiwanese Parliament who tabled the bill are Tsai Yi-Yu, Chen Chi-Mai, Xu Guoyong, Kolas Yotaka and Lai Jui-lung. The bill won with a majority of 65 votes against 30.

On 14 August, the Taiwan Executive Yuan announced that the MTAC would be dissolved by the end of the year. It was also disclosed that no budget would be allocated to the MTAC for 2018.

Originally set up as a bureau under the interior ministry of Taiwan, the commission was renamed to MTAC in 1929 in accordance with the Nationalist Government Organizational Law. The founding of the MTAC can be traced back to the Qing dynasty in 1636, when it was founded as the Mongolian Bureau.

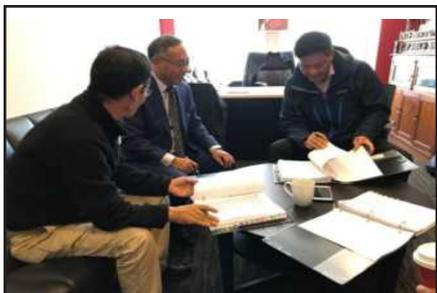
Representative Ngodup Tsering Takes Charge of OOT DC



New Representative Ngodup Tsering and outgoing Representative Penpa Tsering with OOT Brazil representative Tsewang Phuntso as the official witness.

The handing over of charge between outgoing Representative of Office of Tibet, Washington DC, Penpa Tsering and the incoming Representative Ngodup Tsering took place successfully on 1 December.

The handing over ceremony took place in the presence of Representative of South America Tsewang Phuntsok, who was appointed to oversee the handing



Outgoing Representative Penpa Tsering with new Representative Ngodup Tsering.

and taking over of the Office.

He expressed his satisfaction over the smooth transition.

As per the Kashag's directive, the process of Handing over started on 28 November. "The three-day handing over process, which began from 28 November, has been very successfully conducted and organised by the staff and outgoing Representative. I would like to thank all of you," said new Representative of Office of Tibet, Washington DC.

The new representative, Ngodup Tsering took charge from 1 December.

CTA Holds Prayer Service for Self-immolators Konpe and Tenga

The Department of Religion and Culture, Central Tibetan Administration organised prayer services for Tenga and Konpe who died after burning himself in protest against the Chinese government on 26 November and 24 December respectively.

The prayer service was presided over by Lopon Thupten Choephel of Namgyal Monastery, and attended by members of the Kashag, members of the Tibetan Parliament, chief justice commissioners and staff of the Central Tibetan Admin-



President Dr Lobsang Sangay of the Central Tibetan Administration delivering the Kashag's condolence remarks at the prayer service for self-immolator Tenga, 2 December 2017. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

istration along with local Tibetan public.

In his condolence remarks, President Dr Lobsang Sangay expressed the Kashag's profound sadness at the two self-immolations and read out a brief biography of the two self-immolators.

He highlighted the growing international attention on the situation inside Tibet, citing the coverage of the latest self-immolation protest in leading international dailies and the discussion on status of Tibetan political prisoners in the Canadian parliament.

"The Canadian senate recently raised the issue of five Tibetan political prisoners including the status of Panchen Rinpoche. The Canadian foreign minister also stated in the parliament that China should allow human rights activists

and UN officials to meet the Panchen Lama who has been forcibly kidnapped since the age of six. The United Nations has also released a report on the situation inside Tibet based on five urgent researches conducted between February and August this year," he said, and urged the international community to do more to alleviate the sufferings of the Tibetan people inside Tibet.

President Dr Sangay also underlined non-violence as the principal approach undertaken by the Tibetan people in their struggle for freedom including the self-immolators.

"At least 150 people have set themselves on fire in protest since 2009. However, not even a single person has resorted to violence or attempted to hurt someone while staging their protest. This is something that the world should know," he said.

Addressing the Tibetan diaspora, he said the Tibetan people in exile should heed the profound aspirations of the Tibetan people inside Tibet i.e, restoration of freedom inside Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. "We should treat the aspirations of the Tibetan people inside Tibet as sacred and exert our concerted effort to fulfill their aspirations by preserving the unity of the Tibetan people," he said.

Dr Sangay further urged Chinese president Xi Jinping to reform China's failed policies in Tibet in his second term, and said that repressive, hard line policies will never work, but rather they should address the genuine grievances of the Tibetan people to resolve the Tibet issue.

Despite the Central Tibetan Administration's repeated appeals not to resort to drastic actions such as self-immolation, at least 151 Tibetans have set themselves on fire inside Tibet since 2009. Out of the 151, 129 of them have died while the status of the rest remains unknown.

The two self-immolators have raised calls for freedom in Tibet before succumbing to injuries that they have sustained during the fiery protest.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Meets Former US President Barack Obama in Delhi

His Holiness the Dalai Lama met former US President Barack Obama in New Delhi on 1 December.

The meeting of the two Nobel Peace laureates, which is sixth in series, took place at the ITC Maurya.

Responding to press queries at Gaggal airport on his return from Delhi regarding the meeting with the former U.S. President, His Holiness said, "It was very good, I think we are really two old trusted friends. I mentioned to him that now time has come for us to promote the sense of oneness among seven billion human beings. It is sad to see there are so much differences among people."

In an exclusive interview with DIIR media, Kasur Tempa Tsering, who is the India and East Asia Coordinator for Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, said that His Holiness had expressed interest in meeting with Obama, and accordingly Obama responded the same.

"His Holiness was very happy to meet his fellow Nobel laureate and also a friend," he said. Both of them have met five times in the past and have developed a unique friendship.

"The meeting lasted for 45 minutes. The meeting of the former Nobel Laureates dwelled on various topics pertaining to promoting peace in today's world torn by strife and violence.

"During the 45-minute meeting, both spoke about promoting compassion and altruism in human beings. His Holiness remarked that although basic human nature is compassionate, the materialistic orientation of education today tends to instil a sense of selfishness and self-centeredness, while not doing enough to discourage the sense of 'us' and 'them' that leads to conflict. Both peace laureates discussed the kind of future

they envision for the world."

"His Holiness also expressed that there have been a couple of meetings of the Nobel peace laureates but there were very less action and more of words on paper. His Holiness told Obama that



His Holiness the Dalai Lama meeting former US President Barack Obama at ITC Maurya in New Delhi on 1 December 2017.

laureates should meet to effect changes for the immediate future.

"His Holiness also said that since he is based in India, he is committed to reviving the ancient Indian thoughts to promote peace and compassion.

"To Obama, His Holiness said, 'You are not only a former US president but you are a Nobel laureate, you are young and you can do a lot. We should fulfil our aspiration for world peace. Maybe my generation will not see the results, but your generation will definitely see the results,'" Kasur Tempa Tsering said.

After Obama arrived in India last night His Holiness flew out from Dharamshaa at 7.30 this morning and arrived at around 8.30.

The former US President has previously described His Holiness as a good friend and commended his commitment to peace and nonviolence.

During his eight-year presidency, Obama has hosted His Holiness four times in the White House: 18 February 2010, 16 July 2011, 21 February 2014 and 15 June 2016. They first met in September 2005 when Obama was a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In the series of meeting, the former US President has repeatedly emphasised US support for Middle Way Policy of

the Central Tibetan Administration. In a press release issued by the White House in 2016, then President Obama pronounced his strong support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's "Middle Way" approach and the preservation of Tibet's unique religious, cultural, linguistic traditions and the equal protection of human rights of Tibetans in China.

Obama has arrived in India from China on 30 November. In Beijing, he met with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

In India, Obama spoke at a leadership meeting in New Delhi and met Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He also held a town hall meeting for young people hosted by his foundation.

Obama visited China, India, France during his world tour.

Mundgod Doeguling Tibetan Settlement Receives Record of Tenancy Certificate (RTC) from State Government of Karnataka

Under the guidance of Department of Home, Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamsala, the Tibetan Rehabilitation Policy was formulated in the year 2014. Thereafter, at the Karnataka State level, after much deliberations and perseverance from the Office of the Chief Representative, CTA (South Zone) and also, at the District level the Tibetan Settlement Officer, Mundgod along with Doeguling Tibetan Co-operative Society had put great efforts in pursuing with concerned Karwar District authorities.

On 11 December, on the auspicious visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Doeguling Tibetan settlement, Shri. S.S. Nakul, I.A.S. Deputy Commissioner of Karwar Distt presented Record of Tenancy Certificate, RTC to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The Deputy Commissioner said that a simple



Shri S S Nukul, IAS Deputy Commissioner of Karwar District, presenting the RTC to His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Mundgod on 11 December 2017.

function will be held at a later date in order to distribute RTC to individual Tibetan farmers of the settlement. His Holiness the Dalai Lama thanked the Deputy Commissioner for providing such benefits to Tibetan farmers.

The RTC will benefit Tibetan farmers to get all subsidies, grants and schemes from the State Government of Karnataka as well as from the Central Government of India as extended to local Indian farmers.

The Solidarity Rally is a wake-up call to the United Nations and the International Community: CTA President in New York

To mark International Day of Human Rights, thousands of Tibetans and Tibet supporters from across the United States and Canada took part in a mass solidarity rally in front of the United Nations headquarters in New York City on 10 December.

The rally, organised by a committee chaired by Pema Chagzoetansg and Tsewang Rigzin, the two members of the Tibetan Parliament representing North America, was part of the 'Year of Campaign' declared by the Kashag on 10 March this year.

President Dr Lobsang Sangay of the Central Tibetan Administration, Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile and many Chinese scholars and dissidents including Prof Ming Xia, Chinese activist Chen

Guangchen, democracy activist Yang Jianli, attended the rally.

Addressing the rally, President Dr Lobsang Sangay, appealed the United Nations to protect the basic fundamental rights of the Tibetan people and said that the issue of Tibet bears worldwide ramifications. He said that the rally was a wake-up call to the UN and the international community, explaining that ignoring the just cause of Tibet is akin to ignoring human rights, democracy and violence.

"For the last six decades, Tibet has been suffering under a brutal occupation. And that is unacceptable. Tibetans are suffering and they are saying it's unbearable. They are burning



President Dr Lobsang Sangay addressing the Tibetan solidarity rally in New York City on 10 December 2017. Photo/Goms Vision

themselves; not just one or ten or twenty, but one hundred and fifty Tibetans have burned themselves asking for basic freedom and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet," Dr Sangay said.

Citing William Herschel's quote "you may chose to look the other way but you cannot say that you didn't know," President Dr Sangay said "We are here today in front of the United Nations to tell you today about the tragedy unfolding in Tibet."

"Next year marks the 70th year since the Universal declaration of human rights was made. But where is our human rights? Where is our basic freedom? That's why we are here today in front of the UN headquarters to tell the UN and the international community about what is going on inside Tibet for the last sixty years."

Dr Sangay also underlined the ongoing demolition of Larung Gar and Yarchen Gar by Chinese authorities as trampling on the rights of the Tibetan people and said that China should immediately stop the demolitions and restore the monastery to its original settings.

"Larung Gar monastery with more than 12000 monks and nuns was demolished from last August to this August. From 12000 monks and nuns, it was reduced to just 5000. 7000 of the monks were expelled, never to return again. Three nuns from Yarchen Gar committed suicide. Such is the situation inside Tibet. So, is there any justice? No. Sixty years is too long, demolition of Larung gar is unacceptable, demolition of Yarchen gar is unbearable. We want the UN and the international community to know that the tragedy of Tibet is real, and the sufferings of the Tibetan people are real," he said.

President further emphasised that Tibetans in Tibet have clearly protested the political repression, economic marginalization caused by the Chinese government's policies. "The issue of Tibet not only concerns the 6 million Tibetans but that 1.4 billion people in Asia that depend on Tibet's rivers," said Dr Sangay.



Participants of the rally holding photos of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela. Photo/Goms Vision

Speaker of Tibetan Parliament, Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, recalled the contribution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Tibetan people and to the world. He highlighted the current critical situation in Tibet, pointing out the cases of Tashi Wangchuk, late Tenzin Delek Rinpoche and Larung Gar as examples of how China was mistreating Tibetan people and destroying Tibetan

culture and tradition. He spoke about the past resolutions on Tibet by the United Nations and sought its support to the Tibetan people, including in the resumption of dialogue with the Chinese leadership.

Richard Gere, Actor and Chairman of the International Campaign for Tibet, who was unable to attend the rally, sent a written message expressing his solidarity with the Tibetan people. He expressed his hope that everyone can “be united in our nonviolent struggle to fulfill the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and honor the voice of Tibetans inside Tibet.” Saying that there were many people who care deeply about Tibet, he said ICT remains committed to being proactive on the issue of Tibet.

Tibetan Parliamentarian Pema Chagzoetsang offered her gratitude to all those who had helped with the organization of the events. Tibetan parliamentarian Tsewang Rigzin said all the participants should go back home knowing that they were successful in delivering the three objectives that he had outlined that sent strong messages to China and the international community.

The day-long rally began from the United Nations building, through the streets of New York, and culminated in front of the Chinese consulate. Participants raised slogans of peace, human rights, non-violence, dialogue and His Holiness the Dalai Lama, during the rally.

Since the declaration of 2017 as ‘Year of Campaign’ by the Kashag, over 30,000 Tibetans residing in North America have organized and participated in various rallies and campaigns to highlight the Chinese government’s atrocities in Tibet and have called for the resumption of dialogue between Chinese representatives and envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Chorig Kalon Elected Vice President of Governing Council of International Buddhist Confederation

Kalon Karma Gelek Yuthok of Department of Religion and Culture of Central Tibetan Administration has been elected as one of the Vice Presidents of the Governing Council of International Buddhist Confederation. Kalon Yuthok returned to Dharamsala after attending the two-day General Assembly Meeting



Kalon Karma Gelek Yuthok, Department of Religion and Culture, CTA among the other 11 Vice President of the Governing body of IBC. Photo/Department of Religion and Culture

of International Buddhist Confederation held in Delhi from 10 -11 December.

Chief guest Shri Kiren Rijiju, the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Government of India, and spiritual heads of the Cambodia and Bangladesh and Kyabji Gaden Tri Rinpoche, Tibetan representative graced the inaugural ceremony of the General Meeting. The morning session of the meeting began with screening the video message of His Holiness the Dalai Lama followed by welcome speech by Professor Kyabje Samdhong Rinpoche, the presiding president of IBC.

Shri Kiren Rijiju, the Minister of State for Home Affairs gave the key note address. In the afternoon session, the Chairman of electoral committee introduced the voting procedure and then voted new President, Vice President and Members of Governing Council of IBC.

Kalon Karma Gelek Yuthok has been elected as one of the Vice President of the Governing Council.

The second day of the meeting dwelled on discussion on the topic “Buddhist Heritage, Asokan Legacy and Way Forward for IBC” where many scholars and researchers debated and presented research papers on various issues. During the session a video message of Gyalwang Karmapa Rinpoche was screened and a reading of message from Sakya Trizin Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang Rinpoche.

The International Buddhist Confederation was formed in autumn of 2010, during Ven. Lama Lobzang’s visit to Sri Lanka. Some respected Sangha members suggested that India host a large-scale international Buddhist conference. The planning then began for one of the largest international gatherings of Buddhists ever to take place on Indian soil – the Global Buddhist Congregation. The purpose of this body is to create a role for Buddhism on the global stage so as to help to preserve our heritage, share our knowledge, and promote our values and to represent a united front for Buddhism to enjoy meaningful participation in the global discourse.

China’s Decade Old Reincarnation Policy Cannot Replace Tibet’s Millennia Old Tradition: CTA Spokesperson

It has been a decade since China announced its infamous ‘Order no 5’ in 2007, decreeing that all the reincarnations or tulkus of Tibetan Buddhism must get government approval, explaining that anyone otherwise would be “illegal or invalid”.

The Chinese government has justified this step as an effort to institutionalize the management of the Tibetan reincarnation system and curb fraudulent activities.

The self-described ‘atheist’ state, even took the unusual step of publishing a list of “authentic living Buddhas” on the official website of its State



Sonam Norbu Dagpo, Secretary for International relations and Spokesperson of the Central Tibetan Administration.

Administration for Religious Affairs.

Unsurprisingly, the move was widely criticized by Tibetans as interfering in their religious belief. They called it China's latest attempt to legitimise the occupation of their country by co-opting Tibetan Buddhism, the spiritual glue that binds Tibetan people into a single political entity.

"Interfering with Tibetan people's faith for political gains has been an age-old practice of China's political game. During the cultural revolution, they destroyed Tibetan monasteries and cultural relics in the name of modernization, and disrobed and disbanded monks and nuns from monasteries in an effort to brainwash Tibetans with socialist propaganda," Sonam Norbu Dagpo, Secretary for International Relations and spokesperson of the Central Tibetan Administration said.

"They are now manipulating people's faith in Tibetan Buddhism particularly the millennia-old tradition of reincarnation to control Tibet. It's obvious that their ultimate goal is to grab Tibet's institution of the Dalai Lama and use it as a political tool to legitimize their occupation," he added.

"However, China should understand that the reincarnation system is a millennia old tradition that is deeply embedded in the Tibetan people's culture, and China's decade old policy cannot replace this tradition," he explained.

Since 1951, China has controlled Tibet with a high-handed approach to its culture and religion. This overbearing attempt has won them few supporters

and antagonised the majority of the population including inciting several popular uprisings.

Sensing the futility of their approaches, the Chinese government has implemented various carrot and stick policies to woo the Tibetan people but failed. They have now realised that it cannot rule Tibet forever without the influence of the Dalai Lama institution on the Tibetan people. This has prompted China to devise a strategy to ensure that the next Dalai Lama will align with its goals.

In other words, Beijing wants to control the selection process of the next Dalai Lama; so that the next Dalai Lama is seen hand in glove in furthering China's political ambitions.

However, despite best efforts and millions of dollars down the line, China has emerged from this whole saga as 'ridiculous' and has invited itself much derision and mockery.

President Dr Lobsang Sangay, political head of the Tibetan people, has compared China's meddling in the issue with Fidel Castro appointing the next pope.

He also exposed the irony of China's policy wherein they scramble to hijack the legacy of the Dalai Lama institution, while rejecting the current Dalai Lama who has given the institution unparalleled gravitas and international recognition.

Hence, for now, the rule by reincarnation strategy of China in Tibet is currently seen as 'flawed' and 'suspicious'. Early indications from the international community towards the issue has also pointed toward similar articulations.



Indian Government Streamlines Stay and Travel Regulations for Tibetans in India

In what comes as a good news for Tibetans living in India and abroad, the government of India has streamlined stay and travel regulations for Tibetans.

According to a circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs/Foreigners Division, regulations regarding renewal of Residential/Registration certificates for Tibetans in India have been slightly relaxed, and the validity and the number of entry for return visas for those who wish to travel abroad have been increased from single to multiple entry lasting a year.

Responding to the decision which was made public on December 7 this year, the President of Central Tibetan Administration Dr Lobsang Sangay thanked the government of India for relaxing the regulations and said:



"Over the years, Kashag and the Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been pursuing the matter with the Indian Government and on many occasion have diligently requested for provisions to ease travel for Tibetans holding Identity Certificate and to facilitate easy process for renewal of Registration Certificate for Tibetans living in India."

"On behalf of CTA, I want to extend my deepest appreciation and gratitude to the Government of India for not only heeding to our requests, but for putting in place all possible measures for CTA and the Tibetans people."

The circular reads as follows:

(i) Tibetan migrants who are registered online may be granted Residential/Registration certificate for 5 years and such certificates may be renewed for five years on each occasion as and when applicable. However, if a Tibetan Migrant faces difficulty in online registration and desires renewal of Residential/Registration Certificate without online registration, his/her Residential/Registration Certificate may be renewed as per extant instructions i.e registration will be valid for one year with provision of extension by one year on each occasion. The present instructions of issuing five-year extension of Residential Certificate to those Tibetan Migrants, who have stayed in India for more than twenty years, will continue to remain valid.

(ii) Transfer of Residential/Registration certificate in case of migrants shifting from one place to another may also be done online, avoiding need for personal visits and delays in manual transfer of registration.

(iii) In case of delays in renewal of Registration Certificate by any Tibetan Migrant due to any unavoidable reason or oversight, stringent action like prosecution/imprisonment may be resorted to only if a serious offence has been committed which is not compoundable. In normal cases, pecuniary fine/penalty as per provisions of Law/Rules/Instructions may be imposed.

(iv) Tibetan migrants, who wish to visit abroad, may be granted one year multiple entry Return Visa which may be issued by FRRO/FRO, or Indian missions abroad. This one-year Return visa will be given to Tibetan migrants whose cases are recommended by the Central Tibetan Administration.

2. All concerned authorities may be sensitized that as a general policy Tibetan migrants in India may be dealt with dignity. It should be the endeavor of officers concerned to facilitate them within the provisions of Law/Rules. However, in case of any specific violation of any provision of Law/Rules/instructions, due action may be taken as

applicable to other foreigners.

3. All authorities concerned are requested to strictly comply with the above mentioned instructions.

4. These instructions shall come into force with immediate effect.

Press Release: Enrollment for Tibetan Medicare System 2018 – 2019

Health Insurance works by spreading the risk of healthcare expenses over a number of people so that the financial burden of unfortunate few who need healthcare is shared by the many fortunate who remain healthy.

Most of us, at some point in our lives, will need to seek expensive healthcare



services e.g. hospitalization or surgery. With the present day stress, sedentary life-styles and pollution, an increasing number of people are being diagnosed with heart ailment, cancer and other critical illness that are expensive to treat. A few days of hospitalization, major surgery or chemotherapy can cost lakhs of rupees.

In India, many of us pay directly to the doctor, the chemist and the laboratory for day to day ailments, since treatment of these are generally low-cost. However, the cost of hospitalization is expensive and most of us find it unaffordable.

Health Insurance protects us against unexpected financial loss. It empowers us to access and afford needed healthcare services. Let us see an example: Tenzin has fallen ill and requires hospitalisation, which will cost Rs. 50,000. There are two different ways to cover this cost:

1. Collect, or pool, a small amount of money from each person in the community to cover the cost of Tenzin's hospitalization, or
2. Make Tenzin cover the cost on his own – which could potentially push him into poverty – and set the precedent that everyone must pay their own healthcare costs, regardless of how high it might be.

The first option is an example of how health insurance works. Each person in the community makes a small contribution and eventually the community shares the burden of the large expense incurred for the hospitalization of one.

What is Tibetan Medicare System?

Tibetan Medicare System is a holistic Secondary and Tertiary Health Care Program meant for all Tibetan refugees under the direct cover of Tibetan Voluntary Health Association (TVHA), registered under the Societies Act 1860. TMS is a nonprofit and charitable Health Plan that aims to improve public health and well-being of the Tibetan community in-exile. The Department of Health launched TMS on 1st April 2012. It is running on its 6th year now and 7th year will be started from 1st April 2018.

Status of Tibetan Medicare System for year 2017-18

1. Total number of member: 24155
2. Total number of beneficiaries from 1st Apr 2017 to Dec 2017 (In 8 months) – 1554
3. Total amount of reimbursement Rs: 13715849/-
4. 37 Settlements and including Organizations are covered under TMS in India.

Period of Cover for a year starts from 1st-April 2018 and ends on 31st-March 2019.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation Holds week-long Tibet Advocacy Campaign in New Delhi

A three-member Tibetan Parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Speaker Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok successfully concluded the week-long Tibet Advocacy campaign in Delhi on 22 December.

The delegates met over 40 Indian parliamentarians and Party leaders from 11 different political parties belonging to 19 different states of India. Since 2014, the Tibetan Parliamentary delegations have successfully called upon over 210 Indian MPs of the 16th Indian Parliament during various Parliament sessions.

“The current Advocacy campaign proved a major success with meetings and interactions being successfully held with over 40 Indian lawmakers in a short span of 5 days. Most importantly, as requested, many Indian MPs affirmed their visit to Dharamshala in future and to participate in Tibetan official programmes and events of the exile Tibetan communities and Administration. These visits have helped garner major Tibet supporters among the Indian lawmakers in the past,” said Deputy Speaker Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok, head of the delega-



Tibetan Parliamentary delegation, Kasur Ngodup Dongchung, Representative of Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Delhi and Indian MPs at the meeting of All Party Parliamentarian Forum for Tibet (APIPFT), 21 December 2017. Photo/Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

tion.

During the entire campaign, the delegates were received with great admiration by the Indian counterparts and were assured of their strong support

and solidarity for the Tibetan cause. The Indian leaders earnestly pledged to do their utmost for Tibet and especially assured to discuss and deliberate on Tibet issue with colleagues, Party leaders and the Government of India whenever opportunities arise. Many earnestly offered their valuable guidance regarding the future course of actions for Tibet. For example, Shri Vivek Tankha suggested that a formal meeting of certain number of Indian MPs with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, coinciding with His Holiness' visit to Delhi, to discuss ways to create momentum for Tibetan freedom struggle would be a major bolster for the Tibetan movement.

While commending the success of exile Tibetan movements and the undying spirit and commitment of the Tibetans in carrying forward the Tibetan freedom struggle, they expressed anguish and condemnation of the Chinese illegal occupation of Tibet. They also emphasised that they be kept updated on the Tibet situation and to call on at regular intervals in future.

The Tibetan delegates formally thanked the Government and the people of India for their continuous support for Tibet. They apprised them on the critical situation inside Tibet and the ongoing Tibetan freedom struggle. While advocating for greater support for Tibet, the delegates urged the Indian MPs to stand up for Tibet during the Parliamentary proceedings and bolster their support through various platforms. The delegates also urged them to seek further support from their respective leaders and Government for immediate intervention to end the crisis inside Tibet.

Most importantly, the Indian MPs assured their participation in the upcoming 7th World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet.

On the evening of 21 December, a meeting of the members of All Party Parliamentarian Forum for Tibet (APIPFT) was held in the Constitutional Club, where over 7 Indian Parliamentarians including Mr. P D Rai, Dr. Arun Kumar, Mr. Ninong Ering, Ravi Prakash Verma,

Thangso Baite and others took part and deliberated on the Tibet issue. Due to sudden extension of the Parliament session over a voting motion on a vital Bill, many lawmakers who confirmed their participation failed to make it in time for the meeting. The meeting successfully adopted four resolutions on Tibet. The meeting was also participated by the Tibetan Parliamentary delegation, Kasur Ngodup Dongchung, Representative of Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Delhi and the Coordinator, Karma Th-



Tibetan parliamentary delegation with Shri Janardan Singh Sigrwal. Photo/Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

argyal and other staff of ITCO.

Among the leaders the Tibetan parliamentarians met during the 5-day lobbying included prominent Indian MPs: former Defense Minister Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, Mr. Moti Lal Vora, Mr. D Raja, Mr. Subhash Chandra, Mr. K T S Tulsi, Mr. Rajiv Shukla, Mr. Thupten Tsewang, Mr. Vivek Tankha, Rev. Prasanna Kumar Patasani, Mr. Shadi Lal Batra, Mr. Pradeep Tamte, Col Chaudary Sona Ram, Mr Gopal Narayan Singh, Mr. Dinesh Kashyap, Mr. K Bhabananda Singh, Dr. Boora Narsaih Goud, Mr. Vinod Kumar Bolanapalli, Mr. Daddan Mishra, Mr. Santuise Kujur, Mr. BN Chandrappa, Mr. Sunil Baliram Gaikwad, Mr. Thangsoe Baite, Mr. CL Raula, Mr. Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu, Mr. Virendra Singh, Mr. Harivansh, Mr. Rangasayee Ramakrishna, Mr. Vikas Mahatme, Mr. Janak Ram, Mr. Bhushan Lal Jangde, Mr. Mekapati Rajamohan Reddy, Mr. Devender T Goud, Mr. Vinay Dinu Tendulkar and Mr. N. Thota.

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Kalon Karma Gelek Yuthok to take Additional Charge of Education Department

Since Kalon Ngodup Tsering has been appointed as the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the Office of Tibet, North America based in Washington DC, he relieved his responsibilities as Kalon of Education Department from 1 January 2018.

In his place, Ven Karma Gelek Yuthok,



Kalon Karma Gelek Yuthok of Department of Religion and Culture.

Kalon of the Department of Religion and Culture, took additional charge of Department of Education from the said date, according to a circular issued by Kashag Secretariat on 29 December 2017.

Brief Biography of Kalon Karma Gelek Yuthok

Ven Karma Gelek Yuthok was born in the year 1955 in Tibet. After completing his studies in Buddhist dialectics and Masters in Arts (MA) degree, he joined the Central Tibetan Administration in 1986.

Since then, he has served in various capacities including as the Secretary of the Department of Religion and Culture, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at OOT Japan, Secretary of the Department of Education, and finally as Secretary of the Kashag Secretariat from 2012 until his nomination as a Kalon in the 15th Kashag led by President (Sikyong) Dr Lobsang Sangay in June 2016.

Canadian Senators Launch Inquiry into State of Political Prisoners in Tibet

Canadian Senators have launched an inquiry into the state of political prisoners of Tibet in Canadian Senate chamber on 23 November 2017.

Five senators led by Senator Dennis Glen Patterson have highlighted five political prisoners of Tibet who are languishing in Chinese prison for peaceful expression of views in asserting their national identity and defending their culture.

The other four senators who have raised strong voice in support of Senator Patterson were Senator Marilou McPhe-dran, Senator Thanh Hai Ngo, Senator Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) and Senator Linda Frum.

“I am concerned and disturbed to learn that a child (Panchen Lama) was abducted by the state and that his whereabouts and current condition remain unknown.....I do hope that this inquiry will serve, as our government reaches out to engage with China, to emphasize that in doing so we must also reinforce and advocate for the basic human rights and freedoms that we cherish and protect in Canada,” said Patterson in the Senate.

He further added that His Holiness the Dalai Lama only wants to restart a dialogue with the Chinese government toward making Tibet a truly autonomous province as provided for in the Chinese Constitution.

CTA President Strengthens Tibet Advocacy in Ottawa

The President of Central Tibetan Administration Dr Sangay met with parliamentarian Arif Virani, Chair of Canadian Parliamentary Friends of Tibet (CPFT), parliamentarian Garnett Genuis, PFT vice-chair, Gayle Turner and Paul De-giacomo from the AgriTeam Canada.

Dr Sangay also met with Linsay Mar-

tens, the director of policy, Public Policy Forum, who currently leads the PPF consultative forum on China.

Interacting with CBC, an english language broadcast network, Dr. Sangay apprised CTA’s commitment to the Middle Way Approach to resolve the Tibet issue through peace and dialogue seeking a genuine autonomy for Tibet.

Upon meeting with the Tibetan community, Dr Sangay spoke of the journey the Tibetans have made in exile under the visionary leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He further added the importance of preserving the Tibetan identity and strengthening unity among Tibetans.

Tibetan Parliament Greets Australian Parliamentary Delegation



Members of the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament with the visiting Australian Parliamentary delegation.

The Deputy Speaker of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok and the members of standing committee met with the four member Australian Parliamentary Delegation led by Senator Derryn Hinch, Justice Party of Australia, Hon Kevin Andrews, former Defence Minister, Liberal Party of Australia, Senator Kimberly Kitching, Labor Party of Australia, Meryl Jane Swanson labor Party of Australia along with Lhakpa Tshoko, Office of Tibet, Canberra on Monday, 20 November.

Tibetan parliament secretariat hosted a dinner reception in honour of the Delegation at the Norbu House. At the dinner gathering, Deputy Speaker Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok welcomed the Delegation to Dharamshala and introduced the standing committee members.

The Genesis of Tibetan Self-Immolations is China's Repressive Policies in Tibet

By Jamphel Shonu

As the wild fires that engulf southern California continue to grab headlines across the world, another fire, seemingly larger and more widespread, has been silently raging on in Tibet, the roof of the world.

Of the 151 people who have been forced by circumstances to set themselves on fire, the burning flame has consumed 129 lives. The sweeping wave of self-immolation began in 2009 in the aftermath of the nationwide uprising against China in 2008. Between 2012-13 alone, over a hundred people resorted to this desperate act to express their anguish at China's increasingly repressive policies in their homeland.

The spate of self-immolations abated since last year after the Chinese government imposed heavy security measures and resorted to criminalization of self-immolators and family members in a bid to curtail this expression of discontent. However, news of sporadic incidents of self-immolation still trickles from inside Tibet. Last month, when the rest of the world was in a festive mood to ring in Christmas, elsewhere in northeast corner of Tibetan plateau, Konpe, a former Buddhist monk in his 30s, set himself alight and a day after, on the eve of Christmas, succumbed to his injuries.

The burning question is, why do Tibetans, young and old, resort to such painful act of setting themselves on fire and risk their precious lives? The President of Central Tibetan Administration Dr Lobsang Sangay attributed the genesis of Tibetan self-immolations to the repressive policies of the Chinese government in Tibet.

Religious repression, social marginalization, treating Tibetans as second-class citizens in their own land, exploitation of the poor, discriminatory policies undermining Tibetan language, among others, have been some of the key facets of China's six-decade rule in

Tibet. These failed policies have time and again exposed China's disregard for the legitimate aspirations of the Tibetan people, and evinces China's imperialist designs over Tibet and establishes its position as a colonial master.

With history dating back to more than 2,000 years, Tibet existed as an independent nation prior to China's illegitimate occupation. However, despite Tibet's unique cultural and linguistic heritage, China has looked at Tibet solely through a constricting prism of safeguarding their territorial integrity and maintaining stability.

In their quest to maintain this cult of stability, China has devised numerous policies, a combination of reward (economic) and punishment strategies to induce a desired behavior from the Tibetan people.

However, the truth of Chinese rule in Tibet is that, despite its arm-twisting, economic and financial inducements, the Tibetan people have defied and resisted and instead expressed unflinching faith in His Holiness the Dalai Lama and allegiance to Central Tibetan Administration which is the moral and legitimate representative of Tibetan people inside and outside Tibet.

To wean the Tibetan people off from their sublime devotion to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, China has waged multiple campaigns that force the Tibetan people to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This attempt at delegitimizing His Holiness the Dalai Lama has only led Tibetans to sense the void of His Holiness and express their aspiration for the return of His Holiness back to Tibet. This is best illustrated in the slogans raised by each self-immolator that called for the return of His Holiness back to Tibet and freedom inside Tibet.

For Tibetans inside Tibet, His Holiness is the custodian of their cultural identity and the symbol of freedom in Tibet.

Moreover, the Chinese government's efforts to assimilate Tibetans into the mainstream Han culture and undermine Tibetan language and expressions of cultural identity has left the Tibetan people deeply suspicious of China's motives.

By encouraging mass migration of Han Chinese people into Tibet, China has effectively made Tibetans a minority in their own land. As a result, the six million Tibetans are vastly outnumbered today by Chinese immigrants, who are given preferential treatment in education, jobs and private enterprises, making Tibetan language redundant and leaving the Tibetan people disenfranchised and marginalized in almost all sectors.

In the field of education, Tibetan students bear the brunt of prohibitive and discriminatory fees set in place by Chinese authorities, and inadequate facilities in rural areas.

It is because of such predatory nature of the Chinese rule in Tibet and the lawlessness it spawns that has driven Tibetans to resort to extreme measures such as self-immolation to protest against the very policy that threatens their identity and engenders cultural annihilation.

On the other hand, Tibet's traditional leaders, the lamas and spiritual teachers who, preaching simple living, has given them a sense of identity, unity and spiritual belonging at a time of great uncertainty and disorientation.

And this is China's real dilemma in Tibet. Although China physically rules Tibet, it could not win the hearts of the Tibetan people. It is the very conquering nature of Chinese rule in Tibet that has alienated Tibetans from their colonial masters.

The Chinese government is wary of the self-immolation protests, and is sensitive to anything that can be remotely

interpreted as challenging Chinese rule.

Speaking about the self-immolation protests, Sonam Norbu Dago, Secretary of International Relations and official spokesperson of the Central Tibetan Administration, said: "China is obsessed with controlling every aspect of Tibetan lives. The fact that China monitors virtually every step of Tibetans has left Tibetans with no alternate agency to express their dissent but through self-immolation."

In the Buddhist world, self-immolations have been one of the long-standing forms of protests. The image of Thich Nhat Hanh's lotus in a sea of flame still resonates across the world. In Tibet, the self-immolations are an expression of anguish and dissent. It is also symbolic of Tibetans reclaiming their control over their lives.

It in a way has sent a message to China that that they may control Tibet, but they cannot control the hearts and minds of Tibetan people.

China's handling of the self-immolations: complete censorship and criminalization of self-immolators evince China's growing insecurity, and needless to say, their embarrassment over the same.

Vivid images of the red and yellow flames that have engulfed Tibet over the last nine years has captured the imagination of Tibet in the world's eye. The only way forward for Chinese leadership to stop the self-immolation protests is to review their six decade old failed policies in Tibet and address the genuine and legitimate grievances of the Tibetan people inside Tibet, that is, freedom for Tibetan people and the rightful return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama back to Tibet. These demands have been echoed by every Tibetan self-immolator as they breathed their last amid the fiery flame that blazed and razed their body to ashes.

For detailed news visit:

www.tibet.net

The Need for a Tibetan Reading Revival: My Observation on Reading Among Tibetan Children

By Jigme Namgyal

Current observation and research has prompted me to invite every Tibetan to consider reviving reading as a priority in our system of educating children. The reasons unfold below and I welcome your thoughts.

As Noble Laureate Ernest Hemingway said, "There is no friend as loyal as a book". It is true since from our childhood, be it at home or school, we have been told that, books are your best friend. Many explanations were given on how it is your best friend, why it is important to read books etc. However, I observed a hard truth, that most of the Tibetan children do not have the habit of reading nor is the importance of 'reading' correctly understood by them. Parents are either busy for the livelihood of the family or are uneducated and don't know what 'reading' means. Teachers are overloaded with a number of additional responsibilities and even the timely completion of the prescribed syllabus itself was sometimes challenging for them. Whereas students are in an atmosphere where passing exam is what they think they are for. But ultimately it is the larger community that has to bear the brunt of this negligence, which thereby affects our strength, struggle and very survival! Why is it so? What went wrong that even after more than five decades of providing education we failed to have sufficient numbers of scholars, statesmen, opinion makers etc.? It is a known fact that education was not universal in free Tibet, nevertheless we produced numbers of renowned scholars and practitioners (nyam-len-pa). Study shows that in most of the Tibetan schools, reading is limited to language classes which emphasize more on memorization than on reading itself. Students were not encouraged enough to use libraries effectively or to develop reading skills in them. The other factor could be socio-economy of the society, where reading is not being given much importance as it should be.



Jigme Namgyal, Additional Secretary of Department of Education

These are huge challenges which must be addressed collectively.

It is even more challenging, if it is indeed true as psychologist Keith Stanovich explains. He has done extensive research on reading and language disabilities where his concept of the 'Matthew Effects' says, if children fail to learn reading and writing at an early years then he/she dislikes reading gradually. "As a consequence, they do not gain vocabulary, background knowledge, and information about how reading material is structured. In short, the word-rich get richer, while the word-poor get poorer". But one should also know that, there are cases where children pick up reading at a later stage when he/she enjoys reading. So how pervasive his concept is a matter of further research.

In any case, being a father of 5-year-old daughter, who is about to enter her prime years, led me to some readings. I say prime years, because expert says that, after first three years of children's pre-schooling (ngon-dro-lo-sum/སློབ་འགོ་ལོ་གསུམ་ལ།), it is the first five years of the primary school (she-rim-oag-ma-lo-nga/གཞི་རིམ་ལོ་གསུམ་ལོ་སྟེན།) that shapes their mind, let alone reading skills. Therefore, I would prefer to call it 'ngoe-she-lo-nga' (ངོ་ཤེ་ལོ་གསུམ།) in Tibetan.

In the course of my search for children's books, I have encountered many good works initiated by the Education

Department, in the last more than three and half years, to create an atmosphere for reading in Tibetan schools. Some of these are good to be known by all of us. Under their Early Grade Reading (EGR) program they brought out 40 Graded Reading Series (GRS) called Sontsa Series for early graders to fulfill the demand for children's story books in Tibetan, which was written along the lines of Barkha Series of NCERT. These books were based on Tibetan folk tales, festivals, popular Tibetan customs, children's games etc. They are indeed, very suitable for early graders. Around 18 high quality children's story books were also translated from other languages. Record also shows 159 books, including above DoE publications, were distributed to all the schools. Many of these are available on www.bodyiglobjong.com Under the Tibetan Early Grade Reading (TEGR) itself 4,70,500 copies of children's books along with 42,127 copies of other books were printed. Similarly 224 Classroom Reading Corners (CRC) were introduced in 63 schools like Teacher Reading Corner (TRC) were installed for teachers. Not to mention teacher training and Teacher Professional Development (TPD) is one of the intrinsic parts of their area of work. Workshops were also organized for primary teachers as well as for librarians on methods and activities

related to developing and improving reading skills. Parents were equally engaged in these similar workshops, which helped them to understand the importance of reading for children.

These initiatives are amazing. Perhaps we would have been different people had we received such encouragement and facilities during our school days. I still remember very clearly that during my high school days we used to have a 'library period'. The Library was somewhere near the staircase in a somewhat low illuminated room. During the period we did go to the library but did not really use it for what it is meant for. We just talked among ourselves, turned a few pages of magazines lying on table that didn't need stock entry in the school records. I must confess I had never read one complete book in my school days. It is so surprising, as far as I remember, that none of us ever thought of borrowing books from the library. In fact, whatever books the school library had, most of them were locked, or secured in a shelf where students could ever reach! Thanks to our Gandhian English teacher and friends from senior class at Sarnath Institute who constantly encouraged us for reading.

Indeed, some of the above facts are disheartening but unlike the concept

of 'Matthew Effects' I believe reading can be 'cultivated' at any stage - better late than never. Therefore, I welcome the above initiatives taken by the Department and schools like TCV Suja. It is very encouraging to learn from one of my colleagues about the 'Readers of Dalai Lama' reading program run by the school. There may be similar activities by other schools as well. These programs, including EGR, are some of the key factors to achieve competent readers, which I think should be promoted on a large scale by the school and administration alike. Maybe all the stakeholders should ponder upon them seriously. No wonder this kind of initiatives take years, but as Tibetan says, 'dhon-chen-drub-par-ngang-ring-goe' (དོན་ཆེན་གྲུབ་པར་ངང་རིང་དགོས།) meaning 'patience is required for the success of an important matter'.

Education in fact begins with good reading. It is seen that children who read books often are more skilled than those who don't when they lead people or get themselves employed. As such the greatest gift we can give to our children and to the country is to create a passion for reading in them. And this could be your and my 5/50 vision for our children.

The views expressed in this article are the personal opinions of the author.

Tibetan Scholarship Program 2018

The Education Department of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) is pleased to circulate the announcement of 2019 Tibetan Scholarship Program (TSP) sponsored by the Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the US State Department. It is being administered jointly by the Tibet Fund & the Department of Education, CTA. Total of six (6) candidates from India and one (1) from Nepal will be selected to this program. Application will be accepted from eligible Tibetan refugees residing in India and Nepal for two-year Master's Degree programs in the United States.

Announcement: goo.gl/Nf4FDN

Online Application Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/nTiShl7aBLubBAz53>

If you have any question, please contact the respective offices:

INDIA

Ngawang Yonten
Email: doe.lobyon@tibet.net
Phone: +91-1892-222572 & 222721
Facebook: facebook.com/doe.lobyon/

USA

Tenzing Choephel
Email: tchoephel@tibetfund.org
Phone: +1.212.213.5011

NEPAL

Tsering Topgyal
Email: tspscnepal@ymail.com
Phone: +977-1-5000036/5000002



Statement of Kashag on the 28th Anniversary of Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama

On this joyous occasion of the 28th anniversary of the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, the Kashag, on behalf of Tibetans inside and outside Tibet pay obeisance and bow down in deepest reverence and express our highest form of gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the supreme saviour of all sentient beings, the master of all teachings of the Buddha, a great champion of peace in this world, the human manifestation of the Bodhisattva of compassion, the spiritual sovereign of the three realms of existence and the saviour and supreme leader of Tibet and the Tibetan people. We also extend our warm greetings to the Tibetan people, friends and well wishers around the world.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has made a lifetime commitment to make today's world a more peaceful place for its inhabitants. He continues to travel across the world, promoting the basic human values of love, compassion, altruism and justice and religious harmony, which he firmly believes are the inherent goodness that exists in all human beings. To encourage these inherent values to practically affect change in the society, His Holiness has always encouraged the common people and the youth to embrace these values. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has consistently worked towards making this world peaceful, devoid of war, famine and nuclear arsenals.

In today's competitive world driven by technology and materialistic desire, modern knowledge has failed to provide true happiness to mankind. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is therefore committed to bringing true happiness by introducing a rational and peaceful approach to solving problems. For this he has time and again stressed to his global audience the importance of studying the ancient Indian wisdom based on the teachings of the Nalanda tradition. The major classical texts of Nalanda tradition on psychology and dialectics provide an important field of study for everyone, irrespective of differences in their faiths. This ancient tradition has been kept alive



by Tibetans for thousands of years. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said that he has committed the rest of his life to promoting this ancient Indian wisdom. He has therefore stressed and urged the revival of these ancient traditions in the home of their origin, India. The similar efforts made by the Centre and State Governments of India towards this end is commendable.

Even though the situation inside Tibet is critical, Tibetans under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama has never wavered from the principles of non-violence and has maintained a steadfast commitment to resolve the issue of Tibet through dialogue and through the mutually beneficial solution of the Middle Way Approach. These core tenets of such benevolent approach should similarly form the basis for international conflict resolutions and resolving issues of human rights violations and environmental crisis. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has always advocated that universal responsibility exists not only between human beings but should also extend to the protection of the natural environment and the sentient beings inhabiting it. For His Holiness the Dalai Lama's tireless promotion of human values, peace and compassion, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. Today, he is one of the most admired leaders of the world and an icon of peace.

With His Holiness the Dalai Lama as one of its laureate, the stature of Nobel

Peace Prize has further strengthened and the cause of Tibet has also gained widespread international awareness and support.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's meeting with his fellow Nobel laureate and former U.S President Barack Obama in India earlier this month brought much joy in all of us. This marks the sixth meeting: four times when Barack Obama was the U.S President. His Holiness have expressed happiness over the meeting of two old trusted friends and mentioned that time has come for Nobel laureates to promote the sense of oneness of seven billion human beings.

It gives us much delight to congratulate this year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). Their tireless work to completely ban and eliminate the creation and use of all nuclear arsenals are highly commendable. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has over the years strongly advocated for a nuclear free world.

Today is also observed world wide as World Human Rights Day and marks 69 years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was issued. Sadly, the human rights situation in many countries including Tibet continues to be deplorable. We are taking this opportunity to remind the United Nations and the UN Human Rights Council and all other peace and justice-loving

individuals and governments about the ongoing repression and oppression still rampant in today's world.

The ever-increasing repression and lack of real human rights and religious freedom in Tibet does not need more deliberation. The UNHRC, the Foreign Relations Council, Freedom House and so on have clearly documented the ground reality in their annual reports.

In Tibet, mere expressions of their cultural rights and dissent against the government lead to arrest and detention devoid of proper trials. This is despite the fact that the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the National Regional Autonomy Law stipulates provision for religious freedom, protection of culture, language and environment.

The repressive policies of the Chinese government have caused 150 Tibetans to self-immolate. Of the 150, 128 have lost their lives and whereabouts and the condition of 22 remains unknown. The self-immolators have called for freedom for Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

This year alone, five Tibetans have self-immolated, four of whom are young Tibetans between the age group of 20 and 30 and a 63-year-old monk. The Chinese government, instead of addressing the legitimate grievances of the Tibetan people have resorted to greater repression and in worst cases, the criminalization of self-immolation, causing the arrest of family members and the refusal to return the bodies of the self-immolators. The abject disregard for basic human rights is a travesty of justice and a violation of the basic principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Despite the worsening situation inside Tibet, the spirit and resilience of the Tibetan people have been rock solid, thanks to the support and solidarity from justice and freedom-loving people

and governments around the world. In October this year, both the Senate and the House of the US Congress have unanimously passed a resolution supporting His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the issue of Tibet. The unanimous approval of a bill to dissolve the Mongolian Tibet Affairs Commission (MTAC) in Taiwan's Legislative Yuan is a welcome step. Similarly, the issue of Tibet has gained commendable support from the European Union and countries such as United States, Canada, Australia, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Last month five Canadian Senators led by Senator Patterson have launched an inquiry into the state of political prisoners of Tibet in the Canadian Senate chamber. They have highlighted five political prisoners of Tibet and the case of Panchen Lama. Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honorable Chrystia Freeland, called on China to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief to visit Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. Minister Freeland reiterated Canada's commitment to continue to have open discussions with China on the issues of human rights and rule of law in Tibet, and to seek greater access to Tibet for Canadian diplomats and delegations.

At the United Nations, between February and August, in a span of six months, UN Special Procedures have made four urgent and joint communications to China regarding pressing human rights cases in Tibet.

The Chinese government's efforts to assuage Tibetan people by bringing economic development have failed. Therefore it is in China's interest to address the long-standing issue of Tibet by heeding the calls for dialogue and in seeing the wisdom and magnanimity of the mutually beneficial solution that the Middle Way Approach which seeks genuine autonomy and not

independence. It is time the Chinese government enables the resumption of dialogue with the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

As mentioned in the statement of the 58th commemoration of the Tibetan National Uprising Day, the Central Tibetan Administration and the Tibetan people across the globe will mark 2018 as Thank You Year. The year 2018 will mark the beginning of 60th anniversary since His Holiness the Dalai Lama and about 100,000 Tibetans first arrived in exile. From March 31st to April 4th, 2018, the Central Tibetan Administration will observe a series of 'Thank You India' events in Delhi to publicly express our gratitude to the people and government of India. Similarly, Tibetans living in other countries will also organise similar programs to express their gratitude to their host countries. These countries have been instrumental in keeping alive the Tibetan cause and by generously hosting the Tibetan communities they have supported in terms of education and livelihood.

On this most special occasion, we take the opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to the people and government of India for their continued hospitality and unflinching support for the Tibetan people. We also express our heartfelt thank you to all the friends of Tibet, freedom and justice loving people, governments, leaders, parliamentarians and organisations across the globe who have continued to champion the cause of Tibet.

Finally, for the benefit of all sentient beings and particularly on behalf of all Tibetans, we pray for the long life of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet. May all his wishes be fulfilled. We hope and pray that the non-violent cause of Tibet will prevail.

KASHAG
December 10, 2017

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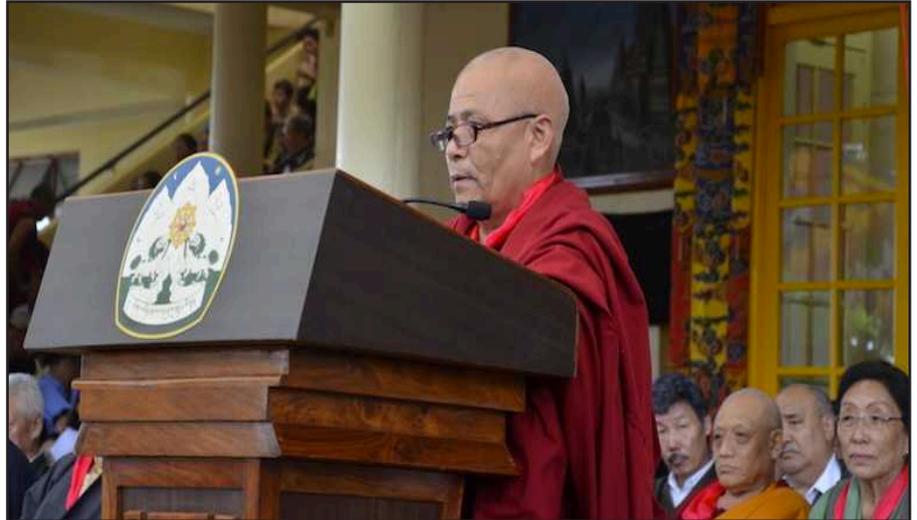
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Statement of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the 28th Anniversary of Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness 14th Dalai Lama

We are gathered here today to mark the 28th anniversary of a momentous occasion when His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the guardian protector and guiding light of all Tibetans, whether living in exile or those left behind in their homeland, and a champion of world peace was conferred the Nobel Peace Prize, an award renowned across all corners of this globe. For his accomplished and still continuing secrets of body, speech and mind deeds of truly vast expanse, expended with free abundance to suit all desires for the benefit and wellbeing of all sentient beings, resulting in debts of gratitude impossible of repayment, I, on behalf of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, offer my commemorative tribute and greetings of auspiciousness to His Holiness the Dalai Lama with utmost body, speech, and mind obeisance.

It was on the 10th of December 1989 that His Holiness the Dalai Lama was presented with this globally most acclaimed of award, the Nobel Peace Prize. In this connection it bears pointing out that all the deeds of His Holiness the Dalai Lama were designed to serve others in general terms and, in particular, the Tibetan people and their culture to ensure their sustenance, progress and revival in ways which are beneficial to the whole world. For these purposes, His Holiness the Dalai Lama steadfastly adhered to the method of nonviolence rooted in the profound Buddhist teachings. It was on the bedrock of this foundation that His Holiness the Dalai Lama made efforts to accomplish the just cause of Tibet and, likewise, to bring effective benefits to this world from the perspective of a long term vision by means of bringing into existence mutual appreciation, fraternal relationship, justice and compassion, in this world. On this basis, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has made, and continues to make, admirable noble efforts directed at the realization of meaningful peace that is beneficial in the attempts to resolve the different kinds of conflicts taking place in this world, to the assumption of responsibilities based on respect for human rights, and to the protection of the



natural environment. These have won him spontaneous attraction from people across the world and led to the awarding to him of an honour of such repute as the Nobel Peace Prize.

In this year of 2017, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has continued to carry forward his highly admirable deeds, visiting four countries – namely the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Latvia – as well as New Delhi and other cities in India, which he still continues to tour. During the visit to Italy, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said that millions of people had lost their lives as a result of violent conflicts afflicting mankind. In addition, he added, the world's economic situation as well as the conditions of the natural environment were continuing to deteriorate. He continued that we should therefore strive to make the 21st century a century of tolerance and the recourse to dialogue as the means to resolve disputes. He said that to bring that about, education had become of utmost importance. However, he expressed disappointment that the education system today lacked emphasis on developing innate human values. And he said that it was therefore most important that the modern education system should incorporate the promotion of secular ethics and the positive values inherent in human nature as they are closely related to our emotion, so that we may thereby be able to raise understanding about the system and working of the human mind.

And he also made an appeal to everyone to practice compassion and to recognize the fact that all human beings are same in their essential nature. In addition, he said the real source of peace of mind was love and compassion, not just the love that that we feel for those who are close and already affectionate towards us, but an unlimited sense of altruism, a love that could be extended to all beings, including one's enemies, adding that this was something well within the capability of a human being to achieve. Also during his recent visit to Italy, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was honoured with awards which recognized him as a champion of world peace through non-violent means, as well as with citations and an honorary citizenship in recognition of his work towards global peace and justice, and, likewise, for his enormous deeds in terms of imparting knowledge about science and philosophy based on his knowledge of Buddhist teachings.

The Nobel Peace Prize for the year 2017 has been awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) which had indeed made vigorous continued efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons from across the world. However, there is no certainty at all what transformative turn the situation in this world today will take in the near future. Not only that, there is unsettled turbulence in the situation in many parts of this world. Given such a state of affairs, there is no doubt about the

fact that the need for the work of this campaign organization has become ever more urgent and imperative. This and the campaign organization's resolute and determined efforts carried out with courage have been given a clear recognition with the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize for this year. This being the case, we too take this opportunity to offer the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons our compliment and congratulations, expressing it with appreciations for its noble efforts.

The Tibetan struggle is also strongly concerned with issues of justice and human rights. It was for this reason that Dr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Houssein, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, discussed the human rights situation in Tibet at the 36th session of the United National Human Rights Council, which is the world body's apex human rights forum. Not just that, he, at that time, strongly highlighted the situation of the human rights and religious freedom of the Tibetan people with particular focus on the late revered Tulku Tenzin Delek Rinpoche and the Tibetan language campaigner Mr. Tashi Wangchuk. In this connection he, likewise, expressed his serious concern on the circumstances surrounding the death in prison of Tulku Tenzin Delek Rinpoche and the ethnic Chinese democracy activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Mr. Liu Xiaobo, citing them as a reflection of even more serious deterioration of the human rights situation in China. Besides, the United States of America, The United Kingdom, the European Union, Switzerland, and Germany made calls for more efforts than ever before by the international community to safeguard respect for human rights.

Outwardly, China presents a dignified facade of being a respectable and responsible government. However, in reality, in September this year, the United States-based human rights monitoring group Human Rights Watch stated in its annual report that the government of China had made every possible effort by deploying all the enormous resources at its disposal to obstruct all the ongoing measures being undertaken

by the United Nations Organization directed at protecting human rights. Likewise, the State Department of the United States government in its International Religious Freedom Report for 2016 presented a detailed picture of how Chinese authorities had engaged in widespread interference through restrictions and harassment of Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns in their routine religious practices in their monasteries and nunneries. This report surely afforded a clear understanding of the human rights situation in Tibet today. Likewise, Professor Philip Alston, the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights of the United Nations, recently undertook a visit to China in order to gain first-hand knowledge on the situation there and in Tibet. And he reported that there had so far been no positive change in the state of extreme poverty in Tibet and other ethnic minority areas of the People's Republic of China. On the contrary, he pointed out, the reality of the situation in Tibet was that there was still no bridging of the gap in disparity in income and wealth which he added was deeply problematic.

In October 2017, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was held in Beijing at which the members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau, and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China were elected. It was decided at the congress to incorporate President Xi Jinping's thought into the constitution of the Communist Party of China. And so, like Marxism and Leninism and the Mao Tsetung thought, the position and the powers of the President Xi Jinping were made supreme through the party congress. Among the 14 bullet points in which President Xi Jinping put forward his thought for attaining comprehensive accomplishments, one could discern such positively termed section of goals as 'continuing to comprehensively deepen reform', 'seeing that the people run the country', 'ensuring every dimension of governance is law-based', 'ensuring and improving living standards through development', 'ensuring harmony

between human and nature', and 'promoting the building of a community with a shared future for mankind'. And it is not as if one cannot entertain any hope as much for China as especially in the case of Sino-Tibetan relations for these to lead to a change in the positive direction. In fact, it has become a matter of importance for Chinese President Xi Jinping to adopt a policy of liberalism and thereby make efforts to gain a position of respectability in the international community and, in particular, to strive to resolve the issue of Tibet on the basis of taking due cognizance of the aspirations of the Tibetan people.

Since the 27th of September 1987, there have been a series of peaceful protest rallies in Tibet led by the new generation of Tibetan people from among those who had been left behind in their Chinese ruled homeland. These included, in particular, the large-scale peaceful Tibetan uprising protests of the Earth-Mouse Year in 2008 and the peaceful protest by self-immolation by the monk named Tenga-la on the 26th of November this year in Karze Dzong, making a call on the government of China for freedom in Tibet. The monk passed away after holding that protest. Since 2009, a total of 150 Tibetan people in Tibet, including the young, adult and old; men and women; monks and nuns, as well as laypeople, have been driven to make a high sacrifice of giving up their precious lives by setting themselves on fire as an act of peaceful protest. What all these show is obvious to everyone that they resulted from the government of China's continued implementation of a hardline policy on Tibet whose consequence is a brutal violation of the human rights of the Tibetan people beyond all limits. With this perspective in view, we once again take this opportunity to emphatically remind the leaders of the People's Republic of China to bear full responsibility for this tragic situation in Tibet today.

Regarding information about the situation in Tibet today, it continues to be as difficult to obtain as ever. And this year, in the run up to the holding of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in Beijing and thereafter,

restrictions on the ordinary Tibetan people on accessing the internet through their mobile phones were considerably strengthened. In its report 'Freedom of the Net 2017 – Manipulating Social Media to Undermine Democracy', Human rights organization Freedom House – which is based in Washington, DC, capital of the United States of America – ranked China as the country with the world's worst internet freedoms for the third consecutive year. The report found that a new set of internet regulations which took effect this year had further tightened already heavily restricted access to cyber space for Chinese citizens. Likewise, the report also highlighted the fact that China had frequently imposed restrictions on the use by the ordinary Tibetan people of their mobile phones to access the internet and that this practice was still continuing.

From about the year 1974, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has, in a desire to make an effort to reach a peaceful settlement between Tibet and China, and with utmost sincerity of purpose, adhered to a mutually beneficial Middle Way Policy. This Middle Way Policy has also been formally adopted by the democratically elected law-making body of the Tibetan people, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, by means of a resolution passed. And it is absolutely clear to the government of China that this policy which calls for a genuine and meaningful regional ethnic autonomous governance for all the Tibetan people is fully in accord with the rights legally guaranteed to them within the framework of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. And it knows that this policy is not in any sense separatist in nature and character. Nevertheless, the government of China keeps using the term 'separatist' in this context at every opportune moment. It was in keeping with this attitude that this year, an official of the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party of China proclaimed to the world his government's hardline policy of not showing any leniency for all times to come to any leader of any foreign country who had met with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Nevertheless, although some nations which are under China's dominion economic power and influence

may possibly surrender to this threat from Beijing, countries of power and those that give importance to human rights will surely never cower to implement such a demand. What is of real, practical value, on the other hand, is that there is an urgent need to realize that a peaceful resolution for the immediate as well as long term interests of both Tibet and China, and for the mutual benefit of the two sides, is the real need of the hour and accordingly efforts should be made as soon as possible to establish contact and hold discussions between representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the government of China. We take this opportunity to reiterate our call accordingly.

We have nothing but praises of the highest order with a sense of solidarity for the patriotic Tibetan men and women in Tibet, whether since dead or alive, for their selflessness, heroism, and fortitude and for their incomparable deeds. We are also appreciative of all the Tibetan people living in exile for safeguarding their ethnic identity and for their continued active assumption of responsibility in the struggle for Tibet by all means at their disposal. At the same time it bears reminding that all Tibetans should strive to accumulate merits by carrying out positive deeds in an effort to achieve the realization in all speediness the just cause of Tibet and so that His Holiness the Dalai Lama may live for a hundred aeons and all his wishes may be seen fulfilled in a spontaneous manner. And in order that the fraternal bond and unity of the Tibetan people may endure for all times to come, all Tibetans should never slacken in making their efforts for their cause in the right direction by exercise diligent care at all times. On the other hand, we deem it particularly necessary to be emphatic in appealing to everyone to ensure that they do not allow to slip on the internet social media forums any message which is of such extreme nature as to have the effect of gladdening our enemies' hearts and rendering those close to us crestfallen, so to say, for they will be the cause of the destruction of the Tibetan people's fraternal unity. Likewise, we should keep with deep fondness in the very centre of our hearts His Holiness the

Dalai Lama's instructive teachings about the importance of adhering to the path of nonviolence and, on that basis, to bear responsibility to work for the benefit of the world in general and in particular for the immediate and long term interests of Tibet as a whole, for they are concerned not just with a sense of love for ourselves but also with the need to take active and diligent interest in matters of concern for the general good of everyone. This then is the essence of the objective underlying our commemorating of the gratitude we owe to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and our observance of this anniversary. We are accordingly emphatic in appealing to everyone to keep this in mind and implement it in the day to day conduct of their life.

Likewise, this day is also being marked with a grand International Himalayan Festival of Dharamshala. This festival is an occasion for the people of the local host community to offer their high salutations to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his noble deeds and it also symbolizes ties of friendship and unassailable sense of fraternity between the community and the Tibetan people. Hence, we offer our appreciations to everyone involved in organizing this festival. Besides, to all the concerned nations offering support for the Tibetan cause, and, in particular, to the central as well as concerned state governments and the people of India, who have given support and material facilities for the general wellbeing of the Tibetan people and in the efforts to realize their just cause, we owe such gratitude as could hardly ever be forgotten and we take the opportunity offered by this occasion to express our heartfelt appreciations to them.

Finally, to conclude, we pray that His Holiness the Dalai Lama may live a long life and, on that basis, see all his wishes fulfilled in a spontaneous manner, with peace and wellbeing prevailing among all the sentient beings of this world and the just cause of Tibet being seen realized in all speediness.

Delivered on 10th of December 2017.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Travels to Bhubaneswar, Odisha

OHDDL

Before setting out for Bhubaneswar His Holiness the Dalai Lama met members of an Australian Parliamentary Delegation who were on their way to Dharamsala. After a comfortable two hour flight from Delhi, His Holiness arrived at Biju Patnaik International Airport, Bhubaneswar. He was received on behalf of the State Government of Odisha by Surya Naryana Patra, Minister for Civil Supply & Consumer Affairs; Ashok Panda, Minister for Culture & Tourism;



Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik looks on as His Holiness the Dalai Lama answers questions from the media at the Chief Minister's residence in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India on November 20, 2017. Photo by Tenzin Choejor



His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik exchanging greetings at the Chief Minister's residence in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India on November 20, 2017. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

Mrs Mona Sharma, Principal Secretary for Tourism and Nitin Jawale, Director of Tourism. Prof Achyuta Samanta, founder of Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), who extended the invitation to His Holiness, the Phuntokling Tibetan Settlement Officer and Lhunpo Rinpoche, were also on hand to welcome him.

Outside the airport Tibetans who are settled in Odisha had gathered to greet His Holiness, who laughed and waved to them. A scrum of members of the media were also eager to record his arrival and he had a few words for them about the need for people to gain better control of their negative emotions to be able to contribute to a more peaceful world.

Odisha Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik received His Holiness at his residence and the two shared a few minutes conversation. Once again His Holiness spoke briefly to members of the media outside, acknowledging that Mr Patnaik is one of the longest serving Chief Ministers in the country. He also expressed gratitude for the hospitality shown to Tibetans who have settled in the state. Arriving at his hotel, His Holiness retired for the day. Tomorrow, he will speak to more than 20,000 students at the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Addresses Students of Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences

OHDDL

The air was clear, the sun was shining and Bhubaneswar's broad roads were relatively uncongested as His Holiness the Dalai Lama drove to the campus of the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) University. On the last stretch, the road was lined by smiling students, some holding placards inscribed with greetings, welcoming him to the University. On arrival, he was received by Dr Achyuta Samanta, founder of KISS and KIIT, and university officials. Groups of energetic dancing drummers lined the path as he entered the campus. He was invited to garland a statue of the Buddha, then unveil a plaque and plant a sapling that will commemorate his visit.

His Holiness drove to the stage, set up at the head of large field, in an electric golf cart. Once again the road was lined by students, some performing yoga, others dancing and playing drums. He clearly enjoyed this display of ebullience. Reaching the stage he was invited to



His Holiness the Dalai Lama speaking to a crowd of over 25,000 students at KISS University in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India on November 21, 2017. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

light the lamp to inaugurate the occasion.

Speaking in Oriya, Dr Samanta introduced His Holiness to the audience of more than 25,000 students, explaining what the words Dalai and Lama mean and what the training of a Tibetan Buddhist monk entails. Mentioning that he invited His Holiness to come to the University in 2015 he declared his happiness in being able to actually welcome him at last. He then proceeded to offer His Holiness the 10th KISS Humanitarian Award before

inviting him to address the students.

His Holiness began as he usually does by greeting the older and younger members of the audience as brothers and sisters, telling them how happy he was to be among them.

"I always consider that the shape of the future is in our hands," he observed. "The past is past and can't be changed, but the future has not yet arrived. Young people like you have the opportunity and responsibility to shape it by creating a better world. Despite many remarkable developments, the 20th century was an era of violence, a time when, sadly, scientists' brilliant brains were put to destructive use. For example, they participated in the design and manufacture of nuclear weapons that were used twice against Japan. "Although killing has continued since the beginning of the 21st century, steps should be taken to make this a century

of peace. Since peace is destroyed by negative emotions like anger and jealousy, we have to find ways to develop inner peace if we are to create peace in the world. It's worth asking yourself whether you feel happy when you're angry. Anger and extreme irritation all too easily lead to violence. So, how are we to reduce anger? By increasing our sense of love and compassion.

“Scientists have evidence that basic human nature is compassionate. If it were not, there would be no hope. However, our common experience is that we are all born from a mother and survive in her care. Common sense tells us that even if our neighbours are poor, if they show signs of affection, we think of them as good neighbours. What's more, anger and violence bring disaster. They make you lose your peace of mind. They spoil the atmosphere wherever you are.

“When we are young we appreciate love and compassion, but as we grow up we become more interested in money and status. One of the reasons for this is that modern education is inadequate because it tends only to have material goals with little scope for inner values.

“It's worth reminding ourselves that all 7 billion human beings are physically, mentally and emotionally the same. But if we allow ourselves to think in terms of being privileged or under-privileged, belonging to higher, lower or no caste, it will only fortify division. This is unhelpful, out of date and undemocratic. Reminding ourselves of the oneness of humanity, that we are all the same in being human, is, on the other hand, a great source of confidence.

“The modern world lacks moral principles and doesn't understand how to tackle negative emotions. Because of this, what we can learn from ancient Indian knowledge of the workings of the mind and emotions can be very relevant today. Many Indians today neglect this knowledge, but I am encouraging young Indians I meet, like you, to pay attention to it because it's on the basis of this kind of understanding that we can build a more compassionate society.”

In the auditorium of the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) nearby, His Holiness mentioned to a capacity crowd of 1600 that he considers the Buddha to have been a great thinker and something of a scientist. He remarked that he thinks of himself too as half a monk and half a scientist.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama reaching out to some of the more than 25,000 students gathered at KISS University for the KISS Humanitarian Award presentation in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India on November 21, 2017. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

He highlighted one of the unique aspects of the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition—that, in addition to revealing profound philosophy and psychology, it embraces reason and logic. It is this that makes it of interest to scientists. He reported that the Buddha's own advice to his followers not to rely on blind faith, but to subject his teaching to reasoned investigation, has allowed him to reject traditional Buddhist cosmology.

Reverting to the shortcomings of modern education by itself, His Holiness repeated how important and more realistic it is to incorporate a secular approach to universal values.

In his answers to several questions from the audience, His Holiness noted that all human beings wish to be happy and that happiness is their right. He mentioned the recent publication of two volumes, the ‘Compendium of Science’ and the ‘Compendium of Philosophy’, derived from material extracted from the Kangyur and Tengyur, the collections of translations of largely Sanskrit Buddhist literature. They focus on the science of the mind and correct views based on reconciling the gap between appearance and reality.

After lunch, 1600 Tibetans from the Phuntsokling Settlement in Chandragiri

filled the KIIT auditorium. To begin with the Settlement Officer gave a report, mentioning the start of the settlement in 1963 on 849 acres of land, when the community included 300 monks and nuns. He described the development of schools, the construction of a hostel for old people with the support of Tibetans in Switzerland and the offer of 4 post-graduate places for Tibetan students at KIIT University.

His Holiness regaled the audience with the importance of study for personal satisfaction and to preserve the Buddha's teaching. He told them that 40 years ago he urged monasteries and nunneries that had previously concerned themselves mostly with performance of rituals, to develop programs of study. One result was that last year 20 nuns were awarded Geshe-ma degrees in recognition of their completing their rigorous Buddhist education. Similarly, Penor Rinpoche's determination to encourage study and debate at his monastery Namdrolling in South India, contrary to the advice of Chatral Rinpoche, has meant that today there are a good number of well-qualified Nyingma Khenpos.

He concluded, “We live as refugees, but we have kept our traditions alive. Our spirit is resilient and strong. The time will come when Tibetans in Tibet and those in exile come together again.”

Then, remarking that he might not visit them again so often, His Holiness decided to lead the community in a brief ceremony for generating the awakening mind of bodhichitta. He took time to describe the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, Indian and Tibetan masters they could visualise before them in witness to their aspirations. He encouraged them with the advice that all the happiness in the world comes from ensuring that others are happy. He ended by giving transmission of the mantras of Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri and Tara.

Many in the crowd clamoured to receive His Holiness's smile or touch as he slowly left the auditorium and made his way to his car.

His Holiness Addresses Indian Chamber of Commerce in Kolkata

OHDDL

In his homily to about 150 Tibetans—sweater-sellers, students and monks—this morning, His Holiness the Dalai Lama remarked that he had been familiar with Calcutta since his childhood. Tibetans who had been to the city had described its sights to him. Then, on his first visit to India in 1956, he made he became acquainted with the city himself.

“Since 1959, as refugees,” he told them, “we Tibetans have been able to reveal our culture to the world. Wherever we live, whether we’re in India, Europe, Australia or America, we have maintained our identity and shared in the spirit of being Tibetan. Those of us who live in the free world represent those who live in Tibet. I’m grateful to all Tibetans for keeping that spirit alive.

“Soon after we arrived in India, with the help of the Government of India, we set up schools for our children. After that, in the settlements in South India, we re-established our centres of learning where we have upheld the Nalanda Tradition, which was brought to us by Shantarakshita in the 8th century and Atisha in the 11th, both of whom hailed from where we are now, Bengal. One of the features of the Nalanda Tradition is its reliance on reason and logic. Indeed, the Buddha advised, ‘O monks, just as the wise test gold by burning, cutting and rubbing, Examine my words thoroughly And accept them only after you have investigated them—not just out of respect for me’.”

His Holiness emphasized the value of the Tibetan language as a means of accurately expressing the psychology, reason and logic of what the Buddha taught. He reminded his listeners that it is the language of the Kangyur and Tengyur, the body of largely Buddhist literature translated from Sanskrit.

As he prepared to lead a simple ceremony for generating the awakening mind of bodhichitta, His Holiness explained that when it comes to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, it is essential to understand what the Dharma is. On that basis it



His Holiness the Dalai Lama speaking to over 250 members and guests of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Kolkata, India on November 23, 2017. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

will be possible to better understand the Buddha and the Sangha. He said that to understand the Dharma you have to have some idea what is meant by emptiness. Not just a nihilistic idea, what it means is that whatever exists arises in dependence on other factors and therefore is empty of intrinsic existence. This corresponds to quantum physics stating that things have no objective existence.

His Holiness encouraged the students in the audience not to forget their Tibetan but to make an effort to keep it up. He recommended that they pay attention to Buddhist philosophy and psychology in an academic way, not necessarily from a religious point of view.

The Buddha taught the two truths, conventional and ultimate, which concern the gap between appearance and reality. When, in the ‘Heart Sutra’ it says ‘form is empty’, it means form has no intrinsic or inherent existence. It exists in dependence on other factors. On the basis of these Two Truths, the Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths concerning suffering and its origin, cessation and the path to it. His Holiness remarked that he made this clear in one of the verses of the Praise to the Seventeen Masters of Nalanda:

By understanding the meaning of the two truths, the way things exist,
We ascertain through the four truths how

we arrive in and how we leave the cycle of existence.

Engendered by valid cognition, our faith in the three refuges will be firm.

May I be blessed to establish the root of the path to liberation.

On this occasion His Holiness came to Kolkata at the invitation of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC). An audience of 250 members and invited guests made him welcome. Once he had lit the inaugural lamp, he sat down to speak to them.

“I always start my talks by greeting the audience as brothers and sisters, because that’s how I feel about all 7 billion human beings alive today. Each of us was born from our mother and then basked in her affection. That’s the seed that enables us to show affection to others. Scientists observe that our basic human nature is compassionate. As social animals, we all have a sense of compassion, but it tends to lie dormant. We need a sense of the oneness of humanity, a sense that we are all like brothers and sisters, to awaken it. As a human being, I am committed to encouraging people to appreciate this.

“As a Buddhist monk, I am committed to fostering religious harmony. India is a vivid example that religious traditions can live together. Indigenous traditions like the Samkhyas, Jains, varieties of Hinduism, Buddhism and

later Sikhism, have for centuries lived in peace alongside Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, which are traditions that originated elsewhere.

“As a Tibetan, I have retired from temporal responsibility since we elected leaders in 2001 and 2011. I have also put an end to Dalai Lamas occupying such a position in the future. Because the custom is related to feudalism, it’s out of date and time to change it. Incidentally, I feel the same about the caste system, the classification of some people as untouchable, while others are privileged. It too is out of date and undemocratic. It’s time it was changed.

“Anyway, I am committed to drawing attention to the need to protect the natural environment of the Tibetan Plateau. This is of importance not only to Tibetans, but also to the 1 billion people across Asia who depend for their water supply on rivers that rise in Tibet.

“In addition, I’m concerned about keeping our Tibetan cultural heritage alive. In the past you Indians were our Gurus and Tibetans were your chelas or students. What we learned from you about philosophy and psychology, about

the workings of the mind and emotions, and the uses of reason and logic, remains relevant and helpful in the world today.”

His Holiness explained his conviction that the world is facing a moral crisis. Many of the problems we face today come about because we lack moral principles—we lack compassion. One reason for this is that modern education is oriented to material goals with little time for inner values. He suggested that if we really believed that other human beings were like our brothers and sisters, we couldn’t let children die of starvation, nor stand by while people killed each other as they do today.

His Holiness noted that in an increasingly globalised world, national boundaries have less significance than they did. He reported California Governor Jerry Brown’s telling him that national boundaries are nowhere to be seen when this blue planet is viewed from space. He reiterated his admiration for the spirit of the European Union, the placing of a common European interest before that of individual states. He cited the fact that, in a historical precedent, peace has prevailed amongst members of the EU over the last 70 years.

Asked how to apply the Buddha’s advice in modern life, His Holiness recalled a conversation with a Swami in Bangalore in which they agreed that Buddhist and Hindu traditions have ethics, concentration and wisdom—shila, shamatha and vipashyana—in common. They may differ on their stance towards atman and anatman, but that is a matter of personal practice. Many Indian traditions involve an inner transformation that His Holiness has described as cultivating emotional hygiene.

Whereas there is evidence that constant anger, hatred and fear undermine our immune systems, warm-heartedness and a compassionate outlook bring a smile to the face.

After the formal words of thanks, His Holiness had a few final words for the audience.

“Don’t think there isn’t much you can do. Change always begins with an inspired individual, who then influences ten others, who in turn may influence ten more—that’s how ideas spread and change comes about.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Speaks on Education for Wisdom and Compassion in Bengaluru

Tibetan spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave a Silver Jubilee lecture on ‘Education for Wisdom and Compassion to Rebuild Nation’ at Tripura Vasthi, Palace ground, Bengaluru today.

Seshadripuram Educational Trust had requested His Holiness to grace the Silver Jubilee celebration of Seshadripuram First Grade College, Seshadripuram Primary and High School, Seshadripuram Pre-University College of Yelahanka and Seshadripuram Higher Primary School of Kumara Park West.

The function began with introductory speech by Dr Wooday P Krishna, General Secretary of Seshadripuram Educational Trust.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama along Shri

ASKiran Kumar, Shri NR Panditharadhya, President of Seshadripuram Educational Trust and Dr Woody P Krishna lighted the butter lamp.

Addressing a packed crowd of Vice Chancellors of different universities, Staffs and Students of Seshadripuram group of institute, His Holiness the Dalai Lama greeted by saying, “Respected elder brothers and rest of brothers and sisters, I always emphasise we are same human being. I, myself consider one of 7 billion human being. Which gives me immense benefit. I don’t care about formality, there isn’t any formality when we are born or die.”

His Holiness briefly talked about his four main commitments. “All this problem starts with too much emphasis on

secondary level of differences such as different race, country and religion. Therefore in order to reduce this what I called human created problem must be solved through consideration of fundamentally being human.”

His Holiness said his second commitment is the promotion of religious harmony and understanding among the world’s major religious traditions. “Despite philosophical differences, all major world religions have the same potential to create good human beings. It is therefore important for all religious traditions to respect one another and recognise the value of each other’s respective traditions,” he said.

As a Tibetan, His Holiness said his third commitment is to work towards the

preservation of Tibet's fragile environment and Tibet's Buddhist culture, a culture of peace and non-violence, which are both under threat inside Tibet.

He further talked about Tibetan language being the richest in preserving the Nalanda tradition of India and Tibet's ecology which holds great importance with regard to ecology of neighbouring countries and Asia as whole.

He recalled the times he had memorised Buddhist root text when he was eight years old and how he has kept on studying it with rigour.

"Among our refugee community of Tibetan, handful people are preserving rich cultural Nalanda tradition of India through rigorous study," the Buddhist leader said.

"My fourth commitment is try to revive ancient Indian knowledge in modern India. This ancient knowledge is really helpful and I had serious discussion with many scientists mainly on cosmology, neurobiology, nuclear physics particularly in quantum physics and psychology over 30 years."

"Therefore I'm fully convinced and according to my own experience, this ancient Indian knowledge is not only ancient but also very relevant to today's world. Emotional problem won't be solved through materialistic approach rather it could be tackled with knowledge of emotion," His Holiness remarked.

His Holiness mentioned that materialistic development alone is not enough to have mental peace. He urged India to pay attention to include study of inner value.

While returning to his seat His Holiness said, "You are exploring external space, I'm exploring internal space."

The program was followed by question and answer session.

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Unity of Three Provinces of Tibet is Most Important: His Holiness the Dalai Lama

His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave an audience to new arrivals from Tibet and a group of Tibetan teachers gathered for Secular ethics workshop on 22 December.

"Tibetans in Tibet are the real masters of the country. Despite facing immense hardship, you have kept your spirits up. In 1959, the whole of Tibet was thrown into turmoil. There is a story that after the bombardment of Lhasa, Mao Zedong asked what happened to the Dalai Lama. When he heard that I had escaped to India, he is said to have replied, 'Then we've lost.'"

"The Chinese authorities thought the issue of Tibet would simply fade away, but even after 58 years it hasn't. In 1959, many countries had no idea about Tibet; they do now," His Holiness said, urging them to uphold the spirit.

"What is important," he said, "is that all three provinces of Tibet remain united, standing together in solidarity," His Holiness told the gathering.

"Tibetans should pride themselves of its thousand millennium old cultural heritage, rooted in the profound Nalanda teachings."

"We started appealing to the UN late 1959, but, as Pandit Nehru advised me, the USA will not go to war with China over Tibet. We concluded that eventually we would have to deal with the Chinese government. Until now the Chinese policy has been to denigrate the Tibetan people and their culture, nevertheless we remain hopeful of being able to preserve our culture and values within the People's Republic of China" he added.

His Holiness emphasised "Tibetan language is the key to hold Tibetan alive and unity. Nothing can exterminate Tibetan language which started more than 1000 years ago."

His Holiness briefly explained about Middle way approach and its appreciation from Chinese intellectuals.

President Dr Lobsang Sangay, Central Tibetan Administration also addressed the new arrivals and the participants of the workshop on Secular ethics.

In his talk, he emphasised that Middle Way is best approach to have win-win situation and expressed hope for positive changes to take place within China. "The present situation inside Tibet is indeed sad and unfortunate, but I am hopeful that in time, changes will take place within China."

"We are seeking genuine autonomy for Tibet through non-violence and Chinese government can't say no to this as it does not contradict China's sovereignty and One China Policy," he said.

Enumerating the practicality of Middle Way Approach, under the prevailing situation inside Tibet and exile, Dr Sangay highlighted the widespread support and appreciation expressed by world leaders for the policy envisioned by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

He further said, "Tibetan in exile practice full democracy rather than Chinese communist party of holding power by few people. Many of high-level authorities are mostly Chinese. So we seek to genuine autonomy, which is within framework of Peoples Republic of China's constitution."

President Dr Sangay urged people to invest in education rather than wasting money on luxury. "Since 2011, Kashag has given top priority to education and will continue to do so."

Towards the end, he urged for the Tibetans to stay united. "Keeping differences aside, if we all work together, the dreams and the aspirations of the Tibetan people in Tibet and in exile will be fulfilled," the President said.

His Holiness Attends Inter-Religious Conference at JNU

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama speaking at the inter-religious conference at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, India on December 28, 2017. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

His Holiness the Dalai Lama drove to the extensive campus of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) to attend the inaugural session of an inter-religious conference. The meeting took place at the initiative of the Qutbi Jubilee Scholarship Program and the Centre of Arabic and African Studies of JNU.

Once His Holiness and other eminent spiritual leaders had settled on the stage, the Vice Chancellor of JNU, Prof Jagadesh Kumar gave a short welcome introduction. He stressed the importance of nurturing inner peace, suggesting that only when we have peace of mind within us will we properly appreciate harmony in the world around us.

Prof Tahera Qutbuddin, in her introduction as Co-Director of the Qutbi Jubilee Scholarship Program, explained that the present meeting was part of a Taqreeb Conference Series that began in Kolkata. She clarified that 'taqreeb' means to bring closer. She remarked that the Prophet Muhammad, the Buddha and many other religious teachers highlighted the importance of kindness and education in the spread of harmony.

Syedna Taher Fakhruddin Saheb welcomed everyone present as members of one family, for, he said, that was the spirit in which the conference was taking place. As to why such meetings were being convened, he pointed out that, at the present time violence is rife. "Since people regularly enter into dialogue after conflict has taken place, how much better it would be if they were to talk to each other in the first place. All religions teach that people should believe of their

own free will, with no force involved." He explained his father's role in bringing people together, to act in the interest of the greater good.

Jain leader, Acharya Lokesh Muni, spoke about peace and harmony in Hindi. He was followed by Shri Gaurgopal Das who stated that all our different religious traditions share a message of peace and harmony. He illustrated the need for work to improve harmonious co-existence with a story about the willingness of pigeons to share their living space wherever they were—on the roof of a temple, mosque or church because they were just pigeons. A young pigeon was bewildered that the people who used these buildings seemed less generous and more concerned with being Hindus, Muslims or Christians than just fellow human beings. Shri Gaurgopal Das pointed out that those who experience God experience harmony because they recognise the whole world as their family and everyone in it as brothers and sisters.

Rabbi Ezekiel Isaac Malekar declared that he was an Indian first and a Jew second because India is the only country in which Jews have not been discriminated against. He suggested that concern for humanity is the only real religion and that ahimsa would be better translated as 'love'.

Sadar Manjit Singh said that every religion preaches equality and love for each other. He cited the Sikh founder, Guru Nanak's efforts to convey respect by engaging in dialogue and visiting others' places of worship. He informed the gathering of his community's efforts to serve displaced Rohingyas and to provide food and shelter to those who come to demonstrate at Jantar Mantar, near to Gurudwara Bangla Sahib.

Dr Ali K Merchant speaking as a representative of the Bahá'í faith emphasized the need to recognise the oneness of humanity. Archbishop Anil Joseph Thomas Couto spoke of Jesus Christ's having come to teach love,

forgiveness and the way of service. He mentioned the example of Jesus's washing the disciples' feet and the parable of the good Samaritan, who acted out of a fundamental responsibility to help another human being. In such a way, he said, we need to join hands to build a better world.

Justice Ahmadi, former Chief Justice of India, noted that people of all the world's faiths are found living together in India. Expressing reluctance about the use of the word tolerance when it implies, "I don't like you, but I'll tolerate you", he suggested that we need instead to actively embrace and accommodate each other. He was pleased to announce the award of the Syedna Qutbuddin Harmony Prize, in memory of the 53rd Da'i al-Mutlaq, Leader of the Dawoodi Bohra people, to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Then presented His Holiness, spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, and advocate of peaceful non-violent co-existence, with a plaque.

"Respected brothers and sisters, it's been a great honour for me to listen to these marvellous speakers," His Holiness responded. "There isn't much else for me to say. We human beings are wonderful in some ways, but act as trouble makers in others. Because we rely on violence and the use of force, we spend money and ingenuity on developing powerful, complex weapons. Despite talk about eliminating nuclear weapons, and the knowledge that if they were used they could destroy the world, no concrete steps have been taken. What will happen if we go on like this?"

Finally, His Holiness drew attention to the treasure that is India's ancient knowledge of the workings of the mind and emotions. He suggested that this profound psychology is relevant today when tackling destructive emotions is so urgent. Learning to achieve peace of mind is the basis for establishing peace in the world, he said. And India is the one country that has the potential to combine its ancient knowledge with modern education for the wider benefit.

Dalai Lama: We need an education of the heart

By Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama Los Angeles Times



Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama greets people in Huy, Belgium on May 29, 2006. (Geert Vanden Wijngaert / Associated Press)

When the president of the United States says “America first,” he is making his voters happy. I can understand that. But from a global perspective, this statement isn’t relevant. Everything is interconnected today.

The new reality is that everyone is interdependent with everyone else. The United States is a leading nation of the free world. For this reason, I call on its president to think more about global-level issues. There are no national boundaries for climate protection or the global economy. No religious boundaries, either. The time has come to understand that we are the same human beings on this planet. Whether we want to or not, we must coexist.

History tells us that when people pursue only their own national interests, there is strife and war. This is shortsighted and narrow-minded. It is also unrealistic and outdated. Living together as brothers and sisters is the only way to peace, compassion, mindfulness and more justice.

Religion can to a certain degree help to overcome division. But religion alone will not be enough. Global secular ethics are now more important than the classical religions. We need a global

ethic that can accept both believers and nonbelievers, including atheists.

My wish is that, one day, formal education will pay attention to the education of the heart, teaching love, compassion, justice, forgiveness, mindfulness, tolerance and peace. This education is necessary, from kindergarten to secondary schools and universities. I mean social, emotional and ethical learning. We need a worldwide initiative for educating heart and mind in this modern age.

At present our educational systems are oriented mainly toward material values and training one’s understanding. But reality teaches us that we do not come to reason through understanding alone. We should place greater emphasis on inner values.

Intolerance leads to hatred and division. Our children should grow up with the idea that dialogue, not violence, is the best and most practical way to solve conflicts. The young generations have a great responsibility to ensure that the world becomes a more peaceful place for all. But this can become reality only if we educate, not just the brain, but also the heart. The educational systems of the future should place greater emphasis on strengthening human abilities, such as

warm-heartedness, a sense of oneness, humanity and love.

I see with ever greater clarity that our spiritual well-being depends not on religion, but on our innate human nature — our natural affinity for goodness, compassion and caring for others. Regardless of whether we belong to a religion, we all have a fundamental and profoundly human wellspring of ethics within ourselves. We need to nurture that shared ethical basis.

Ethics, as opposed to religion, are grounded in human nature. Through ethics, we can work on preserving creation. Empathy is the basis of human coexistence. It is my belief that human development relies on cooperation, not competition. Science tells us this.

We must learn that humanity is one big family. We are all brothers and sisters: physically, mentally and emotionally. But we are still focusing far too much on our differences instead of our commonalities. After all, every one of us is born the same way and dies the same way.

The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the spiritual leader of Tibet and a Nobel laureate for peace. He wrote this op-ed with Franz Alt, a television journalist and bestselling author. This piece is adapted from their new book, “An Appeal to the World: The Way to Peace in a Time of Division.”



For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Beijing Hinders Free Speech in America

By Wang Dan, The New York Times



I spent nearly seven years in a Chinese prison for being a leader of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. I was freed in 1998, and the Chinese government let me leave the country. I chose to go to the United States, where I could freely speak my mind without fear of being thrown in prison.

I earned a doctorate in history in 2009 and took a teaching position in Taiwan. I taught contemporary Chinese history and led a weekly seminar — a “China salon” — of open discussions about Chinese society and politics. Many of the seminar topics, like the 1989 protest movement and political reform, were taboo in the mainland but safe for public discussion in Taiwan.

The salons drew large numbers of mainland students attending Taiwanese universities on exchange programs who were hungry for the truth about China’s past. Many of them wondered about the Tiananmen Square crackdown, for example, because there is little mention of it in China’s history books.

I returned to the United States earlier this year and brought the salons to American universities. Given the long tradition of free speech in the United States, I assumed that the forums would fare even better in America, where some 329,000 Chinese students attend college. I hoped that public discussions of topics off-limits in China might challenge visiting Chinese students and encourage them to embrace Western democratic values.

But instead, over the past three months, my efforts on American campuses have been stymied. The Chinese Communist Party is extending its surveillance of

critics abroad, reaching into Western academic communities and silencing visiting Chinese students. Through a campaign of fear and intimidation, Beijing is hindering free speech in the United States and in other Western countries.

The Chinese government, or people sympathetic to it, encourage like-minded Chinese students and scholars in the West to report on Chinese students who participate in politically sensitive activities — like my salons, but also other public forums and protests against Beijing. Members of the China Students and Scholars Association, which has chapters at many American universities, maintain ties with the Chinese consulates and keep tabs on “unpatriotic” people and activities on campuses. Agents or sympathizers of the Chinese government show up at public events videotaping and snapping pictures of speakers, participants and organizers.

Chinese students who are seen with political dissidents like me or dare to publicly challenge Chinese government policies can be put on a blacklist. Their families in China can be threatened or punished.

When these students return to China, members of the public security bureau may “invite” them to “tea,” where they are interrogated and sometimes threatened. Their passport may not be renewed. One student told me that during one of his home visits to China he was pressured to spy on others in the United States.

And in one egregious example of intimidation, in March 2016, the police in China abducted the relatives of the Chinese journalist Chang Ping, who lives in exile in Germany, after he published an article in a German publication that was critical of President Xi Jinping’s crackdown on free speech.

Chinese students abroad hear these stories and, with good reason, tread

carefully. Many have become too afraid to attend open forums like my salon, and those who do show up mostly keep a low profile.

Not all Chinese students in the West condemn their government. Many, in fact, actively support Beijing, often by shaming their fellow students who criticize Beijing.

Nationalism is rampant in China and many students, who grew up subjected to the full force of the Chinese government’s “patriotic education program,” carry it abroad. They blame Western powers for causing a “century of humiliation” before the Communist takeover in 1949 and for instigating trouble and constraining China’s growth as a global power. These “patriotic” students and scholars team up with the Chinese consulates to sabotage protests critical of the Chinese government. Many resort to online harassment of Beijing’s critics.

In a typical example, Shuping Yang, a Chinese student at the University of Maryland in May praised the “fresh air of free speech” in the United States during her commencement address and then faced a barrage of threats online from Chinese citizens and the state media for “insulting the motherland.” The China Students and Scholars Association encouraged people to rebut Ms. Yang’s views. Under the pressure, Ms. Yang issued a public apology, asking for forgiveness and declaring that she did not intend to belittle her country.

Even Western educational institutions that have benefited from Chinese government funding, student enrollment and Chinese private donations have succumbed to pressure from Beijing. Some have canceled activities or programs, and others have resorted to self-censorship.

Springer Nature, which publishes prestigious science magazines like Nature, recently blocked access to

some articles from China to avoid being banned in the country.

The country's growing influence abroad has received a lot of attention in Australia, where journalists have detailed how Chinese money has infiltrated the political process. Chinese students in Australia can come under heavy pressure and shaming from other nationalist Chinese students for criticizing Beijing.

Recently, Clive Hamilton, a professor of public ethics in Australia, said that his publisher delayed the release of a book of his that investigates the rising influence of the Chinese Communist Party in Australia for fear that the Chinese government may sue for defamation. We can be certain that Mr. Hamilton's name has been added to a list of Western scholars who are banned from China, another common tactic used against outspoken China scholars whose work the Chinese government dislikes.

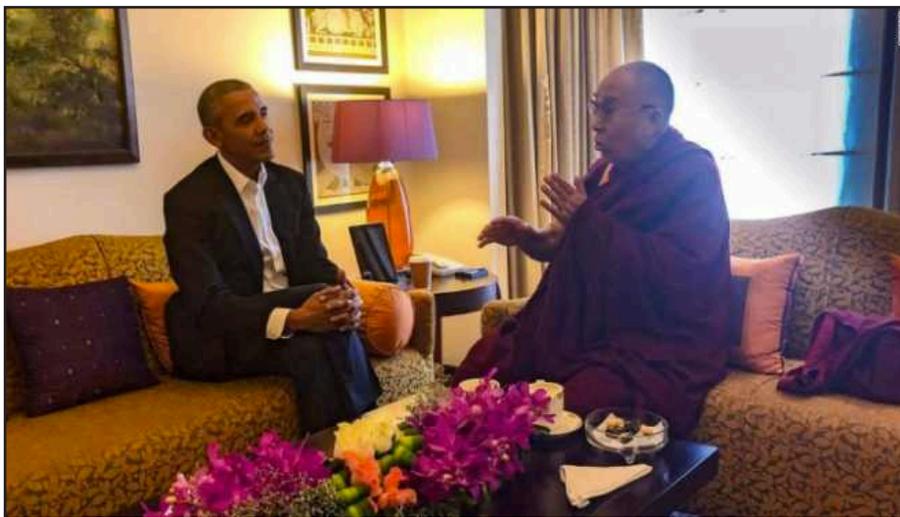
These threats to free speech should prompt Western politicians to stand up to China. I'm disappointed that President Trump chose to focus mainly on trade, rather than human rights, during his recent trip to China. There appear to have been no attempts to push back against Beijing's increasing proclivity to commit rights abuses beyond its borders. Such appeasement will only embolden Mr. Xi, further threatening Western democratic institutions.

In recent months, the Trump administration has restarted talks with its allies in Asia about how to counter China's growing assertiveness in the region. It is equally important for the United States to shore up its policies at home to stop China from undermining core democratic values — both on campus and beyond.

Wang Dan, a former leader of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, is the founder of New School for Democracy, an independent think tank that promotes democratic reforms in China. This essay was translated by The New York Times from the Chinese.

Dalai Lama to Obama: 'You are young and can do a lot'

CNN



Former US President Barack Obama met with the Dalai Lama on Friday in India, where they discussed “compassion and altruism,” according to a representative from the Tibetan spiritual leader's office.

The meeting in New Delhi was the sixth between the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates, and the first since Obama left office in January. Obama is on a five-day world tour, including stops in China and France.

The Dalai Lama said the meeting with Obama was “very good, I think we are really two old trusted friend(s),” according to a report from the India-based Central Tibetan Administration, which is essentially a government in exile.

Kasur Tempa Tsering, a representative from the Dalai Lama's office, told the administration's Department of Information and International Relations that the 45-minute meeting included a discussion about “promoting peace in today's world torn by strife and violence.”

Tibet Fast Facts

“To Obama, His Holiness said, ‘You are not only a former US president but you are a Nobel laureate, you are young and you can do a lot. We should fulfill our aspiration for world peace. Maybe my

generation will not see the results, but your generation will definitely see the results,’ ” Kasur Tempa Tsering said, according to the report.

The Dalai Lama officially retired in 2011 from his political role as the leader of the exiled Tibetan government but remains the head of Tibetan Buddhists and is scorned by the Chinese government.

While Obama's meetings as president with the Dalai Lama angered the Chinese, the US under his administration did not support an independent Tibet or consider the Dalai Lama a head of state. Instead, Obama backed what some Tibetans call a “middle way” that preserves the country's religious and cultural heritage while maintaining China's political rule.

The Dalai Lama himself has backed such an arrangement, repeatedly insisting that he is not a “separatist” despite Chinese accusations.

A spokesman for Obama could not be immediately reached on Friday for comment on the meeting.

According to the Central Tibetan Administration, Obama hosted the Dalai Lama four times in the White House: February 18, 2010, July 16, 2011, February 21, 2014, and June 15, 2016, and the two first met in 2005, when Obama was a member of the Senate.

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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

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

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,
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 Novodmitrovs-
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

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QUOTES

“I’ve had several dreams indicative of the past. In one I had been held as a prisoner in ancient Egypt and was released by order of the Pharaoh. I’ve also had dreams indicative of my close connection to the Indian adept Krishnacharya and to the founder of Drepung Monastery Jamyang Chöjey. Be that as it may, every one of us has had a previous rebirth. The important thing is to lead a meaningful life here and now.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama answering the question of a girl from Ladakh during meeting with Tibetans and People from the Himalayan Region on 25 December 2017

“I always consider that the shape of the future is in our hands,” he observed. “The past is past and can’t be changed, but the future has not yet arrived. Young people like you have the opportunity and responsibility to shape it by creating a better world. Despite many remarkable developments, the 20th century was an era of violence, a time when, sadly, scientists’ brilliant brains were put to destructive use. For example, they participated in the design and manufacture of nuclear weapons that were used twice against Japan.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama during address to the Students of the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences on 21 November 2017

“Even though the situation inside Tibet is critical, Tibetans under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama has never wavered from the principles of non-violence and has maintained a steadfast commitment to resolve the issue of Tibet through dialogue and through the mutually beneficial solution of the Middle Way Approach.” Sonam Topgyal Khorlatsang, Home Kalon during 28th Anniversary of Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness 14th Dalai Lama on 10 December 2017

“We have nothing but praises of the highest order with a sense of solidarity for the patriotic Tibetan men and women in Tibet, whether since dead or alive, for their selflessness, heroism, and fortitude and for their incomparable deeds. We are also appreciative of all the Tibetan people living in exile for safeguarding their ethnic identity and for their continued active assumption of responsibility in the struggle for Tibet by all means at their disposal. ” Deputy Speaker of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile during 28th Anniversary of Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness 14th Dalai Lama on 10 December 2017
